

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 1



MONTHLY SUMMARY 4th March 2020

CONTENTS

Bird Race 2020

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Velvet Scoter	Scarce with only two at Ross Back Sands and Druridge Links.
Black Scoter	Returning drake still at Cheswick/Goswick all month.
Long-tailed Duck	Peak count of 82 at Ross Back Sands on 1st.
Smew	Redhead at Widdrington Moor lake again all month, also again at Caistron on 26th.
Great Northern Diver	Popular individual at East Chevington N Pool until 18th otherwise only in North.
Red-necked Grebe	Singles only at Ross Back Sands on 10th and East Chevington on 2nd.
Slavonian Grebe	Peak count of 42 at Ross Back Sands on 1st.
Marsh Harrier	Wintering continued at East Chevington with four on 7th.
Crane	Adult at Middleton from 9th until end of month.
Avocet	6th-ever wintering occurrence for county with one at Blyth Estuary from 14th.
Black-tailed Godwit	One to two at four localities.
Ruff	Up to four at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools.
Purple Sandpiper	Peak count of 138 at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 13th.
Jack Snipe	One to two at five localities.
Green Sandpiper	Singles at Cramlington and Longhirst.
Kittiwake	Surprisingly scarce with only 3 individuals seen at Seaton Sluice & one at Boulmer.
Mediterranean Gull	New winter high count of 49 at Newbiggin on 28th.
Glaucous Gull	Adult at North Shields Fish Quay on 21st and first-winter at Budle Bay on 21st.
Iceland Gull	Up to two juveniles at North Shields Fish Quay all month.
Caspian Gull	Near adult at St Mary's Island on 2nd. Excellent local record.
Short-eared Owl	Continuing sightings of up to 8 at Holywell with two at Old Hartley.
Green Woodpecker	Only reported sighting all month was one at Corbridge on 12th.
Magpie	2nd highest-ever roost in county of 125 at Longbenton. Beaten only by 138 in 1984.
Hooded Crow	Wintering individuals at Low Steads, Linton & Glororum.
Waxwing	Peak count of 63 at Blyth.
Bearded Tit	One at Holy Island Lough on 11th.
Siberian Chiffchaff	One at Amble Braid on 1st.
Black Redstart	One again at Boulmer all month north of village.
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	Last month's superb find again showing incredibly well at Prestwick Carr all month.
Water Pipit	Singles at Boulmer all month at Seaton Pt and at Newbiggin on 23rd.

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 **12th March 2020**.

See you there -

Cain Scrimgeour –
“Redesdale and Beyond”.

Cain is an up-and-coming wildlife cameraman and a club member. The talk is about some of Redesdale wildlife and life beyond his new home, with stills and moving pictures to set the scene.

A Willow Tit awaiting a survey
Prestwick Carr

Jack Bucknall on 18th Jan.



FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

April 26th Langholm harriers etc. Contact seaswan@btinternet.com for details.

May 17th Leighton Moss RSPB by coach; cost £35 depending on numbers. Please contact seaswan@btinternet.com and pay £10 deposit ASAP.

June 21st Nightjars. Contact seaswan@btinternet.com for details.

August Waders. Contact t.r.dean@btinternet.com for details.

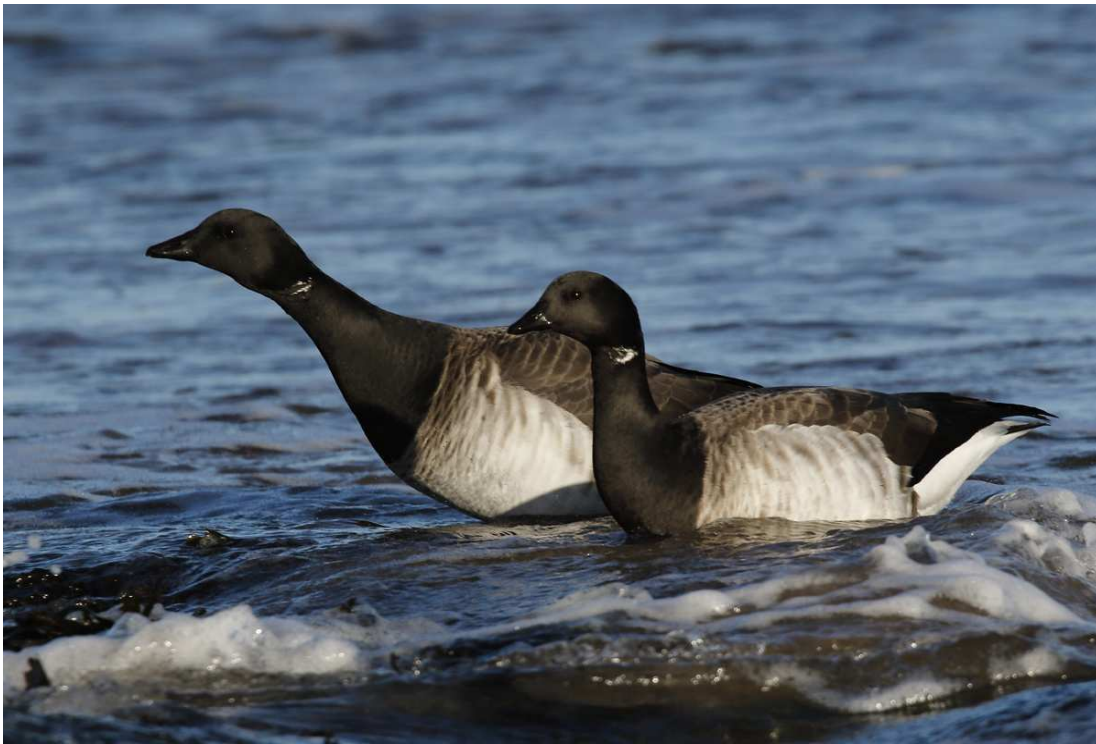
September Musselburgh by coach: TBC.

October Holy Island TBC.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta hrota*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included peaks at the Lindisfarne NNR of about 1,750 in the Fenham Mill area on 11th (DF), about 1,700 at Beal on 18th (DF), and 1,600 at Budle Bay on 23rd (BS). A count of 1,150 at the latter site on 13th contained 61.9% young (DF). Up to 18 were also noted in the Monks House area on several dates (CDB/IDR/RW *et al.*). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 210 at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 11th (IK) and one at Holywell on 16th (DLo).



Brent Geese on the beach near Monks House by Chris Barlow on 12th January

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 280 at Grindon Lough on 5th (TRD/JD), 243 at Druridge on 25th (SW), 242 at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (IFo), 224 at Big Waters on 12th (GB), 188 at Hauxley Reserve (HRS), and 68-92 at East Chevington, Killingworth Lake, Low Cocklaw and the Tweed Estuary. Groups of 18-46 were also at the Aln Estuary, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Greenlee Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP, Rothley and Widdrington Moor Lakes.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

16 flew N at Tynemouth on 12th (CB) and 14 moved S at Druridge Links on 8th (STH). Good numbers were noted all month in the Budle Bay-Elwick area, peaking at about 2,500 on 29th (TRD/JD/DF). The only other report was of three at Widdrington Moor Lake on 8th (CH).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

140 flew S at Budle Bay on 22nd (DF) and 21 N at North Shields Fish Quay on 3rd (MSH). Largest concentrations were about 400 at Budle Bay on 1st (DF), 300 at Big Waters on 1st (GB), 274 at Cocklawburn on 30th (MHu), 150 at Haughton Strother GP on 1st (SW), 144 at the Tweed Estuary on 25th (MHu), 133 at Woodhorn Flashes on 1st (DM/STH), 106 at Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) and Low Cocklaw (TBr/STH), and 22-41 at Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Old Hartley. Groups of 12-17 were at East Chevington, Linton Ponds, Plenmeller Common and Rothley Lakes. Two to eight were at the Aln Estuary and QEII CP Lake.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Northerly movement involved 1,000 at Stobswood on 25th (TF) and a total of about 140 at Shilbottle between 10th-12th (MKi), the monthly Seaton Sluice total was 41 N and 170 S (SSWT), a total of 170+ flew S at Newbiggin on 2nd and 23rd (BSi), 120 flew in from the SE at Holy Island on 10th (IK), 56 moved S at Boulmer on 17th (MJC), and 27 flew W at Prestwick Carr on 1st (DM/STH). Several large concentrations were noted (possibly involving some overlap): 3,500 at Brier Dene Farm on 13th (MNC), 2,000 at Beadnell on 19th (BS), 2,000 at Doddington on 4th (BS), 2,000 near Waren Mill on 18th (DF), 1,550 at Elwick on 2nd (DF), 1,500 at Bamburgh on 25th (TF), 1,500 at Goswick on 29th (TRD/JD), 1,000-1,050 near Budle Bay and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 500-700 at the 'Beehive Flash' (Earsdon), Blyth Links, Cresswell Pond and Holywell. Counts of 160-522 came from Old Hartley, Ross Back Sands, St Mary's Wetland and Woodhorn Flashes, and 86 were at Cocklawburn. One to six were at/over Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Humshaugh.

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved nine at Bannamoore near Alnwick on 10th (MH), two at Budle Bay on 1st and 3rd (DF/TRD/JD) and one there on 25th (CGK), two near Druridge Pools on 14th (TRD/JD), and two at Hepple on 12th (TRD/JD). Three that flew W at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th were thought to be *albifrons*. Greenland *flavirostris* race birds included two at Woodhorn Flashes on 6th (AP) and again between 26th-29th (SRB/TB/AP *et al.*). A single un-raced individual was at Cresswell on 4th-5th (JBU/IJ *et al.*).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

At Seaton Sluice, three flew S on 1st and two S on 19th (SSWT). Peak gatherings were 88 at QEII CP Lake on 12th (CDH), 37 at Caistron on 6th (JD), 23-32 at the Aln Estuary (MKi), East Chevington (DM/STH), Howdon (CB), Killingworth Lake (LJM), Lilliestead (Berwick)(MHu), and 11-17 at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Gainslaw and the Tweed Estuary. Four to seven were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Holy Island and West Ord.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

One flew S at Newbiggin on 23rd (AP). In the north of the county, 48 at Gainslaw on 26th included 19 juveniles (MHu) and 42 at Loanend (Horncliffe) on 12th included 12 juveniles (MHu). A 'herd' centred around Cresswell Pond peaked at 40 on 4th (AT) but fell to 19 by 10th (TB), and 23 at nearby Widdrington on 13th may have involved some of the above birds (SRB). At Druridge-East Chevington, a peak of 21 was noted on 17th (IDR/JF). One to seven were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Budle Bay, Caistron, Craggside, Shortridge Hall and West Ord on various dates.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

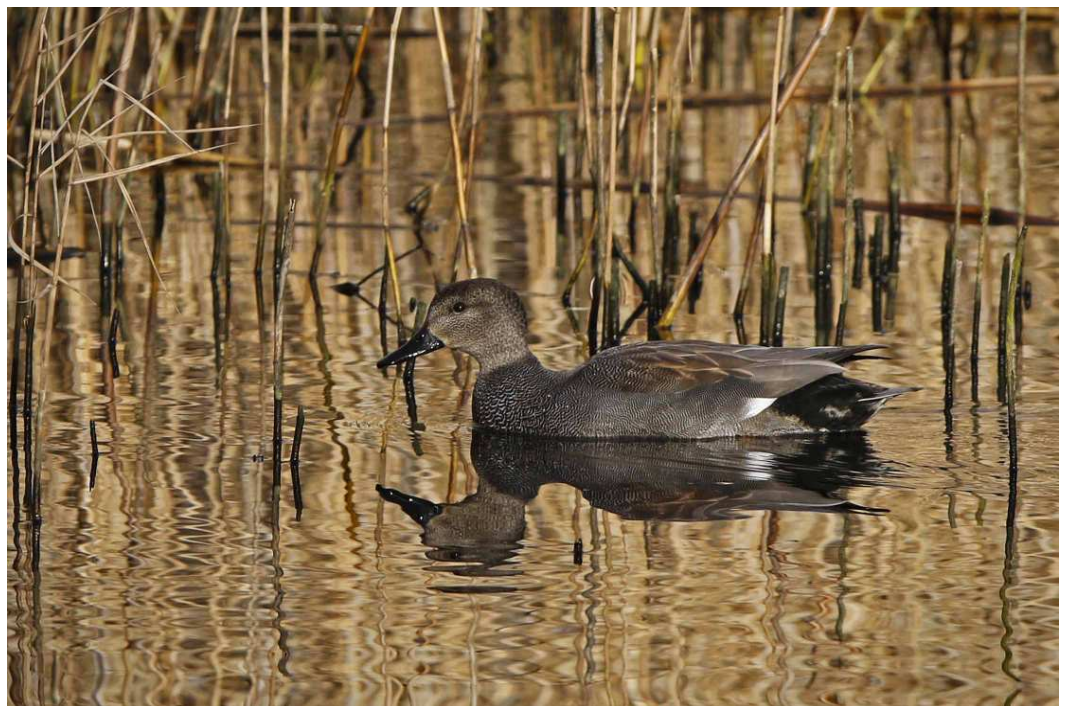
Two flew N and five S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A minimum of 400 were at Fenham Flats on 18th (DF) and a peak of 60 was noted in Budle Bay on 3rd (TRD/JD). Elsewhere, 28 were at Howdon on 18th (CB), 25 at the Blyth Estuary on 14th (LJM), 11-14 at Cresswell Pond (MSH), Druridge Pool (IDR) and Widdrington Moor Lake (IF). Four to six were also at the Aln Estuary and Boulmer, and one to two at the Coquet and Tweed Estuaries, East Chevington, and Hauxley Reserve. Inland, two were at Branton and Haughton Strother GPs on 1st (TRD/JD/SW), and two at Caistron on 26th (BS).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

One flew N at Druridge Bay on 1st (SW). The largest concentrations involved 35 at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR/NHSN), 17 at East Chevington on 1st (IRD), 14 at Linton Ponds on 4th (PRM), ten at Holy Island 'rocket fields' on 11th (IK), and six to nine at Budle Bay (CDB) and Monks House Pool (IDR/RW). Four were also at Arcot Pond, and one at Killingworth Lake.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Swallow Pond proved attractive for this species, holding 62 on 1st and 84 on 29th (GPK). Peak counts elsewhere were 25 at Caistron on 6th (JD), 15-18 at the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Killingworth Lake (LJM), Linton Ponds (PRM), Newbiggin (Summerhouse Lane Pond; AT), QEII CP Lake (CDH) and St Mary's Wetland (CB/IJ). Groups of ten to 13 were also at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, and Hauxley Reserve, while five to eight were at Big Waters, East Chevington, Howdon and Linton Ponds, and one to four at Castle Island, Druridge Bay (offshore), Druridge Pools, Embleton Quarry Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island Lough and Widdrington Moor Lake. More unusual were three at Wallington Hall on 7th (AB/LB).



A Gadwall by Mike Carr on 25th January at Gosforth Park NR

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

524 were at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo), 463 at Druridge Pools on 17th (IDR/JF), 350 at the Coquet Estuary on 16th (IDR/RW/ECO), 337 at Budle Bay on 4th (DF), 300+ at Cresswell Pond on 19th (MSH), and Bothal and Linton Ponds, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Low Cocklaw. Groups of 52-72 were at Gosforth subsidence pond and Yarrow Slake, and 20-28 at Big Waters, Boulmer and Haughton Strother GP.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Largest counts involved 139 at the Tweed Estuary on 13th (TBr/MMcN), 102 at Hallington Reservoir on 13th (MR), 74 at Druridge Pools on 17th (IDR/JF), 74 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 16th (DM), 50-69 at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Marden Quarry and the River Tweed between A1-Scottish Border, and 20-45 at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Bothal and Cocklawburn Ponds, Budle Bay, Chirton Dene Park, the Coquet Estuary, Eland Hall (Ponteland), Holy Island, St Mary's Wetland, Wansbeck Riverside Park, Wark and West Ord. Groups of 12-19 were also at Backworth, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Boulmer, Ford, Hauxley Reserve, Monks House Pool and QEII CP Lake. Copulation was noted at St Mary's Wetland on 1st (CDH).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Two were at Druridge Pools on 1st and one there on 12th and 17th (IDR/JF). The only other reports were of a single drake at East Chevington on various dates between 2nd-25th (CDB/SW *et al.*).

Teal *Anas crecca*

Peak counts were 307 at Budle Bay on 4th (DF), 231 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (MR), 210 at Druridge Pools on 12th (IDR), 210 at Holy Island 'rocket fields' on 25th (IK), 200 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (IF), and 160-167 at Arcot Pond, the Coquet Estuary, Grindon Lough and Howdon, and 67-87 at Backworth Pond, the Blyth Estuary, Linton Ponds and St Mary's Island. Groups of 25-44 were also at Bothal and Middle Ord Ponds, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve, Gosforth Park NR, Low Cocklaw, Monks House Pool, Plenmeller Common and the Tweed Estuary, and 12 at Haughton Strother GP.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 23 at Killingworth Lake on 4th (CDB), 17 at Swallow Pond on 23rd (GPK), 16 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (DM/PJA), three at Bothal Pond (TD) and Marden Quarry (KWY). One to two were also at Branton GP, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and West Allotment Pond.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Larger concentrations were 94 at Killingworth Lake on 4th (CDB), 70 at East Chevington on 25th (SW), 54 at Swallow Pond on 23rd (GPK), 53 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (MSH), 46 at QEII CP Lake (CDH), and 21-24 at Arcot Pond, Castron and Haughton Strother GP. Ten to 17 were also at Big Waters, Bothal, Linton and West Allotment Ponds, Grindon Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park. One to eight were also at Cocklawburn and Embleton Quarry Ponds, Druridge Pools, Howdon Wetland, Monks House Pool, 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington), Paddy Freeman's Pond (Jesmond Dene) and St Mary's Wetland.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Three were at Widdrington Moor Lake from 1st-25th (IK/ASH/NFO *et al.*). Singles were at East Chevington on 1st and 4th (IRD/IK/ASH), Hallington Reservoir on 13th (MR), and Swallow Pond all month (GPK *et al.*).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 48 N and nine S (SSWT), and one flew N off Druridge Links. Peak counts were 175 at Holy Island harbour on 11th (IK), 115 at Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC), 62 at the Blyth Estuary on 14th (LJM), and 44-48 at North Shields Fish Quay (STH) and Seahouses harbour (IDR/RW). Counts of 11-20 came from Boulmer, Cocklawburn, off Monks House, Ross Back Sands and Sharper's Head (Berwick), while two to five were at Alnmouth and Spittal Bay.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two were off Druridge Links on 1st and 12th (IDR/JF), and two were off Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 20 N and three S (SSWT). About 800 were at Cocklawburn on 3rd (TRD/JD) and 570 at nearby Cheswick Sands on 12th (CH) may have involved some of the same birds, as about 400 at Goswick on 29th (TRD/JD) may have. Also in the north of the county, 507 were counted off Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC), 100 at Stag Rocks on 4th (RB/MB), and ten to 50 at Boulmer, Holy Island and Seahouses harbour. Further south, 100+ were off Druridge Pools on 4th (PRM), 40 at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT), and four at Birling Carrs.

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

The regular drake was at Cheswick Sands on 2nd and 12th (CH/TF/JFa), and at nearby Goswick on 10th (AT).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Six flew N at Seaton Sluice on 10th (SSWT). Most were concentrated off Ross Back Sands, where numbers peaked at Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC), five were at Cocklawburn (MHu), four were at Goswick on 29th (TRD/JD), and singles at Cresswell Pond between 1st-5th (IJ/SW *et al.*), Monks House Pool on 4th (IRD) and Stag Rocks on 19th (KWY).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

74 were at the Tweed Estuary on 13th (TBr/MMcN), 58 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 25th (MHu) 50 at East Chevington on several dates (IJ/SW *et al.*), 36 at Yarrow Slake (the Tweed Estuary) on 25th (MHu), 25-26 at QEII CP Lake (CDH) and Widdrington Moor Lake (TF), and ten to 19 at Big Waters, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Holy Island, Killingworth Lake and West Ord. Counts of six to nine came from Boulmer, Branton GP, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Howick Haven and Ross Back Sands, and three were at Warkworth. One to two were also reported from Bothal, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Cragside, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, Haughton Strother GP and Hauxley Reserve.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Single 'redheads' were at Caistron on 26th (BS) and Widdrington Moor Lake from 1st-29th (TB/CH/AT *et al.*).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Singles flew N at Ross Back Sands on 10th (MJC) and Seaton Sluice on 13th (SSWT). Ten were at Branton GP on 1st (TRD/JD), six at Warkworth on 22nd (MJC), three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), Killingworth Lake (LJM) and Wark (PRM), and one to two at Arcot, Holywell and West Allotment Ponds, Berwick Hill, Big Waters, Greenlee Lough, Hulne Park, Jesmond Dene, Marden Quarry, Morpeth, New Water Haugh, Newcastle Exhibition Park, the Tweed Estuary, Wallington Hall, and West Ord.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

An impressive 77 were noted off Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC) while ten to 33 were noted there on several further dates (TF/JFa/TRD/JD *et al.*). Other peak counts were 25 at Cheswick Sands (TF/JFa), nine in Druridge Bay on 25th (SW), eight at Birling Carrs on 8th (CSa), seven at Druridge Pools on 4th (PRM), and six at the Blyth Estuary (TB/LJM) and Stag Rocks (TB). Three to four were also at Budle Bay and Cresswell Pond, and one to two at Castle Island, Cocklawburn, the Wansbeck Estuary and Widdrington Moor Lake. Display was noted off Ross Back Sands on 14th (MH/AA).



Red-Breasted Mergansers enjoying the sun
by Eddie Douglas on 15th January at Druridge Pools

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Five Blackcock were at Pithouse Fell on 12th (AA), however only a lone female was seen at the normally regular site of Knockshield Burn (Allendale) on 5th (TRD/JD). A single female was also at Staward on 25th (AJH).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

There were some decent counts with a minimum of 50 present at Plenmeller Common on 24th (PRM), at least 40 at Simonside on 10th (AJH), 30 at Allenheads on 3rd (TF/JFa), 27 at Hedgehope on 27th (IRD) and ten at HaltonLea Fell on 8th (SW). One to five were at Alnwick Moor, Knockshield Burn, Langley, Long Crag (Thrunton Woods), Longframlington Common, Quarry House Moor, Ship Crag (Rothbury) and Windy Gyle.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

11 were at Widdrington Lane on 19th (MSH), six were at North Lyham and one to four were at Alnwick Moor, Seaton Delaval Hall and South Hazlerigg.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The only counts into double figures were 14 at both Cresswell Pond on 1st (DM) and St Mary's on 24th (ASJ). Eight were in the dunes at East Chevington on 3rd (MH) and eight were also at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell) on 12th (MNC). One to five were at Big Waters NWT, Bilton, Druridge Pools & Links, Hemscott Hill, Holywell, North Seaton, Old Hartley, Old Helsay, Ord Moor (Berwick) and Seaton Delaval Hall.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

An impressive 25 were at Old Helsay on 16th (IDR/RW/Eco) whereas numbers fell at Druridge Pools and Links with the peak being 15 mid-month (IDR/JF). On 12th eight were feeding together under a niger seed feeder at Rothbury (TRD/JD) and a single was in Budle Bay.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

A below-average total for January of 63 (35N, 28S) headed past Seaton Sluice during the month in 35 hours of watching (SSWT). 71 were off Buston Links Beach on 20th (CSa) and 32 were feeding together with a Scoter flock offshore at Cocklawburn on 3rd (TRD/JD). 24 were on the sea at Druridge Bay on 12th (IDR), 22 at Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC), 20 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 8th (CSa) and 15 at Warkworth Gut on 19th (RB/MB). One to nine were at Berwick Little Beach, Boulmer, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), East Chevington Burn mouth, Goswick, Low Hauxley, Spittal Bay (Berwick), Stag Rocks

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Two was the peak at Ross Back Sands on 30th (CH) after just a single reported there on several earlier dates. One was at Cheswick Sands on 2nd and one flew S past Seaton Sluice on 26th.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Only single individuals were at several localities. A first-winter bird was at Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC) and it or another was there on 24th (RB/MB). One was at East Chevington North Pool up to at least 18th (IK/ASH/TB/TRD/JD/DM) but annoyingly spent most of its time underwater! Other sightings came from East Chevington, Goswick and Stag Rocks.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Reports of birds back on cliff ledges and in pairs included 36 at both Howick on 21st (JAR) and Coves Bay (Holy Island) on 26th (IK), six at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) and five at Old Hartley. One to two were at several other locations.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

12 were along the R. Tweed from Loanend to Horncliffe on 14th (CH), a WeBS visit to Caistron on 6th produced a total count of 11 birds (JD) and 11 was also the peak at Castle Island on 19th (DM). East Chevington peaked at eight birds on 5th (IJ) and six were on the sea together at Boulmer on 4th (BS). One to five were at 25 other localities: Arcot Pond (on 5th, an early date for this site), Big Waters NWT, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Calot Shad (R. Tweed), the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Embleton Quarry, Gosforth Park NR, Hallington Reservoir, Haughton Castle, Haughton Strothers, Hauxley NWT, Howick, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park, Linton Lane NWT, QE11 CP Lake, Sleekburn, the Tweed Estuary, Wansbeck Riverside Park, Wark (North Tyne), West Ord (Berwick) and Widdrington Moor Lake, .

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Singles were at East Chevington on 2nd (CDB) and Ross Back Sands on 10th (JD).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

A total of six were seen at Seaton Sluice during the month – two heading N, one S and three on the sea (SSWT). Five were on the sea at Buston Links Beach on 18th (CSa) and singles were at Big Waters NWT, Druridge Bay, Warkworth and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The congregation at Ross Back Sands peaked at 42 on 1st (MJC), gradually reducing thereafter with 19 present on 24th (NFO) and only three seen there on 30th (TRD/JD). Elsewhere two were in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 9th and singles were at Seaton Sluice, Spittal-Cocklawburn during a WeBS count and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

A WeBS visit to the Tweed Estuary produced a count of 23 birds there on 13th (TBr/MMcN). The popular site of Druridge Pools peaked at 20 on 25th (TF/IDR/NHSN), nine were roosting on staithe at North Blyth on 28th (STH) and eight were at Old Hartley on 3rd (MSH). A count of seven birds came from Hauxley NWT on 12th (HRS) and six were at both Linton Ponds and Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary). One to four were seen at Alnmouth Beach, Arcot Pond, Blezard Business Park (Seaton Burn), the Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Budle Bay, the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Exhibition Park, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Greenlee Lough, Leazes Park, Monks House Pool, Seahouses Harbour, Seaton Delaval Hall, Wark, West Hartford and Widdrington Moor Lake.

A watchful Heron by Mike Carr
18th January - Gosforth Park NR



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

At Holy Island, four on the causeway at Beal Road Ends on 21st constituted this month's highest count (MH/AA). Two at Branton GP on 1st was the observer's first sighting of more than one bird there (TRD/JD) and one of the two birds at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 25th sported Darvik colour-rings – orange with a black letter (maybe "H") on the right tibia and possibly orange one on the left tibia (MJc/DJC). Singles were at the Aln Estuary, Backworth Pond, the Blyth Estuary, Caistron, the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island/Fenham mud flats, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Longhirst Flash and, a regular individual since November 2019, at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

The Watch Tower at Seaton Sluice reported only 20 heading S following fishing boats and five N all month (SSWT). A single adult was watched heading N past Castle Point (Holy Island) during a strong SW gale on 10th (IK).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

55 were in Holy Island Harbour on 11th, some already with breeding crests (IK) and 54 were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 7th (MHu). 34 were at Ross Back Sands on 1st and 22 were counted during a WeBS visit to the Spittal-Cocklawburn area on 16th. 12 were sitting on an island by Berwick Little Beach on 3rd and one to nine were seen at Blyth South Harbour, Druridge Pools, Saltpan Rocks, Seaton Sluice, Spittal Bay (Berwick), and Stag Rocks. A ring-bearing corpse (Blue Darvic RDW) found on Little Beach (Berwick) was originally ringed as a pullus on 08/07/18 at Inchkeith, an island in the Forth Estuary (BWG).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

87 were at Howdon on 30th (CB), numbers varied at Amble Harbour and North Shields Fish Quay throughout the month with the peaks being 57 and 55 respectively on 22nd (IF) and 33 were present during a WeBS count from Spittal-Cocklawburn on 15th (TRr/MMcN). 28 came in to roost at a site on the R. Tyne on 5th and 17 in the Blyth Estuary on 14th was a very low count for this site (LJM) following 31 in the South Harbour area there on 4th (DM). The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost peaked at 16 this month, 12 were at QE11 CP and one to nine were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools & Links, Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT and Ross Back Sands. A strikingly marked *sinensis* race bird was at North Shields Fish Quay on 29th (AJ) and another was at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth).



A Cormorant at NSFQ eyes up Alan Jack on 31st January

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A female was seen at Bedlington on six dates during the month (JR). Single birds were also noted at 23 other sites.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A female was harassing Teal *Anas crecca* at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th (MR), and unsexed birds were at Wooler Common on 19th (MJC) and at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Four birds involving 3 juvenile males were over East Chevington North Pool and a female was over the South Pool at the same time on 7th (MH/AA) and two birds involving females/imm females and imm males were seen there on several dates. (IRD/TD/JD *et al.*). Single birds were noted at East Chevington on several dates (MSH/TB *et al.*). A single bird was seen coming in off the sea at St Mary's Island on 2nd before flying S (JBU). Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (STH), and Widdrington Moor Lake on 4th (AT), 8th (CH) and on 19th (MSH). A female was at Druridge Farm on 8th (CH) and a bird flew N at Druridge Pools on 12th (IDR).



A Marsh Harrier at East Chevington on 8th January by Tim Dean

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Up to three birds involving an adult male and two ringtails were at a site on 19th, 24th and 28th (ADMc/MH/AA). A ringtail was seen at a confidential site on 10th (*per* MHM) and a male was noted at another site on 20th and 24th (MR).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Three birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 31st (IFo), two birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 5th and at Crooked Oak Lane on 10th (IFo) and single birds were at Kiln Pit Hill on 8th and at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were in the Budle Bay - Waren Mill area on four dates (CGK) and 1-2 birds were noted at West Hartford throughout the month (TB). Eight birds were over moor and woodland at Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 10th (MH). At St Cuthbert's Cave four birds were present on 6th (JAR) and three birds were at Humshaugh (SW) and Fourstones (AJH) on 4th, Prestwick Carr on 5th (MJC) and 27th (TD) and at Brunton Airfield (MJC) & West Hartford (TB) on 28th. One - two birds were observed at over 40 sites during the month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Four calling birds were at Gosforth Park NR on 25th (MJC/DJC), three birds were calling at the Lough (Holy Island) on 11th (MJC). Two birds were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (ADMc/STH), East Chevington North Pool on 5th (TB) and 8th (TD/JRD), Silverlink Park LNR (West Allotment) on 19th (AC) and at St Mary's Wetland on 30th (MSH) and 31st (AC). Single birds were either seen or heard at Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, and Gosforth Subsidence Pond and at Hauxley NWT.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

19 birds were counted at Castle Island during WeBS count on 19th (DM/PJA), 15 birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 16th (DM) and 14 were there on 3rd (GB). 13 birds were at QEII CP on 21st (LJM), 12 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 16th (DM), 11 were at Chirton Dene Park (North Shields) on 12th (MSH) and 10 were at St Mary's Wetland on 19th (IJ). One to eight birds were noted at 13 sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest counts this month were 72 at QEII CP Lake (CDH), 62 at Linton Ponds (CDH), 57 at Killingworth Lake (LJM) and 35 at Big Waters NWT (GB) all on 12th. Other high counts were 31 at Bothal Pond on 25th (TD), 28 at Linton Lane on 4th (PRM). One to fifteen birds were at 13 sites including a pair nest building at Middle Ord pond (Berwick) on 25th (MHu).

Crane *Grus grus*

An adult was at Middleton on several dates from 15th till the 30th (ATTRD/MN/STH).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The largest counts came from the coast, with 150+ at roost on St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ), 72 at West Ord, Berwick on 5th (MHu) and 64 from the WeBS count at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 17th (TBr/MMcN). There were 60 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 23rd (MN), 40 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 21st (IDR/RW), and 32 on Tweedmouth Town green on 7th (MHu). Numbers ranged from 30 to 12 at Boulmer, the Blyth/Sleekburn confluence, Hauxley, Lindisfarne, East Chevington and other coastal locations, but a count of eight birds at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo) was an unprecedented number for mid-winter. At other inland sites, a pair were back on breeding territory at Hexham on 24th (PRM), and there were singles at Haughton Strother on 1st (SW) and Gosforth on 26th (MJC/DJC).



An Oystercatcher at Holy Island
by Mike Carr on 12th January

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Early sightings of one bird were reported from the river Blyth and Sleekburn confluence on 21st–24th (MN, TB, AA).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Budle Bay had the largest flock, with an estimated 700 on 25th (DF). Druridge Pools had a maximum of 493 on 17th (IDR/JF) and St Mary's Island and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) both had 310 on 24th and 26th respectively (ASJ, TF). Cresswell Pond's highest count was ca 300 on 1st (DMcK/STH). Hallington Reservoir had 250 on 13th (MR), as did Brunton Airfield on 28th (MJC). There were 158 at East Hartford on 26th (LJM) and 154 at Haughton Strother on 1st (SW). Shotleyfield, near Airy Holm Reservoir, had 150 on 29th (IFo) and the same number were in a field SW of Bedlington, opposite the golf course, on 30th (TB). There were 146 at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PRM) and at Cocklawburn on 20th (MHu). Smaller flocks were noted at the Tweed Estuary, Spittal-Cocklawburn, Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Howdon, Wooler Common, Plenmeller Common, Fenrother-Longhorsley and Grindon Lough.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The highest counts were 542 at Boulmer on 12th (BS) and 500 at Budle Bay on 4th (IRD), with ca 450 at Smeafield on 18th (NFO). There were 300 at Druridge in fields N of Bell's Farm on 2nd (TRD/JD), at Cocklawburn on 3rd (TRD/JD), and at Shotleyfield, near Airy Holm Reservoir, on 29th (IFo). Alnwick Moor had 250 on 19th (TRD/JD), Cullercoats had 150 on 1st (KWY), and Cresswell Pond had a maximum count of 140 on 2nd (STH). Smaller counts came from Prestwick Carr, Brunton Airfield and Plenmeller Common, and a single bird was noted at Gosforth on 26th (MJC)

Golden Plover over Alnwick Moor
Tim Dean
19th January

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

The largest flocks were at Boulmer, with 33 on 24th (MJC/DC) and at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) with 28 on 8th (CSa). There were 8 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 23rd (MN) and two birds at Berwick Little Beach on 3rd (TRD/JD) and at the Blyth Estuary on 25th (LJM).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The Blyth Estuary had the highest number, with 66 on 14th (LJM). Budle Bay had 60 on 25th (CJK) and there were 56 on the beach at East Chevington on 5th (RB/MB). Druridge Bay had 49 on 25th, Cheswick Sands had 48 on 12th (CH), and there were 40 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 23rd (MN). There were 31 at Boulmer on 25th (BS), 26 at St Mary's Island on 1st (MSH), and 21 at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 6th (STH). Smaller numbers were reported from Cocklawburn, Lynemouth, Brier Dene Farm at Whitley Bay, and Berwick Little Beach.



A Ringed Plover at St. Mary's
Alan Jack on 27th January

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The highest counts came from Budle Bay, with 520 on 4th (CGK) and Cresswell Pond, with at least 400 on 10th (EC/JSB). Boulmer had 182 on 24th (MJC/DJC) and Druridge Pools had 180 on 10th (IDR). There were 150 at Goswick on 29th (TRD/JD), 113 at the Coquet Estuary on 27th (CSa), and 92 at Cocklawburn on 30th (MHu). There was a maximum of 83N on 17th at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Smaller flocks were at Castlehills, Berwick, the Blyth and Tweed estuaries, Hauxley NWT, Old Hartley, East Chevington and Howdon. Counts of below 20 birds came from Heddon-on-the Wall, the Aln Estuary, Howick, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh and Seahouses Harbour.



A Curlew at Boulmer by Mike Carr on 3rd January

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A flock of 1,000 noted on the Holy Island causeway at Beal Road Ends on 21st (MH/AA) was by far the largest this month. Boulmer had 43 on 19th (AJR) and there were 18 at Dodd's Well Cave, near Berwick, on 18th (BWG). Numbers below ten were at Hauxley NWT, Beacon Point, Newbiggin, Little Beach, Berwick, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh, Cocklawburn, the Blyth Estuary and Druridge Pools.



Bar-tailed Godwits by John Richards
Boulmer on 19th January

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

There were two at Druridge Pools on 4th and 5th (PRM, JBu/JCm/DMcG/MMU, CDB) and at Rocket Field (Holy Island) on 25th (IK). Single birds were at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (IF, STH) and at Howdon on 11th (CB).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The highest count were made on 21st at Seahouses Harbour where 55 were present (IDR/RW) and a little way further north, 45 were counted at Stag Rocks (IDR/RW) on the same date. The monthly high at Boulmer was 44 on 3rd (MJC) reducing gradually to four by 17th (TRD/JD/IRD/RW/Eco). In the south-east 41 were present at St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ) and 40 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 23rd (MN). At Budle Bay, 31 were seen on 21st (IDR/RW/DF), 15 were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 12th (IF) and 14 were counted at Cocklawburn beach on 13th (CBD). One-ten were present at Alnmouth, Berwick Little Beach, Blyth Harbour, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley NWT and Holy Island causeway.



A Turnstone at NSFQ by Alan Jack

The flock present at Budle Bay this winter was reported to be as low as 14 on 5th (CBD) but increased to gradually to 320 by 25th (CGK/DF/KWY). Approximately 60 were at St Mary's Island on 22nd (AJR), 33 were at the River Coquet Estuary and 31 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 8th (both CSa). Elsewhere 20 were at Amble Braid, nine at Seaton Sluice, four at Newbiggin and one at Boulmer during the month.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were reported from Cresswell pond and nearby Druridge Pools up to 25th with a maximum of four at each site (many observers).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The flock present at Boulmer was variously reported to be as low as two on 16th and a high of a minimum of 135 on 19th (AJR/IF/MJC *et al.*). At Budle Bay, the highest count was 115 on 22nd (DF) and at Newbiggin numbers persisted throughout the month with the maximum being 70 on 2nd and 23rd (STH/MN *et al.*). The group wintering in Druridge Bay was regularly reported with a low of six on 1st and a high of 60 on 12th (IDR/JF/ *et al.*) with two at Druridge Pools on 4th (PRM). The highest count received from St Mary's Island was 53 on 24th (ASJ), 29 were seen at Lynemouth on 3rd (BS) with 23 reported from Alnmouth on 10th (JAR). One-five were at Berwick Little Beach, Cresswell Pond and Cocklawburn.



A Sanderling at North Shields by Alan Jack on 27th January.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The highest count from Boulmer during the month was 172 on 25th (BS). Numbers remained high from last month at the River Blyth Estuary with the maximum noted being 200 on 1st (DM) with 166 on 14th (LJM). The River Coquet Estuary attracted 115 on 20th (CSa) and 100 were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 23rd (MN). Birds were reported from Cresswell Pond up to 19th with the highest count received being 85 on 2nd (CBD). Other counts in double figures were 45 at St Mary's Island on 14th (MSH) and 22 at Hauxley NWT on 12th (HRS), with ten at Stag Rocks on 10th and ten also at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 12th. One-two were at Berwick Little Beach and Druridge pools.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Numbers at Stag Rocks recovered from last month's low numbers with birds reported on many dates during the month with a low of 24 on 5th (CBD) and a high of 138 on 13th (CBD). Smaller numbers were observed elsewhere with 24 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 8th (CSa), 22 at Boulmer on 25th (BS), 18 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 23rd (MN), 14 (flying S) at Druridge Bay on 12th (IDR), 14 at Howick on 21st (JAR) and 13 at Cocklawburn on 13th (CBD). One-nine were reported from Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) Seahouses Harbour, Seaton Sluice and St Mary's Island.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

At Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), four were flushed from roadside woodland on 31st (EC/JSB). A maximum of three were at Big Waters on 18th (GB), two were seen at Howick on 1st (JAR) and also at Brunton airfield on 28th (MJC). Single birds were seen at Berwick Castle, Blagdon, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell village, Houxty (Wark), Morpeth, Newburn Business park, the River Wansbeck (Morpeth-Bothal), Tyelaw Burn (Shilbottle), Wark and Widdrington Moor Lake

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

As in January, two were reported from a damp field at High Hauxley on 4th (DM). Two were also seen at St Mary's wetland on 29th (AC) and at Newburn Business Park on 30th (AT). Singles were seen at Arcot Pond on 5th & 12th (STH/LJM) and at Gosforth Subsidence pond on 5th (MJC/DJC).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

There were high counts of 50 at Newburn Business Park on 30th (AT) and 30 at St Mary's wetland on 25th (AC/MSH). The maximum reported from Arcot Pond was 13 on 12th (LJM), 12 were in a damp field at High Hauxley on 4th (DM) and 11 were seen at East Chevington on 1st (IRD). Reports of one-seven came from Big Waters, Brenkley pond, Cresswell pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR), Gosforth subsidence pond, Howdon, Linton ponds and Monks House pool.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

One was present at Arcot pond from 13th-15th (LJM) and one was at Longhirst flash on 16th (AT).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

St Mary's wetland attracted the highest numbers with 212 counted on 24th (ASJ). Other three-figure counts were 185 at Budle Bay on 13th (DF), 150 at Howdon on 18th (CB), 141 at Hauxley on 12th (HRS), 105 at Cresswell pond on 12th (EC/JSB) and 103 at the River Tweed Estuary on (TBr/MMcN). Also on the River Tweed, counts of 86-94 were received from the Union Bridge and Yarrow Slake. At St Mary's Island, a minimum of 70 were present on 14th (MSH), a few miles further north, 60 were at Newbiggin on 23rd (MN), 37 were at Cresswell pond on 2nd (CBD), 30 were at the River Coquet Estuary on 16th (IDR/RW/Eco) with 25 at Boulmer on 3rd (MJC) with 23 at the Wansbeck Estuary on 19th (DM). One-18 were reported from Alnmouth, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Druridge pools, Monks House pool, River Aln Estuary, Seahouses Harbour, Seaton Point (Boulmer) and Stag Rocks.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Four passed Seaton Sluice during the period – a 'very poor month' - (SSWT) - and a single was seen at Boulmer (BS).



Ringed Black-headed Gulls.

A Polish-ringed bird by Tim Dean 10th January at Stag Rocks and right, a Scottish-ringed bird at Killingworth Lake on 4th January by Chris Barlow

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

In the evening roost at Budle Bay on 4th a total of 700 were present (CGK) with smaller gatherings of 200-350 counted at Bedlington (TB), the Blyth Estuary, Killingworth Lake (LJM) and Woodhorn Flashes (B.Stevens), 100-200 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake and the Tweed Estuary with up to 100 at 13 other widespread localities, the largest of these counts coming from Amble, Boulmer, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park and Monks House Pool. Two marked birds were one at Killingworth Lake, ringed White 2ADL from the Scottish Borders (CDB) and another from Poland, Yellow T86W, seen at Stag Rocks (TRD/JD).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Very well reported as usual with a new winter record count of 49 on the tideline at Newbiggin on 28th (STH); 13 other counts of two-25 came from Newbiggin and nearby localities on various dates throughout. Further afield one to three were recorded at Boulmer, the Coquet Estuary, Gosforth, Killingworth Lake, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's and Swallow Pond.



A Mediterranean Gull At Gosforth Race Course on 4th January by Mike Carr

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The Budle Bay roost held 1,500 on 4th (CGK) and 500-600 on 24th-25th (DF); significant counts elsewhere were 230-300 at Beal (DF) and in a roost at West Ord (Berwick) (MHu). Groups of 25-60 were also recorded at Big Waters, Beacon Hill (Cramlington), Boulmer, Castle Island, Druridge Pools/CP Lake, Grindon Lough, High Letham (Berwick), the Tweed Estuary and Widdrington Moor Lake with up to 18 at seven other sites.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Counts of 40-45 came from a WeBS survey in the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu) and in the Budle Bay roost on 4th (CGK) with, on other dates, 10-25 at Alnmouth, Castle Island, East Chevington and on the Tweed at Calot Shad and New Water Haugh (MHu). Six were at Boulmer, four at Seahouses and one to two at eight other localities.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

An adult was at the North Shields Fish Quay on 30th (MN) and a first-winter bird was in Budle Bay on 21st (DF).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

Two immature birds were at the Fish Quay on 6th-7th (MN/AC) and one remained there, reported almost daily, until 28th (MN *et al.*), joined by a second immature bird on 25th (MN).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeBS survey in the Tweed Estuary recorded 752 on 13th (TBr/MMcN) and large counts elsewhere were 350 in the Budle Bay roost on 4th (CGK), 100 and 220 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd and 29th respectively (MR) and 105 at Linton Ponds on 12th (CDH). Smaller groups of 20-80 were noted at Boulmer, Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools/Links, High Letham (Berwick), the QE II CP Lake and Widdrington Moor Lake with up to 15 at another 11 mainly coastal sites. Four adults of the Northern race *argentatus* were identified at the Linton Lane ponds on 4th (PRM).

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

A near-adult bird was well identified as it rested on the rocks at St Mary's on 2nd before flying N (AC) and it was also seen by a number of other lucky observers.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Following last month's total lack of records, three were found at Grindon Lough on 18th (MRS) and, from 11th onwards single, mainly adult birds, were seen at Ashington, Budle Bay, Grindon Lough, Hallington Reservoir, St Peter's Basin (Newcastle), Swallow Pond, the Tweed Estuary and Warkworth weir.

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

Few records came from Seaton Sluice with a maximum of 13 moving N on 9th (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Five were at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 14th (MHu) and four at Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC), otherwise just one to two were at Boulmer, Druridge Pools/Links, Low Hauxley and Stag Rocks,

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Ross Back Sands 14 were recorded on 1st and five were at Low Hauxley on 3rd (MJC). Elsewhere, one to two were seen at Amble Harbour, Druridge Pools/Links, Holy Island, Little Beach (Berwick), St Mary's Island, Stag Rocks and Whitley Bay,

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Six were at Ross Back Sands on 1st (MJC) with one to two seen there on subsequent dates and singles were also seen at Stag Rocks on 10th-12th.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

A high count of 82 was at Leazes Park on 16th (DM), 60 at Stakeford road bridge on 29th (RS), 40 at Asda (Gosforth) on 4th, 38 at Haymarket (Newcastle) on 16th, 25 at Seahouses Harbour on 21st, 18 at Old Helsay on 16th and 8 at North Moor Farm (Cramlington) on 1st.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Large gatherings of 64 seen at Crooked Oak Lane on 27th with 18 there on 23rd (IFo), 60 at Howdon on 30th (CB), 32 at Widdrington Lane on 19th (MSH), 24 at Haughton Castle on 4th (SW), 17 at Big Waters NWT on 12th (GB) with one to eight at 11 other widespread localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Around 1,000 were at Crookham on 18th (JR), 500 at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 21st (RMH), more than 400 out of roost at Arcot Pond on 12th (LJM), 260 at New Water Haugh (R.Tweed) on 25th (MHu), 250 at Howdon on 8th (CB) and 200 at Crooked Oak Lane on 27th (IFo). 150 were at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 21st and Crooked Oak Lane on 23rd with two to 65 at seven other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A peak of 28 was at Berwick Hill on 12th with 15 there on 4th (AHB/DM/GB/LAR), a maximum of 14 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS) with eight at Embleton Quarry on 8th and six at Fawdon on 26th, four at Blyth on 29th and three at Eachwick on 1st.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Just one multiple count of two at Heiferlaw Tower on 29th (TWi) with singles at Keepwick Fell (Wall) and Greenfield on 2nd, New Moor (Ashington) and Prestwick on 3rd, New Moor and Gunnerton on 4th, Denwick on 9th, Fulbeck Morpeth, Big Waters NWT on 12th, Hebron on 18th, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 27th, Brunton Airfield on 28th and Whittington Fell (Corbridge) on 30th. Four road casualties were at Longfamlington Common on 12th, A1 at Swarland on 25th, A1 Felton Airfield on 28th and Waterside House on 29th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Three heard at 07.10h at Darras Hall on 12th (CFH), two at Meadowdale (Bedlington) on 2nd (ASH), Belford on 4th (JBu *et al.*), Longhorsley on 9th (AB/LB), and Colt Crag Reservoir on 22nd (MR). Singles were at Rothbury and Low Cocklaw (Berwick) regularly and at 12 other locations.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

All reports were of singles with 12 reports in the Druridge area during the month, a male singing at Shiremoor on eight evenings (CGK), one at Berwick Hill on 5th and at Startup on 19th (AHB).

Asio sp

One came 'in off' at Warkworth beach on 4th (Csa).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One perched by the roadside at Humshaugh on 24th (PRM) was the only report.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

A gathering was at Holywell until 16th with the high count eight on 3rd (MNC), seven on 2nd and 3rd, five on 1st, four on 4th, two on 8th and down to one on 16th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Just single birds were reported regularly at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Jesmond Dene, Northumberland Park (North Shields), St Mary's Island and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay). On the coast at Howick Haven on 3rd, Seaton Sluice on 9th, Seahouses Harbour on 21st and Tynemouth on 29th. Inland at Big Waters NWT and Prestwick Carr on 1st, Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd, Caistron on 6th, Gosforth Park NR and Dyke Neuk (Meldon) on 21st.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Well reported as drumming commenced with three at Gosforth Park NR on 4th and Warkworth on 22nd (MJC/DJC), two at Gosforth Park NR on 8th (AJN) and at Preston Park (North Shields) on 26th and a pair at Harwood Village on 30th (STH). Singles were at Humshaugh regularly and at 13 other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

One was at Riding Hills (Corbridge) on 12th (RMH).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were at Prestwick Carr on 4th and 5th (PRM/MJC), Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 19th (MH) and at Windmill Lane (Cramlington) on 19th (LJM), two birds were seen at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 10th (TBr), Horton Grange (Blagdon) on 21st TB) and at Staward on 25th (AJH). Single birds were reported from over 30 locations throughout the month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A bird was seen at St Mary's Island on 2nd and 3rd ((JBu/AC/MSH). Other birds were at Boulmer on 3rd (MJC), Goswick (AT) and Seaton Sluice (SSWT) on 10th. On 13th birds were near Colwell (MR) and at Elwick (CDB). Single birds were noted at Allendale (TWi) and Stobswood (TF) on 25th, Colt Crag reservoir on 27th (MR) and at The Snook (Holy Island) on 29th (TRD/JD).



A Merlin near Elwick
Chris Barlow on 12th January

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two adults, a male and a female, were at Holy Island on 11th (MJC) and two adults were sharing a Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* as prey at Budle Bay on 25th (CGK). Single birds were seen at Blagdon, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Debdon (Rothbury), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holy Island, Humshaugh, Old Felton, Prestwick Carr, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower and Widdrington Moor Lake

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

On 21st 11 flew SE over Exhibition Park at dawn (BS), five was the maximum at Gosforth on 11th and at Walker Park on 18th (MJC/DJC/AT) with three W at Jesmond on 17th. Two were at Preston Park (North Shields) on four dates from 17th with likely nest prospecting on 25th and 26th (Dlo). Two were also at Gosforth and Jesmond Dene.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Four were at Gosforth Park NR on 4th and at Lincoln Hill on 5th (MJC/DJC/SW) with two at Linton on 1st, Howick and Prestwick Carr on 5th and Ellington on 25th. Singles were at 12 other widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

The second highest-ever county gathering of 125 for evening roost was at Balliol Business Park (Longbenton) on 21st with 117 there on 6th (ADM). 21 were at Big Waters NWT on 4th (CDB) with one to six at eight other locations.

Jackdaw/Rook

A fairly evenly mixed flock of around 1,000 was at Hallington Reservoir on 13th (MR).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost gathering was a minimum of 2,000 (possibly 3,000) at Gosforth on 11th (MJC/DJC), 800 pre-roost at Budle Bay on 4th (CGK), 400 at Redhouse Farm (Whitley Bay) on 26th and 350 in the air at Ellington Colliery on the same date (MN/IDR/JF). 300 were at Gosforth on 4th, 200 at Warkworth on 22nd, 150 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 15th and at Kenton Bank Foot (Newcastle) on 21st with three to 80 at seven other locations.



Jackdaws at Boulmer

Chris Barlow on 5th January

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

A minimum 500 were at a pre-roost on 11th at Gosforth with 200 there on 4th (MJC/DJC), 300 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 15th (TBr), 160 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 27th (MR) and 150 at Whittingham on 20th and Warkworth on 22nd (JR/MLC). There were 11 nests at Cramlington Hall on 27th and four birds at Druridge Pools on 1st.

Rook / Carrion Crow

At least 500 were at a pre-roost on 11th at Gosforth.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

On 26th 276 were at Gosforth subsidence pond, 100 pre-roost at Gosforth on 11th with 79 there on 4th (MJC/DJC), 80 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 29th (MR), 25 gathering pre-roost on Newcastle Town Moor on 24th, 24 at Kitty Brewtser (Blyth) on 1st, 23 at Bewick Moor on 17th and 20 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd. One to 16 were at 12 other locations.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One was at Low Steads (Longhoughton) on 1st (BS), at Linton on 4th and Glororum (near Bamburgh) on 5th (AT/BS), in a sheep field at Boulmer on 8th (TRD/JD) and at Longhoughton Steel on 13th and 21st (CDB/CH).



The Longhoughton Hooded Crow by Mike Carr on 3rd January

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two pairs and a single bird were at Alnwick Moor on 22nd (TB), four flew south at Boulmer on 1st (BS) and at Colt Crag Reservoir on 27th (MR). Three were at St Cuthbert's Cave on 6th with two at Hartside on 1st, Holy Island on 11th, Aydon Forest (Alnwick) and Wooler Common on 19th, Cloudy Crag / Alnwick Moor on 24th and Hepburn on 29th. Singles were at five other upland locations.



A splendid Raven at Holy Island by Mike Carr on 12th January

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Blyth was still the preferred location with 63 at Bowes Court on 7th and 60 in trees at Cowpen Road on 1st (LJM/DM/STH), 40 in the town centre car park on 8th and 38 on High Street / Thornton Street junction on 4th (TB/PRM). 19 were at Gosforth (Newcastle) on 3rd with 7 to 12 at Blyth on three further dates from 4th to 7th and three at Wylam on 28th.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

An impressive 44 were counted with a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 22nd (TBr), more than ten at Rothley Lakes on 8th (AJR), five trapped and ringed at Eschott on 24th (MSH) with four at Hartburn on 10th (MNC) and one to two at four other locations.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Three was the peak at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 10th with two there on 5th (NFO) and at Hartburn on 1st, Rothley Lakes on 8th, the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 25th and Scotch Gill (Morpeth) on 26th. Singles were at Linden Hall, Rothbury and Scotch Gill regularly, at Fontburn on 18th and Woodhorn on 19th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Prestwick Carr was the core location with six on 5th (MJC), three on 4th and 12th and one to two on five other dates. Three were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 19th (JBu) and two on feeders at Big Waters NWT on 26th (GB) with singles at these and Gosforth, Linden Hall, Longhoughton Quarry, Ryal and Slaley.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

31 were counted with a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 22nd (TBr), 15 trapped and ringed at Eschott on 24th (MSH), six at Ellington Pond on 12th (IDR/JF), four at Eachwick on 1st and three in Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 5th. One to two were at four other locations.



A Blue Tit at Prestwick Carr feeder by Jack Bucknall on 18th January

Great Tit *Parus major*

On 22nd 31 were counted within a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr), 16 trapped and ringed at Eschott on 24th (MSH), 13 at Colt Crag Reservoir on the same date and 12 at Ellington Pond on 12th (MR/IDR/JF). More than nine were on feeders at Big Waters on 26th, six in Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 26th, five at Castle Island on 19th, four at Druridge Pools on 25th with one there on 1st.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

One was at the Lough (Holy Island) on 11th (MJC).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

On 1st 15 were in a nearby field to Big Waters NWT (GB), eight at Old Helsay on 16th (IDR/RW/EC), seven at North Seaton (Ashington) on 3rd and Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 22nd (JR/TBr). Four were at Quarry House Moor on 18th and three at Longhoughton Steel on 13th with singles at a further five widespread localities.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest 'tribe' was 16 at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 12th (KWY). There were 12 at Humshaugh on 26th and 12 was the peak monthly count from gardens at Gosforth Garden Village and Longdyke (Shilbottle). At Blyth, 11 were noted at Ha'penny Woods on 28th and garden feeders attracted ten at Hexham and Rothbury; ten were also noted at Longhorsley. There were counts of seven to nine from two Cramlington sites and also Colt Crag Reservoir, Gosforth, Harwood village, Howick, Ponteland and Weldon Bridge, while four to six were noted at Crooked Oak (Derwent Gorge), Exhibition Park, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Hulne Park, Jesmond Dene, Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh), North Shields Fish Quay, Tyne Green (Hexham) and Tynemouth. Two were at the RGS (Jesmond) on 24th.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Wintering birds were reported from North Shields on 5th and East Ord (Berwick) on 27th.

A **Siberian race** *P.c.tristis* bird found at the Coquet Estuary on 30th December 2019 was reported from Amble Braid on 1st (CSa).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Four or five wintering birds were found this month (2-3 males and 2 females). Females were in gardens at Morpeth (The Kylins) on 1st and Corbridge on 15th, while males were noted in a Gosforth garden on 25th and Gosforth Garden Village and Redhouse Farm (Whitley Bay) on 26th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Five were at Prestwick Carr and four at Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh) on 5th (MJC/SW). Two were reported from Big Waters and singles at Corbridge, Druridge Pools, Holy Island (11th), Howdon, Linton Lane and QEII CP.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

One to three were reported from Druridge Pools, Embleton Quarry, Jesmond Dene, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Sharperton and Warkworth.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Six were reported from Kirkley Hall (different areas) on 21st (IK). Singles were at four sites in Jesmond Dene on 26th and four were at Scotch Gill Woods on 13th. There were counts of three from Gosforth Park NR, Ha'penny Woods (Blyth) and Morpeth-Bothal and one to two at Corbridge, Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Derwent Reservoir, Dipton Woods, Harbottle, Hartburn, Hulne Park, Humshaugh, Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh), North Shields (Northumberland Park and Preston Park), Rothbury, Sharperton and Wansbeck Riverside Park.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Counts of three came from Gosforth Park NR and Warkworth on 25th and 22nd respectively. Two were reported from Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Humshaugh, Prestwick Carr and Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and singles at Belford, Big Waters, Brierdene, Blyth (Ha'penny Woods and Ridley Park), Hulne Park, Humford Mill (Bedlington), Jesmond Dene, Newbiggin, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Old Bewick, Rothbury, Sevenoaks Park (Cramlington) and Wark (North Tyne).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A murmuration of some 4,000 was noted at Belford on the evening of 21st (DF) and there was a large flock of 1,500 on sheep walk at Colt Crag Reservoir on 24th. The only other flocks reported were 100 at Big Waters NWT on 18th, up to 60 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and 50 at Druridge Pools during the month, 27 at Fawdon on 30th and eight at Seahouses Harbour on 21st.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The highest counts were 26 at Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh) and 23 at Prestwick Carr on 5th (SW/MJC). Fallen apples attracted 14 to a Wylam garden on 28th, 12 were noted at East Chevington on 1st, eight were in a Corbridge garden on 15th and seven was a good count for a Longbenton garden on 5th. Elsewhere, six were noted at Ellington Pond and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), four at Druridge Pools, Eachwick and Embleton Quarry and three at Fawdon, with singles at Berwick Little Beach (with white head), Budle Bay, Jesmond Dene and Warkworth. Another was in song at West Jesmond allotments on 24th.



A spotted Blackbird on Berwick Little Beach on 3rd January by Tim Dean



A Blackbird by Jack Bucknall at Gosforth NR on 18th January

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Good numbers remained in the county during the month with counts of 250 from Middleton Mill Farm on 24th (TRD), 160 at Horncliffe Mains on 2nd and 100-116 at Carrycoats Hall and Grindon Lough on 10th and 3rd respectively. A flock of 90 was at Knockshield Burn (Allendale) on 5th and 50-60 were at Big Waters, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Ulgham, St Cuthbert's Cave (Holburn) and Widdrington. Further counts of 30-40 came from Derwent Reservoir, Eshott, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Houxty (North Tyne), Linden Hall and Wooler Common and 15-21 were at Bedlington, Brunton Airfield, Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) and Prestwick Carr. One to 12 were reported from a further ten localities.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

As with the previous species numbers remained high, thanks largely to the bumper autumn berry crop. The largest gatherings were 450 at Gosforth / Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 25th-26th (MJC/DJC), 300 at Swallow Pond on 29th and 200 at Kirkley Hall on 21st. Flocks of 100-150 were reported from Big Waters, Corbridge, Crooked Oak (Derwent Gorge), Howick and Widdrington, while 50-70 were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington (Northumberlandia and Windmill Lane), Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) and Prestwick Carr. Other noteworthy counts of 30-42 came from Bedlington, Bothal Pond, Brunton Airfield, Carrycoats Hall, Eshott, Exhibition Park, Haughton Castle, Horncliffe Mains, Houxty (North Tyne), Humshaugh, North Shields (Percy Park) and Weetslade, while 20-22 were at Letah Wood (Hexham), Linton Lane and Morpeth and one to 16 at a further 17 localities.



A Fieldfare at Gosforth NR by Mike Carr on 18th January

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Many birds were in song by 6th of the month. Four were heard at Gosforth Subsidence Pond and Jesmond Dene on 26th and 12th respectively, three birds were noted at Big Waters and East Chevington and two at Brandling Park (Jesmond), Howden and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and singles at Chapel House, Cramlington, Exhibition Park, Fawdon, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Killingworth, Longhorsley, Marden Quarry, West Hartford and West Sleekburn.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Seven were singing at Wooler Common on 19th (MJC) and seven birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFO). Five at Colt Crag Reservoir on 27th included three singing birds, while three were at East Chevington and Whitebridge Park (Gosforth). Reports of one to two came from Blanchland, Boulmer, Corbridge, Cramlington, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Exhibition Park, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Gosforth, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Newcastle Civic Centre, Ord Moor (Berwick), Percy Park (North Shields) and Prestwick Carr.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

One to two were reported from Druridge Pools, Eachwick, Embleton Quarry, Fawdon and Jesmond Dene.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The wintering female type in the Boulmer-Longhoughton Steel area was noted regularly to at least 27th.



The popular Boulmer Black Redstart
3rd January by Mike Carr

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts during the month were seven at Lynemouth on 3rd (BS), three at Chevington Burn mouth, Druridge Pools and Holy Island and two at Alnmouth, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Darden Lough, East Chevington, Hemscott Hill, Howick, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) and St Mary's. Singles were reported from Alnmouth GC, Amble, Cresswell, Longhirst Flash, Middleton, Monks House Pool, Quarry House Moor and Woodhorn Flash.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Seven or possibly eight were counted during a 4 km walk in Upper Coquetdale on 19th (MKi). Two seen on 1st at Lilburn and at Hartburn and at Berwick Hill bridge on 21st. Singles were noted at 14 other localities.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Around 60 spent the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS). 44 were noted at a roost in Cramlington on 26th (DM). 41 were counted at Corbridge on 15th (MR). One to 16 were at six other sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

40 plus were present at Prestwick Carr on 4th (PRM). 25 at Ellington on 12th and 20 at Brier Dene farm (Whitley Bay) on 24th (IDR/JF/MNC). 20 frequented a Morpeth garden during the month (TD). 17 to 20 at Holystone (N. Tyneside) and at Holywell all month (ASJ). One to 15 were observed at a further 16 sites.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Three were seen at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month, with four there on one date (RS). Three were seen at Druridge Pools on 1st and two noted at Fawdon and Marden during the month. Singles were noted at two sites.



A Dunnock at Prestwick Carr by Jack Bucknall on 18th January

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*

The wintering individual at Prestwick Carr was seen throughout the month by many observers, largely remaining faithful to its favoured feeding areas around Mayfair House.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were seen at Gosforth and Jesmond Dene during the month and singles noted at 15 other locations.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Prestwick Carr held feeding birds all month, with six to 18 counted over several days. Ten were at Ross Links on 14th. One to five were seen at five other sites this month.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A notable winter feeding flock of around 70 birds was at Prestwick Carr on 3rd, up to 16 were seen here on several other dates (ASJ per SP *et al.*). Another good winter count was 45 at Budle Bay on 25th (CGK). Six to ten were seen at East Chevington, Dinnington, St. Mary's Wetland and Warkworth G.C. during the month and one to two at three other locations, including a single bird, unusual in winter, at The Heugh (Holy Island).

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

The wintering individual at Boulmer was seen on five dates. One was also noted at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 23rd (MN).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

15 birds were counted at Warkworth Gut on 2nd and the same number were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 12th, with lower counts made there all month (CSA/IF). The Boulmer birds were thought to be mostly of Scandinavian race. One to seven were seen at eight further sites.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit ssp

Anthus petrosus littoralis

Five were at Budle Bay on 4th and 25th of the month and two were at Holy Island on 11th (CGK/MJC).



A Rock Pipit at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 27th January

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Several large flocks were found this month, with 100 at St. Cuthbert's Cave and at Crooked Oak on 6th and 10th and 95 at Low Cocklaw on 22nd (JAR/IFo/TBr). Elsewhere, 20 to 35 were found at seven other locations and two to 13 at six sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Northumberlandia (Cramlington) held four on 19th, 16 birds on 21st and one on 23rd (LJM/STH). One to two were seen at four further sites.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

12 were seen at Gosforth Park on 4th, 10 were at Newbiggin on 16th and eight at Howick on 21st and on garden feeders at Rothbury during the month. Well reported elsewhere, there were with one to seven noted at a further 37 localities during the month.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

An impressive roost of around 200 birds was found on 17th and 19th at Freeman Road (Newcastle) (ASJ/LM). 12 were at Gosforth Garden Village and Wooler Common during the month. One to ten were noted at ten other sites.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

60 were noted at Druridge Pools/Links on 1st (IDR/JF) and 40 at nearby Chevington burn mouth on 19th (DM/PJA). Lesser numbers were noted at both sites on several other dates. 29 were seen at Warkworth Gut on 2nd (CSa). 26 were observed at Buston links on 19th (AJR). Six were at Beal point on 12th and a single bird at Fenham flats on 5th.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

200 birds were noted at a roost at Big Waters on the evening of 1st (GB). Other large flocks this month included 150 to 180 at Howick on 25th and 28th, 120 at Boulmer on 19th and around 100 at Belford that day (JAR/BS/DF). 75 were at Holy island on 11th (MJC). Three to 60 were observed this month at 12 other sites.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

Few were reported, with 10 at Grindon on 29th the largest group (PRM). Four were at Prestwick Carr on 1st and at Rothbury garden feeders during the month. One to two were seen at three more sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Eight were seen at Harwood Village on 21st (AT). Seven, including three juveniles, were noted at Colt Crag on 17th (MR). Six were at Dipton Wood on 23rd and a single was at Cragside on 12th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

80 were seen in stubble at St. Cuthbert's Cave on 6th (JAR). 66 were counted at Howdon on 8th (CB). Groups of 30 were noted at Waren Mill, Carrycoats Hall, Valley Park and North Shields during the month and one to ten were seen at eight other sites.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

A large flock of about 200 was at Edlingham Woods on 5th (NFO). A flock at Corbridge Common peaked at around 130 on 26th (DLe). Groups of 50 were at Dipton Wood on 23rd and Blanchland the following day (AJ/IK/TW/RB/MB). One to 26 were noted at a further ten locations.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

There were some encouraging counts this month. A large flock, present all month, feeding in stubble, roosting in a hedgerow, at Holystone (N. Tyneside) was estimated at 130 birds, but photographs revealed 162 (ASJ/BL). 45 were noted in the Low Cocklaw area on 22nd (TBr). Around 40 were found at Stobswood open cast site on 3rd (ADMc). 40 were also seen at Holburn Grange on 13th and 29th (NFO/Twi). 34 fed in stubble on 26th at Prospect Hill (Corbridge) (DLe). 22 were seen at St. Cuthbert's Cave on 6th (JAR). At least 20 were observed at Warkworth G. C. on 4th (JBU *et al.*). One to 19 were noted at another 15 sites.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The sole report this month was of a single bird at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 28th (AP).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Stubble fields held 26 at Dinnington and 25 at Holystone (N. Tyneside) this month (GB/ASJ). Eight were at Druridge Pools/Links on 1st and 25th and at Boulmer on 22nd (IDR/JF/AB/LB). Six were at Swallow Pond on 20th (ASJ). Five were roosting in reeds at St. Mary's on 22nd (ASJ). One to three were seen at six sites during the month.

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

One was again present at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd with Canada Geese flock (IFo).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Two were still at QE II CP, Ashington from at least 2nd - 19th (DM/ CDB / CDH)

Hybrids

No sightings

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

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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

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RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. 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

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

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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



A Mediterranean Gull passes Longhoughton

Mike Carr

24th January



Red-breasted Mergansers

Druridge Pools

Eddie Douglas

15th January

Northumberland Winter Bird race 2020

An amazing nine teams, 34 individuals, braved the cold on Saturday 4th January 2020 for the annual Northumberland Winter Bird Race. This must be a record number of teams, which proved to be a 'trying day' made difficult by the nagging and persistent wind which forced the small birds to keep their heads down a little more than normal.

As usual there was a great diversity of strategies. As well as the popular and traditional areas, a number of teams had been out reconnoitring and coming up with a number of favourite sites for possibly tricky species. However, it is interesting that seven out of the nine teams went out of their way to see the Eastern Yellow Wagtail that had been performing so well at Prestwick Carr. It's worth noting that all species only count as one but a 'good' bird is hard to resist, in fact it was a lifer for several Racers.

Several new species were added to the Winter Bird Race list this year; Ring-necked Parakeet and Raven are two in particular which possibly reflects the increase in populations. We always get a sprinkling of rare and scarce birds and of course the afore-mentioned Eastern Yellow Wagtail falls into the category as does Black Redstart and Water Pipit. No white-winged gulls this year, although one or two had been seen prior to the turn of the year. Some common species, such as Greenfinch, proved difficult to find which again probably indicates the decline in the population.

The winning Team, again, Jack Bucknall, James Common, Dan McGibbon and Michael Murphy with a magnificent 115. After winning for at least three years in a row, this team of bright-eyed birders got to keep the trophy. Six teams broke the 100 threshold, which must be a record, and the combined species list for all nine teams stands at a very impressive 135 species.

Thank you all for taking part and If you'd like to join in for 2021 Winter bird race then put the 9th January in your diary and watch out for the notices.

Tom Cadwallender

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 2

MONTHLY SUMMARY February 2020

4th April 2020



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CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	Two at Cocklawburn on 26th with one there following day. Scarce this winter.
Garganey	Rare winter sighting with one at Druridge Pools on 19th and 20th.
Gadwall	High count of 97 at Swallow Pond on 11th.
American Wigeon	Returning drake back at Grindon Lough from 26th.
Green-winged Teal	Drake at Druridge Pools on 19th and 20th.
Pochard	High count of 39 at Killingworth Lake on 16th and 17th.
Black Scoter	Returning drake still being seen sporadically at Cheswick/Goswick.
Long-tailed Duck	Peak count of 74 at Ross Back Sands on 6th.
Smew	Redhead at Widdrington Moor lake again all month, also at Caistron up to 22nd.
Marsh Harrier	Up to 4 individuals wintering at East Chevington / Druridge.
Rough-legged Buzzard	Rare wintering bird with one at Spartylea on 26th.
Avocet	One at Blyth Estuary wintering, seen all month.
Ruff	Up to four at Druridge Pools all month.
Jack Snipe	Singles at St Mary's, Branton GP and Monks' House Pool.
Little Gull	Unusual wintering bird with one at Seaton Sluice following plough.
Iceland Gull	Singles at five sites including long stayer at North Shields.
Little Auk	Single feeding with Eider off Berwick pier.
Black Guillemot	One off Holy Island on 15th.
Short-eared Owl	Still up to six being seen at Holywell.
Hooded Crow	Wintering individuals still at Low Steads and Glorum.
Waxwing	Several sites with sightings but influx declining.
Bearded Tit	Male at Holy Island lough on 5th.
Shorelark	One at Cottonshope Head, Otterburn Ranges on 8th. Highly unusual inland.
Cetti's Warbler	Several sites with singing birds.
Lesser Whitethroat	One at Woodhorn on 29th. Unusual in winter possibly of eastern origin.
Black Redstart	One again at Boulmer all month north of village.
Eastern Yellow Wagtail	Still at Prestwick Carr until 26th.
Water Pipit	Singles at Boulmer all month and at Monks' House Pool and Branton GP.
Brambling	100 at Letah Wood, Hexham on 20th. Scarce elsewhere.
Greenfinch	Large flock of 160 at Jesmond Dene on 5th, 30 at Berwick, one to eight elsewhere.

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 likely to be in September. Keep well.

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson

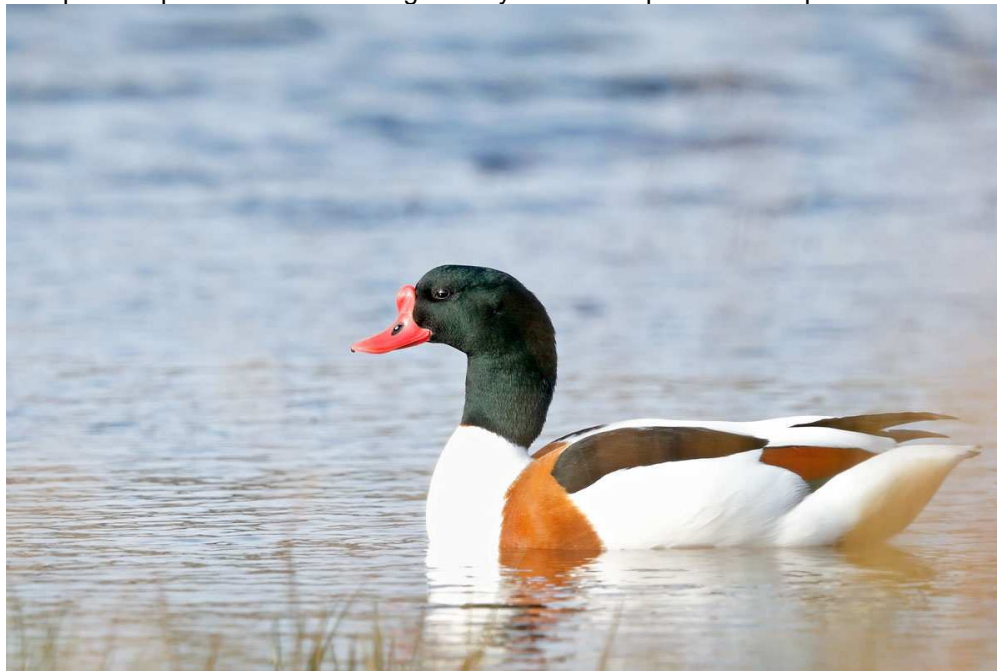
seaswan@btinternet.com

A Shelduck

Howdon

Colin Bradshaw

8th February



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

Peak counts of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved 2,000 at Budle Bay on 25th (NNBC) and 1,100 there on 8th (DF/CGK/RA), 200 at Holy Island on 6th (TRD/JD), and 40 at Monks' House Pool on 13th (RA). In addition, 279 flew S at Ross Back Sands on 6th and 45 S there on 22nd (MJC). The sole reports of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds concerned ten at Holy Island on 6th (TRD/JD) and one S at Hauxley on 19th (MH). A single bird at Cresswell Pond on 18th may have been of the *bernicla* race.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

21 flew SW at Arcot Pond on 18th (LJM). Grindon Lough held a peak of 553 on 7th (PRM), 354 were at Druridge Pools on 4th (CH), 217 at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo), 132-178 at Big Waters (GB) and Hipsburn (MKi), and 78 at West Ord (MHu). Counts of 19-27 came from Linton Ponds and QEII CP, and one to six were at Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Hauxley NR, Howdon and Monks' House Pool.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

643 flew N at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC). Good numbers in the Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh area all month included peaks of 2,500+ on 4th and 2,050 on 25th (DF), and 1,000-2,000 on several further dates (CGK/MSH *et al.*). The only other reports were of ten at Beal on 23rd (RA), and one to two at Cresswell and Linton Ponds.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Moderate numbers included peaks of 200+ at Newham Bog on 27th (MSH), 180 at Cocklawburn on 12th (MHu), 133 at Waren Mill on 16th (BS), 107 at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 56-85 at Castron and Druridge Pools, and 27-34 at Hipsburn, Low Newton and Plenmeller Common. One to six were also at Alnmouth, Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Linton Ponds, QEII CP and Woodhorn Flashes.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Light movement concerned 250 NW at Holy Island on 6th (TRD/JD), 150 N at Alnmouth on 6th (PCF), 150 N at East Sleekburn on 14th (JR), 50+ N at Blyth on 1st (BS) and 20 S at Wark on 3rd (PRM). A minimum of 3,300 were at Budle Bay on 8th (DF), and 1,250-3,000 up to 27th. Other peak concentrations elsewhere involved 3,000 at Crow Hall Farm, Holywell on 25th (MNC), 2,500 at Holy Island causeway on 17th (IDR), 2,000 at Beadnell on 16th (BS), 2,000 near Bell's Farm, Cresswell on 19th (TRD), 2,000 at Embleton on 13th (RA), 1,700 at Waren Mill (RA) and 1,000 at Widdrington Moor Lake (TF). Gatherings of 550-950 were noted at Beal, the 'Beehive Flash' (Earsdon), Cresswell Pond, Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Goswick, Newham Bog, Old Hartley and St Mary's, and 400-470 at Druridge Pools and Monkseaton. One to 30 were at Castron, Cheswick, Hipsburn and Longhirst Flash. Birds were heard calling overhead at Humshaugh at 19.00h on 2nd (SW).

An individual with an all-pink bill and narrow white 'blaze' at the bill base was noted at Monkseaton on 19th (MSH).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

Two were at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu) and one there, with 104 Greylag Geese, on 27th (TBr).

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved 11 at the Aln Estuary-Hipsburn on 11th (MKi) and 12 on 22nd (NNBC), while four were in the Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR) and three there on 15th (TF/IDR).

Birds of the Greenland *flavirostris* race included a party of nine at Prestwick Carr between 5th-8th (PCF *et al.*). Possibly the same group of nine birds were noted at East Holywell on the early morning of 8th (but were gone by late morning; MNC), at Backworth on 18th (AC), and Big Waters (six adults and three first-winters) on 23rd (GB/AJJ). Others of this race involved two at Linton Ponds on 2nd and 19th (TF/CDH), and singles (first-winters) at Gosforth Park NR on 29th (MJC) and Waren Mill on 22nd (DF).



A Whitefront by Mike Carr at Gosforth Park on 29th February

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The largest concentrations were 78 at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH), 34 at Howdon on 21st (CB), 31 at Killingworth Lake on 4th (LJM), and 12-22 at Big Waters, Caistron, Lilliestead, Shortridge Hall (near Warkworth) and the Tweed Estuary. Four to eight were also at Birling Carrs, Linton Ponds, Loanend (Horncliffe) and Prestwick Carr. A decapitated adult bird was found at East Chevington on 2nd (MH). An example of local movement involved a pair of ringed adult birds at Newcastle Exhibition Park, the male of which was ringed (red 'ZKC') as a cygnet at Swallow Pond in August 2013 and the female ringed (red 'ZKD') as a cygnet at Burradon Pond in 2011 (LMI).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A group of 14 flew N at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 6th (AP). A count of 72 at Loanend, Horncliffe on 13th consisted of 56 adults and 16 immatures (MHu), and the peak count in the Druridge Pools area was 44 on 9th (IDR) with 36 remaining on 26th (IDR). Other peak counts were 34 at Low Newton on 27th (NNBC), ten to 14 at Beal-Fenham Flats, Birling Carrs, Cresswell and East Chevington, and eight at Widdrington Moor Lake. Two to three were also at Budle Bay, Embleton Quarry and Greenlee Lough.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Budle Bay held a peak of 277 on 22nd (CGK), 50+ at the Blyth Estuary on 29th (MN), 33 at Hemscott Hill on 19th (TB), 28 at Howdon on 6th (CB), 11-12 at the Coquet Estuary (CSa), Druridge Pools (MSH) and Elswick (KWY), eight at Castle Island, four to five at Boulmer and Cresswell Pond, and one to two at Alnmouth, Holywell Pond and Widdrington Moor Lake. Three were back at Branton GP on 5th (TRD/JD) and two at Grindon Lough on 7th and 26th (PRM).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

An early 'find' concerned a female at Druridge Pools on 20th (ADM*c et al.*).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Good numbers at Druridge Pools included peaks of 45 on 15th (IDR) and 42 (33 drakes) on 4th (MH/AA) and 42 on 9th (IDR). Numbers elsewhere were much lower, with peaks of 15 at Holy Island on 15th (RA), ten at Monks' House Pool on 29th (RA), eight at Bamburgh (Castle Wood) and six at Embleton Quarry Pond. One to two were also at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Big Waters and Prestwick Carr.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

A scarce sea-watching report involved one N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT). Swallow Pond proved the favoured locality, holding a peak of 97 on 11th (GPK *et al.*). Elsewhere, 28 were at Hauxley Reserve on 13th (HRS), 20 at Caistron on 8th (JD), and ten at Bothal Pond (TD) and Druridge Pools (IDR). Five to nine were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, East Chevington, Howdon and Killingworth Lake. Three to four were also at Branton GP, Budle Bay, Cresswell and Embleton Quarry Ponds, Hauxley Reserve and Woodhorn Flashes, and one to two at Holy Island Lough and Monks' House Pool.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT). Large concentrations included 812 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (CH), 540 at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo), 450 at Budle Bay on 8th (CGK), 332-348 at Druridge Pools (IDR) and Grindon Lough (PRM), 240 at Warkworth Gut (CSa), and 100-175 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Hauxley Reserve, New Water Haugh, Widdrington Moor Lake and Yarrow Slake. Counts of 57-97 also came from Branton GP, Caistron and Gosforth, and ten to 12 were at Colt Crag Reservoir and Middle Ord Pond. More unusual were four at the Blyth Estuary on 4th (LJM).

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A drake was at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

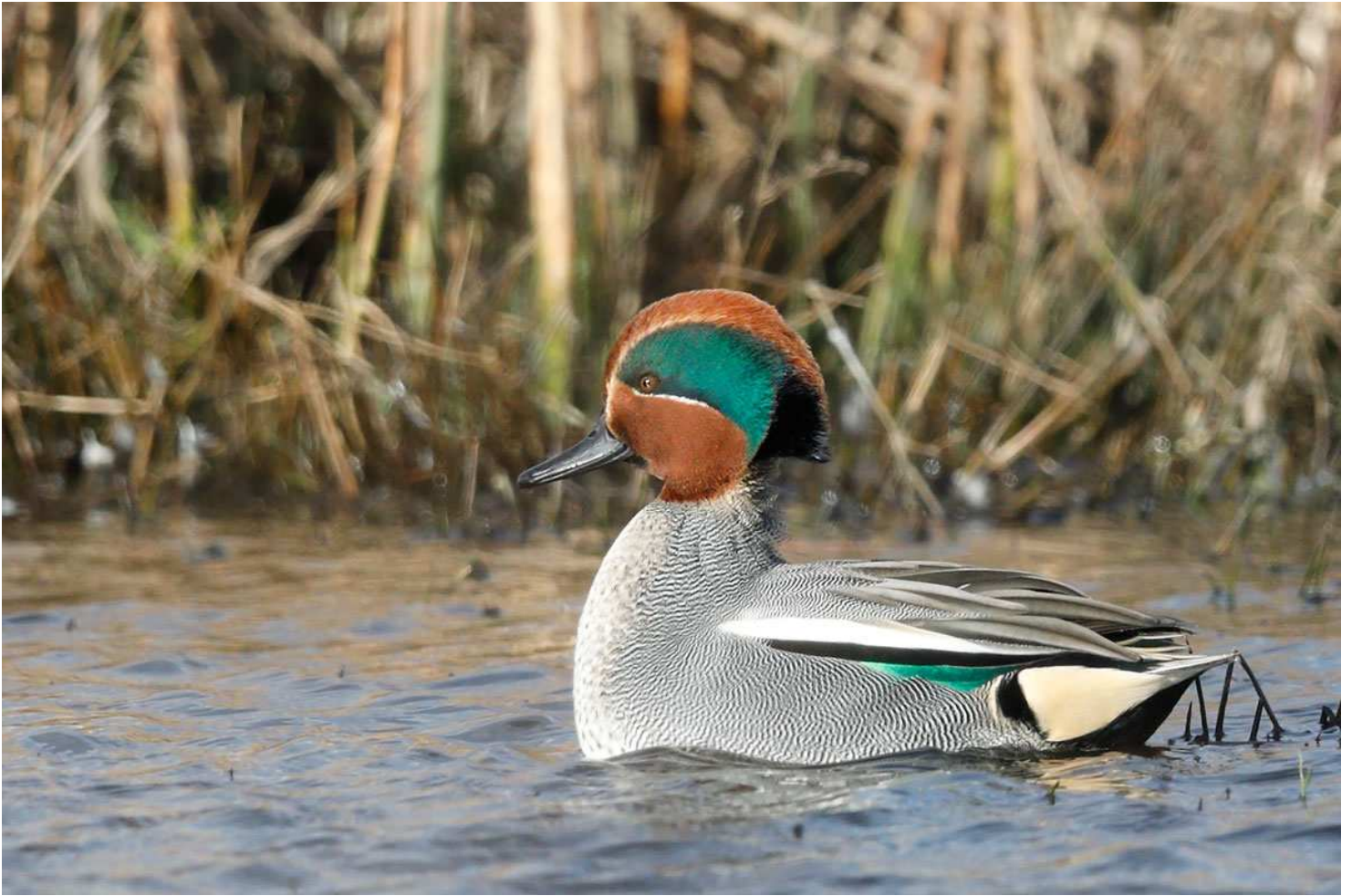
120 were at the Tweed Estuary on 17th (MMcN), 82 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 14th (GB), 62 at Boulmer on 12th (JAR), 60 at Druridge Pools on 15th (IDR), 22-39 at Acomb, Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Middle Ord Pond, and ten to 16 at Arcot Pond, Hauxley Reserve, QEII CP Lake and West Ord.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A count of 106 at Fenham Flats on 11th was considered incomplete (MH/AA) and 80 were noted there 23rd (RA). Two were at Holy Island pm 15th (RA), and one to two were at Druridge Pools between 6th-29th (MSH/IDR *et al.*).

Teal *Anas crecca*

The largest gatherings were 207 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), 200 at Howdon on 14th (CB), 162 at Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR), 100-140 at the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Holy Island (MJC), Warkworth Gut (CSa) and Widdrington Moor Lake (JC/IF), and 64-69 at Arcot Pond, New Water Haugh and St Mary's Wetland. Counts of 20-42 came from Backworth, Branton GP, Castle Island, Cresswell and Middle Ord Ponds, Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Mitford, Prestwick Carr, Tyne Green and Yarrow Slake, and ten to 16 were at Bamburgh, Bothal and Linton Ponds, and Monks' House Pool.



Above: a handsome drake Teal at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 22nd February
and below: a Teal flying at Big Waters by Chris Barlow on 17th February



Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was found at Druridge Pools on 19th (CDB/TRD).



A Green-winged Teal (top left) on 19th February
Druridge Pools by Tim Dean

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake was again popular, holding a peak of 39 on 16th-17th (GB/MSH). Other peak counts elsewhere were 16 at Bothal Pond on 23rd (TD), 12 at Linton Ponds on 15th (TF), 11 at Swallow Pond on 23rd (GPK), and five to seven at Grindon Lough and Holywell Pond. Two to three were at Branton GP and East Chevington

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

As with Pochard, Killingworth Lake was the most productive site, producing a peak of 72 on 4th (LJM), followed by 54 at Swallow Pond on 9th (GPK), 41-42 at Branton GP (MJC), Castron (BS) and QEII CP Lake (CDH), and 21-30 at Castron, 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington), Tynemouth Boating Lake and Widdrington Moor Lake. Counts of ten to 18 came from Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Craggside, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park, and one to eight were at Big Waters, Castle Island, Embleton Quarry, Holywell, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Hauxley Reserve, Howdon, Monks' House Pool, Paddy Freeman's Lake, St Mary's Wetland, West Ord, and Woodhorn Flashes.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Three were reported from Widdrington Moor Lake on 7th (TRD/JD) and regularly between 18th-27th (MKi/MN *et al.*). The only other report was of one at Swallow Pond all month (ASJ/GPK *et al.*).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

80 were at Holy Island Harbour on 8th (IK), 65 at Blyth Harbour on 6th (MN), 50-56 at Holy Island North Shore and off Ross Back Sands (MJC), 46 at Boulmer and St Mary's, and 20-26 at Amble Harbour, Meadow Haven, North Shields Fish Quay and Spittal Bay. Four were also at Warkworth weir.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A total of 11 (groups of six and five) were off Cheswick-Goswick on 25th (CH), and two to seven were noted in this area on three further dates between 8th-19th (CH/MHu). Four were off Ross Back Sands on 6th (MJC).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A mobile flock centred on the Spittal-Cheswick-Goswick area peaked at 660 on 26th (CH), the peak count at the Budle Point-Stag Rocks locality was 240 on 29th (RA), while 208 were off nearby Ross Back Sands on 6th (MJC) and 100 at Holy Island North Shore on 5th (MJC). In addition, ten were off Druridge and one in Alnmouth Bay.

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

The regular drake was at Cheswick on 5th (STH/JRT).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

A total of 74 was noted off Ross Back Sands on 6th (MJC), 15 were at Budle Point on 29th (RA) and two to eight at nearby Stag Rocks during the month (DF *et al.*). Six were at Cheswick on 5th (STH/JRT) and one at Holy Island. The only record in the southern half of the county was of one amongst Eiders off Newbiggin Beacon Point on 4th (AP).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Peak counts were 82 on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 2nd (MHu), 47 at East Chevington on 2nd (MH), 26 at Howick on 18th (JAR), 20 at Holy Island on 20th (DLo), and ten to 19 at Branton GP, Castron, Castle Island, and Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes. Five to eight were at Bakethin Reservoir, Big Waters, Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Widdrington Moor Lake, and three to four at Bolam Lake, Bothal Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Fenham Flats and Hauxley Reserve. One to two were at ten further widespread localities.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Single 'redheads' were at Castron on 1st and 22nd (BS) and Widdrington Moor Lake between 18th-27th (MKi/MN *et al.*).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

The only double-figure count involved 26 at Branton GP on 7th (MJC). Killingworth Lake held a peak of seven on 16th (MSH), three to four were at Castron, New Water Haugh, QEII CP Lake, Tyne Green and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and one to two at Airy Holm Reservoir, Allen Banks, Bolam Lake, Dilston, Heatherslaw, Holywell Pond, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Wark.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

The biggest counts were 15 off Ross Back Sands on 6th and 22nd (MJC), 15 off East Chevington on 27th (AJH), and 11 off Druridge Links on 15th (IDR). Seven were at the Blyth Estuary (LJM) and five at Widdrington Moor Lake (TRD). Three to four were also at Alnmouth, Budle Point-Stag Rocks, Cheswick, Holy Island, Spittal Bay, Stakeford bridge (River Wansbeck) and the Tweed Estuary. A group of six, including four drakes, displayed off East Chevington on 23rd (MH).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

A good count of 13 males were feeding at Far Town (Slaggyford) on 27th (JSe). Seven birds were at Swinhope Shield (Allendale) on 23rd and three males were with two Greyhens at Paxhill (Allenheads) on that date (SJH). Two Greyhens and a single male were at Westburnhope on 6th, a single male with two Greyhens was at Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) on 14th and two birds were at Burn House Farm (Coanwood) on 27th.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Allendale Common held around 120 on light snow cover on 14th, mainly in three compact groups of 40, 30 & 20 with other scattered birds (EC/JSB). 20 were at Paxhill (Allenheads) on 23rd (SJH), whilst 12 were at Plenmeller Common on 14th. Two were at Lordenshaw and also heard calling at Alnwick Moor.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

11 were at Quarry House Moor and nine at nearby Haughterslaw House (North Charlton) on 26th (JR). Six were in the Fontburn area on 6th (TD) with the same number at Druridge Lane on 19th (TB) and Brandon Farm (Breamish Valley) on 26th (JR). Five or fewer were at Bewick Moor, Brier Dene Farm, Castron, Newham and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

At High Cocklaw (Berwick) a total of 17 were found within a radius of 1km (TBr). Three pairs were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 28th (STH), five birds were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 8th (MNC), five at Lynemouth Power Station on 2nd (DM) and three at Pegswood on 16th (TB). Two were at Bywell, Druridge Pools NR, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Howick, Linton, Newton Links and Shorestone.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

14 were at Haughterslaw House (North Charlton) on 26th (JR) and the peak at Druridge Pools & Links was 12 on 15th (IDR) with numbers gradually reducing towards month end. A single male was amongst ten birds present most days under a niger feeder at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Seven were at Quarry House Moor, five at Hauxley, two at Linton and singles at Alnmouth Saltmarsh, Alnmouth Village, Beaconhill (Cramlington) and Castle Island.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

A low passage total of 13 (three N, ten S) for ten hours of watching was reported from Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Numbers at most coastal sites gradually dwindled as the month progressed. Cheswick/Goswick Sands peaked at 21 on 8th (CH), 14 were in Druridge Bay off Chevington Burn mouth on 6th (MH) and Ross Back Sands peaked at 12 on 6th (MJC) only for all three sites to be down to a few individuals by the end of the month. Elsewhere eight were counted from Spittal-Cocklawburn on 28th (TBr), seven were off Holy Island North Shore on 5th (MJC) and one to six were at Alnmouth Bay, Budle Point, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Meadow Haven (Berwick), Spittal Bay (Berwick), Stag Rocks and Warkworth Gut.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

One was at Cheswick Sands (STH/JRT) and one at Holy Island North Shore (MJC), both on 5th. One flew S at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) (AP).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Two were at Ross Back Sands on 6th (MJC), one at Cheswick on 5th (STH/JRT) and one headed S past Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 20th (DLo).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

142 were at Nessend (Holy Island) on 25th (MMBC), 48 at Cullernose Point on 14th (TRD), between 20-30 birds at Coquet Island on 2nd (DM) and 24 at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC). Reports from nesting cliffs included 28 at Tynemouth on 25th and 14 at Cullercoats on 25th (ASJ). Two or fewer were seen at Alnmouth Bay, Cresswell Village, Longhoughton Quarry (pair on cliff), Snab Point and Stag Rocks.



A Fulmar returns to Tynemouth cliffs
Alan Jack on 26th February

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

21 were along the R. Tweed from Paxton to Horncliffe on 3rd (CH) and a WeBS visit to Caistrion on 8th produced a total count of 13 birds (JD). One to four were at Amble Braid, Annstead Burn (Seahouses), Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Embleton Quarry, Fourstones, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island Lough, Howick, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, Morpeth (R. Wansbeck), QE11 CP Lake, Tyne Green (Hexham), the Wansbeck Estuary, Warkworth, Whiteadder Water and Woodhorn South Flash.



A Little Grebe

Big Waters

Chris Barlow

17th February

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Two were at Killingworth Lake on 16th and 29th (MSH/CDB) and single birds were on the sea at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) and at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) and Druridge Pools.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

The regular Ross Back Sands grouping peaked at 23 on 6th (MJC), gradually reducing thereafter with 14 present on 19th (CH) and 11 on 22nd (MJC). Stag Rocks had a peak of six on 5th (STH/JRT), reducing to one by 25th and four were mixing with several species of duck and divers just offshore of Budle Point on 5th (MKi).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Druridge Pools area held good numbers on many dates. The peak count was 17 on 15th (IDR) with 15 present on 23rd, 13 on three other dates and ten on 6th. At Gosforth Park NR seven were in the reserve itself and two in a flooded field nearby on 8th (AJN), five were at Branton GP on 7th (MJC), with the same number at Warkworth Weir on 20th including one carrying twigs to a nest (LJM), and one to four were at Arcot Pond, Berwick Little Beach (roosting on cliffs), Hauxley, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Howick, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, QE11 CP Lake, St Mary's, Tyneview Park (Benton) and Wark.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Four at Branton GP on 5th was a high count for this locality (TRD/JD/NNBC), with three present on other dates. Three at Beal Saltmarsh on 23rd was the peak for Lindisfarne NNR (RA) and two were at both Castron and Gosforth Park NR. Singles were at Holy Island, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Longhirst Flash, North Seaton (R. Wansbeck), Ross Back Sands, Shankhouse (Cramlington) and Widdrington Moor Lake.



A Little Egret at Branton GPs by Tim Dean on 5th February

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Seaton Sluice reported ten N on 13th (SSWT) but the first evidence of purposeful northward movement this year was 112 heading N in one hour past Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 29th (DF). A minimum of 23 were off Boulmer on 16th and a few birds were noted from several other localities.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

30 were in Holy Island Harbour on 8th with most sporting breeding crests (IK). Ross Back Sands peaked at 24 on 2nd (MJC), 12 were at Black Rocks (Cheswick) on 6th and totals of eight were in Blyth South Harbour on 4th, Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 23rd and Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 19th. One to five were at Alnmouth Bay, Blyth Harbour, Budle Point, Druridge Bay and Spittal Bay (Berwick).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

71 were sitting on staithes in Amble Harbour on 9th (NNBC) and 38 were in the Blyth Estuary on 4th (LJM). North Shields Fish Quay held 19 birds on 29th (CDB) and six out of 16 roosting at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 22nd were *sinensis* race birds (IK). 12 were at both Branton GP and Meadow Haven (Berwick) and ten at Alnmouth Bay. One to seven were at many other localities and further *sinensis* race sightings came from Castle Point (Holy Island), Druridge Pools, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and on the North Tyne at Wark.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

A pair circled in flight at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 14th (LMI). A female was noted hunting feeders in a garden at Rothbury on several days (TRD/JD), and other single birds were noted at Blyth, East Ord (Berwick), Budle Point, Bywell, Cramlington, Druridge Pools, Ellington, Embleton Quarry, High Heaton (Newcastle), Humshaugh, Jesmond Dene, North Seaton, North Shields, Pigdon, St Mary's Wetland and West Hartford

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A male was seen soaring overhead for sometime at Blakehopeburn Haugh (Kielder Forest) (JD) on 4th. Another male was observed at Harwood on 7th (ADMc) and a male was at Grindon Lough on 26th (AT).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Three birds involving two males and a female were at East Chevington South Pool on 6th and one of the males was seen sky dancing when the female appeared (MH). A male, a female and a sub-adult male were at Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR). Up to two birds were seen regularly throughout the month in the East Chevington - Widdrington Moor Lake area. A bird came in off the sea at Beacon Point (Newbiggin by the Sea) on 21st before flying off N (AP) and on 23rd a bird flew up river over Castle Island (Ashington) then headed S (DM/PJA).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Three birds were at a confidential site on 6th (TRD/JD) and a ringtail was noted at the same site on 22nd (BS). Ringtails were also seen at other confidential sites on 6th (SJH) and on 25th (IRD).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Derwent Reservoir had two birds on 26th (IFo) and single birds were seen at Boulmer, Crooke Oak Lane, Lilswood Moor (Hexhamshire), Plenmeller Common, Snods Edge and Wallsend Swallow Pond. A bird feeding on prey at Minsteracres gave prolonged views (ASH/TW/AJN/AJ).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

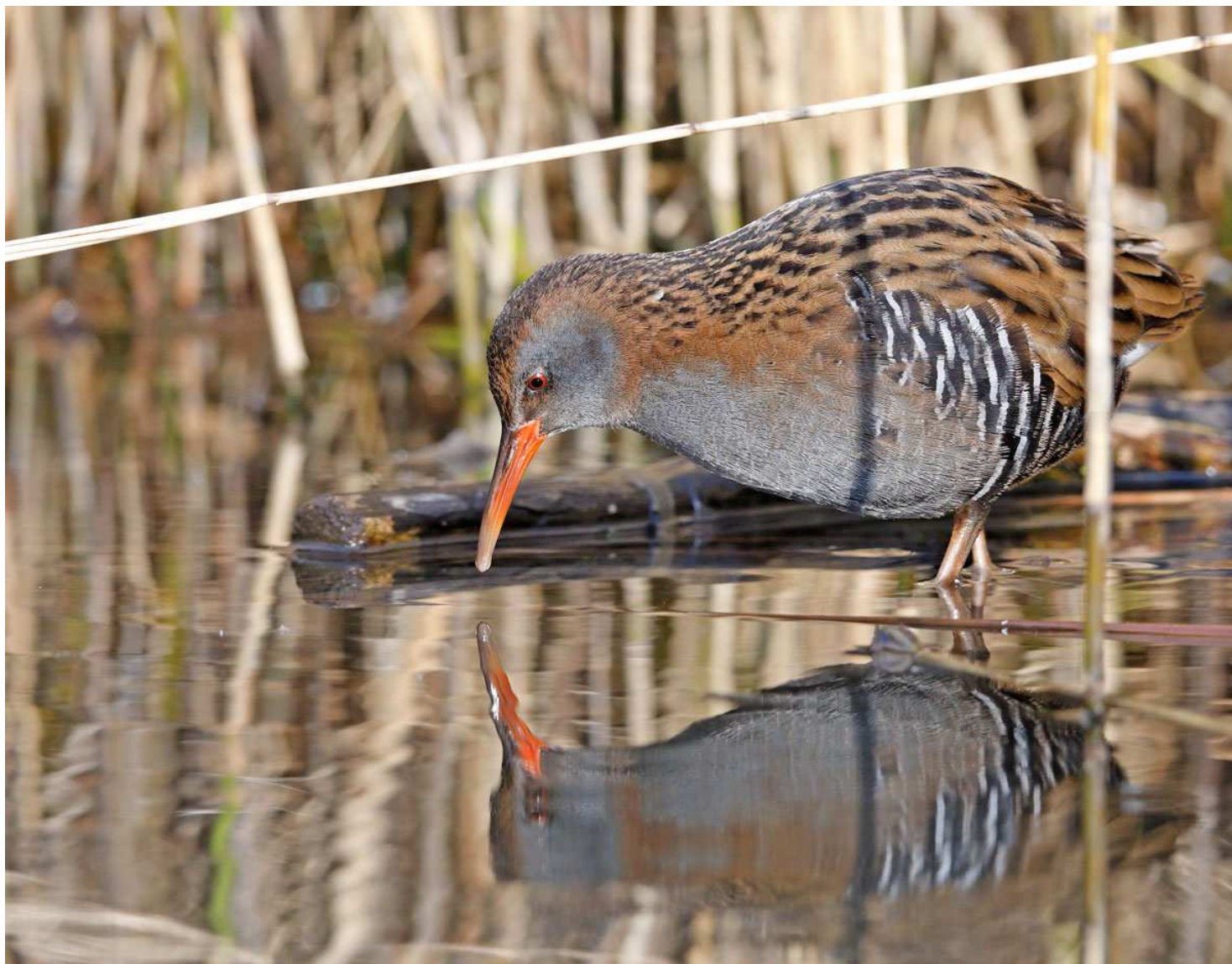
12 birds were at Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 25th (MH/AA) including seven birds together, and seven birds were north of Bywell on 20th (ASH/TW/AJN/AJ). Six birds were noted at Bywell on 16th (MH) and five were up in the air together at Heatherslaw on 19th (DLo). Four birds were noted at Bellshiel Law on 8th (JR), Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th and 26th (MN) and Bewick Moor on 19th (MJC). Three birds were at Kirkley Hall on 3rd (IK), Fontburn on 6th (TD), Widdrington Moor Lake on 6th (MSH), Beal on 17th (DLo), Minsteracres on 20th (ASH/TW/AJN/AJ), Coanwood Burn on 27th (SJH) and at High Cocklaw (Berwick) on 28th (TBr). One to two birds were observed at 36 sites during the month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three calling birds were at Holy Island Lough on 5th (MJC). Two birds were present at Wallsend Swallow Pond throughout the month (GPK) and two were at Holy Island Lough on 6th (TRD/JD). The very confiding bird at Northumberland Park (North Shields) was present all month (DRW *et al.*); single birds were noted at St Mary's Wetland on 2nd, 5th and 10th (MSH/AC) and Big Waters NWT on 17th and 23rd (CDB/GB). Other single birds were seen or heard below the feeders at Hauxley NWT on 2nd and 27th (DM/GB/TD), Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and Druridge Pools on 29th (ASJ/IDR).



The Water Rail with a stickleback at Northumberland Park by Alan Jack on 21st February



The popular Water Rail reflects at Northumberland Park
Colin Bradshaw on 27th February

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

19 birds at Hauxley NWT on 13th (HRS), 16 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM) and 15 at Castle Island (Ashington) on 23rd (DM/PJA) were the highest counts. Eight were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM) and seven were at Branton GP on 7th (MJC) and at QEII CP on 19th (CDH). Six birds were in Alnmouth village on 26th and five were at Druridge Pools on 29th (IDR). One to four birds were at Druridge Pools, Longhirst Flash, Monks' House Pool, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and at Warkworth and Warkworth weir.

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest counts this month were 58 at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH), 33 at Branton GP on 7th (MJC), 31 at Bothal Pond on 8th (TD), 28 at Linton Pond on 2nd (DM/GB), 26 at Woodhorn Flash on 23rd (DM/PJA) and 24 at Arcot Pond on 4th (LJM). One to fourteen birds were at ten sites.

An Oystercatcher

Whitley Bay

Alan Jack

21st February



Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

St Mary's Island had the largest flock again, with 157 on 27th (ASJ). At Derwent Reservoir, numbers went from seven on 21st to 147 on 27th, an unprecedented increase in winter numbers at this location (IFo). There were 140 at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK), 95 feeding at Whitley Bay's Mini Golf Course on 15th (ASJ) and 81 at North Shore (Holy Island) on 5th (MJC). There were 75 at Howick on 10th (JAR) and 70 near the Sleekburn confluence with the Blyth on 20th (MN). 71 at Caistron on 8th represented a normal early influx from the coast before dispersal (JD). There were flocks of 47 at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 7th (MSH), 46 at Cocklawburn on 6th (MHu) and 44 at Budle Point on 5th (MKi). Cresswell Pond had 40 on 21st (JC/IF) and 36 were noted near Amble Cemetery on 2nd (DM/GB). Smaller flocks were reported from Berwick, Hauxley NWT, Branton GP, Boulmer and Druridge Pools. Two birds were back on territory at the Melville Grove entrance to the Freeman Hospital, Newcastle, on 9th and for the rest of the month.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A single bird was present near the Sleekburn confluence with the Blyth Estuary between 4th and 23rd (LJM, MN, DM/PJA).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest coastal flocks were 500 at Druridge Pools on 21st (JC/IF) and 465 at Cresswell Pond on 1st (IRD). There were 400 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th (MN) and at Branton GP on 16th (NNBC). The maximum count at Grindon Lough was 250 on 23rd (SJH) and 200 were at Melkridge on 18th (SJH). 180 were also noted at Bedlington on 18th (TB) and there was a maximum of 148 at New Water Haugh on the Tweed Estuary on 23rd (MHu). There were 130 at Allenheads on 23rd (SJH), 120 at Shorestone on 6th (IDR), 120 at Monks' House Pool on 13th (RA), 116 at St Mary's Wetland on 16th (IJ) and 100 at Bewick Moor on 23rd (BS). Amongst the smaller flocks reported throughout the county, birds were observed displaying at Backworth on 28th (ASJ), Longhorsley on 11th and 26th (AB/LB) and Mile Moor (Whittingham) on 24th (CW).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Plenmeller Common had a pre-breeding flock of 1,126 on 14th, dwindling to 400 by 23rd (PRM). There were 625 at Boulmer on 4th (BS), 400 at East Holywell (Whitley Bay) on 20th (MN) and 300 at Prestwick Carr on 1st (JC/IF). 250 were in flight over Cresswell Pond on 7th, a high count for this location (TRD/JD), and 250 were circling over fields near West Minsteracres on 23rd (IFo). There were 217 at Goswick Sands on 8th (CH), 150 on St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 20th (DLo) and 144 at Coanwood Burn House farm on 27th (SJH). Druridge Pools had 100 on 21st (JC/IF), Greenhaugh, Waterhead had 70 on 3rd (SW) and there were also 70 at Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) on 11th (AB/LB).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The highest counts came from Boulmer, with 65 on 2nd (BS), Ross Back Sands, with 48S on 22nd (MJC) and Birling Carrs, Warkworth, with 38 on 25th (NNBC). 11 were at Longhoughton Steel on 25th (MKi). Three birds were at Longhirst Flash on 23rd (DM/PJA), two at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) and the Blyth Estuary on 20th (DLo) and 23rd (MSH) respectively, and there was a single at Cocklawburn on 12th (MHu).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The highest counts were 67 on a warehouse roof at Blyth South Harbour on 4th (LJM), 45 at Budle Bay on 22nd (CGK), and 39 at the burn mouth, East Chevington on 2nd (MH). There were 26 at Cocklawburn on 6th (MHu), 25 at Boulmer on 2nd (BS) and 22 at East Holywell (Whitley Bay) on 14th (MSH). Ten birds were noted in a field near Hauxley on 2nd (DM/GB) and there were eight at Calod Shad on the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The largest flock was at Boulmer, which had 450 on 8th (BS). Budle Bay had 415 on 8th (CGK), Ross Back Sands had 380 on 6th (MJC) and Cresswell Pond had 326 on 4th (CH). There were 158 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu), a high count for this site, and 140 at the Coquet Estuary on 24th (CSa). Druridge Pools had 130 on 15th (IDR) and there were 120 at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 25th (MSH). There were 114 at Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu). 85 were at Whitley Bay Mini Golf Course on 15th (ASJ) and at Caistron on 22nd (BS). Smaller flocks were noted at Holy Island, Berwick, Warkworth, St Mary's Island, Cheswick, Grindon Lough, Derwent Reservoir and Branton GP, Allendale and Hauxley. The maximum count from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was 39N on 16th. An early display was observed at Bewick Moor on 19th (MJC).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The largest flock was at Holy Island again, with ca. 800 at the high-tide roost on St Cuthbert's Island on 6th (TRD/JD). Boulmer had 39 on 9th (BS) and Longhoughton Steel had 18 on 25th (MKi). A single bird was at Budle Bay on 28th (TRD/JD).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

There were 15 at Low Newton on 27th (NNBC), two on Holy Island on 5th (MJC), 6th (TRD/JD) and 15th (RA), and a single bird at Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary) recorded the highest count with 62 present on 23rd (MHu). A minimum of 40 was at St Mary's Island on 11th (MSH) and 30 were at Boulmer on the same date (TRD). The only other count in double figures received was 25 at Tynemouth on 29th (KWY). One-eight were seen at Amble, Cheswick, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools and Holy Island causeway. Four took a break from their normal seafood diet by feasting on a dead Rabbit at Alnmouth on 2nd (GB/DM).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Large counts were received from three areas of Lindisfarne NNR with probably some overlap involved with 1,650 at Goswick Sands on 8th (CH), approximately 1,200 at a high-tide roost at St Cuthbert's Island on 6th (TRD/JD) and 1,000 at Beal saltmarsh on 23rd (RA). Only 20 were counted at Budle Bay on 22nd where numbers were noted as low this winter (CGK). Much lower counts were 30 at St Mary's Island on 9th (AC), 29 at Amble Braid on 2nd (DM), 28 at Seaton Sluice on 3rd & 20th (SSWT), 18 flying S at Cocklawburn on 6th (MHu), 18 at the River Coquet Estuary on 24th (CSa) and 12 at Boulmer on 9th (BS). Three were at Longhoughton Steel on 25th.



A Knot at Ross Back Sands
by Mike Carr
on 23rd February

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Four were at Cresswell Pond on 1st (DM). Thereafter all records came from Druridge Pools where one-four were seen from 6th-29th (many observers).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Ross Back Sands attracted the highest number with 163 counted on 22nd (MJC). The Boulmer flock from last month remained with a high of 159 on 15th reported (BS) and the high at St Mary's Island was a minimum of 75 on 29th (MSH). Smaller numbers were noted elsewhere with 45 at Low Newton on 23rd (SW). This group included a bird ringed on Sanday, Orkney in April 2017. At Newbiggin, 40 were seen on 19th (CDB), with the same number at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 22nd (IK). Spital (Berwick) held 30 on 1st (TBr) with 22 a little further south at Cocklawburn on 6th (MHu). The regular haunt of Druridge Bay could only muster a maximum of 18 (flying S) at Druridge Links on 15th (IDR). Stag Rocks held 11 birds on 10th (DF) and two were at Cresswell Pond on 21st (JC/IF).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

An impressive 1,100 at Goswick Sands on 8th (CH) was the highest count by far. Numbers in the River Blyth Estuary varied during the month with a low of 30 on 15th and a high of approximately 300 on 23rd (MSH/MN/LJM *et al.*). The highest count during the month at Boulmer was 155 on 2nd (BS) with approximately the same number with other waders on 25th (MKi). Seventy-seven were reported from the River Coquet Estuary on 24nd (CSa), 50 were at Cresswell Pond on 1st (IRD) but only one by 19th (TRD). Amble Braid attracted 40 on 2nd (DM) with the monthly high at Druridge Pools being 23 on 15th (IDR). Elsewhere, 18 were at Holy Island causeway, 12 at Cocklawburn and ten at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) and three at Hauxley.



Dunlin at Boulmer by Chris Barlow on 8th February

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The Stag Rocks flock was reported throughout the month with a low of 34 on 11th (MH/AA) and a high of 140 on 10th (DF). At Birling Carrs (Warkworth), a low of 12 was recorded on 9th and a high of 138 on 25th (NNBC). The maximum counts elsewhere were 54 at Boulmer on 15th (BS), 23 at Newbiggin on 16th (AP), 20 at Tynemouth on 28th (ASJ), 16 at Holy Island north shore on 5th (MJC) and 16 at St Mary's Island on 24th (AC). Two-nine were seen at Budle Point, Cheswick Black Rocks, Cocklawburn and Seaton Sluice.



Eyes left - Purple Sandpipers at St. Mary's Island by Jack Bucknall on 14th February

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Only four singles were reported this month at High Cocklaw (Berwick), Linton Ponds, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and Smalesmouth (Ridley Stokoe).

Jack Snipe *Limnocyrtus minimus*

One of last month's birds was noted at St Mary's wetland on 1st and 2nd (AC/CB). Single birds were at Monks' House Pool on 7th and 29th (MSH/RA) and Branton GP on 7th (MJC).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Monks' House pool held the highest number this month with 32 reported there on 29th (RA). The only other double-figure count was 21 at 21 at Hauxley NWT on 13th (HRS). Two-seven were at Arcot Pond, Beal saltmarsh, Big Waters, Branton GP, Druridge Pools, near Hauxley, Holy Island and St Mary's wetland.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Birds on wintering territory were, two at Hedgeley GP and singles at Longhirst flash and Mounthooly (College Valley).

Addition to January bulletin.

One was at Berwick Hill Bridge on 23rd (AHB).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Numbers were maintained from last month at St Mary's Island with 210 on 27th (ASJ) and 200 on the wetland on 16th (IJ). Other notable groups were 200 at Shortridge Hall (Warkworth) on 27th (NNBC), 153 at Druridge Pools and Links on 29th (IDR), 150 at Howdon on 26th (CB) and 110 at Budle Bay on 5th (DF). A WeBS count at the River Tweed Estuary revealed 86 present on 17th (MMcN). Elsewhere 80 were near the mouth of the Sleekburn (River Blyth) on 8th (MN), 62 at Boulmer on 8th (CDB), 48 in the Upper Blyth Estuary on 3rd (DM), 42 at Calot Shad (River Tweed) on 20th (MHu) and 40 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 29th (IJ). Two-12 were seen at Alnmouth, Bothal Pond, Holy Island causeway, Monks' House Pool, near Hauxley and the River Wansbeck Estuary.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

On 8th, singles flew N at Seaton Sluice, the only record (SSWT) and one was seen off Goswick Sands (CH). The first evidence of significant movement this year came from Stag Rocks on 29th where 38 flew N whilst six fed offshore (DF).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest groups recorded were 1,800 on a grass field at Houndalee Farm (near Widdrington Station) on 16th (IDR), 1,200 on 9th at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) (MHu), 605 found from a WeB survey in the Tweed Estuary on 20th (MMcN) and 500 at Budle Point on 8th (CGK). Smaller gatherings of 100-300 were noted at Boulmer, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, Monks' House Pool, QEII CP Lake and Woodhorn with 40-90 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park, Gosforth, Leazes Park and Ross Back Sands and up to 20 at four other localities. Three Norwegian-ringed and two Polish-ringed birds were seen amongst these flocks.



A Polish-ringed Black-headed Gull at Killingworth Lake by Chris Barlow on 2nd February

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

One adult was seen following the plough in a field at Seaton Sluice on 4th (AT/ASJ).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

At least 36 remained at Newbiggin on 25th (HG *per* STH) and up to 20 fed there at Quarry Cottage throughout the month (RS). Elsewhere, six were seen at nearby Woodhorn Flashes, four at Boulmer, three at Widdrington Moor Lake and singles at Beal saltmarsh, Hemscott Hill, Killingworth Lake, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's and Swallow Pond. Another single, seen in Jesmond Dene on 9th, was ringed, red darvic PTK1, as an adult male in Poland in May 2018.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Large numbers of birds were seen this month on their spring passage north through the county with the largest gatherings of 3,000 at Lindisfarne NNR (Fenham Mill) on 23rd (RA) and, on the same day, 2,500 on the beach/sea off Druridge Links (DR). Three-figure counts included 800-900 at Budle Point (CGK) and Grindon Lough (the largest of several counts there) (PRM), 100-200 at Houndalee Farm (near Widdrington Station) and 40-80 at Castron, Cocklawburn, Gosforth and Ross Back Sands with up to 12 at ten other localities..

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The largest groups reported were 137 at Boulmer on 2nd (BS) and 20-22 at Amble Braid (DM) and St Mary's (CDH) with one to six at Boulmer, Castle island, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Holy Island causeway, North Shield Fish Quay, the Tweed Estuary and Warkworth weir.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

A first-winter bird was at the North Shields Fish Quay from 1st-8th and 20th-29th (MN *et al.*) and from 13th-18th another first-winter, partly-oiled bird, appeared there (MN). Other records were a first-winter at Blyth Quayside on 8th, considered a different bird to the one at the Quayside on 8th (MN), a first-winter at Woodhorn flash on 23rd (AP), a second-winter at St Mary's on 28th (AC), a third-winter at Big Waters on 16th (GB) and an un-aged individual at Budle Bay on 29th (RA).



An Iceland Gull at NSFQ by Alan Jack on 29th February

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeB survey in the Tweed Estuary on 17th found 674 (MMcN) and 270 followed the plough at High Cocklaw (Berwick) on 7th (TBR). Other three-figure counts were 139 in the Blyth Estuary (LJM) and 130+ in a field at Newham (MSH) with 50-90 at Castle Island, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, QEII CP Lake, Ross Back Sands, 20-50 at Druridge Pools, Gosforth, North Shields Fish Quay and Houndalee Farm (near Widdrington Station) and one to ten at nine other localities. An adult of the northern race *argentatus* was found at Elswick wharf on the River Tyne (KWY).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The seasonal influx continued steadily up to 20th but accelerated thereafter during the last week when ten were in Budle Bay (RA), seven flew N at Ross Back Sands (MJC) and three were Coanwood and East Hartford. From 3rd on dates throughout, one to two were at Bewick Moor, Budle Bay, Exhibition Park, Grindon Lough, High Heaton, Jesmond Dene, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr, the Blyth Estuary and Stag Rocks.

Auk *sp*

At Seaton Sluice the only movement noted was 70S in 30 minutes on 7th (SSWT).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

A single fed with Eider off the pier at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 16th (MHu).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Eight were in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 20th, four in Alnmouth Bay on 2nd (DM) and offshore at Druridge Pools on 4th (IDR); elsewhere, singles were seen at Boulmer, Budle Point, Ross Back Sands and St Mary's.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

A good record for the month was 22 at Stag Rocks on 27th (AJH) and seven were at Ross Back Sands on 6th (MJC). One or two were recorded at Druridge, Holy Island and St Mary's.

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*

One was off Holy Island on 15th (RA).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Supermarkets attracted peak counts of 55 on the roof of ASDA (Gosforth) on 29th (ADM), 30 in Morrison's car park (Blyth) on 1st (RS), 28 at Shorestone on 6th (IDR), 21 at Blyth Quayside on 23rd (DM/PJA) and eight at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 17th.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

20 was the high count at Widdrington Lane on 6th (MSH), 18 at West Chevington on 19th (MH), ten at Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) on 14th (EC/JSB) with five to eight at Big Waters, Budle Bay, Cresswell, North Shields and one to three at 13 other widespread localities.



A Stock Dove by Mike Carr
Gosforth Park NR on 20th February

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Cramlington was the hot spot with 650 at Beaconhill on 23rd, 600 on 28th and 300+ at nearby Arcot Pond on 11th (DM/GB/STH/LJM). More than 300 were at Linton Crossroads on 2nd and 200 at Mount Pleasant (Blyth) on 23rd (DM/PJa), 200 at Sandy Bay on 15th (RS), 141 at Holywell Pond on 26th and 110 at High Heaton (Newcastle) on 19th (LMi). 100 were at East Cramlington NR and Big Waters with one to 55 at six other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

On Holy Island 25 were near the strawberry field on 6th (JD), 20 roosting at North Sunderland (Seahouses) on 15th and at Berwick Hill on 19th (AHB) with six at Embleton Quarry on 11th and Hauxley NWT on 13th.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

All sightings were of single birds at Linton Ponds and Chevington on 2nd, Whittingham on 3rd, Colwell on 7th, Big Waters on 8th, Weldon Bridge on 12th, Tranwell Woods on 17th, Widdrington Station and Felton Lane on 18th and Christon Bank on 23rd. One road casualty was on A1 again at Morpeth Bypass.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A pair were regularly around a garden at Stamfordham all month (EC) and two males called at Slaley Hall on 6th (RMH) with singles calling on at least ten nights at High Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr), on three mornings at Castle Vale Park (Berwick) (BWG), at Derwent Reservoir daylight roost on 21st/ 22nd (IFo) and at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 23rd (TD).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two were noted regularly at Shiremoor during the month (CGK) with singles at Druridge on seven dates, usually in its favourite round window and at Holystone (Wallsend) on 15th (ASJ).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Six were near the obelisk (Holywell) on 7th (TBr) with singles at Alnwick Moor on 6th (TRD/JD), Shield on the Wall on 23rd (PRM) and Old Hartley on 25th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Occasionally two were at Northumberland Park (North Shields) with most sightings singles on five dates. One was also at St Peter's Basin (Newcastle) on five days, Cresswell Pond on 6th, Tyneview Park (Benton) on 15th, Seaton Sluice on 21st, QEII CP on 23rd, East Cramlington LNR on 25th and Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 28th.



A Kingfisher after dinner at Northumberland Park

by Chris Barlow

9th February



The Northumberland Park Kingfisher poses for Alan Jack on 21st February

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

On 7th three were at Bolam Lake (IRD), two at Ellington Wood on 21st and Preston Cemetery (North Shields) on 28th (TB/MNC) with one at peanut feeders all month at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Singles were at Cramlington, Gosforth Garden Village, Grindon Lough, Humshaugh, Longhirst, North Shields and Shilbottle.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two were heard at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 5th and one at Houxy on the same date (ALH/AJ) with one also yaffling at Close House R. Tyne on 7th (MH).

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Three birds were in the same tree at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th (TB) and two birds were seen at West Hartford on 4th and 25th (TB), Howick on 14th (JAR) and two were continuing their interest in an ex-Magpie nest in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) TD). Single birds were reported from 20 locations throughout the month.

A Kestrel stretches

Ross Back Sands

Mike Carr

6th February



Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were noted at Low Steads (Longhoughton) on 2nd (BS), Single birds were at Newbiggin by the Sea Golf course on 4th and 26th (AP), Barley Hill (Slaley) on 7th (RNH), Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 11th (MH/AA), Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 14th (MSH), Holy Island on 15th (RA), Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (TRD) Fenham-le-Moor on 23rd (RA) and at Shield on the Wall on 27th (PRM).



A Merlin

by Tim Dean

Holy Island Snook

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were at a confidential site in the SE of the County on 2nd (DM/GB) and two were at Newcastle Quayside on 3rd (KWY). Single birds were seen at Berwick Hill (Blagdon), Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Holy Island, Middleton (near Hartburn), Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, Stakeford and at Woodhorn.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Six were at Black Plantation (Low Gosforth Home Farm) on 5th and six flew between Preston Park and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 27th (LAR/MNC) with four over Brandling Park (Jesmond) on 5th and 13th (GB) and at Gosforth on 29th including one singing (MLC). One to two were at the above locations during the month and at East Ord (Berwick), Holywell Dene, Exhibition / Leazes Park (Newcastle) and Percy Park (North Shields).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A peak of only three were at Howick on 28th (JAR) with two at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 15th (LMi), Longdyke (Shilbottle) on 22nd (MKi), Longhirst Flash on 23rd (DM/PJA) and East Cramlington NR on 25th (LJM). Singles were at eight other locations.

Magpie *Pica pica*

An evening roost count of 49 was made at Balliol Business Park (Longbenton) on 12th (ADM), 17 were at Druridge Pools and Links on 29th with two to eight there on five other dates (IDR). 12 were at Carlisle Park Morpeth on 19th (MKi) with four at Shorestone on 6th and two at Hauxley NR on 2nd.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A count of at least 2,500, probably more, was made at Gosforth on 16th with 2,000 on 18th (MJC/DJC), 300 at Longwitton on 8th (JR), 80 at Howdon on 8th and Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 23rd (CB/DM). 48, including a bird with much white, were at Killingworth Lake on 1st (CDB), 20 at Houndalee Farm (Widdrington Station) on 16th and 17th, at Amble on 22nd with nine at Alnmouth on 26th and four at Druridge Pools and Links on 29th.



A spotted Jackdaw spotted by Chris Barlow at Killingworth Pond on 1st February

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Approximately 400 were at Longwitton on 8th (JR), 300 moving over Budle Bay at dusk to roost at Ross on 22nd (CGK). 250 was the minimum at Houndalee Farm (Widdrington Station) on 16th (IDR) with 44 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st and 34 at Druridge Pools and Links on 23rd.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A high count 273 was reported at Gosforth of 18th with 264 there on 16th (MJC/DJC), around 300 at Longwitton on 8th (JR) with 21 at Town Moor (Newcastle) on 14th (GB) and 12 at Druridge Pools and Links on three dates during the month (IDR). Two to eight were at seven other locations.



A Carrion Crow at NSFQ by Chris Barlow on 29th February

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

On 5th the long staying bird was at Linton (East) Pond area with one at East Chevington North Pool on 8th (ADMc), one in sheep field at Low Steads (Longhoughton) on 14th (TRD), one mile south of Bamburgh on 25th (BS) and at Buston (nr Bamburgh) on 27th (MSH).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two were at Bellshiel Law and at Davyshiell (both Otterburn Ranges) on 8th (JR), two at Whittingham on 17th (CW), at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC), Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 25th (MH/AA), College Valley on (26th) and Carter Bar on 27th (TRD/JD). Singles were at three upland and one coastal location.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

On 23rd 20 were at Fenwick STW (RA) and two young birds at Warkworth on 18th grew to four by 20th, staying till 22nd (CDB *et al.*) with probably the same birds at Alnmouth on the same date (NNBC). A first-winter bird was also at Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 29th.



Waxwings – Above: at Gosforth by Mike Carr on 29th February and below: at Warkworth by Tim Dean on 20th February



Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Seven singing birds were at Branton GP on 7th (MJC), two at Darras Hall on 24th with singles at Grindon Lough on 19th Colt Crag Reservoir on the same date and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 29th.



A Coal Tit by Alan Jack in Holywell Dene on 8th February

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Four were at Bolam Lake on 23rd with three there on 17th (CDB), two at Watersmeet (Acomb) on 1st, Church Wood (Longhorsley) on 26th and Mitford on the same date.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

The highest count was of only two from Branton GP on 4th, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 6th, Prestwick Carr on 7th and 8th, Brier Dene (Whitley Bay) on 15th and 29th, Big Waters on 17th and Hauxley NWT on 27th. Singles were at six other locations.



A Willow Tit at Bolam Lake by Chris Barlow on 17th February

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A count of 39 over 2km came from Holywell Dene on 17th (ASJ), 20 at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 5th (AJH) with five at Alnmouth on 26th and four at Shorestone on 6th. Singles were at Boulmer on two dates and Druridge Pools and Links on four.



A Blue Tit at Fawdon by Chris Barlow on 17th February

Great Tit *Parus major*

42, many singing, were counted over 2km at Holywell Dene on 17th (ASJ) with three in Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 29th and one to two at Druridge Pools and Links on five dates and Alnmouth on 26th.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

A male was at Holy Island Lough on 5th (MJC).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Well reported as birds sang in earnest with 50 the high count at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 29th (IJ) and 36 at Lordenshaw on the same date (JD). 24 were in full song at Killingworth Moor and 18 at St Mary's Island on 15th (ASJ), 17 on 2hr vis-mig at Budle Point on 29th (RA), 15 at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 14th and 14 at Shorestone on 6th. There were 12 at Paxton Dene (Longhorsley) on 11th and 11 at Longhoughton Steel on 16th with one to seven at 19 other widespread localities.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

One fed on a rough parking area at Cottonshope Head (Otterburn Ranges) on 8th (JR).

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

A bird was heard singing at East Chevington South Pool on 2nd and 6th (MH/MN). Another was at Woodhorn Flashes / Summerhouse Lane Pond on 8th and 23rd and one to two were heard and seen here on 29th (AP/LAR/GB).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A total of 26 were found in four separate groups at Holywell Dene on 17th (ASJ). At Cramlington the highest count was 17 at Alexandra Park, again on 17th, while 13 were at Stakeford Bridge on 14th, 11 at Alwinton on 8th and ten at Allen Banks, Grindon Lough and Longdyke (Shilbottle). Further counts included nine at Howick, eight at Castle Island and Southfield Green (Cramlington) and seven on feeders at RGS (Jesmond). There were six at Gosforth, Humshaugh, Tynemouth and Yearle and two to four at a further eight localities.

A Long-tailed Tit

Gosforth Park NR
Mike Carr 20th February



Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

The overwintering bird was seen at Boulmer on 8th and 18th (BS/CDB).

The over wintering Chiffchaff

Boulmer

by Chris Barlow

18th February

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Overwintering birds were noted at Gosforth Garden Village on 1st (MJC), High Heaton on 3rd and Jesmond Dene on 23rd (LMi). All were males.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

A bird coming to feeders at Woodhorn Village on 29th had been present for several weeks. It showed some characteristics of the **Central Asian races** and was tentatively identified as ssp. *halimondendri* or *blythi* but not yet confirmed (GB/LAR).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

More than ten were at Colt Crag Reservoir and five at Grindon Lough on 19th (PRM), three at Fenwick on 23rd and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 29th and singles at Darras Hall, Druridge Pools and Howdon on 26th, Hazelrigg on 18th, Linton Lane on 2nd and Wark (North Tyne) on 3rd.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

At least five were singing at Carlisle Park (Morpeth) on 19th (MKi), four were at Alnmouth on 26th, up to three at Druridge Pools and three at Shorestone on 6th. A plague of sandflies on seaweed at Boulmer attracted a large number of birds on 8th, including three Wrens.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

There were five in Holywell Dene on 17th (ASJ) and up to four at Northumberland Park (North Shields). Four singing males were heard at Plessey Woods on 26th and at least three at Jesmond Dene on 28th, while three were also at Bolam Lake on 23rd and Carlisle Park (Morpeth) on 19th. Counts of two came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Preston Park (North Shields) and Stamfordham and singles were at Cramlington Hall, Darras Hall and Derwent Reservoir.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Four (two singing) were at Holywell Dene on 22nd (ASJ), three at Branton GP and Plessey Woods and two at Bolam Lake, Gosforth and Wark (North Tyne). Singles were also reported from Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir, Dinnington, East Cramlington Pond NWT, Fourstones, Humshaugh, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Rothbury.

A grounded Treecreeper

Alan Jack

Holywell Dene

2nd February



A Treecreeper

Mike Carr

Gosforth NR

26th February

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

By far the largest gatherings were 2,000 at Fawdon on 25th (LAR) and Yearle on 15th (NNBC). A flock of 500 was at Ridley Common on 23rd, 300 were at Grindon Lough on 23rd and near Widdrington Station on 16th and 200-225 at Coanwood on 27th and Fontburn on 6th. Elsewhere 125 were at Whittingham on 17th and 100 in the Boulmer-Longhoughton area on several dates. Up to 30 were reported from Druridge Pools during the month.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The flooded Golf Course at Gosforth attracted 42-47 feeding on worms from 16th-18th (MJc/DJC). At Marden Estate (Tynemouth) 25 on 24th included several in full song, while elsewhere there were counts of six from Alnmouth and Hauxley NR, up to four at Druridge Pools and one to two at Boulmer and Embleton Quarry.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Stubble fields at Hulne Park attracted two flocks totalling 230 birds (150 + 80) on 10th (MH), while other larger gatherings included 210 at Grindon Lough on 7th and 180 at Church Wood (Longhorsley) on 26th. Elsewhere, 70-74 were reported from High Carrick (MoD) on 8th and Smallburn (Longhorsley) on 11th, 40-47 were at Corbridge, Dilston, Elford, High Cocklaw (Berwick) and Wallington Hall, up to 32 at Gosforth and 20-22 at Doddington, Druridge, Healey and Whittingham. There were also 16 at Houxty (North Tyne), 12 at Netherwitton, nine at Crooked Oak and one to two at Branton GP, Bywell, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Widehope.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gathering was 300-350 at Gosforth from 18th-20th (MJc/DJC), declining to 150 by 29th, when several birds were in song. Another sizeable flock of 220 was at Melkridge on 24th and 189 were at Bywell Hall on 16th. Further notable gatherings included, 71-75 at Howick on 17th and Wylam on 7th, 60-66 at Corby's Crag (Edlingham) and Humshaugh and 40-50 at Corbridge, High Cocklaw (Berwick), Mitford, Prestwick Carr, Smallburn (Longhorsley) and Swallow Pond. The peak count from Jesmond Dene was 25+ on 28th, while 18-20 were at Dukeshouse (Hexham), Exhibition Park, Linton and Percy and Preston Parks (North Shields). One to 15 were noted at a further seven localities.

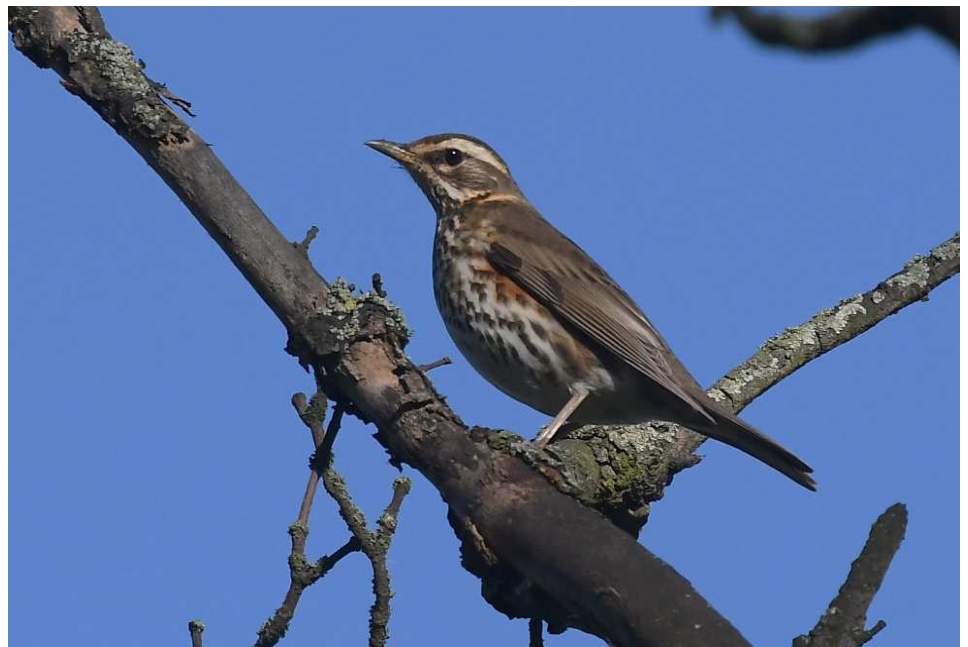


A Redwing

North Shields

Tim Dean

12th February



Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

There were many reports of birds in full song during the month, most notably eight singing between Stakeford and North Seaton on 23rd (DM/PJA) and seven on the edge of Bewick Moor on 19th. Six birds were reported from Cocklawburn on 6th and four at Alnmouth on 26th, while there were three at Carlisle Park (Morpeth) on 19th and up to two at Howdon, Jesmond Dene, Percy Park (North Shields) and St Mary's. Singles, most of which were in song, were noted at Brandling Park, Budle Point, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington Pond LNR, Exhibition Park, Hauxley NR, Humshaugh, Lynemouth Power Station, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Rothbury, Slaley Hall, Stamfordham, Valley Park (Cramlington), Woodhorn Flash and Wylam.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Eight were with a large Redwing *Turdus iliacus* flock at Bywell on 16th (MH). Six were at Holystone and four on the MoD Ranges at both Highshaw and Bellshiel Law on 8th. There were counts of three from Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley NR and Percy Park (North Shields) and two + at High Heaton, while two were noted at Bywell, Castle Island, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Corbridge, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Great Ryle (Whittingham), Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, Preston Park (North Shields), RGS (Jesmond) and Warkworth. Singles were reported from a further four localities at Alnmouth, Colt Crag Reservoir, Newcastle Airport and Newcastle city centre.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

There was an impressive count of 31 (over 2km) at Holywell Dene on 22nd (ASJ), while ten were in song over the same distance at Westwood Grange (Cramlington) on 15th. Elsewhere four were reported from Alnmouth, three on seaweed at Boulmer and singles at Druridge Pools and Shorestone.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The overwintering bird at Boulmer was present throughout the month.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were 12 at East Chevington on 6th (RB/MB), five at Druridge Links on 4th, four at Boulmer on 8th and three at Cocklawburn on 6th and 26th and at Ross Back Sands on 6th. Elsewhere, two were reported from Cheswick, Holy Island, Howick, Low Newton, Monks' House Pool and St Mary's and singles at Chibburn Links, Lynemouth Power Station, Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were seen at Allen Banks on 27th and at River Pont at Berwick Hill. Single birds were seen at eight further sites.



A Dipper

Alan Jack

Holywell Dene

23rd February

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A flock at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) peaked early this month at 70 birds (RS). 40 attended garden feeders at Cramlington on 11th (STH). 25 were at both Stannington and Dinnington on 12th and at Chapel House Estate on 28th. 20+ were noted at High Heaton on 21st.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

The largest count this month was 31 seen at Shoreston on 6th (IDR). A minimum of 25 were at feeders at Hauxley (TD). 20 noted at Prestwick Carr on 8th (KWY). 20 were also seen in Holywell Dene on 10th (ASJ). A Morpeth garden held 16 birds all month (TD). One to 15 were observed at a further ten localities.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

A 2km walk through Holywell Dene on 22nd revealed 28 birds, including a group of six in a territorial chase, with much display involved (ASJ). Five were in Alnmouth on 26th (IDR). Four fed on sandflies on Boulmer Beach on 8th (CDB). Singles were seen at five other sites.

Eastern Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla tschutschensis*

The wintering bird at Prestwick Carr was seen on 7th, 8th and 21st (TB/KWY/AJ *et al.*).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

A pair was at Holywell Dene during the month (ASJ), with singles at 14 other sites.



A Grey Wagtail at St Mary's Island by Jack Bucknall on 14th February

Pied Wagtail

Motacilla alba yarrelli

An excellent count of 41 was made at Prestwick Carr on 8th (KWY). 12 were at Boulmer on same day (CDB). One to six were seen at four other sites.



A Pied Wagtail

St Mary's Island

Jack Bucknall

14th February

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

50 were counted at Hauxley on 13th. 20 seen at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF). 12 were noted at Boulmer on 14th and seven at St. Mary's on 10th (TRD/ASJ). Six were on uplands at Bewick Moor on 19th (MJC) and one to four seen at two other sites this month.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Singles were seen at Boulmer, Branton and Monks' House Pool this month (BS/NNBC/RA).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

An impressive 32 were counted on 8th feeding on sandflies at Boulmer beach, with two to three here later in the month (CDB). Ten were seen at Warkworth Gut on 24th (CSA). One to two were also seen at three other sites.

"Scandinavian Rock Pipit" *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Eight were at Budle Bay on 8th, increasing to ten by 22nd (CGK).



A Rock Pipit at St Mary's Island

by Jack Bucknall on 14th February

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Around 120 were feeding on Beechmast at Hexham on 3rd, with a similar number noted at Paxton Dene (Longhorsely) on 11th (AJH/AB/LB). Feeders at a Rothbury garden attracted a good flock all month, with a peak of 50 birds on some dates (TRD/JD). 50 were also at Crooked Oak Lane on 25th (IFo). 30+ at Cramlington Hall on 25th (LJM). 27 were counted on 26th at Druridge Pools and Links (IDR). 23 were at North Charlton on 26th (JR). One to eight were seen at a further four locations.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

About 100 were feeding on beechmast at Letah Wood on 20th (AJH). One to four were noted at four other sites.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

11 were observed at Bolam Lake on 23rd (CDB). Eight were seen at Howdon on 1st and at Holywell Dene on 10th (CB/ASJ). Seven males were noted at Longwitton on 1st (JR). Elsewhere, one to six were seen at 16 sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

About 160 remained on 5th at this winter roost site at Freeman Road (Newcastle) (LMi). 30 gathered pre-roost at East Ord on 15th (CH). One to eight were seen at 13 further sites during the month.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

100 were counted at Longbridge End on 8th (CH). 82 were at Druridge Pools on 26th (IDR) and 70 at Hemscott Hill on 28th (EC/JSB). The flock frequenting East Chevington burn mouth peaked at around 60 on 6th (MN) the above sites having lesser numbers reported during the month. 28 were at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu). Ten were at Warkworth Gut on 23rd.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

A large flock of 400 was at Elwick on 15th (RA). Elsewhere, three to 20 were seen at six other sites.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

Two were on garden feeders at Gosforth Garden Village on 2nd and one on 18th (MJC). The only other report this month was of one also on feeders at Hexham on 10th (AJH).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

A three-hour visit to Harwood Forest on 19th resulted in 88 being counted (AJ). 50+, many in song, were noted at Churnsike Lodge on 4th (SJH). 20+ were seen at Colt Crag on 19th (PRM). Two to eight were noted at seven further sites, including a coastal sighting of two birds flying NW on 22nd at Guile Point.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

47 were counted at Howdon on 16th and 45 were seen at Howick on 24th (CB/JAR). 34 was a record garden feeder count at Chapel House on 24th (MH). One to 24 were seen at ten more locations this month.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

120 were counted during a three-hour visit to Harwood Forest on 19th (AJ). Around 100, many singing, were at Churnsike Lodge on 4th (SJH). 50+ were at Wark on 15th and 25+ at Colt Crag on 19th (PRM). 16 were seen at East Sleekburn on 14th (JR). One to six were at four other sites.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

The winter gathering at Holystone/Killingworth Moor remained with 160+ present all month, feeding in stubble (ASJ). 100 were also noted at Dinnington on 28th (IK/AJJ). In the north of the county, 51 were found at Shoreston on 6th, 30 at Howick on 16th and at Chillingham on 26th (JAR/JR). 18 were seen at Fourstones on 4th (AJH). 17 at North Charlton on 6th (JR). Six noted at Crooked Oak Lane on 25th. A single was found at Alnmouth village on 8th.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

The winter's highest count was of 63 seen at Shoreston on 6th (IDR). 18 to 20 remained among the Yellowhammer flock at Holystone/Killingworth Moor all month (ASJ). 12 noted at Monks' House Pool on 13th (RA). Eight were seen at Holy Island and seven at Ross on 6th (TRD/JD/MJC). Four males were singing at Gosforth subsidence pond and at St. Mary's by the month's end (MJC/ASJ). One to three were also seen at a further nine sites.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The peak count in this month was of eight at Long Nanny on 17th, with six seen at Goswick on 8th (NNBC/CH). Three were also at Long Nanny on 25th. One to two were observed at six other sites during the month.



A Snow Bunting at Bewick Moor by Mike Carr on 19th February

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

Three were at Birling Carrs all month (BS / NNBC) and one at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (IFo).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Two were still at QE II CP, Ashington all month (CDB / CDH / DM)

Greater Rhea *Rhea americana*

Again seen near Thrunton on 17th (JD). Local landowner keeps exotics and they wander widely.

Northern Bald Ibis *Geronticus eremita*

Notable escapee with one found feeding on edge of ploughed field at Dinnington on 28th & 29th (PCF / IK / AJJ / GB). Apparently escaped from Kirkley Hall Zoo.

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

Single at Big Waters on 8th (GB).

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

One at Budle Bay on 15th (RA).

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

One noted at Swallow Pond all month.

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

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Berwick Wildlife Group, 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

RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. 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

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

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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



A Waxwing at the berries in Warkworth by Chris Barlow on 18th February

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 3

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MONTHLY SUMMARY March 2020

6th May 2020



CONTENTS

A photographic supplement is included for bulletin readers

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	Female at Derwent and Slaley plus three over Tynemouth and then seen elsewhere.
American Wigeon	Returning drake still at Grindon Lough all month.
Ring-necked Duck	Drake at Caistrone on 15th and then Branton GP on 29th.
Smew	Redhead at Widdrington Moor Lake up to 21st, also at Caistrone again on 15th and 16th.
White Stork	Single over Branton GP and Spindleston plus two over St Mary's.
Great White Egret	One at Longhirst Flash from 14th to 24th then Cresswell from 25th.
Osprey	Single early migrant at Melkridge on 26th.
White-tailed Eagle	Immature over Howick on 31st. Part of UK influx from Isle of Wight!
Crane	Long-staying individual at Middleton until at least 21st. Also three over Amble on 17th.
Avocet	Maximum of 21 at Blyth Estuary on 20th.
Whimbrel	Early migrants at Tynemouth, Melkridge and Wark from 29th.
Ruff	Up to four at Druridge Pools during month.
Jack Snipe	One to two at Beal, Gosforth and Monks' House Pool.
Little Gull	Adult at St Mary's on 6th.
Iceland Gull	Singles at Tynemouth and Hazelrigg plus long stayer at North Shields.
Sandwich Tern	Early migrants at Bamburgh on 17th and Cresswell on 23rd.
Great Grey Shrike	One at Kirkharle on 13th.
Hooded Crow	Wintering at several sites.
Waxwing	Single at Longframlington Common fly catching on 26th.
Bearded Tit	Female at Holy Island Lough on 15th and up to 3 at East Chevington.
Ring Ouzel	Female at Cocklawburn on 23rd.
Cetti's Warbler	Singing males at Woodhorn & East Chevington.
Black Redstart	Singles at Boulmer and Warkworth.
Water Pipit	Singles at Boulmer, Berwick and Monks' House Pool.
Lapland Bunting	One at Beal Pt on 15th.

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 likely to be in September. Fingers crossed.



A Goldcrest in Northumberland Park by Chris Barlow on 14th March

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

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CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Birds of the pale-bellied *hrota* race included a peak of 800 at Budle Bay on 10th (DF) falling to about 400 on 13th (DF) and 200 by 16th (RA), and 70 at Fenham Mill on 31st (DF), while 100 flew N at Stag Rocks on 8th (KWY) and five N at Budle Point on 16th (RA). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 110 at The Ouze (Holy Island) on 5th (IK), 77 at Holy Island Harbour on 22nd (MJC), and singles at Boulmer, Budle Bay and St Mary's Island Wetland variously between 7th-16th.

A Brent Goose at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 8th March

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Variable numbers at Grindon Lough included a peak of 318 on 2nd (SJH), with ten to 304 on various dates between 4th-26th (PRM/MRS). Other peak counts were 228 at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo), 84 at Big Waters on 8th (GB), 50-53 at Plenmeller Common (PRM) and West Stobswood Pool (MSH), and ten to 42 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP, Slaley Hall, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord. Two to nine were also at/over Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Budle Point, Ellington Pond, Hauxley Reserve, Howdon, Lynemouth Flash, Monks' House Pool, Seghill and West Sleekburn.

A Canada Goose
Howdon Wetland
2nd March
Colin Bradshaw

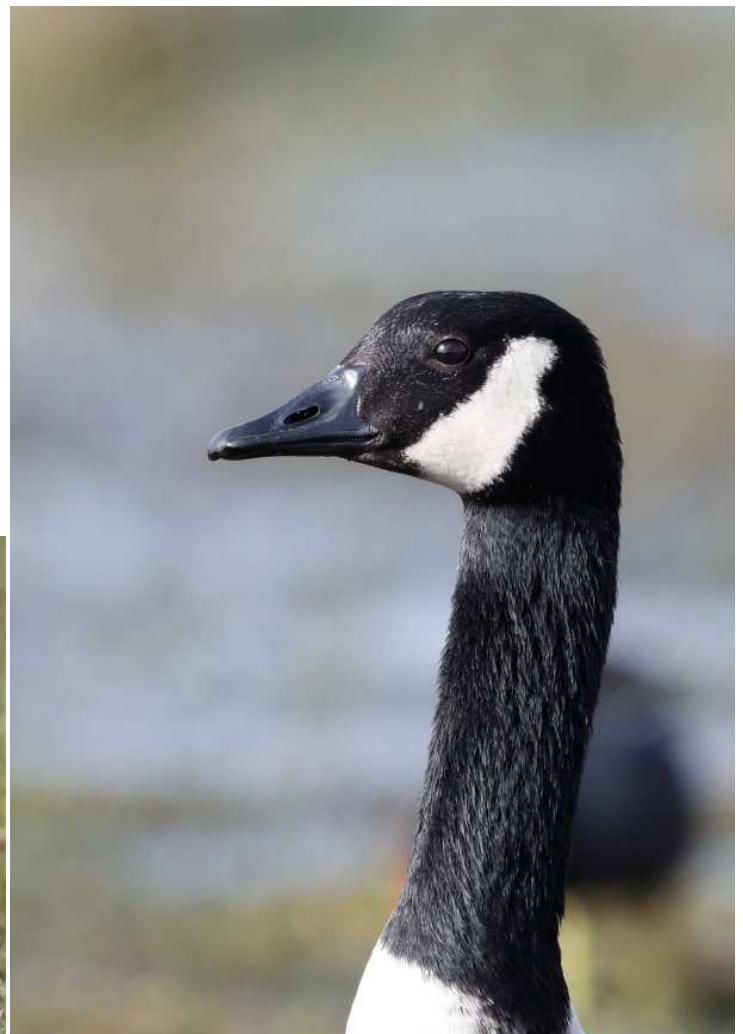
Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

At Budle Bay, an estimated 3,000 on 3rd dropped to 2,100 by 5th, 1,500-1,600 by 14th, 600 by 16th and a final 250 on 18th (RA/DF/CGK). The only other reports were of three at Grindon Lough on 11th and seven there on 18th (SJH/PRM), and one at Bothal Pond on 10th (TF).



Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Peak gatherings were 185 at Backworth Pond on 28th (MNC), 160 at Newham on 16th (RA), 152 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 8th (IFo), 150 at Slaley on 15th (PCI), 120-130 at Budle Bay (DF), Castron (AJR) and Newham Bog (BS), 50-94 at Bothal, Coanwood and Linton Ponds and Plenmeller Common, and 21-41 at Allenheads, Big Waters, Coatenhill Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Ellington, Gosforth, Grindon Lough, Haughton Castle, Holburn Moss and Lynemouth Flash. One to ten were



Left - A Greylag Goose by John Richards

Coatenhill Reservoir on 18th March

also at/over Allerdean Mill, Budle Point, Cocklawburn, Corbridge, Middle Ord Pond, Monks' House Pool, Seghill, Wark and West Ord. A neck-collared individual ('NHI') at Airy Holm Reservoir on 22nd had been ringed at Blondous, northern Iceland on 18th July 2016 and had previously been recorded at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd March 2017 (IFo).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Northerly movement involved 350 at Harwood Forest on 5th (ASJ), 220 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th (MR), and 40-150 at the Aln Estuary, Blyth Harbour, Boulmer, Budle Point, Crooked Oak, East Ord, Ellington, Newbiggin, St Mary's and Whittingham between 3rd-18th, while 55-80 flew SW/W at East Chevington and Kielder, 50 S at Ellington, and 50 over Corbridge. One to six were also at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Big Waters, Grindon Lough and Plenmeller Common. Large concentrations involved 6,000 at Doddington on 16th (DF), about 3,500 at Budle Bay on 8th (DF) dropped to 800 by 10th (DF) and 550 by 22nd (MJC), 2,000 were near East Chevington on 7th (TF), 1,700-1,900 at Druridge Pools (IDR) and East Holywell (MNC), 1,200 at Cresswell Pond, Doddington and Widdrington Moor Lake, 510-800 at Cocklawburn and Old Hartley, and 100 at Bradford Kaims.



A Pink Foot at Cresswell by Colin Bradshaw on 23rd March

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

Birds of the Eurasian *albifrons* race involved 12 near Hipsburn on 3rd (MKi), four at Airy Holm Reservoir on 8th increasing to seven by 16th and nine by 20th, with two remaining until 24th (IFo), three at Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR), two at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), and one at East Chevington on 7th (TF).

Greenland *flavirostris* race birds involved nine (six adults) at Big Waters on 8th and 18th (GB/CDB) and at Prestwick Carr on 20th and flying E at Dinington on 25th (PCF), and singles at Gosforth Subsidence Pond all month (MJC/ADM) and Old Hartley on 5th (MSH).



Greenland Whitefronts leave Big Waters by Chris Barlow on 7th March

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak concentrations were 66 at Lilliestead (Berwick) on 4th (MHu), 66 at QEII CP on 15th (CDH), 64 at Loanend, Horncliffe on 8th (MHu), 30 at Crookham Westfield (JR) and 30 at Killingworth Lake (LJM). Three to six were also at Cocklawburn and Linton Ponds and the Tweed Estuary, and one to two at/over 15 further widespread sites. Of two ringed adults at Paddy Freeman's Park (Heaton) one (XY2882) had been ringed as a male cygnet at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 14th August 2016 and the other (XY2889) had been ringed as a female cygnet at Killingworth Lake on 6th September 2016. Both had been reported from Killingworth Lake and Jarrow Slake in the intervening time (LMi).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A total of 170 flew W/NW at Budle Point in four hours on 16th, plus 52 there on 8th and 33 on 2nd (RA). Northerly movement involved a total of 52 at Newbiggin Beacon Point between 2nd-18th (AP), about 50 at Plessey Woods on 16th (MJC), 42 at Beal Point on 15th (MJC), 40 at Tynemouth in the dark on 16th (CB), 38 at Holy Island on 17th (BS), 35 at Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR), 31 at Whitley Bay on 18th (IJ), 28 at Ellington on 7th (TB), 24 at Cocklawburn on 4th and 11 there on 17th (MHu), and 24 at Cresswell on 18th (TRD/JD), while 11 flew NE at Harwood Forest on 13th (EC). Large concentrations included 120 at Warkworth beach on 16th (CSa), 103 near Druridge Pools and 16 offshore there on 8th (IDR), 101 at Bothal Pond on 17th (TF/JFa), 88 (68 adults) at Loanend (Horncliffe) on 8th (MHu), 77 at Beal saltmarsh on 8th (RA), 76 at Holy Island on 15th (MJC), 59 at Linton Ponds on 7th (TF), 56 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo), 50 at Low Newton scrape on 3rd (DGB), 48 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (MH/AA), 43 at East Chevington on 17th (MH/AA), 42 at QEII CP Lake on 8th (AP), 41 at Goswick on 16th (DF), and 21-35 at Big Waters, Branton GP, Budle Bay, North Steads and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to seven were at/over Airy Holm Reservoir, Castron, Cocklawburn, Crookham, Greenlee Lough, Humshaugh, Park Dam, Shield on the Wall, Swallow Pond, West Ord, Whitley Bay and Whittingham.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

The Blyth Estuary held 50 on 3rd and 20th (LJM/MN), 34 were at Howdon on 1st (CB), 33 at Bell's Pond (near Creswell) on 4th (TB), 20 at Cresswell Pond on 27th (IF), and ten to 12 at the Coquet Estuary (RPo) and West Stobswood Pool (MSH). Eight to nine were at the Aln Estuary and Druridge Pools, four at Lynemouth Flash, and one to two at Arcot and Holywell Ponds, Brier Dene Farm, Budle Point, Castle Island and West Ord, and further inland at Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

On 26th, three flew NNW at Tynemouth (DRW) and then appeared at Holywell Grange briefly before moving E (GPK). The three (all males) were noted at the 'Beehive' Flash (Earsdon) on 30th-31st (AC). Two were found at Smallburn Farm, Longhorsley on 23rd (PHa/AHa), and singles were at Slaley on 15th (PCI), and Backworth Flash (per GPK) and Brier Dene Farm (IJ) on 31st.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Six were at Redmire Bridge on 21st (JR/NA), a pair at Smalesmouth and two drakes at Glen Ridley on 14th (JR/NA), a pair at Humshaugh on 17th and 31st (when nest-prospecting; SW), and a drake at Wark on 28th (PRM). Away from the River North Tyne, a pair were at Harehaugh on 26th (TRD/JD).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Good numbers at Druridge Pools included a minimum of 45 on 21st (TF/JFa) and 41 on 6th (IDR). Fewer were noted elsewhere, with nine at Holy Island on 22nd (MJC), seven to eight at Holywell Pond (MSH) and Monks' House Pool (RA), three to four at the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, and Low Newton, and one to two at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Buston Links, Grindon Lough, Howdon, New Water Haugh (River Tweed) and Plenmeller Common. More unusual was a pair on the sea off Sheldrake Hole (Holy Island) on 7th (IK).

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Peak site counts were 61 at Swallow Pond on 1st (GPK), 43 at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM), 40 at Hedgeley GP on 23rd (TRD/JD), 31-32 at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa) and Lynemouth Flash (IDR), 26 at Hauxley NR (HRS), ten to 18 at Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Castron, East Chevington and Howdon, and eight at Monks' House Pool. Three to six were also at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Big Waters and Druridge Pools, and one to two at Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Grindon Lough, Linden Hall and Marden Quarry.

A Gadwall
Gosforth Subsidence Pond
Mike Carr
8th March



Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Numbers at Grindon Lough peaked at 522 on 11th, with 350+ remaining on 25th-26th (PRM). Other peak site counts were 450 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 400 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (MKi), 250+ at Druridge Pools on 23rd (MN), 250 at Fenham Flats on 7th (BS), 200 at Budle Bay (KWY) and 200 at Newham (RA). Counts of 100-180 came from Bothal Pond, the Coquet Estuary, Hauxley Reserve and Hedgeley GP, and 20-54 were at the Aln Estuary, Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Low Newton, New Water Haugh, Warkworth Lane Pond, West Stobswood Pool and Woodhorn Flashes. Groups of ten to 16 were also at Coanwood, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Lynemouth Flash and Plenmeller Common.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

A drake, also reported last month, was again at Grindon Lough on 2nd and was noted regularly until 23rd (SJH *et al.*).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Moderate numbers included 70 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 6th (DM), 37 at Castle Island on 15th (DM/PJA), 37 at Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR), 33-35 at Grindon Lough (SJH), Hauxley Reserve (HRS), the River Tweed between A1-Scottish border (TBr), and Whiteadder Water (TBr), 24 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) and 12-17 at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Holy Island and Lynemouth Flash. One to eight were at 19 further scattered sites.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

19 were at Elwick, Lindisfarne NNR on 7th (BS), three at Big Waters on 8th (CDB), two at Cresswell Pond on 18th (TRD/JD), two at Druridge Pools on 2nd-3rd and 14th (TRD/MSH/IDR), and a pair at Grindon Lough between 11th-26th (PRM *et al.*).

Pintail
Big Waters
early morning on 8th March
Chris Barlow

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

Numbers at Grindon Lough peaked at 338 on 11th but fell to 130+ by 25th-26th (PRM), 250 were at Budle Bay on 8th and 21st (DF/KWY), 130 at Howdon on 15th (CB), 52-73 at the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Bothal Pond (TD), Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), Druridge Pools (IDR), and Holy Island 'rocket fields' (IK). Groups of 20-49 were at Arcot, Backworth and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Big Waters, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's Wetland, while 12-19 were at Buston Links, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Lynemouth Flash and the Tweed Estuary. One to eight were at a further ten sites.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak site counts were 20 at Bothal Pond on 3rd (TF), 20 at Holywell Pond on 14th and 16th (GPK/KWY), 14 at Woodhorn Flashes on 14th (AP), five at Linton Ponds on 7th and 15th (TF/CDH), and three to four at Arcot Pond (STH), Big Waters (GB) Grindon Lough (PRM/MRS) and Killingworth Lake (LJM). One to two were also at Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Subsidence Pond and Greenlee Lough.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

A drake was at Castron on 15th (TRD) and Branton GP on 29th (IBDa/KDa).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Largest counts were 64 at Killingworth Lake on 4th (LJM), 58 at Swallow Pond on 1st (GPK), 26 at Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR), 26 at QEII CP Lake on 15th (CDH), 20-22 at Grindon Lough (PRM/MRS) and 'Northumberlandia', Cramlington (LJM), and ten to 19 at Arcot, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holburn Moss, Newcastle Leazes Park and Woodhorn Flashes. One to nine were also at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Bank's and Coanwood Ponds, Haughton Strother GP, Lynmouth Flash, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Paddy Freeman's Lake (Heaton).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Three were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 4th and one there on 20th (TB), and three were at Cresswell Pond on 6th and two there on 12th (ADMc). Singles were at Big Waters on 17th-18th (GB), Bothal Pond between 14th-31st (TF *et al.*), Hallington Reservoir on 9th (MR), Linton Ponds on 20th (TB) and Swallow Pond between 1st-23rd (GPK *et al.*).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

55 were at Holy Island on 15th (MJC), 45 at Seahouses on 11th (LJM), 43 at Spittal Bay on 11th (MHu), and 26-35 at the Blyth Estuary, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and North Shields Fish Quay. Four to nine were off Cresswell and Whitley Bay and at the Wansbeck Estuary, and one off Druridge.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N at Budle Point on 8th (RA) and one was off Stag Rocks on 4th (DF).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

About 1,000 were at Stag Rocks on 5th, and 200-470 were in the Budle Point-Stag Rocks area between 4th-21st (RA/DF). Elsewhere, 60 were at Alnmouth-Warkworth on 18th and 25th (RPo/CSa), 55 at Cocklawburn on 23rd (MHu), 35 off Druridge Links (IDR) and ten at Whitley Bay.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

35 (29 drakes) were at Budle Point-Stag Rocks on 6th (DF/MH), 35 were off Beal saltmarsh on 8th (RA), 20 between Goswick-Cocklawburn on 17th (BS), two at Fenham Flats on 17th (BS) and one there on 18th (RA), and two at Whitley Bay on 29th (IJ). An interesting record involved a drake discovered on a 'flash' pool at East Hartford on 3rd. The bird was seen to dive frequently and remained until 13th (GMI *et al.*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Peak counts were 43 at QEII CP Lake on 15th (CDH), 38 at East Chevington north pool on 8th (MH), 32 at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 26th (MHu), 22-29 at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa), Grindon Lough (PRM) and Yarrow Slake (MHu), and ten to 18 at Big Waters, Castron, Castle Island, Colt Crag and Hallington Reservoirs, Hedgeley GP and Killingworth Lake. Four to nine were also at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Druridge Pools, Howick and West Ord, and one to two at Budle Bay, Derwent Reservoir, Fenham Flats, Greenlee Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Linton and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Milkhope Lake, Monks' House Pool and Park Dam. Display was noted at Big Waters (GB) and copulation at Grindon Lough (PRM).

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

The overwintering 'redhead' was at Widdrington Moor Lake until 21st (TF/JFa/MN *et al.*). A 'redhead' was also at Castron on 15th-16th (TRD/JD).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

37 (six drakes) were at Close House on 30th (MH) and 27 (12 drakes) were noted there on 23rd (AA). Much smaller numbers were recorded elsewhere, with five at West Ord on 12th (MHu), and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir, Greenlee Lough, Hepple, Killingworth Lake, Melkridge and Rothbury (two sites). One to two were also at Allenbanks, Castron, Chollerton, Cocklawburn Pond, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Houxy, Low Alwinton, Smalesmouth, Warden, Wark, Warkworth and Wooler.



A Goosander by Chris Barlow at Killingworth Lakes on 23rd March

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

A pair flew N at Whitley Bay on 29th (JBU). 11 were off Druridge Links on 14th (IDR), ten at Stag Rocks on 4th and 8th (DF/KWY), nine at East Chevington north pool on 19th (AJR), seven at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (MN), five at Holy Island (MJC) and three at Cresswell Pond (TRD/JD). One to two were also at Budle Bay, Castle Island, New Water Haugh, Spittal Bay, Stag Rocks and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

A good count of 17 males was made at Far Town (Slaggyford) on 3rd, mainly feeding but also with some half-hearted lekking (JSe). Numbers at Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) peaked at 11 (nine males and two greyhens) on 18th (SJH), four males and a single female were at Westburnhope on 6th (AJ) and one to four birds were at Coanwood Common, High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale), Plenmeller Common, Ridley Common and Swinhope Shield (Allendale).

A Black Grouse
Westburnhope
Alan Janes
6th March



Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

At least 30 were at Plenmeller Common on 26th (PRM) whilst at Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) many were displaying on 4th with a peak count of 22 there on 18th (SJH). In the Cheviots "large numbers" were reported at the top of Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) on 21st with at least 20 present (CDB). 14 were at High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale) on 4th (SJH), between one to nine were at Plenmeller Common on various dates and a pair were seen near the "golf ball" on Alnwick Moor.



A Red Grouse on Alnwick Moor by Tim Dean on 22nd March

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Four were at Fellhouse Farm (Plenmeller) on 18th (SJH), three at Castron, pairs at Beukley, Bolton, Druridge Lane and Melkridge and single birds at Allenbanks NT, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Budle Point and Hepple.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

At Whittle Dene four were found during a Willow Tit survey on 4th (AJ). Four were also at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) and Howick. Pairs were reported from Branton GP, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell Pond, Crowhall Farm (Holywell), Ellington, Elwick, Glororum, Houxy, Howick Hall Gardens and Rowley Burn (Hexhamshire). A single bird was at Druridge Pools & Links.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

22 was a good count from Lynemouth Flash on 2nd (TB), as was 12 at Chugdon Wood on 31st (IDR). Elsewhere six was the peak at Druridge Pools and Links, three were in Ellington Dene, two were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) and Cresswell Hall Woods whilst a single was at Castle Island.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

This winter's higher than average county presence continued until early in the month with 35 at Beal Saltmarsh on 8th (RA), 29 along the stretch of coast from Goswick-Cocklawburn on 17th (BS), 21 in Lynemouth Bay on 3rd (MSH) and Druridge Bay peaking at 18 on 2nd (TRD). 11 were at Stag Rocks on 5th and, as numbers dwindled on later dates, one to seven were reported from many other coastal locations.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Three were along the stretch of coast from Goswick-Cocklawburn on 17th (BS) and a single was at Budle Point on 21st (RS).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

The stretch of coast from Goswick-Cocklawburn produced a good count of five birds on 17th (BS). One was at Beal Saltmarsh on 8th (RA) and a summer-plumaged individual headed S past St. Mary's on 4th (ASJ).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

A total of 60 birds were in the Cullernose Point (Craster) area on 6th with 18 at the Point itself and 42 at the first cove about a half km further south (MKi). 36 were at Coves Haven (Holy Island), mostly in pairs on the breeding cliff, on 22nd (IK). 19 were on the cliffs at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 6th (MHu), 15 were at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 31st and ten at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 29th. Five or fewer were at Annstead (Seahouses), Dunstanburgh Castle and Lynemouth Bay.



A Fulmar at Cullernose Point by Tim Dean on 5th March

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Birds were recorded at 25 potential breeding sites. Seven were at East Chevington North Pool on 8th with two in breeding plumage, trilling and engaging in usual breeding aggro (MH). Six were at Caistron on two separate dates (JD) and six were also at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) (TD). Three to four, with many birds noted trilling, were at Arcot Pond, Blyth Estuary, Boulmer (on the sea), Coanwood Pond, Howick Hall, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds, Low Newton, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), QE11 CP and Whiteadder Water. One to two were at Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Beal Saltmarsh, Big Waters NWT, Colt Crag Reservoir, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Grindon Lough, Kirkharle, Longframlington Quarry, Middle Ord Pond (Berwick), Tumbleton Lake (Cragside) and Woodhorn Flashes.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Birds returned to breeding sites with seven at Big Waters NWT having several fights in the middle of the lake and three separate pairs displaying to each other by 8th (CDB) with a further bird taking the total number to eight birds present on 18th (GB). Three pairs were at East Chevington North Pool by 19th (AJR) and four birds were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 20th (TB). One to three birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Branton GP, Caistron, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother, Killingworth Lake, Linton Ponds and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and also on the sea at Rockcliffe, Tynemouth and Warkworth Beach.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Numbers reduced this month as birds left the county for breeding grounds. Up to seven were still present at Stag Rocks on 5th (DF), six at Budle Point on 21st and three at Beal Saltmarsh on 8th (RA).

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

After a possible sighting at Branton GP on 5th (IBDa) one was seen flying W at 50ft at Spindlestone on 7th (JPL) and then two were watched soaring, heading NW, over St Mary's on 27th (ASJ).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The Druridge Pools area held good numbers early in the month with a peak of 29 on 6th and some nest building observed (IDR). 12 were at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 7th (MHu), five were watched heading into a wood at Ashington on 15th (TB) and four were at Gosforth on 25th. One to three were reported from many other sites, with birds noted back at nests at Grindon Hill, Haughton Castle, Houxty, Howick Hall, the R. Coquet Lower Wear and Whiteside.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

A well-watched individual was at Longhirst Flash from 14th-20th (IF/MN/TB/TF/JFa *et al.*) and then Cresswell Pond on 27th (IF).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The highest count at Lindisfarne NNR was three at Beal Saltmarsh on 8th (RA). Up to two birds were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond all month and singles were at Bolton, Budle Point, Buston Links (Alnmouth), Caistron, Fenham-le-Moor, Longhirst Flash, Lynemouth Flash, Middleton, Monks' House Pool, Sleekburn and Warkworth Gut.



A Little Egret at Gosforth Subsidence Pond by Mike Carr on 30th March

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Strong northerly movement on 20th was evidenced by counts of 200+ past Howick in 30 minutes (TRD/JD), 484 per hour in a total of 605 N past Annstead (Seahouses) and 1,300 per hour N at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) (MHu). Elsewhere, 45 flew N at Cullercoats Bay in 45 minutes on 28th (MN) and one to 15 were watched, mainly heading N, at several other locations on various dates.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Numbers reduced as birds returned to their breeding sites and eleven adults at Blyth South Harbour on 3rd was the largest count (LJM). At Berwick eight were on the cliffs at Needles Eye on 6th, seven at Meadow Haven on 8th and three in Spittal Bay on 11th (MHu). Singles were at Cullernose Point, Druridge Pools and Links and St Mary's.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

61 were at North Shields Fish Quay on 6th (MN), Blyth South Harbour peaked at 45 on 3rd (LJM) and 16 was the monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo). At Berwick 12 were roosting at Meadow Haven on 8th and, on 22nd, 12 were in a group fishing in a line across the R. Tweed (MHu). Two of the seven birds at Greenlee Lough on 4th showed characteristics of *sinensis* race birds (MRS). Seven was the peak at Castle Island on 15th (DM) and one to four were at several further locations including two *sinensis* birds at Linden Hall (Longhorsley).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

On 26th a bird flew up the river at Melkridge (River S Tyne) (SJH).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Low Cocklaw (Berwick) had a maximum count of two birds during March (TBr). Two females were displaying at Slaley Forest on 13th (PCI), two birds, a male and female, were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th (IDR) and two birds were at Humshaugh on 28th (SW). Single birds were noted at 23 sites throughout the month



A Sparrowhawk has a meal in Alan Jack's Marden garden on 19th March

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Two birds were displaying near Colt Crag Reservoir on 16th (MR). Single birds were at Harwood Forest on 6th (TB/JD), 15th (CDB) and 26th (TRD). Other single birds were noted at Rothbury on 22nd (TRD/JD) and near Sipton Burn also on 22nd (ADMc). Single birds were also seen at three confidential sites including a 2nd calendar year bird mobbing a ringtail Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*. An escapee complete with jesses, looking superficially like a Goshawk but possibly not a pure bird, was at Big Waters NWT on 8th (GB).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Four birds, a female, an adult male and two immature males, were at South Pool (East Chevington) with some sky dancing by the male (TRB). Three birds, a female with two males, were seen sky dancing on 23rd (MH). Up to two birds were noted there on several dates (TRD/JD/MH/MN). Other single birds were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 3rd, 14th and 20th (TB/MN), Newham on 23rd (RA) and at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 25th (TB).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

An adult male flew along a ridge being mobbed by a Goshawk at a confidential site on 10th (MH/AA).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Nine sightings involved at least six birds on 23rd at Carterway Heads (IFo), with three birds there on 21st and two on 4th and 16th (lfo). Single birds were noted near Whittle Dene on 4th (PCF), Derwent Reservoir on 8th and 31st (IFo), Snods Edge and Weetwood (Wooler) on 9th (lfo/DF) and one flew South over the estuary at Alnmouth on 10th (MH/AA). On 12th birds were seen at Minsteracres and Low Waskerley (AJ/AJN/IFo), Carterway Heads on 13th (IFo), Slaley Forest on 13th - 15th (PCI/RMH), Holburn Moss on 16th (RA), Chain Bridge (Horncliffe) on 18th (MHu) and Blanchland Moor on 20th (PCI). Singles were also observed at Causey Hill (Hexham) on 21st (PRC) and at a confidential site in the north of the county (EHa); one flew S along the promenade at Whitley Bay on 23rd (IJ) and at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 27th (IFo).

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

On 31st an immature bird was being mobbed by four Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo* at Howick (JAR).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

12 birds involving six pairs displayed over Slaley Forest throughout the morning of 20th (PCI). A minimum of eight birds was noted at Widdrington Moor Lake on 21st (TF/JFa) and eight birds involving four pairs were at Melkridge (River South Tyne) on 30th and 31st (SJH). Seven birds were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR) and six birds were at Hartburn on 2nd (TD) and at the Winters Gibbet (Harwood) and Slaley Forest on 13th (EC/PCI). Five birds were noted at Belford Moor on 16th (DF) and at Humshaugh on 29th (SW). One to four birds were noted at over 40 sites this month.



A Buzzard quarters Longhoughton Quarry by Tim Dean on 22nd March

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were at Holy Island on 22nd (MJC), while two birds regularly showed in front of the main hide at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) throughout the month (GPK). Two birds were at South Pool (East Chevington) on 3rd (MN), two in courtship at Ellington Pond on 6th (IDR), East Chevington on 18th (TRD/JD) and at the North Pool (East Chevington) on 20th (TB). A confiding bird was at Northumberland Park (North Shields) throughout the month. Other single birds were either seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holywell Pond, Longhirst Flash, Low Newton, St Mary's Wetland and a bird was flushed from a garden in Longhoughton on 23rd (BS).



A Water Rail gave exceptionally close views in Northumberland Park
Jack Bucknall on 22nd March

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

17 birds at Castle Island (Ashington) on 15th (DM) and 15 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 6th (DM) were the highest counts. Other high counts involved eight at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 6th (DM), at Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR) and at Middle Ord Pond (Berwick) on 22nd (MHu), six birds at Benton (Newcastle) on 20th (CDH), five at Hauxley NWT on 15th (HRS) and Holy Island on 22nd (MJC). One to four birds were at 12 sites during March.



A Moorhen at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 2nd March

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest counts this month were 41 at QEII CP on 15th (CDH), 38 at Killingworth Lake on 4th (LJM) and 30 at Bothal Pond on 22nd (TD). Other high counts were 20 at Arcot Pond on 5th (DM), 17 at Woodhorn Flashes on 15th (CDH), 16 at Arcot Pond on 17th (LJM) and 13 at Linton Ponds on 15th (CDH). One to ten were noted at Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools NR, Ellington Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Grindon Lough, Howick, Howick Hall, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Longhoughton, Middle Ord Pond (Berwick), Monks' House Pool and at Park Dam.

Crane *Grus grus*

A bird was at Middleton from the 5th till the 7th (ASJ/TRD/JD/TB/AJ/TW) and three birds were flying in a NE direction at Amble South Jetty. They then flew out to sea about 600 yards, circled and rose (PRC).



The Middleton Crane by Alan Jack on 3rd March

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Derwent Reservoir had the highest number of birds, with a site record of 219 on 1st; the flock had dwindled to 22 by 26th (IFo). There were 128 at Cocklawburn on 4th (MHu) and 102 at Beal Point, Lindisfarne on 15th (MJC). 87 were noted foraging in a riverside field at Melkridge on 20th (SJH) and there were 72 at West Ord (Berwick) on 12th (MHu) and 70 on the Blyth Estuary on 5th and 9th (MN). Caistron had 66 on 7th (JD) and St Mary's Island had 55 on 3rd (MSH). Flocks below 50 were reported from the Aln Estuary, the Tweed at the A1 border, Humshaugh, Lynemouth Flash, Berwick golf course, Snab Point, Cresswell, Hauxley NWT, East Hartford and Lynemouth Bay. Pairs were seen throughout the county at Plenmeller Common, Coanwood Common, Wark, Allenheads, Airy Holm Reservoir, Hexham and Allen Banks, with a maximum 23 pairs between High Knock Shield and Knockburn (Allendale) on 18th (AJR). One or two pairs were present at the Freeman Hospital and Tyneview Park area of Benton (Newcastle) during the month (LMi, CDH), with display flights observed in Heaton and Gosforth on 24th (PCI, MJC).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The maximum numbers recorded were 21 at the Blyth Estuary on 20th (ASJ, MN) and 11 at Cresswell Pond on 27th (IF). A single bird made an early return to Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TRD).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest flock was at the South Tyne, Melkridge, with approximately 700 on 28th (SJH). There were 300 at Allendale on 22nd (ASJ), where display was taking place, and 270 at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRM). Several large groups, amounting to 250 birds, were at Hammershields near Allenheads on 18th (SJH). There were flocks of 100 at Rowleyburn (Hexhamshire) and Derwent Reservoir on 4th (AJH, IFo) and at Coanwood Common on 2nd (SJH), where there were also 85 birds displaying. There were smaller flocks of 60 at Hollin Green, near Keenley on 18th (SJH), 50 at Slaley on 15th and 20th (PCI), and 44 at Whittle Dene on 4th (AJ). Caistron had an estimated 30 pairs on 25th (AJR) and Plenmeller Common had 20 pairs on 26th (PRM). Display was noted in smaller groups throughout the county, including Druridge Pools, Killingworth Moor, Quarry House Moor, Straight Lonnen on Holy Island, Low Hazelrigg and Weetwood (Wooler).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Plenmeller Common had the largest flock, with approximately 700 on 16th (SJH), dwindling to two pairs by 26th (PRM). There were 500 at Hammershields, near Allenheads on 4th (SJH) and 400 at Grindon Lough on 22nd (ASJ). Allendale had 350 on 22nd (ASJ), Backworth Pond had 240 on 13th (MNC) and there were 200 at Smallburn (Longhorsley) on 27th (AB/LB). The only coastal record came from Boulmer, where there was a flock of 178 on 8th (BS). There were 81 at Coanwood Common on 2nd (SJH), 45 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), and 40 S over Pegswood on 8th (TB). Smaller numbers were recorded at Westburnhope on 6th (AJ), where display was noted, the South Tyne at Melkridge, Beacon Hill and Alexandra Park at Cramlington, and Prestwick Carr. Four birds were observed feeding on the sports field at the Royal Grammar School in Jesmond, Newcastle on 5th (GB).



Golden Plover return to Upper Allendale by John Richards on 18th March

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The highest count came from the saltmarsh at Beal, Lindisfarne NNR, with 300 on 8th (RA). There were 48 at Boulmer on 14th (BS) and six at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The maximum numbers recorded were 35 at the high-tide roost by the Chevington Burn on 5th (MH), 26 at Budle Bay on 7th (CGK) and 17 at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM). Boulmer had eight birds on 22nd (TRD/JD). A pair with a male displaying was observed on the shore near Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 22nd (MJC).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Singles were noted in flight and calling over Tynemouth on 29th (CB), the South Tyne at Melkridge on 30th (SJH), and the North Tyne at Wark on 31st (PRM).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The largest flocks were at Boulmer with 305 on 2nd (BS) and Budle Bay with 300 on 10th (DGB). There were 170 at the Aln Estuary on 17th (RPo) and Druridge on 23rd (CB). 150 were feeding on pasture at Slaley on 20th (PCI) and there were 104 at Cocklawburn on 13th (MHu). Cresswell Pond had 80 on 2nd (TRD), Prestwick Carr had 70 on 15th (MRS) and there were 64 in the mast field at Old Hartley on 3rd (LJM). The maximum count from Allendale was 60 on 22nd (ASJ), where birds were observed displaying. There were 52 at the Blyth Estuary on 9th (MN), 50 in a field near Church Pond at Woodhorn on 14th (AP), 47 at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRM) and 45 at Howdon on 23rd (CB). 44 were at Rowleyburn (Hexhamshire) on 4th (AJH) and 42 were at Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary on 7th (MHu), at Caistron on 7th (JD) and at Dinnington on 20th (PCF). Smaller flocks were reported at Howick, Holywell Pond, Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin, Hammershield near Allendale, and Plenmeller Common. Display was noted at Westburnhope on 6th (AJ), Quarry House Moor on 18th (DF) and Longhorsley Moor on 27th (AB/LB).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The highest count was 33 at Boulmer on 2nd (BS). There were three birds at Little Beach (Berwick) on 15th (MHu). The Coquet Estuary had three birds on 27th (RPo) and two on 13th (CSa), and a single bird was at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The largest flocks were at Druridge Pools, with 15 on 31st (ADMc) and Grindon Lough, with 13 on 22nd–23rd (ADMc, SJH, JBu). There were eight at the Coquet Estuary on 23rd (CSa), five at Howdon on 26th (CB) and one at Holywell Grange on 14th (GPK).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The Hadston/Bondicarr area held the highest numbers with 69 counted on 10th (MH/AA). At North Shields Fish Quay, the highest count in March was 41 made on 13th (DRW). Other reports were 38 at Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary), 24 at the breakwater at Newbiggin on 19th (STH), 15 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (TRD/JD), 12 at Holy Island north shore on 19th (RPo) and 10 at Dunstanburgh Castle on 5th (TRD/JD). One-eight were at Boghall Rocks (Cresswell), Boulmer, Cocklawburn, and Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn).



A Turnstone at Newbiggin by Colin Bradshaw on 9th March

Knot *Calidris canutus*

No reports were received from Lindisfarne this month so the numbers reported were much lower with a minimum of 30 at St Mary's on 13th (MSH/AC) being the highest reported. At the River Coquet Estuary the peak was 20 on 23rd (CSa), with eight reported from nearby Amble Braid on 2nd (TRD). Eight were also at Boulmer on 2nd (BS) with a single bird at Cresswell Pond on 21st (TB).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

The quartet reported last month at Druridge Pools was reported up to 21st (TF/JFa/IDR *et al.*) with two there on 23rd (MN).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The flock wintering at Boulmer increased to a maximum of 233 on 14th (BS) reducing to a minimum of 100 (including a bird ringed on Orkney) by 22nd (TF/JFa). Other counts were 80 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 14th (AP), 66 at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 19th (RPo), 47 at Warkworth beach on 13th (CSa), a minimum of 45 at St Mary's Island on 5th (MSH) and a single at Cresswell Pond on 18th (TRD/JD).



Sanderlings huddle at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 16th March

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Much lower numbers were reported compared to last month with the peak count being 400 at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 8th (RA). Other three-figure counts were 168 at the River Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM) and 133 at Boulmer on 8th (BS). Approximately 50 were at Amble Braid on 2nd (TRD), a minimum of 30 were at St Mary's on 3rd (MSH), 12 were present at Lynemouth Flash on 13th (TB) and also at Boulmer on 22nd (TRD/JD). Five to eight were at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools on 18th and 14th.



An interesting Dunlin at Druridge Bay photographed by Trevor Basey on 8th March

Tim Dean, County Recorder, commented;

"The potential Curlew Sandpiper is an extreme example of the 'alpina' race of Dunlin. These long-billed birds can give the appearance of Curlew Sandpiper as they can show a tapered bill. However key features shown in the photo are the shorter legs than Curlew Sandpiper, bill too thick and not thinner at tip, supercilium not distinct enough, buff ear coverts a feature of 'alpina'. Obviously a key feature would have been the white rump if a genuine Curlew Sandpiper.

There have only ever been three wintering records of Curlew Sandpiper in Northumberland. Only a handful on a national scale this winter with the only one this March in UK being one in early March in Cornwall."

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The regular flock at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) reached 126 on 10th (DF). At Boulmer the peak count was 57 on 14th (BS), 29 were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 31st (AP), 15 were seen at Cullercoats on 24th (MN) and 12 were at Tynemouth on 13th (DRW). Elsewhere during the month two-nine were present at Dunstanburgh Castle, Howick, Rockcliffe (Whitley bay), Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) and St Mary's Island.

A Purple Sandpiper
Newbiggin
by Colin Bradshaw on 20th March



Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Singles were reported from nine localities this month with birds seen at Chollerford, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools and Links, Howick, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Rothley, Slaley Hall (roding) and Widehope.

Jack Snipe *Limnocyptes minimus*

Singles were at Beal Saltmarsh on 8th (RA), Monks' House Pool on 21st (RA) and Gosforth Pond on 28th and 30th (MJC).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The Monks' House Pool concentration remained from last month, with 24 reported on 21st (RA). Double-figure counts were received from Big Waters, with 11 on 8th (GB), Arcot Pond with ten also seen on 8th (LJM) and Howdon with ten on 20th (CB). Groups of less than ten included seven at Gosforth Subsidence Pond, six at St Mary's Wetland, four at Low Cocklaw (Berwick), three at both Druridge Pools and Backworth Pond and singles at Derwent Reservoir and Kirkharle (nr Capheaton). Birds were back on territory in several inland areas with three pairs on Plenmeller Common on 26th (PRM), five displaying in Allendale on 22nd (ASJ), three 'drumming' at Meadow Cottage (Allenheads) and singles 'drumming' at High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale), Codlaw Hill (Acomb) and Grindon Lough.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at Hedgeley GP on 6th (IBDa/KDa) with a single reported on 23rd (TRD/JD). Singles were seen at Berwick Hill Bridge on 4th and 18th (AHB), Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd and 9th (MR) and Longhirst Flash from 3rd to 31st (TF/TB).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The highest counts received this month were from Budle Bay with 300 on 8th (RA), 207 were at Howdon on 26th (CB) and 200 at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ). The Druridge Pools and Links area held 84 on 14th (IDR), 80 were seen at the River Blyth Estuary 9th-20th (MN), 64 were at Yarrow Slake (River Tweed) on 7th (MHu) and 64 were at Newbiggin breakwater on 19th (STH). Other significant coastal counts were 50 at Cullercoats on 26th (MN) and 30 at Lynemouth Flash on 2nd (TB). Birds were visible in inland breeding areas, with 20 at Allendale (6 displaying) on 22nd (ASJ), 15 at Hammersfield (nr Allenheads) on 18th (SJH), a maximum of 11 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), five at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo) and four at Melkridge (River South Tyne) on 29th (SJH). Single pairs were at Coatenhill Reservoir (AJR), Plenmeller Common (PRM) and Plenmeller Fellhouse farm (SJH). One to 16 were seen/heard at 13 mainly coastal or lowland sites.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Passage movement N was noted on a number of days with a maximum of at least 500 per hour at Tynemouth on 29th (CB) and lesser rates of 313 per hour at Annstead on 20th (DF) and 60-100 per hour at Cullercoats Bay, Druridge Bay, Howick and Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on other dates from 13th-22nd. On the cliffs at Howick, 300 were counted on the 19th and elsewhere up to 100 were at Rockcliffe and 30 at Cullernose Point. Unusual inland records came from Hallington Reservoir with 18 on 9th (MR) and a single at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM). On 6th, birds seen on the city centre breeding sites were four on the Tyne Bridge and one at Dean St. railway bridge (DM).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest gatherings were 580 at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM) and 335 in the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM). At other sites, 100-200 were recorded at Bothal Pond, Hallington Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, over the breeding site at Plenmeller Common and at the QEII CP Lake with 30-80 at Alexandra Park (Cramlington), Budle Point, Castle Island, Druridge Pools and Exhibition Park. Smaller numbers were at eight other localities and Scottish-ringed birds were recorded at High Heaton and Killingworth Lake with a Norwegian-ringed individual also at Killingworth Lake (CDB/LMi).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A single adult bird at St Mary's Island on 6th (MSH) was the only sighting.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

The wintering population had largely moved away to their summer quarters but nine still lingered at Newbiggin until 27th where, at Quarry Cottage, nine, including eight adults in full summer plumage, fed on bread (RS). One to two were noted at other localities away from Newbiggin including Beal saltmarsh, Boulmer, Branton GP, Elwick, Holy Island and Howdon, A fully-plumaged pair at Druridge Pools on 18th were possibly a breeding pair en-route to Coquet Island.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Large numbers passed through the county en-route to their breeding grounds, in Scotland or on the continent, and concentrations of 1,500 were in fields east of Grindon Lough on 14th (CB) with ca.1,000 in two groups following cultivators working in arable fields at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (EC). Smaller groups of 300-600 were counted at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Grindon Lough, Hexham Racecourse, West Woodburn and Whittingham and 100-250 were at Acomb, Budle Bay, Houxty and Middleton. Up to 100 were at a further eight sites.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Very few reports were received with a maximum of five at Prestwick Carr and one to three at Budle Point, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Lynemouth Bay, Plenmeller Common and Wark (North Tyne).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

The first-winter bird which has wintered at the North Shields Fish Quay was again seen there regularly until at least 23rd (MN *et al.*) and an immature seen passing over Tynemouth on 26th was possibly the same individual (DRW). The third-winter bird reported intermittently during the past two months at Big Waters was seen at Hazelrigg on 27th and 31st (GB)

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A large gathering of 1,250 roosted off the Panama Gardens (Whitley Bay) on 1st (BS), 290 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th (MR), 100-200 in the Blyth Estuary, Budle Point and West Ord (Berwick) and 20-90 at Big Waters, Castle Island, East Hartford Flashes, Hallington Reservoir, the QEII CP Lake and Snab Point (Cresswell). Up to ten were at 11 other localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The seasonal influx continued and migration was witnessed at Budle Point on a number of days throughout (RA). The largest counts, all in the second half of the month, were 23 at Swallow Pond (GPK), 17 at Big Waters (GB) and 14 at Prestwick Carr (PCF). Nine were in a gull roost at Whitley Bay on 1st and three to six were at Budle Bay, Castle Island, Chapel House (Newcastle), Cramlington, Davy Bank (Wallsend), Grindon Lough, Hedgley GP, New Water Haugh (River Tweed) and the QEII CP lake. One to two were at a further 15, mainly inland, sites. Pairs were noted at a number of potential breeding sites on urban buildings.



A Lesser Black-backed Gull at QEII Park on 23rd March by Colin Bradshaw

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

The first sightings of the year were singles, one flying N at Stag Rocks on 17th (DF) and one at Cresswell Pond on 23rd (SRB).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

At Needles Eye (Berwick) on 6th, 58 were on the cliffs with a further 68 on the sea nearby (MHu) and elsewhere, three to six were offshore at Druridge Pools, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) and St Mary's Island.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At Needles Eye (Berwick) 50 were present on 3rd (SVM) and on 6th, 22 were on the cliffs there (MHu). One to four were at six other coastal sites from Holy Island-Druridge Bay.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Two were sighted off Budle Point on 21st (RA).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

On 6th 123 were at Old Eldon Square (Newcastle) (DM), 56 at ASDA (Gosforth) on 3rd with 33 there on 6th (ADM/DM), 37 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 15th, five at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 5th and present at Jesmond Dene during the month.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Well reported with 41 at Big Waters on 30th and 25 there on 8th (GB), 14 at Holywell Dene on 2nd (CB) with 12 at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 4th and Gosforth on 30th (TB/MJC). Nine were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 30th, six at Swinhope Shiel (Allendale) on 18th, Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 22nd and Melkridge (S.Tyne) on 31st with four at seven other locations. One to three were at 16 other widespread localities.



A Stock Dove in Northumberland Park by Alan Jack on 9th March

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Approximated large counts were:- 1,000+ at Whittingham on 22nd (CW), 800 East Learmouth and 500 at Mindrum on 8th (JR), 400 at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 2nd (LJM), 160 at Warden on 15th (SW), 116 at Middle Ord Pond (Berwick) on 29th (MHu) with 100 at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) on 4th and Gosforth on 25th (SJH/ADM). Ten to 80 were at eight locations and one to nine at a further three.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Three were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 30th was the high count (NFO) with two at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th (IDR) and singles at five other locations.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

All reports were of singles: at Holy Island on 5th, Big Waters NWT on 8th, Druridge Pools and Links on 22nd, Brocolitia on 27th, Cresswell Hall Woods on 27th and Dinnington on 30th. There were two road casualties on the A1 on 5th & 6th. One was in a box at Harwood on 7th (ADMc) and a pair in SE Northumberland had taken over a nest site used last year by Little Owl (AHB).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two males and a female called at Ellington on 25th (TB) and two called at Howick throughout the month with one calling at 3pm on 19th (JR). One was at a garden nest box at Stamfordham on 6th with singles, generally calling, at Harbottle Hills on 9th, Howick Hall gardens on 13th and 20th (also at mid-day), Melkridge on 20th, Letah Wood (Hexham) on 23rd, Ellington Colliery on 25th, Low Buston on 26th and Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 27th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Singles were at Holystone (Wallsend) on 4th, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 5th, Druridge Pools and links on 6th and Embleton on 22nd.

Asio sp One came over the sea at Warkworth beach on 18th and landed on Coquet Island (CSa).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Three were at Holywell on 9th and at St Mary's Wetland on 14th with two there on 11th and 13th (ASJ/IJ/AC). Singles were at St Mary's Island on two other dates, Holywell Pond on 16th and Prestwick Carr on 17th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Birds were present all month at Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Gosforth (MNC/MJC) with singles also at East Chevington on 3rd, Bywell Bridge on 5th, Jesmond Dene & Howick Burn lake on 8th, Ponteland Park on 9th, Tyneview Park (Benton) on 14th, Branton GP on 22nd and Cresswell Pond on 26th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

They were well reported as birds drummed with six (two drumming) at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 18th, five drumming at Low Cocklaw (Berwick), this being the maximum count during the month (PRM/TBr), and three at Ellington on 31st (TB). A pair were at Yearle on 3rd with two at Derwent Reservoir on the same date, Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 4th, Howick and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 5th, Howick Hall on 19th, Lincoln Hill on 25th and Gosforth on 26th. One drummed all month at Jesmond Dene with singles at 21 other widespread localities.

A Great Spotted Woodpecker at Tynemouth
by Colin Bradshaw on 30th March

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Most reports were of 'yaffling' with two at Letah Woods (Hexham) on 23rd (JBu) and singles at Gosforth Park NR on 9th, Houxty on 11th, Chirdon Bridge on 14th, Slaley Forest on 20th, Hexham & Harthope Valley on 21st and Slaley Hall on 26th & 27th. One passed through Lemmington Hall (Edlingham) on 27th and 28th, with one at Rothbury and Weetslade CP on 30th.

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

Three birds, including a pair, were at Whiteadder Water throughout the month (TBr); three birds were also seen at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 14th (MN). Two birds were seen at Ellington throughout the month and two birds were also at Blanchland Moor, Buston Links (Alnmouth), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Hips Heugh (Howick), Howdon, Milkwell (Corbridge), Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Longhorsley Moor, Prestwick Carr and Widdrington Moor Lake. Single birds were at 13 sites during the month.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Three sub-adult females were together in the dunes at Snook House (Holy Island) on 6th, and the observer reports that this is the first time in over 40 years watching locally that he has come across three birds together in the winter (IK). Single birds were noted at six inland sites and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 4th (TB), Boulmer on 11th (BS), Holy Island on 15th (MJC) and at Low Steads (Longhoughton) on 22nd (TF/JFa).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were seen patrolling the cliffs at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin-by-the-Sea) on 1st and 2nd (RS) and two birds were in the Budle Bay area on 13th and 16th (DF/RA). Single birds were at Beal Point, Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon), Boulmer, Budle Bay, Chapel House (Newcastle), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Druridge Pools, Hepple, Lynemouth Flash, Melkridge (River S Tyne), Slaley, Spindlestone Woods and Tynemouth.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Up to 8 were at Gosforth all month (MJC) with two to three on 27th and 29th (ADM) and two at Cochrane Park on 22nd (PCI). One visited a garden at Castle Hill (Berwick) on 5th (BWG) being seen at roost at East Ord on the same day and at Castle Hills on 26th (MHu).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

The only report was of one at Kirkharle on 13th (EC) although social media reports suggest it was there for a longer period.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Four were at Howick Hall on 19th and at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th (Pha/AHa/IDR) with three at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 2nd, Howick on 10th and Holywell Dene on 16th. Two were at nine other locations with singles at a further nine.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A pre-roost gathering of 44 on 25th was at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) (KWY) with ten the highest count for years at a Longbenton Garden (ADM). Six were at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale) on 2nd and Rowley Burn (Hexhamshire) on 4th, five at Jesmond Dene on 15th with four at Druridge Pools and Links on 6th and Dinnington on 20th. One to three were at five other locations being seen regularly around Ellington with three on 'vis-mig' at Budle Point on 16th and possibly the first nesting attempt on the island at Chare Ends (Holy Island) (RA/MJC).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

At Wark (N.Tyne) on 29th, 386 moved N to roost at dusk (PRM). 66 were at Howdon on 26th with 37 there on 7th (CB), 45 the high count at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th with 35 there on 24th and 28 at Ellington Colliery on 25th. The maximum count during the month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) was 35, 28 at Lynemouth on 26th, 20 at Jesmond Dene on 1st and one to 12 at seven other locations including one carrying a freshly dead female House Sparrow at Jesmond either prey or scavenged (GB).





Three Crows

Above left: A Rook at Cresswell by Colin Bradshaw on 9th March

Above right: A Jackdaw in Holywell Dene by Alan Jack on 2nd March

Right:-A Carrion Crow at Northumberland Park by Jack Bucknall on 22nd March



Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Rookery counts included 38 nests at Woodhorn Church on 22nd (AP) and a total of 27 nests from three locations in Cramlington town centre, a 50% increase on 2018 despite the loss of a favoured tree (DM/LJM), nine at Hagg Farm (Ellington) and four at Potland Farm (Linton). On 27th 12 were at Cresswell Hall Woods and one to three regularly at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) in the latter part of the month. One pair nested at Shiremoor Metro Station on 4th incubating by 30th with three at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) in the second half of the month and two past Budle Point on 16th.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Gosforth Subsidence Pond was the main attraction with 123 on 14th and 79 on 17th (MJC) and 11 in a Hexham garden on 4th (AJH). Up to 11 were at Druridge Pools and Links with up to 9 at Chugdon Woods (Ellington) with smaller numbers regularly at both locations. One to six were at six other locations.

Correction for February report of around 300 at Longwitton on 8th (JR) was erroneous.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

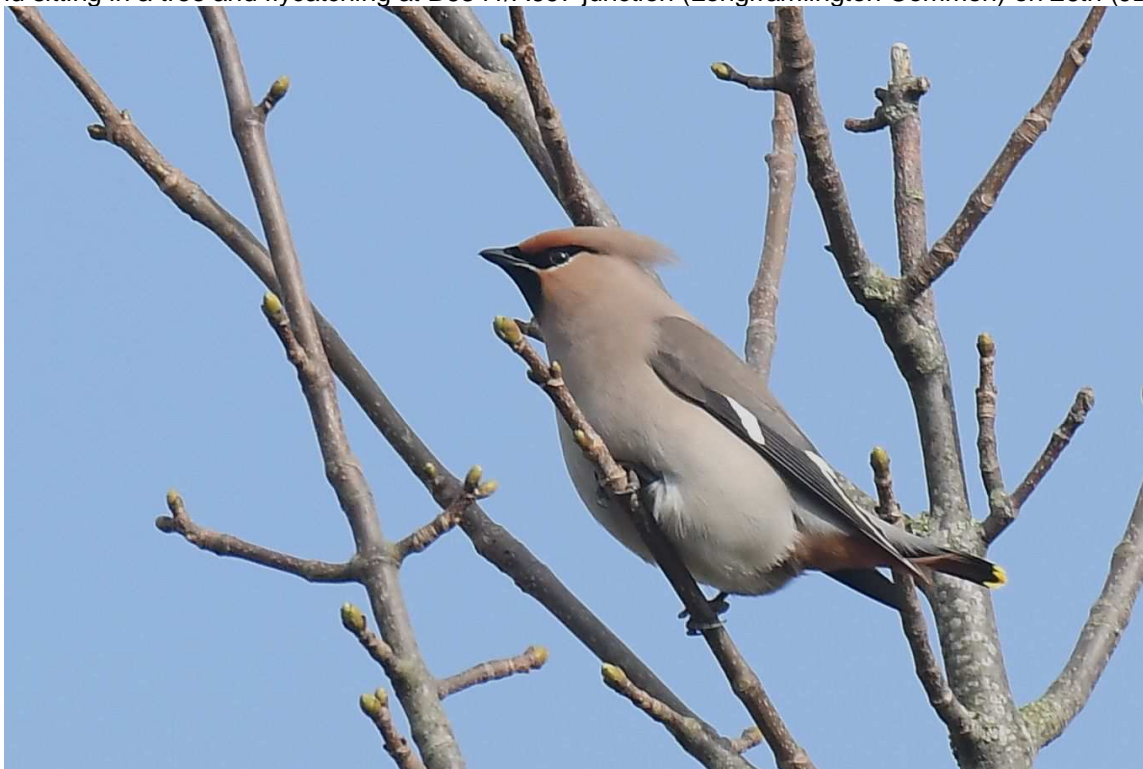
Presumably the regular bird at Linton on 3rd was possibly paired with a Carrion Crow and also seen at Linton Pond on 7th, 19th and 20th (MSH/TF/TB/ADM). One was present all month at Low Steads (Longhoughton), at Morpeth Sewerage Works on 9th and 17th, seen during 'vis mig' at Budle Point on 16th, at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) on 4th and in a Crow flock at Prestwick Carr on 31st.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Sightings, either pairs or singles, with display by two were noted at Winter's Gibbet (Harwood Forest) on 5th and two again on 13th, two at Budle Bay and past on 'vis mig' at Budle Point on 7th and 8th, at Hepple Whitefield on 17th, Fenham-le-moor on 18th, Lyham Moor (Holburn) on 19th, Doddington on 20th and Whittingham on 25th. Singles were at a further ten upland locations.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

One was found sitting in a tree and flycatching at B6341/A697 junction (Longframlington Common) on 26th (JD/TRD).



A Waxwing at Longframlington Common by Tim Dean on 26th March

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

On 26th 18 visited feeders at Holywell Dene (ASJ), 14 at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 18th (PRM) and ten were ringed including one re-trap at Corbridge Common on 7th (DLe). Five were at Craggside (Rothbury) on 7th, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 8th and Pundershaw (Wark Forest) on 18th with four at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 31st and one to two at four other locations.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

One of two at Mitford on 20th was singing whilst two at Borough Woods (Morpeth) on 24th both sang (JFa/TD). Two were at Linton on 24th (TB) and a pair at Hartburn on 25th (TD), two at Morpeth on 29th (TF/JFa) with two singing at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 30th and a single there on three dates from 25th. Singles were at Mitford Village on 3rd, Posterngate (Morpeth) on 9th and Old Railway Line (Rothbury) on 26th and 30th.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two were at Holywell Dene on 2nd and two trapped together at East Sleekburn on 4th with two all month at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) having been present since January (CB/JR/ALT). On 18th two were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) and at Dinnington on 20th (STH/PCF) with singles at garden feeders in Woolsington, Slaley Hall and at a further nine other locations.

A Willow Tit
Holywell Dene
Colin Bradshaw
20th March

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

High counts of 25 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th with 17 there on 25th and three to 13 on five other dates (IDR). 25 were also at Gosforth on 25th (ADM) with a flock of 19 foraging on the ground at Crooked Oak Lane on 17th (IFo), 16 at Ellington Dene on 29th (IDR/JF) and 11 at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 31st (JR). One to nine were at eight other widespread localities.

Great Tit *Parus major*

On 25th 30 were found at Gosforth (ADM), 18 was the peak count at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th with one to eight there on seven other dates (IDR). 12 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th and Ellington Dene on 29th with 11 at Cresswell Hall Woods on 27th and one to five at six other locations.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

A male and two females were at East Chevington North Pool on 7th and 16th (TF/ADM_c) with two there on 14th (ADM_c) and a female was at The Lough (Holy Island) on 15th (MJC).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Well reported both singing and on passage, the peak count being 106 at Holy Island on 15th (MJC) with 71 on 'vis-mig' at Budle Point between 07:40-11:30 on 16th and 64 between 06:30-08:50 on 9th with 28 to 38 on three other dates (RA). Six out of 20 sang at Winter's Gibbet (Harwood Forest) on 5th with more than 20 at St Mary's Island on 6th of which six sang (ASJ). A maximum 17 were found on 2km radius counts at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month, 15 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 14th with 13 at Otterburn Camp on 2nd and one to 12 at 20 widespread localities.



A Skylark on Holy Island by Mike Carr on 15th March

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The first report was of one at Hexham on 13th (AH per MH) with one at Wark (N.Tyne) on 15th and at Holywell Pond on 18th (PRM/GPK). Eight were at East Chevington on 21st (TF/JFa) with a peak count for the month of 15 at the south pool there on 23rd (MH). Three were at Bothal Pond on 22nd, Hedgeley GP on 23rd and Melkridge W on 25th. One to two were at Melkridge, Close House (Wylam) and Warkworth beach between 24th and 29th.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

The singing male at East Chevington was heard at the North Pool on 3rd, 7th and 19th-20th (MH/AA/TF/MN). Another was again at Woodhorn Flashes on 14th (MN).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A single 'tribe' of 16 was at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 14th (TB) and 11 were at Budle Point on 8th. Counts of eight came from Dinnington on 11th and Ellington Dene on 29th, while six were noted at Alexandra Park (Cramlington), Cresswell Hall Woods, Horncliffe, Howick and Longdyke (Shilbottle). Elsewhere, five were at Marden Quarry and four at Corbridge, East Ord, Gosforth, Holywell Dene, Howick Hall, Low Alwinton and Valley Park (Cramlington). One to two at a further 17 localities included nest building in the Bedlington area, at Furnace Bridge on 17th and a complete nest at Free Wood on 31st.



A Long-tailed Tit at Gosforth garden village on 20th March by Mike Carr

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

The overwintering bird at Boulmer was last seen on 2nd. Another wintering bird at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 8th had been present for about two weeks previously, while others which had potentially overwintered were at Hexham on 5th, Holy Island on 6th and Prestwick Carr on 4th. There was a noticeable influx from mid-month with one to two reported from 14th-17th at Arcot Pond, Blyth, Cresswell Pond, Crooked Oak, East Chevington, Morpeth, Prudhoe and Slaley Hall. A large population was reported from Linden Hall, where 19 singing males on 25th increased to 30 by 31st, possibly the largest number ever to be recorded here (NFO). Elsewhere, 16 were singing at Holywell Dene by 30th and 15 at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 25th; 15 birds at Branton GP on 22nd included 11 singing males, while 12-13 were in song at Arcot Pond and Newburn on 25th. Reports of nine birds came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell Hall Woods, Ellington Dene, Howick Hall, Longdyke (Shilbottle) and Low Cocklaw, while seven to eight were at Backworth, Morpeth, Rothbury (Addycombe & Hillside) and Warkworth Lane. One to six were noted at a further 50 widespread localities.

A Chiffchaff in Holywell Dene
by Alan Jack on 26th March

**L****Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

There were potentially at least 11-12 wintering birds in the county, as singing males made their presence known from mid-month. Males reported from February were noted at Gosforth Garden Village to 20th and at Jesmond Dene to 7th. Another male had been singing in a Marden Estate (Tynemouth) garden for six days to 15th, while further singing was heard at Arcot Pond, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Ellington, Fawdon, Hexham, Morpeth and Northumberland Park (North Shields) from 21st-31st and singles were also reported from Cresswell Hall Woods and Melkridge on 27th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

More than 15 were noted in breeding habitat at Pundershaw (Wark Forest) on 18th, while 13 were at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on the same day (PRM). At least five were reported from Bull Crag (Kielder) on 4th and at Widehope on 11th, while there were reports of four from Ellington Dene, Fenwick and Northumberland Park (North Shields). On the coast, three were at Holy Island on 15th, two at Budle Point and St Mary's on 18th and 21st respectively and two in a Tynemouth garden on 26th. One to two were reported from a further 13 localities.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

In the Ellington area there were counts of up to eight at Chugdon Wood, five at Ellington Dene, three at Ellington Pond and one at Ellington Colliery (IDR). Elsewhere, seven at Bedlington (Free Wood) on 31st included five singing birds, six were at Cresswell Hall Woods, five at Jesmond Dene and three at both Dinnington and Druridge Pools.



A Wren in a Tynemouth garden by Colin Bradshaw on 26th March

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

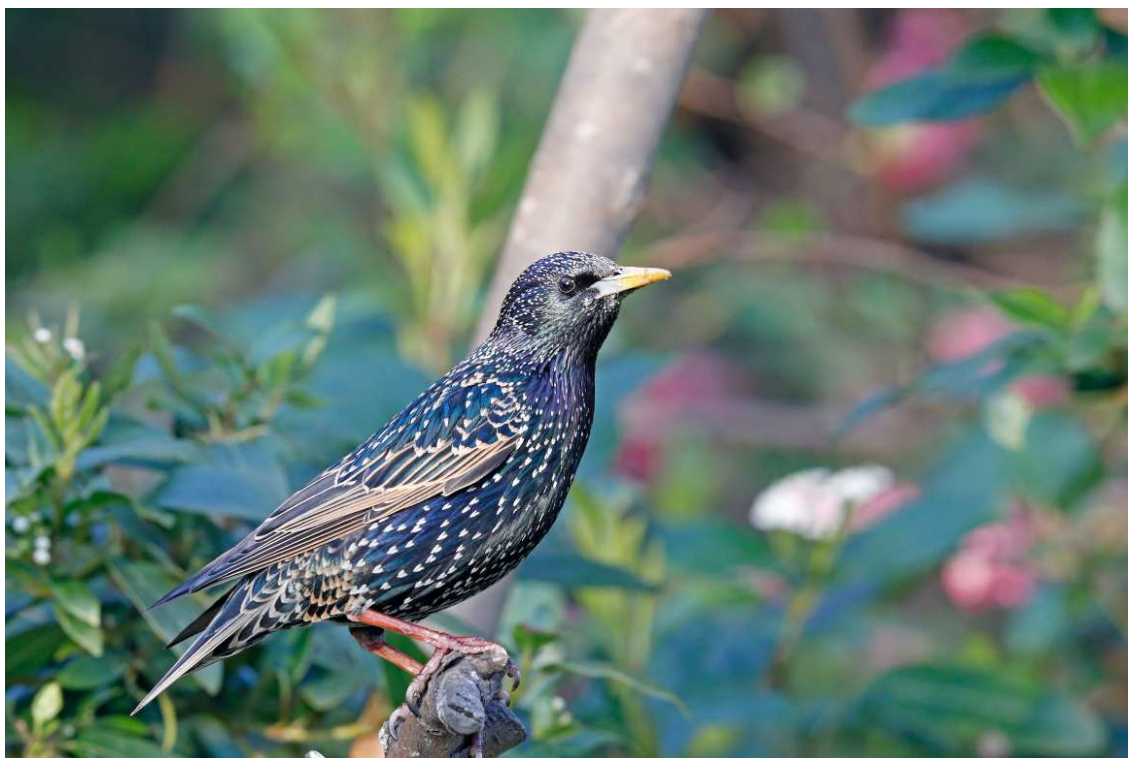
Six were at Holywell Dene on 24th included a female applying mud to a nest hole (ASJ). Up to five were noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Howick Hall and Jesmond Dene, four at Northumberland Park (North Shields) and three at Allenbanks. Two were reported from Bedlington (Free Wood), Corbridge, Crooked Oak, Humshaugh and Yearle and singles at Blagdon, Craggside, Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Gosforth, Guzyance, Snods Edge, Tynemouth, Warden and Wark (North Tyne).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Six at Gosforth on 30th was the highest count (MJC), while four were noted at Holywell Dene and three at Dukeshouse and Letah Wood (both Hexham), the latter singing birds. Reports of two came from Corbridge, Ellington Dene and Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh), while in the Newcastle area two were at Longbenton and singles at Armstrong Park, Heaton Park, Jesmond Dene, Ouseburn Park and the RVI. Further singles were noted at Allenbanks, Bedlington (Free Wood), Big Waters, Castron, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington (Northumberlandia), Cresswell Hall Woods, Edlingham, Hagg Bank (Wylam), Houxty (North Tyne), Howick Hall, Humshaugh, Lynemouth Dene, Rothbury (Debdon / Old Railway line / Thrum Mill) and Wallington Hall.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Large roosts of 2,000 were noted at Yearle (DGB) and 1,000 at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) and Rothbury during the month. About 700 were reported from Plenmeller Common on 21st, while nearby, flocks of 500 were at Grindon Lough and The Sill on 4th and 400 at Coanwood Common on 16th. The peak count from Colt Crag Reservoir was 320 on 11th, while 200-260 were noted at Keenley, Needles Eye (Berwick) and West Minsteracres and 120-150 at Airy Holm Reservoir and Allenheads. Up to 90 were at Seaton Sluice during the month, 68 at Howick, 42-55 at Budle Point and 50 at Chirdon Bridge. Four were reported from Howdon and a Tynemouth garden, where the species is not common at either site. Four pairs visited nest sites at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).



A Starling in a Tynemouth garden by Colin Bradshaw on 26th March

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

The first arrival of the year was a female at Cocklawburn on 23rd (MHu).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The peak monthly count from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) was 17 on 31st, while elsewhere in the area; seven were at Ellington Pond on 6th, six at Ellington Dene on 29th and three at Ellington Colliery on 25th (IDR). At Free Wood (Bedlington), eight on 31st included four singing males; five were at Cresswell Hall Woods on 27th and one to three at Druridge Pools, Jesmond Dene and Swarland.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The largest gathering was 200 at Plenmeller Common on 21st (SJH), while there were counts of 100-150 at Coanwood Common, Grindon Hill, Humshaugh, Longhorsley, Low Cocklaw, Simonburn, West Minsteracres and Wooler from 14th-29th. Smaller flocks were widespread and mainly from upland regions, including 60-80 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bellingham, Colt Crag Reservoir, Melkridge, Middleton, Sharperton, Shilbottle and Wark (North Tyne) and 40-56 were at Brocolitia, Corbridge, College Valley, Gosforth, Hartburn, Linden Hall, Ord Manor (Berwick) and Stamfordham. Up to 30 were reported from a further 11 localities; there was very little coastal presence.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

200 at Gosforth on 1st was by far the largest gathering (MJC). Elsewhere numbers were much reduced, with 75 reported from Howick on 5th, 50 at Bothal Pond on 8th and at Hartburn on 2nd and 30-43 were at Crooked Oak, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Mickley Square and West Minsteracres. Flocks of 20-24 were noted at Corbridge, Longframlington Common, Longhorsley and Prestwick Carr. Up to 12 were noted at Jesmond Dene and at Airy Holm Reservoir and one to six at a further 15 localities, including Shiremoor, where several were heard calling during nocturnal migration on 30th and a bird was in full song on 31st.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Nine were feeding on a ploughed field at Ellington on 21st (TB) and at least eight were in song at Branton GP on 6th. Many other reports included birds in full song. Five were at Cresswell Hall Woods and Tyne Green (Hexham), four+ at Jesmond Dene and four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Derwent Reservoir and Howdon. Three were noted at Bedlington (Free Wood), two at Budle Point, Corbridge, Leazes Park, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and Valley Park (Cramlington) and singles at Exhibition Park and Priors Park (Tynemouth).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Two pairs and a singing male were in the Colt Crag Reservoir area on 4th (MR). Four were reported from Belford Moor and Greenlee Lough on 30th and 4th respectively and two pairs were at Jesmond Dene (Paddy Freeman's Park and Towers Ave.). There were three at Glanton on 19th and three singing males at Gosforth Garden Village by 27th. Reports of two came from Budle Point, Corbridge, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Harwood Forest, Leazes Park, Meldon, Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend) and the RGS (Jesmond). One was at Melkridge, while singles were noted carrying nest material at Ellington Dene on 29th and food for young at Corbridge on 31st.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A maximum of 30 were found within a 2km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBr) and 28 during a 2km walk at Holywell Dene on 24th. A 3km circular walk at Northburn (Cramlington) on 14th produced 12 singing birds, while 12 were also at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th. Eight were reported from Cresswell Hall Woods on 27th, seven were in song at Bedlington (Free Wood) on 31st, and six were at Ellington Dene and four to five at Gosforth and Jesmond Dene. One to two were reported from a further five localities.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The over-wintering bird at Boulmer was last seen on 5th (BS/PHA/AHa). Further singles were noted in a Warkworth garden on 23rd (CSa) and Lynemouth Power Station on 26th (AP).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were two pairs at Buston Links (Alnmouth) and Druridge Pools, four at Cocklawburn and Rothbury and three at Addycombe (Rothbury), Boulmer, Harthope Valley and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh). Two were reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell Pond, Debdon (Rothbury), East Chevington, Edlingham, Elwick, Holy Island, Howick, Low Newton, Lynemouth Bay, Newham, Warkworth Gut and Winter's Gibbet (Harwood), while singles were noted at Berwick Little Beach, Bygate, Cowden (A68), Crooked Oak (new for the site), Gloucester Lodge Farm (Blyth), Plenmeller Common, Seahouses and Weetwood (Wooler).

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

All reports were of singles, beginning with the first arrival at Cresswell Pond on 19th, Boulmer and Windyhaugh on 21st and Brier Dene Farm on 22nd. The next were at Airy Holm Reservoir and Warkworth Gut on 25th and Berwick Pier on 30th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Five were seen in Harthope Valley on 7th and 21st (MJC/CDB). A pair were present at Holywell Dene all month, and nest building was seen on 2nd (ASJ/CB). Pairs were also seen during the month at Allendale, Mitford, Corbridge and near Morpeth. Single birds were seen at a further 18 locations. Four nests examined in late March in Upper Coquetdale did not contain eggs.

A Dipper
Holywell Dene
Jack Bucknall
8th March



House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

60 were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) in the first fortnight, reducing in number as the month went on (RS). 50 were counted in a Corbridge garden on 2nd (MR). 24 was a good garden count in a garden at Hazelrigg on 24th (GB). 20 plus were at Wark on 10th and 12 to 16 in gardens at Gosforth and Marden during the month (MJC/ASJ). 15 seen at Chugdon Wood on 24th (IDR). One to ten at six other sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

The month's peak was 35 at Aydon on 16th (MR). A total of 25 to 30 were at four sets of feeders in Holywell Dene on several dates, with 15 at nearby Holywell Pond (ASJ). 20 were at Ellington on 14th (TB). One to 12 were noted at a further 20 widespread sites.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Nine were seen at Bedlington and eight at Chugdon Wood on 31st (JR/IDR). Six were at Cresswell Hall on 27th. One to six were at ten other sites this month.



A Dunnock eyes Mike Carr in Gosforth on 20th March

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Four were noted at Jesmond Dene on 15th (MJCo). Three were seen in Newcastle city centre, including two singing males at busy Northumberland Street (MJC). Pairs were seen at a further 19 sites and singles at many of these during the month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Alnwick bus station was the site of a roost gathering of 90 plus birds on the 7th (CGK). On 20th, 30 passed through Grindon in an hour in small groups (SJH). 24 were at Low Newton on 3rd and counts of 20 were made at Prestwick Carr, Bothal and Newham. 18 moved through Budle Point on the morning of 16th (DRG/LAR/TFa/JFa/RA). One to 14 were seen at an encouraging 28 further sites.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Two were seen at Gosforth on 30th and singles found at five other sites as birds arrived in the County.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus patrensis*

131 were counted passing through Budle Point on the morning of 16th (RA). Counts of north-bound migrants passing Marden (Cullercoats) during the month totalled 127 birds (ASJ). 51 migrants moved through Branton on 22nd (MJC). 50 did the same at Budle Point on 18th, with lower numbers here on other dates (RA). Another count of 50 was made at Prestwick Carr on 31st (MH). 26 flew N at Beal Point on 15th and 38 did so at Holy Island on 22nd as did 19 on 15th (MJC). At St Mary's Island, birds settled into breeding areas, with 15 song flighting and a further ten present on 25th (ASJ). One to 12 were seen at 26 other sites during the month, including upland breeding areas of High Acton, Grindon and Harwood Gibbet.



The Eastern Yellow Wagtail at Prestwick Carr
John Littleton on 23rd March

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Single birds were seen at four sites this month, Lynemouth, Boulmer, Monks' House Pool and Berwick.



A Water Pipit at Boulmer by Colin Bradshaw on 9th March

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

16 were counted at Boulmer on 2nd and 14th (BS). 14 were at Warkworth Gut on 11th and at Holy Island on 15th. One to seven were at a further eight sites.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Seven were seen at Budle Bay on 7th and six were at Holy island on 15th (CGK/MJC). Three were observed at Low Newton on 6th. Singles were seen at three other sites.

A Scandinavian Rock Pipit

Low Newton

Mike Carr

6th March

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**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Around 80 were noted at Ord Manor (Berwick) on 29th (MHu). 50 were seen at Howick on 26th (JAR). A minimum of 25 were at Northumberlandia on 2nd (LJM). 20 were seen at Howdon on 1st (CB). Elsewhere, one to 18 were seen at a further 16 locations.

Bambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Four were seen at Grindon Hill on 2nd (SJH). Two flew N at Holy Island on 22nd. One to two were at four other sites, including a Tynemouth garden.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Eight (six males) were noted at Holywell Dene on 9th (ASJ). Seven were seen at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 18th (PRM) and six were noted at Howdon on 1st (CB). One to five were also seen at 26 other sites during the month.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

The winter roost at Freeman Hospital remained this month, with 70+ noted on 8th (LMi). 11 were seen at Ponteland Park on 15th (CW). Ten were noted at Barn's Park (Cramlington) on 28th (DM). One to five were at 13 other sites this month.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

55 were counted at Beal on 8th (RA). The Druridge Bay wintering flock remained throughout the month, with a peak of 40 seen on 16th along the coal road and dunes (ADMc). 14 were seen at Warkworth Gut on 11th and at Cresswell on 14th and inland, a group of ten were noted on the latter date in Alwin Valley (CSa/IDR/JR/NA). Ten+ were at East Chevington on 19th and five seen at Cresswell pond on 23rd.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

A large flock of 250 was at Shiremoor all month (CGK). 78 were counted at Holy Island on 15th (MJC). Flocks of 40 to 48 were noted at Berwick, Cocklawburn and Hallington in the first two weeks. 12 to 31 were also at a further four sites and one to ten noted at 11 other locations.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

22+ were seen at Pundershaw in Wark Forest on 18th (PRM). Elsewhere, one to six reported at 11 sites during this month, including one N at Gosforth and two N at Budle Point.



A Lesser Redpoll in the Harthope Valley by Chris Barlow on 21st March

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

20+ were seen at Harwood Forest on 15th (CDB). A minimum of 15 were at Bull Crag (Kielder) on 4th (AJR). One to four, including singing males were at nine further places.

A Crossbill

Harthope Valley

Chris Barlow

15th March



Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

An impressive 55 came to roost in a Longhorsley garden on 5th (AB/LB). 30 noted at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 22nd (DM). 20 were seen at Howick, Corbridge and Marden Quarry during the month. One to 18 were noted at ten more sites.

A Goldfinch

Gosforth

Mike Carr

8th March



Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Early morning at Budle Point on 9th saw 197 counted migrating N. Ten were seen here on 2nd and 34 on 18th (RA). 100+ were counted at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 2nd, with 51 remaining on 18th (AJH/PRM). 44 were seen at Pundershaw on 18th. One to five were at four other sites and light passage WNW was noted at Budle Bay on 7th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

The wintering flock at Holystone/Killingworth Moor reduced to 110 by 4th, with several singing males (ASJ). 20 were at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 20th and at Haughton Mains on 28th (RB/MB/SW). 17 were Humshaugh on 1st and at garden feeders at Swarland on 8th (SW/IDR/JF). 12 to 16 were seen at Hebron, Ellington, Felton, Hartburn and Hazelrigg this month and one to ten were noted at 21 further places.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Wintering birds remained at Holystone/Killingworth Moor with 20 noted on 4th (ASJ). 16 males were counted on territory at St. Mary's and surrounding fields, many of them in song (ASJ). 11 were seen at Boulmer on 2nd (BS). One to six were at 16 further sites during the month, including well inland at Hallington, Crooked Oak, Bellingham, Colt Crag and Linden.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

The sole report was of one at Beal Point on 15th (MJC).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

At Beal point, two flew N on 15th, a single bird was seen at Budle Point on 21st and more unusually, one was observed at Great Bavington on 18th (MJC/RA/MR).

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

The adult remained at Derwent Reservoir until at least 18th (IFo).

Northern Bald Ibis *Geronticus eremita*

The escapee from last month was again seen on 25th (MH), this time at Newburn. It was watched soaring and also on a pylon with its crest blowing in the wind. Apparently escaped from Kirkley Hall Zoo.

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

The individual remained at Budle Bay and was seen on 8th and 9th (RA).

Tufted Duck x Pochard *Aythya fuligula x Aythya ferina*

Two were noted at Swallow Pond all month.

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club

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.
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RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com
 Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.
 Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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



03 March 2020 Bulletin Photograph Supplement



A Mute Swan on territory at Howdon wetland by Colin Bradshaw on 1st March and below
a Greenland Whitefront at Gosforth subsidence pond by Mike Carr on 28th March





A Sanderling flock at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 16th March



A Curlew Sandpiper look alike Dunlin at Druridge Bay by Trevor Basey on 8th March



A Black headed Gull in summer plumage by Colin Bradshaw on 23rd March

A Grey Wagtail in Holywell Dene by Colin Bradshaw on 2nd March





Two views of Dippers. Above at Holywell Dene by Colin Bradshaw on 2nd March and below
a pair in the Harthope Valley by Chris Barlow on 21st March





Garden Black birds - Above by Alan Jack on 2nd March and below by Colin Bradshaw on 26th March





Two summer arrivals by Mike Carr

above a Chiffchaff on 22nd March at Granton Gravel Pits and below a Blackcap in his Gosforth garden on 19th March





The popular Water Rail at
Northumberland Park

Above going for a swim on 22nd March
by Chris Barlow

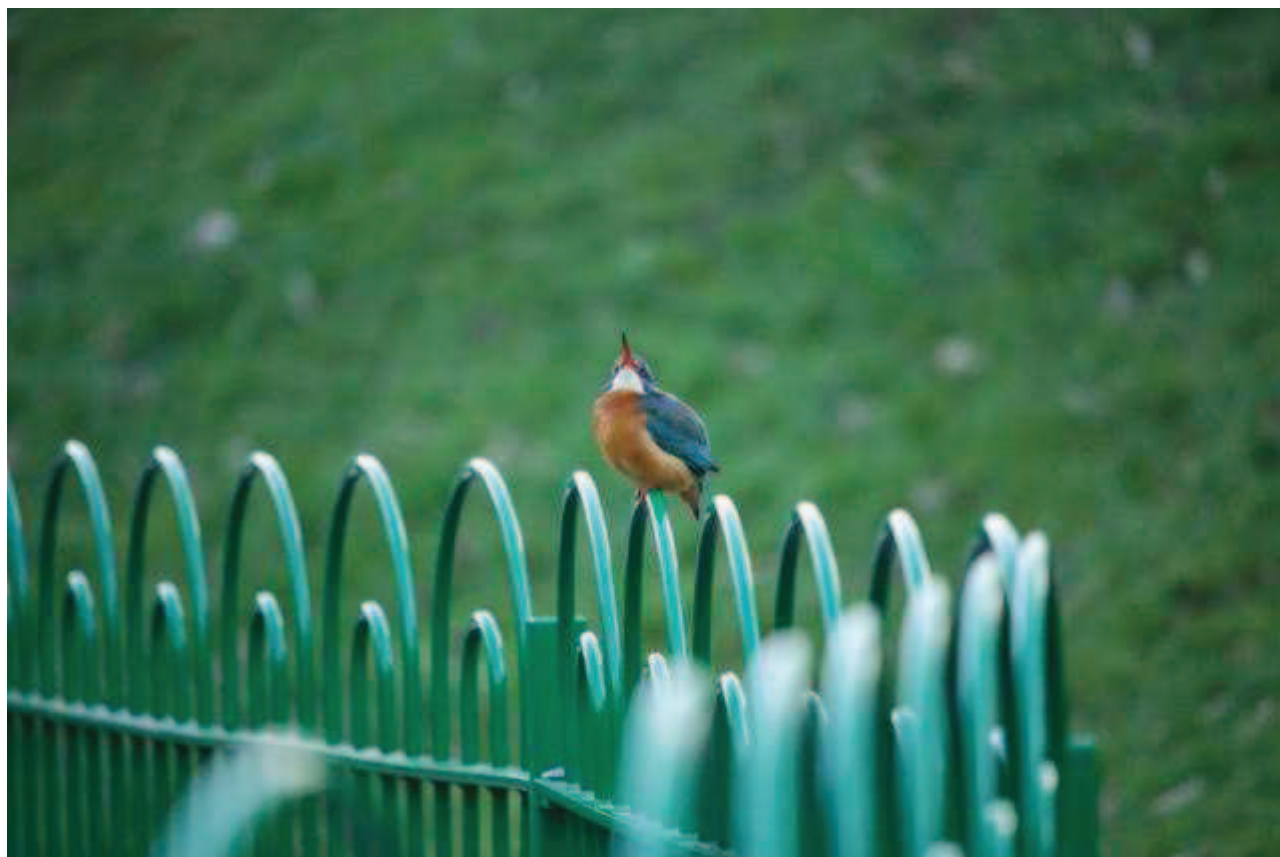
Right Reflecting by Colin Bradshaw on
15th March

Overleaf

Another Northumberland Park visitor

A Kingfisher by Iain Johnstone on 19th
March





Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 4

MONTHLY SUMMARY April 2020

4th June 2020



CONTENTS

WeBS site surveyors wanted.

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Egyptian Goose	One in Ashington area on 14th and 15th.
Ruddy Shelduck	Influx with one to two at several sites mostly coastal but one also at Slaley.
Garganey	Single at Tynemouth on 19th and drake at Druridge Pools on 23rd.
American Wigeon	Drake still at Grindon Lough on 7th.
Ring-necked Duck	Drake at Longhoughton Quarry on 5th then Branton GP from 6th to 14th.
Common Scoter	Interesting overnight passage at many sites, mostly early in month.
Manx Shearwater	Early passage on 13th.
Purple Heron	Adult at Warkworth Lane on 27th. First county record since 2013.
Great White Egret	Single sightings at Warkworth Lane on 4th and Newton Pool on 22nd.
Crane	Singles at Pegswood on 16th and at Holy Island lough on 28th.
Sanderling	High count of 221 at Boulmer on 10th.
Purple Sandpiper	Peak count of 50 at Boulmer on 10th. High total for area.
Jack Snipe	Singles at Monks' House Pool, Newbiggin and Gosforth.
Iceland Gull	Wintering third-winter at Big Waters present until 27th.
Hoopoe	One at Druridge Pools on 26th and 27th.
Bee-eater	One flew over Woodhorn on 30th.
Hooded Crow	Still several records.
Sand Martin	Huge count of 550 at Gosforth on 7th.
Cetti's Warbler	Singing male at Woodhorn.
Wood Warbler	Singing males at Linden and Derwent Gorge.
Firecrest	One at St Mary's Wetland on 18th and 19th.
Spotted Flycatcher	Early migrant at Yearle on 26th.
Grey-headed Wagtail	Male at Boulmer on 16th.
'Channel Wagtail'	One at Longhirst on 13th.

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 scheduled for September. Fingers crossed.

The St. Mary's
Firecrest

18th April

Jack Bucknall



FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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

A single dark-bellied *bernicla* race bird was at Boulmer between 6th-10th (BS).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Two flew N at Tynemouth on 12th (CB) and the species was heard over Ellington during darkness on 1st (IDR). Grindon Lough held a peak of 28 on 5th (SJH). 13-19 were at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, East Ord, Gosforth and New Water Haugh, and four to nine at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Earsdon, Ellington, Holystone and Howdon. Two were also at East Holywell and Lynemouth Flash. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Newcastle racecourse	1	8	ADM. On 24th
Merryshields GP	1	7	ID (no date)

Single nesting pairs were also noted at Bank's Pond (Dinnington) and Haughton Castle.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

120 flew NW at Howdon on 25th (CB), 880, in two flocks, flew high NE at Longhoughton at dusk on 26th (BS), and 16 N off Hauxley on 27th (CSa). In addition, 11 flocks were recorded over Longhoughton between 0158h-0331h on 27th (BS), and two groups were heard flying NW over Gosforth Garden Village on the evening of 8th (MJC).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Peak counts were 180 at East Holywell on 3rd (MNC), 38 in the Gosforth Home Farm area on 9th (MJC), 34 at Melkridge on 27th (SJH), and ten to 21 at Earsdon, Grindon Lough and Haughton Castle. Five to eight were also at Bothal Pond and Ellington, and one to four at/over Big Waters, Brenkley, Chesters, Chollerford, Corbridge, Cramlington, Holystone, Howdon, Lynemouth Flash, Merryshields GP, Newcastle Great Park, New Water Haugh, Seghill, St Mary's Wetland and Wall. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Gosforth Home Farm/subsidence pond	1	11	MJC/ADM. From 19th
Castron	1	5	TRD. From 17th

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Northerly movement involved 150 at Morpeth (TD) and a 'skein' at Shilbottle (MKi) on 1st, 120 at Linden Hall on 5th (NFO), 80-94 at Alnmouth (MJC) and Cartington (TRD/JD) on 8th, 150 at Kenton on 9th (MRS) and 43 at Longhoughton on 10th (BS). A flock was heard over Gosforth Garden Village after dark on 3rd (MJC). On 6th, 2,500 were at Warkworth Lane and 1,000 near Cresswell Pond (TB), and 350 were at Brier Dene Farm on 1st (MN). Six were at Cresswell on 19th (TB) and four at Druridge Pools on 30th (AT), and one to two occasionally at Castron, Earsdon, Ellington and Warkworth Lane Ponds between 2nd-24th.

White-fronted Goose *Anser flavirostris*

One of the Greenland *flavirostris* race was at Gosforth subsidence pond on 1st and 5th (MJC/ADM). Two, of the Eurasian *albifrons* race, were at East Chevington North Pool on 8th (ADMc).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts were 46 on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 28th (MHu), 43 on the River Tweed between A1- Scottish border on 27th (TBr), 36 at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 22nd (MHu), 14-16 at Howdon and Longhirst golf course, and five to eight at Bothal Pond and Grindon Lough. One to three were at 11 further sites.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A flock of 36 drifted north on the sea off Cullercoats on 4th (MK) when 15 flew W at Chapel House, Newcastle (IK), eight N at Longhoughton (BS) and a large group was heard heading N over Ellington at dusk (TB) while eight flew N at Tynemouth on 5th (DRW). A group of 15 distant swans offshore at Birling Carrs on 6th were presumed to be of this species (CSa). Ten were at Castron on 9th (TRD/JD), six at Grindon Lough on 5th (SJH), and singles at Druridge Pool, Howdon and New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on single dates between 19th-30th.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

One at Bothal Pond on 14th (AT) was at nearby 'Cooper's Flash' (Ashington) on 15th (TF/JFa).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Peak counts were 54 at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 21st (TB), 46 at Boulmer on 6th (BS), 22 at Howdon on 5th and 27th (CB), 11 at Howick (JAR), and six to eight at Castron and Lemington Gut-Scotswood. Three to four were also at East Holywell-Backworth, Grindon Lough, Holystone and Humshaugh, and one to two at Bebside, Bedlington Station, Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Big Waters, Brenkley, Brier Dene Farm, Dinnington, Ellington Colliery, Ellington Pond, Hazlerigg, Lynemouth Flash, Seghill, Slaley, St Mary's Wetland, Weetslade CP and Yarrow Slake.



Two images of 'Shelduck'

Above: Shelducks in dispute at Howdon

Colin Bradshaw on 2nd April

and left:



A Ruddy Shelduck flies past Jack Bucknall at Holywell pond on 5th April

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two flew N over Woodhorn Flashes on 2nd (AP). Two were on a flash pool at Brier Dene Farm on 14th (MN) and one there on 5th (IJ), and at nearby Beehive Flash on 1st (MN). On 5th, one flew S at Arcot Pond (GB) and one, perhaps the same, appeared at Holywell Pond a short while later (JBU). Singles were also at Whitehouse Farm (Slaley) on 15th-16th (OS per RMH), Hauxley Reserve on 17th (CSa), Hedgeley GP on 19th and 27th (IBDa/KDa), and Druridge Pools on 30th (AT).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Two flew over Benridge on 4th (IRD), two were at Holystone on 7th (DRo) and single drakes at Chollerford on 18th (SW) and Gosforth subsidence pond on 28th (MJC).

A mega for Mike Carr

A drake Mandarin

Gosforth subsidence pond

on 28th April



Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

A drake was briefly at the Tyne Estuary, before flying S, on 19th (DRW) and a drake was at Druridge Pools on 23rd (ADMc).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

By far the highest count was 73 at Druridge Pools on 14th (ADMc). Six were at Bothal Pond on 11th (TD), four at Arcot Pond on 10th (DM), Low Newton on 15th (MJC) and Monks' House Pool on 1st (JPL), and one to two at Big Waters, Crowhall Farm (Holywell), Cresswell Pond, Earsdon and Gosforth subsidence pond. More unusual was a female at Airy Holm Reservoir on 4th (IFo).

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

A drake was briefly at the Tyne Estuary, before flying S, on 24th (DRW). The largest counts were 30 at Swallow Pond on 5th (GPK), 29 at Lynemouth Flash on 13th (IDR/JF), 14 at Bothal Pond on 5th (TD), and ten at Branton GP (TRD/JD), Caistron (TRD/JD) and Pegswood Community Park (AT). Six to eight were also at Big Waters, Ellington Pond, Gosforth subsidence pond, Hedgeley GP and Howdon, three to four at Arcot Pond, Monks' House Pool and Weetslade CP, and one to two at/over Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Embleton, Gosforth Garden Village, Grindon Lough, Holystone, Linden Hall, Marden Quarry, St Mary's Wetland and Throckley. Single pairs were noted on the River Coquet at Rothbury and Warton (TRD/JD).

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Peak counts were 62 at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo), 61 at Grindon Lough on 5th declining to 26 by 30th (SJH), and ten at Bothal Pond on 5th (TD). Six to seven were also at Caistron and New Water Haugh, three to four at Big Waters and Gosforth subsidence pond, and one to two at Bardon Mill-Beltingham, Branton GP, Caistron, Melkridge and Warkworth Lane (display noted at the latter site).

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

A drake was at Grindon Lough on 7th (SJH).

A Mallard family by Colin Bradshaw at Howdon on 20th April

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

38 were at Grindon Lough on 5th (SJH), 38 on the River Tweed between A1-border on 27th (TBr), and 12-16 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, and Big Waters. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Gosforth subsidence pond	3	14 (9,3,2)	MJC/ADM. From 24th
Big Waters	2	22 (12,10)	GB. On 28th
Morpeth	2	21 (12,9)	TD. Brood of 9 on 12th and brood of 12 on 25th
Howick	2	14 (11,3)	JAR. On 15th
Slaley Hall	2	13 (9,4)	RMH. On 19th
Merryshields GP	2	12 (8,4)	ID (no date)
Arcot Pond	2	11 (7,4)	GB/DM. Between 24th-28th
Horton Burn, Cramlington	1	12	LJM. On 22nd
Melkridge	1	10	SJH. On 16th
Tyneview Park, Benton	1	10	KWY. On 16th
Weetslade CP	1	10	PS. On 9th
Pegswood Community Park	1	9	AT. On 22nd
Whitehouse Farm, Slaley	1	9	RMH. On 20th
Ponteland Park	1	2	GB. On 28th
Killingworth Lake	1	1	GB. On 29th

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A pair flew up and then down the River South Tyne at Melkridge on 8th (SJH). A pair was also at Lynemouth Flash on 9th and 13th (AP *et al.*).

Teal *Anas crecca*

94 at Grindon Lough on 7th declined to 27 by 30th (SJH), 33 were at Prestwick Carr on 5th (MH), 24 at Big Waters on 20th (GB), and 11-17 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Gosforth subsidence pond and Lynemouth Flash. Three to six were also at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Caistron and Linden Hall, and one to two at Branton and Hedgeley GP, Ellington Pond, Haughton Castle, Howdon, Melkridge, St Mary's Wetland and Weetslade CP. Birds were heard over Gosforth Garden Village during darkness on four dates.

A Teal at Howdon

Colin Bradshaw on 13th April



Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Peak counts were 13 (11 drakes) at Woodhorn Flashes on 8th (AP), six at Gosforth subsidence pond on 13th (MJC), and three at Big Waters on 28th (GB). One to two were also at Arcot Pond and Grindon Lough on single dates.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

A drake discovered at Longhoughton Quarry Pond on 5th was not present the following day (BS). What was presumably the same individual was at Branton GP between 6th-14th (IBDa/KDa).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Maximum counts involved 81 at Castron on 17th (TRD), 37 at Swallow Pond on 12th (GPK), 21-24 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Grindon Lough (SJH), and 12-14 at Killingworth and Swinhoe Lakes. Five to eight were also at Arcot Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Low Cocklaw, Haughton Strother GP, Merryshields GP, Monks' House Pool, Slaley Hall and Warenford Dean, three to four at Big Waters and Gosforth Home Farm area, and one to two at Bank's Pond (Dinnington), East Ord and Howdon.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two ducks were at Bothal Pond between 6th-15th (TF/JFa/AT) and one on 18th (TD). A pair was at Druridge Pools on 20th (CSa).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

28 were at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 29th (MHu), and four at Lynemouth Bay (IDR).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

One flew S at Tynemouth on 12th (CB), 60 were at Birling Carrs on 12th and seven to 23 in this area on 6th-7th and 15th (RPo/CSa). An unprecedented series of nocturnal records indicating broad front overland passage was noted at many sites. The actual numbers involved were difficult to establish as birds were only heard (and not seen) in the darkness, and direction of movement often uncertain. Most reports came between 1st-4th and all were during darkness (often between 2200h-2300h). On 1st, at least eight birds were heard flying NW at Benton (AJ), seven groups passed NW at Gosforth Garden Village (MJC), two flocks over Heaton (PCI), two flocks over Morpeth (TF/JFa), one flock over Hazlerigg (GB) and an unknown number over Ellington Colliery (IRD), while coastal reports concerned four flocks over Tynemouth (DRW), and one flock over Monkseaton (JBU). More reports came on 2nd when observers, alerted to the movement, took to gardens during the 'lock down' conditions; inland, three flocks were noted over Heaton (PCI) and Shiremoor (CGK), two flocks E at Longbenton (ADM), at least two birds E over Melkridge (SJH), one group NW at Gosforth Garden Village (MJC), and single groups over Hazlerigg (GB), Seghill (IF) and Weetslade Colliery CP (PS), whilst coastal reports involved 11 flocks over Tynemouth (DRW), seven flocks over Monkseaton (JBU) and three flocks over Cullercoats (MK). On 3rd, birds were heard on five occasions at Humshaugh (SW) and one was over Gosforth Garden Village (MJC). Five groups flew NW over the latter site on 4th (MJC) and two groups flew over Melkridge on 6th (SJH). Later in the month, two groups flew E at Melkridge on 28th (SJH) and a flock was recorded over Longhoughton on 30th (BS). This was part of a large scale movement noted across much of England and awarded many an addition to their 'garden' lists.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Ten+ at Big Waters on 5th included two displaying drakes (GB), ten were at Branton GP on 26th (TRD/JD), five to seven at East Ord (MHu), Grindon Lough (SJH), Hedgeley GP (TRD/JD) and New Water Haugh (MHu), and three to four at Bothal Pond, Castron and Derwent Reservoir. One to two were also at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, Boulmer and Lynemouth Flash.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

One flew N at Boulmer on 28th (BS). Good numbers early in the month in the Close House area of the River Tyne included a peak of 31 (eight drakes) on 1st (MH), eight were at Corbridge on 28th (MR), eight at Melkridge on 8th (SJH), six at Holystone on 7th (DRo), three to four at Castron and East Mill (Morpeth-Bothal), and one to two at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Big Waters, Castron, Chesters, Chollerford, Hedgeley GP, Low Waskerley, Morpeth, New Water Haugh and Rothbury.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Two flew S at Whitley Bay on 30th (IJ). Two pairs were at Cresswell Pond on four dates between 6th-23rd (TB).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Six males were at a lek on Greenrigg Moor (Hexhamshire) on 12th (AJH) and a single female was at Shield on the Wall on 30th.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Two birds were seen at Holystone and Longframlington Common and a single was at Addycombe (Rothbury).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Four were at Warton on 14th (TRD/JD), three were at Lorbottle and two were at Castron, in a garden at Dinnington, Earsdon (Whitley Bay) and Prestwick Carr. A single was at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Two pairs were at Howick throughout the month (JAR) and four birds were also at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 30th (TBr). Pairs were recorded at Bewick Drift (Lynemouth), Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell Village, Ellington, Embleton, Horton Grange (Blagdon), Mickley Grange Farm (Stocksfield), Monks' House to Bamburgh, Prestwick Carr, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Seaton Sluice (in horse paddocks), Sleafy Hall and Weetslade Colliery CP. Single birds were at Big Waters NWT, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) and Humshaugh.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Between two to 13 were seen during regular visits to Chugdon Wood (Ellington) throughout the month (IDR). Six at Dinnington on 6th included a melanistic male (PCF), whilst six were also at Ellington Pond on 2nd (IDR/JF). One to four were at Arcot Pond and Lane, Big Waters, Cresswell Hall Woods, Ellington Colliery, Lynemouth Bay, Lynemouth Flash and Seghill. An albino male was at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 4th (TB).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

One to two were at Alnmouth Bay South, between Embleton-Dunstanburgh, Embleton Bay, Lynemouth Bay, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Stag Rocks.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One, still in winter plumage, was on the sea close in off Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 12th (AP).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

A total of 30 birds were on cliff ledges at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 17th (TB), 15 were on a coastal slope in nearby Lynemouth Bay on 20th (IDR) and 12 pairs were on nesting ledges at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 12th (MN). Three birds were above Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 20th, with another one circling there the following day (TB).

A Tynemouth Fulmar
Colin Bradshaw on 20th April

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

Two singles headed N past Cullercoats during an hour's seawatch in the early morning of 13th (MK). One was also spotted heading N past Low Steads (Longhoughton) on the same day (BS).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Peaks of six birds were reported from three locations - Arcot Pond on 30th (GB), Castron (three pairs) on 17th (TRD) and throughout the month at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) (TD). Four were at Howick and one to three were at Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Big Waters NWT, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Grindon Lough, Hedgeley GP, Linden Hall, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Sleafy Hall Hotel and Tumbleton Lake (Craggside). Nocturnal migration was noted with single birds heard flying over Ellington Colliery on 1st (IDR) and Garden Village (Gosforth) on 2nd (MJC).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

At Big Waters NWT, seven to eight were present during most of the month increasing to nine on 28th (GB) and five pairs on 29th (DM). There was also a report of 11, date uncertain, from an unknown birder (per GB). Two pairs were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) throughout the month, apparently both nest building (TD/TF/JFa). Two were at Derwent Reservoir and Merryshields GP (with some display) whilst the pair at Castron moved nest sites during the month to opposite hide no.7 (TRD/JD). A pair were also at Airy Holm Reservoir and a single bird at Branton GP.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

12 were at New Water Haugh (R. Tweed) on 30th (MHu). By the end of the month three nests were active at Haughton Castle with four, three and three+ nestlings respectively on 25th (SW). A total of seven at Warkworth on 12th comprised three nests with attendant pairs and a further single bird on the river Coquet (RPo). Five birds were at the nest site at Howick on 5th with a juvenile noted there by the end of the month (JAR). Three to five birds were at Big Waters, Farnley Haughs (Corbridge), Great Park (E of A1), Lynemouth Bay and Melkridge (R. South Tyne) with one to two seen at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Lane and Pond, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Big Waters, Brier Dene Farm, Chollerford, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Fawdon, High Waskerley, Merryshields GP, Milkwell, Monkseaton (sound recorded calling overnight), St. Nicholas' Park (Gosforth), Northburn (Cramlington) Seghill, Shankhouse Bridge (Cramlington) and Wylam Bridge.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

An adult was at Cresswell Pond on 27th. First seen at 17:37h flying from the pond to land in a reedbed, it then re-appeared shortly afterwards and flew to another reedbed (TB).

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Presumably the bird from last month was at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 4th (TB) then at Newton Pool (Low Newton) on 22nd (PAs).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Four were at one of the Warkworth Lane (Ellington) ponds on 4th and 6th (TB) and up to three were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond all month (MJC) and at Caistron on 9th (TRD/JD). One of the three at Weetslade Colliery CP on 6th was ringed (right leg 'H', left leg 'B') as a chick in nest at Rossmere (Hartlepool) on 23/06/2018 (PS). Two were at Cresswell Pond and singles at Dinnington, Great Park (E of A1), Holystone, Prestwick Carr and Warton.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

A total of 42N and three S passed Snab Point (Cresswell) on 25th (TB). Nine were in Lynemouth Bay on 30th and a single headed N past Alnmouth Bay South on 8th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

52 were at a low-tide roost at New Water Haugh (R. Tweed) on 30th (MHu) and 14 was the monthly peak at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo). Eight were at Big Waters NWT on 9th, six in a fishing group on the R. Tweed at Clayholes Shield on 14th and one to three were at Haughton Castle, Humshaugh, Lynemouth Bay and Melkridge. Two at Linden Hall throughout the month were of the continental *sinensis* race (NFO).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

A female with a blue/white Darvic ring PF1 was at Woodhorn Flash on 26th and 27th (AP).



Cullercoats Osprey
gives Alan Jack a
splendid garden tick

6th April

A Goshawk near
Rothbury by Tim Dean
on 11th April

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Up to two birds were seen at Monkseaton throughout the month but three birds were noted on 24th (MSH). Pairs were noted throughout the month at Chapel House (Newcastle) (IK) and at Heaton (Newcastle) (TW/PCI). Two birds were also noted at Debdon (Rothbury) on 15th (TRD/JD) and at Humshaugh (SW) and Weetslade Colliery CP (PS), both on 18th. Single birds were noted at 17 sites throughout the month.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A male and a female were at Holystone on separate occasions on 12th (DRo). A bird was heard calling in a wood at Longframlington on 10th (TRD/JD). A male flew overhead at Debdon (Rothbury) on 11th (TRD/JD) and a female flew through Warton high heading W on 14th (TRD/JD).



Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Two birds, involving a male and an immature female with orange/red wing tags, were at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 24th (TB). A female flew NW over the observer's garden at Tynemouth on 4th (DRW), an un-sexed bird flew N at Warkworth Gut on 5th (CSa). A male flew N at Shadfen on 6th (TF/JFa). A female was at Gosforth Park NR being "buzzed" by a Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* on 6th (ADM) and other single birds were flying North at Pegswood on 7th (AT). A cream crown flew over a Warkworth garden on 8th (CSa), an un-sexed bird was near Sleekburn on the A189 on 14th (IF) and an immature flew S at Tynemouth on 24th (MK).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Carterway Heads on 1st (IFo) and at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 1st and 8th (NFO). Two birds were also seen flying SW at Tynemouth on 11th (DRW), Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 15th (TD) and at South Snods (Allensford) on 29th (IFo). Single birds were seen at Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir, Dinington, Gosforth Home Farm, Heaton (Newcastle), Kiln Pitt Hill, Longhoughton, Melkridge (South Tyne), Monkseaton, Shotley Field, Slaley, Snods Edge, Stobhill Manor (Morpeth), Unthank (near Haltwhistle) and Weetslade Colliery CP.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

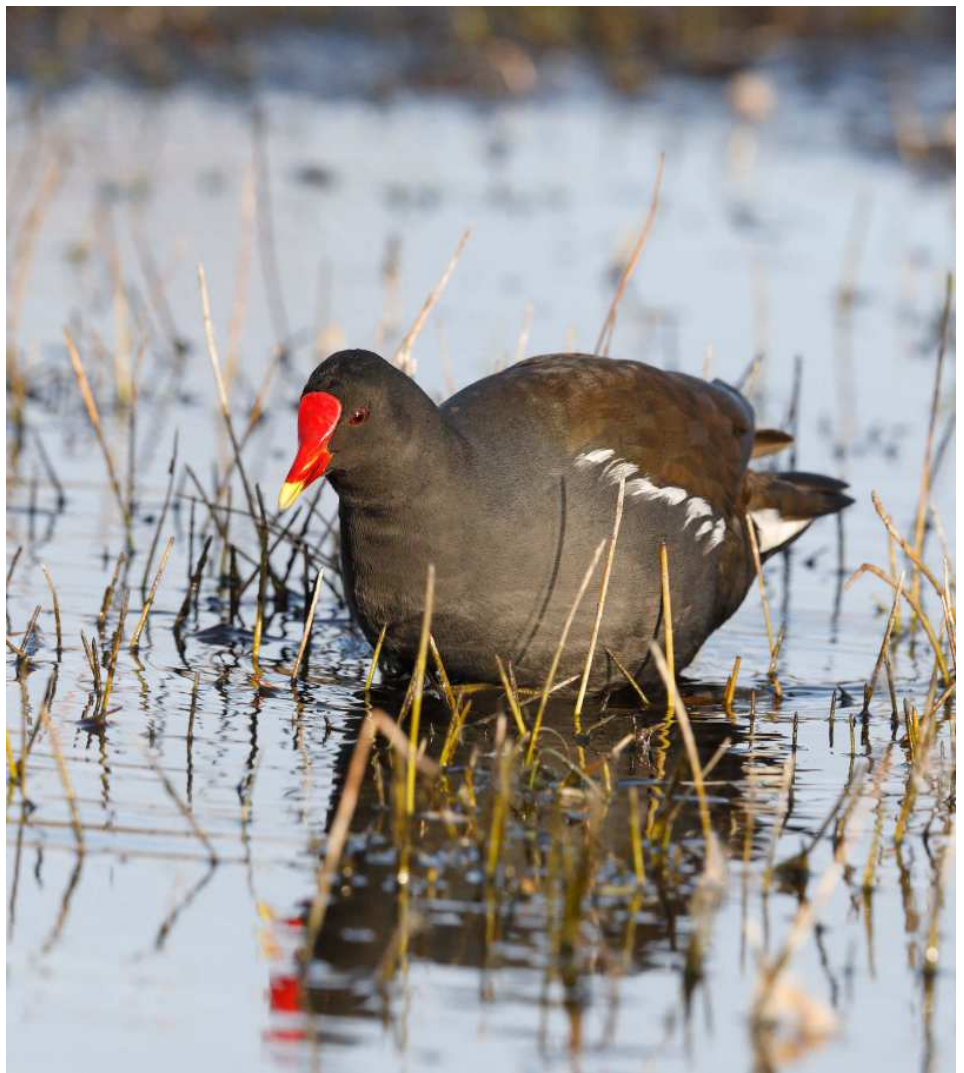
Melkridge (South Tyne) peaked at seven birds on 16th & 24th (SJH); six birds were noted at Simonside on 22nd (TRD/JD) and at Stamfordham on 23rd (MH). Five were at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 5th (GB), Gosforth Home Farm on 12th throughout the month (MJC) and five were also seen at Prudhoe on 19th (MH). One to four birds were noted at over 30 sites this month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were calling at Weetslade Colliery CP on 9th with one or two birds heard throughout the month (PS). Two birds were either heard or seen at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) throughout the month (GPK) and two were at Ellington Pond on 3rd (TB), Castron on 9th (TRD/JD), Arcot Pond on 23rd (STH) and at Bothal on 30th (TF/JFa). Single birds were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Bothal, Ellington Pond, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Weetslade Colliery CP. Single birds were recorded overnight during "Nocmig" at Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 11th and 15th (MJC).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest counts this month were four birds at Haughton Castle on 10th (SW), St Mary's Wetland on 23rd and 24th (IJ) and at Tyneview Park (Benton) on 28th (CDH). Three were at Haughton Castle on 1st (SW) and two were recorded overnight during "Nocmig" at Longhoughton on 18th and one on 24th (BS). Two birds were also at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Ellington Pond, Merryshields GP, Newcastle Academy Flash and Willington Gut (Wallsend). Single birds were recorded during "Nocmig" at Gosforth Garden Village, Monkseaton and Shiremoor and single birds were at seven sites during the Month. One to four birds were at 12 sites during March.



A Moorhen at Howdon

Collin Bradshaw on 2nd April

Coot *Fulica atra*

24 birds with three nests noted were at Bothal Pond on 18th (TD), Five nests were at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 12th (KWY) and Arcot Pond peaked with eight birds on several dates (DM) and six were noted there on 22nd (GB). Four birds were at Weetslade Colliery CP on 1st (PS) and four birds with two nests were at Howick on 19th (JAR). Birds were recorded overnight during "Nocmig" at Gosforth Garden Village and at Longhoughton. One to two birds were at Arcot Pond, Ellington Pond, Grindon Lough, and Howdon and at Newcastle Academy.

Crane *Grus grus*

A bird flew N at Pegswood (AT) on 16th and one was at Holy Island Lough on 28th (*per* IK).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The largest count came from Longhoughton Steel, with 86 birds on 24th (MKi). Derwent Reservoir had 47 on 20th (IFo). There were 38 by the South Tyne at Melkridge on 1st (SJH), 36 at Cullercoats Bay on 13th (MN) and 29 at Caistron on 9th (TRD/JD). Longhirst golf course had 18 on 1st (AT). Groups of ten or fewer were noted at Lynemouth Flash, Anick near Hexham, Holystone and Grindon Lough, and about ten in small groups flew over Longbenton on 11th (ADM). Displaying birds were at Craggside School, Cramlington on 10th (DM) and Gosforth Garden Village on 11th (MJC). One or two were also recorded calling overnight at Monkseaton on 23rd and 26th (MSH).

An Oystercatcher at Caistron
Tim Dean on 24th April

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

There were 13 at Cresswell Pond on 6th (TB), the largest count of the month, and eight at Cooper's Kennel Flash (Ashington) on 22nd (TB). Smaller numbers were at Low Newton, Ellington, East Holywell in Whitley Bay, Bothal and Mount Pleasant on the Blyth Estuary. Two flew N at Boulmer on 21st (BS), a first site record.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Grindon Lough had a flock of 39 on 11th (SJH) and there were 18 at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 5th (TD). Birds were observed displaying at Howdon on 5th (CB) and at Mickley Grange (Stocksfield) on 29th (ID). Breeding was noted at Brenkley between 9th and 25th (GB), at Weetslade Colliery CP between 7th and 26th (PS), at the Gosforth Home Farm area on 12th (MJC) and at Cooper's Kennel Flash (Ashington) on 21st (TF/JFa).



A Lapwing at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 18th April

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest flock was at Grindon Lough, with 250 on 16th (SJH). There were 200N at Linden Hall on 4th (NFO) and 110 at Mickley Grange (Stocksfield) on 12th (ID). East Holywell had 80 on 12th (CGK), Boulmer had 78 on 11th (BS) and Ellington had 75 on 3rd and 9th (TB). 70 were seen in flight at Warenton on 23rd (DF) and there were 67 at Longhirst on 22nd (AT). 23 birds of the northern race *albifrons* were at Heathery Lane (Gosforth) on 5th (ADM) and a northern race bird in full breeding plumage was amongst a group of 13 at Prestwick Carr on 9th (MH). Flocks were heard at Gosforth Garden Village on 5th, 9th, 11th, 14th and 15th (MJC).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

There were ten at Boulmer on 10th (BS), five at Alnmouth to Seaton Point on 8th (MJC) and singles at St Mary's Island on 22nd (IJ) and 23rd (JBu).



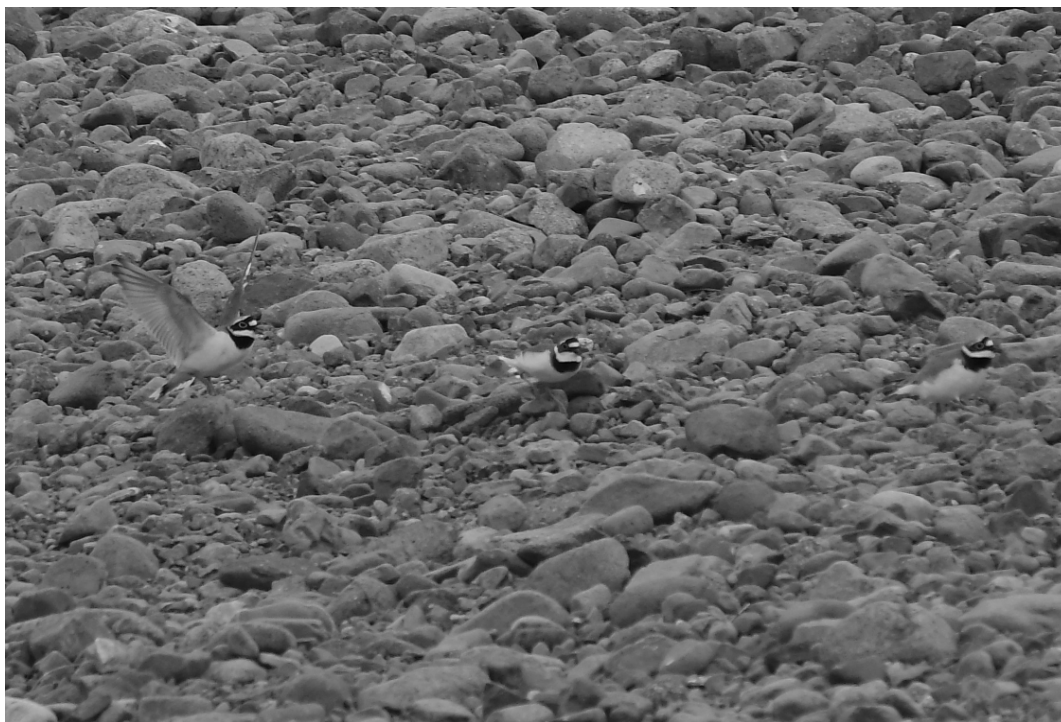
A Grey Plover at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 22nd April

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Boulmer had 23 on 12th (CSa). There were five at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), four at Brier Dene Farm on 5th (IJ) and three at Grindon Lough on 27th (SJH). Displaying pairs were noted at Backworth during April (CGK) and at Cramlington on 27th (STH). Pairs were reported at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Manor Pond and Warton, and singles were at Cresswell Pond, Seghill, and Bothal.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Up to three birds were noted at several sites throughout the county.



Spot the Little Ringed Plovers
The Breamish valley by Tim Dean on 26th April

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Three birds were observed flying NW at the South Tyne, Melkridge on 4th (SJH), and there were three at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC). Reports of single birds came from Swallow Pond, Wallsend, Gosforth Garden Village, Low Steads, Longhoughton, Howick, Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, Tynemouth and Hedgeley GP.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The highest count came from Alnmouth, with 142 on 7th (MJC). There were 125 at Brier Dene Farm on 4th (IJ), 45 in a stubble field at Howick on 6th (JAR) and 44 at Holystone on 9th (DRo). Longhoughton Steel had 26 on 24th (MKi) and there were 22 at Eshells Moor (Allendale) on 23rd (AJR). Reports of smaller flocks came from New Water Haugh on the Tweed, Kiln Pit Hill and Crooked Oak Lane, with groups of fewer than ten birds at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Lynemouth Bay. Birds were heard 'bubbling' at Prestwick Carr, Brenkley, Blagdon and Big Waters NWT, and displaying birds were seen at Belford Moor on 10th (DF) and at Arcot Lane on 29th (DM).



A Curlew at Howdon.

By Colin Bradshaw on 2nd April

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

There were 24 at Boulmer on 10th (BS), three at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TB) including a bird in full summer plumage, and one at Calot Shad on the Tweed Estuary on 22nd (MHu).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Low Newton had 18 on 15th (MJC) and Grindon Lough had 17 on 11th (SJH). There were 13 at the Coquet Estuary on 5th (CSa) and six at Branton GP on 12th (IBDa/KDa). Three were at Cresswell Pond on 4th (TB), at Howdon on 5th (CB) and at Holywell Pond on 27th (CGK). Two birds were reported at Earsdon on 10th (MNC), the Coquet Estuary on 14th (RPo) and Druridge Pools on 26th (TB). A single bird was at Shooters' Flashes, south of Bothal Barns, on 15th (TF/JFa).



A Black-tailed Godwit at Howdon. By Colin Bradshaw on 2nd April

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Numbers reduced as birds headed back to breeding areas with the maximum counts received being 30 from Alnmouth to Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 30th (MJC) and 30 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (TB). Other counts in double figures were 26 at Cullercoats on 20th (MN), 20 at Longhoughton Steel on 24th (MKi) and 15 at Stag Rocks on 22nd (JPL). The only other report received was of four at Tynemouth on 27th (CB).



A Turnstone at St. Mary's. By Alan Jack on 22nd April

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Only three reports were received, all within the last week of the month. At Seaton Sluice, 20 were present on 26th (MK) and just further south, 20 were at St Mary's Island on 30th (JBU). Four were seen at the River Coquet Estuary on 28th (CSa).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

The birds at Druridge Pools during the past few months were noted again with a maximum of five on 20th (CSa) reducing to two by 30th (AT/TB). A single was at Branton GP on 7th (IBDa/KDa).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

At Boulmer, the high numbers from last month persisted with 221 counted on 10th (BS) declining to 11 by 24th (MKi). 45 were counted from Alnmouth to Seaton Point on 8th (MJC).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

At Grindon Lough, two on 7th increased to 11 by 27th (SJH). At least one was detected by sound recording during the night over the observer's home in Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) on 22nd (MSH).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritime*

The highest count received was from Boulmer where 50 had gathered on 10th (BS). The favoured Stag Rocks area attracted a maximum of 45 on 23rd (NFO), 30 were roosting at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 11th (AP), 17 were seen at Tynemouth on 14th (MK), 15 were at Cullercoats on 23rd reducing to eight by 26th (MN/MK) and six were counted from Alnmouth to Seaton Point on 8th (MJC).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Four reports of single birds were received this month. One was seen at Howick on 1st and 3rd (JAR), one was at Holystone on 7th (DRo), one at Gosforth (Newcastle) on 15th and a roding bird was seen at Slaley Hall on 22nd (RMH).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

A wintering bird was present all month at Gosforth Subsidence Pond (MJC/ADM) and other singles were seen at Newbiggin Golf Course on 25th (AP) and Monks' House Pool on 14th (JPL).

Snipe *allinago gallinago*

A mixture of wintering and territorial birds was reported with the largest group being eight at Big Waters on 12th declining to one by 30th (GB). Six were seen at Howdon on 8th reducing to three by 25th (CB). Up to five were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond all month (MJC) and three were at Cresswell Pond on 19th (TB) and Druridge Pools on 26th (TB). Two were at each of Alnmouth-Seaton Point, Beacon Hill (Cramlington), Warkworth Lane Ponds and Weetslade CP. Possibly two pairs were at Belford Moor where display was seen on 11th (DF). Single birds were reported from Bothal Pond, Caistron, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Debdon (Rothbury-singing), Grindon Lough, Longframlington Common, Prestwick Carr and Simonside (singing).

Two waders at Howdon Wetland.

By Colin Bradshaw

on 13th April

Right: a Snipe and

below: a Redshank



Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

A mixture of wintering birds and returning migrants was noted this month, all reported as single birds. Birds remaining from last month were at Berwick Hill Bridge, Hedgeley GP and Longhirst Flash. Further singles were noted at Arcot Pond, Holywell Grange, Low Trewitt, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal), Prestwick Carr and Thropton. Actively migrating birds flying north were seen at Ebbleton-Craster on 21st (MJC), Gosforth (Newcastle) on 11th and 20th (MJC) and Weetslade CP on 18th (PC).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

High numbers remained at Howdon with 165 on 2nd but only one by 25th (CB). At The River Coquet Estuary, 130 were counted on 11th (CSa). The only other significant counts received from coastal or near coastal areas were 40 at Cullercoats on 10th (MN), 33 at Earsdon on 12th (MNC), 26 in the East Holywell-Backworth area also on 12th (CPK/GPK *et al.*), 22 at Yarrow Slake (River Tweed) and 12 at the Wansbeck Estuary. Birds were present at Grindon Lough all month with the peak count being 18 on 14th (SJH). Coastal pools and locations attracted small groups with a maximum of nine at Lynemouth Flash on 3rd (IDR), six at Bothal Pond on 5th (TD), three at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) from 1st-4th (IDR), and two at both Brierdene Farm (Whitley Bay) and Wideopen. Birds in breeding and potential breeding sites were noted at Derwent Reservoir with six on 14th (IFo), two pairs displaying and copulating at Melkridge (River South Tyne- SJH), two breeding pairs at Caistron on 9th (TRD/JD), two pairs at Wharton on 14th (TRD/JD), three birds at Holystone on 5th (DRo), two at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 14th (IFo) and two at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 19th (GB). Possible northbound migrants were seen over observers' houses at Gosforth Garden Village on 16th & 24th and Heaton also on 24th.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The first returning bird was at Grindon Lough on 20th increasing to three by 24th (SJH). Three were also present at Hedgeley GP on 26th and 29th (TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa). Singles were at Brenkley on 23rd-28th (GB) and calling over Tynemouth at dusk on 28th (KWY).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Four in Lynemouth Bay on 7th (IDR) was the only record of the month.

A Kittiwake at Tynemouth.

Colin Bradshaw

19th April

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest groups were ca.400 following a plough at Flothers (Slaley) on 5th (RMH), 165 at Grindon Lough on 7th (SJH) and 80 at Warkworth Lane ponds on 2nd (IDR). Elsewhere, 10-30 were at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Ellington and Lynemouth Bay with one or two recorded on many dates throughout at a few other localities.

**Mediterranean Gull** *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Two adults flew S at Cullercoats on 8th (MK) and singles were seen at Boulmer and at Melkridge on the South Tyne where one bathed in the river shallows (SJH).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

At least 1,000, mainly immatures, followed a plough at Aydon Castle (Corbridge) on 26th (MR) and 100 were on the South Tyne at Melkridge on 8th (SJH). Smaller gatherings of 12-30 were noted at Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough and Tynemouth with up to ten at Corbridge and Ellington.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

One to two were reported at Branton GP, Caistron, Fawdon (Newcastle) and Lynemouth Bay.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

The third-winter bird which had visited Big Waters regularly during earlier months this year was recorded on a number of occasions until 27th at Big Waters and at nearby Brunswick Green and Hazelrigg (GB).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A total of 284 were recorded within a 3km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 29th (TBr) and 100-130 were at Aydon Castle (Corbridge) (MR), Berwick Hill (Ponteland) (GB) and Prestwick Carr (GB). Elsewhere, on dates throughout, 20-50 were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Lynemouth Bay and Newbiggin with up to ten at Cramlington, Ellington, Fawdon (Newcastle) and Wallsend (Davy Bank) where five AON were recorded CDH).

Lock down dispute

Fawdon

by Chris Barlow

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

At Thropton, a large group of 94, almost all adults, were present on 22nd (TRD/JD), two gatherings, totalling 83, followed ploughs at Black Callerton on 9th (MH) and 40-60 were at Branton GP (TRD/JD), Belford Moor (DF) and Gosforth (ADM). At other localities 11-25 were at Arcot Pond, Berwick Hill (Ponteland) and Big Waters with one to ten elsewhere at 13 widespread and mainly inland sites.



Lesser Black-backed Gull at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 2nd April

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

The largest count was 50 moving N at Stag Rocks on 22nd (JPL) and birds flying N were also recorded at Alnmouth on 8th and Seahouses on 22nd (MJC). 15 were in Lynemouth Bay on 30th (IDR/JF) and one to nine at eight other coastal sites between Berwick and Tynemouth.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The first returning birds, all seen on 30th, were five from Monks' House-Beadnell (MJC) and a single fishing offshore at St Mary's Island (JBU).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

The first sightings this year were singles at Druridge Bay CP on 13th (CSa) and another at Big Waters on 19th (GB). Seven flew N between Seahouses and Beadnell on 22nd (MJC) and the numbers gradually built up thereafter numbering two to six at other localities, namely Blagdon (two S), Bothal Pond, Craster, Embleton, Gosforth (three sites), Killingworth Lake, Tynemouth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The first record was a single moving N at Alnmouth on 15th (MKi) and birds moving N elsewhere comprised two at Embleton on 21st and five at Seahouses on 22nd (MJC).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Small groups moving N at Tynemouth totalled 100 on 12th and 20 on 24th (CB) and on 25th, 25 were counted moving N at Cresswell, Snab Point (TB).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

A single record only of two off the pier at Tynemouth on 25th (CB).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

One flew N at Longhoughton on 13th (BS).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

There were few records with just three at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th and singles there on two other dates and at Cresswell Home Farm on 2nd (IDR).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Well reported with 20 the high count in the area of Gosforth Home Farm on 9th and at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 23rd (MJC/TB). On 2nd 16 were at Howdon (CB) with eight at Lynemouth Bay on 30th and six at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 8th, Melkridge on 20th and Derwent Reservoir on 20th. One to four were at 26 widespread localities.

A Stock Dove
Howdon
2nd April
Colin Bradshaw



Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Pre-roost gatherings in the Gosforth Home Farm area numbered 2,100 on 23rd, 1,150 on 30th, 641 on 19th and 107 on 17th (MJC) with 505 feeding at Gosforth on 19th (ADM) and 500 at Howick on 1st. On 13th 19 were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) with 60 there on 29th, the peak count at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) was 65 on 3rd with five to 45 present on 12 other days in the month. Two to 30 were at nine other locations.

A Woodpigeon by Jack Bucknall
St.Mary's on 30th April

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Six were at Seghill on 14th (IF) with two at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on three dates and one there on 1st (IDR).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

First arrival was at Alnwick on 7th (AMG/MG) with one heading W at Carterway Heads on 8th (lfo), then the main influx, all singles, commencing 24th at Holystone and Longframlington Common, Cartington on 27th, Slaley Hall on 28th, Belford Moor and Budle Bay on 30th.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

There were just three reports of singles at Seaton Burn on 12th (JR), Cresswell Pond at 11.45 on 26th (TB) and Howick on 27th (JAR).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two pairs were present all month in the Gosforth Home Farm area (MJC), three were calling at Ellington Colliery on 1st (IDR) and two north of Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 25th (TD). All other reports were of singles from 14 locations including a number of birds calling at midday.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

There were only three reports with two at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 4th (IJ) and singles at Embleton all month and near Big Waters (NWT) on 26th (PAs/GB).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

One was at Pegswood Community Park on 18th (TF/JFa) and one was mobbed by gulls at Tynemouth on 25th (MK).

Swift *Apus apus*

The first birds were reported on 20th with two at Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) and in the Gosforth Home Farm area where the peak count of 32 occurred on 30th (MSH/MJC). Three birds were seen on 21st at Embleton to Craster, Styford / Bywell and Gosforth Subsidence Pond with the main arrival building from 25th where 21 were at Killingworth Lake on 29th and 15+ there on 27th. One to eight were at 14 other widespread localities.

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

One was found and photographed flying with hirundines at Woodhorn on 30th where it stayed briefly before flying off strongly N (AP/JG).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two were present all month in the Gosforth Home Farm area (MJC) and at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 23rd (MNC) and a pair at Weetslade Colliery CP on 26th (PS) with singles there on two other dates and regularly at Melkridge (R. South Tyne). Singles were also at Chollerford, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Embleton-Craster, Mitford and R.Wansbeck.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One found by Gary Wren near the plantation flew off over the dunes at Druridge Bay on 26th (TB) and was relocated on 27th near the turning circle (ADM/CSa).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A high count of four came from Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 30th (MNC), three at Lincoln Hill (nr Chollerford) on 14th with two there on 8th (SW) and a maximum of three at Ellington during the month (TB). Two were present at Gosforth all month (MJC), at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 12th and Mitford on 14th with singles present on four dates at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) where they are normally more frequent (NFO). Singles were also at 22 other widely spread localities.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

All reports were of singles as birds called at Gosforth Home Farm area on three dates, Ellington and Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Letah Wood (Hexham), Sleafy Hall on two dates and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Dipton Wood, nr Edlingham, Killingworth Village, Weetslade Colliery CP and Close House (Wylam).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were at Belford Moor on 7th (DF), pairs were seen at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 4th (TB) and 6th (IDR), Weetslade Colliery CP on 5th (PS), Airy Holm reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 20th, Arcot Pond on 22nd (DM) and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 30th (TBr). Single birds were noted at 18 Sites.



A Kestrel wind hovers
Tynemouth.
Colin Bradshaw
19th April

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

There were only two records this month, with a 2nd-calendar-year female at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC) and an un-sexed bird flew South East over the observer's garden at Tynemouth on 11th (DRW).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two males flew over the observer's head at Gosforth on 27th (ADM). Single birds were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Chollerford, Gosforth Home Farm, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Hazelrigg (nr Wideopen), Howdon, Humshaugh, Melkridge (River S Tyne), Monkseaton and at Newcastle on three dates (PCI).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

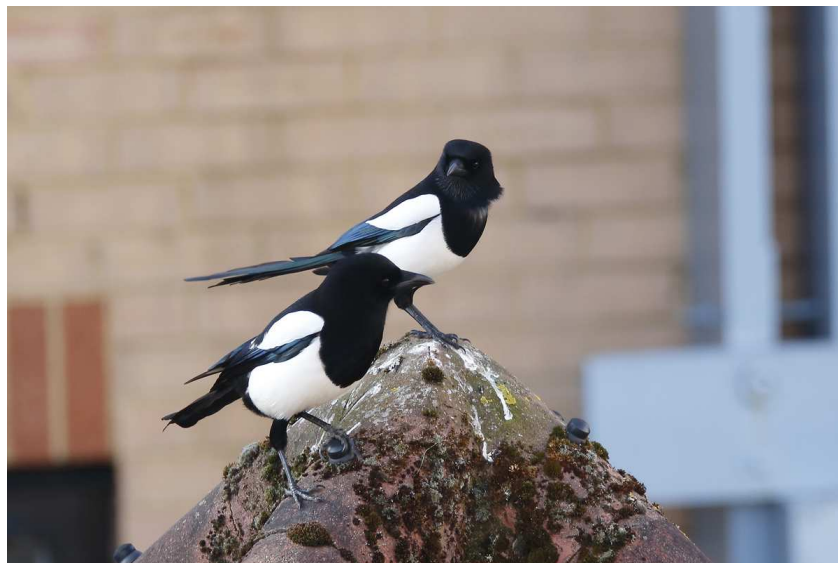
Up to eight were in the Gosforth Home Farm area all month (MJC), five at Benton (Newcastle) on 28th (AJ), three at Heaton Park on 1st & 12th and at Melton Park (Newcastle) on 29th (TW/GB). A breeding pair was present at Gosforth all month (ADM) and a single at North Shields on 11th (KWY).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

More than five were at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) and regularly noted during the month (KWY), five were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th with one to two there on 11 other dates during the month and at Ellington / Ellington Dene on a further seven (IDR/TB). Four were at Gosforth on 11th with one to three all month (ADM), four at Holystone on 19th and at Arcot Pond on 21st with a single there on 19th (DRo/STH), three at Howick on 1st and one to two at 14 other locations.

Magpie *Pica pica*

On 26th 10 were at Bebside (Blyth) (JR), eight at The Goodie Patch Park (Berwick) on 8th (MHu), seven at Fawdon (Newcastle) on 11th (CDB) and two to three at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) from 3rd to 9th (IDR). Two were at Ellington Colliery on 23rd, Lynemouth Bay on 29th and 30th and a single at Holystone (R.Coquet) unusual for the upland location.



Two for Joy - Magpies in Fawdon
5th April
Chris Barlow

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost gathering of 2,000 was in the Gosforth Home Farm area on 23rd (MJC), 66 at Howdon on 25th (CB), 50 at Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 2nd (IDR) and 48 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 13th (DM). Four to 35 were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) during the month with two to 25 at Lynemouth Bay / Flash and four to six at Ellington Colliery (IDR). One to three were at Howick and Fawdon (Newcastle).

A Jackdaw at Howdon by Colin Bradshaw on 28th April

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Nest counts were the main records with 57 at Carraw, 35 at Winshiels and 18 at Halwhistle, all on 15th (Twi), 29 nests at Haughton Castle on 10th (SWi) and three at Havanah NR on 9th (GB). Nine was the peak count at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th with one to three at Ellington Colliery, Lynemouth Bay and Seghill.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The Gosforth Home Farm area had a pre-roost gathering of 800 on 23rd with 147 there on 19th and 71 on 17th (MJC) with 110 at New Water Haugh (R.Tweed) on 12th (MHu). 21 to 35 were at Walker Riverside, Beaconhill (Cramlington), and Berwick Hill (Ponteland) with one to nine at eight other locations.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Two were at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 23rd with singles there on three dates from 20th to 29th (ADM/CSa/TB). One was at Boulmer from 4th to month end (BS) and one at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea from 10th to 14th (AP), at Hadston Links (Druridge Bay) on 24th (CSa) and Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 30th (STH/DM).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two at Holystone on 4th were seen throughout the month (DRo) with two at Debdon (Rothbury) on 11th & 15th and the old Railway Line (Rothbury) on 13th with one there on 6th (TRD/JD) and two at Dancing Green (Belford Moor) on 14th (DF). Singles were at Belford Moor regularly, Humshaugh on 1st, Whittingham on 20th, Longframlington Common on 24th, Cartington and Grindon Lough on 27th.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

On 15th seven were at Humford (JR), six at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 8th with two to four on four other dates (IDR/JF), five at Ellington Colliery on 23rd (IDR) and one to two at four other locations including Holy Island, regarded as unusual in spring (IK).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

A walk from Benridge to Kirkhill (Morpeth) turned up four on 4th (IDR), with two visiting feeders at Rothbury on 23rd and singles sporadically during the month (TRD/JD). Two were at Carlisle Park (Morpeth) on 8th, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 23rd, Ellington on 26th and Bluebell Woods (Morpeth) on the same date with singles at four other locations.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Surveying at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) found six to eight singing birds / territories with four present on 25th (NFO), two at Weetslade CP regularly and at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 8th & 28th, Morpeth GC on 14th, Low Newton on 15th and Matten on 20th with singles at a further 17 locations including five in North Tyneside.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A peak of 25 was reported at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 4th with four to 22 there on 12 other dates, eight the peak at Ellington Colliery on 12th with two to seven on four other dates (IDR). Seven were at Humford on 15th, five at Fawdon (Newcastle) on 11th, four at Seghill on 15th and one to two at Ellington Pond, Cresswell Hall Woods and Wallsend GC.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Birds were present on 12 dates at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) with 18 the peak on 6th, six at Ellington Colliery on 12th & 23rd (IDR), five at Humford on 15th with two at Cresswell Hall Woods, Fawdon (Newcastle), Howick and Seghill.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A high count of 25 came from Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 23rd (DM), 16 within 3km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (TBr), 12 at Whittingham on 5th (CW), 10 at Humshaugh on 12th (SW) with six at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 5th, Berwick GC on 21st and New Water Haugh (R.Tweed). Five were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th with two to four at 17 other widespread localities.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Some large gatherings were noted over Gosforth subsidence pond peaking at 550 on 7th with 160 to 200 on the previous day and 50 on 5th (MJC/ADM). 150 were at Killingworth Lake on 27th (GPK) and 100 between Monks' House and Bamburgh on 30th (MJC) with 60 at Big Waters NWT on 6th and Caistron on 17th, 50 at Branton GP on 5th and Melkridge on 27th. 12 to 45 were at 12 other locations with colonies noted at Branton GP, Tynemouth, Close House (Wylam) and Prudhoe. One to eight were at a further 18 widespread localities.

Sand Martins return to Tynemouth
Colin Bradshaw on 19th April

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Around 250 were noted in a two-hour period at Melkridge (S.Tyne) on 20th arriving from S to drop down and feed / rest before heading N with 200+ on the 27th (SJH). 70 were at Melkridge on 22nd, 63 flying N between Embleton and Craster on 21st, 12 to 35 in the Gosforth Home Farm area on five dates in the last week of the month and more than 12 at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on the 21st (MJC). Ten were at Derwent Reservoir on 17th with one to seven at a further 43 widespread localities, the first birds being three seen high over GPNR Lake from Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 5th then one to two at nine locations on 6th.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The first reports were two seen high over GPNR lake from Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 5th (MJC) with a single at Branton GP on the same date (IBDa/KDa) Two were at Bothal Pond on 6th (TF/JFa) and singles at Marden Farm (Tynemouth) and Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on the same date with numbers slowly building thereafter, the peak counts being more than 30 at Arcot Pond and 20+ at Big Waters NR, both on 29th (DM). Numbers were otherwise low with 11 in the Gosforth Home Farm area on 28th, eight at Styford / Bywell on 21st and six at Derwent Reservoir on 16th with one to five at 25 other widespread localities.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

A singing male was again heard at Woodhorn Flash on 7th (AT).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

There were regular counts of up to six at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) throughout the month (IDR), while five were noted at Ellington Colliery and at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and three at Benton. Elsewhere, reports were of singles and pairs at 19 localities, including nesting activity at Alnmouth, East Ord (Berwick), Free Wood (Bedlington) and Weetslade Colliery CP.

A Long-tailed Tit

Tynemouth

26th April

Colin Bradshaw

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The first arrival was at Melkridge on 5th (SJH). Many more arrived from 6th-8th, including 18 singing birds at Linden Hall on the former date (NFO). Peak counts elsewhere were 20 singing males at Arcot Pond on 24th, 13 at Stobhill-Bothal on 15th, 11 at Branton on 10th, ten at Corby's Letch and Corby's Crag Wood (Edlingham) on 11th and 22nd respectively, ten at Belford Moor on 24th and another ten at Bedlington Station on 27th. Nine were in song at Crooked Oak on 24th, eight at Arcot Lane on 29th and Gosforth Home Farm on 16th and seven at Caistron on 9th. Counts of six singing birds came from Attlee Park (Bedlington), Bardon Mill-Beltingham, Cramlington (Brockwell area) and Seghill. Four to five were reported from Free Wood (Bedlington), Grindon Lough, Howdon and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and one to three at a further 56 widespread localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

This increasingly common species may well outnumber the previous species in many areas. A total of 27 territories were identified within a 2.5km radius of the observer's house at Northburn (Cramlington) during the month (LJM) and 21 were singing on a 6.5km walk near Slaley Village on 6th. There were 19 at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 5th, 15 at Lumby Law (Edlingham) on 11th and 14 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 9th and at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 5th, while ten to 12 were reported from Alnmouth, Belford Moor, Corby's Crag Wood (Edlingham), Farnley Haughs (Corbridge), Gosforth and Lemmington Hall (Edlingham), the latter bringing the total for the Edlingham area to 35. Further notable counts included seven to nine at Chapel House, Free Wood (Bedlington), Hobberlaw (Alnwick), Morpeth, Newcastle Great Park, Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh), Seghill and Swallowship (Hexham) and five to six at Arcot Hall GC, Bedlington Station, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Corbridge, Druridge Bay CP, East Ord, Ellington Colliery, Gosforth Home Farm, Howdon, Humford, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Weetslade Colliery CP. One to four were reported from a further 25 localities.



A Chiffchaff in Fawdon
by Chris Barlow on 5th April

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

The first was singing at Derwent Gorge on 24th (IFo), while another singing bird at Linden Hall on 26th-27th was the first here in 17 years (NFO).

A Wood Warbler in full voice at Linden hall

Neil Osborne

26th April

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

The first arrivals were two at both Big Waters and Gosforth Park on 12th (GB/MJC). Towards the end of the month up to six were noted at Weetslade CP on 24th-26th (PS), four were at Castron on 24th and Arcot Pond on 29th and three at Branton GP on 26th, Gosforth Home Farm on 16th and Backworth and Monks' House-Bamburgh on 30th. In addition, two were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 20th and singles at Arcot Manor Pond, Bothal Pond, Crowhall Farm (Holywell), Druridge Pools, Embleton Quarry, Newcastle Great Park, St Mary's Wetland and Woolsington Hall.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

One at Gosforth Park on 12th was the first of the year (MJC). The first arrival at Weetslade Colliery CP was on 22nd, numbers here increasing to a site record of three singing males by the end of the month (PS). Singles were reported from Big Waters, Castron and Newcastle Great Park from 20th-26th.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

April was a good month for the species, with the first noted at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 10th (IJ). A total of 30 territories had been identified in the Cramlington area by the 29th, of which 13 were in the Arcot Pond area and five at West Hartford (STH/GMi/LJM/DM/PJA/JM/SL). Elsewhere, ten were heard 'reeling' from Monks' House-Bamburgh on 30th and six at Druridge Pools on 26th. At least five were at Dickies Holm (Seghill) from 25th-30th, four+ at Rising Sun CP from 14th-30th and four at Brenkley from 26th-28th and at Weetslade Colliery CP on 26th. Counts of three were received from Bedlington Station, Low Newton and Warkworth Dunes and two were noted at Backworth and Prestwick Carr. Singles were also at Arcot Lane, Budle Point, Embleton Quarry, Gosforth Home Farm, Gosforth Park, Howick, Pegswood Community Park, Seaton Burn and Snab Point (Cresswell).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

At Linden Hall, 21 singing males were noted on 6th (NFO), while 20 birds were at Branton GP on 9th and ten at Bedlington Station on 27th and Corby's Crag Wood (Edlingham) on 22nd. Nine singing males were at Arcot Lane on 29th, Gosforth Home Farm on 16th and Stobhill-Bothal on 15th and eight were in song at Twizell by 16th. Counts of seven came from Attlee Park (Bedlington), Arcot Hall GC, Arcot Pond, Farnley (Corbridge) and Free Wood (Bedlington), while five to six were noted at Corbridge, Crooked Oak, Ellington Colliery, the High Waskerley area, Marden Quarry and Valley Park (Cramlington). Four were reported from Blizzard BP (Seaton Burn), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Ellington Colliery, Humshaugh, Newcastle Great Park, Northumberland Park (North Shields), Stonehaugh and Weetslade Colliery CP, while one to three were reported from a further 47 widespread localities.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Two singing at Hexham on 7th were the first of the year (AJR). Peak counts were three singing males at Farnley (Corbridge) on 28th and Watersmeet (Acomb) on 17th (MR/AJR), while two were heard singing at Branton GP on 26th and Ovington-Bywell on 28th. Elsewhere, singles, mainly in song were reported from Arcot Pond, Backworth, Callaly, Easington, East Ord, Gosforth Home Farm, High Waskerley area, Holywell Dene, Linden Hall, Mitford, Ord Sewage Works (Berwick), Styford, Tweedmouth and Yearle.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

The first sighting was at Rising Sun CP on 18th (GPK). A maximum of four were noted at East Holywell-Backworth from 19th, with a peak on 25th and the peak count from Rising Sun CP was three on 23rd. Elsewhere, two were singing at Bamburgh GC on 23rd, two were reported from Arcot Pond, Dickies Holm (Seghill), East Chevington, Ellington and Howdon and singles were noted at Bilton Banks, Brenkley, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Chapel House, Dinnington, Gosforth Home Farm, Horton Grange, Longhirst GC, Low Newton, Prestwick Carr, Red Row, Styford-Bywell, Tynemouth, Warkworth and Weetslade Colliery CP.



Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

The first arrival was at Rising Sun CP on 12th (GPK). By the end of the month 12 were singing at Monks' House-Bamburgh (MJC), six were at Bedlington Station and Arcot Lane and five at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) and Corbridge. Counts of four came from Howdon, Stonehaugh, St Mary's Wetland and Weetslade Colliery CP, while three were noted at Bothal and Chugdon Wood (Ellington). One to two were reported from a further 35 localities.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

One was found at St Mary's Wetland on 18th-19th (IJ/MN).

A Firecrest finds a meal at
St. Mary's
by Alan Jack 18th April

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Four were at Ellington Dene on 1st (TD) and three at Haughton Castle on 5th, with nest building noted at the latter locality on 10th. One to two were in a Tynemouth garden on 4th and 26th and at Ellington on 21st and 26th, two were singing at Arcot Hall GC on 3rd and at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 1st and 28th, while singles were also in song at Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Big Waters, Seaton Burn, Stamfordham and St Nicholas' Hospital (Gosforth). Further singles were reported from Bedlington Station and Gosforth.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A total of 25 were singing in Throckley Dene on 27th (MH) and the peak count from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) was 15 on 8th. In the Bedlington area, nine were at Attlee Park, eight at Bedlington Station and four at Free Wood, while the wider Ellington area produced further counts of four at Ellington Colliery and two at Ellington and Ellington Pond. Elsewhere two to three were noted at Corbridge (Milkwell), Cresswell Hall Woods, Fawdon, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Southfield Green (Cramlington).



A Wren at Fawdon

Chris Barlow

5th April

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A very well reported species in April, no doubt due to 'lockdown'. Peak counts were four at Aydon Castle (Corbridge) on 17th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 8th (MR/IDR/JF), while counts of three came from Attlee Park (Bedlington), Crooked Oak, Haughton Castle (singing), Gosforth and Throckley Dene (singing). A pair was noted nest building at Humshaugh on 14th and an adult was feeding an immature at Bluebell Woods (Morpeth) on 26th. Two were singing at Arcot Hall GC and Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh) and two were also reported from Corbridge (Milkwell), Howdene Burn and Northumberland Park (North Shields). Singles were noted from Arcot Pond, Brenkley, Chollerford, Cramlington Hall, Denton Dene, East Ord, Ellington Colliery, High Waskerley area, Humford, Melkridge, Ponteland Park, Rothbury, Seven Oaks Park (Cramlington), Swinhoe Lakes, Twizell, Tynemouth, Walbottle Hall and Weetslade Colliery CP

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Five individuals were in song at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 6th (AJH) and four birds were noted at Gosforth Home Farm on 3rd. Counts of three came from Callaly (singing), Humshaugh and Weetslade Colliery CP, while two were noted at Attlee Park (Bedlington), Chollerford, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Dipton Wood, Haughton Castle, Howdene Burn, Lumby Law (Edlingham), Thrunton Woods (singing), Valley Park (Cramlington) and Warkworth Lane, the latter carrying nest material. Singles were reported from Aydon (Corbridge), Big Waters, Caistron, Gosforth, Haughton Mains, Lemington, Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh), Melkridge, Rothbury (Old Railway line), Rugley (Alnwick) and Simonside.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest gathering was 150 at Prestwick Carr on 9th (GB). There was another notable flock of 70 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 1st, while 40 were noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 8th and 21-26 at Lynemouth Bay and Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 5th and 19th respectively. Three breeding pairs were at Quarry Cottage, with young heard in the nests by the end of the month. At Heaton, a nest under the eaves of the observer's house contained three eggs on 12th and five eggs by 16th; on 25th the female was brooding four one-day old chicks and a single egg. At Humshaugh a bird was heard mimicking the calls of Blackbird, Curlew, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Kestrel, Lapwing, Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Song Thrush and Swallow.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

In breeding areas, up to nine were noted in the Harthope Valley on 22nd (SVM). Three migrants were found between Monks' House and Bamburgh on 30th, while singles were noted at Holywell Pond on 5th, St Mary's Wetland from 23rd-24th and Weetslade Colliery CP on 25th. Singles inland at Cartington on 8th and Debdon (Rothbury) on 11th were also considered to be migrants.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A total of 34 were noted within a 3km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) during the month (TBr) and 15 singing males were heard during a 3km walk at Corbridge on 26th. Up to 14 were noted at Ellington Colliery and 13 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) during the month and 11 at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 5th. Elsewhere, nine were at Free Wood (Bedlington) on 14th, six at Seghill on 21st, five at Bedlington Station and four at Ellington Pond and Fawdon. Adults were feeding young at Kenton from 13th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Several large flocks were noted late into the month. The largest gatherings were 300 at Wall on 9th (SW) and 200-230 in the Airy Holm Reservoir-Shotleyfield area on 4th and 17th. At Edlingham, 180 were found at Lemington Hall on 5th and 150 at Lumby Law on 22nd, while 100-105 were noted at Corbridge on 6th, Gosforth GC on 11th, Low Trewitt (Rothbury) on 25th, Stonehaugh on 3rd and Thrunton Woods on 5th. Flocks of 80-90 were at Linden Hall, Old Railway Line (Rothbury) and Simonside, 60-63 were noted at Longframlington Common and Shelly (Netherwitton) and 40-53 at Grindon Lough, Melkridge and Prestwick Carr. Smaller numbers elsewhere included flocks of 20-30 at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Holystone, Stamfordham and Weetslade Colliery CP. The final bird of the month was at Bamburgh GC on 30th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gathering by far this month was 120 at Holystone on 2nd (DRo). Elsewhere, 25 were at Gosforth Home Farm on 2nd and 15-20 at Corbridge on 1st-2nd, ten flew NE at Stamfordham on 3rd and eight were at Arcot Hall GC and at Chollerford on 3rd and 4th respectively. Most had left by the end of the first week, with a further one to two noted at six localities during this period. One to two were at Backworth, Branton GP, Gosforth Home Farm, Marden Quarry, Morpeth (Bluebell Woods) and Prestwick Carr from 9th-12th, Gosforth Home Farm on 16th, Airy Holm Reservoir on 17th and singing at Preston Cemetery (North Shields) on 22nd. Birds were sound recorded during nocturnal migration at Monkseaton on 22nd-23rd.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

The peak count from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) was 12 on 6th (IDR). Five birds held territory within a 3km radius of Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 20th and up to four were noted at Free Wood (Bedlington) and Weetslade Colliery CP. Three were at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 5th, one of which was carrying food for young; two were at Brockwell (Cramlington), Ellington Colliery and Prior's Park and singles at Benton, Ellington Pond, Fawdon, Jesmond Dene and Seghill.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Three at Gosforth included a nesting pair (AJN), while two fledged juveniles were at Boulmer on 28th. Two were noted at Dinnington and Killingworth Lake and singles at Brenkley, Bilton Banks, Seghill and Weetslade Colliery CP.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

An early arrival was at Yearle on 26th (SVM/AJM).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

The peak monthly count from Low Cocklaw (Berwick) was 23 within a 3km radius (TBr). In the Ellington area 22 were at Chugdon Wood on 6th, four at Ellington Colliery on 12th and one to two at Ellington and Ellington Pond. A circular 4km walk at Horton Burn (Cramlington) produced 14 singing birds on 7th, while the Bedlington area was also well reported, with nine at Attlee Park on 5th, eight at Free Wood on 26th, four at Bebside on 26th and Humford on 15th and two at Gallagher Park on 20th. A pair fed young at Gosforth Home Farm on 19th and singles were reported from Cresswell Hall Woods and Fawdon.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

The first of the year was prospecting a nest box at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (AJR). On the following day four singing males were at Letah Wood and four were singing at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 24th (AJH), while four males were at Derwent Gorge on the latter date (IFO). By the end of the month three singing males were located at Dipton Wood and a single was singing at Holystone.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Singles were at Embleton throughout the month and at Marden Farm (Tynemouth) from 15th-16th (WMB/PAs/MN).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Early returning individuals were at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC), Lincoln Hill (Humshaugh) on 8th and Whittingham on 9th. Further singles were noted at Great Whittington on 10th and Letah Wood (Hexham) and Derwent Reservoir on 11th. Peak counts were four at Warton on 25th and three at Letah Wood and Low Trewitt on 14th and 17th respectively. A pair were in potential breeding habitat at Stamfordham on 17th and singles were noted at Adshiels (Longhorsley), Callaly, Cartington, Holystone, Lemmington (Edlingham), Longframlington Common, Lorbottle, Mitford, Rothbury (Debdon, Newtown and Old Railway line), Simonside, Thrunton Woods and Warenton. One in a Hexham garden on 30th was a garden tick for the observer, the first here in 30 years.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

The first arrival was at Howdon on 23rd (CB). Two males were in breeding areas at Cartington by 27th (TRD/JD).

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were six at Alnmouth on 7th and Seaton Point-Howick Haven on 14th (MJC), five at Monks' House Pool on 1st-3rd and two pairs at Druridge Bay CP on 11th and Embleton-Dunstanburgh on 15th. Three were at Belford Moor and pairs at Cresswell Pond, Debdon (Rothbury) and Lynemouth Bay and another pair was at Howick where the female was nest building. Singles were also reported from Longframlington Common, Seahouses-Beadnell and Simonside.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

On the coast, eight were at Boulmer on 14th (BS), and six at Lynemouth Bay on 7th and Maiden's Hall (West Chevington) on 14th, while six males were in breeding territory at Holystone on 8th. Counts of five came from Alnmouth-Seaton Point on 8th and Newcastle Racecourse on 12th and four were at Gosforth Home Farm on 10th, Walwick Fell on 30th and Weetslade Colliery CP on 7th. Three were noted at Alnwick, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Howick, Longhoughton Steel and Prestwick Carr and one to two at a further five coastal and 18 inland localities.

A single bird showing characteristics of the **Greenland race** *O.o leucorhoa* was at Lynemouth Bay on 30th (IDR).

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Pairs were nesting this month at Free Wood (Bedlington) and at Holywell Dene (JR/ASJ). Single birds were observed at ten other rivers during the month.

A Dipper in Holywell dene

Jack Bucknall

5th April

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

40 were at Cullercoats Bay on 13th (MN). One to ten at five other sites.



Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

25 were counted at Ellington Pond on 2nd with a peak of 19 at Chugdon Wood on 3rd (IDR/JF). Around 20 were seen during the month at Hawkwell (Stamfordham) (EC). One to ten were at 12 further sites.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

18 were the peak counts made this month at Low Cocklaw (TBr). At Chugdon Woods, 13 was the peak of the almost daily counts (IDR). Nine were seen at two sites in Bedlington this month, with eight at another (JR). One to seven were noted at six other sites.



A Dunnock at Fawdon by Chris Barlow on 5th April

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flavissima*

Four were seen at Boulmer on 16th (BS). Three males were seen between Seaton Point and Howick Haven on 14th (MJC). One to two were noted at a further 17 locations this month.



A Yellow Wagtail
Holywell Pond
by Jack Bucknall on 9th April

Blue-headed x Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla flava flavissima*

A bird was noted on 13th at Longhirst known as "Channel Wagtail" (AT).



A Grey-headed Wagtail by Ben Steel at Boulmer on 16th April

Grey-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava thunbergi*

A male of this race was observed at Boulmer on 16th (BS).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Four were noted at Humshaugh on 1st and at Bedlington (two pairs), on 14th. Three were seen at Rothbury on 13th (SW/JR/TRD/JD). Pairs were observed at 12 other localities during the month, with single birds at 20 sites.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

21 were between Seaton Point and Howick Haven on 14th (MJC). 18 were seen in a field at Boulmer on 15th and 13 at Whitley Bay on 14th and at Gosforth on 23rd (JAR/ASJ). One to nine were seen at a further 21 sites.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

A good count of 34 was made on 14th between Seaton Point and Howick Haven (MJC). 18 also at Boulmer on the same day (BS). One to five were nine other locations.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A total of 216 moved N at Gosforth Garden Village on 11th, with 198 doing likewise the following day at Gosforth Home Farm and lower numbers at these sites on several days (MJC). 130 were counted at Holystone on 6th (DRo). 77 flew N at Alnmouth on 8th (MJC). 71 were counted in a horse paddock at Bothal Pond on 10th as were 43 at Prestwick Carr on 4th, with lower counts made on several dates at the latter (TFa/JFa/MH). Elsewhere, one to 25 were noted at 19 localities.



A Meadow Pipit by Alan Jack at St. Mary's

7th April

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Two were seen at Beacon Hill on 23rd and singles noted at nine further sites as birds arrived in the county, with the first at Linden Hall and St. Mary's on 10th (AT/NFO/JBu).



A Tree Pipit at Linden Hall
21st April by Neil Osborne

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Seven were counted between Alnmouth and Seaton Point on 8th (MJC). A displaying male was noted at Cullercoats on most days, as was one at Tynemouth Pier on 27th (ASJ).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Small numbers were recorded with eight at Chugdon Wood and Howdon the largest counts this month. Birds were present at the former site all month. One – six were recorded at a further six sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

A late group of five was found at Longframlington Common on 4th (TRD/JD).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Four pairs were noted at Fawdon on 2nd (CDB). Seven were seen at Atlee Park on 5th, with five there on 19th (JR). Six attended feeders in a Rothbury garden all month. Six were in Holywell Dene on 10th and at Howdon on 2nd (TRD/JD/ASJ/CB). One to three were noted at 26 other sites.

A male Bullfinch

Howdon

Colin Bradshaw

2nd April



Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

26 were in a pre-roost gathering at Linden Hall on 3rd (NFO). Eight were seen at Howdon on 4th (CB). One to six were also at a further 11 locations this month.



A Greenfinch in a Fawdon garden by Chris Barlow on 14th April

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Some substantial flocks were seen this month, with 50 at Howick on 6th rising to 60 by 12th the largest (JAR). 50 were also counted on 30th near Monks' House (MJC). 46 were between Seaton Point and Howick Haven on 14th (MJC). 40 were at Weetslade C.P. on 3rd and at Aydon on 16th, with lower counts made on several days at the latter (PS/RB/MB). 32 flew N at Gosforth on 12th (MJC). One to 20 were also noted at 17 other sites.

A Linnet

Alan Jack

St. Mary's

4th April

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

Four were a first for a Benton garden on 11th (AJ). Three were seen at Airey Holm Reservoir on 7th (IFo). Two flew N. at Gosforth Garden Village on 10th.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Small numbers were counted this month as observers remained local. Three were at Holystone on 20th, two at Thrunton on 12th and two at Widehope, Grindon and Thrunton again later in the month. Singles were seen at four other sites.



Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

25 were noted at Howick and 17 at Fawdon on 3rd (JAR/CDB). One to 12 were seen at 12 further sites during the month.



A Goldfinch at Brierdene by Ian Johnstone

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Three flew S on 5th at Marden Quarry (KWY). A pair were noted at Berwick on 21st and Linden Hall on 28th, with singles there on two further dates. A single was also seen at Gosforth on 10th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Counts made during the month at Low Cocklaw peaked at 36 birds (TBr). 25 were seen at Humshaugh on 12th (SW). 22 fed in a horse paddock at Belford on 13th (DF). 18 were at East Holywell on 1st and at Howick on 3rd. 17 during the month were at Mickley Grange (ID). One to six were observed at 19 other sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

18 were counted at Boulmer on 18th (BS). 14 -15 pairs were nesting at St. Mary's – Old Hartley this month (ASJ). One to five were seen during the month at 22 other sites.



A Male Reed Bunting in Newcastle Great Park
Chris Barlow on 25th April

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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North Northumberland Bird Club

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).

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

RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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



A Redshank at Howdon
Colin Bradshaw on 5th April;

WeBS SITES AVAILABLE, notice from Tim Daley

Could you be interested in contributing to nationwide and long term recording of water birds?

The Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) is coordinated by the BTO and at its core are regular monthly counts of wildfowl, waders and gulls for all the main wetlands of the country.

I am the WeBS coordinator of the inland waters of Northumberland 53 are on the books with counters at the moment, although a few have recently become available. If you would like to undertake WeBS surveys at any of the below listed sites, please contact me, Tim Daley, at tim.birdman@gmail.com . I could provide more detail on what is required and how to get started.

East Chevington: One of the premier sites in Northumberland, there are almost 20 years of surveys from this large reserve which record large numbers of geese, ducks, waders and gulls and there are frequent sightings of scarce and rare visitors.

Widdrington Moor Lake: Surveyed since 2012, this large lake is viewed from the public road west of Widdrington and is becoming increasingly frequented by ducks and gulls and has become a good place to look for divers and scarce diving ducks.

West Stobswood: These pools are viewed from the road northwest of Widdrington Station and have been surveyed since 2012. The common ducks are usually present and sometimes geese and there is good potential for wader sightings.

Backworth Ponds: This is a small site between West Holywell and Earsdon with a recording history since 2003. It is frequented by the usual ducks and geese, has lapwings in numbers and sightings of other waders.

West Allotment Pond: This is a small semi-urban site with a pool just north of Silverlink frequented by the common ducks and has a WeBS counting record going back to 2003.



Winter and summer visitors, both by Alan Jack
. Above a Waxwing at Tynemouth on 10th April
and below a Whitethroat at Holywell on 14th April



Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 5

MONTHLY SUMMARY May 2020

5th July 2020



CONTENTS

A writer is needed for the section Tits to Chats .

Mike Riichardson has written the section for many years. Many thanks Mike.

Please contact the editor - NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com or any committee member.

A photographic supplement is attached, for emailers only.

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	Continued influx with one to two at various coastal sites and at Haughton Strother.
Blue-winged Teal	First-summer female at Castle Island from 31st.
American Wigeon	Drake still at Grindon Lough on 7th.
Quail	Singles calling at Whittle Dene and Branton.
Spoonbill	One to two at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools during month.
Red Kite	Encouraging number of sightings especially away from core area.
Avocet	Starting to move away from Cresswell area with first breeding at Newton.
Ringed Plover	Large movement from mid-month with 670 at Coquet Estuary on 22nd.
Curlew Sandpiper	Up to three at Druridge Pools from 22nd to 24th with one at Amble Braid on 22nd.
Little Stint	Single at Druridge Pools on 19th.
Jack Snipe	Late record with one at Gosforth on 3rd.
Red-necked Phalarope	Female back again for 6th year from 18th still hoping for a male!
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at several sites from mid-month.
Spotted Redshank	Only sighting of the year was one at Grindon Lough on 28th.
Little Gull	One to two at several coastal sites.
Iceland Gull	Single at Black Middens, Tynemouth on 3rd.
Black Guillemot	One past Newbiggin on 26th and on sea at Seaton Pt, Boulmer on 28th.
Cuckoo	Encouraging 81 separate reports during month.
Bee-eater	One well seen and calling over High Hauxley on 28th.
Red-footed Falcon	Female seen at East Chevington and then over Holy Island on 21st.
Hobby	Adult over West Ord on 31st.
Red-backed Shrike	Female on Holy Island on 31st.
Golden Oriole	1st-summer male or female near Bamburgh on 17th.
Short-toed Lark	One at Newbiggin from 5th to 8th.
Bearded Tit	Up to four individuals at East Chevington through month.
Wood Warbler	Singing males at five sites.
Black-throated Thrush	Stunning male briefly in garden at Kyloe on 8th. Well photographed.
Nightingale	One on Holy Island on 30th.
Black Redstart	Singles at Cresswell on 1st and Holy Island on 20th.
Firecrest	One at St Mary's wetland on 18th and 19th.
Grey-headed Wagtail	Male at Holy Island on 31st.
Hawfinch	One at a feeder at Doxford on 3rd.

Tawny Owlets

Gosforth

2nd May

Mike Carr



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 should be in September. Fingers crossed.

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

At Fenham Flats, a party of 48 pale-bellied *hrota* race birds was noted on 17th (RA) and 68 were present on 19th (NFO). Reports of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved two at Fenham Flats on 22nd (TF/JFa) and one on the Coquet Estuary on 10th (CSa).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Northerly movement involved 14 at Lynemouth on 20th (TB), ten at Boulmer on 25th (BS), 18 at Cocklawburn on 28th (MHu), and on 29th, a total of 96 in four flocks at Tynemouth (DRW), 63 in two flocks at St Mary's (MSH), 50 at East Chevington (STH/IFo), 42 at Druridge Pools (IDR), and 19 at Belford (DF), while 32 flew S at Cramlington on 30th (LJM), and about 90, in two flocks, flew over Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin on 30th (BSt). Peak concentrations were 141 at Grindon Lough on 29th (SJH), 55 (including young) at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IDR), 45-47 at Cresswell Pond (TB) and Hartburn Reservoir (MNC), 36 on the River Tyne at Tynemouth on 28th (DRW), 20-29 at Big Waters, Holy Island and Killingworth Lake, and 18 at Bothal and Holywell Ponds, and Monks' House Pool. One to eight were also at Beal, Brenkley, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Earsdon, Howdon Wetland, New Water Haugh, Seaton Burn, Seaton Delaval, Wark and Warkworth Lane Ponds. Breeding data were as follows (additional to April unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Grindon Lough	2	8 (5,3)	SJH/MRS <i>et al.</i> Brood of 3 from 5th and brood of 5 from 17th (later reduced to four young)
Druridge Pools	2	10 (6,4)	IDR on 25th.
West Stobswood Pool	2	9 (5,4)	TD on 30th.
Linton Ponds	2	7+ (6, 1+)	CDH on 17th. Plus a further 1 to 2 nests
Widdrington Moor Lake	2	6 (4,2)	TD on 30th.
Derwent Reservoir	1	6	IFo on 21st.
Woodhorn Flashes	1	4	CDH on 17th.
Castle Island	1	3	GB on 30th.
East Chevington	1	3	PRM on 22nd.
Banks's Pond, Dinnington	1	2	PCF on 24th.
Plenmeller Common	--	18	PRM on 26th. Plus 14 adults
Hartburn Reservoir	--	15	MNC on 27th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

59 flew N in two flocks at Boulmer on 12th (BS), 31 were at the Coquet Estuary on 10th (CSa), 22 flew S at East Chevington (STH/IFo) and were at Druridge Pools (IDR) on 29th, nine flew S at St Mary's Wetland on 26th (AC) and two flew N/NE at St Mary's Island on 10th (JBU) and Holy Island on 13th and 20th (MJC/ADM). Singles were at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TB) and Holy Island on 30th (MJC). Two flocks were recorded over Longhoughton between 0115-0222h on 1st (BS).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Northerly movement included 16 at East Ord on 21st (MHu), 19-30 at Cocklawburn (MHu) and Ellington (TB) on 28th, and flew N at Cresswell Pond (TB) and 58 N at Spittal cliffs (MHu) on 29th. A notable 1,500 (adults and large young but excluding small young) were at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo), 64 at East Chevington on 22nd (PRM), 23-30 at Brenkley, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Holywell Pond, and ten to 14 at Beal and Woodhorn Flashes. One to six were also at/over Big Waters, Bothal and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Chollerford, Greenlee Lough, Hartburn Reservoir, Humshaugh, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool and Wark.

Breeding data were as follows (additional to April unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	11	41	IFo on 4th. Broods ranging in size from 1 to 8.
Plenmeller Common	3	7 (3,2,2)	PRM on 26th.
Brenkley	2	10 (7,3)	GB on 14th. Brood of 7 first noted on 8th.
East Chevington	2	5	TD on 29th.
Middle Ord Pond	1	6	MHu on 24th.
Bothal Pond	1	3	TD on 3rd.
High Baulk, Great Whittington	1	2	ALT on 26th.
Haughton Strother GP	--	25	SW on 7th.
Alnmouth	--	13	MH on 20th. Also several adults.
Woodhorn Flashes	--	9	PRM on 19th. Plus 18 adults.

A brood of 11 remained at Gosforth subsidence pond from April (MJC).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Eight, together with four white domestic geese, flew N/NW at Holy Island on 22nd (MJC/ADM), four were at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TB), and one to two at/over Big Waters, Castron, Derwent Reservoir, Hepple and Holy Island Lough on single dates between 1st-23rd.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts at the Tweed Estuary were 140 at Calot Shad on 22nd and 132 at New Water Haugh on 7th (MHu), while 82 were at East Ord on 9th (MHu), 27-34 at East Chevington (TD) and QEII CP (CDH), and 11-17 at Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Howdon. Four to seven were also at/over Ellington, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, Holy Island Lough, Longhirst Flash and Tynemouth Boating Lake, and one to two a ten further widespread sites. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Arcot Pond	1	7	GB on 22nd.
Holy Island	1	7	MJC/ADM on 22nd.
Big Waters	1	6	GB on 19th.
Holywell Pond	1	6	DM on 14th.
Howdon Wetland	1	5	CB on 31st.
East Chevington south pool	1	4	MH on 21st.

Birds on nests were also noted at Broomlee Lough, Royal Quays (North Shields) and Weetslade CP.

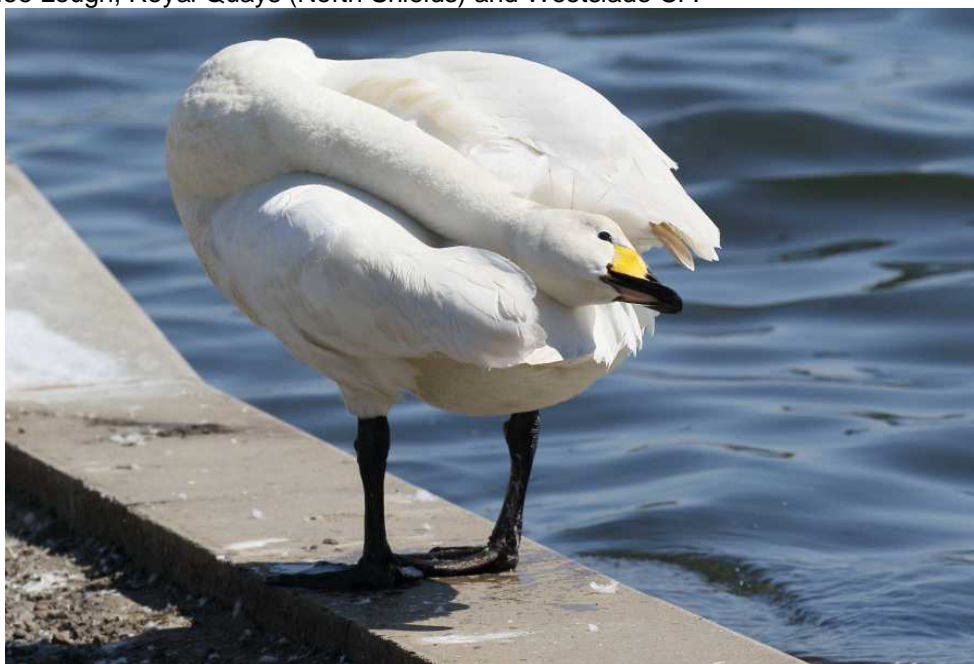
Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Singles were at Killingworth Lake on 6th (ASJ), Big Waters on 19th (GB), East Chevington on 20th (TF/JFa), Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo) and QEII CP on 25th (CDH).

A Whooper stretches

May 6th Killingworth Lake

Alan Jack

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

150 at Budle Bay on 31st included some young (CGK), 38 adults were at Cresswell Pond on 26th (TB), 26 at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IDR), 24 adults at Boulmer on 28th (BS), 11-19 at Amble Braid, Budle Point, the Blyth Estuary, Howdon and Warkworth Old Water. Breeding data were as follows (additional to April unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Boulmer	3	26 (14,8,4)	BS on 28th.
Widdrington Moor Lake	2	18 (10,8)	TRD/JD on 13th.
Cresswell Pond	1	32	IRD on 27th.
North Blyth staithes	1	8	STH on 26th.
Linton Ponds	1	6	CDH on 17th.
Old Helsay, Warkworth	1	6	IDR on 26th.
Widdrington Moor Lake	1	6	IF on 14th.
Castle Island	1	5	IF on 31st.

Three to five were also at Castron, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, and Holywell and Warkworth Lane Ponds, and one to two at Arcot Pond, the 'Beehive' Flash (Earsdon), Big Waters, Brenkley, Budle Point, East Chevington, Ellington, Hazlerigg, Holystone, Lynemouth and Woodhorn Flashes, North Blyth, West Ord, West Stobswood Pool, Widdrington Moor Lake and Yarrow Slake.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

A good showing involved several mobile birds (all males where stated). Two were at Budle Bay on 30th-31st (RA/CGK/GPK *et al.*), Cresswell Pond on 28th (MN), East Chevington on 21st (CSa) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 13th (TRD/JD). Single birds were noted at Budle Bay regularly between 'early May' and 19th (CGK/GPK/NFO *et al.*), Druridge Pools on 3rd and 9th (TB/ADM), East Chevington on five dates between 17th-31st (ADM/MN *et al.*), Haughton Strother GP on 7th (SW), Holy Island on 29th (SR), Longhoughton Steel on 24th (flew in with Shelduck; TRD/JD) and 25th (noted as wary and un-ringed; BS). The bird at the latter locality was the first there since the first county record there back in 1845! (TRD/JD). A female was at Derwent Reservoir on 11th March (IFo).



A Ruddy Shelduck at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 24th May

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A pair was on the River North Tyne at Wark on 13th (EAW) and a drake was noted there on 2nd and 16th (PRM), and a pair was at Chollerford on 7th (SW). Single drakes were also at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder Forest) on 16th (JD/TRD), Holywell Pond on 7th (MK) and Redesmouth on 14th (IRD). One exited a tree hole at Holystone on 20th (LA).

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Three (two drakes and a duck) were at Holy Island on 13th (ADM) and 30th (MJC) and a pair was noted there on 21st-22nd and 30th-31st (RA/NFO/TF/JFa *et al.*). Single drakes were at Druridge Pools on 4th (CSa) and 22nd (ADM/PRM/IDR *et al.*), East Chevington north pool on 24th-25th (TB/TF/JFa/ADM) and Holywell Pond on 23rd (STH/MN).

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*

A female, or possible hybrid, was at Castle Island on 31st.

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Two drakes on the sea off Boulmer on 4th later flew S (BS). Eight at Druridge Pools on 18th (IDR) was the largest count received. Three to four were at Bothal Pond (TD), Budle Bay (TRD/JD), Holywell Pond (IJ/DM) and Monks' House Pool (JPL). One to two were also at Big Waters, Branton GP, Earsdon, Gosforth subsidence pond, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, Hauxley Reserve, Howdon Wetland, Linton and Warkworth Lane Ponds, St Mary's Wetland, Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Peak counts were 18 at Woodhorn Flashes on 30th (GB), 16 at Bothal Pond on 3rd (TD), 16 at Druridge Pools on 22nd (PRM), and ten to 14 at Castle Island (IF), East Chevington (PRM) and Lynemouth Flash (IF). Five to nine were at Arcot, Holywell and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Big Waters, Branton GP, Caistron, Gosforth subsidence pond and Monks' House Pool, and three to four at Cresswell, Ellington and Linton Ponds, Hedgeley GP and Marden Quarry. One to two were also at Brenkley, Grindon Lough, Holystone, Howdon Wetland, Killingworth Lake and Longhirst Flash. Two were on the sea at Tynemouth Bay on 13th and 14th (IDR).

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Two flew N at Cullercoats on 11th (MK) and one N at Boulmer on 31st (BS). Numbers at Grindon Lough peaked at 21 (14 drakes) on 8th (PRM), with four to 17 throughout the month (SJH *et al.*). Three were at Druridge Pools on 13th and 22nd (TRD/JD/IDR) and East Chevington on 19th and 29th (TD/TRD/JD). One to two were at the above two sites on several further dates, and one to two were also at Caistron, Ellington and Linton Ponds, Melkridge (River South Tyne), New Water Haugh and Newton Pool on sporadic dates between 1st-17th. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	1	8	IFo on 26th.
Plenmeller Common	1	2	PRM on 26th. Also 2 drakes and 2 ducks

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

A drake was at Grindon Lough on 7th (SJH).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts of adults involved 54 at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFO), 43 at Big Waters on 25th (GB), 32 at Grindon Lough on 4th-5th (SJH), 25 at Castle Island (IF), and ten to 20 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot, Bothal, Ellington and Holywell Ponds, Druridge Pools and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows (additional to April unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	10	64 (12,10,8,8,7,6, 5,4,2,2)	IFo. First broods (6 and 2 young) on 7th. Latest new brood (2 young) on 26th.
Big Waters	3	14 (7,4,3)	GB on 17th. Includes depleted broods from April
QEII CP Lake	2	13 (8,5)	CDH on 17th.
Killingworth Lake	2	10 (8,2)	GB on 21st.
Callerton Pond	2	9 (5,4)	MH on 8th. Eight young still present on 21st.
Gosforth subsidence pond	2+	9+	MJC. As April?
Arcot Pond	2	3 (2,1)	GB on 17th.
West Ord	1	8	MHu on 13th.
Castle Island	1	6	GB on 30th.
Jesmond Dene	1	6	CDH on 2nd.
Throckley Pond	1	5	CDH. Well grown young on 30th.
Wark	1	5	EAW on 26th.
Holy Island (quarry pond)	1	4+	MJC on 30th.
Weetslade CP	1	4	GB on 8th (probably additional to April)
Haughton Castle	1	3	SW on 31st.
Middle Ord Pond	1	3	MHu on 31st.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A drake was at Grindon Lough on 27th (SJH).

Teal *Anas crecca*

Noted throughout the month at Grindon Lough, with a peak of 24 on 5th and 18 still present on 24th (SJH/PRM). Seven were at Druridge Pools on 25th and one to five there between 13th-29th (TRD/JD/IDR). One to two were also noted at Aydon, Castle Island, Gosforth subsidence pond, East Chevington, Linton Ponds, Melkridge and Plenmeller Common and West Stobswood Pool on occasional dates. Two were on the sea off Druridge Pools on 20th and two were on rocks at Tynemouth on 22nd (DRW).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

12 (ten drakes) were at Holywell Pond on 22nd (DM), seven at Swallow Pond on 7th (GPK), five at Bothal Pond on 24th (TD), five at Woodhorn Flashes on 30th (GB), three to four at Druridge Pools, Gosforth subsidence pond and Linton Ponds, and one at Cresswell Pond.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

34 were at Caistron on 9th (JD), 27 at Bothal Pond on 29th (IFo), 20 at Holywell Pond on 14th (DM), 11-13 at Cresswell Pond (IDR), Druridge Pools (IDR), Grindon Lough (SJH), Linton Ponds (CDH), and five to nine at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot, Banks's, Cocklawburn and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Big Waters, Holy Island Lough, Longhoughton Quarry, Monks' House Pool, Tynemouth Boating Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to four were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Gosforth subsidence pond, Haughton Castle, Howdon and Plenmeller Common.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Five flew N at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 4th (AP) and three flew N at St Mary's on 10th (JBu). A drake was at Cresswell Pond between 21st-31st (TB *et al.*).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

129 adults were at Holy Island on 30th (MJC), 43 at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (DM), 34 at Cocklawburn on 28th (MHu), ten (including display) at Spital, Newbiggin (BSt), and one to seven at Amble Braid, Blyth South Harbour, Collywell Bay, Lynemouth and Snab Point. Breeding data were as follows (additional to April unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Boulmer	2	7 (5,2)	BS on 31st.
Budle Bay	1+	37	CGK/GPK on 31st.
Amble Braid	1	11	TRD/JD on 29th. With three females. Brood of 3 noted on 22nd; PRM
Holy Island North Shore	1	11	MJC on 30th

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A drake was at Holy Island North Shore on 25th (AH/SR) and 30th (RA/MJC).

A Velvet Scoter

off Holy Island

30th May

Mike Carr

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Northerly movement involved a total of 26 at Budle Point on 17th and 25th (RA), 18 off Druridge Links on 28th (IDR), and seven to nine at Annstead (DF) on 26th and Boulmer (BS) on 31st. Two were noted flying S offshore during a 'lockdown' watch from the observer's attic in Tynemouth on 10th (CB). Small numbers included 24 at Alnmouth Bay on 2nd (RPo), 12 at Holy Island North Shore on 25th (ADM), and two at Amble Links. A flock was recorded flying over Longhoughton at 2357h on 2nd (BS).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Up to ten (two adult drakes, two immature drakes and six ducks) were noted at the regular breeding site (TRD/JD) and up to seven (one adult drake, one immature drake and five ducks) were at a nearby site (TRD/JD/NFO). A pair was at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), and singles at Cocklawburn Pond on 20th and 28th (MHu), East Chevington north pool on 29th (TD/IFo/STH) and Swallow Pond on 10th (GPK). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Site A	1	8	PHa/AHa on 18th
Site B	1	2	TRD/JD/SJL on 25th and 30th.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Peak gatherings were 26 on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 19th (MHu), 18 at Boulmer on 31st (BS), 15 at Budle Bay on 31st (CGK/GPK) and 12 at Holy Island on 21st (ADM). Five to eight were found at the Blyth Estuary, Melkridge, Twizel and Wark, and three to four at Allen Banks, Boulmer and West Ord. One to two were also at Caistron, Castle Island, Catton, Chollerford, the Harthope Valley and Holystone. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Wark	1-2	6-9	PRM/EAW. Brood of 6 on 13th and brood of 3 on 28th and 30th.
Rothbury-Thropton	1	5	TRD/JD on 21st. Ducklings holding up traffic on main road!

A Goosander brood

on the roadside near Thropton

Tim Dean

21st May



Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

A drake and three females were on the River Tyne at Tynemouth on 31st (MK/DRW), and two were at Budle Bay on 31st (CGK/GPK), Budle Point on 17th (RA) and Fenham Flats on 22nd (TF/JFa).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Up to six males were at Mohope Fell on 3rd and four males were at Swinhope Shield (Allendale) on 7th (SJH). Four females were at Whitfield Moor on 23th (PRM) and single birds were recorded at Catton, Meadow Cottage (E. Allendale), North Kellas Plantation, Shield on the Wall and Winnows Hill (Slaley).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

21 were on Carrshield Moor on 7th (SJH) and at least 20 were at Simonside on 25th (ASJ). Meadow Cottage (Allendale) peaked at 14 on 7th (SJH) and a female with six juveniles was at Caudhole Moss (Simonside Hills) on 31st (IRD). One to four were at Alnwick Moor, Harthope Valley, Hepple Whitefield, Plenneller Common and Whitfield Moor.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Three pairs were at Lorbottle on 2nd (TRD/JD), four birds were seen at Bebside and the Harthope Valley, whilst one to two were at Beehive (Earsdon), Catton, Debdon (Rothbury), Dinnington, Druridge Pools, Easington Grange, Edlingham (Lemington), Langley Dam, Netherwitton, Wark and Whitfield. One stood on the A1 at Newham and successfully dodged traffic on 21st (ADM).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Records came from an encouraging 22 locations. The highest count was seven at Boulmer on 14th (BS), two pairs were at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 13th (TB), three were at Big Waters NWT and pairs were at Berwick Hill, Choppington, Easington, Ellington, Elwick, Linton, Low Horton Farm (Blyth), Lynemouth Bay, Minsteracres, Old Dryburn (Lowick), Old Helsay and Whinney Hill (Longhorsley). Singles were at Catton, Cresswell, Druridge Pools and Links, Gosforth, Longhirst Flash, Staward Pele and Weetslade Colliery CP.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

The first record of the year was a single calling bird at Whittle Dene on 7th (ASJ). One was at Branton on 26th (IBDa/KDa).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Eight was the peak at both Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 1st and Old Helsay on 26th (IDR). Warkworth Lane Ponds area held six birds from 6-8th (IDR/JF), as did Ellington Dene on 21st and Arcot Pond on 13th. One to four were at Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond NWT, Druridge Pool & Links, East Cramlington Pond, Ellington Colliery, Ellington Pond, Holywell Dene, Holywell Pond, Howdon, Linton Flats, Lemington Rise, Lynemouth Bay, Scotswood and Seghill.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Singles were seen on passage, mostly heading N, at Annstead, Hauxley, Holy Island, Seaton Point (Alnmouth) and Tynemouth. Four were on the sea at Back Scurrs (Holy Island) on 25th (SR/AH), two were offshore of Druridge Pools on separate dates (IDR) and a single was at Boulmer.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

One was spotted from the observer's attic heading N past Tynemouth during a "lockdown watch" on 10th (CB) and another headed N past St Mary's on 11th (JBu).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Passage records from Annstead (Seahouses) included 37N on 13th and 22N on 26th (DF). Breeding reports came from Howick with 30 pairs on the cliffs on 19th (JAR) and Needles Eye (Berwick) with 24 active nests on 26th (TRD/JD). 25 birds were at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 9th and varying numbers of between six to 13 roosting birds were present in Lynemouth Bay on several dates. One to six were at Berwick Little Beach, Boulmer, Druridge, Hauxley, Newton Point and Seaton Sluice.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Some early movement was observed with six offshore of Druridge Pools on 27th (IDR), five heading N past Tynemouth during a lockdown watch from an attic on 10th (CB), five also N past St. Mary's on that day (JBu), four past Boulmer and two at Cullercoats.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest count was from Holywell with a peak of eight birds there on 25th (MK). Warkworth Lane Ponds held seven on 9th (TB), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) peaked at six on 29th (IFo) and a minimum of six at Arcot Pond on 6th included a pair with small young (GB). Breeding reports also came from Northumberlandia (Cramlington), with a pair feeding two young and a further pair displaying on 30th (LJM), Banks's Pond (Dinnington) with a pair and two young on 9th (GB/PCF), an adult and two large juveniles at the smaller of the two lakes at Killingworth (GB) and two birds sitting on nests on the Waggonway Flash at Holywell (STH/DM). One to five birds were at Big Waters NWT, Branton GP, Broomlee Lough, Castron, Callerton Pond, Cocklawburn Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Grindon Lough, Haughton Castle, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds and Middle Ord Pond (Berwick). One was heard flying over a garden in Seghill at 02:10 on 26th (IF).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Nine remained at Big Waters NWT all month (GB), a total of eight were at Killingworth Lake on 1st with a pair and two young on each lake (GB), a pair at Linton Ponds were accompanied by four juveniles on 24th (IRD) and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had at least five birds present from 14th onwards, although the nesting situation was unclear as several sites were occupied at various times (TD/TF/JFa). Breeding, or potential breeding, was also noted at Haughton Strothers with two pairs and nests on 7th (SW), a pair with two juveniles at Holywell on 25th (IJ) and a pair with a nest at Caistron (opposite hide 7). The pair at Branton GP had no young with them on 30th, presuming predation (TRD/JD). Two pairs were at East Chevington and Widdrington Moor Lake, a single pair was at Airy Holm Reservoir and two birds were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One flew past Budle Point on 23rd (RA) and one was on the R. Wansbeck at Castle Island, unusual at this site (GB).

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

An adult was "furiously feeding" after newly arriving at Druridge Pools on 7th (GeD), still present on 8th (TB) and then joined by a juvenile on 9th. The adult seemed irritated by the younger bird and flew off south, quickly followed by the juvenile (GeD). One was at Cresswell Pond on 29th (STH/IFo/TRD/JD/TB).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Reports of breeding success came from Haughton Castle, with at least ten well grown juveniles around the three nests on 16th (SW), two large young in a nest at Old Helsay on 15th (IDR) and single juveniles at Howick Castle and Milkwell (Corbridge). Totals of five birds came from Castle Island on 30th, Druridge Pools on several dates and Warkworth Lane Ponds on 7th. Four were at Big Waters NWT and Wark, with three were seen at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), East Chevington and on migration at Budle Point. One to two were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Banks's Pond (Dinnington), Blyth South Harbour, Catton, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell, Grindon Lough, Happy Valley (Wooler), Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, Longhirst Flash, Lynemouth Bay, Melkridge (S. Tyne), Newbiggin, Road Pool (Woodhorn Flashes), Royal Quays, Seaton Sluice, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Throckley Pond.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The highest count was five adults at Budle Bay on 31st (CGK/GPK). Four were at Holy Island on 30th (RA), two at East Chevington on 22nd (PRM) and single birds at Beal Saltmarsh, Boulmer, Caistron, Cresswell, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Fenham Flats and Gosforth Subsidence Pond. One was inspecting the heronry at Warkworth Weir on 19th (RPo).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Some significant movement was observed at Annstead (Seahouses) on 13th with 692 heading N in one hour (DF) with similar reports from Boulmer on the same day (TRD/JD). A "lockdown watch" from a Tynemouth attic saw 145 heading N in an hour on 10th (CB) and reports of 20 to 28 birds came from Druridge, Lynemouth Bay and Spittal Bay (Berwick) on separate dates. One to 15 were seen from several other coastal sites.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Only three records this month – four nests at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 26th (MHu) and single birds seen at Blyth South Harbour and Newton Point.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The regular low-tide roost at New Water Haugh (R. Tweed) peaked at 26 on 24th (MHu), 18-20 were at East Chevington on separate dates towards the end of the month (TD/PRM/STH/IFo) and nine were at Blyth South Harbour on 20th alongside six *sinensis* race birds (PRM). Six was the monthly max at Derwent Reservoir and one to four were at ten other localities.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetetus*

*Records from April were two single birds which flew upriver W at River South Tyne (Melkridge) (SJH). Other single birds were at Holystone on 4th (HAKn), South Tyne (Melkridge on 3rd (SJH), One bird was seen at Tynemouth (DRW/MK), then at Gosforth Subsidence Pond (ADM) and at Big Waters NWT (GB) on 6th. One also flew N at Pegswood also on 6th (AT). Another single bird was noted at River South Tyne (Melkridge) on 11th (SJH), on 14th a bird was noted flying NNW at Chapel House (Newcastle) at 12.35 (MH) and it or another bird was at flying upriver at Holystone at 14:35 (DRo). Single birds were also at Derwent reservoir on 15th and 16th (IFo), Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 26th (NFO) and at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 28th (GPK).



An Osprey on 25th May in Coquetdale by Alan Jack

May records involved a bird by the river at Alnwick Castle on 3rd (AH), a bird on the nest platform viewed from Elf Kirk (Kielder) on 16th (TRD/JD). A bird was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th & 27th (SR) and a bird landed on the mudflats at Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR) before flying off inland on 22nd (TF/JFa) and a bird was at Holystone Woods on 25th (ASJ).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds, two females and a male were circling over the observer's garden at Heaton (Newcastle) on 2nd (PCI), two birds were at Gosforth on 5th, 7th and 9th (MJC) and two were at Humshaugh on 9th (SW). Single birds were noted at 22 sites throughout the month

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A female was at Holystone on 9th (DRo) and a juvenile male flew W at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 12th (MJC). A bird was heard calling in a wood at Longframlington on 10th (TRD/JD), a male flew overhead at Debdon (Rothbury) on 11th (TRD/JD) and a female flew through Warton high heading W on 14th (TRD/JD).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Five birds were noted at the South Pool (East Chevington) on 13th (MH), 15th (IF) and on 25th (IF), up to four birds were noted there throughout the month (TRD/JD *et al.*). Two females were also seen at Beal salt marsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 25th (RA). Away from the Druridge Bay area single birds were at Warkworth & Backworth on 1st (CSa/CGK), Rothbury on 6th (TRD), Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 8th (MJC), Boulmer on 12th (BS), Newton Pool on 14th (TRD/JD), Tynemouth on 16th (DRW/MK), Linton Ponds on 17th (CDH), Beal on 17th and 29th (Ra/SR), Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 23rd (IFo) and at Holy Island on 30th (ADM).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo) and at Carterway Heads on 31st (IFo). Single birds were reported from Crooked Oak Lane on 1st (IFo), Dipton Wood on 5th (AA), Wooler Common (DRi), River South Tyne (Melkridge) (SJH) and Crooked Oak (Derwent Reservoir) (If), all on 8th. A bird was in the Harthope Valley on 21st (STH), Low Buston on 23rd (CSa), Humshaugh on 24th (SW), Longdyke (Shilbottle) also on 24th (MKi), Allenheads on 25th (MH), Wylam on 27th (PMHa/RMHa) and at Blanchland Moor on 29th (PCI).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

River South Tyne (Melkridge) peaked at eight birds on 1st (SJH). Four birds were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th (MN), Dipton on 25th (MJC) and Alnwick Moor on 26th (MH) and three birds were soaring above the factory units at Admiral Business Park (Cramlington) on 6th (LJM). One to two birds were noted at over 30 sites this month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Three birds were at East Chevington on 15th and 25th (IFR) and two birds were at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 3rd & 20th (TB). Single birds were heard or seen at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Druridge Pools and Woodhorn Flash (Road Pool) CP. Single birds were recorded overnight during "Nocmig" at Wark (North Tyne) on 2nd (PRM) and over Seghill on 26th (IF).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Six birds were at the Lough (Holy Island) on 30th (MJC). Four birds were at Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Linton Pond Tyneview Park (Benton) and Woodhorn Flash. One to three birds were at 16 sites during the month. Birds were recorded during "Nocmig" at Longhoughton, Monkseaton and Wark (North Tyne).

Coot *Fulica atra*

24 birds with five nests noted were at Bothal Pond on 24th (TD) and on 29th (IFo). 12 birds were noted at Holywell Pond on 14th (DM) and Arcot Pond on 26th (GB) and ten birds were at East Chevington & Woodhorn Flash on 19th (PRM), nine were at Linton Pond on 17th (CDH). One to five birds were at 11 sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The highest count came from Holy Island, with 120 (68 North Shore, 52 East Shore) on 30th (MJC). There were 32 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 17th (STH) and at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 28th (MHu). Tynemouth and Lynemouth Bay had 26 on 2nd (CB) and 14th (IDR) respectively. There were 22 at North Blyth on 20th (PRM) and 20 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo). Smaller groups were noted at Melkridge on the South Tyne, Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary, Old Helsay and Plessey Checks, Cramlington. Young were observed at Redesmouth and Boulmer, and a clutch was seen hatching near Benridge Moor on 15th (ADMc).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

At Cresswell Pond numbers rose from one on 9th to 16 on 29th (TB), with a maximum of 17 on 27th (IRD). Druridge Pools had eight on 22nd (PRM/IDR), where nesting took place for the first time. A pair also nested at Low Newton scrape for the first time, representing the most northerly UK breeding point for the species. Concerns about the site drying up resulted in Natural England pumping water into the scrape (thanks to Gary Woodburn), and there were four fledged birds with the adults on 26th (TRD). Elsewhere, one to four birds were noted at Warkworth Lane, Ellington between 2nd and 31st (TB) and there were two at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 6th (GPK).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Breeding was noted throughout the county, with the highest numbers being 110 at Allendale on 16th (ASJ), 74 at Grindon Lough on 11th (SJH), 40 at Acton Moor, Blanchland on 16th (ASJ) and 40 at Plenmeller Common on 26th. There were 24 at Druridge Pools on 19th (IDR/JF) and 22, including fledglings, at Backworth Pond on 8th (CGK). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had 20 on 19th (PRM). Chicks were also seen at Lynemouth Flash, Woodhorn Flashes, Crooked Oak Lane and Derwent Reservoir. There was an unusual sighting of two N at Tynemouth on 25th (DRW).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

There were ten N at St Mary's Island on 18th (KWY), eight at Alnwick Moor on 8th (PHa/AHa) and two to four birds at Holy Island on 20th (MJC) and 22nd (ADM).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The highest counts came from Holy Island, with 50+ on 20th (MJC, NFO) and 22nd (TF/JFa), while only three birds were seen at Boulmer on 18th (BS) and 24th (TRD/JD).



A Grey Plover with a Ringed Plover. By Jack Bucknall on 22nd May

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest flocks were at Amble Braid, with 670 on 22nd (PRM), the Coquet Estuary, with 544 on 21st (TF/JFa), and the Blyth Estuary, with 454 on 12th (AC). Holy Island had 405 on the north shore on 20th (MJC). There were 84 at Boulmer on 18th (BS), 80 at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK), 73 roosting at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 12th (AP), and a maximum of 42 at Grindon Lough on 13th (SJH). Smaller flocks were recorded at Low Newton scrape, Castle Island on the Wansbeck, Alnmouth Bay, Cresswell Pond and St Mary's Island.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

One to six birds were reported at Derwent Reservoir, Castle Island on the Wansbeck, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Warkworth Lane, Ellington, Grindon Lough and St Mary's Island.



A Little Ringed Plover at Gosforth subsidence pond by Mike Carr on 19th May

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Groups of seven were at Humshaw, Haughton Strother on 3rd (AJR), St Mary's Island on 4th (AC) and Tynemouth on 5th (MK). There were six at Druridge Pools on 18th (IDR) and five at Hauxley on 15th (CB). Four birds were in Alnmouth dunes on 10th (RPo), Goswick on 15th (EHa), Boulmer on 18th (BS) and East Chevington on 25th (IF). Reports of three or fewer birds came from locations throughout the county, including Holy Island, Melkridge on the South Tyne, the Coquet Estuary, Elwick, Newbiggin and Budle Bay.



A Whimbrel at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 24th May

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Boulmer had the largest flock, with 35 on 28th (BS). Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary had 28 on 2nd (MHu), as did Plenmeller Common on 26th (PRM). There were 16 at Old Water (Warkworth) on 15th (IDR), 15 at Holystone on 11th (DRo) and a maximum of 12 at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR) and Holy Island east shore on 30th (MJC). Ten were at Acton Moor, Blanchland on 16th (ASJ), where some display was observed. One to six birds were recorded at Derwent Reservoir, Old Helsay, Whitfield Moor, Budle Point, Catton, Fell End at Haltwhistle and Grindon Lough.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Holy Island had a maximum of 220 on 30th (RA). There were 30 at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK) and 13 at Boulmer on 25th (BS), while Amble Braid had six on 30th (MK) and the Coquet Estuary had six on 31st (CSa). One to two birds were at Cocklawburn pond on 15th (MHu) and Druridge Pools on 19th (TRD/JD).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

There were nine at Druridge Pools on 15th (MH), eight at Grindon Lough on 20th (SJH). six on the dried-up flash at Warkworth Lane, Ellington on 9th (TB) and two at Low Newton scrape on 1st and 13th (WMB).

A Black-tailed Godwit
Druridge Pools
Jonathan Farooqi
14th May



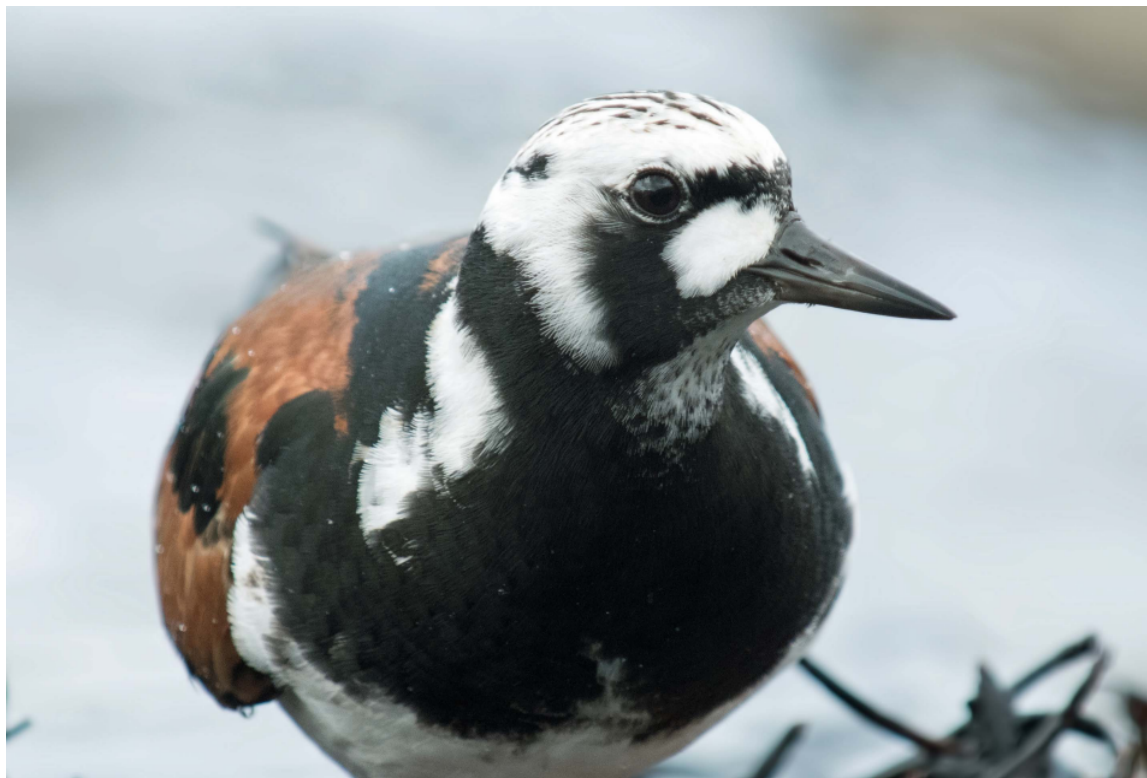
Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Birds were still present at many coastal localities throughout the month with the peak count being 57 on the north and east shores of Holy Island on 20th (MJC). At St Mary's Island, 32 were reported on 11th (ASJ) and there were 20 at Boulmer on 28th (BS). Other double-figure counts were 18 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 13th (STH), a minimum of 12 at Amble Braid (PRM) on 22nd and ten at the nearby River Coquet Estuary on 21st (TF/JFa). One-nine were seen at six other typical coastal locations during the month. At Big Waters the observer received a 'major shock' when three flew low over the lake at 0830 on 2nd, before departing N. This is the first record here since 1991(GB). A single was also inland at Grindon Lough on 18th (SJH).

A Turnstone eyeballs
Jack Bucknall

St. Mary's Island

7th May

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Northbound birds were apparent at Holy Island where 300 were counted on 30th (RA). Nearby, 73 were at Budle Bay on 20th (NFO) reducing to three by 27th (CGK/JD/TRD) with ten seen on 31st. The maximum reported in the Amble Braid / River Coquet Estuary area was 20 on 30th (MK/CSa) and at Cresswell Pond, two on 21st had risen to 18 by 26th and down to three by 30th (TB/PRM/TF/JFa). Birds flying N were seen at Foxton with 12 on 4th (MKi), Boulmer with 11 on 21st (BS) and Budle Point with 11 on 25th (RA). One to four were reported from Boulmer, Druridge Pools and St Mary's Wetland.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

The regular haunt of Druridge Pools held one to three, including a white-ruffed male, from 1st-29th (CSa/MN/IDR *et al.*). Two were at nearby East Chevington on 30th (TF/JFa) and a single was at Lynemouth Flash on 15th (AA). The white-ruffed male seen at Druridge Pools made an appearance at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 25th (TB).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Three were at Druridge Pools on 22nd reducing to one by 24th (IDR/JD/TRD/TB). A single adult was at Amble Braid on 22nd (PRM).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Northbound passage was evident with 198 counted on the north shore of Holy Island on 20th, which declined to 73, by 30th (MJC). Movement of birds through the River Blyth Estuary was illustrated by a count of 80 on 25th when the previous week the maximum had been 30. By the 27th only 15 remained (STH/AC). Maximum counts elsewhere were; 66 roosting at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 6th (AP), a minimum of 41 at Boulmer on 25th (BS), at least 35 at Amble Braid on 22nd (PRM), 19 on migration past Budle Point on 25th (RA), 18 at the River Coquet Estuary on 21st (TF/JFa), 15 at the Long Nanny on 26th (TRD) and 15 on Chevington Burn beach on 16th (TD). One to two were at Stag Rocks and Tynemouth and freshwater records were two at Grindon Lough on 21st (SJH) and one at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (IFo).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Like other high latitude breeding waders, this species was also seen in high numbers at some coastal locations. At Holy Island, a high-tide roost at the Snook on 13th contained 450 birds (ADM). Other counts from Holy Island were 233 at the north shore on 20th (MJC) and a minimum of 70 at the causeway on the same date (NFO). Maximum counts from other areas were 109 at the River Blyth Estuary on 12th (AC), 100 at the River Coquet Estuary on 11th (CSa), 68 at Boulmer on 25th (BS) and at least 20 at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (PRM). Birds were present at Grindon Lough all month with a peak count of 19 made on 20th (SJH). The maximum count at Druridge Pools was 11 on 22nd (IDR). One-six were seen at Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Hedgeley GP, Low Newton and Low Newton Scrape, Monks' House Pool, Tynemouth, St Mary's Wetland and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed). A juvenile ringed at Ynyslas NNR Mid Wales on 14/08/18 was seen at Newbiggin 11-13th (AP).



A Dunlin at Tynemouth on 17th May by Colin Bradshaw.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Varying numbers were recorded at Stag Rocks with three on 5th, 41 on 21st and five on 27th (NFO/DF/JPL). The only other report in double figures was 18 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 13th (STH). One to four were at Boulmer, Cullercoats, Holy Island and Tynemouth.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

A single bird was at the Budge Fields (Druridge) on 19th (IDR/JF).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

At least two were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 26th (TF/JFa) where one had been seen 'roding' the previous day (STH). Singles were reported from Beanley Wood, Derwent Reservoir, Holystone, Matfen (roding), Moralee Wood (Allen Banks) and Ruffside.

A Woodcock

Grahame Rose's garden

Blanchland

27th May



Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

A single remained at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 3rd (MJC).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Displaying birds were noticeable with five seen at Meadow Cottage (Allendale) on 7th (SJH), two pairs on Plenmeller Common on 26th (PRM), three displaying at Harthope Valley on 18th (TRD/JD) and three at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo). Birds in potential breeding areas were two at Alnwick Moor (PHa/AHa), a pair at Catton (PRM), plus a single 'drumming' at Longhorsley (AB/LB) and a single 'chipping' at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 2nd and 19th (IFo). Birds in lowland habitats were two at Gosforth Subsidence Pond (MJC), two at Holy Island (ADM) and singles at Druridge Pools, Howdon, Prestwick Carr and Warkworth Lane Ponds.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

The female returned for its 6th year to Grindon Lough from 18th-29th (SJH/PRM/TD *et al.*).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Birds continued to become established in breeding areas and to be seen on passage. By 25th, 11 pairs were in Upper Coquetdale and seven pairs were counted on the River Breamish on 14th (ASJ). Six were at Melkridge (River South Tyne) on 1st (SJH), six at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo) and three pairs at Hesleyside (Bellingham) on 30th (ASJ). Two pairs were at Wark (River North Tyne) on 2nd and Felton on 4th (MJC). Four birds were reported from Bothal Pond, Hedgeley GP and Holywell Pond. Two were seen at Big Waters, Branton GP, Castron, Catton, Chollerford, Happy Valley (Wooler) Holystone, Longhoughton Quarry and Staward Pele. Singles were at 11 other sites including nocturnal recordings of passage birds over Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) on 4th and 6th (MSH).

April records

The first arrivals were seen at Derwent Reservoir and Branton GP on 6th (IFo/IBDa/KDa). Further arrivals continued throughout the month with birds seen at lowland, coastal and upland locations. Three pairs were at Melkridge by 26th (TRD/JD), five there on 20th (SJH), five at Ovingham-Bywell Haughs on 28th (MH) and two pairs at each of Warton on 25th and Branton GP on 26th (JD/TRD). Three were at Holywell Pond on 26th (MK), and two at the River Breamish on 10th (IBDa/KDa) and Fourstones on 17th (AJH). Singles were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir, Alnmouth-Seaton Point, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Castron, Corbridge, Druridge Pools, Gosforth (Home Farm and Subsidence Pond), Holystone, Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Monks' House-Bamburgh, Tynemouth and Whiteadder Water (River Tweed).



Common Sandpiper by Alan Jack in the Ingram valley 23rd May

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Singles were seen at Wark (River North Tyne) on 17th (PRM) and Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Well reported from Grindon Lough where birds were present all month with a maximum of 15 seen on 12th and 18th (SJH/PRM/MRS *et al.*). Maximum counts at other sites were six at Druridge Pools on 7th (IDR), four (two pairs) at Castron on 1st (TRD) and three at Hedgeley GP on 26th (NFO). One-two were reported from Brenkley (Blagdon), Cresswell Pond, Haughton Strother, Holystone, Melkridge (River South Tyne), Plenmeller Common, Rocket Field Pools (Holy Island) and Seaton Sluice.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

A noticeable spring passage, with birds present at eight localities. The maximum reported at Druridge Pools was three on 14th (TF/JFa). Two were at Bothal Pond on 17th (TD) and single birds were seen at Charlton Mires (N of Alnwick) on 18th, Gosforth Subsidence Pond from 15th-21st, Hedgeley GP on 11th, 13th and 26th, Holywell Pond on 17th, Lynemouth Flash from 15th-17th and Warkworth Lane Ponds on 5th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A single was seen (in non-breeding plumage) at Grindon Lough on 28th (SJH).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Light passage continued from last month with two at Hedgeley GP on 2nd (IBDa/KDa), singles at Grindon Lough on 7th, 8th and 11th (PRM), Warkworth Lane Ponds from 9th-30th (TB), Budle Point on 14th and 17th (NFO), flying N at Boulmer on 17th (BS), Druridge Pools on 19th (IDR/JF/TRD/JD), and Cresswell Pond on 22nd (PRM).

April additional record- One was at Cooper's Corner Flash (Ashington) on 20th (ADMc).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

At Annstead, 218 moved N in one hour on 13th (DF) and 50 were seen moving N at Boulmer on the same day (TRD/JD). At the Berwick Needles Eye colony, 1,004 nests were counted towards the month end (MHu). Elsewhere, very few were reported.

A Kittiwake

Tim Dean

Annstead Pond

27th May

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

An estimated 300 followed harrows at Newton Low Steads on 14th (MKi), 120 fed offshore at Druridge Pools on 27th (IDR) and 83 were counted moving past Budle Point on 25th (RA). Smaller groups of 10-50 were counted on various dates throughout at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond/flash, Lynemouth Bay, Snab Point and Warkworth (IDR/JF/MHu/MRS/DM) with up to nine at Cresswell Pond, Ellington (5 sites), Linton and Lynemouth Flash.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Three 1st-summers were present at East Chevington North Pool on 31st (ADMc) and from 15th-29th, one or two birds frequented Druridge Pools and the East Chevington pools. Elsewhere, on dates 19th-29th, two were recorded at Berwick (West Ord) and Budle Point with singles in the Coquet Estuary and St Mary's Island on 10th and Boulmer on 19th. All these records were of immature birds including at least one sub-adult.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Single immature birds were recorded on dates throughout at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Howdon and Newbiggin (Beacon Point) (ADMc/CSa/CB/BS/SFH).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The large migratory flocks seen last month had moved on, the largest counts being 40 on Holy Island and 30 at Budle Point (RA) during the last week with ten at Tynemouth and one to three at four other sites.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Few reports, comprising three adults at Branton GP (TRD/JD) and two immatures at Haughton Strother and Holywell Pond (DM/SW).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

A 2nd-summer bird seen at Tynemouth on 3rd was the only sighting (KWY).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

In a roost at Berwick (West Ord) 184 were present on 17th on (MHu) and counts of 98 came from Holywell Pond (DM) and around 65 were on the Beehive Flash and Tynemouth Boating Lake (MSH/CDH). Elsewhere, 20-30 were at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, Holywell Pond, Killingworth Lake, Kiln Pit Hill and Wallsend (Davy Bank), 10-19 at Arcot Pond, Grindon Lough, Lynemouth Bay and Snab Point with up to six at ten other localities. Breeding birds included 74 AON at Blyth Power Station (STH), six AON at North Blyth staithes (STH), three AON at Wallsend (Davy Bank) (CDH) and four AON in the Cramlington area (LJM).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The largest gatherings were an unusual 150 at Branton GP on 7th and 70 on a flash by Summerville GC (TRD/JD). Three counts of migratory birds at Budle Point during the second half of the month comprised 67, 49 and 40 (RA) and 44 were at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM). Other groups of 10-20 were recorded at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir and Kiln Pit Hill (DM/IFo) and one to nine were at ten other localities. At Blyth Power Station 24 AON were found (STH) and other AON comprised two at Wallsend (Davy Bank) (CDH) and singles at Needles Eye (Berwick) (MHu) and Plenmeller Common (PRM).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

'Good numbers' were reported to be present on Coquet Island on 14th (HRS). Groups of 50-90 were recorded from 12th onwards at Boulmer, Budle Point, East Chevington, Holy Island, Newbiggin (Beacon Point) and North Low with 10-49 elsewhere at Amble Braid, Blyth South Harbour, Druridge Pools, Low Newton, North Blyth, the Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth (*many observers*). Up to seven were also reported from many of the above sites.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

At least 30 were at the Long Nanny burn mouth colony on 28th (STH) and 12 pairs were reported from there on 14th (AMG/MG). Counts of up to ten came from Fenham Flats and Holy Island (TF/JFa/MJC) and one to four were also seen at Amble Links, Annstead, Boulmer, Budle Bay, the Coquet Estuary and Low Newton.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Twenty fed offshore at Amble Links on 22nd (PRM) and at least 12 were at Boulmer on 21st (BS). Singles were seen offshore at Druridge Pools.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

On St Mary's Island, 112 rested on the rocks on 1st (ASJ) and up to 70 were counted at the North Blyth staithes breeding colony by the month end (STH) where 28 AON were recorded on 20th (PRM). Groups of 10-30 were at Boulmer, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holywell Pond and Tynemouth with one to nine at 12 other localities, all in the south east apart from the River Tweed Estuary. Breeding pairs reported were six at Holywell Pond and one at Big Waters.

Common Tern
Gosforth subsidence pond
2nd May by Mike Carr

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

At the Long Nanny burn mouth colony, 1,000 pairs were reported on 14th (AMG/MG) but on 26th the numbers there were described as 'seemingly still low' with only 300 seen on that date but no wardens were there to verify the numbers (TRD/JD). Apart from 28 feeding offshore at Annstead on 13th (DF) and 12 at Druridge Pools on 27th all other sightings were of up to eight at Budle Point, Newton and Tynemouth with an unusual record of three adults early in the morning at Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

One flew N at Longhoughton (Low Steads) on 10th (BS) and another single was recorded at Holy Island on 30th (RA).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Single birds flew N at Cullercoats/St Mary's Island on 10th and 11th (IJ/MK) and one was offshore at Low Hauxley on 14th (TF/JFa).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

One very dedicated observer recorded 168 moving N on 10th during a one-hour 'lockdown' watch from his attic window! (CB). Counts of 10-30 came from Berwick (Little Beach), Boulmer, Druridge Pools offshore, Holy island, the Long Nanny burn mouth and Newton Point. At the Berwick Needles Eye breeding colony 128 AON were recorded on the cliffs whilst 42 birds were on the sea on 26th (MHu).

Razorbill *Alca torda*

One to four were seen at Boulmer, Druridge Pools offshore, Howick, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth. At the Berwick Needles Eye breeding colony 14 AON were recorded on the cliffs whilst five birds were on the sea on 26th (MHu).

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

A summer-plumaged individual flew S close in to Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 26th (AP) and possibly the same individual was recorded at Boulmer Seaton Point on 28th (BS).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

'Good numbers' were reported from Coquet Island on 14th (HRS) and elsewhere up to five were seen offshore at Druridge Pools, three at St Mary's Island and a single at Boulmer.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

A high count of 36 was made on ASDA supermarket roof at Gosforth on 10th (DM) with eight at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 14th, seven at Old Helsay on 15th and two at two other locations near Ellington (IDR).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The peak count was of 22 at Howdon on 12th (CB) with ten at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 11th and six there on 30th, nine at Woolsington Hall on 27th and Warkworth Lane Ellington on 30th. Seven were at Cresswell Pond on two dates and at two locations near Ellington with one to five at 20 other widespread localities with display / singing heard at five of these.



A Stock Dove at Marden Quarry by Jack Bucknall on 13th May

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Large gatherings of 160 were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 3rd (STH), 120 at Old Helsay on 26th with 18 there on 15th (IDR), 100+ at Green's Houses (Seaton Burn) on 10th (DM), 60 at Arcot Golf Club on 25th, 38 on BBS at Bebside Blyth on 30th and 34 at Attlee Park Bedlington on 28th (JR). 36 were on a field of beans at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th and 25 at Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 6th with ten to 15 at Lynemouth, Druridge Pools and links and two locations at Ellington. Fledged juveniles were at Dinnington on 25th and Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 30th with one to eight at five others locations and most of the above.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Seven were counted on BBS at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 28th (JR) with a pair at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month and two at Budle Point on 17th, Benton Tyneview Park on 30th and Walkerville (Newcastle) on 31st with a single at Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 8th.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

On 28th four males were seen or heard in 5km of roadside between Nunnykirk and Forestburngate (ASJ), at least four at Blanchland Moor on 29th (PCI) with three at Shepherds Law on 9th, near Blanchland on 16th, Harthope Valley from 20th to 30th, Ruffside on 20th, Holystone on 21st and Lordenshaw to Simonside on 25th. Two were at 14 other locations with egg laying in Meadow Pipit's nest noted at Edmundbyers on 16th (ASJ) and singles at a further 24 widespread localities.



A Cuckoo with an unhappy Meadow Pipit

Carterway Heads

Alan Jack on 20th May

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

A breeding pair was well observed during the month at North Tyneside (CGK *et al.*) with all other reports of singles with birds carrying prey at East Chevington and Whittington Bog on 21st, Snods Edge on 23rd and Hauxley NWT on 30th. One was at Cresswell Pond on three dates from 27th and at Simonburn from 8th to 11th with singles at 11 other locations and one road casualty at A189 R.Wansbeck on 25th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

A pair with two branching juveniles and another pair with one were at Gosforth on 5th along with a pair with two well grown young at Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 29th (MJC). An adult with two calling chicks was at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 26th (TF/JFa), two fledged young nr. Lordenshaw on 6th (ADMc) and an adult with one young in Hauxley area on 14th (HRS). Two were at Howick on 5th, Cambo on 18th and Wingates on 28th with singles at 15 other widespread localities.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Singles were seen at Earsdon on several dates (ASJ), Embleton all month (PAs/WMB) and four territories were located in North Tyneside (CGK *et al.*).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

An adult with two juveniles was at Alnwick on 15th and two adults with one squeaking juvenile were at Alnwick Moor on 26th (AH/MH). Birds carrying prey were at East Chevington on 15th and Winnowshill / Pithouse Fell on 31st with singles at Wingates on 25th. In North Tyneside three pairs were found breeding at two sites with young noted from 20th (CGK *et al.*).



A Long-eared Owl by Jack Bucknall
North Tyneside on 19th May

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Five were noted at Alnwick on 15th (AH) with display / food carrying noted at confidential sites mid-county on 24th and 26th (TRD/JD/MH) and south of the county on 31st (TF/JFa). Singles were at Plenmeller Common on 3rd, Carrshield Moor on 7th and Alnwick Moor on 8th.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Three were at Ruffside on 20th (IJ) with three, possibly four, churring birds at Winnows Hill (Slaley Forest) on 31st (STH) and three there on 31st (MH). Singles were at Beanley Wood on 24th, and Winnows Hill on 26th with one heard churring at a confidential site for 5 to 10 seconds at 1.30pm (TRD/JD) possibly a result of disturbance to a bird at nest close to a path.

Swift *Apus apus*

The high counts involved birds on the coast moving S with 532 at Druridge Pools and 240+ at East Chevington both on 22nd (PRM) whilst inland at Melkridge (S.Tyne) on 13th, 70 arrived from south to feed before flying off north (SJH). 60 fed at Holywell Pond on 11th with 50 there on 17th (ASJ) and at Holywell Flash pond on 15th (DM). 36 were at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR), 30 back at Cullercoats nesting colony on 10th and at Lambley on 24th, 25+ at Big Waters on 11th and 22 at Humshaugh on 31st. 'Vismig' at Budle Point numbered 21 on 23rd and 25th with 17 on 17th and 20 moved S at Amble Braid on 22nd. Ten to 19 were at 11 other locations and one to nine at a further 30 widely spread localities.



A Swift over Alan Jack on 27th May

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at Gosforth subsidence pond on 2nd, at Felton Fence (Felton) on 4th (MJC) and Branton GP on 30th (TRD/JD). Singles were at Gosforth subsidence pond on three dates from 1st to 6th, Hedgeley GP on 1st, Melkridge (R.S Tyne) on 4th, Branton GP on 11th and Twizell (near Berwick) on 13th.

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

A single bird was heard calling loudly at High Hauxley on 28th then seen briefly from a garden before drifting off S (KG).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

A pair reared three young at Coleman's Field (Jesmond Dene) (DHWB) with pairs feeding young in nest at Holystone on 25th and Hesleyside (Bellingham) on 30th (ASJ). Three were found on BBS at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 28th (JR) with two at Lincoln Hill and Walwick on 7th, Gosforth on 12th, Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 13th and 25th, Seaton Delaval on 14th, Holywell Dene on 15th, Derwent Reservoir on 20th, Ellington Dene on 21st, Holystone on 25th, Hesleyside (Bellingham) on 30th and visiting garden feeders at Longdyke (Shilbottle) on most days during the month. Singles were at 16 other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two calling at Wingates on 28th (ASJ) was the only multiple count with singles at Dipton Wood on 5th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 5th and 12th, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 16th, Letah Wood (Hexham) on 16th and 28th, Derwent Gorge and Harthope Valley on 18th, Slaley Forest on 19th, Ellington Dene on 21st, Woodhall on 28th and Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 30th.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Four birds were hunting with four Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo* on the same hillside at Alnwick Moor on 26th (MH). Two birds were at Gosforth on 9th (ADM), Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 16th (TB), Holy Island on 20th (MJC) and two juveniles were at Wingates on 28th (ASJ). Single birds were noted at 19 Sites.

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*

A female was at the South Pool (East Chevington) on 21st (ADM). It was seen and photographed as it flew over the North Dunes on Holy Island towards the sea later on (ADM).

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were noted at Druridge Pools on 4th (CSa) and Seaton Point (Boulmer) which caught a Swallow *Hirundo rustica* on 21st (BS). Single birds were also noted on four possible breeding areas during the month (DRi/PHa/Aha/SJH/MH).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A male was seen hawking insects over the Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) on 31st (MHu).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

A pair with at least two downy young was at a confidential site on 21st (ALT). Two birds were at another confidential site on 2nd (TRD/JD) and a single bird seen at another site (GB). Single birds were also seen at Dinnington on 3rd (PCF), Longhoughton on 5th & 29th (BS).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

A pair with two fledged young were at Gosforth on 9th (MJC), a first for Chapel House Estate (Newcastle) as one flew over the observer's house on 5th. One was at High Hauxley on 15th and 17th and another flying into Ord Country Park (Berwick) on 30th.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

A female was found off the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) by A Hall and S Rippon on 31st (ADM *et al.*).

Red-backed Shrike on Holy island

Joanthan Farooqi on 31st May

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

A first-summer bird was at Shada Plantation near Bamburgh on 17th (NFO).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On 28th four were at Netherwitton (ASJ), three at Ellington Dene on 21st with singles there on three other dates (IDR), two at Ellington on 2nd (TB) and at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 28th (JR). Singles were at 15 other widespread localities.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Ten was the peak at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 29th (DM), five were found on BBS at Bebside (Blyth) on 30th (JR), four at Lynemouth Bay on 5th and Warkworth Lane Ponds on 7th (IDR) with one to two at ten other locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A high count of 80 was made at Howdon on 1st (CB), 25 at Lynemouth Bay on 14th, Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 28th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 18th (IDR/JR) with regular counts of double figures during the month at Lynemouth and Ellington. 14 were at Cresswell Pond on 8th, 12 past Budle Point on 25th with one to ten at six other locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

On 13th 85 were at Holystone (DRo) with rookery counts at Catton of 42+ on 28th and 20+ on 26th (PRM). 20 were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th with 15 there on 18th and regularly throughout the month with one to six at four other locations.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

At Howdon on 1st 36 were counted (CB), 28 at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on the same date (LJM), 17 in one field at Berwick Hill on 4th and the same number in the Hauxley area on 14th (HRS) with ten at Druridge Pools and Links on 25th (IDR). One to six were at 12 other locations with predation of juvenile Starling noted at Heaton (Newcastle) and three nests with chicks on Holy Island (ADM).

A Carrion Crow finds its dinner in

Pete Clark's Heaton Garden

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One, not thought to be the wintering bird, flew S at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 3rd (BS) with singles at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 4th (CSa), on golf course at Newbiggin on 5th (AP), Bell's Farm (Cresswell) on 13th (TRD/JD) and Budle Point on 17th (RA).



Raven *Corvus corax*

A family group of six was seen at close range from a car at Bushman's Crag (Upper Coquet Valley) on 21st (TRD/JD), three at Thrunton Crag on 27th with one there on 13th (IRD), two at Wark N.Tyne on 2nd, Old Railway line Rothbury on 5th, at Hazelrigg Moss on 8th, Holystone on 15th and Usway Burn (Shillmoor) on 18th. Singles were at Debdon (Rothbury), Hepple Whitefield, Holy Island and Whittingham.



A Raven over Otterburn ranges
Tim Dean on 21st May

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Six were at Humford on 6th (JR) and at Ellington Dene on 21st (IDR) with two at Ellington Colliery on 11th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th. Singles were at Warkworth Lane Ponds, Big Waters and Ellington Dene.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two pairs were at Felton Fence on 4th with one pair there on 1st (MJC) and at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Longhorsley on 17th (ASJ) with a pair nesting in a hole in a tree, three at Whinney Hill Farm (Longhorsley) on 21st (PHa/AHa). Singles were at Wark (N.Tyne) on 2nd & 16th, Todburn (Slaley) on 6th, Rothbury on 11th and Fontburn area on 31st.

Addition for April bulletin Surveying at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) found eight singing birds / territories as a result of unfettered access to Golf Course (NFO).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Two were at Ellington on 4th (TB), a pair at Ellington Dene on 15th (IDR), at Longhoughton on 18th (BS) and feeding on Hawthorn at Prestwick Carr on 19th (GB). Singles were at Backworth and Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) all month, noted singing at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and High Park (Felton) and present at eight other widely spread localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

High counts on BBS of nine at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 28th, eight at Bebside (Blyth) on 30th, at Humford on 6th (JR) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 8th with one to seven there on several other dates and at four other locations. A nest box in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) held eight eggs but only one fledged.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Seven were at Ellington Dene on 11th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 12th with two to six there on other dates during the month (IDR). Six on BBS at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 28th (JR) and one to four at seven other locations. A nest box in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) had four ready to fledge on 31st.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

More than four were at East Chevington on 25th (IF), a male and two females on North Pool there on 21st (TF/JFa) and singles on 8th, 17th and 30th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A count of 96 singing birds was made at Otterburn Ranges on 25th, 32 (eight singing) at St Mary's Island fields on 2nd, 30 (12 singing and some feeding fledged young) at Wingates on 25th, 24 singing from Winter's Gibbet (Harwood) to Elsdon on 28th and 22 (eight singing) at Simonside on 28th. Ten were at Middle Farm (Seghill) on 14th, five at Alnwick Moor on 8th and one to four at 13 other widespread localities.



A Skylark at Newton by Tim Dean on 24th May

Hirundine sp

Around 180 were feeding over the Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) on 13th (MHU).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

'Vismig' count of 159 at Budle Point on 17th (RA), 140 arriving to roost at Gosforth subsidence pond on 7th (MJC) with 100 at Big Waters NR and Derwent Reservoir on 13th (DM/IFo). More than 90 were at Big Waters NR on 10th, 80 at nest colony at Castron on 1st, 60 in two colonies in Breamish Valley on 14th and at least 50 at Druridge Pools and Links on 22nd with 20 to 40 at eight other locations and one to 18 at 17 further sites.



Sand Martins squabble – social distancing ?
Colin Bradshaw at Tynemouth on 9th May

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

On 17th 748 were counted 'vis mig' at Budle Point (RA), 237 flying N at Gosforth subsidence pond on 10th (MJC), 100+ dropping in to feed at Melkridge (S.Tyne) before heading off north on 13th (SJH), 60 at Holywell Pond on 3rd (ASJ) and 50 at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (IFo). 40 were at Gosforth subsidence pond on 2nd with 26 N there on 18th, 40 at Eslington Park (Whittingham), 37 past Budle Point on 25th and 25 at Holywell Pond on 11th and Holy Island on 17th. One to 20 were at 26 other widespread localities.

Swallows
Tynemouth
Alan Jack
9th May



House Martin *Delichon urbica*

'Vis mig' count of 71 at Budle Point on 25th (RA), 60 over flash at Holywell Pond on 17th and 40+ on 20th (ASJ/DM), 50 nesting all month at Seahouses (JPL), 45 at nest sites in Upper Coquetdale on 25th (ASJ), 39 south at Druridge Pools on 22nd (PRM), 36 at West Ord (Berwick) on 13th (MHu), 30 breeding in Longhoughton on 19th (BS) with 25 at colony at Cresswell on 8th (IDR) and 24 flew N at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 13th (GB). Ten to 20 were at 14 locations and one to eight at a further 15 sites.

A House Martin
Cresswell
Jack Bucknall
26th May

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

A singing male was heard on numerous occasions at East Chevington North Pool throughout the month, and was seen to mob a Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* on 21st (MH *et al.*).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A party of 23 moving through the observer's garden at Northburn (Cramlington) on 30th included many juveniles (LJM). A family party of 16 was at Ellington on 22nd and 15 at Derwent Reservoir on 27th were again mainly juveniles. At Marden Quarry, 12 young had fledged from a nest by 11th, while further family parties included eight at Warkworth Lane and at Westwood Grange and Valley Park (both Cramlington), six at Arcot Pond and Crow Hall Lane (Cramlington) and four + at Big Waters and Humshaugh. Breeding was also confirmed at Brunswick Green, East Ord and Ellington Dene. Counts of six came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Dukeshouse (Hexham), Hexham, Seghill and Slaley Hall, four were at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) and one to two at a further 12 localities.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A seven-mile stretch of roadside trees and hedges from Beacon Hill-Todburn produced a count of 61 singing males (ASJ). Other sizeable counts of singing birds included 43 at Stonehaugh on 30th and 40 at Wingates on 17th. Elsewhere, 21-22 were noted at Branton GP and Longhorsley - Beacon Hill and 17-18 at Fontburn and Linden Hall. On Holy Island, 14 passage birds were noted on 20th, while further reports from breeding areas included 11 singing at Longhorsley Moor, ten at Alnwick railway, eight at Harthope Valley, Holystone North Wood and Wark (North Tyne) and five to seven at Cramlington (Brockwell-Westwood Grange), Druridge Pools, East Ord, Glantlees and Warkworth Lane. One to four were noted at a further 24 localities.

A bird photographed at Holy Island on 17th showed characteristics of the **Northern race** *P.t.acredula*

Correction to April bulletin: The reference to 18 singing males at Linden Hall was on 30th April, the first was seen here on 6th.

A Willow Warbler

Howdon

Colin Bradshaw

7th May



Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

At Cramlington, 32 territories were identified within a 2.5km radius of the observer's house in Northburn. These are additional to the 27 reported in April (LJM). Elsewhere, 15 were reported from Beacon Hill-Longhorsley on 7th, 13 were singing at Holywell on 3rd and ten to 11 were noted at Branton GP, Choppington and Ellington Dene. Counts of eight came from Attlee Park (Bedlington), Harthope Valley and Warkworth Lane, while six were reported from Alnwick railway, Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Dipton Woods (pair feeding at least four fledged young), Hauxley, Holywell Dene and Seghill. There was an additional report from the Ellington area of five at Chugdon Wood, while five were also noted at Humford and Longhorsley Moor. One to four were reported from a further 27 localities, including one to two coastal migrants at Holy Island on 20th, 22nd, 25th and 30th-31st.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Up to two were heard singing at Derwent Gorge during the month (ASJ/IFo/EC). Singles were also heard singing at Edlingham on 5th, Haughton Mains on 7th, Harthope Valley on 18th and Ford Moss on 25th.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

On the coast, 25 were singing between East Chevington and Hauxley on 15th (CB) and twelve at Holy Island on 20th, including five at the Lough. Eight were singing at Castron on 9th and eight were at Druridge Pools on 29th. Three pairs were reported from East Ord on 8th and six were noted at East Chevington on 15th and 25th. Up to five+ were at St Mary's Wetland during the month, while five were reported from Cresswell dunes, Ellington Pond, Holywell Pond and in the south-west of the county at Lambley. Two pairs were on breeding territory at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 26th and in an area of wet felled woodland at Stamfordham, the latter a new site. Cocklawburn and Warkworth Lane both held up to four and counts of three came from Bamburgh dunes, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Cramlington Hospital, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Hauxley, Linton Ponds, Prestwick Carr and Seghill. One to two were reported widely from a further 30 localities including passage birds at Tynemouth on 2nd, 8th and 12th and one at Airy Holm Reservoir, the latter only the second record for this constant effort site.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

This species was reported from 15 potential breeding localities during the month, with peak counts of ten at East Chevington on 25th (IF) and eight singing at QEII CP on 17th. Up to four were in song at Holy Island Lough and Woodhorn Flashes, three at Druridge Pools and two at Big Waters and Killingworth Lake. Singles were also singing at Castron, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Pond, Lambley, Linton Ponds, Newton Pool, St Mary's Wetland and Swallow Pond.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Up to five were 'reeling' at East Chevington during the month (IF), two to three at Prestwick Carr and two at Backworth, Druridge Pools and Rising Sun CP. Singles were reported from Arcot Pond, Banks's Pond (Dinnington), Beanley Moor, Berwick Little Beach, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Big Waters, Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder), Brenkley, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Budle Point, Castle Island, Cresswell, Cresswell dunes, Cresswell (Snab Point), Holy Island, Lynemouth, Old Hartley and Sweethope Lough.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

By the end of the month the number of singing birds/territories at Linden Hall had risen to 26 (NFO). A BBS count at Attlee Park (Bedlington) produced a count of 15, while 12 were at Ellington Dene, 11 singing at Beacon Hill-Longhorsley and West Hartford and ten were at Warkworth Lane. There was a count of eight from Alnwick railway at the beginning of the month, while seven were noted at Brier Dene (Whitley Bay), Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Seghill. There were up to six at Hauxley and Humford and five were singing at Wark (North Tyne), with one to four noted at a further 35 widespread localities, including three singing in and around the grounds of St Nicholas Hospital (Kenton) on 9th, another at Kenton Lane all month and a pair feeding young in the nest at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) by 24th.

Correction to April bulletin: The reference to 21 singing males at Linden Hall was on 30th April, the first was seen here on 6th.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Eleven singing birds / territories were identified at Linden Hall during the month (NFO), while there were further notable counts of nine singing birds at Wingates on 14th, six at Crooked Oak Lane and in the Cramlington area (including three at Arcot Pond / Lane) and five at Netherwitton. Four were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Ford Moss and three at Airy Holm Reservoir, Banks's Pond (Dinnington) and Unthank (Haltwhistle). Two were at Aydon (Corbridge), Branton GP, Castron, Coldwell (Humshaugh), Fowberry, Glantlees, Happy Valley, Holystone, Low Alwinton, Twizell and Wark (North Tyne) and in an excellent month for the species singles were reported from a further 35 widespread localities.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

At least 16 different singing birds were heard early in the month in the Cramlington area, including four at Arcot Pond and another four at Beaconhill (STH/DM/GMi *et al.*). Counts of three singing males came from Backworth, Bebside, Longhirst GC and Rising Sun CP, while two were noted at Alnwick, Longdyke (Shilbottle), Seghill and Watersmeet (Acomb). In addition singles, mostly in song, were reported from Amble Braid, Annitsford, Bamburgh GC, Banks's Pond (Dinnington), Brenkley, Brier Dene (Whitley Bay), Cawledge Burn (Alnwick), Corbridge (rare here), Crooked Oak Lane (observer's first here), Druridge Pools (brood patch), East Chevington, Gosforth, Gosforth Business Park, Hauxley NR, Hazelrigg, Holy Island, Horton Grange, Lesbury, Linden Hall-Highmoor, North Shields Fish Quay, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin), Seaton Burn, St Mary's Island, Todburn (Slaley), Tynemouth, Wallsend GC, Warkworth Lane (carrying food) and West Chevington.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

A five-mile walk from Backworth-Holywell-Whitley Bay on 3rd resulted in a total of 37 singing males (ASJ), while a further 30 were in song from Hauxley-East Chevington on 15th and 21 in the Breamish Valley on 28th. At Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) there were counts of 12-20 on various dates, 15 were singing at Wingates on 17th and 13 singing birds / territories were identified at Linden Hall. Eleven were at Beacon Hill-Longhorsley on 7th and nine singing birds and a displaying pair were noted at Cramlington (Brockwell-Westwood Grange area) on 7th. In what was an excellent month for the species, there were further counts of up to nine from Choppington, Lynemouth and St Mary's Island, eight at Tynemouth, seven at Boulmer, Seghill and West Hartford and six at Druridge Pools, with one to five noted at a further 63 widespread localities.



A Whitethroat by Chris Barlow on 2nd May

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Six singing birds were in the Ingram Valley on 28th and up to a possible six likewise in the grounds of St Nicholas' Hospital (Kenton) on 1st (ASJ/MRS). Three were at Seghill on 4th and three were singing at East Hartford-Horton Dene on 17th. Counts of two came from Ellington Dene and Holystone (North Wood). A pair was noted at Valley Park (Cramlington), while all other reports were of singles from Allen Banks, Alexandra Park (Cramlington), Big Waters, East Cramlington LNR, Ellington Pond, Gosforth Park, Lynemouth, Ponteland Park and Seaton Burn.

A Goldcrest singing

Ingram

Alan Jack

14th May

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A BBS visit to Attlee Park (Bedlington) produced 17 on 28th (JR), while up to 13 were noted at Ellington Dene during the month and ten were at Bebside during another BBS visit on 30th. Counts of nine came from Longhorsley Moor and Warkworth Lane; up to eight were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), seven at Chapel House, Humford and the Ingram Valley and six at Druridge Pools. One to three were noted at a further eight localities.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Four birds were feeding young in two nests at Humshaugh by the end of the month (SW) and three were at Derwent Gorge on 8th. Two singing males were heard at Haughton Castle on 2nd and two birds were noted at Allen Banks, Humford and Low Carrith. In the Ellington area, singles were reported from Chugdon Wood, Ellington, Ellington Colliery, Ellington Dene and Warkworth Lane, while further singles were reported from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Brenkley, Holystone, Holywell Dene, Longhoughton, Northumberland GC, Ponteland Park, Valley Park (Cramlington), Wark (North Tyne) and Woodhorn Church.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

A pair were feeding at least three small young in the nest at West Hartford on 17th (GB), while family parties were noted at Beanley Plantation and Hepple Whitefield on 24th-25th (TRD/JD). Four birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 27th and three-four from East Hartford-Horton Dene on 17th; counts of three came from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Warkworth Lane, while two were reported from Allen Banks, Attlee Park (Bedlington) and Gosforth Park. Singles were noted at a further 16 localities.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

About 200 were feeding in the observer's garden at Heaton on 27th (PCI), while a post-breeding flock of 150+ comprising mainly juveniles, was at St Mary's Wetland on 26th. Flocks of 20-25 were reported from Derwent Reservoir and Warkworth Lane on 28th and 6th respectively and 18-19 at Attlee Park (Bedlington) and Prior's Park (Tynemouth). A total of 12 nests were located under roof eaves at Parkside Estate (Cramlington) and four pairs bred at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin). Three pairs were feeding young at Yearle, fledging on 25th, and eight juveniles appeared with adults at Chapel House on 26th. Two juveniles were being fed by an adult at Longdyke (Shilbottle) on 29th and young were being fed in an old woodpecker nest at Howick on 20th. One to six were reported from a further eight localities.



A spitting image of a Starling at Tynemouth

Colin Bradshaw on 4th May

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

A passage bird was seen briefly in a Tynemouth garden on 1st (DRW), while the only other report was of a single in breeding territory at Hawsen Burn on 21st (STH).

Blackbird *Turdus Merula*

A total of 33 singing males were noted at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 1st (ASJ), while BBS counts included 25 at both Attlee Park (Bedlington) and Bebside on 28th-30th. A further 17 were reported from Warkworth Lane on 6th and ten were noted at Choppington on 19th. The highest count from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) was nine on 1st and 5th, while nearby, eight were at Ellington Dene and six at Ellington Colliery. Up to four to five were at Druridge Pools and Ellington Pond, two juveniles at Humshaugh and singles at Holy Island (recently fledged on 30th), Lynemouth Bay, Old Helsay, Seaton Point (Boulmer) and West Moor Farm (Ellington).

Black-throated Thrush *Turdus atrogularis*

A male was seen briefly, and photographed, in a Kylloe garden on 8th (*per* TRD).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

A late flock of 60 was at East Kielder Farm on 4th (*per* MH), while six were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 5th, three at Shepherd's Law on 9th and singles at Overthwarts on 6th and Holy Island on 31st.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

A total of 19, including nine singing males and some feeding young, were found in the Breamish Valley on 14th (ASJ). Seven (four singing males and three fledged young) were at Longhorsley Moor on 31st, while up to six were noted at Attlee Park (Bedlington) and Ellington Dene. Several were noted in song at Jesmond Dene on 6th, and more than usual are being heard and seen in the Stamfordham area this year. Counts of four came from Bebside, Choppington and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and three at Cramlington (Brockwell-Westwood Grange area) and Ellington Colliery. Two were reported from Prior's Park (Tynemouth), Valley Park (Cramlington) and Warkworth Lane, with singles at Druridge Pools, East Cramlington Pond LNR, Gosforth, Lynemouth Bay and Seghill.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Breeding records comprised an adult with four young at Melkridge on 13th and pairs with three young at Red Row on 11th and Warkworth Lane on 31st and two recently fledged young at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 30th (SJH/IF/TB/DM). In addition, pairs were at Dudley, Ellington Dene, Gosforth Park and Wideopen and singles at Linton Flats, Prestwick Carr, Spittal (Berwick) and Wark (North Tyne).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Following the year's first and early arrival in April, there was a modest influx from 6th, with one at Linden Hall, equalling the earliest arrival date here in 17 years of recording. On the following day singles were noted at Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Castle, Humshaugh, Lincoln Hill and a different bird at Linden Hall. A pair was at Stamfordham and singles at Ellington and St Mary's Wetland on 8th, and further singles at Wark (North Tyne) on 9th and Howick on 10th. Numbers increased from mid-month, and by the month end there were six pairs in the Breamish Valley, three pairs at Hesleyside (ASJ) and two pairs at Linden Hall. Three were singing at Ford on 28th and two or three were at Holy Island on 31st. The pair at Stamfordham were sitting on eggs in a garden nest box until 26th when the nest was predated, while another pair were incubating eggs at Nunnykirk on 28th and a pair were visiting a nest site at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 30th. Two / pairs were also reported from breeding areas at Catton, Harthope Valley and Sidwood and singles from Allen Banks, Blagdon, Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder), Branton, Fontburn, Ford Moss, Hepple Whitefield, Longhorsley Moor, Low Carritheth, Matfen, Melkridge, Shada Plantation (Bamburgh) and Whittingham. Single passage birds were noted at Newbiggin from 19th-22nd and Holy Island on 22nd and 30th.



Stamfordham Spotted Flycatchers in Eddie Crabtree's garden
Predated, probably by a Grey Squirrel

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A total of 12 was noted during a BBS at Attlee Park (Bedlington) on 28th (JR), while there were counts of up to seven from Choppington, Ellington Dene and Humford and six at Chugdon Wood (Ellington). Four at Holy Island on 21st may have been passage birds, while three were noted at Druridge Pools, Ellington Colliery and Warkworth Lane. Two were reported from Ellington Pond, a pair was feeding young at Gosforth on 5th and fledged juveniles were noted at Boulmer on 30th.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

One was at Holy Island on 30th (RA).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

At Derwent Gorge two singing males and a pair (the female with nest material) were noted on 1st, increasing to six birds by 8th (IFo). Three pairs occupied nest boxes at Letah Wood (Hexham) by the end of the month, while three singing males and a female were noted at Dipton Woods on 5th. Three singing males were also reported from Holystone Woods on 25th and West Dipton Burn on 18th; a pair was at a nest site at Holystone on 9th. One to two were at Harthope Valley on 18th-20th, while singles were noted at Allen Banks, Barrow Burn Wood, Cupola Bridge, Derwent Reservoir, Eals Bridge, Hesleyside (Bellingham), Nunnykirk, Plankey Mill and Sharperton.

Correction to April bulletin: The report from Derwent Reservoir on 15th was a singing male, and not prospecting a nest box; it was also heard on 20th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Female types were reported from Lynemouth (Cresswell Home Farm) on 1st (IDR), Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) from 2nd-4th (BS) and Holy Island (Excavations) on 20th (MJC).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

This species was very well reported, and considered by several observers to be more numerous than usual in many areas. A total of 16 pairs were identified in the Wark (North Tyne) area (PRM), while a 20-mile cycle ride from Beacon Hill-Toddburn-Wingates-Simonside produced 26 birds on 14th. It was also noted as 'common' in Coquetdale, with 17 singing males on 25th, while 13 singing males were in Dipton Woods on the same date. In the Longhorsley area, at least seven were noted at Beacon Hill on 25th and three pairs occupied nest boxes at Whinney Hill Farm on 21st. Five singing males were reported from Allen Banks-Cupola Bridge, a pair plus three other males were noted in the Stamfordham area, there were at least four territories around Great Ryle (Whittingham) and four singing males were at Coldwell (Humshaugh). Counts of three singing males were received from Beanley Plantation, Felton Fence, Haughton Mains, Holystone (North Wood) and Lorbottle, while two males and a female were at Rothbury (Old Railway line). Two were reported from Big Waters, Debdon, Dyke Head (Newton-on-the-Moor), Derwent Reservoir, Fontburn, Haughton Castle, Hedgeley GP, Longhorsley Common, Low Carrith, Nunnykirk and Todburn (Slaley), while singles were noted at Abshiel, Alnham, Branton, Callaly Burn, Cartington, Eslington Park (Whittingham), Ford Moss, Haughton Mains, Haughton Strother, Harthope Valley, High Whittle (Shilbottle), Longhorsley, Netherwitton, Newcastle Racecourse, Newton Burn, Park Farm (East Allen), Ratchwood, Snods Edge, Stonehaugh and Warkworth Lane.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

A four-mile walk through Upper Coquetdale on 25th produced a total of 23 singing males, while in the Breamish Valley nine nesting pairs (including eight singing males) were located on 28th (ASJ). Eight were found in the Harthope Valley on 13th and 20th and two were at both Cartington on 9th and Carnaby's Banks (Alwinton) on 28th. All other reports referred to passage birds, beginning with two at St Mary's Wetland on 4th and one here on 5th, another at Hazelrigg Moss on 6th, singles at Hadston and Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 7th and two at Brenkley and one at Newbiggin on 8th.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Breeding data for May were as follows:

Locality	No. of pairs	Broods (young)	Notes	Observer
Acton Fell (Slaley)	1	One (1)		STH
Alnwick Moor / Brizlee	2	Two (3 and 3)		MH
Boulmer	2	Two (4 and 2)	Five adults seen.	BS
Breamish Valley	2	One (2)		ASJ
Budle Bay	1	One	Family party of four	CGK
Hazelrigg Moss	2	Two (no data available)		DF
Jock's Knowe (MoD)	1	One (2)		JR
Longframlington Common	1	One (2)	One pair + a male	NFO
Long Nanny	1	One (4)	Adult male with brood	STH
Lordenshaw	1	--	Adult feeding one juvenile	TRD/JD
Newton Steads	--	--	Two males + two fledged young	STH
Simonside	3	Three (2,2 and 3)	Fledged young	ASJ
Stag Rocks (Bamburgh)	1	--	Male carrying food on 18th / Female on 21st	DF/NFO
Winnowshill / Pithouse Fell	1	One (2)	Male with juveniles	MH

In addition to the above, there were counts of 12 from Bewick Moor on 16th and ten in the Harthope Valley on 20th (IBDa/KDa). Peak counts from elsewhere were five at Cheswick Links, two pairs at Ford Moss, Hadston and Howick, four at Holystone and Shepherd's Law, three at East Chevington and pairs at Bamburgh dunes, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Lynemouth, Scremerston, Warkworth dunes, and two at Druridge Pools and Plenneller Common. Singles were also reported from Beanley Moor, Cartington, Cocklawburn, Greenlee Lough, Holy Island, Low Newton and North Blyth.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

There were 16 at Holy Island on 13th (ADM) and four here on 22nd. Six nesting pairs were in Upper Coquetdale on 25th, while elsewhere, five to six were reported from Allendale, Alwinton, Boulmer, College Valley, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Longhoughton, Lynemouth Bay and St Mary's Island. Three to four were reported from Alnwick Moor, Bothal Pond, Brenkley, Cresswell Pond and Goswick and one to two at a further 14 coastal and eight inland localities.

At Holy Island, 16 birds on 20th all showed characteristics of the **Greenland race** *O.o leucorhoa* (MJC), while further singles of this race were at Cocklawburn on the same date and at Colt Crag Reservoir and Lynemouth on 19th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

The Breamish Valley held two pairs, with each feeding two fledged young, and another single singing male on 14th (ASJ). A pair with one juvenile was seen on several dates at Ellington Dene, the observer's first sighting of the species in over 26 years of visiting the site. (TB). Two birds were seen in Harthope Valley, Holywell Dene and Berwick Hill and singles seen at 12 sites.

Addition to April bulletin; one seen on two dates at Armstrong Park, Heaton (TW).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

25 were counted at Atlee Park on 28th and 16 at Bebside on 30th (JR). One to nine were at seven further sites.

A Tynemouth House Sparrow by Colin Bradshaw



Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Counts at feeders at Chugdon Wood during the month peaked at 34 on 30th (TB). Two broods, plus adults, totalling 15 birds fledged in a Tynemouth garden this month (CB). 12 were at Ellington pond on 2nd (IDR/JF). Ten were seen at Hadston on 15th (CB). One to eight were noted at 22 other localities.

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

Counts of 13 were made this month at Atlee Park and the Brockwell area of Cramlington, nine at Atlee Park on 6th (JR/LJM). One to eight were seen at another 13 sites.

A 'channel' Wagtail

Longhirst

Jack Bucknall

29th May



Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flavissima*

Four birds were seen on 7th at Haughton Strother (SW). Three noted at Mootlaw Quarry on 17th (ALT). Two were seen at Acomb, Boulmer and on several dates at Wark this month. Singles were seen at 11 other sites.

Addition to April bulletin: Budge fields held birds on several dates, with a peak of four on 18th (ADMc). Two were at Newbiggin on 12th and a single near Netherwitton on 21st.

Yellow x Blue Headed Wagtail "Channel Wagtail" *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Two males noted. One at Longhirst on 25th and one at Druridge on 27th (ADMc).

Addition to April bulletin: A male seen at Druridge, Budge Fields on 12th (ADMc).

Grey Headed Wagtail *Motacilla f. thunbergi*

One female was observed at Holy Island north shore on 31st (SR).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

It appears to have been a successful breeding season. Fourteen, seven nesting pairs, some feeding fledged young, were observed along the Upper Coquet valley on 25th (ASJ). Three pairs were seen at Wark on 2nd (PRM). A male with four juveniles was watched at Derwent Reservoir on 27th and a female also with four young at Ellington Dene on 28th (IFo/TB). Two pairs, each with fledged young were at Breamish Valley on 14th (ASJ). A pair with two young were seen at Allenbanks on 20th and four also at Ellington Dene and Felton during the month. An adult with two young was at Kirknewton on 26th and one fed a fledged youngster on 20th at Twizell (RPo/TRD/JD). One to two were seen at a further 28 sites this month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

14 were counted at Holy Island north shore 20th and nine were at Gosforth G.C. on 1st (MJC). A pair plus two juveniles were at Newbiggin on 29th (RS). One to eight were noted at a further 11 sites.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Four were seen at north shore (Holy Island) on 20th (MJC). Three were at Druridge Pools on 13th (TRD/JD). Singles were seen at the flash pool at Holywell and at Warkworth Lane, Felton and Low Steads.

Addition to April bulletin: two were seen on 9th at Newbiggin G.C. increased to ten on 10th and 16 on 12th (AP).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A roadside count on 25th on the Otterburn Ranges revealed 107 birds, with much display and some carrying food to nests and in Upper Coquet valley that day, a further 49 were noted on breeding territory (ASJ). 16 were noted in fields at St. Mary's, again displaying and feeding young on 3rd (ASJ). Ten were seen at both Druridge Pools and Alnwick Moor this month and eight at Lynemouth Bay on several dates. One – seven were also noted at 11 other sites.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Eight birds were displaying in a clearfell area at Dipton on 25th (MJC). Five also song-flighting at Beanley on 8th (TRD/JD). Four (two in song) were at Barley Hill (Mindrum) on 4th (IFo). Two - three were displaying at Beacon Hill on several dates (ADMc/ASJ/JBu). Two were at four further sites, including a pair taking food to young in a nest at Wingates on 28th (ASJ). Less than usual numbers were noted at this site however. Single birds were noted at eight other locations.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Three, including a pair feeding young were seen at Cullercoats Bay on 9th (MN). Singles were seen at only five further sites this month.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Small numbers were reported. Groups of five were seen this month at two Ellington sites and two to three were there on other dates and at Holystone North Wood. Four were at garden feeders at Marden Estate and at Bebside. One to two were at five other sites.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

A rare spring sighting, with one on garden feeders at Doxford on 3rd (JCI).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Four males and two females were regular visitors to Rothbury garden feeders during the month (TRD/JD). Six were also at Howick on 6th (JAR). Five were seen in Brier Dene (Whitley Bay) (IJ). One to four were noted at a further 26 locations.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

There were few reports this month with four singing males at Tynemouth and one to three at seven other sites.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

30 were noted at Aydon on 5th and at Lynemouth on 19th (RB/MB/PRM). One to 12 were seen at 26 other sites this month. Two pairs fed young in nests at Holywell on several dates (ASJ).

Addition to April bulletin: 48 were seen at Beacon point (Newbiggin) on 15th (AP).

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

Upland woodland edges at Simonside on 17th and Stonehaugh on 30th held 15 and 13 displaying males and pairs (ASJ). Also, on 30th, four were seen in Harthope Valley (DGB/RHB). One to two were seen at a further seven inland sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

The only large group was of 36 birds, including juveniles, feeding at Stonehaugh on 30th (ASJ). A family party of seven was at Lordenshaw on 25th (ASJ). Six were at Debden on 1st and another family group of five noted at Holystone on 7th (JD/DRo).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Ten were counted at Warkworth Lane on 7th and seven to eight at nearby Chugdon Wood and Lynemouth during the month (IDR). One to six were observed at 29 other locations.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Very few were reported this month. One to three were at seven sites, including two flying N at Budle Point on 23rd.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

20 were on Longhorsely Moor on 15th, ten there on 21st (PHa/Aha). 13 males sang in Breamish Valley on 28th (ASJ). Eight sang in one km at Linton on 6th and six sang at Holywell on 3rd (TB/ASJ). One to five were noted at 25 further sites during the month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Good numbers noted breeding at St. Mary's/Old Hartley, with 19 (two females) counted on 2nd, most feeding young (ASJ). 12 males sang at Upper Coquetdale on 25th and ten in Breamish Valley on 28th. A good number of scattered males were singing in arable fields in the Longhorsely – Wingates area this month and also in the Thropton – Alwinton area (ASJ). Seven were seen at Druridge Pools and dunes on 28th (IDR). One to five were observed at an impressive 36 sites.

Addition to April bulletin: **Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A male, retaining winter plumage, was watched at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 13th and was present for two further days (AP).

The Reed bunting image in the April bulletin was by Jack Bucknall.

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

One was noted at Castle Island on 15th (TRD/JD).

Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*

A male was seen crossing the A697 near Rothbury just south of the B6341 turnoff (STH). Unusual escape for the county.

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

One was seen at Holywell Flash on 14th (DM) and at Caistron on 1st (TRD).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings.

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Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club.

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).

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

RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to ntbc.records@googlemail.com
 Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.
 Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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



**May 2020 Bulletin
Photograph Supplement**



A Common and a Ruddy Shelduck at Boulmer on 24th May by Tim Dean



A Sparrowhawk hunts in Gosforth on 5th May by Mike Carr



A Ringed Plover is confused by St.,Marys 'not' wetland. Colin Bradshaw on 13th Mayt'



A male Blackbird in Tynemouth on 4th May by Colin Bradshaw



A Stonechat at DBCP by Jonathan Farooqi on 15th May



A Robin in Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 18th May



Wheatears by Alan Jack
Above displaying at Beacon Hill on 9th May
Below a splendid male in Upper Coquetdale on 28th May





Female Blackcaps
Above at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw on 18th May
Below by Chris Barlow on 9th May





A Carrion Crow at Berwick by Tim Dean on 20th May



A Jackdaw at Rothbury by Tim Dean on 5th May

Flycatchers

Right A Pied Fly at Letash Wood

25th May by Colin Bradsahw



Below

A Spotted Fly at Nunnykirk by Alan Jack

20th May





Above a Grasshopper Warbler
reeling
by Tim Dean
19th May

Right
A Blue Tit in a Tynemouth garden
Colin Bradshaw
4th May





Above Long-tailed Tit in Tynemouth on 2nd May by Colin Bradshaw
Below a White Wagtail at Druridge Pools on 13th by Colin Bradshaw





Two popular finches
Above - a Goldfinch in Tynemouth on 1st May by Colin Bradshaw
Below a Linnet on 8th May by Colin Bradshaw





A Reed Bunting by Tim Dean at Newton on 24th May



The Longhirst 'channel' Wagtail by Jack Bucknall on 29th May

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 6

MONTHLY SUMMARY June 2020

3rd August 2020



CONTENTS

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Lesser White-fronted Goose	Unringed bird on 3rd at Derwent Res. Maybe from reintroduction scheme.
Ruddy Shelduck	One to two at several sites with birds; very mobile.
Garganey	Pair at Holy Island and a drake at Druridge Pools.
Blue-winged Teal	1st summer female remained at Castle Island until 22nd.
American Wigeon	Drake still at Grindon Lough until 28th.
Scaup	Drake at Cresswell Pond on 1st.
Long-tailed Duck	Pair at East Chevington on 20th and 22nd. Drake at Snab Pt on 26th.
Quail	Singing males at seven sites. Noticeably good year for the species.
Great Northern Diver	Summer-plumaged individuals, 2 N at Seaton Sluice and one at Druridge on 4th.
Spoonbill	Up to five at various sites.
Little Stint	Summer-plumaged individual at Druridge Pools on 5th.
Red-necked Phalarope	Female still at Grindon Lough all month. Female also at Castle Island on 2nd.
Wood Sandpiper	One to two at Druridge Pools and Holywell.
Spotted Redshank	Summer-plumaged individual at Grindon Lough on 25th.
Black Tern	Summer-plumaged bird at East Chevington on 13th then Long Nanny from 23rd.
Black Guillemot	First-summer at Annstead on 6th.
Alpine Swift	First county record since 2010. One over Holy Island Snook on 16th.
Hobby	Adult N at Humshaugh on 29th.
Red-backed Shrike	Female near Alwinton on 4th.
Bearded Tit	Up to eight individuals at East Chevington throughout month.
Cetti's Warbler	Two singing males at East Chevington during month.
Wood Warbler	Only three sites recorded sightings during month.
Great Reed Warbler	Singing male at Druridge Pools from 5th to 8th.
Blyth's Reed Warbler	Singing male late evening of 6th at Boulmer.
Marsh Warbler	Singing male at Holy Island lough on 13th.
Asian Desert Warbler	First county record. Singing male at Holy Island Snook from 15th to 19th.
Rose-coloured Starling	Adult at Shilbottle from 27th to 30th.
Black Redstart	Male at Cresswell on 19th.
Crossbill	Large count of 141 over Tynemouth early morning on 24th.
Siskin	Huge count of 6,500 over Tynemouth early morning on 24th.

Correction

Firecrest record for May 2020. Highlights was erroneous. The record refers to April 2020.

The find of the Year
The Holy Island Asian Desert
Warbler

A photograph by the finder
Mike Carr
19th June

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 may be in September. Fingers crossed.



FIELD TRIPS

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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

Four pale-bellied *hrota* race birds were at Fenham Flats on 3rd (RA).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 61 N and 15 S, including 61 N on 8th-9th (SSWT). Also on 9th, a total of 76 flew N at Belford-Craster-Stag Rocks (DF), 30 N at Stag Rocks (BS), 20 N at Earsdon (MSH) and 20 NW at Humshaugh (SW), while 16-18 flew N at Berwick (MHu) and Stag Rocks (SW) on 20th-21st, and 12 N at Longhoughton Quarry on 8th (BS). Peak counts were 212 at Calot Shad (the Tweed Estuary) on 29th (MHu), 211 at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (IFo), 185 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 22nd (MR), 155 at Grindon Lough on 3rd (SJH), 106 at Killingworth Lake (GB) and 55-74 at Berwick Old Bridge, Big Waters and Greenlee Lough. Counts of 21-49 came from Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington, Druridge Pools, Marden Quarry, Tweedmouth Dock, West Stobswood Pool, Whittingham and Woodhorn Flashes, and 11-15 were at Monks' House Pool and Plenneller Common. One to eight were also at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Budle Bay, Fenham Flats, Holywell Pond and Howdon. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
West Stobswood Pool	3	13 (6,4,3)	TD on 7th. Includes broods from May?
Grindon Lough	1	4	MRS. Well-grown young on 7th.
Linton Ponds	1	4	CDH on 7th. Depleted brood from May.
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	3	GB on 11th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at Cresswell Pond all month (TB *et al.*), Derwent Reservoir on 25th and 27th (IFo), and Killingworth Lake on 25th and 30th (GB).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 8th (SSWT). An impressive 3,293, including juveniles, were counted at Derwent Reservoir (all on the Northumberland side) on 26th (PRM). Much smaller numbers elsewhere involved peaks of 75 at Marden Quarry on 27th (KWY), 44, including 28 S, at Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR), 34 at Plenneller Common on 26th (PRM), 28 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 7th (PRM), and 12 at Coanwood Pond. One to seven were also at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, Shield on the Wall and Woodhorn Flashes. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Longhoughton	4	24	BS on 1st. On small, unnamed pond.
Druridge Pools	3	12 (7,3,2)	IDR on 2nd.
Gosforth subsidence pond	1	10	MJC on 5th. As April-May?
Howick	1	7	JAR on 1st. Family party walking along road.
Middle Ord Pond	1	6	MHu on 7th and 29th. As May.
Bothal Pond	1	3	TD on 26th. As May.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One was at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

On 21st, 220 were at Tweedmouth Dock and 180 at Calot Shad (the Tweed Estuary) (MHu). Other peak gatherings were 54 at Howdon on 29th (CB), 40 at QEII CP Lake on 29th (CB), 25 at East Chevington on 10th (STH), and 19, including six young, at Big Waters (GB). Eight were at Bothal Pond and two to three at Arcot Pond, Boulmer (offshore), Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, the Long Nanny Estuary, Snab Point (offshore) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Caistron	4	24 (7,7,6,4)	JD on 7th.
Hedgeley GP	2	9 (6,3)	TRD/JD on 4th.
Longhoughton Quarry Pond	1	4	BS on 7th.
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	4	PCF on 14th.

Broods first noted in May remained at Big Waters (six young), East Chevington south pool (four young) and Holy Island Lough (seven young).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

An adult was noted at QEII CP Lake on 2nd, 7th and 27th (TF/JFa/CDH/CSa).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

279 were at Budle Bay on 26th (SW), 40 at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (IJ), 32 (one juvenile) at the Blyth Estuary on 19th (LJM), 21 at Castle Island on 10th (PRM) and 14 adults at Scotswood (MH). Six to nine were also at the Coquet Estuary, Howdon and West Stobswood Pool. One to two were also at the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Charlton Mires, Ellington Pond, Grindon Lough, Holywell Dene, Holywell flash, West Ord and Yarrow Slake. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Boulmer	3	23 (14,6,3)	BS on 29th. All new broods.
Cresswell Pond	3	22+ (9,9,4+)	IF on 1st. As May?
Hedgeley GP	2	13 (7,6)	TRD/JD on 4th.
Castle Island	1	16	GB on 4th. Pair with small young.
Scotswood	1	9	MH on 3rd.
Longhoughton Quarry Pond	1	8	BS on 1st. No adults seen prior to this date and no Shelduck noted after this date.
Low Newton Scrape	1	5	TRD/JD on 9th.
Druridge Pools	--	25+	IDR/JF on 7th. Female with 16 ducklings noted on 5th-6th (TRD/IF)

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two (drakes where specified) were at Cresswell Pond on 1st-2nd (TB/KG/IJ *et al.*), 5th (TRD/JD) and 8th (MN), Budle Bay on 3rd (RA), East Chevington north pool on 2nd (ADMc), Castle Island on 4th (GB/AC) and 8th-9th (ADMc/MN), and Druridge Pools on 6th (TF/JFa/ADMc). A female was at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, 28th and 30th (IFo). Singles were also at East Chevington on 4th (IRD) and S/SE on 25th (IF), and S at Tynemouth on 25th (DRW).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Wark (River North Tyne)	1	9 (5,4)	PRM on 21st. Two broods with one female.
Ridley Stokoe	1	3	AA on 19th.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

A pair was noted at Holy Island Lough on 3rd, 14th and 17th (RA/ADM), a drake on 1st (CSa) and a duck on 16th and 20th (TF/JFa/ADM).

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*

A first-summer female (second calendar year) of this species, or a hybrid, was at Castle Island between 1st-22nd (AC *et al.*).

April addition First summer female at Castle Island from 31st. (AC).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Six were at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR), six (three pairs) at Holywell Pond on 20th (DM), five at the Beehive Flash, Earsdon on 15th and 18th (MSH), and four at Grindon Lough on 7th (MRS). One to two were noted at the above sites on various further dates and at Bothal Pond, East Chevington, Holywell flash, and Monks' House Pool. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Druridge Pools	2	10 (6,4)	IDR/JF. Brood of 4 on 2nd and brood of 6 on 7th.
Bothal Pond	1	6	TD. Small young on 20th and still present on 26th.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Peak counts (of adults where specified) were 45 at Castle Island on 3rd (GB), 36 at Linton Ponds on 7th (CDH), 33 at Big Waters on 14th (GB), 21 at Woodhorn Flashes on 3rd (GB), and 12-15 at East Chevington (KWY) and Monks' House Pool (RA). Six to nine were also at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, the Beehive Flash (Earsdon), Druridge Pools and Marden Quarry, three to four at Caistron and Embleton Quarry Pond, and one to two at Budle Bay, Cresswell, Holywell and Middle Ord Ponds, Gosforth subsidence pond, Holy Island Lough, Lynemouth Flash, Newton Pool and Widdrington Moor Lake. More unusual was a drake at Tynemouth boating lake on 20th (DRW). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	3	14	TD. Brood of 4 on 20th, and two further broods (totalling 10 young) on 26th.

May Gadwall Correction: Two on the sea at Tynemouth Bay on 13th and 14th May should have read 'Two were on the sea at Lynemouth Bay on 12th and 14th (IDR)'.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Numbers at Grindon Lough peaked at 37 on 17th (SW), with seven to 24 noted variously between 1st-27th (SJH/PRM *et al.*). Other peak counts were 18 at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo), seven at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR), and four at Budle Bay on 28th (BS). A pair displayed at east Chevington on 4th (IRD), and singles were at Monks' House and Newton Pools. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Plenmeller Common	1	2	PRM. Female (plus 2 more adults) with young on 26th – different to brood from May.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

A drake was noted at Grindon Lough on five dates between 11th-25th (SJH/STH *et al.*).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts (of adults where stated) were 109 at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo), 70 at Big Waters on 7th (GB), 58 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th (MR), 31-40 at Arcot Pond (DM), Castle Island (LJM), Grindon Lough (SJH), Holywell Pond (DM) and West Ord (MHu), and 13-20 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools and Earsdon. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	3	20 (9,7,4)	IFo. New broods on 1st (9), 11th (4), 30th (7)
Grindon Lough	3	17 (10,4,3)	PRM/SW. Broods on 17th (10 young), 20th (2) and 24th (3).
Swallow Pond	2	21 (12,9)	CDH on 26th.
Big Waters	2	11 (7,4)	GB. New broods of 7 on 4th and 4 on 28th.
Gosforth subsidence pond	2	7 (4,3)	MJC. Brood of 3 on 5th and brood of 4 on 26th.
Shillmoor Farm (Upper Coquetdale)	1	10	JR on 7th.
Cresswell Pond	1	9	MSH. Fresh brood on 29th.
Fulbeck, Morpeth	1	9	TD. Brood on Morpeth bypass flood pool on 26th.
Furnace Bridge (R.Blyth)	1	8	JR on 7th.
Howick	1	7	JAR on 3rd.
Wark	1	6	PRM on 21st.
Amble	1	5	MKi. Fresh brood on stream on 22nd.
Linton Ponds	1	5	CDH on 7th.
Castle Island	1	4	GB on 3rd. As May?
Charlton Mires	1	4	GB on 16th.
Middle Ord Pond	1	4	MHu on 21st.
West Ord	1	4	MHu on 16th.
Arcot Pond	1	3	DM on 5th.
Cocklawburn Pond	1	3	MHu on 11th.
Colt Crag Reservoir	1	3	MR on 8th.
Airy Holm Reservoir	1	2	IFo on 25th.
QEII CP Lake	1	1	CDH on 7th.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Two were at Grindon Lough on 8th (CB). A drake was noted there on five dates between 1st-11th (SW/SJH/STH), and a duck on 17th (SW).

Teal *Anas crecca*

34 flew W at Tynemouth on 25th and three S there on 4th (DRW) but the monthly total at Seaton Sluice was just ten N on 1st (SSWT). Variable numbers at Grindon Lough included a peak of 35 on 19th (SJH). Peak counts elsewhere involved 27 at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo), 27 at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR), seven at East Chevington on 26th (TRD/JD), and three to five at Big Waters, Castle Island, Charlton Mires, Holywell Pond and Plenmeller Common. Singles were also at Longhoughton Quarry Pond, Longhoughton Steel and Monks' House Pool. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	1	7	PRM on 26th.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

21 were at Holywell Pond on 2nd (GPK), a peak of 15 (14 drakes) at Bothal Pond on 6th-7th (IRD/TD), seven (six drakes) at Big Waters on 21st (GB), and four at Marden Quarry (KWY) and Woodhorn Flashes (GB). Singles (all drakes) were also at Arcot and Cresswell Ponds, East Cramlington LNR and Grindon Lough.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Peak site counts were 23 at Bothal Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa), 23 at Coanwood Pond on 1st (SJH), 21 at Caistron on 7th (JD), 18 at Holywell Pond on 20th (DM), 14 at Druridge Pools (PRM) and 14 at Linton Ponds (CDH). Five to nine were at Arcot and Cocklawburn Ponds, Castle Island, Grindon Lough and Woodhorn Flashes, three to four at Cocklawburn Pond, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington and Merryshields Pond, and one to two at Airy Holm Reservoir, Big Waters, Embleton Quarry Pond, Gosforth subsidence pond, Holy Island, Howdon and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Killingworth Lake	1	9	GB. Small young on 25th.
Merryshields GP	1	4	ID on 3rd.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A drake was at Cresswell Pond on 1st (TB).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

15 flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT), 27 were at the Blyth Estuary on 19th (LJM), 20 at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 4th (STH), 19 at St Mary's Island on 27th (MSH), 18 at Seaton Sluice on 20th (DM), and 12 at Cocklawburn (MHu). Breeding data were as follows (additional to April unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Blyth Estuary	4	--	AC on 1st.
Amble	1	5	MKi on 22nd. Young accompanied by 3 adult females. As May?
Low Newton	1	3	TD on 15th.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Three were with Common Scoters off Seaton Sluice on 20th and two flew S there on 12th (SSWT). Two drakes were also with Common Scoters off Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR), and singles were off Holy Island on 1st (ADM) and North Blyth on 17th (STH).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly Seaton Sluice total was 674 N and 95 S, including 375 N on 10th-11th (SSWT), 100 flew N at Low Newton on 9th (TRD/JD), 59 N and 13 S at Newbiggin on 3rd-4th (GB/STH), and 16-30 N at St Mary's Island and Whitley Bay on 3rd (MSH/IJ) and Stag Rocks on 18th (DF). Numbers built up off Druridge-East Chevington from 400-500 on 14th (TD/IDR) to a peak of about 900 on 20th and 25th (IDR). Other peak gatherings included 400 off Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT), 190 off North Blyth on 17th (STH), about 80 off Alnmouth on 21st (MJC), and 40 off Newbiggin Church Point on 11th (MH). Two to seven were off Annstead, Holy Island and Snab Point. Two interesting inland records concerned a tight flock of 24 (20 drakes, four ducks) at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (IFo) and a group of 20 (six drakes, 14 ducks) at Colt Crag Reservoir on 10th (MR).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

An unseasonable pair was off East Chevington on 20th (MK) and 22nd (RB/MB). A drake was at Snab Point on 26th (TB).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Four ducks were at a regular breeding site on 4th (TRD/JD), an immature drake was at Cocklawburn Pond between 1st-26th (MHu) and a female flew downstream at Ingram on 2nd (ASJ). Breeding data were as follows (additional to May):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Site C	1	2	TRD/JD. Adult female with 2 young on 4th – at a site different from those reported in May.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

11 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT), seven N at Holy Island on 16th (STH), three N at Stag Rocks on 19th (DF), and two N at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW). Peak counts were 82 at Fisherman's Haven (Berwick) in 30th (MHu), 57 at Budle Point on 20th (SW), 48 off St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 11th (ADM), 38 at the Blyth Estuary on 19th (LJM), and 35 on the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 14th (MHu). Groups of 11-18 were at Amble, Dodd's Well (Berwick) and West Ord, and eight to nine at Boulmer and Windyhaugh. Three to four were also at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, and Warkworth, and one at Branton GP. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Goosander Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Alnwick (River Aln)	1	9	AMG/MG on 10th.
Warkworth-Amble (River Coquet)	1	8	MKi. Almost adult sized young on 22nd.
'River Derwent'	1	5	AJN on 15th.
Rothbury	1	5	TRD/JD. Large young on 6th (as May).
Chollerford	1	4	SW. Large young on 21st.
Eltringham/Merryshields	1	4	ID. Large young on 28th.

A group of three adult females and 15 'immature' birds at West Ord on 7th may have been locally bred (Mhu).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Four were off East Chevington on 20th (MK), three fed off Snab Point on 18th (IFo), a pair was at West Ord on 2nd (MHu), and two were at the Tyne Estuary on 19th (MSH).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Only three records – a male at Heatheryburn Moor (Allenheads), a single female at Shield on the Wall and a juvenile at Whitfield Moor.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

At Plenmeller Common 11 were at Ramshaw Fell on 2nd (SJH) and four, including a female with a juvenile, were seen there on 26th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

A breeding pair at Yearle successfully hatched nine eggs on 15th (SVM/AJM), eight birds were in the Harthope Valley on 10th (ADM), two were at Grindon Lough and singles were at Debdon (Rothbury) and at Seaton Point (Boulmer) where it is locally rare.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Six were at Boulmer on 23rd (BS) whilst pairs or two were at Bamburgh, Big Waters NWT, Brenkley (Blagdon), Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Doddington, East Chevington, Felton, Mickley Grange Farm (Stocksfield) and Old Hartley. Singles were at Acklington, Beacon Lane (Cramlington), Druridge Pools area, Fenwick Pit (East Holywell) and Humshaugh.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Four birds were calling overnight between Howick-Embleton on 23rd (BS). Two were at Boulmer on 9th (BS) and 14th (per STH) whilst singles were seen or heard at East Chevington, Mickley Grange Farm (Stocksfield) - where there were possibly two - Todridge (Great Whittington), Wallhouses, West Ord and Widdrington Station.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Eight was the peak in the Druridge Pools area on 24th (IDR), four were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th (IDR) and one to three were at Arcot Pond, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Holywell Pond, Howdon and Seghill.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Nine N was the monthly total observed heading past Seaton Sluice, including five N on 11th (SSWT). Three headed N past Tynemouth in two hours during the early morning on 4th (DRW) and three were seen flying N together past Druridge on the same day (IDR). Two were in breeding plumage offshore at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 11th (MH) and singles were seen on passage from Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Cullercoats, East Chevington, St. Mary's, Snab Point and Tynemouth.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Two summer-plumaged birds headed N past Seaton Sluice on 4th after one was initially on the sea in front of the watchtower (SSWT). Probably one of these birds was also seen heading N past Druridge (IDR) and a single flew N at Newbiggin on 5th (AP).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Good numbers on passage were reported early in the month with 220 per hour N past Berwick Pier on 3rd and 270 per hour N on 6th (MHu), whilst at Annstead a five-hour sea watch in the afternoon of 6th produced a total of 1,260 birds (RA). Smaller numbers were reported from Annstead on 3rd and 8th (DF) and from several other coastal watchpoints. Around 40 birds were on the breeding ledges at Ness End (Holy Island) on 20th (ADM) and eight birds were present at four nests at Longhoughton Quarry on 28th (BS).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The majority of passage was recorded early in the month with a peak of total of 450 (430N, 20S) past Seaton Sluice on 1st, up to 130 per hour there on the evening of 8th (SSWT), 205 at Annstead in five hours on 6th and 1,252 in almost five hours of watching there in the late afternoon of 8th (RA/DF). 154 headed N past Tynemouth in two hours during the evening of the 7th (DRW) and 108 flew N in two hours during the evening of 8th (TW). There were many other smaller counts submitted from other observers during those dates, but no passage at all was reported after 10th.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest counts came from West Allotment Pond (Silverlink), with three adults and a brood of four youngsters on 13th (KWY), and from Arcot Pond (LJM) and Big Waters NWT (GB) with a peak of six each at the end of the month. At Arcot Pond all were involved with trilling and displaying. A maximum of five were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 20th (TD), four with one small juvenile were at Linton Ponds and four were also at Caistron and Swallow Pond. A pair with two large juveniles were at Longhoughton Quarry on 26th, two pairs were at Holywell Pond and one to two birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Cocklawburn Pond, Coanwood Pond, Derwent Reservoir (where uncommon) Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Embleton Quarry, Howick Hall Gardens, Merryshields GP, Seghill (over a garden at 02.17h!), Shield on the Wall and Woodhorn Flashes.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Big Waters NWT held nine birds on 7th with three on nests (GB) and four pairs were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th including a pair nest-building (ASJ/EC/STH). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had three pairs on 4th (IFo) with two young backriding on 7th (TD) and a second brood (for the first time in several years) of three chicks present from 25th (TC/JFa/TD). Four birds were at Derwent Reservoir all month but there was no positive evidence of breeding (IFo). The only other confirmed breeding report came from Holywell Pond, with a pair and two large young present on 1st and 20th (ASJ/DM). Three birds were at East Chevington on 10th (PRM), whilst pairs were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Branton GP and Colt Crag Reservoir. Singles were at Druridge Pools and Linton Ponds.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One was at Cresswell Pond on 4th (ADMc), then a flock of five at Druridge Pools on 15th flew off S (ADMc) and were also seen flying S over St. Mary's (JBu). One, at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR/JF/ADMc), was joined by a second bird at nearby East Chevington on 26th and by the end of the month up to four were present in the Druridge Pools/Cresswell Pond area (MN/AA/TB/ASJ *et al.*).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The heronry at the wear near Helsay Farm (Warkworth) had four nests and a total of 15 birds present on 25th (RPo). Druridge Pools & Links peaked at 15 on 14th (IDR), 12 were at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 17th and 11 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th. Eight were at East Chevington on 27th, seven was the monthly max at Derwent Reservoir and one to five were at Arcot Pond, Airy Holm Reservoir, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Berwick Little Beach, Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Castle Island, Coldwell, Coquet Estuary, on a cliff side roost at Dodd's Well (Berwick), Haughton Castle, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, Long Nanny, Monks' House Pool, Redesmouth, Sweethope Lough, Thropton, Wark and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Grey Heron hunts.
Holy Island
18th June
Jack Bucknall

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Budle Bay continues to be a preferred summer destination with a peak of six birds present on 27th (RA). Four were at both Warkworth Weir on 17th (TB) and Cresswell Pond on 26-27th (ADMc/MN), three were by the causeway at Holy Island on 12th (TF/JFa) and at Long Nanny (Newton) on 24th whilst one to two birds were seen at the Aln Estuary, the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island (R. Wansbeck), Druridge Pools area, East Chevington, Fenham Flats, Low Steads (Longhoughton), New Water Haugh (R. Tweed) and on the R. Wansbeck at North Seaton. A colour-ringed bird present at Gosforth Subsidence Pond all month was reared on Teeside.

A Little Egret at Holy Island
18th June by Jack Bucknall

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

There were some significant passage counts early in the month with, all on 3rd, 191N and 20S past St. Mary's in an hour during the morning (MSH), 275 past Rockcliffe (IJ), 580N in 75 minutes at Annstead (Seahouses) (DF) and 1,500N per hour at Berwick Pier (MHu). On 4th, Snab Point (Cresswell) saw 254N in an hour (JR), there were 187N and 82S past Stag Rocks (DF) and 400 past Druridge Links (IDR). Numbers then peaked on 6th with 5,900 past Annstead Point in five hours (RA) and 1,700N per hour watched from Berwick Pier (MHu). 1,140 per hour headed N past Annstead Point on 7th (DF) and 1,995 were counted there on 8th (RA). Seaton Sluice continued to record large movements between 8th-12th with 900N in four hours on 8th, 260N per hour on 9th and 540N in two hours on 12th (SSWT). Numbers then reduced to a steadier flow with several reports of between five to 40 birds passing various coastal sites during the remainder of the month.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

One heading N past Seaton Sluice on 8th was the only passage sighting of the month (SSWT). The roost at Meadow Haven (Berwick) held 12 on 23rd and six on 29th (MHu), three first-summer birds were in Blyth Harbour on 8th (STH), one was on the sea at Seaton Sluice on 3rd and a single was at Newton on 9th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

East Chevington peaked at 70 on 25th (IF), Blyth Harbour held 26 on 7th (STH) and ten was the monthly max at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo). Nine were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 29th and one to five were at several other localities.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Two birds flew over the observer's head at Whittle Dene on 9th (AH per MH). Two birds with different moult patterns were seen at Greenlee Lough (MH) and two birds were at the North Reservoir at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 25th (IK). Single birds were at Doddington on 6th (RDi), Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th (MR), and Derwent Reservoir on 15th, 17th and 30th (ASJ/IFo), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th, 17th and 19th (ASJ/MH/STH/PCF). On 21st a bird flew low WNW over the observer's garden at Tynemouth (DRW) and a bird flew in from the north at Longhoughton Quarry then flew off W on 28th (BS).

*A record which was omitted from the April bulletin was of a bird flying N at Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 16th April (MJC).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds, including two young in the nest, were at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 28th (DRW) and two birds were seen at Tynemouth on 25th (CB). Single birds were noted at Ashington, Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon), Castle Island, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Holywell Dene, Humshaugh, St Mary's Wetland, Wark (North Tyne) and Yearle.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

There were only two records this month, with a male at Holystone on 7th (DRo) and an unsexed bird was seen at North Charlton on 19th (AMG/MG).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

East Chevington had three birds present on 2nd (IF), 5th (ADM/MH), 20th and 27th (ADMC) and 30th (MH) involving up to seven birds. Single birds were a 'cream crown' at Seaton Point (Boulmer) throughout the month (BS), an immature male at Widdrington Moor Lake on 3rd (PCi). A female was at Holywell Pond on 20th (DM) and female was at Bothal Pond on 20th and 26th (TD). A female was seen at Red Row on 26th (TRD/JD) and another at Druridge Pools on 27th (IDR). An unsexed bird was at Beal Salt Marsh (Lindisfarne NNR) also on 27th (RA) and a female was at Linton Pond on 30th (ADM/C).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A male was at a confidential site on 7th (AJR).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo) and 26th (PRM). Single birds were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield). Blanchland Moor, Carterway Heads, Cresswell Pond, Crooked Oak Lane, Dilston (Corbridge), Dipton Wood, Havannah NR, Hazelrigg Moss, Longhorsley Moor, Longhoughton, Low Buston, South Snods (Allensford), Tyne Riverside CP (Newburn) and at Wylam.



Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were seen at Whittingham on 3rd (CW) and in the Harthope Valley on 10th (ADM), while three birds were at Wark (North Tyne) on 6th (PRM) and in the Harthope Valley on 14th (JAR). Two birds were reported at Charlton Lodge (TB) on 17th and at Grindon Lough on 20th (PRM). Single birds were reported from 14 sites during the month.

A Buzzard on Blanchland Moor by Alan Jack on 15th June

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

A pair with five tiny fresh young were at Big Waters NWT on 12th (GB). Two birds were either seen or heard at North Pool (East Chevington) on 1st and 13th (TB) and on 14th (STH), Druridge Pools on 6th (IF/TF/JFa), Big Waters NWT on 7th (GB). Two birds were heard over the observer's garden during "Nocmig" at Seghill on 14th (IF). Single birds were also seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Seghill.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The peak counts were eight birds at Holywell Pond on 20th (DM) and seven at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 26th (CDH). Five birds were at Druridge Pools on 27th (IDR) with four birds seen there on several dates (IDR/JF). Four birds were also seen at Bates Mine water Treatment Plant (River Blyth Estuary) on 9th (LJM), Tyneview Park (Benton) on 19th (CDH) and at Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend) on 22nd (CDH). One to three birds were noted at nine sites during the Month.

Coot *Fulica atra*

39 birds were at Bothal Pond on 26th (TD) and 30 were at Killingworth Lake on 25th (GB), 22 were noted at Linton Ponds on 7th (CDH) and 21 were at Woodhorn Flashes on 3rd (GB). 19 adults were at Big Waters NWT on 14th (GB) and 14 birds were at Holywell Pond on 20th (DM), while ten birds were seen at Arcot Pond on 5th (DM) and Embleton quarry on 22nd (IDR). One to six birds were at nine sites.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The largest roosts were all counted on 30th, with 92 at Sharper's Head (Berwick) (MHU), 85 at Cresswell Pond (ASJ), and 84 from the Berwick coastwatch (Mhu). There were 41 at St Mary's Island on 27th (MSH), 40 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 4th (STH), and 33 at North Blyth staithes on 26th (STH). Derwent Reservoir had 23 on 26th (PRM) and Heatheryburn Moor, near Allenheads, had 16 on 24th (AJR). Reports of successful breeding came from Boulmer, Coanwood Pond and Shotleyfield, near Airy Holm Reservoir. Two pairs were observed during the month at roof-top nest sites at Tyneview Park, Benton (KWY) and another pair were at a possible roof-top nest at Bassington Industrial Estate (Cramlington) on 26th (LJM).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The highest counts came from Cresswell Pond, with 20 on 19th (TB) and Druridge Pools, with 17 on 26th (IDR). Birds were noted incubating at Cresswell Pond during the month, with two broods of two seen on 22nd (MN). There was also evidence of successful breeding at Druridge Pools, with three large juveniles and one tiny chick seen on 30th (MH). The first pair to breed at Low Newton scrape still had their four young on 23rd (MKi). There were three birds at Castle Island on the Wansbeck Estuary on 20th (KWY) and 29th (PRC), two at Boulmer on 7th (BS) and the Blyth Estuary on 21st (AC), and a first sighting of a single bird at Ellington Pond on 12th (TB).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest flocks were at Derwent Reservoir, with 65 on 26th (PRM), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) with 60 on 26th (TD), and Holywell Pond, with 55 on 23rd (ASJ). There were 37 at Acton Moor (Blanchland) on 25th (ASJ) and 33 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM). Breeding was noted at Druridge Pools on 7th, where the peak count of 25 birds included 11 large fledglings from four broods (IDR/JF). Chicks were also seen at Gosforth Subsidence Pond (MJC) and Big Waters (GB) on 7th, Boulmer on 16th (GB), Northfield Farm (Warkworth) on 28th (RPo) and Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 30th (MSH).

A juvenile Lapwing at Blanchland on 4th June by Alan Jack



Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

There were 15S at Boulmer on 17th (TB), 15 roosting at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 29th (AP) and ten at Middlehope Moor, near Allenheads, on 7th (AJR). On Holy Island, there were five on 20th (ADM) and eight on Beal saltmarsh on 27th (RA). Pairs were at Whitfield Moor (PRM) and on the top of Cheviot (JAR) on 9th, at Old Hartley on 24th (MNC) and Great Wanney Crag on 26th (PRM).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

There was one at Boulmer on 8th (BS), a summer-plumaged bird at Castle Island on the Wansbeck on 12th (MK) and one N over Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 16th (AP).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A flock of 47+ was at the Blyth Estuary on 4th (IFo). There were 21 at Boulmer on 8th (BS), and 15 at Castle Island on the Wansbeck on 3rd (GB). Groups of ten or fewer were reported from Beacon Point, Newbiggin, from Annstead, Seahouses, from Long Nanny, Newton and from Cresswell Pond. There was a pair with three new chicks at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

One to seven adults were reported at Derwent Reservoir and Castle Island on the Wansbeck. Singles were at Holywell Pond, Woodhorn, Druridge Pools and Grindon Lough, and a juvenile was at the Garden Centre Flash at Earsdon.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

There were groups of four on East Shore (Holy Island) on 3rd (RA) and two at the Snook on 19th (MJC). Two were at Ellington on 25th and Cresswell Pond on 30th (TB). One was present at Boulmer all month (BS). Single birds were seen flying over at Saltpan Rocks, Cocklawburn, Beacon Point, Newbiggin, Druridge Pools, Hauxley and the Blyth Estuary.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Boulmer had the largest flock again, with 41 on 23rd (BS). Grindon Lough had 31 on 24th (ASJ), the Aln Estuary had 27 on 14th (MKi) and the Berwick coastwatch produced 24 on 30th (MHu). Numbers of birds roosting at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) rose from five on 18th to 24 on 30th (AP). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported 13 (3N, 10S), a very poor total in what is generally a good month for the species. There were groups of 12 at Heatheryburn Moor, near Allenheads on 24th (AJR) and Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM), and 11 at Vindolanda on 8th (CB) and Druridge Pools on 13th (IDR/JF). Four to eight birds were recorded at Long Nanny, Newton, Fell End at Haltwhistle, Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary and Grindon Lough. Birds with young were observed at Kingswood Burn on 16th (AJR) and at Black Burn (Alnwick Moor) on 20th (ASJ).



A Curlew
Alnwick Moor
Alan Jack
20th June

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

13 birds were present at Boulmer all month (BS), with a maximum of 14 on 3rd (CSa). Two were at the Long Nanny (Newton) on 27th (CGK) and singles were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 4th (STH) and the Coquet Estuary on 30th (CSa).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Druridge Pools had a flock all month, with counts ranging from seven on 2nd (MN) to a maximum of 40, including a leucistic bird, on 28th (TF/JFa). 19 birds of ssp. *islandica* were noted on the Budge Fields on 27th (IDR) and 15 of the 20 birds counted on 30th were in breeding plumage (MH). East Chevington had nine on 10th (STH) and the Coquet Estuary had seven on 13th (CSa). A single adult male *islandica* was at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 30th (MJC).



A summer-plumage Black-tailed Godwit
Gosforth subsidence pond by Mike Carr n 30th June

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

At Seaton Sluice two flew N and seven S on 1st and one flew N at Tynemouth on 14th (SSWT/DRW). Birds were reported from Newbiggin throughout the month with the maximum being 24 at Beacon Point on 26th (STH). Four were also seen at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 3rd (GB). Other sites attracting small numbers were Boulmer with 12 on 29th (BS), Stag Rocks with seven on 5th (JPL), Seaton Sluice, with six on 16th (SSWT), St Mary's Island held six on 10th (MSH) and five were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 6th (NFO). Singles were at Cocklawburn and the River Blyth Estuary.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Three flew S at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). The peak count came from Holy Island causeway where 78 were counted on 20th (ADM). Boulmer attracted 30 on 18th (AMG/MG) and 25 were roosting at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 29th (AP). One to eight were reported from Cresswell, Druridge Pools, Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR), the Long Nanny, the River Coquet Estuary, Seaton Point (Boulmer) and Warkworth Gut.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were again present at Druridge Pools all month with some turnover noted. Two males and two females were noted on 1st (CSa) with a maximum of five males (no females) noted on 27th-28th (IDR).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

At Tynemouth, three flew N on 7th and two flew N on 14th (DRW). Significant numbers were reported early in the month with 100 at the north shore of Holy Island on 3rd (RA). The peak count at Boulmer was 47 at Seaton Point on 6th (NFO), 48 were roosting at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 6th (AP), with two still there on 26th (STH). Ten were at the River Blyth Estuary on 4th (IFo).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Grindon Lough held birds all month with a peak of 13 on 22nd (SJH/PRM/MRS/*et al.*) A pair was at Whitfield Moor on 15th (PRM). Migrants or summering birds were noted at the coast with seven at Cresswell Pond on 8th (MN), four at Boulmer, the River Blyth Estuary and the Snook (Holy Island). One to three were reported from Beal saltmarsh, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Monks' House Pool and Newbiggin.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The sole report was five at Stag Rocks on 5th (JPL).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

A summer-plumaged bird was at Druridge Pools on 5th (TRD/JD/STH/NFO).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Well reported from the Slaley area, with a maximum of five reported from Winnows Hill (four roding) on 12th (PRM) and three roding at Slaley Forest on 6th and 25th (JBU/MB/RB). Singles were reported from Beanley Moor and wood, Debdon (Rothbury), Edlingham wood, Sweethope Lough (roding) and Whitfield Moor. An unseasonal coastal record was one at Holy Island Snook on 11th (ADM).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Birds were reported mainly from breeding and potential breeding areas. At Derwent Reservoir, the peak count was six, including at least one pair (IFo/PRM). Three were displaying at Prestwick Carr on 6th (STH), two were 'drumming' at Edlingham Wood on 9th (KG) and two birds were at each of Druridge Pools, Great Wanney Crags and Plenmeller Common. At least two pairs were at Hazelrigg Moss during the month (DF). Singles were seen at Catcleugh, Coanwood Pond, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Harthope Valley (drumming) and Heatheryburn Moor (nr Allenheads).

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

The returning female was reported from Grindon Lough from 1st-27th (many observers). Another female was seen at Castle Island on 2nd (PRC/TB/IF/TRD/JD).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

There were reports from many breeding areas and some birds were still at coastal locations. The highest count was five pairs at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM). Six birds were in Upper Coquetdale on 14th (TRD/JD), three pairs at Wark on 21st (PRM), four at Colt Crag Reservoir (including a pair with one recently fledged young) on 22nd (MR) and two pairs at Redesmouth on 28th (PRM). Three were seen at Bygate Farm (Upper Coquetdale) on 7th (JR), two (pair) at Harthope Valley, two at Hedgeley, and pairs at Heatheryburn Moor (nr Allenheads) and Lambley Minewater Treatment Plant. Single birds were seen at each of Breamish Valley, Caistron, Eltringham/Merryshields and Rothbury. Coastal and lowland sites also held birds during the month. Eight were at Castle Island on 26th (PRC/LJM), Three were at East Chevington on 30th (NFO) and singles were present at Cresswell Pond and Howick Haven.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Four were seen at Druridge Pools on 18th (MN) but only one by 24th (IDR). On 3rd, two were on the River Blyth at Ogle Bridge (AHB) and singles were at Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Earsdon and Gosforth Subsidence Pond.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

At the River Coquet Estuary, 20 on 23rd had increased to 43 on 30th (CSa). Birds were reported from Grindon Lough throughout the month, with the peak number being 18 on 17th (SW) and two juveniles were seen there on 20th (PRM). Maximum counts elsewhere were 18 at Lindisfarne on 27th (RA), 15 at Druridge Pools and Links on 17th (IDR), 11 at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo) and 11 also at Boulmer on 29th (BS). Two juveniles were at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR/JF), two pairs were at Derwent Reservoir, one with two or three new chicks on 7th (IFo). A pair with young were seen at Lilswood (Hexamshire) on 11th (AJR) and a juvenile was at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 30th (MJC). A pair was also at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 12th (PRM). One to nine were at Beal Saltmarsh, Budle Bay, Collywell Bay (Seaton Sluice), East Chevington, North Blyth Staithes, Plenmeller Common and Seaton Point (Boulmer).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Two were seen at Druridge Pools on 17th (IDR) reducing to one by 21st, remaining to 30th (MN). One was at Holywell Pond on 22nd (AC), with presumably the same bird on the nearby flash on 26th (PRC).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A single bird in breeding plumage was at Grindon Lough on 25th (IK).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Two were at Alnmouth on 21st (MJC). During the last four days of the month, singles were seen at, Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR), Boulmer, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth (Newcastle-flying N) and Low Newton.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

During two five-hour periods of sea-watching on 6th and 8th, an impressive 4,590 and 998 respectively were recorded moving N at Annstead Point, a large number of these being immature birds as well as breeding birds from the nearby Farne Islands (RA *et al.*). At Berwick Pier on 3rd and 6th, 800-850/h moved N (MHu) and also during this period significant movement N was recorded at Boulmer, Druridge Bay, Newbiggin and Tynemouth. At Needles Eye (Berwick) 80 pairs were at the colony on 26th (SVM).



A Kittiwake at Seaton Point by Neil Osborne on 6th June

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Maximum counts were 140 in the Blyth Estuary (LJM) and, at Druridge Pools, 140 was the largest of several counts there throughout (IDR) with 20-70 at three sites in the Berwick area (MHu) and Big Waters. Smaller numbers were recorded at Bothal Pond, Boulmer, the Coquet Estuary and Holywell Pond.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

All records were of immature birds, reported by many observers. East Chevington North Pool hosted a maximum of seven on 26th (ADMc) and one to six were present there on many dates throughout. Elsewhere, singles were seen at Annstead Point, Boulmer, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond and Holywell Pond.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Increasing numbers were seen at Newbiggin at the month end with a maximum 16 on 29th which included eight adults (STH). One to four were at other sites namely Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's and West Stobswood Pool.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A maximum of 150 were at Holy Island (RA), 88 immature birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Shotleyfield (IFo) and ten at Boulmer (BS).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

At the Long Nanny Estuary, 12 were present on 22nd (IDR), eight were at Grindon Lough (SW) and one to four at Derwent Reservoir, Holywell Pond and Newbiggin.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The gull roost at West Ord (Berwick) held 240 on 28th (MHu) with a similar number counted in the Blyth Estuary (LJM) and 100 at Newbiggin (AP). Smaller groups of up to 65 were at Big Waters, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools, Holywell Pond, the Long Nanny Estuary and Newbiggin. Breeding records included 11 nests in the Blyth Estuary (LJM), three on suburban chimney stacks in Monkseaton (MSH) and three broods at the Bassington Industrial Estate, Cramlington (LJM).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The largest counts were 31 in the Long Nanny Estuary (IDR), 24 in the Blyth Estuary (LJM) and 15 at Big Waters and Castle Island (IFo/GB/DM). One to eight were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, three sites in the Berwick area, Bothal Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Embleton Quarry, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Howdon and Newbiggin. Six nests were on the Admiral Business Park (Cramlington) and five on the Blyth Riverside Industrial Park (LJM).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

At the Seaton Sluice observatory the only significant counts came towards the month end with a maximum of 139N and 620S seen in four hours on 27th (SSWT). The maximum recorded at East Chevington North Pool, from a number of counts, was 100 (IJ) and the highest count offshore at Druridge Pools was 50 (IDR). Elsewhere, up to 40 were recorded at Boulmer, Cocklawburn, the Coquet Estuary, Cresswell Pond, the Royal Quays (North Shields), Seaton Sluice (on the shore), Spittal Bay (Berwick) and St Mary's Island.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

The highest count from the Long Nanny colony was 22-25 on 22nd (IDR/AMG/MG) and one to four were seen at Annstead, Boulmer, East Chevington, Holy Island, Low Newton and Seaton Sluice.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

At least 29 fed offshore at Boulmer on 30th with a further ten at nearby Longhoughton, Low Steads (BS). Sightings elsewhere ranged from one to five offshore at Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Seaton Point, Boulmer.

A Roseate Tern

Hauxley

Neil Osborne

26th June

Common Tern/Arctic Tern

Sterna hirundo/ paradisaea

Eighty fed offshore at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR)



Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

At the North Blyth staithes 100 were counted on 26th (STH) and 80 were on/around the raft at the Royal Quays (North Shields) (MK). Counts of 11-40 came from Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Gosforth Park and Tynemouth with, elsewhere, one to five at Big Waters, Boulmer, the Coquet weir, Howdon, Seaton Sluice, Swallow Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Breeding records comprised 50 AON at the North Blyth staithes (STH), 30 chicks were on the raft at the Royal Quays (IF) and six at Gosforth Park (MK). One bird at Whittle Dene Reservoir carried a ring indicating it was marked as a chick at Saltholme RSPB in July 2018 (STH).



A Common Tern
Howdon wetland
20th June
Colin Bradshaw

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

At the Long Nanny colony on 23rd at least 380 roosted on the beach with a further 40 still on the nesting scrapes (MKi). The largest of several counts of birds offshore at Druridge Pools was 20 (IDR) and up to ten were at Annstead, Boulmer, East Chevington, Hauxley, and Tynemouth.



An Arctic Tern by Neil Osborne
Hauxley on 10th June

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

An adult in full summer plumage was recorded at East Chevington on 13th (IF/TRD/JD) and presumably the same individual was regularly seen again in the Long Nanny Estuary from 16th until at least 25th (Birdguides/MKi *et al.*).



A Black Tern at the Long Nanny
Jack Bucknall on 24th June

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Four singles flew N at Annstead Point, seen during the long sea-watch on 6th (RA) and other records, all of single birds moving N, came from Tynemouth on 4th (DRW), Berwick Pier on 6th (MHu), Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 4th and 6th (AP), Annstead Point and Seaton Sluice on 8th (RA/SSWT), Cresswell (Snab Point) on 10th and 12th (ADM/PRM), Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 15th (STH) and Annstead on 30th (DF).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Three were seen from the Seaton Sluice watch point on 1st, the only record, described as 'another very poor month for the species' (SSWT). Two were seen at Annstead Point on 8th during the long period of sea-watching (RA) and there were ten records of single birds at other sites, all moving N, between 4th and 23rd at Boulmer, Druridge Pools and Links, Rockcliffe, Stag Rocks, Warkworth Old Water and Whitley Bay.

Auk *sp*

At St Mary's Island, movement N of 300+/h and 270/h was recorded on 3rd and 7th respectively (MSH).

Common Guillemot/Razorbill

During five hours sea-watching on 6th at Annstead Point a massive total of 46,650 was counted, all of which were moving N, a good proportion being immature birds, not just breeding birds from the Farne Islands (RA). On 7th, 800 were seen moving N at Tynemouth (CB) and at Seaton Sluice large movements were noted, mainly during the first half of the month, with peaks of 800/hour N on 5th and 1,500/hour N on 8th (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

During five hours sea-watching on 8th at Annstead Point, a huge total of 27,930 was counted moving N many of which were immature birds, not just breeding birds from the Farne Islands (RA *et al.*). Significant movements N were also witnessed on 6th with 1,100/hour at Berwick Pier (MHu) and, on dates between 3rd and 12th, rates of 200-500/hour N were seen at Berwick Pier, Boulmer, Cresswell (Snab Point), Newbiggin, Rockcliffe and Seaton Sluice (JR/TRD/JD/IJ/GB/SSWT/). Counts of 1,000+ moving N offshore on 4th came from Druridge Pools/Links (IDR), 200 at Newton Point, 100 at Berwick, Needles Eye and up to 60 at three other localities.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

The five-hour sea-watch on 8th at Annstead Point produced a total of 456 (RA *et al.*). Elsewhere on 6th, 60/hour flew N at Newbiggin (GB) and 135 were counted during periods at Rockcliffe on 3rd (IJ); at Seaton Sluice on 12th, 225 moved N in two hours (SSWT). At the Berwick Needles Eye colony, 30 were counted on 26th and smaller numbers, up to ten, were seen at five other sites.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

On 6th, one immature bird was seen offshore at Annstead Point (RA/DF).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

During the five-hour sea-watch at Annstead Point on 8th a large total of 4,018 was counted, some of which, but not all, would have been breeding birds from the Farne Islands (RA *et al.*) and on 12th, 375 passed N in two hours at Seaton Sluice (SSWT); similar movements were also recorded at Newbiggin, St Mary's and Tynemouth on 3rd-7th (DRW/GB/MSH). Smaller numbers were counted offshore at Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Newton and Rockcliffe on other dates throughout.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

On 11th, around 40 were at Nursery Park (North Seaton) (RS), 15 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 10th (DM) and two at Druridge Pools and Links on 26th (IDR).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

There was a high count of 68 at Howdon on 27th and 20 there on 3rd (CB) with 51 foraging at Dilston (Corbridge) on 8th (IFo). Four were at Big Waters on 2nd with one to two at eight other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

More than 300 were in one field at Beehive Flash (Earsdon) on 15th (MSH), 123 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 5th with 100 there on 22nd (DM/STH), 33 on BBS survey at Bedlington on 1st (JR). 12 were at Druridge Pools and Links on 14th with up to eight there on 13 other dates, 12 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th, ten at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month and two to three at three other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

There were just two reports of 13 on BBS survey at Bedlington on 1st (JR) and a pair in song and courtship at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Three males and a female were at Edlingham Wood on 1st (NFO) with three at Caudhole Moss (Alnwick) on the same date (IRD), at Bewick Moor on 14th and Blanchland Moor on 18th (MJC/PCI). Two were at Common Burn, Ford Moss, Debdon (Rothbury) and Harthope Valley on 1st, at Wingates and Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, Edlingham Wood on 9th, Harthope Valley on 14th, Dipton Wood on 15th and a pair at Greenlee Lough on 17th. Singles were at Derwent Reservoir on five dates, Slaley area on four and at 17 other widespread localities.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

A pair was with three juveniles in an owl box at Derwent Reservoir on 25/26th (PRM/ASJ) with singles seen on five other dates in the month (IFo). Two were at Druridge Pools & Links both hunting and carrying prey on four dates from 8th to 24th with singles on two other dates and two adults fed young in nest box at Howick from 8th to 14th (JAR). Probably two had fledged and were flying at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 26th (MSH) with singles regularly at Cresswell Pond and at 21 other widely spread localities. One road casualty was freshly dead on A69 near Stocksfield turn off on 23rd.

A Barn Owl quarters a
Backworth field

Jack Bucknall

6th June

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

On 1st a pair with three young were at the Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) (ASJ) with five, consisting of pairs and fledged juveniles between Howick and Embleton on 23rd (BS). More than three juveniles were clambering in trees 500m north of Arcot Pond (Cramlington) on 1st (GB), a family of three at Howick on 7th (JR) with three calling at Slaley on 25th and an adult with two juveniles at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on the same date (ASJ/TF/JFa). Two juveniles were at Wallington on 12th and at Brenkley (Blagdon) on 24th with singles at ten other locations including two juveniles. A road casualty was at Coldside (Forestburn Gate) on 2nd.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

All reports were of singles at Welton Hall (Whittle Dene) on 10th & 19th, Fenwick Pit (East Holywell) on 14th, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 18th and High Hauxley on 19th. Three territories were located in North Tyneside during the month (CGK).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Nine, consisting of two pairs with three and two fledged young, were at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) all month (ASJ), an adult with two large juveniles at a confidential site in south east Northumberland (LJM/GB) and pairs with four and one fledged juveniles at two sites in the north of the county (BS). Two calling juveniles were found at Great Wanney Crag, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Sweethope Lough, all on 26th, with single juveniles at Grindon Lough, Walwick, Nunwick on 24th plus Colt Crag Reservoir and Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM). Adults were at Druridge Pools and Links on 20th and hunted at Brocolitia on 24th with a single juvenile harassed by 'toggers' at Swallow Pond on 22nd and there were three territories with adults feeding young in North Tyneside.

A curious juvenile Long-eared Owl

Rising Sun

Jack Bucknall

23rd June

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

It was a good breeding season on Bewick Moor with three territories where young were being fed (MJC). Two were at Whitfield Moor on 15th (PRM), one hunted at Blanchland Moor on 18th and at a site in the south west of the county near 'kepered' moors on 25th.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Nine were found at Slaley Forest on 25th with three at the south edge of the forest and six near Ladycross (ASJ). Six were at Edlingham Forest with four including three males over clear fell (NFO) and two on the other side of the forest at the same time (TAC). Four were at Slaley Forest on 6th & 23rd (JBU/AJH), at Beanley Moor on 23rd and Sweethope Lough on 25th (PRM) with three at Slaley Forest on 25th. One to two were at Beanley, Edlingham and Slaley on various other dates.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

At Holy Island on 16th one flew rapidly E low over Half Moon Slack (The Snook) with a Swallow trailing behind but was not seen subsequently despite searching until dark (ADM).

Swift *Apus apus*

Movement S was noted in the last week of the month with 700S at Low Steads (Longhoughton) between 0735-0835h (BS), 595 S at Cresswell Pond between 09.30-10.30 (TF/JFa), both on 28th, with 432 south at Alnmouth on 21st including 186 between 12.00-12.30 (MJC) and 165S in two hours at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT). Feeding flocks numbered 150 at Backworth on 13th (ASJ), 100 at Walbottle on 15th, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 20th, Holywell Pond on 23rd and Walker (Newcastle) on 26th with 93 at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 27th (MH/IJ/ASJ/RA) and 67 north at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 22nd (DF). 20-50 were at 18 other locations with one to 16 at a further 16.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

A pair in the Mitford area bred successfully for the 4th year in a row having a juvenile present on 16th and a pair at a second site in the area were displaced by bank collapse over winter (ADM). Two on opposite banks at Tyne riverside Merryshields (Eltringham) on 27th showed some aggression (ID) with singles at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 7th, Ogle Bridge (R.Blyth) on 13th, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and Chollerford on 21st, Shilvington Bridge on 25th and Merryshields (Eltringham) on 28th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Pairs with two juveniles were in gardens at Stamfordham and Corbridge throughout the month (EC/MR) and at Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th (MR) with three at Harthope Valley on 10th and Humshaugh on 13th (ADM/SW). A pair with young calling in nest were at Low Carriteth (Hesleyside) on 5th, two were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, Humshaugh on 6th, Wark on 8th and Reeds mouth on 28th. A female with juvenile was at Humshaugh on 11th and Ellington Dene on 16th with singles at a further 14 other widespread localities.



Dinner time - Great Spotted Woodpeckers in a Stamfordham garden: Eddie Crabtree

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Singles were at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 2nd and 30th, Wingates on 2nd, Slaley Hall on 7th, Wark on 8th, Yearle on 12th, Derwent Reservoir on 14th, 19th and 21st, Slaley Forest and Harthope Valley on 17th with a juvenile at Lambshield (Hexham) on 30th.

Kestrel *Falco tinninculus*

A pair with three young in the nest at Lindisfarne Castle (Holy Island) on 11th looked ready to fly soon (ADM). Five birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM). Four birds were noted at Sweethope on 9th (ASJ) and at Winnow's Hill (Slaley) on 25th (MH) and on 16th four birds were flying around Lindisfarne Castle (Holy Island) (ADM). Three birds were hunting around Widdrington Moor Lake on 3rd (PCI) and one to two birds were at 24 sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A moulting female was seen hunting at a site on 15th (MH).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A bird flew N at Humshaugh on 29th (SW).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 17th (PRM), with a single male there on 1st and 3rd (ADM). A bird in flight at the Excavations (Holy Island) on 20th was noted carrying a prey item that appeared to be a Swift *Apus apus* (ADM). The only other record was a bird at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM).

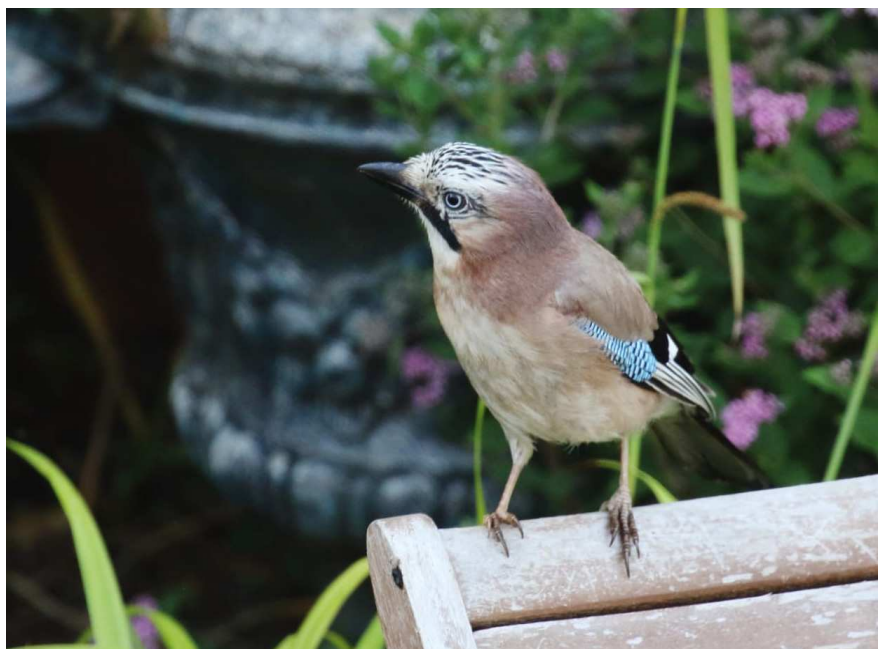
Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

A female was at Barrow Mill nr Alwinton on 4th (per IK).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A pair and four juveniles were in the observer's garden at Mickley on 4th (ID) and a pair reared two young in Ouseburn Park during the month (DHWB) with a family party including at least one juvenile in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 20th (TD) and an adult with two juveniles at Ellington on 28th (TB). Two were at Debdon (Rothbury) on 1st, Howick on 4th, Harthope Valley on 10th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 18th. Singles were at nine further locations.

A Jay in John Littleton's garden
Woolsington



Magpie *Pica pica*

A pair with four fledged young were at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 17th (DM) with a family party of four at Druridge Pools and Links on 30th with one to three seen there all month, another juvenile being present on 13th (IDR/JF). Singles were also at Rothbury feeding on peanut cylinders during the month and Embleton on 22nd.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A large count of 400 was made at Humshaugh on 28th (SW) with 104 at Howdon on the same date (CB), 27 on BBS survey at Bedlington on 1st (JR) and one to three at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), R Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools and Links and Embleton Quarry.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

On 9th, 300 were at Buteland Fell (Redesmouth), 100 at Plashetts and 75 at Sweethope (ASJ). A family party of a pair with three young were at fed at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A count of 40 was made in R Blyth Estuary on 19th, mainly near the Sleekburn confluence (LJM). The peak count at Druridge Pools and Links was 14 on 24th with 11 there on 25th and two to seven on 13 other dates during the month (IDR/JF). Four were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th and a pair fledged three young at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 15th.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four were at Holystone on 18th and at Toft House (Otterburn MOD range) on 27th (DRo/JR/NA) with three at Cochrane Pike (Whittingham) on 16th (CW). Pairs were at Harthope Valley on 17th and Holburn on 26th with two at Holystone on 14th and flying N noisily at Ord Moor (Berwick) on 28th. Singles were at seven other upland locations.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

A family party of seven was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th (MR) and an adult feeding young at Druridge Pools and Links on 14th being possibly the first breeding record there (IDR).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

On 6th a family party of four was at Nunnykirk (JBU) with singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 19th and 26th.



A Marsh Tit at Nunnykirk
9th June by Jack Bucknall

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

A family party of seven was at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) on 8th (GPK), an adult with five juveniles at Ellington Dene on 9th, the juveniles still present on 16th (TB), and a pair with three fledged young at Backworth on 13th (ASJ). Three were at Prestwick Carr on 7th, Whitley Bay Cemetery on 8th and Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) with two there on 15th and singles at five other locations.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Family parties of 12 were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th with a pair and four juveniles ringed at Druridge Pools and Links on 9th, the family group remaining till 28th (IDR). Five were found on a BBS survey at Bedlington on 1st (JR) and a pair with three fledged young at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 13th (MJC), with three fledging at Longdyke (Shilbottle) on 15th (MKI). A pair fed young at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 7th and one to two were at Druridge Pools and Links.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Eight were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th and family parties of five to six at Druridge Pools and Links from 13th with two ringed there on 9th (IDR). Four were found on BBS survey at Bedlington on 1st (JR) and an adult feeding young at nest at Ford Moss on the same date.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Two adult females with six juvenile males were at south pool East Chevington on 1st with five juvenile males on 25th and four on 19th (IF). One flew across the reedbed at East Chevington on 4th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Large counts, with many singing birds of 90+ came from Otterburn Ranges on 2nd, 60+ at Hareshaw (Bellingham) on 9th including some juveniles, 50 from Plashett to Throckrington on the same date, 40 from South Charlton to Bolton on 16th and 30 from Sweethope to Great Wanney Fell on 9th. 16 sang at Wingates on 2nd, 12 (six singing) were at St Mary's on 30th and 11 at Backworth on 10th with one to five at eight other locations.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

A possible pre-migration gathering of 200+ was on mud, fences and feeding at Grindon Lough on 27th, 120 in three small colonies at Ramshaw Fell (Plenmeller Common) on 2nd (SJH), 100 in colony at Acomb on 9th (ASJ), 62+ at 31 active nests at Wark (N.Tyne) on 6th (PRM), 60 in two colonies at Breamish Valley on 2nd and 50 in several colonies in Upper Coquetdale on the same date (ASJ). 50 were also at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 3rd, Wark on 8th and Grindon Lough on 26th with 40 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th, Tynemouth on 25th and Lynemouth on 30th. Ten to 30 were at five other locations and one to nine at a further six with 15 AON at West Ord (Berwick) on 2nd, 28 AON Barrowburn (Upper Coquetdale) on 11th and nine AON at Brown's Bay (Whitley Bay) on 20th.



Sand Martins roost on the banks of the Tyne near Close House

6th June

John Littleton

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Numbers appear low with 30 from South Charlton to Bolton on 16th the peak count, 15 at Druridge Pools and Links on 7th and 21st and double-figure counts there on four other dates (IDR). Six pairs were nesting at Todburn (Slaley) on 2nd, five pairs at Plashetts on 9th with ten at Tynemouth on 25th and eight at Embleton Quarry on 22nd. Pairs with four fledged young were at Blindburn (Upper Coquetdale) on 2nd and Hesleyside (Bellingham) on 9th with one to six at eight other locations. It was noted that very few were seen around Stamfordham.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

On 27th, 80 fed at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) with 50 nesting between South Charlton and Bolton on 16th and 15 pairs at nests at Barrowburn (Upper Coquetdale) on 2nd (ASJ). 30 were seen taking mud at Castle Island (R.Wansbeck) on 2nd with 25 there on 1st (TRD/JD/IF), 30 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 5th, Waggonway Flash (Holywell) on 20th (DM), 25 at Woodhorn Church on 4th, Embleton Quarry on 22nd (GB/IDR), 20+ at Arcot Pond on 18th (DM) and 20 at nests at Ingram on 2nd (ASJ). 15 were at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 13th, Druridge Pools and Links on 14th, 24th and 26th and Northburn (Cramlington) on 17th with 6+ active nests at Colt Crag Reservoir on 7th, 12 birds at Southernknowe (College Valley) and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin). One to eight were at six other locations with two cliff nests noted at Little Beach (Berwick) (MHu).

Asian Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*

One of the most extraordinary finds for many years, this male bird was first located at the Snook (Holy Island) on the evening of Monday 15th. Although elusive at times, it continued to sing in the same area until Friday 19th (MJC *et al.*).



The much appreciated Asian Desert Warbler
Holy Island
by Colin Bradshaw
17th June

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

One was again heard singing at East Chevington from the beginning of the month, with two singing birds there from 15th to the month end (MN/PCI/ASJ *et al.*).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A 'tribe' of 22 at Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 3rd was the largest gathering (LJM), followed by 19 at Marden Quarry on 7th and a family party of 12 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 14th. Counts of ten came from Chapel House and Wark (North Tyne), nine were in a Northburn (Cramlington) garden and at Tynemouth, eight at Holywell Dene and four to five at Howdon and Humshaugh; in addition an unspecified number were in a family group at Eshott.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Counts of singing males included 31 at Sweethope Lough on 24th (ASJ) and 21 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 1st. Up to nine + were reported from Druridge Pools on many dates, while six were at Dinnington on 8th and five at Derwent Reservoir (singing) on 26th, Great Wanney Crag and Holy Island on 14th and Prestwick Carr on 19th. Four singing males were at Redesmouth on 28th and one to three birds were noted at a further 23 localities.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Peak counts included six at Harthope Valley on 10th (ADM), five at Bedlington on 22nd, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th, Dinnington on 8th, Druridge Pools on 21st and Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 21st, the latter a family group. Elsewhere, three to four were noted at Derwent Reservoir, Embleton Quarry, Eshott, Low Carrith and Wark (North Tyne) and one to two at a further 17 localities.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Single passage birds were at Boulmer (Seaton Point) and Howick Haven on 16th (BS/MJC), while in breeding territory a singing male was at Derwent Gorge on 19th (IFo).

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

An elusive singing male was at Druridge Pools on 5th and again on 8th (IDR/IF/MN/TRD/JD).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A pair with four fledged young and a further six singing males were noted at Cresswell Pond and foreshore on 30th (ASJ). The peak count from Druridge Pools was eight+ on 10th, while eight were also at Backworth Pond on 21st and East Chevington on 19th. There were at least six at Holy Island (including four at the Lough) on 13th, five singing males were noted at Holywell Pond on 10th and at St Mary's on 1st and two pairs at Stamfordham, included a bird carrying food to a nest. Three were reported from Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), East Cramlington LNR, Lambley Minewater Treatment Works, Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene Reservoirs and one to two from a further 12 localities, including higher ground at Great Wanney Crag and Greenlee Lough.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

A singing male was sound recorded near Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 6th (BS).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Ten singing birds were noted at East Chevington on 14th (IF) and the highest count from Druridge Pools was seven (caught and ringed) on 9th. Elsewhere, a pair was feeding young and at least five were singing at Holy Island Lough on 13th and six singing birds were at QEII CP on 7th. At St Mary's Wetland, two were singing on 8th and a single to at least 27th; two were in song at Big Waters on 7th and at Bates Minewater Treatment Works on 19th, while singles were reported from Branton GP on 15th, Cresswell Pond on 5th, Newbiggin on 13th and Newton Pool on 9th.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

One was reported from Holy Island Lough on 13th (RA).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Counts of at least three 'reeling' birds came from the Arcot Pond area and Prestwick Carr on 1st and 23rd respectively (GB), while three were in song at Druridge Pools on 14th. Up to two were noted at Backworth Pond, Beanley Moor and East Chevington, one two were at Holy Island from 14th-20th and singles at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bamburgh, Bellasis Bridge, Berwick, Brenkley, Branton, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Drift Inn Café (Cresswell), St Mary's Wetland, Stamfordham, Widdrington Moor Lake and Winnows Hill (Slaley).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

A family party of eight at Druridge Pools on 14th was the highest count this month (IDR), while seven were singing at Holywell Dene on 20th and six were reported from Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 8th. The peak count from Holy Island was five on 14th, with singles (or the same) here from 15th-17th. Four singing birds were noted at Allensford, Bedlington, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Colt Crag Reservoir and Howdon and two at Bellasis Bridge, Cambois, Dinnington, Redesmouth and St Mary's Wetland. Singles were reported from Barns Park (Cramlington), Carshope (Upper Coquetdale), Chollerford, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Humshaugh, Langley Castle, Merryshields, Plenmeller Common and Wark (North Tyne).

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Three birds were reported from Airy Holm Reservoir and Ford Moss (IFo/JAR) and two at Derwent Reservoir, Harthope Valley and Redesmouth. Singles were at Holy Island on 13th and 15th and further singles at Allensford, Breamish Valley, Cartington, Coldwell (Humshaugh), Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge, Crooked Oak, Cupola Bridge, Debdon, Eltringham, Fenham Flats, Gosforth Garden Village, Linden Hall, Longhoughton Quarry, Merryshields, Upper Coquetdale, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Wark (North Tyne).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Two were singing at Rising Sun CP throughout the month (GPK), while singles were also in song at Arcot Pond, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Cambois, East Chevington, Holystone, Howick, Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) and Stamfordham.

A pale bird, showing some characteristics of an **Eastern race** was photographed in the Gertrude Jekyll Garden (Holy Island) on 16th (ADM).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

A count of 29 from Backworth-Holywell on 10th comprised pairs and singing males (ASJ). The same observer reported six pairs and ten fledged young at St Mary's on the same day and 21 singing males in the Breamish Valley on 2nd. Ten adults and at least four fledged young were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 16th, two family parties, totalling 12 birds were at Druridge Pools on 14th and 11 were noted at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 8th. Elsewhere, up to eight were reported from Bedlington, Blyth Estuary and East Chevington, six at Howdon, five at Airy Holm Reservoir and four at Dilston, Church Wood (Longhorsley) and Seghill. One to three were noted at a further 22 widespread localities.

A Whitethroat in Holywell Dene. Alan Jack on 26th June



Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Four were at Derwent Reservoir and singles at Chollerford, Cramlington (Alexandra Park, Barns Park, Valley Park), Haughton Castle, Holy Island (14th), Grindon Lough, Seghill and Wark (North Tyne).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

13 singing males were noted at Throckley Dene at dawn on 22nd (MH), 12 singing birds were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 15th and 11 at Bedlington on 1st and at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 25th. At Druridge Pools, seven were caught and ringed on 9th and six recently fledged young were noted here on 8th. The only other reports were five at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 17th, a family party of four at Howick on 12th, an adult feeding two recently fledged juveniles at Newbiggin on 4th and one bird at the Coquet Estuary on 13th.



A Wren sings at Holywell by Alan Jack on 26th June

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Adults feeding young and/or carrying food were noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Fulbeck (Morpeth), High Hauxley (only the third sighting in 30 years), Humshaugh and Woodhorn Church (first confirmed breeding for this site), while in addition juveniles were seen in gardens at Corbridge and Linden Hall. Two birds were noted at Low Carritheth, Redesmouth and Wark (North Tyne) and singles at Haughton Castle and the Blyth Estuary, the latter an unusual record for the site.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Five were in a single pine tree at Ellington Dene on 10th (TB), while two to three were reported from Derwent Reservoir, Redesmouth and West Dipton Burn, the latter carrying food for young. In addition singles were noted at Airy Holm Reservoir, Beacon Lane (Cramlington), Castron, Derwent Gorge, Holywell Dene, Humshaugh and Wark (North Tyne).

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

A fine adult male was in private gardens at Shilbottle on 29th (TRD).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

At Holy Island numbers increased from 300 (East shore) on 3rd to ca. 1,000 (Excavations) by 20th (MJC/ADM). Over 400 were at St Mary's Island from mid-month, while flocks of 300 at Big Waters on 4th and Boulmer on 30th both contained many juveniles. A further 250 were attracted by an insect hatch at Colt Crag Reservoir on 11th and 110-130 were noted at Grindon Lough and Newbiggin. Other notable gatherings included 80 at Airy Holm Reservoir, 50 at Bamburgh, Bedlington and Druridge Pools and 30-33 at Chapel House and East Chevington. Breeding data included five juveniles from a nest under eaves at Longdyke (Shilbottle), a nest with young in last year's woodpecker hole at Colt Crag Reservoir and two pairs re-nesting at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Two were singing at Hawsen Burn on 1st (NFO), with one here on 8th.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

A BBS survey at Bedlington produced a count of 40 on 1st (JR). Eight were noted at Dinnington on 8th, six at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th and five singing males were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 17th. Four birds (including carrying food) were noted at Furnace Bridge on 7th, three at Embleton Quarry on 22nd, one to two at Druridge Pools throughout and one at Bamburgh on 22nd.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

A late bird was at Holy Island on 1st (ADM).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

It was described as an exceptionally good year for this species at Stamfordham with many seen and heard around the village (EC). Five possible migrants were at Cocklawburn on 1st and five singing males were at Howdon on the same date. Elsewhere, one to two were noted at Arcot Pond, Bedlington, Blyth Hospital, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Dinnington, Druridge Pools, Embleton, Holywell Dene, Seaton Delaval, Seghill, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Wark (North Tyne).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Eight were at Ford Moss on 1st (JAR), two at Arcot Hall GC, Low Carritheth, Redesmouth and Tweedmouth and singles at Colt Crag Reservoir, Whittingham and Whittle Farm.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

One to four were at Holy Island daily from 13th-17th with a peak on 14th (AH/ADM/SR). In breeding areas, counts of three came from Catcleugh Reservoir on 1st and Linden Hall on 19th, while two were noted at Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Dukeshouse (Hexham), Haughton Castle, Low Carritheth, Thrunton Woods and Upper Coquetdale. In addition a pair and five newly hatched chicks was found in the Harthope Valley on 20th and single birds were noted at Branton GP, Breamish Valley, Edlingham Woods, Holystone, Howick Hall, Humshaugh, Wark (North Tyne) and Whittingham. Potential migrant birds were noted on the coast at Druridge Pools on 14th and 28th, Longhoughton on 1st and Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 16th.



A Spotted Flycatcher in the Ingram Valley

10th June

Tim Dean

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Nine at Bedlington on 22nd included five juveniles (JR). Three at Holy Island on 20th also included a juvenile, while a pair were feeding young at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 7th and single juveniles were at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs. One to two were reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Druridge Pools.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Three (male and two females) were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo) and three singing males at Letah Wood (Hexham) on the same date (KG). A pair visited a nest site at Holystone on 4th, while at Derwent Gorge a male was singing in one area and a female carrying food in another on 5th, and a pair was carrying food on 11th; a nesting pair at Whinney Hill Farm (Longhorsley) was a first for the site. On the coast a passage female was at Druridge Pools on 28th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A male bird was at Blakemoor Farm Cottages (Cresswell) on 19th (AMcL/TB).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

At least five pairs were feeding young at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 2nd (ASJ), while five singing males were noted at Bolton on 16th and two pairs at Derwent Reservoir on 14th. A male was feeding three juveniles at Haughton Mains on 18th and breeding was also confirmed from a site near Big Waters and at Great Whittington, where adults were seen carrying food and feeding young; nesting was also confirmed at Whinney Hill Farm (Longhorsley) and adults were seen with juveniles at Derwent Reservoir and Wark (North Tyne). Elsewhere, three were at Debdon on 1st, two at Derwent Gorge, Humshaugh and Low Carritheth and singles at Carshope Bridge (Upper Coquetdale), Coldwell (Humshaugh), Dipton Wood, Ford Moss and Lambley Minewater Treatment Works. Passage birds were at Holy Island on 15th and Low Steads on 28th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Counts from the Breamish Valley included 29 (five pairs in 1km stretch, plus broods totalling a minimum 18 young) on 25th (MJC) and nine nesting pairs on 2nd (ASJ). Good numbers were also reported from Upper Coquetdale, where 21 were noted on 2nd (ASJ), while elsewhere, six were in the Harthope Valley on 16th, a pair at Cartington on 8th and single males at Debdon and Glanton Pike (Whittingham).



A Whinchat in the Breamish valley
Mike Carr on 20th June

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Breeding data for June were as follows:

Locality	No. of pairs	Broods (young)	Notes	Observer
Breamish Valley	2	Two (3 and 3)	On 25th	MJC
Druridge Pools	1		Family group of three birds on 27th	IDR
East Chevington North Pool			One juvenile on 19th	IF
East Chevington South Pool			One juvenile on 25th	IF
Ford Moss	2		On territory, giving alarm calls on 2nd	DF
Gibbs Hill	1	One (4)	Male with begging juveniles on 17th	MH
Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley)			Two males and four juveniles on 1st	NFO
Hazelrigg Moss	2-3		Bred here successfully	DF
Holy Island			One juvenile on 14th; first record of the spring here for this observer. Must have bred locally.	ADM
Hope (Rothbury)	1	One (1)		TRD/JD
Longframlington Common	1		Agitated behaviour on 30th	JDO

Long Nanny			Adult male with at least one juvenile on 23rd. Six birds here on 22nd.	MKi/IDR
Newbiggin	1		Carrying food and alarm calling 23rd-30th	BS
Plashetts	3		Plus two juveniles on 9th	ASJ
Plenmeller Common	1	One (4)	Plus an additional male on 15th	MH
Simonside	2	Two (3 and 3)	Fledged young on 2nd	ASJ
Stag Rocks (Bamburgh)			Seven birds including three juveniles on 20th/22nd	SW/IDR
Warkworth Gut			One juvenile on 22nd	NFO
Widehope	2	Two	Six birds (two family groups) on 20th	JD
Winnowshill			Agitated behaviour on 15th.	RHM

In addition to the above, six pairs were noted at Great Wanney Crag on 14th (PRM); two pairs were in the Harthope Valley on 17th and pairs at Catcleugh Reservoir on 25th, Cheswick dunes on 18th, Debdon (Rothbury) on 1st and Northfield Farm (Warkworth) on 28th, and two singing males at Whittingham on 16th. Singles were also reported from Boulmer, Buckham's Bridge (Upper Coquetdale), Cartington, Greenlee Lough, Linbriggs Farm, North Yardhope, Ridlees Cairn, Shillmoor Farm and Slaley Forest.



A Stonechat at Alnwick Moor by Alan Jack on 20th June

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus*

A male was at Holy Island Lough on 15th (MJC) while, much more unusual, was a breeding pair with a brood of four young in the Upper Breamish Valley on 25th (MJC).

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

In the Upper Breamish Valley, 41 on 25th comprised five pairs in 1km stretch, plus broods totalling a minimum 31 young (MJC). Five (two adults and three young) were at Ridlees Cairn (MoD) on 7th and in Upper Coquetdale on 14th, while three were noted in the Harthope Valley on 8th, two juveniles were at Gibbs Hill on 17th, and an adult and juvenile at Hepple Whitefield on 11th. On the coast two were at Beal saltmarsh on 27th and singles at Boulmer and Hauxley on 7th and 10th respectively.



Two Wheatears

Above: a juvenile in the Breamish valley
by Mike Carr on 25th June

Right : A Greenland Wheatear at Hauxley
Neil Osborne on 10th June



Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

An adult with a juvenile were at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo). Two juveniles were seen from a nest near Berwick Hill on the Pont on 9th (AHB). A further five sites held single birds this month and included one at a nest at Common Burn and a juvenile at Ellington Dene.

A Dipper in the Harthope Valley
John Littleton
10th June



House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

40 roosted in an ivy tree at Marden Estate during the month, with young being fed in a nest nearby (ASJ). 36 were counted in a survey made at Bedlington on 1st (JR). 14 spent the month at Yearle (DGB). One to ten were at three other sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

20 were seen at Tynemouth on 28th, with lower numbers present earlier in the month, including 15 on feeders on 21st (CB). One to six were observed at a further 17 sites.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

13 were counted at Bedlington on 1st with five there on 22nd (JR). Five were also at Bank's Pond on 8th (PCF). A pair fed two fledged young at Marden Estate on several dates (ASJ). One to two were reported from three other sites.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Four were seen at Fourstones on 14th (PRM). Birds were noted throughout the month at Druridge Pools, with a maximum of three seen on 9th (ADMc). A pair were at Stocksfield on 1st and singles were seen at 12 other sites.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

A family group of a pair with six young were at Carshope on 11th and five, a pair with three juveniles, was at Shillmoor on 14th (JR). Two pairs were noted in Breamish Valley on 10th and four birds at Upper Coquetdale on 14th (TRD/JD). Three juveniles were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo). Two plus a juvenile were seen in College Valley on 29th, and a male with two juveniles was in Ellington Dene on 19th with a female seen there on 10th (RPo/TB). One to two were at an impressive 28 further locations this month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Fifteen nesting pairs were noted throughout Upper Coquetdale on 2nd (ASJ). From Plashetts to Thockrington 18, (nine pairs) were counted on 9th and 12 birds were at Bellingham on 24th. At St. Mary's Island, eight, seven juveniles, were feeding on 26th (ASJ). Seven juveniles were seen at Druridge Pools on 27th and six at Backworth on 29th (IDR/ASJ). A pair feeding four fledged young were at Arcot Hall G.C. on 18th (DM). One to two were at seven other sites during the month.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A minimum of 70 were counted in Upper Coquetdale on 2nd, with many displaying and collecting food for young (ASJ). In the Plashetts - Thockrington area, 50+ were noted on 9th, including 30 song – fighting males. Around 20 pairs were noted in the Wingates area on 2nd (ASJ). 30+ were at Ford Moss on 1st (JAR). Few reports came from elsewhere, with one to seven at six sites.

A Meadow Pipit poses at Sweethope

Alan Jack

26th June

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

A pair was feeding young at Wingates on 2nd (ASJ). Two sang at Dilston on 15th and at Catcleugh on 25th (ASJ/CW). Singles were also seen at a further six sites.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Counts of seven were made at Holy Island on 3rd and 17th (ADM). An adult and juvenile were seen at Brown's Bay (Cullercoats) on 30th and one was at Rocky Island (Seaton Sluice) on 20th.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

18 were found singing in Colt Crag area on 1st (MR). One to five were seen at only five further sites.



A Chaffinch in the Ingram valley on 10th June by Tim Dean

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A pair were feeding six young at Bedlington on 22nd (JR). A fledged brood of five was seen at Marden Quarry on 14th (KWY). A pair with two juveniles were watched at Longhoughton on 13th (BS). Four birds were seen at Howdon on 18th (CB). Three were in a Corbridge garden on 11th, with the pair nesting for the first time here (RB/MB). One to two were noted at a further 15 locations during the month.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Twelve, including juveniles, were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 29th (RS). Seven were counted in a survey at Bedlington on 1st (JR). Pairs with four juveniles were seen this month, at Dinnington and St Mary's Wetland (PCF/ASJ) and four were noted at Prior's Park on 25th (CB). A pair with two juveniles fed at garden feeders all month at Marden Estate (ASJ). One to three were seen at five other sites.

A Greenfinch in a Tynemouth garden

Colin Bradshaw on 10th June

**Linnet** *Linaria cannabina*

30+ were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 26th and 30, including juveniles, were at Boulmer on 30th (PRM/BS). 16 were seen at West Ord on 14th and 12 at Cocklawburn on 18th (MHu). 12 were also at Druridge Pools on 25th (IDR). One to eight were seen at 13 further sites.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

64 plus were seen at Great Wanney Crag on 14th (PRM). Elsewhere, very few were reported with one to three at seven sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Large numbers were noted passing through the area in the final week. A dawn moth trapping session at Tynemouth on 24th revealed 141 flying S, with 53 noted at another Tynemouth site which could have involved some of the same birds (TT/DRW). 96 were counted flying SW on 26th at Gosforth, with 26 likewise on 24th. 44 flew S at Alnmouth on 21st (MJC). 29 were noted heading S at Hazelrigg on 22nd (GB) and one to nine were also seen flying S during this period at nine other largely coastal sites. In breeding areas, 50 were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 1st, 20+ at Thrunton Woods on 3rd and at Branton on 24th (NFO/JD). 15+ were at Redesmouth on 28th (PRM). One to 12 were noted at 11 further localities.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

A flock of around 30, including juveniles, was seen at St. Mary's Wetland on several dates (ASJ). 15 were seen at Colt Crag on 22nd and ten were at Bedlington on 1st (MR/JR). One to eight were also noted at ten other sites.



A handsome Goldfinch in the Ingram Valley by Jack Bucknall on 9th June

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

An unprecedented passage of birds occurred in the final week as part of a national movement, with 6,500 counted flying S over Tynemouth early morning of 24th (TT). 500+ also flew S at Gosforth Garden Village that day and as the movement continued 300+ did so on 26th (MJC). On the morning of 25th, 180 -225 also headed S at Tynemouth (DRW/CB). 168 had flown S at Alnmouth and 20 at Brunswick on 21st, with 71 noted at Druridge Pools on 24th and 24S on 20th at Tynemouth. One to 11 were also observed at a further 30 sites during the month.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Singing males were noted at Breamish Valley, with 14 on 2nd, 12 from South Charlton - Bolton on 16th and six at Holywell on 10th (ASJ). Elsewhere, four were singing at Beaconhill (Cramlington), near Big Waters, Seghill and Bedlington during the month (DM/JR). One to three were noted singing at six other locations.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

14 males were in song at St. Mary's from 1st, with ten there on 22nd (ASJ/KWY). 13 were also singing at Boulmer on 16th (BS). Seven were at East Cramlington on 5th (one female) (LJM). Six+ were noted at Druridge Pools on 10th, with lower numbers recorded there on several dates. One to four were singing at a further 22 sites this month from Howdon to Upper Coquet Valley to Holy Island.

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

Seven adults were at Derwent Reservoir from 26th to 30th with three juveniles also seen there on 30th. Known to breed ferally in Scotland.

Hybrids

No sightings

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

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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).

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Clive Hampton is Information Manager

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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



A Swallow poses for Jack Bucknall on Holy Island

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 7

MONTHLY SUMMARY JULY 2020

6th September 2020



CONTENTS

BIN author request

AGM notice

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	A female was still being seen at Derwent Reservoir.
Garganey	Two were noted at Monks' House Pool late in month.
Pintail	An unseasonal female was at Grindon Lough on 11th.
Scaup	Single record of one at Haughton Strother on 21st.
Long-tailed Duck	One at Druridge on 14th with Scoter flock. Unusual in summer.
Quail	Singing males at several sites. A good year for species.
Sooty Shearwater	One at Seaton Sluice on 30th was the only sighting.
Spoonbill	Three at Cresswell Pond on 18th.
Bittern	One at East Chevington during month. Only second instance of booming on 31st.
Cattle Egret	A popular bird at Cresswell Pond from 25th to 29th.
Great White Egret	Single adult at Gosforth and Holywell early in month.
Osprey	Increasing number of sightings away from the Kielder stronghold.
Little Egret	Influx at Cresswell Pond late in month with maximum of 25.
Corncrake	Belated news of one singing early July in North Northumberland for two weeks!
Temminck's Stint	Adult at Warden on 11th.
Pectoral Sandpiper	One at Druridge Pools on 27th and 28th.
Red-necked Phalarope	Female still at Grindon Lough on 1st but not thereafter.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Holywell.
Spotted Redshank	Single adult in breeding plumage at East Chevington on 24th.
Caspian Gull	Returning Polish-ringed adult to Amble harbour from 23rd.
Sooty Tern	Stunning adult on Howick cliffs with Kittiwakes on 29th.
Black Tern	Single record of an adult N at Seaton Sluice on 24th.
Hobby	Several records during month.
Bearded Tit	Up to three individuals at East Chevington during month.
Cetti's Warbler	One at East Chevington on 9th.
Yellow Wagtail	Unusual roost at St Mary's Island late in month with maximum of 24 on 22nd.

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting will be on Zoom at 1915h on September 10th

Katie August - Studying population dynamics in the elusive Northern Goshawk.

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson

seaswan@btinternet.com

Howick

The Sooty Tern

Alan Jack

29th July



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

An unseasonable dark-bellied *bernicla* race bird flew N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (the first July record for the site: SSWT).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Peak concentrations were 244 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), 224 at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary on 20th (MHu), 202 (including 14 young) at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR), 105 at Grindon Lough (SW), 67-99 at Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve, Killingworth Lake, New Water Haugh (River Tweed) and QEII CP Lake, and 28-43 at the Aln Estuary, Big Waters, Hedgeley GP and Marden Quarry. Counts of 11-17 came from Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Branton GP and Greenlee Lough, whilst one to five were at Kimmer Lough and Linton Ponds. A pair with six well grown young were at Scaup Burn, Kielder on 10th (MH) and a pair with three young remained at Bank's Pond, Dinnington.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at Cresswell Pond (TB) and Killingworth Lake (LJM) on 6th. The former remained there until 31st. One was also at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (GB/DM/LAR).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

A minimum of 2,000 was at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo). Peak concentrations elsewhere involved 430 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 24th (IFo), 262 at Hedgeley GP on 24th (TD), 200 at Low Newton on 25th (JPL), and 140-196 at Budle Bay and New Water Haugh (River Tweed). Counts of 52-82 came from Big Waters, Grindon Lough and Marden Quarry, and 15-45 were at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve and Kimmer Lough. Four to eight were also at Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Two flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT). A count of 160 at Tweedmouth Dock on 3rd increased to 458 on 20th, and 206 at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 3rd rose to 320 by 27th (MHu). Other peak concentrations were 102 at QEII CP Lake on 19th (LJM), 72 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), 46 at Howdon (CB), and ten to 25 at Castle Island, East Chevington north pool, Hauxley Reserve, Hedgeley GP and Widdrington Moor Lake. Six to nine were also at Arcot Pond, Greenlee Lough and Longhoughton Quarry Pond, and two to four at Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Howick burn lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Blyth Estuary	1	4	PRM on 7th
Killingworth Lake	1	4	LJM on 6th
QEII CP Lake	1	2	LJM on 19th

A brood of six at Big Waters dropped to five young (PCF).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

One was at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 2nd (BWG).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

At Budle Bay 300 were present on 4th (DF), 242 on 10th (CGK/GPK), 70 on 24th (SW) and 20 on 13th (CGK/GPK). Elsewhere, 19 (including 14 juveniles) were at the Blyth Estuary on 7th (PRM), five (juveniles) at Cresswell Pond on 29th (TB), five (four juveniles) at Hedgeley GP on 24th (TD), three to four at Castle Island, Grindon Lough and Warkworth Gut, and one to two at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Druridge Pools and Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Scotswood	2	9	MH on 14th. Pair with 4 small young and pair with five larger young. As June?
Amble Braid	1	2	DM <i>et al.</i> Large young on 25th.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

A female was at Derwent Reservoir between 4th-6th (IFo).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Three (juveniles) were at Haughton Strother GP on 13th (PRC), and two were at Birks (near Todburn on R. North Tyne) on 18th (AJH). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Chollerford	1	6	TWi. Female plus small young on 30th.
Redesmouth	1	6	MH on 10th. Female with six large young.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Two females/juveniles were at Monks' House Pool on 25th (BS/CGK/GPK/KWY).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice between 13th-16th (SSWT). Nine (including juveniles) were at Druridge Pools on 10th (IDR/JF), two were at Arcot Pond on 29th (LJM), and singles at Budle Bay, Castle Island, East Chevington and Grindon Lough. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	2	9 (6,3)	TD/TF/JFa. Brood of 6 young all month (as June) and new brood of 3 small young on 15th.
Swallow Pond	1	6	GPK on 15th.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

32 were at Castle Island on 5th (DM/PJA), 12 at Marden Quarry on 19th (KWY), ten at Arcot Pond on 9th-10th (DM/KWY), three to five (excluding young) at Big Waters, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve and Hedgeley GP, and one to two at Cocklawburn Pond and Druridge Pools. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Gosforth subsidence pond	1	6	MJC on 7th. Still all present on 18th.
Hauxley Reserve	1	6	IF on 2nd.
Bothal Pond	1	5	TD. Present to 31st (as June?)
Hedgeley GP	1	4	TD on 24th.
Linton Ponds	1	4	STH/IFo. Smallish young on 28th.
Branton GP	1	3	TD on 24th.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Six to 16 were regularly at Grindon Lough and a peak of 18 on 23rd (SW). Three were at Hauxley Reserve on 21st (HRS), two at Monks' House Pool on 9th and 25th (KWY), and singles at Big Waters, Druridge Pools and East Chevington. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	1	5	IFo. Female plus new brood on 2nd.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Five flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT), 119 were at Arcot Pond on 29th (LJM), 77 at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo), 71 at Big Waters on 15th (GB/DM), 60 at Hedgeley GP on 31st (IDR/JF), 23-42 at Bothal and West Allotment Ponds, Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Marden Quarry and QEII CP Lake, and 11-17 at Hauxley Reserve, Middle Ord Pond, Warden and Warkworth. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	2	10 (7,3)	DM/PJA. Brood of 7 on 5th and brood of 3 small young on 25th.
Jesmond Dene	2	10 (5,5)	MJCo on 5th. Broods at Fisherman's Lodge and Paddy Freeman's Lake.
Killingworth Lake	2	8 (4,4)	LJM. Well-grown young on 6th.
Longhoughton Quarry Pond	2	8	BS on 7th.
'Northumberlandia', Cramlington	2	6 (5,1)	LJM on 24th.
Derwent Reservoir	1	10	IFo. New brood on 21st.
Tweed Estuary	1	8	MHu. Fresh brood on 16th.
Boulmer	1	5	BS. Large young on 10th.
Chollerford	1	5	SW on 11th.
Druridge Pools	1	4	DM/PJA on 5th.
Gosforth subsidence pond	1	4	MJC on 10th. Down to 3 young by 16th. As June?
QEII CP Lake	1	3	LJM. Small young on 19th.
Branton GP	1	3	MJC on 8th.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

One was at Grindon Lough on 11th (CB).

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 42 flew N and five S at Seaton Sluice from 8th onwards (SSWT), 22 moved N at Newbiggin on 10th (STH), and one N at Snab Point on 7th (PRM). Peak site counts were 36 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), 30 at Grindon Lough on 28th (SW), 25 at East Chevington on 25th (GB/DM/LAR), 20 at Budle Bay on 17th (GPK), 15 at Druridge Pools on 15th (TD), and. Three to six were also at Bothal Pond, Branton GP and Monks' House Pool. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	1	7	IFo on 2nd. Presumed same as June.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

20 were at Holywell Pond on 10th and 13th (MN), five at Bothal Pond on 4th (TD), three at East Chevington north pool on 6th (TB), and singles at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington NR, Hauxley Reserve and Widdrington Moor Lake. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Woodhorn Flashes	1	1	AP. Female plus one young on 'road pool' on 14th and still present on 19th.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts (excluding young) involved 51 at Bothal Pond on 30th (TF/JFa), 31 at Castle Island on 3rd (TF/JFa), 27 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), 21-24 at Branton GP (TD) and Druridge Pools (DM), and 11-14 at Hauxley Reserve and Marden Quarry. One to six were also at Arcot and Cocklawburn Ponds, Big Waters, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir and Hedgeley GP. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Killingworth Lake	3	13 (9,3,1)	LJM on 6th. Brood of 9 presumed same as June.
Linton Ponds	2	12 (8,4)	STH/IFo. Fairly new broods on 28th.
Longhoughton Quarry Pond	2	5 (4,1)	BS on 13th.
Bothal Pond	1	5	TF/JFa on 15th.
Cocklawburn Pond	1	4	MHu on 21st.
Druridge Pools	1	1	IDR on 24th.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A female/immature bird was at Haughton Strother GP on 21st (PRC).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

74 were off Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT), 60 were at the Blyth Estuary on 7th (PRM), 45 at Annstead on 18th (DF), and ten at Snab Point (PRM). One to four were also at Amble Harbour, Druridge Links and Warkworth weir. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Seahouses Harbour	1	9	TD. Female with small young (less than a week old) on 20th.
Aln Estuary	1	6	MKi. Two adult females with 6 almost full grown young on 10th.
Boulmer	1	3	BS. Large young on 9th.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT) and two N at Newbiggin on 10th (AP), and three S at Tynemouth on 25th (MK). Six (three drakes) were at Alnmouth Bay on 18th (RPo), a drake was with Common Scoters off Druridge Links on 14th (IDR) and one was at Holy Island on 16th (BCh).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 1,698 N and 465 S, including 471 N and 187 S on 25th (SSWT). 600, including a flock of 250, flew N at St Mary's on 15th (JBU), 237 moved N and 71 S at Tynemouth on 25th (DRW), a total of 133 N and 70 S at Newbiggin between 2nd-17th (STH), 110 N at Cocklawburn on 10th (SW), 60 N at Beadnell on 2nd (DF), and 50 N at Stag Rocks on 10th (DF). A flock of Druridge Links-East Chevington peaked at about 750 on 9th (IDR), 100 were off Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT), and 60-70 off Alnmouth-Warkworth (RPo/CSa). One to six were also off Boulmer, Cocklawburn and Snab Point. Inland, four drakes were at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo) and a single drake was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 27th (MR).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

An unseasonable individual was amongst Common Scoters off Druridge Links on 14th (IDR).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Eight at the regular breeding site on 24th contained at least three immature birds (TD) and three females were present on 5th (TRD). Two were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th and one on 21st (GB/TB/DM/LAR), a female was at Bothal Pond on 15th and 18th (TD/TF/JFa), and an immature drake was at Cocklawburn Pond on 2nd (MHu).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of 22 flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), seven flew N then S at Newbiggin on 28th and two S there on 2nd (STH/IFo), and two S at Annstead on 30th (DF). At Holy Island, 200+ were in the harbour area on 24th (IK) and 163 were counted between Nessend-Castle Point on 16th (BCh). A flock of 150 off nearby Ross Back Sands on 19th (TD) may have involved the same birds, as may have 120+ at Budle Point on 18th (CGK/GPK). Also in the north of the county, 124 were at Spittal Bay on 19th (MHu), 75 off Cheswick on 18th (NFO), 52 at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 17th (MHu), 42 at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 10th (MHu), and 41 at Boulmer on 27th (BS). Further south, 43 were at the Blyth Estuary on 8th (LJM), 16 at Amble Harbour on 29th and 31st (TB/STH), and ten to 11 on the River Aln at Alnwick (nine juveniles) and at North Blyth staithes. Five to eight were also at Holystone, the Tyne Estuary and Warkworth, three to four at Derwent Reservoir, the Wansbeck Estuary and Wark, and one to two at Newbiggin and St Mary's Island.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Two flew S at Ross Back Sands on 16th (PCI). Seven were at Boulmer on 24th (DBo/RMH/DWN). A family party of six (male and female/juveniles) was off Druridge Links on 6th and four to five were noted there on 4th and 9th (IDR), five were at the Tyne Estuary on 25th (IRD) and a drake was at Castle Island on 3rd and 5th (TF/JFa/DM/PJA). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Budle Bay	1	6	CGK/GPK. Young noted between 17th-31st.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Two males were at Rowley Burn on 29th (TW).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

30 were at Hedgehope on 16th (IRD).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Five were at Holburn on 25th (KWY).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

A family party of two adults and six chicks was at Howick on 22nd (JAR), a pair with three large juveniles on 25th was the only evidence of breeding at Boulmer this year (BS). One to two were regularly seen in the at Druridge Bay area and a single bird was at Chollerton.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Two were singing in fields beside the Red House Farm estate at Whitley Bay on 6th (JBU), another two were heard every day until the end of the month at Newton Red House (Mitford) (PG), and two were at nearby Mitford Steads on 6th (ADM). Singles were heard at Flodden Field, Harelaw (Mindrum), Low Steads (Longhoughton) and Ross Farm (Belford). One observer was fortunate enough to see one well in flight at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 6th (MN).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Four was the peak in the Druridge Pools area on 24th (IDR),. Four were also at Arcot Lane, two at Big Waters and a single was in Upper Coquetdale.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

A monthly total of 13 (six N, seven S) past Seaton Sluice was about average for this time of year (SSWT). One to three were seen heading past several other viewpoints throughout the county during the month. Four were in Warkworth Bay on 17th (CSa) and one to three were seen elsewhere.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Little passage was noted this month with four heading N at Annstead on 6th being the only record (DF). Numbers at Cullernose Point peaked at 25 on 29th (IDR), 15 were at Dunstanburgh Castle on the same date, including three young (IDR/DF) and two large juveniles were on a breeding cliff at Longhoughton Quarry on 26th (BS). One to two were at Boulmer, Hauxley and Howick.

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*

Only one record – a single N past Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 407 (370N, 37S) which is well below the average for July (SSWT). Other passage reports included 108N past Snab Point (Cresswell) in just over four hours during the evening of 7th (PRM), 86N at Annstead on 30th (DF), 48N and 12S at North Blyth in two hours on 9th (IF), 30N at Druridge also on 9th (IDR), 22N in one group at Snab point on 8th (TB) and 18 or fewer at several other coastal points on various dates.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The highest count by far came from Hedgeley Pools (Powburn) with a peak of 20, including immature birds, present on 24th (TB). Up to nine were at Druridge Pools on 20th (TD) and the total of eight at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 15th included two juveniles (IRD). Eight was the peak count at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 30th and a pair at Bank's Pond (Dinnington) were feeding five juveniles on 7th, reducing to four by 9th (MH). Breeding, with only one pair involved, was also reported from Branton GP and Longhoughton Quarry whilst one to four birds with no breeding noted were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Castron, Cocklawburn Pond, Hauxley NWT and Howick Burn Lake (on nest).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

At Bothal Pond, the young reported last month – three pairs and two broods of juveniles – remained all month (TF/JFa/TD). Three pairs were at Big Waters on 15th (DM), with two juveniles present there on 9th, four adults and two well grown young were at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), a pair and two young were at Holywell Pond whilst four adults at Branton GP failed to produce any young. Four were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (DM) and one to three birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Boulmer, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay, East Chevington (on nest), Fourstones and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

After last month's influx, the only report was of three at Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

At East Chevington one was seen on 7th (TF/JFa) and then heard booming at 0500 on 31st (IF).

Cattle Egret *Bulbucus ibis*

One was first seen at Cresswell Pond on 25th (MN/TW/AH) and remained, well-watched, in that general area until at least 29th (TB/TRD/JD/NFO/KWY *et al.*), often living up to its name by foraging amongst the local oxen.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

There was evidence of local passage at Seaton Sluice with one N and five S during the month (SSWT). Howdon peaked at 16 on 12th including at least five juvenile birds (CB), 12 were at Hedgeley Lakes on 4th (IBDa/KDa) and nine were at both Warkworth Weir on 10th (RPo) and 25th (DM) and Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo). Seven were at Boulmer on 13th (AMG/MG), six at Hauxley on 21st and peaks of five at Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir and East Chevington on separate dates. One to four were at 11 other sites.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

One flying S over Gosforth on 9th (MJC) may well have been seen in the Holywell Pond area the next day (ASJ/MN).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

The now regular mid-summer influx produced some unexpectedly high counts from favoured sites in the latter part of the month. Cresswell Pond peaked at 25 birds, including many juveniles, on 25th (MN/TB/ADM) with numbers remaining high in the Druridge Bay area until the month end. Ten, including three juveniles, were present all month at Budle Bay but local breeding could not be confirmed (CGK/GPK), nine were at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 26th (MJC), seven flew into a copse near Ross Farm (Ross Back Sands) on 16th (PCI). Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) held seven on 16th (LJM) and 30th, including a red colour-ringed bird (TF/JFa), and seven were also at Foxton Bends (R. Aln) on 14th (RPo). One to six were at the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Dunstanburgh Castle (overhead), Earsdon, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, East Chevington North Pool, Holywell Dene, Holywell Pond, Holywell Waggonway, Low Newton, New Water Haugh (R. Tweed), Sandham Bay (Holy Island), Wansbeck Estuary, Warkworth Gut, Warkworth Weir and Yarrow Slake (R. Tweed).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded no really high counts during the month with a maximum of 680N in three hours on 8th (SSWT). Elsewhere, passage counts included 47 (18N, 29S) past Annstead (Seahouses) on 24th (DF), 40N at both Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd (STH) and Cullernose Point on 9th (TRD/JD), 39N at Annstead on 30th and 32N at Newton Point on 16th (DF). Lower numbers were also reported from several other coastal viewpoints. Feeding groups included a "frenzy" of an estimated 112 birds feeding close to shore in Spittal Bay (Berwick) on 19th, after a smaller group of 34 were there on 3rd (MHu), 50 at Stag Rocks on 9th (KWY) and eight diving at the mouth of the R. Coquet in Amble Harbour on 31st (TB).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

One heading N and a single S past Seaton Sluice on 1st were the only passage sightings of the month (SSWT). At least 50 were offshore in Budle Bay on 24th (CGK/GPK), a group of 20 were feeding offshore at nearby Stag Rocks on 9th (KWY) and 15 were on the sea at Boulmer on 30th (BS). 14 were at a low-tide roost at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 21st and 12 at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 5th (MHu). Two were at Dunstanburgh Castle on 29th (IDR).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

At East Chevington observers remarked upon the large numbers present across the islands throughout the month with a peak of 84 present on 27th (TF/JFa/ TRD/JD/STH *et al.*). 26 were at the Saltpan Rocks low-tide roost (Cocklawburn) on 26th (MHu) with the same number at Hauxley NWT on that day (HRS). 23 were at Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) on 5th (DM), 20 roosted at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 5th (MHu) and 18 was the monthly peak at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFO). 16 were at Annstead on 18th (DF), 12 was the peak at Amble Harbour and Derwent Reservoir, Warkworth Gut held 11, with nearby Warkworth Weir having 12 on 25th (DM). One to six were at several other locations including an adult *sinensis* bird in Amble Harbour on 23rd (STH).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Five birds were seen from Elf Kirk watch point (Kielder) including one with a satellite tag circling low and two birds flew off to Falstone on 10th (MH). Single birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st, 13th, 20th and 30th (IFo), Whittle Dene Reservoir on 2nd (TRD/JD), one flew S over the observer's garden at Tynemouth on 5th (DRW). A bird was mobbed by Corvids and a Buzzard at Grindon Lough on 6th before flying off S (PRC). Other birds were noted at Little Mill (Rennington) on 11th (BS), Colt Crag Reservoir on 15th, 17th, 20th and 27th (MR). One was seen at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) and headed inland towards Snab Point (Cresswell) (AP) and one flew NW at Slaley on 26th (PCI).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Nine birds involving two broods of three plus fledged young, two adult females and an adult male were at East Cramlington LNR on 30th (MJC). Two young were fledged from a nest at Prior's Haven (Tynemouth) on 25th (DRW) and a pair were noted at Dipton Wood on 26th (PCI). Begging juveniles were observed being fed by parents at Longhoughton Quarry on 26th (BS). Single birds were noted at 19 locations throughout the month.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

There was only one record of two birds calling in a wood at Old Bewick (Chillingham) on 8th (JAR).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A pair with four fledged young were at East Chevington on 2nd (IF) and five birds involving an adult female and four young were at East Chevington on several dates (IF/IRD/ADMc). Away from East Chevington single birds were seen at Longhoughton on 1st (ALT), Spartylea on 6th (CB) Boulmer on 14th (BS), one flew in off the sea at Seaton Sluice then flew N up the coast (SSWT) and on 17th a "Cream Crown" flew N low over the sea about a mile offshore north of the Farne Islands (PCI). A female flew S very high at Cresswell Pond on 21st (ADMc), a male drifted S at Foxton Bends (River Aln) on 24th (AJ) and an immature bird was noted at Cresswell Pond on 28th (KWY).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds flew W at Causey Hill (Hexham) on 4th (PRC) and single birds were at Carterway Heads on 1st and 8th (IFo), Clennel St (Alninton) on 4th (TW), West Minsteracres on 18th (IFo), Cresswell Pond and Slaley on 26th (ADMc/PCI), Plessey Woods on 28th (MJC) and at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo). A bird in heavy moult was noted at a sensitive site hunting over a freshly cut field on 9th (PCI).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Nine birds from two family parties of four and five birds were at Dipton Wood on 31st (PCI). Single birds were reported from 14 sites during the month. Six birds were at Whitfield on 14th (MJC) and pair with four fledged young was at East Cramlington LNR on 30th (MJC). Five birds were at The Henhole (The Cheviots) on 20th (RPo) and five were at Corby's Crag (Edlingham) on 28th (JR), while four birds were seen at Carrshield on 14th (MJC) and at Holystone on 29th (DRo). One to three birds were noted at 22 sites.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

At Gosforth Park NR one bird was heard calling and two were seen on 6th (TW) and an adult and two large young were at Ellington Pond on 11th (TB). Single birds were also seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Hedgeley Lakes.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

In North Northumberland a singing male was in suitable breeding habitat, present and calling for the previous "two weeks" according to a local who did not know what was making the noise, on 8th (MJC) but no further calling was noted when the site was revisited on 13th.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The maximum counts this month were nine adults and three young noted at Arcot Pond on 6th (LJM), nine were at Druridge Pools on 15th (IDR), seven were at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 24th (LJM), six were at Big Waters NWT on 15th (DM) and at Hauxley NWT on 21st (HRS). Five were at Cocklawburn Pond on 21st (MHu) and at Druridge Pools and three were at Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJC). One to two birds were noted at Castle Island, East Chevington and Hedgeley GP.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Maximum counts were 57 adults and five large young at Linton Ponds on 28th (STH/IFo), 48 including broods of two, four, five and six at Killingworth Lake on 6th (LJM), 40 at Holywell Pond on 10th (MN), 38 at Bothal Pond on 18th (TD), 27 including three young at QEII CP Lake on 19th (LJM), 22 at Big Waters NWT on 15th (DM), 20 at Woodhorn Road Flash on 5th (DM) and 16 at Branton GP on 24th (TD). One to nine were at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Hedgeley GP, Howick, Kimmer Lough and Middle Ord Pond (Berwick).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The highest counts came from Cresswell Pond, with 70 on 25th (MN), the Coquet Estuary, with 66 on 24th (CSa), Annstead, (Seahouses) with 61 on 18th (DF) and Berwick Coastguard Station, with 58 at the high-tide roost on 17th (MHu). There were 49 at Budle Bay on 26th (MJC) and 41 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 17th (STH). Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) had 38 on 28th (MHu), Derwent Reservoir had 36 on 8th (IFo), Tynemouth had 32 on 26th (CB), and there were 26 at Hauxley NWT on 21st (HRS). Smaller flocks were reported at Allenheads, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh, the Blyth Estuary, Amble Harbour and Druridge Pools.



An Oystercatcher
Colin Bradshaw.
Allenheads
6th July

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Numbers peaked early in the month with 19 at Cresswell Pond on 4th (MN) and eight at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR/JF). Juveniles were reported at both sites. There were five at Castle Island on the Wansbeck on 5th (DM/PJA for WeBS) and at East Chevington, North Pool, on 8th (TB). Five flew N from the Football Hole (Newton) on 16th (TD).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest flocks were at East Chevington with 470 on 29th (STH), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) with 349 on 28th (TF/JFa), Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary with 210 on 9th (MHu) and Derwent Reservoir with 209 on 30th (IFo). There were 140 at Beggar Bog on 27th (SW), 110 at Monks' House Pool on 9th (KWY), 84 at the Coquet Estuary on 24th (MKi), 83 at Holywell Pond on 6th (MN) and 80 at Druridge Pools on 24th (IDR). Cresswell Pond and Grindon Lough had 60 on 4th (MN) and 10th (PRM) respectively and there were 50 at Greenhaugh, Waterhead on 27th (SW). Smaller flocks were at Castle Island, Branton GP, Widdrington Moor Lake, Arcot Pond, Holystone and Stewart Shiel/MOD range. Gosforth Subsidence Pond had two pairs with three young each on 16th (MJC).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The highest counts came from the coast, with 650 on St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ), 250 at Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) on 21st (MKi), and 180 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 17th (STH). There were 49 at Newton Links on 16th (CB), 40 being harried by a Peregrine at Allenheads on 10th (CB), and 40 at Castle Island on the Wansbeck on 25th (DM/GB/LAR). Smaller flocks were at Backworth and Cullercoats. There were groups below 20 at Gosforth, Saltpan Rocks, Cocklawburn and Annstead and a single bird at Sweethope Lough on 11th (PRM).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The roost at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) increased from 33 on 3rd to 160 on 21st (AP). 40 flew in to Ross Back Sands from Holy Island on 19th (TD) and there were 17 on Beal saltmarsh on 26th (MJC). Single birds were at Boulmer on 9th (BS), Cullernose point on 9th (TRD/JD), and Druridge Pools on 27th (IF).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

There were 20 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 29th (RPo) and ten at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 30th (DF). There were five at Boulmer on 28th (TRD/JD), four at Earsdon on 14th (ASJ) and at Druridge Pools on 27th (IDR). Pairs with young were reported at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), Haughton Strother (PRC) and Holy Island (IK).



A Ringed Plover
Long Nanny
11th July by Alan Jack

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Up to eight adult birds were reported from Colt Crag Reservoir, Castle Island on the Wansbeck and Grindon Lough. One to two birds were at Holywell Pond, Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

The monthly total from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was 65 (5N, 60S), a low number for July. There were 18S at Tynemouth on 25th (DRW), eight at Boulmer on 14th (BS), eight at Berwick on 24th (SW) and seven at Annstead on 6th (DF). Numbers from six to two were recorded at North Blyth, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Lindisfarne, Warkworth, Beacon Point, Newbiggin, St Mary's Island, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, Boulmer, East Chevington and Amble Braid. Singles were at a further 12 coastal locations.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The highest counts came from Boulmer, with 273 on 14th (BS), the Long Nanny with 200 on 16th (TD) and the Blyth Estuary with 170 on 19th (MN). There were 132 at Yarrow Slake on the Tweed Estuary on 9th (MHu), 120 at the Coquet Estuary on 24th (CSa), and 101 at the North Pool East Chevington on 29th (STH). Beal saltmarsh had 81 on 26th (MJC). The monthly count from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was 76 (62N, 14S). There were 70 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN), 68 at the Aln Estuary on 10th (MKi), 67 in the fields at Druridge Pools on 8th (ASJ), 63 at Hauxley NWT on 21st (HRS) and 52 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd(DM/GB). Flocks of fewer than 50 were at Budle Bay, Prestwick Carr, the Long Nanny, Newton and St Mary's Island. The highest count from an inland site was eight on 14th (MJC).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

There were 24 at Boulmer on 27th (BS), five at Dunstan Steads (Embleton) on 28th (TF/JFa) and four at Beacon Point (Newbiggin), including a summer-plumaged bird, on 16th (AA). Four were on the North Pool at East Chevington on 27th (AMcL). Only two (IN, 1S) were recorded at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower. Two birds were recorded at Amble Braid, the Coquet Estuary, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh and Tynemouth, and singles were at Annstead, Cullernose Point, Warkworth Gut and Beadnell.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The largest flock was on the North Pool at East Chevington, which had 158 on 18th (TW/MN/AJN/ASH). There were 57 at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR/JF), 52 at the Coquet Estuary on 31st (CSa) and 43 at Warkworth Gut on 25th (DM/GB/LAR). 30 birds, mostly in summer plumage, were at Amble Braid on 28th (TRD/JD). Smaller groups were recorded at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Monks' House Pool and Ellington Pond. Seaton Sluice's only record for the month was eight birds S on 7th (SSWT). Three summer-plumaged birds were at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRC). There were singles at Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Boulmer, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Passage at Seaton Sluice involved 12N and 66S during the month (SSWT). Counts elsewhere were 22 at Tynemouth on 25th (CB), 22 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 29th (RPo), 18 at Cullercoats on 24th (MK), 14 at Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) on 21st (MKI), 13 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 3rd (STH), 12 at the Farne Islands on 20th (TD) and 12 at Amble Harbour on 31st (TD). Seven were reported from Cheswick Black Rocks on 28th and a single was at Howick on 29th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Some summering groups remained with a sprinkling of returning birds noted this month. Ten flew N at Hauxley on 29th (BS). At Beal saltmarsh, an estimate was made of 76 birds present on 26th (MJC) and a walk around Holy Island on 20th produced 20 birds (AJ). Birds were present at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) all month with a maximum of 17 noted on 3rd (STH/IFo). At the River Coquet Estuary, two were seen on 2nd rising to 14 by 26th (CSa/RPo) with 12 at nearby Warkworth Gut on 25th (DM). One to eight, many in summer plumage were counted at Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and East Chevington and Seaton Sluice.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Virtually all reports came from the Druridge Pools-East Chevington area. A maximum of seven were counted at Druridge Pools on 4th reducing to one by 28th (ASJ/MN *et al.*). At East Chevington, the maximum was six on 17th reducing to two by 21st and rising to four by 29th (JBU/MN/STH/*et al.*). The only other report was a single male at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

A single bird was noted on a roadside flash at Warden (Hexham) on 11th (PRC).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The only passage noted at Seaton Sluice was 24S on 22nd (SSWT). A large count of 400 came from Hauxley on 25th (RB/MB). A walk around the shoreline at Holy Island produced a total of 98 on 20th (AJ). Birds were reported from St Mary's Island from 21st with the peak count being 63 on 30th (ASJ). At the Chiburn/East Chevington area of Druridge Bay, 30-32 were present on 16th (NFO/JD/TRD), 30 were at Ross Back Sands on 19th (TD), at nearby Budle Bay 15 were reported on 18th (CGK/GPK) and 15 summer-plumaged birds were at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 26th (IK). One to ten were seen at Amble, Boulmer, Cocklawburn and Druridge Pools and Links.



A newly arrived Sanderling
St. Mary's on 21st July by Alan Jack

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

There were some large concentrations in the area, as passage birds arrived during the last 10 days of the month. At Seaton Sluice, 24 flew S on 27th (SSWT). The highest counts were 600 at Hauxley on 25th (RB/MB), a minimum of 400 at Budle Bay on 22nd (DF), 350 at the River Coquet Estuary on 20th (CSa), 338 at Holy Island also on 20th (AJ), 220 at Boulmer on 27th (BS), 174 at Beal saltmarsh on 27th (MJC) and 105 at St Mary's Island on 21st (MK). Maximum counts from other coastal stretches and ponds were; 75 at East Chevington on 20th (TD), 54 at Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) on 21st (MKI), 50 at Druridge Pools on 28th (TRD/JD), 46 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin –DM) 37 at Monks' House Pool on 20th (DF), 36 at Castle Island on 19th (NFO) 34 at the River Blyth Estuary on 26th (LJM), 32 at Amble Marina on 25th (DM) and 20 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (MN). One-eight were seen at Allenheads, Arcot Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir (five adults and a juvenile), Grindon Lough (including one juvenile), Tynemouth and Tynemouth Boating lake.



Dunlin and a Sanderling at Newbiggin by John Richards on 19th July



A summer plumaged Dunlin at St. Mary's
by Alan Jack on 18th July

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Reports of summering birds were five-six on the Farne Islands on 20th (TD/EHa) and one at Warkworth pier on 21st (CSa).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

One was present at Druridge Pools on 27th-28th (IF/IDR/TB/MN).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

The sole report was of four flying into the valley at Allenheads on 7th (CB).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Three were displaying at Allenheads on 10th (CB) and three were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 16th (MRC). Two were reported from Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR/JF) and Derwent Reservoir on 22nd and 30th (IFo). Single birds were seen at East Wilkwood (drumming), Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley (Tik-tok display) and Makendon (Upper Coquetdale-drumming).

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

The female at Grindon Lough was reported on 1st (PRM/SW).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Return passage was noted at the coast with six S at Seaton Sluice between 6th-27th (SSWT). Sightings came from both inland breeding areas and coastal lowlands with the peak counts being nine at Derwent Reservoir throughout the month (IFo), nine at Castle Island on 19th (NFO), seven were at Colt Crag Reservoir (including two locally bred juveniles-MR). Five at Hedgeley GP, (IBDa/KDa), four at each of Budle Bay, Cocklawburn Pond, Cullernose Point and Low Newton and three at Allenheads (including one chick), Branton GP, East Chevington North Pool, Hauxley NWT and Monks' House Pool. Two were seen at Doddington (River Till), Druridge Pools and Dunstan Steads (Embleton). Single birds were reported from Grindon Lough and 23 coastal and near coastal localities.



A Common Sandpiper at Allenheads by Colin Bradshaw on 6th July

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Light return passage was noted with singles at Berwick Hill Bridge, Colt Crag Reservoir, Doddington (River Till), Dunstanburgh Castle, Longhoughton Quarry and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Visible passage at Seaton Sluice this month was 15N and 110S, with a maximum of 40S on 24th (SSWT). Return to the coast was apparent with 87 at the River Coquet Estuary on 10th (RPo) increasing to 300 by 29th (CSa). The River Blyth Estuary attracted a minimum of 135 on 7th (PRM) and the maximum at Budle Bay was 120 on 10th (KWY). Other significant counts were 73 at Beal saltmarsh on 26th (MJC), 63 at Annstead on 18th (DF), 50 at Cresswell Pond on 13th and 18th (MN), 50 at Warkworth Gut on 25th (DM) 31 at North Blyth Staithes on 15th (STH), 22 at Newbiggin on 12th (STH) and 22 at Berwick Coastguard Station on 17th (MHu). Snab Point held 17 on 7th and 13 were at Hauxley NWT on 21st. The maximum count at Druridge Pools was 12 on 10th (IDR/JF) where two juveniles and 2-3 small chicks were reported during the month. One-six were seen at Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington North Pool, Grindon Lough, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, New Water Haugh (River Tweed), the River Wansbeck Estuary and Warkworth weir.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Presumably lingering birds from last month were singles at Druridge Pools on 3rd & 12th (AA/TF/JFa) with further reports of a single on 28th-29th (TRD/JD/TD/MN). A single was at East Chevington on 12th (TF/JFa) and also at Holywell Waggonway Flash on 23rd (PRC).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A single bird in breeding plumage was at East Chevington North Pool on 24th (AA).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Numbers started to build up at the favoured haunt of Beal saltmarsh, with 12 present on 26th (MJC). Eight were at the River Aln Estuary on 17th (TW), with a maximum of three at Budle Bay on 30th (CGK/GPK). Singles were seen at Castle Island (River Wansbeck), Chugdon Wood (flying S), Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Haughton Strother GP, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), the River Coquet Estuary, the River Wansbeck Estuary, St Mary's Island and West Ord (Berwick).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The only movements of note at Seaton Sluice were 300 S in two hours on 13th and 800 S in four hours on 25th (SSWT) with 150 N in two hours at Newbiggin on 6th (STH). Counts of 700 and 500 adults and young came from the Howick cliffs colony on 12th and 29th respectively (ASJ/TRD/JD), 350 were on and around the colony at Tynemouth on 4th (KYW) and 300 at Cullernose Point on 9th (TRD/JD). Elsewhere, 40-70 were noted at Berwick, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) and Dunstanburgh Castle.

June correction The Kittiwake photograph was a Common Gull

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

A swarm of flying ants attracted at least 300 feeding birds at Gosforth Garden Village on 30th (MJC), 231 were on Newbiggin GC on 12th (AP), 186 adults in the Blyth Estuary on 8th (LJM) and 122 at Castle Island on 5th (DM). A number of counts offshore from Druridge Pools produced a maximum of 120 in a beach roost with many more moving N and S on 6th (IDR) with up to 30 also on the Pools with similar numbers reported at Big Waters, Hauxley NWT and Jesmond Dene.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Druridge Pools attracted four on 7th (TF/JFa) and on many dates throughout one to three were seen there and also at East Chevington North Pool (*many observers*); singles were also seen occasionally at Cresswell Pond, Newbiggin and Tynemouth. The majority of these sightings were of immature birds but at least two were adults.



A Little Gull at Druridge pools by Neil Osborne on 16th July

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Only eight were recorded passing Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The maximum number in the Newbiggin South Bay area was 20 at mid-month (RS) and on 17th, 14 were recorded at Boulmer (BS), probably the usual summer influx although no further similar high counts came from this area. Elsewhere, nine were at Druridge Pools on 8th, seven at Cresswell Pond on 21st, four at St Mary's Island, three at Bothal Pond and Budle Bay with one to two at numerous other sites, mainly in the Druridge Bay complex but also at Embleton, Holy Island, Lindisfarne and Monks' House Pool. The majority of all these sightings were adult birds. A returning adult at St Mary's Island was ringed PNY8 in Poland in 2014 (JBu).



A Mediterranean Gull 18th July at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

Common Gull *Larus canus*

An estimated 120 were in a gull roost near Netherton on 26th (MKi), 90 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), 40-50 at Budle Bay and Grindon Lough and 11-20 at Bamburgh, Berwick (West Ord) and in a gull roost on the beach at Druridge Pools. Up to ten were at a further five sites.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

A tidal roost in the Coquet Estuary held 51 on 24th (MKi), 55 were in Warkworth gut/weir on 25th (DM) with maximum of seven from several counts at Grindon Lough, six at Derwent Reservoir and five at the beach roost by Druridge Pools.

Herring Gull *L. argentatus argenteus*/**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *L. fuscus graelsii*

Juveniles, totalling 27 of both species, were in a mixed group on an industrial roof at Scotswood (MH).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A low-tide roost at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 7th held an estimated 530 (MHu), 300 were in Budle Bay on 25th (CGK/GPK), 71 on rocks at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) (STH), 50 at Castle Island (DM), 47 offshore at Druridge Pools and 15 at Dunstanburgh Castle. The breeding colony at North Blyth staithes produced 11 young from seven nests of which one failed (STH) and six young fledged from four broods at Blyth, Wimbourne Quay (LJM)..

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The returning Polish-marked adult, PKCS, first recorded in Amble Harbour in July 2013 was seen again in the harbour from 23rd-30th (CSa/MKi).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

A typically low number of only 14 were seen passing the watchtower at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Small groups comprised 30 in Budle Bay (DF) and 11-15 at Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir and Druridge Pools with smaller counts of up to eight at Allenheads, Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Cramlington, Derwent Reservoir, Dinnington, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Netherton, New Water Haugh (R. Tweed) and Woodhorn S. Flash. Breeding records were 11 young in five broods at Blyth, Wimbourne Quays (LJM) and six young at Admiral Business Park (Cramlington) (LJM).

A Lesser Black-backed Gull
Cullernose Point
9th July by Tim Dean



Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

The seasonal large movements were recorded throughout at Seaton Sluice with typical days of 390 N, 205 S on 1st and 190 N, 565 S on 30th with the first juveniles noted on 13th (SSWT). The largest groups recorded were at least 300 at St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ/MK) and 176 on the Spanish Battery rocks at Tynemouth on 18th (DRW). Smaller gatherings of 50-70 were regularly offshore at Druridge Pools (IDR) with 11-40 at eight other widespread coastal sites from the Tweed Estuary-Tynemouth.



A Sandwich Tern at St. Mary's on 16th July by Alan Jack

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

At the Long Nanny Estuary, 26 were in the air together on 12th (ASJ) with 14 still present there on 31st (RB/MB). In Embleton Bay on 28th, 19 were recorded but all other records were of one to four, some moving S, at Alnmouth, Boulmer, Cullernose Point, Dunstanburgh Castle, East Chevington, Howick and Seaton Sluice.

Sooty Tern *Onychoprion fuscatus*

This was the fifth county record of an extremely rare visitor. The bird was first seen at St Mary's Island on 25th (A. Armstrong) before reappearing on 28th at Dunstanburgh Castle, Embleton Bay and Howick (P.Waite). The bird was relocated on the cliffs at Howick the following day, 29th, from where it stayed around for a few hours to entertain and excite many lucky observers (TRD/JD *et al.*). It is considered likely that it was the same individual previously seen in Ayrshire on 23rd from where it must have flown unrecognised around the Scottish coastline in two days. Furthermore it is almost certainly the same individual seen in the county during the past two summers.



The Howick Sooty Tern by Neil Osborne on 28th July

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Extremely well reported this month including many juveniles. At Beacon Point (Newbiggin) 40 flew S on 27th (AP) and on the morning of the same day at Seaton Sluice, an 'unprecedented movement' occurred when, in four hours in wind and rain, some 45 birds (in association with large numbers of other tern species) flew S in groups of up to five including 15 juveniles (SSWT). High counts from elsewhere comprised 35 feeding offshore at Druridge Pools on 6th and 9th (IDR), 20-25 at Beacon Point from 17th-24th (AP/STH), 18 at St Mary's Island on 27th (JBu) and up to ten at other localities including Cullercoats, East Chevington, Tynemouth and the Wansbeck Estuary..



Roseate Tern on 17th July at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Large numbers were recorded moving regularly from 13th at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). At least 100 gathered at the Spanish Battery rocks on 22nd-25th (MK/DRW). Groups of 11-65 were seen regularly elsewhere at the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Pools (offshore), East Chevington, Hauxley NWT and Tynemouth. Smaller groups up to ten were also recorded at the Aln Estuary, Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Branton GP, Berwick, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Coquet Estuary, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holywell Pond, Howdon and Warkworth Lane. At the nesting platform at the Royal Quays (North Shields) a maximum of 72, including nine juveniles, were counted on 2nd (ASJ). The breeding colony at the North Blyth staithe was thriving up to 10th with many small young in nests but there was complete desertion by 15th when seven magpies pecking around the colony were being mobbed by 20 birds; on 19th, only four birds were present (STH).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Typically small numbers (compared with Common Tern) were recorded at Seaton Sluice with a total of 4 N and 47 S throughout (SSWT). At Bamburgh Stag Rocks 100 fed offshore on 9th (KWY), 32 were at East Chevington on 29th (STH) and several counts offshore at Druridge Pools produced totals of 11-50 (IDR); 16 were offshore at Cullernose Point on 16th (IDR) and single-figure counts of up to eight came from Hauxley NWT and Tynemouth. On 16th the colony at the Long Nanny Estuary was empty of nesting birds with all adults and juveniles fishing and resting on the nearby spit (TD). No estimates were received of the size of the colony this year.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

An adult flying N past the watch tower at Seaton Sluice on 24th was the only record (SSWT).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

A poor month with few records from the Seaton Sluice watch point totalling only four singles seen moving N (SSWT). On 9th two flew N at St Mary's Island (JBu), singles moved N at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd (AP) and at Boulmer on 12th (BS).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Two flying N together on 8th, one a dark phase adult with 'spoons', were recorded at St Mary's Island (JBu) and then at Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Another very poor month with only nine recorded, 4 N, 5 S, in 68 hours watching (SSWT). Elsewhere, three moved N at Snab Point on 8th (TB), two were recorded at Boulmer, Cullernose Point, Druridge Pools (offshore) and Newbiggin on various dates, with singles seen on dates throughout at Annstead, Boulmer, Druridge Bay, East Chevington dunes, Newbiggin, Ross Back Sands and Tynemouth; the majority of these sightings were of birds moving N.

Auk *sp*

Some large movements of Guillemots/Razorbills were noted in the early part of the month including 600 N (a good percentage Razorbills) in two hours on 2nd and 630 N in three hours on 8th, with only small numbers thereafter (SSWT).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

On many dates throughout, good numbers of 20-90, were seen feeding offshore, or moving generally S, at Alnmouth Bay, Annstead, Bamburgh Berwick (Spittal Bay), Cocklawburn, Cullernose Point, Druridge Pools, Howick, and Newton Point.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Small numbers, none greater than five, were recorded offshore at Berwick (Spittal Bay), Cullernose Point, Druridge Pools, Dunstanburgh Castle and Tynemouth on dates throughout.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Movements recorded at Seaton Sluice comprised 620 N, 9 S from 1st-2nd and 274 N, 4 S on 8th; very few were noted thereafter. At Bamburgh Stag Rocks, 100 fed offshore on 9th (KWY), 42 were in Alnmouth Bay on 18th (RPo) and 15 were offshore from Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

A high count of 182 was at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 25th (DM/GB/LAR) with 28 there on 5th, 83 at Blyth Market Place on 6th, 12 to 15 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on three dates from 1st to 25th (DM), six at Cullernose Point on 29th and two at Dunstanburgh Castle on the same date.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The favoured location of Howdon held 16 on 28th (CB), with a total of four at various locations in Jesmond Dene on 26th (MJCo) and three at Druridge Pools & Links on 15th (IDR). One to two were at eight other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Ten were at Kimmer Lough on 18th, seven being the high count at Druridge Pools & Links on 15th (IDR) and at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS). Two to six were at six other widespread localities.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

The only report was at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) where five adults were present during the month (RS)

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

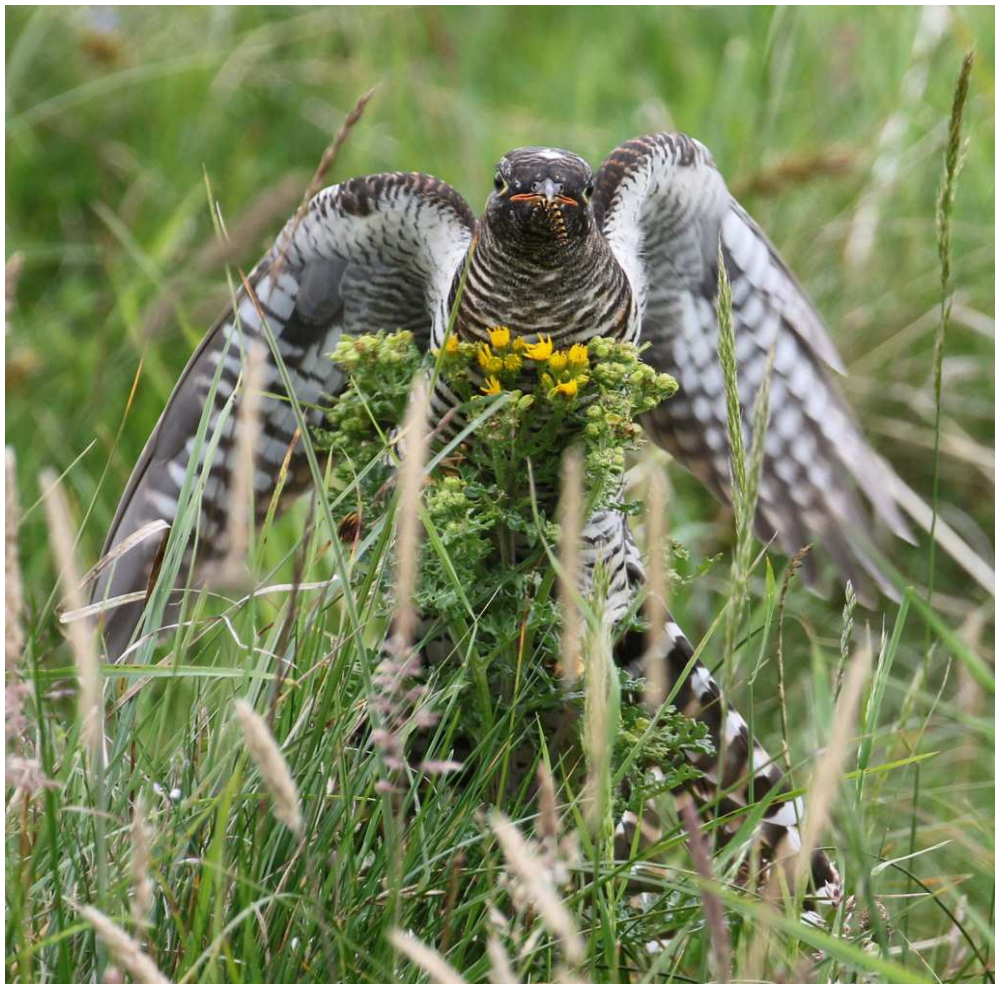
At Druridge Pools four juveniles fed on Cinnebar moths at roadside on 8th with three there on the next day and one remaining till 24th, two having been present on the 7th (ASJ *et al.*). An adult was also present in the dunes at Druridge Pools and Links from 4th till 11th (IDR) and also at Long Nanny (Newton) on 8th, Spittal Cliffs (Berwick) on 19th and Tynemouth on 23rd. Juveniles were at Low Buston on 12th and Waggies Wood (Ellington) on 16th / 17th.

A Cuckoo with Cinnebar lunch

Peter Tapsell

Druridge Bay

7th July





A young Cuckoo rests at Druridge Links by Alan Jack on 16th July

Owl sp

One was at East Chevington on 24th (IF).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

On 14th a pair with four fledged juveniles were at Low Steads (Longhoughton) with another pair with three fledged juveniles at Boulmer on the same date (BS). A adult with two juveniles was in a box at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd and still present on 20th (TRD/JD/IFo). Three were hunting at Druridge Pools and Links on 6th (IDR) and two at Cresswell Pond on the same date, Longdyke (Shilbottle) on 14th, East Chevington on 15th and 31st and Snods Edge on 24th. Singles were at 14 other widespread localities.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two called at Hollingreen on 11th (TWi) and a male called at Sweethope Lough on the same date (PRM). Singles were at Stublick Bog and High Barns (Ovingham) on 12th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Branton on 21st and Hedgeley GP on 31st. One road casualty was on the A1 at near Burgham on 22nd.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

There was only a single report of one at Chibburn Chapel on 8th (NFO).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

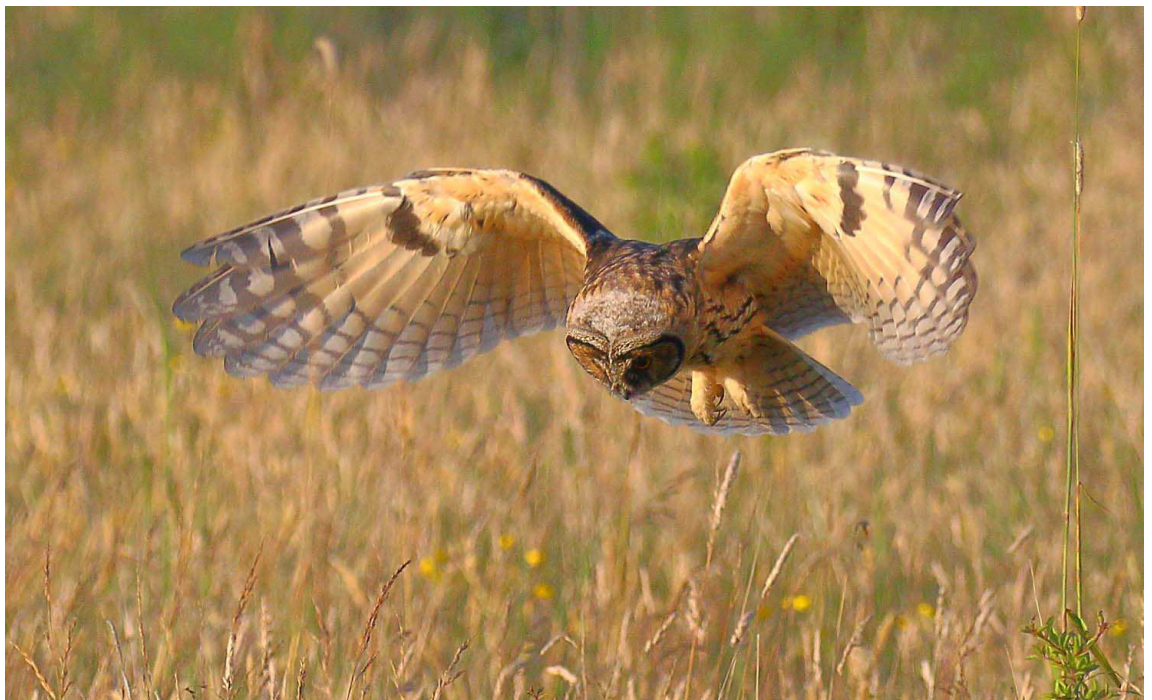
Three juveniles were at Rising Sun CP on 1st with two there on 3rd (ASJ/TW/AJ). Juveniles called at Grindon Lough on 1st and Sweethope Lough on 11th (PRM) with an un-aged, presumably adult, hunting over fields at North Pool (East Chevington) on 21st (TB).

A Long-eared Owl

Hunting at Rising Sun

Jack Bucknall

6th July



Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

All reports were of singles at Druridge Pools and Links on 6th, Holy Island on 11th, flying N over the sea at Boulmer on 12th, hunting at North Pools (East Chevington) on 21st at Little Dodd (nr Alnham) and Druridge Pools on 27th.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

A male churred at Sweethope Lough on 11th (PRM) and one was at Beanley Wood on 20th (IBDa/KDa).

Swift *Apus apus*

More than 500 fed on a flying ant swarm at Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 30th (MJC) with 100 at Humshaugh and Whitley Bay on the same date, 80+ at West Monkseaton on 31st (ASJ/CGK) and 70+ at Gosforth subsidence pond on 18th (MJC). At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower there was a scattering of records throughout the month totalling 224N, 64S with a maximum of 126 North on 12th. On 1st 60 were at the Links (Whitley Bay) and Lynemouth on 23rd, 50 at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) on 5th, Gosforth subsidence pond on 6th, moving S at St Mary's Island on 24th and at Druridge Pools on 27th with around 50 at Monkseaton on 29th. Ten to 40 were at ten other locations with 30 over Holy Island on 13th judged to be the largest flock ever there. One to eight were at eight other widespread localities.



A Swift over Woolsington on 5th July by John Littleton

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

The only multiple counts were two at Low Angerton (R. Wansbeck) on 7th (IRD) and Ouseburn Valley (Newcastle) on 22nd (TW). Singles were at Watersmeet (Warden) on 4th and Branton GP on 6th and 8th, Gosforth Nature Reserve on the same date, Gosforth Subsidence Pond and Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 7th, Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 15th, Budle Bay on 18th, Felton (R.Coquet) on 26th and Holystone on 29th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

An adult female was with three young at Ellington Dene on 12th and an adult with three young at Ellington on 31st (TB), two at Howick Hall Pool on 11th (PHa/AHa) and two juveniles at Ellington Dene on 13th. Juveniles regularly fed on feeders at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and were at East Cramlington LNR on 2nd. Singles were at nine other widespread localities.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

There was just one report of a calling bird at Yearle on 28th (SVM).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Ten birds were hunting between Low Newton and Newton Point with another two birds at Newton Scrape on 24th (DBo/RMH/DWN). Five birds were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 26th (MJC) and at Dipton Wood on 31st (PCI); four were at St Mary's Island on 14th (ASJ) and Black Lough (Edlingham) on 31st (IDR/JF). One to three birds were at 23 sites including two fledged young on Stakeford Railway Bridge (Ashington) (DM).

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A bird was seen flying S at Sweethope Lough on 20th (ALT) and a juvenile flew N at St Mary's Island on 23rd (ASJ). A female/juvenile was at Boulmer on 24th (BS). Other sightings were of a bird being mobbed by Swallows *Hirundo rustica* over the boat sheds on Holy Island (per IK) and a bird was at Boulmer (DBo/RMH/DWN) on 24th. An adult female was at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 26th (IK) and a juvenile was noted at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 28th (STH/IFo). A bird flew parallel with the road at Edlingham on 29th (TRD/JD). A bird was at Waterhead (Greenhaugh) (SW) and a juvenile was at the Ash Lagoon (Newbiggin) (AP), both on 31st.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

On 7th an adult flew W from Widdrington Village towards Widdrington Moor Lake lifting all the Corvids and the Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* off the fields, then flew W along the southern edge of the lake. A bird was seen at Warkworth Lane Ponds (Ellington) on 15th (IRD). A bird flew past the observers scattering Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* at Druridge Pools on 16th (TRD/JD) and an adult bird flew over the observer's head at Causey Hill Caravan Park (Hexham) on 20th (PRC). On 29th an adult flew E over the A1 at Tritlington (MJC).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two juveniles were at Humshaugh on 26th and 30th (SW/TWi). Single birds were noted at Allenheads, chasing Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, also at Budle Bay, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Holystone, Prestwick Carr, Seaton Point (Boulmer), Tynemouth, the Upper Coquet valley and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Three at Howick on 12th (JAR) and three juveniles at Ellington Dene on four dates from 12th to 20th (TB). Two were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 2nd, Debdon (Rothbury) on 17th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on four dates from 18th to 30th and Jesmond Dene on 26th. Singles were at eight other widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Family parties of six at Druridge Pools and Links on 6th (IDR) and three at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 8th (RS). Four were at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 19th and Druridge Pools and Links on 24th with two to three there on two other dates.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

On 25th around 300 were at Warkworth Weir (R.Coquet) (DM/GB/LAR), 103 at Howdon on 28th (CB), 47 at Cramlington High School on 12th, 30 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month but only one juvenile (RS). Two to 12 were at three other locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Six were at Otterburn Training area on 19th and four at Druridge Pools and Links on 6th (IDR/JF).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A large roost of 40 adults and juvenile fledged birds was around the big pool at Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR) with one to 20 there on eight other dates, 22 by the A189 road bridge at R.Blyth Estuary on 26th (LJM), eight at Jesmond Dene on 5th and two to four at four upland locations.

Raven *Corvus corax*

A possible family party of five was at East Kielder Farm on 10th (MH), a family party of three at Longhoughton Quarry possibly bred there (BS), a pair with fledged juvenile at Hazlerigg Moss on 10th and three at Thirlmoor (Otterburn) on 11th. Two flew E at Elf Kirk Watch Point (Kielder) on 10th, were at Beanley Plantation and Holburn Moss on 15th and calling high over Harbottle on 16th. Singles were at four upland and two coastal locations.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Two were at Widehope Woods (Edlingham) on 31st and a recently fledged juvenile was caught and ringed at Druridge Pools and Links on 8th (IDR/JF).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Just one was seen on 2nd and 31st at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) (NFO).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

At Airy Holm Reservoir two were present on 8th and a pair on 15th (IFo) with two at Ellington Dene on 25th (TB), Linton Ponds on 28th (STH/IFo) and one at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 30th.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 2nd ten were ringed on a CES session at Slaley Hall (RMH), two at Druridge Pools and Links on 8th with singles at Boulmer and Jesmond Dene.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Slaley Hall 11 were ringed on a CES session on 2nd (RMH). Five were at Druridge Pools and Links on 8th (IDR) with two at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 26th and Widehope Woods (Edlingham) on 31st.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Birds were still present at East Chevington with a male, female and juvenile male on 15th, juvenile male and female on 9th and adult male and female on 31st (IF).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A high count of 22 was made at St Mary's Island on 1st with six singing till the third week of the month and two juveniles seen. Five sang at the aforementioned site on 15th (ASJ), seven were seen and heard singing till 20th at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS) with singles at Druridge Pools and Links, Kimmer Lough and Black Lough (Edlingham).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

A large feeding flock of 350 was seen between wood and caravan park at Chugdon Wood (Edlingham) on 18th (TB), 220 flew S/SW in 90 minutes at Budle Point on 25th, 145 occupied nests at Watersmeet (Warden) on 4th (SW), with around 80 at West Ord (Berwick) on 3rd (MHu) and at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 18th with 25+ there on 4th (MJC). At least 65 were at Hedgeley GP on 31st, 50 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th and Grindon Lough on 15th with 30+ at Tynemouth on 12th. More than two pairs bred at Low Steads (Longhoughton) with ten juveniles minimum (BS) and three pairs had burrows at Emanuel Head (Holy Island) (Bch). Two to six were at five other locations.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

On 26th 93 flew S in one hour at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) (MJC), 40 at Derwent Reservoir on 20th and Boulmer on 28th (IF/TRD/JD), 32 S at Colt Crag Reservoir on 20th (MR) with ten to 18 at eight locations and two to eight at a further six.



Swallow feeding at St. Mary's on 16th July by Jack Bucknall

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Counts of 45 on 27th, 40+ on 18th and 12 on 9th at Gosforth Subsidence Pond (MJC), 30 at Holystone on 15th (DRo) and 20 at Cresswell Village on 2nd where 57 A.O.N. were found around the Ice Cream shop and sub-tation on 24th, the majority with young (ASJ/ADM). Ten was the peak count at Druridge Pools and Links on 6th with eight at Tynemouth on 12th and two to five at four other locations.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cettia*

A single bird was ringed at East Chevington on 9th (IF).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

There were flocks of 28 at Ellington on 9th (TB) and 25 at Hexham on 7th (ADM) and Fairfield (Longbenton) on 15th (ADM). Ten were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 13th (DMcK). Parties of nine were at garden feeders in Northburn (Cramlington) (LJM) and Tynemouth (CB) on 16th. There were six at Holwell Dene on 28th, five at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 15th, four at Melkridge on 7th, and one at Druridge Pools on 3rd. A single bird was present at a garden feeder in Holy Island Village during July, an unusual record for the time of year.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

20 birds were reported from Branton GP on 8th (MJC). A pair and three young were at Dunsdale (College Valley) on 2nd (RPo). There were four singing males at Druridge Pools on 3rd (PRM), two at Howdon on 11th (CB) and one at Harthope Valley on 2nd. Four birds were at Druridge Pools on 8th (IDR), Howick Hall on 11th (PHa/AHa) and four juveniles were at St Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ). One to two birds were at the Blyth Estuary, the Snook, Holy Island, Quarry Cottage, Grindon Lough, Cawfields Quarry, Kimmer Lough and Newbrough.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

There were 12 birds singing at East Cramlington LNR on 2nd (LJM) and ten juveniles at St Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ). Six were singing between Callerton and the airport on 7th (MH) and six were at Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJCo). Four were singing at Harthope Valley on 2nd (DGB) and Warden on 4th (SW) and four were at Howick Hall on 11th (PHa/AHa). Two singing birds were at Howdon on 11th (CB) and two were at Widehoe Woods (Edlingham) on 31st (IDR/JF). One to two birds were at Druridge Pools throughout the month, and single birds, including a juvenile at Shilbottle, were at Humshaugh, the Blyth Estuary, Valley Park, Cramlington and Chollerford.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

45 birds were ringed at East Chevington this month (two on 9th, 12 on 15th, 23 on 24th, eight on 31st) (IF). Arcot Pond had 13 on 9th, plus a singing bird at Arcot Lane (DM). There were five singing birds and five juveniles at St Mary's Wetland on 25th (ASJ), and a pair with three juveniles at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 19th. Two to four birds were present at Druridge Pools from 3rd to 14th, and one bird was seen feeding fledglings at Cocklawburn on 10th (SW). Single birds were heard singing at Lesbury, High Buston and Howdon.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

61 birds were ringed at East Chevington this month (11 on 9th, 16 on 15th, 24 on 24th and ten on 31st) (IF). Six were singing and one was carrying food at the QEII CP Lake on 19th (LJM) and a maximum of three birds were at Druridge Pools on 8th. Singles were at Caistron, Holywell Pond and St Mary's Island, where there was also a juvenile on the Wetland on 25th.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

33–35 territories were located at Cramlington this month, including 13 in the Arcot Pond 1km square and seven at West Hartford (STH/GMi/LJM/DM/PJA/JM/SL). There were three reeling birds and one juvenile at St Mary's Island on 25th (ASJ) and two at East Chevington on 24th (IF). Birds were heard reeling at Warkworth Gut, Druridge Pools, Castle Island on the Wansbeck, Cresswell and Prestwick Carr.



A Grasshopper Warbler

Druridge

Colin Bradshaw

17th July

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

The highest counts came from Druridge Pools and Howick Hall, with five on 8th (IDR) and 31st (PHa/AHa) respectively. There were four at Valley Park, Cramlington on 3rd (DM) and at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo). Three were at Shotleyfield, near Airy Holm Reservoir on 8th (IFo) and at Howdon on 11th (CB). There was a single at Alnwick on 8th (AMG/MG).



A Blackcap family
Marden Quarry
Alan Jack
9th July

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Four were at Shotleyfield, near Airy Holm Reservoir on 15th (IFo) and single birds were singing at Grindon Lough on 1st (PRM), Harbottle on 9th (MKi), and Swinhoe Lakes (Belford) on 11th (KWY).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

A pair with a juvenile were at Longhoughton Quarry on 18th (BS). Single birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (a first here for IFo), Holywell Pond on 7th (KWY) and Arcot Pond on 10th (LJM). A ringed juvenile was at East Sleekburn on 17th (JR/NA) and another juvenile was at St Mary's Island on 26th (ASJ).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

St Mary's Island and Holywell Pond had 18 and 16 birds respectively on 20th (ASJ), both groups comprising several pairs with juveniles. Eight birds at Druridge Pools on 17th (CB) included three singing birds and juveniles. A family party of four was at Hethpool (College Valley) on 21st (TRD/JD) and three at Watersmeet (Warden) on 4th (SW). One to two birds were reported at Valley Park, Cramlington, East Chevington, Castle Island, the Blyth Estuary, Prestwick Carr, Cocklawburn and Alnwick.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Singles were recorded at Valley Park, Dam Dykes and Alexandra Park, all in Cramlington, throughout the month (DM).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

There were four at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR/JF) and four at Widehoe Woods (Edlingham) on 31st (IDR/JF). Three were at Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJCo) and three were singing in Upper Coquetdale on 19th (IDR/JF).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Three were at Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJCo) and at Howick Hall on 19th (PHa/AHa). There were two at Chugdon Wood on 9th and Ellington Dene on 26th (TB) and two at Humshaugh on 26th (SW). One was at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo) and a juvenile was observed bathing at Yearle on 7th (DGB).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

A family party of five was at Ellington Dene on 12th (TB), and two were at Humshaugh on 26th (SW). Singles were reported from Branton GP, Howick Hall, Big Waters and Linden Hall, Longhorsley.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest flocks were at Boulmer, with 400 on 27th increasing to 800 by 30th (BS). North Blyth had 250 on 24th (STH), increasing to 450 by 31st (PCF). There was a roost of 250 by Big Pool (Druridge Pools) on 6th (IDR) and there were 240 at South Beach (Blyth) on 30th (BS). Flocks of 150 were at Howick on 1st (JAR) and Beaconhill Estate (Cramlington) on 7th (STH). There were 120 throughout the month at Quarry Cottage (BS) and 100 at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd (STH).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

One was at Henhole in the Cheviots, on 2nd (RPo).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

At Chapel House Estate (Newcastle), where three pairs had been noted, only one juvenile was seen on 8th (MH). Three pairs were observed throughout the month at Quarry Cottage, but only one juvenile was seen on 21st (BS). Two pairs nested in the garden at Fairfield (Longbenton) and one pair's nest was discovered by a Magpie on 22nd (ADM). Two birds were at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo) and one was at Druridge Pools on 8th (IDR).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

There were ten at Allenheads on 4th, including four singing males (CB). Five, including three singing, were at East Cramlington LNR on 2nd (LJM). There were four singing in the Arcot Pond area on 9th (DM), two in Valley Park (Cramlington) on 3rd (DM). Singles were at Barns Park (Cramlington) on 9th (DM) and at Jesmond Dene on 26th (MJCo).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

45 flew S at Slaley Forest on 11th (PCI). There were 40 at Walwick on 29th (SW) and 30 at Branton GP on 27th (IBDa/KDa). Colt Crag Reservoir had 15 on 27th (MR) and there were four birds in the College Valley on 20th (RPo). Singles were at Wark and Grindon Lough.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

There was a family party of six at Carrshield on 14th (MJC) and four at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 10th (NFO). A pair and five young in the nest were reported at Langleeford in the Harthope Valley on 2nd (DGB) and there were three at Low Carriteth (Hesleyside) on 25th (JR). Two were at Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 14th (TD) and Humshaugh on 25th (TD). Singles were recorded at the Harthope Valley, Branton, Chillingham Castle and Kidland.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Three were ringed at Slaley Hall on 2nd (RMH). There were two at Druridge Pools on 8th (IDR) and Jesmond Dene on 26th (MJCo).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Derwent Reservoir had two singing birds and two juveniles on 2nd (IFo). Prestwick Carr had one male and two juveniles on 2nd (MH), and there were two juveniles on the track to the North Pool hide at East Chevington on 19th (TB). Singles were recorded at Haughton Mains, North Yardhope, Otterburn Training Area, Low Alwinton, Longhoughton, Mitford Hall, Doddington, Lanehead and Humshaugh.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

The highest count came from Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) on 6th (AJ), with 25 in family parties. There were 20, also in family parties, at Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 14th (TD). A pair was in the College Valley on 2nd (RPo). One to three juveniles were noted at Boulmer, St Mary's Island and East Chevington, with a single unusual record from Derwent Reservoir.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola***Breeding data**

East Kielder Farm	5 male with 4 juvs on fence	10th	MH
East Chevington	5 pair with 3 young	19th	TB
Addycombe, Rothbury	4 two pairs	10th	NFO
Cocklawburn	4 in family group (no details)	21st	MHu
Druridge Pools	3 pair and juv	5th	IDR/JF
Ellington, Chugdon Wood	3 juvs	30th	TB
Harthope Valley	2 Adult and juvenile	1st	TRD/JD
College Valley	2 Adult and juvenile	2nd	RPo
College Valley	2 pair	2nd	RPo
East Chevington	2 Adult and juvenile	6th	TRD/JD
Scaup Burn, Kielder	2 Adult and juvenile	10th	MH
Howick	2 Male and juvenile	28th	JAR
Harthope Valley	1 juvenile	2nd	DGB
Ross Back Sands	1 juvenile	19th	TD
Derwent Reservoir	1 juvenile (first record of juv here)	24th	IFo
Derwent Reservoir	1 juvenile (different to 24th)	30th	IFo

Stonechat Breeding data cont.

Monks' House Pool	1 juvenile	25th	KWY
Boulmer	1 juvenile	26th	RB/MB
Cresswell Pond	1 juvenile	25th	DM/GB/LAR
Cresswell Pond	1 juvenile	29th	TB
Budle Bay two family parties noted throughout month (no details)			CGK/GPK

There were three at Cheswick Links on 18th (NFO) and two were bathing in a stream at the Henhole (Cheviots) on 2nd (RPO). Two were at Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR), Debdon (Rothbury) on 17th (JD) and Upper Coquetdale on 19th (IDR/JF). Singles were at Alnwick Moor, Allenheads and Featherwood MOD range,

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

There were 32 at Upper Coquetdale on 19th (IDR/JF) and a maximum of nine at Grindon Lough on 14th (MJC), with two juveniles on 17th (PRM). There were four at Otterburn Training Area on 19th (IDR/JF) and an adult and two juveniles were at the Long Nanny, Newton on 14th (AA). There were three at Cocklawburn on 21st, with a juvenile on 28th (MHu), and at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd, with two juveniles on 31st (IFo). Two birds were at Allenheads on 10th (CB) and the Coquet Estuary on 16th (CSa). Single juveniles were at Boulmer, Newbiggin, the Long Nanny, Ross Links and St Mary's Island.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Two juveniles were seen at Felton on 5th and two adults at Ellington Dene on 30th with one there on 4th (IFO/TB). Singles were noted at a further five sites.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

62 were counted at Pier House (Berwick) on 30th and 60 were noted 'bathing' in sand at Alnmouth on 2nd (MHu/JAR). A maximum count of 50 made this month of birds at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS). Up to 40 regularly attended garden feeders at Marden Estate on several dates during the month (ASJ). Eight were also on garden feeders on 12th at Tynemouth (CB).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

25 were at Waren Mill Caravan Park on 30th (CK/GK). Six were observed at garden feeders at Tynemouth on 12th (CB). One to four were at eight other sites.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

A pair had fledged four young by 17th at a Morpeth garden (TD). Three were seen at Druridge Pools on 18th.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

A good breeding season in the county was indicated by the many juvenile birds frequenting St. Mary's wetland, shore and nearby fields on most days this month. Birds were noted from 7th, with three on 20th, four the following day, rising to 24 counted on 24th, these roosting in the wetland. 15 remained the next day and 20 were seen on 27th, eight on 30th (JBu/ASJ). At Boulmer, nine+ were also noted on 19th, 12 on 23rd and three on 28th (BS/TRD/JD/NFO). Two to three were seen at Monks' House Pool between 18th and 25th (KWY/NFO/DF). A pair fed at least one juvenile at Dilston Haughs on 6th and an adult with two juveniles was seen at Gt. Whittington on 17th (NFO/ALT). Three were noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 14th (RS). One to two were also seen at a further 14 locations.

Blue headed x Yellow "Channel Wagtail" *Motacilla flava flavissima*

A single was present at Boulmer on 19th (BS).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Family parties totalling at least 20 birds were seen at Allenheads on 6th (CB). A pair with two juveniles were at Harthope on 1st (TRD/JD). Four were noted at Colt Crag on 20th (MR). Three juveniles were at Jesmond Dene on 5th and three along the River Coquet at Felton on 12th (MJCo/NFO). A male with two juveniles was at Tynemouth on 25th (MK). One to two were noted at a further 14 sites this month.

A young Grey Wagtail and parent

Allenheads on 6th July

Colin Bradshaw



Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

35 was a good count at Druridge Pools and Links on 27th, with two to ten there on several other dates (IDR). 22, including 16 juveniles, fed on Sandflies at St. Mary's on 26th (ASJ). 17 were counted at Upper Coquetdale on 19th (IDR/JF). A pair with two juveniles was noted at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the final week (RS). One to five were seen at five other sites.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

39 were counted in Upper Coquetdale on 19th. 12 were in College Valley on 20th and at Black Lough (Edlingham) on 31st (IDR/JF/RPo). The 25th saw the final display/song flights of the year at St. Mary's, involving ten birds (ASJ). One to six were seen at four other sites.



A Meadow Pipit poses for Colin Bradshaw
9th July at Allenheads

Tree Pipit *Antus trivialis*

A pair were alarm calling at Thrunton Woods on 4th, with a further single seen there that day (NFO/IDR). One at Harthope Valley on 7th was assumed to be feeding young as it carried food (AA). A single was also seen at Slaley on 11th (PCI).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Three were noted at St. Mary's on 28th and a pair carrying food were at Dunstanburgh on 29th, with a single at Cullernose that day (ASJ/IF/IDR).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Ten were ringed at Slaley Hall on 2nd (RMH). Two to four were at three other sites.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Ten were seen at Howdon on 30th (CB). Two adults accompanied two juveniles in a Morpeth garden on 4th (TD). One – two were seen at seven other sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Six, a family party, were seen at Newbrough on 23rd (ADM). Another family group of six were also seen, feeding at St. Mary's on several dates (ASJ). Elsewhere, one to four were noted at four further locations.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

A foraging flock of around 100 was noted in fields on 20th at St. Mary's (ASJ). 24 were at Cocklawburn on 2nd and 20 at Druridge Pools on 27th (MHu). 16 noted at Spittal (Berwick) on 19th (MHu). One to twelve were seen at ten other sites during this month.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

12+ were seen at Grindon on 7th and six there on 14th (PRM/MJC). One to four were at 15 other locations.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

At least 60 were seen at Thrunton Woods on 4th (NFO). Around 50 were noted in the air at Harwood Forest on the 2nd and at Slaley on 11th (JR/PCI). 17 were seen over Gosforth Park flying S on 4th, two on 9th, 10th and 19th. Then another 25 there on the latter date, also heading S (MJC). 17 on 9th were noted at Derwent Reservoir including juveniles and ten were at Colt Crag on 20th (IFo/MR). One to eight were also noted at a further 17 sites during the month, including passage birds moving S at Gosforth Garden Village, Tynemouth, Longhoughton and Cramlington.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

A feeding flock of 45, including 30 or so juveniles, was at St Mary's on 30th (ASJ). 25 were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS). 18 were noted at Cocklawburn on 2nd (MHu). One to eight were seen at a further nine sites during the month.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Around 60 were seen at Highshaw (Otterburn Ranges) (JR/NA). 40+ were at Gosforth on 4th and at Colt Crag, including many juveniles on 3rd (MJC/MR). 34 were ringed at Slaley Hall on 2nd (RMH). 30+ were seen at Gosforth Park on 19th with 15 there on 10th. 20 flew W at Gosforth Garden Village on 6th (MJC). One to 11 were also observed at 18 other sites, including up to six in a Morpeth garden during the month (TD).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Ten sang in the Detchant/Middleton Hall area on 11th (KWY). Seven were at Foxton Bends on 24th (AJ). One to four were at seven other sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Eight males, four singing and two carrying food to nests, were at St. Mary's on 24th (ASJ). Seven were seen at Arcot on 9th (DM). Three pairs were seen at Budle Bay during the month (CGK/GPK). Four males were at Druridge Pools on 3rd and 5th (PRM/IDR). Four were also at two sites at Arcot on 6th and at Howdon on 20th (LJM/CB). One to three were noted at a further six sites this month.



A Reed Bunting sings at St. Mary's

by Alan Jack

16th July

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

Still present from last month with up to eight adults at Derwent Reservoir from 6th with three juveniles. Known to breed ferally in Scotland.

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

One seen at Castle Island on 5th (DM)

Birds of Unknown origin

No sightings

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Berwick Wildlife Group, 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), Helen Snaith (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

Proof reading by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Clive Hampton is **Data Manager**.

Edited by Steve Barrett NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE

The 2020 NTBC AGM will be held during the indoor meeting on the 8th October. Please send nominations for the committee to Andrew Brunt Club Secretary, to arrive no later than 17th September

Email: ntbcorg@gmail.com

BIN Request

Mike Richardson is taking a well-earned retirement after 12 years of BiN duties and so I'll need a new author - or authors - for some really exciting species' groups:

- Gulls
- Skuas
- Parakeet, shrikes, crows and tits
- Thrushes, flycatchers and chats
- Finches to Buntings

please contact Andy Mould

highroller10@btinternet.com



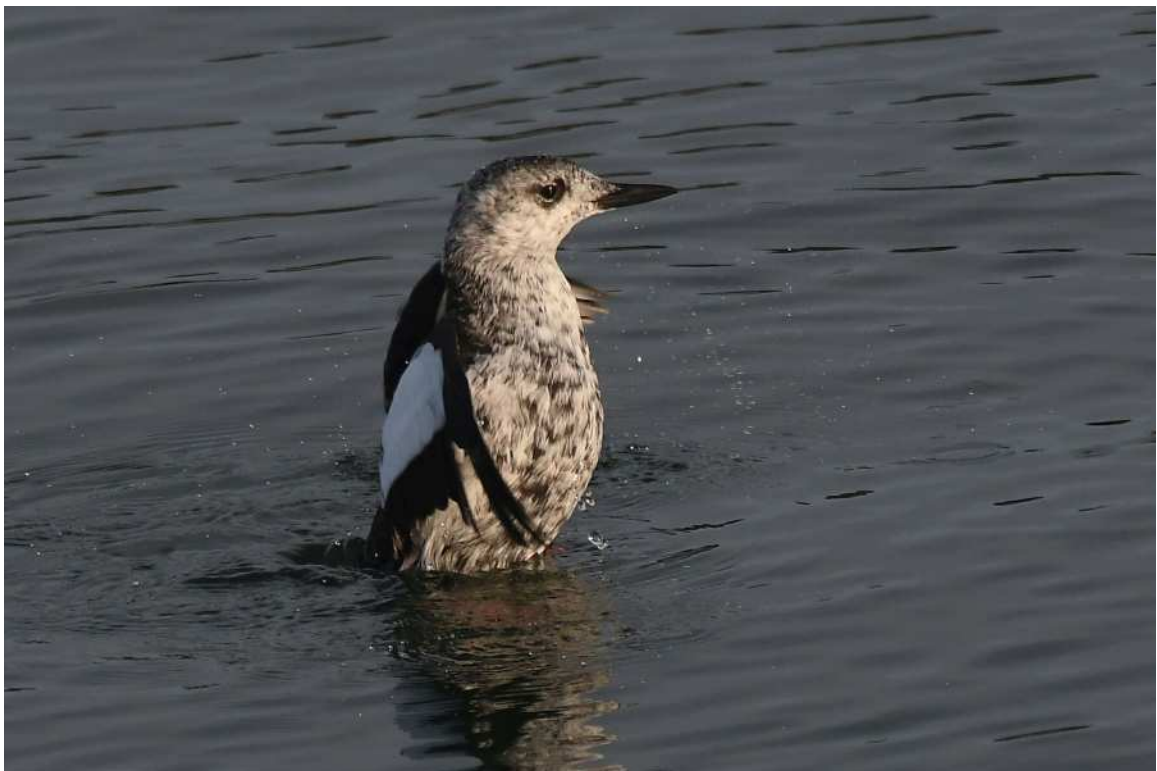
A Cuckoo at Druridge by Peter Tapsell on 7th July



The Howick Sooty Tern by Tim Dean on 29th July



**August and September 2020
Bulletin
Photograph Supplement**



Two close views of a Black Guillemot in Seahouses Harbour by Tim Dean on 12th August



A Pacific Golden Plover by Tim Dean at Longhoughton Steel on 14th August



A Dunlin at Holy Island by Mike Carr on 20th Septemebr



Buff-Breasted Sandpiper at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 16th September



The White-winged Black Tern at DBCP Tim Dean on 14th August



The Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Boulmer by Iain Johnstone

Below a summer Plumaged Bar-tailed Godwit at Boulmer on 2nd August





Caspian Gull in Amble Harbour on 13th September by Tim Dean

A Heron in Tim Dean's Rothbury garden on 24th August





A Wheatear at Druridge pools by Chris Barlow on 20th September



A Robin at Low Newton by Colin Bradshaw on 19th September

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 9

MONTHLY SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2020

6th November 2020



CONTENTS

A Photographic supplement will follow for August and September

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	Singles were still being seen at several sites.
Garganey	Two at Holywell Pond from 4th to 13th were the only sightings in poor autumn.
Storm-petrel	One past Howick on 27th.
Leach's Petrel	One on 16th moved N past Newbiggin then Boulmer.
Sooty Shearwater	Exceptional passage with peak of 538 past Holy Island on 26th.
Red-necked Grebe	One offshore at St Mary's on 7th and another at Druridge on 21st.
Black-necked Grebe	Only sighting was one at Druridge Bay CP on 6th.
Spoonbill	A late bird was at Budle Bay on 29th.
Cattle Egret	Another sighting with one at Druridge Pools on 2nd.
Great White Egret	Singles at several sites though thought to be two mobile individuals.
Crane	Five heard bugling and seen flying NW over Hexham on 27th.
Little Stint	One to two at several sites.
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Superb find at Seaton Pt, Boulmer on 16th. Proved very popular until 22nd.
Pectoral Sandpiper	Only the single sighting with one at Budle Bay on 6th.
Wood Sandpiper	Singles at East Chevington and Bothal Pond early in month.
Greenshank	High count of 18 at Beal Pt on 20th.
Sabine's Gull	Several records signifying an excellent movement this year.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	An <i>intermedius</i> race bird at Branton GP on 20th.
Black Tern	Two to three juveniles at Newbiggin on 12th and 14th.
Long-tailed Skua	After last month's influx there were still several passing offshore mid-month.
Black Guillemot	Singles past St Mary's on 7th and Boulmer on 27th.
Turtle Dove	One at Whittle Dene on 6th. Records increasing in county.
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	One was seen well at Bywell Bridge on 30th. Still hanging on in county.
Hobby	Several records during month.
Hooded Crow	Returning bird again at Craster / Howick on 7th and 25th.
Cetti's Warbler	Singles at East Chevington and Holy Island lough.
Yellow-browed Warbler	Typical influx during month.
Two-barred Warbler	First county record. One at Budle Pt from 28th.
Barred Warbler	Singles at Budle Pt and St Mary's.
Red-breasted Flycatcher	One at Tynemouth on 20th.
Blue-headed Wagtail	One at St Mary's on 1st.
Lapland Bunting	Up to 14 on Holy Island from 22nd. High count for recent years.

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 **Conservation on Gough Island by David Kinchinship 1915h on 12th November by Zoom**

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson
seaswan@btinternet.com

Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Boulmer
Chris Barlow
19th September



CLASSIFIED LIST**Brent Goose** *Branta hrota*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included an estimate of 3,300 spread across Lindisfarne NNR on 27th (IK), 750 at Beal on 2nd (DF), 750 at Ross Back Sands on 13th (MJC), 650 at Holy Island Snook on 19th (MJC/ADM), and 42 at Budle Bay on 16th (MJC) increasing to 100 on 17th (MJC) and 135 on 28th (DF). A total of 204 flew N and five S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 108 N on 16th-17th (SSWT), 30-42 flew N at Snab Point (TRD/JD) and Stag Rocks (DF) on 16th, and 18-30 at Druridge Links (IDR/JF), Newbiggin (GB/TD) and Whitley Bay (IJ) on 26th. One to ten flew N at several further coastal sites from 14th, and one was at Low Newton scrape on 17th.

Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 15 N at Hauxley on 26th (HRS)

Un-raced birds involved 3,000 flying over Holy Island causeway on 19th (DGB/RHB), 800 at Fenham Flats on 9th (JPL) and 25th (AMG/MG), 70 off Ross Back Sands on 21st (AJ), and ten to 35 N at Annstead Point, Boulmer, Cullercoats, Newbiggin, Stag Rocks and St Mary's between 16th-27th. Seven landed at East Chevington north pool on 6th and then continued N (TF).

A pale-bellied Brent
Colin Bradshaw
Low Newton
20th September

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

At Ellington, a total of 84 flew N and ten S between 16th-26th (TB), while ten flew N at Druridge Links on 23rd (IDR) and 20 S at Wark on 5th (PRM). Peak counts came from Hallington Reservoir with 547 on 21st (MR), Bothal Pond with 500 on 17th (TF), 223-278 at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR), QEII CP Lake (CDH) and West Ord (MHu), and 100-188 at Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond, New Water Haugh and Warkworth weir. Counts of 54-68 came from Budle Bay, Druridge Pools and Grindon Lough, and 13-27 were at Ellington, Low Cocklaw and Newcastle Leazes Park.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Nine were at Monks' House Pool on 4th (DGB/RHB), singles at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, N at Ellington and at QEII CP Lake between 14th-20th, and six flew S at Ellington on 25th (TB). An influx occurred on 26th-27th. On 26th, 800 were at Budle Bay (DF) increasing to 1,000 by 28th (CGK/GPK). On 26th, a total of 315 flew N and 585 S at Newbiggin between 0735h-1305h with birds apparently turning back N after 'over-shooting' (GB/TD) and in the afternoon a total of 165 flew N (TF), while 719 flew N at Snab Point (JR), and 196-268 N at Boulmer, Hauxley and Stag Rocks, and 200 W at Longhoughton (BS). A total of 157 flew N at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK/RA) and 109 flew N and 35 S at Seaton Sluice on 26th-27th (SSWT), while 160-239 flew S at Howick (BS) and Holy Island (MJC), and 80-149 N at Cullercoats (ASJ), Howick (BS), Newbiggin (GB/TF) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 26th-27th. Counts of 11-45 came from Boulmer, Cullernose, Druridge Links, Ellington, Rockcliffe and St Mary's on 26th-27th, while 40 flew W at Linden Hall on 26th (NFO) and 24 over Branton on 27th (IBDa/KDa). On 26th, 750 off Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) were thought to be probably of this species (MJC).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

200 flew E at Barrasford on 6th (SW), 150 S at Goswick Sands on 2nd (DF), a total of 95 N and 18 S at Druridge Pools between 8th-17th (IDR), and 18 S at Ellington. Large concentrations involved 1,620 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th (MR), 1,200 at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (PRM) and 23rd (IFo), 500 at Branton GP on 29th (DGB/RHB), 440-460 at Big Waters (GB), Budle Bay (CGK/GPK) and Haughton Strother GP (SW), 330 at Yarrow Slake (the Tweed Estuary) (MHu), 271 at Arcot Pond (LJM), and 100-180 at Alnmouth and Cocklawburn Pond. Counts of 51-63 came from Grindon Lough and Holywell Pond, and 18-40 came from Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools and Ellington. One to nine were also at/over Arcot Pond, Cramlington, Hauxley Reserve, QEII CP Lake and Wark.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Numbers at Budle Bay rose from 17 on 6th to 170 on 7th, 400 by 12th, 1,500 by 19th and 4,000 between 26th-28th (DF/CGK/GPK *et al.*), about 3,000 were at nearby Easington Grange on 27th (DF) and about 3,000 roosting at Goswick Sands on 28th (DF). Other large congregations involved 2,500 at Cresswell Pond and Widdrington Moor Lake on 28th (MN), 1,000 at/over Druridge Pools on 29th (IDR) and 250-350 at Cresswell Pond and Low Newton. Southerly movement included a total of 2,900 at Ellington on 28th-29th (TB), 954 at Druridge Links on 28th (IDR), 742 (plus 35 N) at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 650 at Boulmer on 17th-18th (MN/KWY), a total of 525 at Tynemouth on 17th and 26th (CB/DRW), and

215-250 at Bamburgh, Craster and Holy Island between 10th-29th. Groups of 100-125 flew over (mainly to S/SE) Barrowburn, Belford, Cocklawburn, Newbiggin, North Shields, Warkworth Lane between 15th-29th, and smaller numbers at about 12 sites including well inland at Branton, Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, Grindon Lough, Humshaugh and Rothbury. Earlier in the month, 28-64 flew S/SE at Druridge, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington, Howick, Humshaugh, Longhoughton and Yearle on 6th, 15 S at Embleton on 7th, about 130 were at Low Cocklaw on 8th (TBr), and seven at Fenham Flats on 9th when birds were heard overhead at Cragside, Monkseaton and Wark during darkness.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Five flew N and six S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts were 92 at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH), 78 at Calot Shad (the Tweed Estuary) on 7th (MHu), 74 at West Ord on 13th (MHu), 43 at Killingworth Lake (LJM), 28 at Big Waters (GB) and Howdon (CB), and 11-18 at Hauxley Reserve and Whiteadder Water. Three to nine were at Arcot, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Haughton Strother GP, Holy Island Lough, Monks' House Pool, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two adults were at Budle Bay on 24th (GPK), two were with Mute Swans at Norham (River Tweed) on 29th (TD), and one was at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Seven flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Numbers at Budle Bay built up from 98 on 18th to 108 on 19th, 111 on 21st and 370 by 29th (DF/MSH). Eight juveniles fed amongst seaweed heaps at Boulmer on 10th (MKi), four juveniles were at the Blyth Estuary on 21st (LJM), and singles at Cresswell Pond and Grindon Lough.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

A female was at Derwent Reservoir from 3rd-5th, 8th, 11th-14th and on 20th, and visited Airy Holm Reservoir on 16th (IFo/MN). Singles were also at Alnmouth on 6th (MKi), Branton GP on 9th (IBDa/KDa), Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st and 28th (MR), and Hauxley Reserve on 5th (DF).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Five, including a drake in eclipse plumage, were at Haughton Castle on 6th, and a female was noted there on 15th, with a drake at Haughton Strother GP on 8th (SW). A drake was at Wark on 15th (PRM).

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

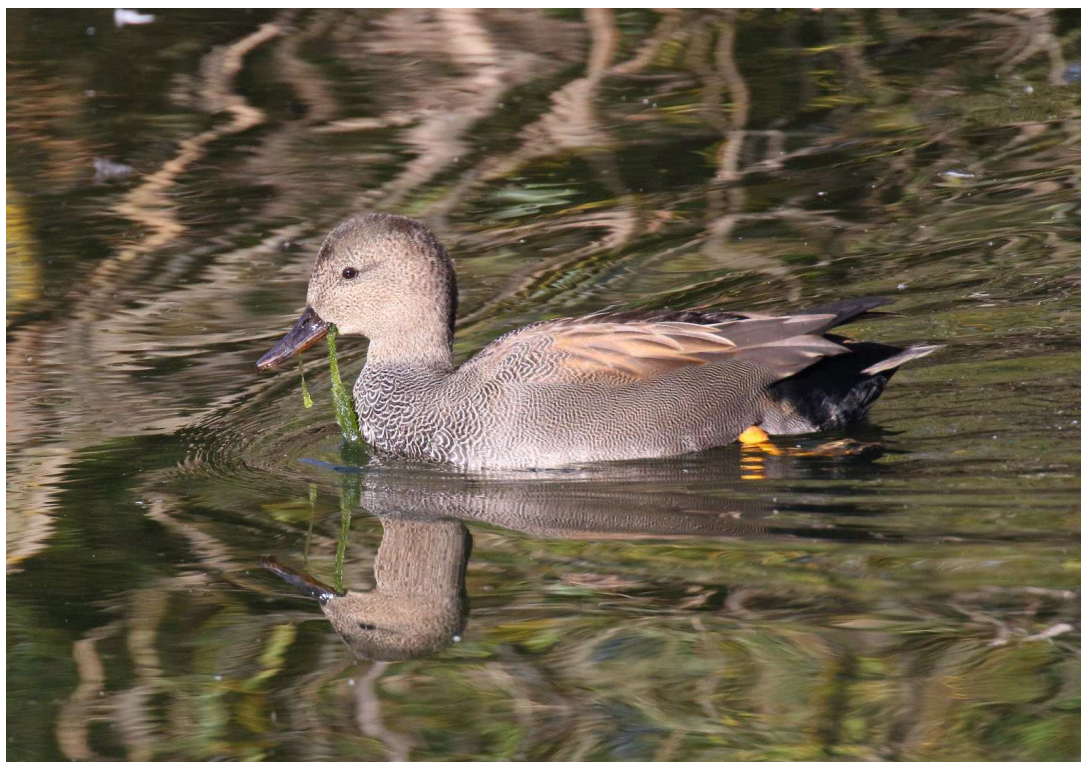
Two were at Holywell Pond on 4th (PC/DM) and 7th (MN), with one remaining until 13th (CB).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT) when one flew N off Druridge Links (IDR), and one flew N at Boulmer on 20th (BS). Peak counts were 26 at Budle Bay on 19th and 28th (MJC/DF/CGK/GPK), 25 at East Chevington on 3rd (KWY), 21 at Bothal Pond on 6th (TF), 15 at Hauxley Reserve on 12th (HRS), and ten at Holywell Pond on 10th (KWY). Four to seven were also at Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough and Monks' House Pool, and two at Linton Ponds and Marden Quarry. More unusually, two were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th and 11th (IFo/PRM).

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

On 16th, eight flew N at Newbiggin (TF) and two N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 52 at Big Waters on 20th (GB), 49 at Linton Ponds on 19th (CDH), 46 at Marden Quarry on 27th (AC), 44 at Hedgeley GP on 14th (TRD/JD), and 20-25 at East Chevington and Holywell Pond (KWY) were the largest gatherings. Nine to 12 were at Branton GP, Castron, Hauxley Reserve and St Mary's Wetland, four at Holy Island Lough, and one to two at Arcot, Bothal, Cocklawburn and Cresswell Ponds, Colt Crag Reservoir, and Monks' House Pool.



A drake Gadwall
Marden Quarry
29th September
Alan Jack

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

The monthly Seaton Sluice total was 1,591 N and one S (SSWT). Other site totals included 592 N at Newbiggin between 18th-27th (GB/TD/JR), 500 N at Tynemouth (DRW), and 203-288 N at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK/RA) and Snab Point (JR) on 26th-27th, and 437 N at St Mary's between 16th-27th (MSH). Smaller numbers were noted, generally heading N, at several further sites mainly in the second half of the month. At Lindisfarne NNR, 2,500 were at Fenham Flats on 9th (JPL), and a peak of 1,500 at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK/GPK). Other peak gatherings were 390 at Branton GP on 29th (DGB/RB), 150 at East Chevington on 3rd (KWY), and 112 at Grindon Lough on 10th (PRM), and 52-56 at Derwent Reservoir and Holy Island Lough. A sample count of 145 at Budle Bay on 13th contained 77% adult drakes (DF). Groups of 24-36 were also at Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve, Linton Ponds, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), and 12-18 at Derwent Reservoir and Embleton Bay.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice between 17th-27th (SSWT), and three to four N at Holy Island and Newbiggin on 26th-27th. A peak of 330 was at Budle Bay on 16th (MJC), 187 were at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo), 116 at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (KWY), 103 at Merryshields GP on 30th (IFo), and 53-89 at Arcot and Newsham Ponds, Colt Crag Reservoir, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition Park, St Mary's Wetland, the River Tweed between A1-Border, and Woodhorn Flashes. Counts of 22-46 also came from Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Druridge Pools, Eland Hall, Hallington Reservoir, Haughton Castle, Hauxley Reserve, Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake, Slaley Hall, Warden and Whiteadder Water, while 15-18 were at Airy Holm Reservoir and Branton GP.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Five moved N at Seaton Sluice between 16th-26th (SSWT), two S at Newbiggin on 5th (AP), and singles N at Howick on 26th (BS) and Newbiggin on 27th (GB). Peak counts of eight were at East Chevington on 3rd (NFO), five at Budle Bay on 5th and smaller numbers on nine further dates (CGK/GPK), four at Grindon Lough on 4th (SW), and three at Arcot Pond on 30th (LJM) and Hauxley Reserve on 12th (HRS). One to two were also at Big Waters and Holy Island Lough.

Teal *Anas crecca*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 1,877 N and 49 S, including 463 N on 16th (SSWT). Also on 16th, 90-148 flew N at Newbiggin (CB), Snab Point (TRD/JD) and St Mary's (MSH), while 50-100 flew N at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK), Newbiggin (GB), Snab Point (JR) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 26th-27th, and 60 N at Cullercoats on 17th (CB), while 26-34 flew N at five coastal sites on scattered dates between 14th-26th. At Budle Bay, an estimated 600 on 3rd (DF) rose to 750 by 16th (MJC), 518 were at Grindon Lough on 4th (SW), 350 at East Chevington on 3rd (KWY), 238 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), 200 on the sea off Newbiggin Beacon Point on 15th (MN), and 101-178 at Hauxley Reserve and Colt Crag Reservoir. Counts of 60-81 also came from Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools and Rockcliffe, 22-49 from Bothal, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Holy Island Lough, Newstead Flash, St Mary's Wetland and on the River Tweed between A1-border, and ten to 18 from Gosforth subsidence pond, Monks' House Pool and West Ord.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Four flew N at St Mary's Island on 16th (MSH) and two flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Modest counts included peaks of five at East Chevington on 5th (DF), four at Big Waters on 6th (GB) and Holywell Pond on 4th and 13th (CB/DM), and two to three at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Killingworth Lake, Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Three flew N at Annstead Point on 27th (CGK/GPK/RA) and singles N at Seaton Sluice on 17th (SSWT) and Snab Point on 26th (JR). Largest counts were 109 at East Chevington on 12th (ADM), 56 at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH), 30 at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TRD/JD), 20-24 at Holywell Pond, Killingworth Lake, Longhoughton Quarry Pond, 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington) and Woodhorn Flashes, and ten to 13 at Grindon Lough, Hallington Reservoir and Haughton Strother GP. Five to nine were also at Bothal Pond and Merryshields GP, and one to four at nine further sites, including two at Budle Bay.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Two flew N at Howick on 25th (BS) when one flew N at Newbiggin (NFO), and singles flew N at St Mary's Island on 7th (JBU/AC/IJ) and Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). A drake was off Cresswell on 8th (NFO) and at Cresswell Pond on 10th (ASH/MN), and a duck was at East Chevington on 12th (DF).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Eight flew N at Newbiggin on 26th (GB). Counts of 24 came from Blyth Harbour on 11th (DM), Cocklawburn on 15th (MHu), and Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 27th (MHu), 21 were at Blyth Bay on 11th (DM), 20 at Alnmouth Bay on 14th (RPo), and eight to ten at Boulmer and off Druridge Links.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 19 N and two S, including ten N on 27th (SSWT), and 11 flew N and three S at Newbiggin 3rd-28th (GB/TF/NFO/AP). Northerly passage also involved ten at Tynemouth between 20th-27th (DRW), eight N off Druridge on 28th (NFO), five at Snab Point on 26th (JR), five at St Mary's on 25th-26th (JBU/MSH), four at Cullercoats on 27th (ASJ), three at Annstead Point on 27th-28th (DF/CGK/GPK), and two N at Howick (BS) and Whitley Bay (IJ) on 27th. One also flew S at Howick on 27th (BS). Two drakes were off Druridge Links on 28th (STH) and one there on 21st (IDR), while a pair sheltered in Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 27th (MHu).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 1,400 N and 69 S at Seaton Sluice during the month was a September record total for the site, and included 567 N on 16th (SSWT), 298 flew N at Newbiggin between 6th-27th (CB/GB/JR), 104 N at Snab Point on 26th (JR), and 73-79 N at Holy Island on 26th (MJC) and St Mary's Island on 16th (MSH). Ten to 41 also flew N at Annstead Point, Craster and Cullercoats and Whitley Bay on various dates. About 420 were off Druridge Links on 21st (IDR) with 80-400 noted there throughout the month, 76 were at Cocklawburn on 8th (MHu), and 60 off Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT). One to six were also at Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Stag Rocks.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Five flew N at Howick on 27th (BS), two N at Holy Island on 26th (MJC), and singles N at Hauxley and Tynemouth on 26th, while one flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Seven were at the regular breeding site on 15th (NFO) and three there on 3rd and 20th. A summering individual was at Cocklawburn Pond on 1st and 29th (MHu).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

The Seaton Sluice total was 54 N and 24 S, including 27 N on 8th (SSWT), 27 flew S and then back N at Cocklawburn on 17th (DF), 16 S at Grindon Lough on 24th (PRM), 12 S at Tynemouth on 26th (DRW), six S at Newbiggin on 27th (GB), and three S at Stag Rocks on 16th (DF). Peak gatherings were 25 at the Tweed Estuary on 17th (KWY), 13-14 at Branton GP (DGB/RHB) and Football Hole on 12th (NFO) and 11 off Dunstanburgh Castle (JEd). Five to eight were at Derwent Reservoir, Rothbury, the Tweed Estuary, Usway Burn and West Ord, and three to four at Castle Island, the Coquet Estuary, Felton, Furnace Bridge, Holystone, the Long Nanny Estuary, Tynemouth Haven and Warkworth weir. One to two were also noted at/over Barrowburn, the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Links. Marden Quarry, Newton Point and Snab Point.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Northerly movement involved 11 at Boulmer on 26th (BS), nine at Annstead Point on 26th (CGK/GPK), five at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), four at Newbiggin on 26th (GB), and singles at Cullercoats, Cullernose Point and Snab Point on 26th. A family party of seven remained at Budle Bay on 13th (CGK/GPK), six were off Druridge Links on 16th (IDR), and one to two at Bamburgh and Berwick Little Beach. An unusual inland record concerned a female at Derwent Reservoir on 18th; only the third site record since 1992 (IFo).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Two at Long Crag (Thrunton Woods) on 20th was the only record received (IRD).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

On 5th, up to 60 were at Quarryhouse Moor, 23 at nearby Bewick and 16 at Haughterslaws (JR/NA). On other dates, one to seven were seen at Alnwick Moor, Boulmer, Doddington and Newstead Flash.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Numbers at Boulmer were possibly encouraged by several seed bins spread around with totals of 22 birds on 4th (BS) and two coveys of seven and 12 at Seaton Point on 29th (TRD/JD). A mixture of 22 adults and young were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS). At Ponteland a total of 19 feeding in a stubble field near Rotary Way on 16th included seven juveniles (PCF). A covey of 14 was in fields opposite Havannah NR on 6th (GB), 13 were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 8th (IRD), 12 were near Norham on 29th (TD) and 11 were at Holywell Pond on 10th (KWY). Ten were reported from both Druridge Links and West Chevington on separate dates and one to nine birds were at Beal, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Howick, Longhoughton, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Newton Pool (where one landed on the water and slowly sank!) and Spital (Newbiggin).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Numbers at Druridge Links and Pools varied throughout the month with two to 34 birds recorded on many dates (IDR/JF). Three were at Brier Dene Farm on 22nd (MNC).

Diver *sp.*

Three flew S past Church Point (Newbiggin) on 26th (GB).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Autumn passage commenced in earnest in the latter half of the month and numbers started to build up at favoured offshore areas. The monthly passage total from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was 360 (87N, 273S) in 103 hours with a peak of 71S on 20th (SSWT). At other viewpoints 31S and one N were seen heading past Stag Rocks on 16th (DF), 25 headed N past Church Point (Newbiggin) during the morning of 27th, plus 19 were on the sea (GB) whilst 14 headed S and eight N past St Mary's on 16th (MSH). 23 were offshore in Druridge Bay on 17th (IDR) with 14 counted there on 28th (STH). One to 12 were witnessed either on the sea or on passage at many other localities throughout the month.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia Arctica*

Singles were offshore at Hauxley Ringing Station (HRS) and Cullernose (IBDa/KDa) on 26th, whilst one headed N past Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Higher than normal numbers were recorded for the time of year, possibly due to greater observer numbers. The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was seven (three N, four S) between 7th-27th (SSWT). Two headed N past Boulmer on 6th (BS) then all other records were in the final week. On 26th one passed Cullercoats heading N (CB) and Cullernose (IDBa/KDa), then

two were seen from Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) (MJC). During the morning of the following day, 27th, six flew N past Tynemouth during the morning (DRW) with other observers reporting sightings of some of these birds further up the coast (GB/TF/NFO/IJ/MSH *et al.*).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One was watched heading N past Rumbling Kern (Howick) at 09:20 on 27th (BS).

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

On 16th one headed N past Church Point (Newbiggin) in the evening (TF) and, what may well have been the same bird, one was seen heading N past Seaton Point (Boulmer) (CSa).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Very little passage was noted with nine N and six S at Annstead (Seahouses) on 7th being the highest count (DF). Six headed N offshore at Druridge Links on 16th and one to four were seen at various other coastal locations. Two chicks fledged at Longhoughton Quarry (BS).

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*

After last month's influx, numbers continued to be impressive and considerably higher than recent years. Unless stated, all records refer to passage birds heading north. Numbers were lower during the first three weeks but birds were still moving through, evidenced by many other records of one to 59 birds submitted from observers from all along the coast. The peak passage period was during the last week of the month. On 25th an estimated 80 per hour were counted from Castle Point (Holy Island) during gale conditions, with likely many passing unseen behind high waves (IK), 529 were counted past Rumbling Kern (Howick) during the morning (BS) and 187 headed past St. Mary's in the early afternoon (JBu). On 26th a total 538 were seen from Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) (MJC), 150 in four hours at Cullercoats (CB) and 130 passed Church Point (Newbiggin) in just over three hours in the afternoon (TF). On the morning of 27th, 459 were seen at Rumbling Kern in three hours (BS). 218 were spotted from Annstead Point during nine hours of watching 26th-27th (CGK/GPK) and although Seaton Sluice reported a monthly total of 157, which was much lower than numbers further north, it was still the highest recorded from that site in 13 years.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly passage total recorded by Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was 378 (335N, 43S) in 103 hours. This is well below the average expected for September but the highest total at this site in the last six years (SSWT). Elsewhere no sightings at all were reported in the first two weeks then suddenly, on 16th, 250 headed N past Newbiggin in four hours (CB), Seaton Sluice recorded 124N on that day (SSWT) and another count of 35 at Newbiggin during the evening (TF). Low numbers persisted thereafter with the only reports into double-digits being 30N at Cullercoats in four hours on 26th (CB), 24N in four hours at St. Mary's on 16th (MSH), 20 at Cullercoats on 17th (CB), 17 at Annstead Point on 19th (DF), 16 at Annstead during nine hours of watching on 26th-27th (CGK/GPK), 13 in four hours at Snab Point (Cresswell) during the morning of 25th (JR) and 11 in four and a half hours past Newbiggin on 27th (GB). One to eight were seen from other viewpoints on various other dates during the second half of the month.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

A peak count of 22 at Holywell Pond on 1st comprised a mixture of adults and juveniles (MN), Hauxley NWT peaked at 17 on 19th (HRS), six adults and eight immatures were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 6th (TD) and at least 13 were at East Chevington on 12th (DF). Other good counts came from Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) with 13 present on 26th (GB), Druridge Bay CP with 12 on 6th (CB), Haughton Strothers had 12 on two separate dates (SW), as did Caistron on 19th (JD). Alnmouth peaked at 11 on 6th and counts of one to eight birds came from Airy Holm Reservoir, Annstead, Big Waters NWT, Boulmer, Branton GP, Cocklawburn Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Haughton Castle, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Flash, Linton Ponds, Merryshields GP, Monks' House Pool, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), Whiteadder Water (Berwick) and Woodhorn Flashes.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One was offshore at St. Mary's on 7th, before flying N (AC/JBu/IJ). A winter-plumaged bird was offshore seen from Druridge Links on 21st (IDR).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded two heading N on passage on 26th and 27th (SSWT) and a single headed N past Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 27th (MJC). The now popular autumn stop-over site of Widdrington Moor Lake peaked at 11 birds on 14th (NFO). Two adults and three juveniles were still present at Haughton Strothers on 8th, reducing to a single adult and three juveniles on 15th (SW). Three adults were with two juveniles at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM) and an adult with three immature birds was present at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) all month (TF/TD). Three were at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo) and one to two birds were seen at Alnmouth Bay, Big Waters NWT, Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Holywell Pond and on the sea at Druridge Bay, St. Mary's, Stag Rocks and Warkworth Bay.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auratus*

The first sightings of the year were of two in Druridge Bay on 21st, 24th and 25th (IDR/ADMc).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

One was at Druridge Bay CP on 6th (CB).

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

A single was in Budle Bay on 29th (CGK/RA).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

One was at Druridge Pools on 2nd (DE/CSa).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The monthly movement total of 24 (seven N and 17S) seen at Seaton Sluice included seven birds together flying in off the sea on 17th (SSWT). One also flew S about one km offshore from Church Point (Newbiggin) on 26th (GB). Numbers at the popular Howdon site peaked at 16 on 13th (CB), nine were at Yarrow Slake (R. Tweed) on 14th (MHu), nine were also at Boulmer Steel on 14th (JAR), while Hauxley NWT peaked at seven birds on 5th (DF) as did Arcot Pond on 3rd (DM). Six were at Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir and Haughton Strothers on various dates and up to four were in fields near St. Mary's Wetland. One to three were at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Druridge Links and Pools, Haughton Castle, Hauxley Village, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, Plessey Woods and Wark.



A successful Grey Heron at Holy Island on 19th September by Mike Carr

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

A flock of four flew high over St. Mary's heading N on 17th (ASJ) and were seen 45 minutes later over East Chevington (PG). Two were at Wark on 2nd (PRM/EAW) and singles were at Cresswell, Derwent Reservoir (a site first), East Chevington North Pool, Haughton Strothers, Hedgeley GP ("standing next to a comparatively tiny Little Egret" (TRD/JD)) and West Chevington.



Little and Large - A Great Egret and a Little Egret at Hedgeley GP by Tim Dean on 20th September

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Castle Island was an attractive location this month with a peak of 15 present on 14th (ADMc) and similar numbers on other dates. Decent numbers were at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) throughout with a peak of ten on 10th (NFO), seven were in Budle Bay on 17th (KWY), six at Cresswell on 6th (CB), six in bushes near the A189 on the R. Wansbeck at North Seaton on 13th (TB) and five at Holy Island Causeway on 5th. One to four were at the following 26 sites: Amble Braid, Annstead, the Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Branton GP, Caistron, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Colt Crag Reservoir, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge, Gosforth Park NR, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Hauxley NWT, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Pond, Killingworth Lake, Long Nanny, Monks' House Pool, Seaton Sluice, Sleek Burn, Snab Point, Warkworth Gut, Warkworth Weir, West Chevington, West Ord (Berwick) and Yarrow Slake (R. Tweed).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers remained steady during most of the month, with the peak towards the middle. The highest counts were 1,500N at Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT) and 800 per hour moving S at Stag Rocks on 30th (DF), followed by 535N at Stag Rocks on 25th and 518 (291N, 227S) at Annstead on 7th (DF). 492 headed N at Annstead in one and a half hours on 28th and 416 flew N there in a similar length watch on 19th (DF). Other sites reflected these numbers with over 200 per hour counted past Druridge, Hauxley, Holy Island and Snab Point on various dates. Groups of feeding birds included 120 close inshore in a long line at Budle Point on 30th (TRD/JD), 50 at Newton Point on 17th and 15 at Dunstanburgh Castle. Many other records were submitted of smaller numbers seen all along the coast.



A young Gannet passing Beadnell by Colin Bradshaw on 18th September

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice reported the usual increase in numbers in September with a monthly total of 64N and 35S (SSWT). 32 roosted at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 4th (MHu), 20 flew S past Boulmer on 6th (BS), six were at Blyth South Harbour (including three juveniles on "Admiralty Dolphin") on 29th (LJM), three also there on 10th, two at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) and a single juvenile looking "rather forlorn" on the rocks at Craster Harbour (TRD/JD).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A grand total of 169 were roosting in Blyth Harbour on 10th (STH) and 66 were in the Blyth Estuary on 21st (LJM). The low-tide roost at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) peaked at 44 on 26th (MHu), numbers at East Chevington reduced from the highs of the summer to a peak of 35 on 12th (DF), 32 were in the Coquet Estuary on 6th (RPo), 31 were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 16th (MR) and Derwent Reservoir had a high of 22 birds present on 6th (PRM). 22 were at Hauxley NWT on 19th and the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost peaked at 18 on 4th. At Newbiggin, 16 were perched on "The Couple" breakwater on 7th (STH), 12 were on rocks at Annstead on 19th and nine or fewer were at many other locations. Two at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 24th included at least one bird of the *sinensis* race (NFO).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetuss*

Derwent Reservoir had single birds on seven dates during the month and two birds were there on 2nd (IFo). Single birds were seen at the following locations: Beal on 2nd (DF), Boulmer on 5th (BS) and 7th (NFO), Fenwick on 12th (BS), Budle Bay on 13th (CGK/GPK), East Ord (Berwick) on 15th (MHu), Tynemouth on 17th (ASJ) and on 21st a bird noted flying over Ellington Dene at 17:15h (TB) may have been the bird that was seen at Widdrington Moor Lake at 17:00h.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds, two males and a female, were on Holy Island on 20th (ADM). Two birds were at Warkworth on 7th and 9th (MJC), Ellington on 8th and 11th (TB), and Guyzance on 8th (MJC), High Heaton (Newcastle) on 18th (LMi), Wark (North Tyne) on 27th (PRM) and at Howick on 29th (MJC). Single birds were reported from 30 locations throughout the month.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Three birds were at Boulmer on 4th (BS) and three birds involving a male and two juveniles were at East Chevington on 6th (TF) and two "cream crowns" were seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 28th (MN). Single birds were noted at Beal, Budle Bay, Druridge Links, Easington, Ellington, Holystone, Holywell Pond, Lesbury, Linton Ponds, West Chevington and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Four birds were at Crooked Oak Lane on 28th and two birds were seen there on several dates (IFo). Two birds were also noted at Low Waskerley on 6th and Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo). Single birds were at West Minsteracres (IFo) on 3rd, Derwent Reservoir on 5th and 6th (IFo/PRM) and at Shotleyfield (near Airy Holm Reservoir) on 25th (IFo).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

An impressive 21 birds were up in the air together at Longhoughton on 6th (BS) and 20 birds were circling Earle Hill (Yearle) on 16th (DGB/RHB). Five birds were at Guyzance on 8th (MJC), Bothal Pond on 14th (MSH) and West Hartford on 29th (LJM). Four birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), Howick Hall on 5th (PHa/AHa) and Warkworth on 7th (MJC). One to three birds were at 39 sites during the month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Single birds were either seen or heard at Big Waters NWT on 6th and 27th (GB), East Chevington on 8th (NFO) and 15th (TB), Druridge Pools on 20th (IDR/JF).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

23 birds at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 9th (DM) and 21 at Merryshields GP on 30th (IFo) were the biggest counts. 11 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM) and 11 were at QEII CP and Linton Ponds on 19th (CDH). One to nine birds were noted at 13 sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

122 birds at East Chevington on 25th (IRD) and 109 at Linton Ponds on 19th (CDH) were the biggest counts this month. 80 were at QEII CP on 19th (CDH), 55 were at Haughton Strothers on 8th (SW), 50 were at Branton GP on 8th (IBDa/KDa), 48 were at Holywell Pond on 9th (DM) and 47 at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM). 30 were at Branton GP on 29th (DGB/RHB). One to twenty birds were at eight other sites.

Crane *Grus grus*

Five birds flew high NW over Hexham bugling on 27th (AJR).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The highest count came from Budle Bay, with 170 on 7th (CGK). There were 112 feeding on the mini-golf course at Whitley Bay on 22nd (ASJ), 110 at roost at Howick on 7th (JAR) and 105 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 4th (AP). Hauxley had 99 on 26th (HRS). Boulmer Steel and Cullercoats both had 75 on 14th (JAR) and 25th (CB) respectively. At Tynemouth, 63 flew N on 20th (CB), and there were 60 at Little Beach (Berwick) on 7th (MHu). There were 45 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 28th (JAR) and 31 at Old Hartley on 28th (LJM). Two were offshore at Druridge Pools on 17th (IDR) and one was at South Harbour (Blyth) on 11th (DM).



An Oystercatcher at Beadnell on 18th September by Colin Bradshaw

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

An estimated 1,500 were present at East Chevington on 5th (DF), and 1,000 were at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had 550 on 6th (TD), Holywell Pond had 354 on 10th (KWY), and Bamburgh had 300 on 22nd (PCI). There were 236 at the Coquet Estuary on 6th (RPo), 232 at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 13th (MHu), 225 in a ploughed field at Gloucester Lodge Farm (Blyth) on 28th (LJM), 214 at Haughton Strothers on 15th (SW), 212 at Cocklawburn on 15th (MHu), 210 at St Mary's Island on 14th (ASJ) and 200 at Blagdon on 12th (PCF). Druridge Links and Pools had 150 on 26th (IDR/JF), Cheswick had 140 on 15th (MHu), Grindon Lough had 120 on 25th (PRM), Boulmer Steel had 100 on 9th (JAR), and Big Waters NWT had 100 on 20th (GB). Smaller numbers were reported from Thorngraston Common, Alnmouth, Mickley Square, Monks' House Pool, Holystone and Arcot Pond.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

2,500 birds were counted in fields along the Crooked Lonnen on Holy Island on 17th (BS), and 2,000 were at Longhoughton Steel on 20th (BS). St Mary's Island had 1,800 on 14th (ASJ), and East Chevington had 1,150 on 5th (DF). There were 800 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 28th (MR), 650 at the Football Hole (Newton) on 12th (NFO) and 500 at Longhoughton on 9th (IRD). Grindon Lough had 360 on 25th (PRM), Beacon Point (Newbiggin) had 300 on 6th (CB), Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) had 218 on 29th (MHu) and Derwent Reservoir had 200 on 14th (IFo). Groups of below 100 were reported from Waterhead, Greenhaugh, Linden Hall, Longhorsley, High Heaton, Newcastle, Annstead, Seahouses, Long Nanny, Newton, Ord Moor, Berwick and the Coquet Estuary, with singles at Monkseaton, Whitley Bay and Ellington.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

There were 20 at Boulmer shore on 22nd (TD), eight at Beal on 28th (DF), seven S at Newton Point on 20th (DF), and seven in Budle Bay on 29th (DF). Six birds were at Howick on 7th (JAR) and Annstead on 8th (DF). There were five at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 14th (RPo), Holy Island on 22nd (TRD/JD), and Fenham-le-Moor on 25th (AMG/MG). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded five (2N, 3S) between 17th and 20th (SSWT). Hauxley had four on 26th (HRS) and there were two N at Tynemouth on 27th (DRW). There were singles at Castle Island on 26th (GB) and at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 27th (GB).



A Grey Plover by Tim Dean 22nd September Holy Island causeway

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The highest counts came from the Blyth Estuary with 50 downstream from the boatyard on 3rd (MN), and Boulmer with 50 on 18th (KWY). St Mary's Island had 40 on 14th (ASJ), Birling Carrs (Warkworth) had 35 on 14th (RPo), Budle Bay had 30 on 28th (CGK), and Cocklawburn had 26 on 21st (MHu). Smaller numbers were recorded at Berwick Little Beach the Coquet Estuary, East Chevington, Holy Island, the Tweed Estuary and Druridge Links, with singles at Hauxley and the Football Hole (Newton). Inland, there were three at Hallington Reservoirs on 21st (MR) and one juvenile at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM).



A Ringed Plover by Alan Jack

St. Mary's 9th September

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

A juvenile bird was roosting with Golden Plovers at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 20th (AP).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a monthly total of 33 (22N, 11S), with the last record being seven N on 17th (SSWT). At St Mary's Island, five flew S with nine Bar-tailed Godwits on 1st (BS). There were four at Boulmer on 1st (AJR), three at Cocklawburn on 1st (MHu) and three N at Druridge on 6th (CB). Singles were recorded at Seahouses, East Chevington, Rockcliffe and North Blyth, with the last sighting for the month coming from Hauxley on 19th (HRS).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The largest flocks were at the Long Nanny with 460 on 19th (CB), Boulmer Steel with 450 on 14th (JAR), and Alnmouth with 304 on 6th (MKi). There were 260 at Longhoughton Steel on 4th (MKi), 170 at Newbiggin on 6th (CB), 141 at the Coquet Estuary on 6th (RPo) and 117 at Cresswell Pond on 5th (DF). Hauxley had 96 on 26th (HRS) and Beal had 66 on 10th (DF). There were 36 at Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 14th (MHu), 32 at Druridge Pools on 30th (IDR) and 31 at St Mary's Island on 6th (CDH). Six were at Ord Moor (Berwick) on 27th (MHu) and there were singles at Holywell Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Big Waters NWT.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The highest counts came from Lindisfarne, with 470 at Beal on 24th (DF), and 400 at the high tide roost on St Cuthbert's Island on 27th (IK). There were 20 at Boulmer on 18th (KWY), 13 at Budle Bay on 10th (DF) and 12 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 6th (CB). Smaller groups were observed at St Mary's Island, Hauxley, Howick, the Blyth Estuary, Rockcliffe and Druridge Links. Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 6N during the month (SSWT).

A Bar-tailed Godwit by Chris Barlow at Boulmer on 13th September

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

The largest flocks were recorded at the Coquet Estuary, with 55 on 22nd (CSa), Hauxley NWT, with 25 on 17th (AJR), Alnmouth, with 21 on 11th (MJC), and Amble Braid, with 20 on 8th (NFO). There were 12 at Castle Island on the Wansbeck on 7th (TF). Smaller groups were noted at Budle Bay, St Mary's Wetland, East Chevington, the Tweed Estuary, Boulmer and West Ord, Berwick.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Seaton Point (Boulmer) was the most attractive location with 64 counted on 7th (MKi), 40 on 16th (TRD/JD), declining to 15 by 29th (TRD/JD). 20 were also seen at Boulmer shore on 22nd (TD). Other significant counts were 32 at both Howick (JAR) and Berwick Little Beach (MHu) on 7th, at least 30 at St Mary's Island on 18th (DLo), 28 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth on 14th (RPo), 23 at Stag Rocks on 16th (DF), 24 at Longhoughton Steel on 4th (MKi) and 20 at Craster Harbour on 29th (TRD/JD). One to ten were seen at Blyth South Harbour, Cocklawburn, Football Hole (Newton), Hauxley and Holy Island during the month.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Lindisfarne NNR held the highest concentrations with the maximum being 280 at Fenham Flats on 21st (AJR), a monthly peak of 200 at Budle Bay on 3rd (GPK), and an estimated 160 at Holy Island on 10th (MHu). Much smaller numbers were reported from other locations with 29 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 22nd (DF), 24 at the River Coquet Estuary on 13th (TF), 20 at Boulmer on 20th (BS) and 15 at Amble Braid on 14th (NFO). One to nine were seen at Alnmouth, Berwick Little Beach, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Newbiggin, Seaton Point (Boulmer) and St Mary's Island.

A Knot at Hadston Carr
by Chris Barlow
20th September



Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

One flew S at Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT). Passage continued through the area this month, with the peak count at East Chevington occurring on 3rd with 21 present (NFO/KWY/CSa). Onward passage saw numbers decline here throughout the month with the last report being three on 29th (PMHa/RMHa). Onward passage was also observed at Holywell Pond with five on 1st reducing to two by 7th (MN). Counts of five also came from Druridge Pools on 3rd (TRD/JD), Low Newton on 17th and 27th (TRD/JD/AMG/MG) and Widdrington Moor Lake on 28th (NFO). Four were at Holy Island (Rocket Field) on 21st and three were at Briar Dene Flash (Whitley Bay) on 1st and Budle Bay on 13th. Singles were reported from Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island (Straight Lonnen), the River Coquet Estuary, Seaton Point (Boulmer), St Mary's Island and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed),

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

A rare record from Seaton Sluice was one S on 23rd (SSWT). Birds were present at Budle Bay throughout the month with a minimum of 15 seen between 5th-7th reducing gradually to one on 29th (CPK/GPK/DF *et al.*). Elsewhere numbers were much smaller and mainly juveniles where reported, with two at the River Blyth Estuary on 2nd-3rd (LJM/MN) and two at Amble Braid on 8th (NFO). Single birds were at Boulmer, Castle Island, (River Wansbeck), Colt Crag Reservoir, Hauxley, Holy Island, the Long Nanny Estuary, Newbiggin, the River Coquet Estuary and St Mary's Island.



A Curlew Sandpiper at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 10th September

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

St Mary's Island was again the main haunt this month with reports between 11th and 24th of a minimum of three and a maximum of 110 (KWY/ASJ/DLo *et al.*). Maximum counts from other locations were 64 at Berwick Little Beach on 7th (MHu), 56 at Newbiggin on 9th (LJM), 50 at Football Hole (Newton) on 12th (NFO), 44 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 14th (RPo), 30 at Longhoughton Steel on 4th (MKi), approximately 30 at Druridge Bay on 21st (IDR) and 25 at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 16th (IF). One to ten were seen at Hauxley, Ross Back Sands (Lindisfarne NNR) and Sandham Bay (Holy Island).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

A total of 63 N on 16th-17th was recorded at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). At Budle Bay the highest count was made on 6th when 700 were present (CGK/GPK) but only 29 were present on 29th (DF). A similar situation was evident in the Boulmer area with a high of 400 counted on 19th (ASJ) declining to 40 at Seaton Point by 29th (TRD/JD), presumably as birds passed south on passage. Other counts in three figures were 300 at Hauxley beach on 20th (CSa), 241 at Alnmouth on 11th (MJC), 135 at Holy Island north shore on 21st (AJR) and 82 in the harbour on the same date (AJR). The River Blyth Estuary attracted 64 on 21st (LJM), a minimum of 50 was at St Mary's Island on 17th (MSH), 40 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 19th (KWY), 38 at Beal on 14th (DF), 36 at The River Coquet Estuary on 6th (RPo) and 20 at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 5th (TD). One to 12 were reported from Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary), Cocklawburn, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Earsdon Plant Centre Flash, East Chevington, Football Hole (Newton) Grindon Lough, Hallington Reservoir, Hauxley NWT and Holywell Pond.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Few were reported again this month with four at Cocklawburn on 21st (MHu) being the highest count. Two flew N at Howick on 26th (BS) and singles were reported from Boulmer, Emmanuel Head (Holy Island), Low Newton, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Light passage continued this month with two juveniles at Holy Island causeway on 13th (BS), singles at Boulmer on 18th-19th (IF/ASJ), Budle Bay from 7th-28th (CGK/GPK/DF), Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary) on 26th (MHu) and Hauxley beach on 20th (CSa)



The popular Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Boulmer
19th Septemebr
Alan Jack

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis*

A single was found at Newton on the morning of 16th (Gary Woodburn) which soon relocated to Seaton Point (Boulmer) where it was last reported on 22nd when put to flight by a Peregrine. (CSa/SVM/TD *et al.*).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

A juvenile at Budle Bay on 6th was the second record for the site (GPK/CGK).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

No reports received again this month.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

The first of the autumn flew in off the sea calling at St Mary's Island on 17th (MSH) and it or another flew towards Old Hartley on 20th (MSH). One flew NE at the 'excavations' on Holy island on 19th (ADM) and one was reported on Holy Island on 20th at the Quarry (MJC/IDBa/KDa). Singles were also at Cresswell Pond on 28th (TF) and at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 30th (MJC).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Low numbers were reported this month with the highest count being nine at Low Newton Scrape on 19th (CB). Gosforth Subsidence Pond attracted a high of eight on 30th (MJC), six were at Holy Island (Rocket Field) on 21st (AJR), five were seen at Grindon Lough on 17th (PRM), four were at Bothal Pond on 20th (TD) and three at Broomlee Lough on 21st (AJH). One-two were Boulmer, Druridge Pools, Hauxley, Howdon and Monks' House Pool.



A Snipe at Gosforth subsidence pond by Mike Carr on 18th September

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

One flew S at Seaton Sluice on 20th (SSWT). Three were at Hauxley NWT on 17th (AJR), two were at Guyzance on 8th (MJC) and one at Castle Island on 9th (STH).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Passage was much reduced with single birds seen at five localities. Singles were at Berwick Hill Bridge (River Pont) on 2nd (AHB), Hedgeley GP on 3rd (NFO), Guyzance on 8th (MJC), Bothal Pond from 9th- 30th (TF) and Colt Crag Reservoir on 25th-28th (MR).

The report from Ogle Bridge in August was erroneous

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

A roost at the Rocket Field on Holy Island held 556 on 17th (BS), the maximum at nearby Budle Bay was 203 on 20th (DF) and the highest count from Beal was 160 on 10th (DF). Away from Lindisfarne NNR, the River Coquet Estuary had a high of 198 on 6th (RPO) and the River Tweed Estuary had concentrations of 156 at Yarrow Slake on 14th and 124 at Calot Shad on 7th (MHu). Other notable counts were 122 at Howdon on the River Tyne on 15th (CB), 107 at Longhoughton Steel on 4th (MKi), 93 at the River Blyth Estuary on 21st (LJM), 80 at Hauxley NWT on 19th (HRS), 62 at Alnmouth on 11th (MJC) and 54 at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 7th (MKi). At West Ord (Berwick) 36 were present on 27th, 20 were at Howick on 7th and also at Monks' House Pool on 19th. The peak count at Druridge Pools was six on 10th and two were at St Mary's Island on 18th. Two were sound recorded over Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) at 23:16 on 16th (MSH).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

A single remained at East Chevington on 2nd-3rd (CSa/KWY) and one was seen at Bothal Pond on 9th (TF).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Birds were reported from East Chevington from 2nd-8th with juveniles specifically reported on 6th& 8th and a moulting adult reported also on 8th(NFO/TRD/JD *et al.*). At Budle Bay a juvenile was seen from 2nd-12th and a moulting adult from 20th-30th (CGK/GPK). Un-aged birds were reported on 13th and 14th (IBDA/KDa/DF). Elsewhere a juvenile was at West Chevington on 5th (NFO), a single was at Holy Island on 10th (MHu) and at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 10th and 12th (AC).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The favoured Beal area of Lindisfarne NNR held birds regularly throughout the month with the peak count being 18 on 20th (MJC). At nearby South Low, 16 were present on 13th (BS). The maximum monthly count at Budle Bay was ten on 20th (CGK/GPK) and four were seen at Holy Island causeway on 19th (DGB/RHB). Other localities attracting one-two birds were, Alnmouth, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Foxton Bends (River Aln), Grindon Lough, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Pond, St Mary's Island, Warkworth, West Chevington, West Ord (Berwick), Widdrington Moor Lake and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed Estuary).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Notable movement N was noted on a number of days from 17th-26th with a maximum of 1,000 seen from Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 26th (MJC) and 'hundreds' flew offshore at Druridge Links in one hour during early morning on 25th (IDR). At Annstead Point, 420 moved N in under two hours on 19th (DF) and at least 250 fed offshore there on 26th (CGK/GPK). Elsewhere, counts of 50-200, either feeding offshore or moving N, came from Bamburgh, Druridge Links, Hauxley, Holy Island and Newbiggin Snab Point.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Three sightings in an hour of adult birds feeding with Kittiwakes and moving slowly N came from Newbiggin on 16th but were thought likely to comprise a single individual (CB/ADMc). A juvenile showed well offshore at Druridge Links on 25th (IDR) and possibly the same bird was again seen on 26th at Cullercoats (CB), Snab Point (JR) and Emmanuel Head where it, or another, appeared again on 27th (MJC).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Several surveys of the gull roost at Budle Bay from 3rd-12th found a maximum of around 3,000 on 12th with other smaller totals ranging from 500-1,200; the great majority of these birds were adults (DF). A roost of 1,200 was at West Ord on 2nd (MHu) and other gatherings of 100-350 were seen at Alexandra Park (Cramlington), the Blyth Estuary, Cocklawbun, Gosforth Garden Village, Hauxley, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, the QEII CP Lake and the River Tweed (A1-Border). Up to 50 were recorded from eight other localities.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Four immature birds fed offshore at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 15th (MN), three flew N there the following day (CB) and on 29th at least four were recorded at Annstead (DF). Elsewhere, apart from two juveniles at Budle Point on 6th (CGK/GPK), all other sightings, on various dates up to the month end, were of singles at Beal, Boulmer, Cullercoats, East Chevington, Hauxley, Newbiggin and St Mary's Island,



A Little Gull at Newbiggin
13th September by Chris Barlow

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

A record monthly total of 24 (19 N, 5 S) were seen at Seaton Sluice following the large influx last month (SSWT). High numbers remained throughout with the largest of many counts at Cresswell Pond being 75 on 12th (ADMc). At least 50 fed on fields adjacent to the QEII CP Lake on 25th (TB) and 20-50 were seen on various dates at Cresswell Snab Point, East Chevington North Pool and Newbiggin. Numerous records of up to six came from other localities around Cresswell/Newbiggin/Ellington and, further afield, from Budle Bay where a daily maximum of nine was recorded (CGK/GPK) with one to three at Bamburgh, Beal, Boulmer, Holy Island, Low Newton, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth. The great majority of these sightings comprised adult birds.



Mediterranean Gulls at Newbiggin by Alan Jack on 12th September

Common Gull *Larus canus*

The largest count was recorded along the River Tweed (A1-Border) where 349 were seen on 15th (TBr) and regular counts throughout at the gull roost in Budle Bay produced a range of 40-108, almost all adults, with the maximum seen on 21st (DF). Other gatherings of 35-100 were at Aydon (Corbridge), Boulmer, Haughton Strother, West Ord and Whiteadder Water (Berwick) and several counts offshore at Druridge Links included a maximum of 35 (IDR). One to three were at five other sites.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

At St Mary's Island, 200+/hour moved N on 27th (MSH), 65 were at Boulmer Steel on 9th (JAR) and several counts in the gull roost at Budle Bay produced 16-47 with the maximum seen on 10th (DF). Elsewhere, 15-25 were at Blyth South Harbour, Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary), Derwent Reservoir and Hauxley with one to six at Colt Crag Reservoir, offshore at Druridge Links, Haughton Strother, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds and Tyne Green (Hexham).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The gull roost at Budle Bay contained a maximum of ca.3,500 on 10th with a range of 700-1,800 on four other dates (DF). The Blyth Estuary held 212 (LJM) with 150-200+ at Holywell Pond (DM), Newstead Flash (MSH), Ord Moor (Berwick) (MHu) and Whiteadder Water (TBr) with smaller counts of ten to 30 from Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir and offshore at Druridge Links.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Good numbers remained until late in the month with 234 at Branton GP on 17th (IBDa/KDa) which declined to 65, mainly adult birds, on 20th (TRD/JD). At Derwent Reservoir, 20+ were present on 6th (PRM) and, at Budle Bay, 18 on 10th had reduced to ten by 21st (DF). One to nine were at ten other, mainly inland, localities including seven adults at Grindon Lough on 25th (PRM).

An adult at Branton GP on 20th was identified from plumage details and build to be of the form ssp. *intermedius* (TRD/JD).

Tern sp

A tern roost of 250 at The Heugh (Holy Island) on 16th comprised a mix of Sandwich, Common and Arctic with one Roseate (BS).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Good numbers were reported during the first half of the month, declining gradually towards the month end. Birds passing at Seaton Sluice from 23rd-27th comprised 126 N and 73 S (SSWT). An estimated 100, including a Dutch-ringed bird, were at Cocklawburn on 15th (DF) and, elsewhere, 25-50 were recorded at Bamburgh. Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Boulmer, offshore at Druridge Links and Ross Back Sands with 10-20 at Blyth Bay/Harbour, Holy Island (Sandham Bay), Seaton Sluice (Collywell Bay) and Snab Point. Smaller numbers up to eight were also at Budle Bay, Church Point (Newbiggin), Cocklawburn, Cullernose, Dunstanburgh Castle, Hauxley and St Mary's Island.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

A very late bird was at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 12th (ASJ).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Four adults and a juvenile were in Budle Bay from 5th-7th (CGK/GPK), three at Newbiggin on 14th (NFO) and two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT). Single adults were at The Heugh (Holy Island) on 16th (BS) and at Boulmer on 26th-27th (CSa/BS).

Commic Tern

A mixed flock of 80, including many juveniles, was at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 12th (ASJ) and 60 moved S at a rate of 800/hour at Stag Rocks on 30th (DS).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Very small numbers were seen up to mid-month at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). At Newbiggin, 70 were recorded on 6th (CB) and 40, comprising 25 at roost and 15 flying S, were seen at Beal on 4th (DF).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The three records received comprised six at Ross Back Sands on 13th, three at Annstead on 17th and four at Cullercoats on 26th.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Three juveniles roosted at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 11th-12th (AP/ASJ) with two still present on 14th (NFO).



Juvenile Black Terns at Newbiggin

Chris Barlow on 13th September

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

A below-average month at the watch tower at Seaton Sluice with a total of 40 N and three S, including a maximum of 32 N on 16th (SSWT). Two hours sea-watching at Tynemouth in the early morning of 25th produced 20 N and three S (DRW) and nine hours watching on 26th-27th picked up nine moving N at Annstead (CGK/GPK). Eight were recorded passing N at both Boulmer and Newbiggin on 16th (CB/CSa) and seven flew S and two N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 26th (MJC). Records of four and five came from St Mary's Island on 16th and 25th (JBu/MSH) and sightings of one and two at other localities, almost all during the two peak periods, 16th-19th and 25th-28th, came from Blyth South Harbour, Boulmer, Cullercoats, Cresswell (Snab Point), Druridge Bay, Embleton Bay, Hauxley and Low Newton.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

The records from Seaton Sluice comprised three N on 16th, one N on 20th (SSWT) and elsewhere, three flew S at Hauxley on 26th (HRS). two N at Annstead on 19th (DF) with singles at Holy Island, Newbiggin, Snab Point and Tynemouth, all during the period 16th-27th.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

It was a 'below-average' month at Seaton Sluice with a total of 34 N and 54 S (SSWT), but an encouraging number of sightings was reported from elsewhere including 12 S in 4-5 hours sea-watching at Tynemouth on 25th (DRW), eleven moving N at Newbiggin in four hours on 16th (CB), nine N in nine hours over 26th-27th at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK) and six N at St Mary's Island on 25th (JBu). The majority of sightings, almost all of birds moving N, came in two periods, firstly 16th-18th when one to three were recorded from Boulmer, Church Point (Newbiggin), Druridge Links, Ross Back Sands, Snab Point, Warkworth Bay and secondly, 25th-27th, when one to three were seen from Church Point (Newbiggin), Cullercoats, Cullernose, Druridge Links, Hauxley, Holy Island and Snab Point. Singles were also seen from Annstead Point on 1st, in Warkworth Bay on 4th and at Bamburgh on 30th.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Single birds were seen from Newbiggin on 16th (CB), Warkworth Pier on 17th (CSa), a juvenile moved N at Howick on 25th (BS) and on the same day possibly the same individual was reported moving S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and Newbiggin (NFO).

Auk *sp*

An estimated 3,000 flew N at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 28th (MJC) and, at Snab Point on 25th, 120 moved N in a half-hour (JR).

Guillemot/Razorbill

At Seaton Sluice the only large-scale movement seen was 1,200 N on 16th (SSWT). Elsewhere, 350 flew N at Annstead on 17th (DF), 100s moved N offshore at Druridge Links on 25th (IDR) and on 29th, 'thousands' were seen moving N at Annstead (DF).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Offshore at Druridge Links, 500 flew N in an hour on 25th (IDR) and on the following day 290/hour passed N at Hauxley (HRS). Small numbers were also seen in Alnmouth Bay (RPO), Boulmer, Newbiggin, Newton Point and Snab Point.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

A single was in Druridge Bay (TRD/JD).

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

One flying N came down onto the sea at St Mary's Island on 7th (JBu/AC/IJ) and a second record was of one flying N at Boulmer on 27th (BS).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

An 'unprecedented' September number was recorded at Seaton Sluice when 150 moved N on 16th (SSWT); also on 16th, 50 moved N in four hours at Newbiggin (CB), with four at St Mary's Island (MSH) and the following day ten flew N at Annstead (DF). One to three were seen at four other sites.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

There was a peak count of 93 at Old Eldon Square (Newcastle) on 9th, 72 were at Blyth Bus Station on 11th and 65 at Blyth South Harbour on the same date (DM). They were noted as present at Jesmond Dene on 20th.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The regular site at Howdon held 88 on 12th with 25 at Holywell Pond on 13th (CB) and 14 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). Six were at Newstead Flash on 15th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 27th, 5 at Ellington on 19th and one to four at eight other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

A large gathering of 1,200 was at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 30th (MJC), 300 near Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (ADM), 135 at Warden on 6th (SW) and 23 S at Wark (N.Tyne) on 5th (PRM). There was a peak of 16 at Druridge Pools and Links on 20th with one to nine there on 16 other dates, 12 were at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 27th and nine at Jesmond Dene on 13th.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

One was found bathing in a roadside puddle at Whittle Dene on 6th with possibly others in an adjacent stubble field viewed flying up into a tree but not seen subsequently (PCF).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Nine were at Hepple on 13th (JR), eight at Ogle on 16th (AHB), seven was the high count at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS) with six at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 4th & 10th and at Crooked Oak Lane on 26th. Three to four were at Dinnington and Whittle Dene.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

All reports were of singles at Derwent Reservoir on 1st and 27th, Druridge Pools on 6th, Colwell on 8th, Wall on 9th, Branton Middle Steads on 12th, Howick on 14th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 15th, near Millfield on 22nd and at Branton on 26th. One at Mickley Square on 16th was the first seen there in many years and one freshly dead bird was at Ross Back Sands on 21st.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Four called at Craggside (Rothbury) on 9th (SW) with two at Howick on 14th, Knowesgate on 16th, Letah Wood (Hexham) on 17th, St John Lee (Acomb) on 22nd and Wark (N. Tyne) on 23rd. Singles were at Howick, Fulbeck (Morpeth) and Waren Mill (Bamburgh) all month and at 12 other widely spread localities.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Just one was heard but not seen at Bellasis Bridge on 5th (AHB).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Singles were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 15th (MR), Spital Bay (Newbiggin) on 21st (LJM) and Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

On 20th three were together at Low Steads (Longhoughton) with one was present at Boulmer all month (BS) with one at Holy Island on 17th and 26th (MJC).

Swift *Apus apus*

Eight was the high count flying S at Boulmer on 5th and Chugdon Wood Ellington on 7th (BS/TB) with five over Curly Kews (Morpeth) before heading south on 2nd (ADMc) and four at Holywell Pond on 13th (CB). Three flew south at Tynemouth on 6th and at Holywell Pond on 10th and Havannah NR on 11th with one to two at 16 other widespread locations generally until 14th. The latest sighting was one at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 28th (IJ).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Well reported with the high count of three at Branton GP on 3rd (IBDa/KDa), two at Warkworth on 2nd & 7th, Felton on 9th, Fourstones on 11th, Low Angerton on 18th, Holystone and Paperhaugh (R.Coquet) on 19th, Tynemouth on 26th and Ladies Bridge (Rothbury) on 29th. Singles were at 22 other widespread localities including multiple sightings at East Chevington, Howick Hall and Seaton Sluice.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

One was seen well though briefly at Bywell Bridge (Stocksfield) on 30th (MR).

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The peak count was of three at Warkworth on 7th (ADM), two at Holywell Pond on 10th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on the same date, Tyne Green (Hexham) on 26th, and Howick on 29th. Singles were regularly at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Valley Park (Cramlington) and at 12 other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

A single bird was calling at Rothbury on 5th, 6th & 7th (TRD/JD).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds were seen at Holy Island on 20th (MJC/ADM) and 23rd (IBDa/KDa). Two birds were at Howick on 4th (JAR), Warkworth (MJC) and Little Beach (Berwick) on 7th (MHu), Druridge Pools on 8th (IDR), Ellington on 12th (TB), Haughton Strothers on 15th (SW), Tower Tye (Humshaugh) on 18th (SW), and Holy Island on 19th (MJC/ADM) and at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 25th (MJC). Single birds were observed at 26 sites.



A Kestrel wind hovers at Boulmer
Tim Dean on 4th September

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

A female/juvenile was seen almost daily at Boulmer from 6th (BS), a juvenile female was on Holy Island on 16th (MJC), and a female was at Grindon Lough on 17th (PRM). Unsexed birds were at Beal on 18th (DF), Harbottle on 19th (ASJ), Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 24th CSa), Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 24th (IK) and at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 27th (TF).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A juvenile flew S over Hauxley NWT Reserve at 15:30h on 12th (HRS), a bird was seen at Tynemouth (ASJ *per* SPP) and another bird was noted at Fenham-le-Moor on 25th (AMG/MG).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Three birds, two N and one S were noted at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower during the month (SSWT) and two birds, an adult and a juvenile, were noted most days at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK). Single birds were noted on or near the coast at 12 sites and at six inland sites.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Picus viridis*

At around 18.30 on 10th and 13th, 15 flew E at High Heaton (Newcastle) (LMi) with six flying into Jesmond Dene on 20th (PCI). Singles were at Brandling Park (Jesmond) on 3rd and Seaton Delaval Hall on 15th (GB/*per* TWi).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Birds were well reported as they stocked up for winter with a total of seven in two groups at Ellington on 17th (TB), five at Colt Crag Reservoir on 16th (MR), four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 10th and 15th, Plessey Woods on 11th and Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 14th and Ellington on 28th (TB/DLo). On 14th three were at Ellington and East Cramlington LNR with one to two at the above and 27 other widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

they were regularly seen at Druridge Pools and Links with eight the high count on 29th and six on 9th (IDR). Six were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 10th (TBr) and three at Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

High counts were of 150 at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo) and 122 at Howdon on 13th (CB) with around 50 pre-roost at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 12th and 40 feeding on ant swarm at Gosforth Garden Village on 14th (MJC). At Druridge Pools and Links on eight dates the high counts were 17 on 14th, 13 at Jesmond Dene on 6th and six at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 27th.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Around 180 flew SW to roost at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 12th (TBr), 50 were at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo), 30 at Beadnell on 18th and 12 at Druridge Links on 27th (IDR/JF).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

On 9th 21 were at Town Moor (Newcastle) (GB), also on most days of the month at Druridge Pools and Links with 16 the high count on 10th (IDR), seven at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 27th (IDR/JF) with nine at Arcot Lane on 10th, five at Jesmond Dene on 13th and two at Long Nanny (Newton) on 24th.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One was at Howick on 7th, 25th and 26th (JAR/BS).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four were at Grindon Lough on 17th and Wooler on 19th (PRM/IBDa/KDa) with two at Budle Point on 6th & 29th, Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd, Beal on 4th, Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 5th, Holy Island on 14th, Cocklawburn on 15th and Holystone on 29th. Singles were at three locations.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

On 14th ten were at Colt Crag Reservoir (MR) with ten trapped and ringed (seven new three retraps) at Corbridge Common on 27th. Six were ringed at Hauxley on 12th with two ringed on 6th and three on 19th (HRS). One to two were at seven other locations.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Singles were present throughout the month at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) (NFO), at Old Railway Line (Rothbury) on 15th and Craster on 29th (JD/MJC).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Three were at Guyzance on 8th and Craster on 29th (MJC), two at Prestwick Carr on 6th and 23rd, Hauxley Ringing Station on 6th, Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 27th and Derwent Reservoir on 27th and 28th. Singles were at 11 other locations including a first in 30 years at Alexandra Park / Southfield Lea (Cramlington) (DM).

A Willow Tit at Brierdene

Alan Jack on 28th September

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

High counts were of 24 at Druridge Links on 20th and 22 at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 27th (IDR/JF) with 20 at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 26th (KWY). One to 17 were at Druridge Links through the month with eight at Hauxley on 18th and Hauxley Ringing Station on 19th with a total of 22 ringed at these sites during the month (HRS). Two were at Jesmond Dene on 20th.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Nine was the high count at Hauxley Ringing Station on 19th (HRS) with nine also at Warkworth Lane Ellington on 27th and eight at Druridge Links on 20th (IDR/JF). During the month a total of nine were ringed at Hauxley Ringing Station and four at Druridge Links and three at Hauxley. A single was at Jesmond Dene on 13th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A vis-mig watch at Budle Point on 28th saw 180 SSE (CGK/GPK) and 64 S at Howick on 29th (MJC). On 27th 60 came out of an arable field at Spital (Newbiggin), 49 were at / over Druridge Links and Pools on 20th, 40+ S at St Mary's Island on 30th and 35+ arrived from east at St Mary's Wetland on 18th with a migrant flock of 30 at Football Hole (Newton) on 17th and 26 over Holy Island on the same date. One to 23 were over Druridge Pools and Links during the month, 19 were at St Mary's Island on 20th and 18 at Long Nanny (Newton) on 24th with one to 12 at ten other locations.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

More than 50 flew S at Druridge Pools NR on 8th (MSH), 20 S over hide at East Chevington on 3rd (TRD/JD) and over the river at Thropton on 5th (CB) with eight at Cresswell Pond on 8th, seven at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 4th, six hawking over the Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) on 6th and at Ellington Dene on 21st, the latest report. Singles were at three other locations.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Well reported as birds gathered and moved S with high counts of 400 at Warkworth on 7th and 200 on 9th (MJC), 200+ S in one hour at Druridge Pools NR on 8th (MSH), 165 S from 11.30 -13.30 at Druridge Bay on 28th (STH) and 150 S at Hauxley on 12th (HRS). 87 were at Holy Island on 17th, 80+ at Wark (N.Tyne) on 15th, 66 at East Cramlington LNR, 60 at Hauxley Ringing Station on 6th, 51 S in four hours at Gosforth Garden Village on 3rd, 50 at Harbottle on 19th and 40 at Boulmer on 17th. Ten to 32 were at 12 other locations with double-figure counts up to 30th and one to nine at a further 18.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Around 200 were at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 9th (AJH), 150 at Warkworth on 7th and 100 on 9th (MJC), 100 S from 6.50-8.40h on 6th at Tynemouth (DRW) with 75 S at Druridge Links and Pools on 8th and 57 at Druridge Links on the same date (IDR). 55 fed at Harbottle on 19th, 52 at East Ord (Berwick) on 4th, 40 at Humshaugh on 8th, Collingwood Grange (Cramlington) on 9th and S at Spital (Newbiggin) between 8.15-10.00 on 6th. Ten to 30 were at 18 other locations and one to nine at a further 11 with the last reports on 28th being 15 at Whiteadder Water (Berwick), six at Corbridge and one at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The highest counts came from Warkworth Lane, Ellington, with 28 on 27th (IDR/JF), Howick Hall, with 20 on 20th (PHa/AHa), and Humshaugh, with 16 on 15th (SW). There were 15 at Lemmington East Cottage on 9th (PHa/AHa), at Hauxley on 26th (HRS) and at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 27th (KWY). There were 13 at Tynemouth on 28th (CB) and at Druridge Links on 29th, of which five were caught and ringed (IDR). There were 12 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) and at Yearle on 27th (DGB/RHB). Northburn (Cramlington) had 11 on 14th (LJM), and Big Waters NWT and Milkwell (Corbridge) had ten on 6th (GB) and 7th (RB/MB) respectively. Smaller numbers were reported from Craster, Rothbury, Holystone, Druridge Links, Hexham and Callaly.



A Long-tailed Tit in Brierdene by Jack Bucknall on 24th September

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

There were five at Holy Island on 20th (MJC/ADM), three at Arcot Pond on 10th (DM), and three at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 14th (TB). Two birds were at Bamburgh on 9th (BRS, where one was singing on 15th (BRS), and two were at Marden Quarry, Whitley Bay on 9th (KWY), Gosforth Garden Village on 10th (MJC), and Tynemouth on 17th (CB). Singles were at Hauxley, Howick, St Mary's Wetland and Low Cocklaw (Berwick).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

The highest counts came from Druridge Links, with 21 on 10th (IDR), Derwent Reservoir, with 18 on 1st (IFo), Mickley Square, with 16 on 6th (DLe), and Hauxley, with 16 on 12th (HRS). There were 13 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 28th (TB), 12 at Craster on 29th (MJC), and 11 at Airy Holm Reservoir, near Shotleyfield, on 14th (IFo). Ten were at Corbridge Common on 4th (DLe), Howick Hall on 6th (PHa/AHa), Gosforth Park NR on 10th (KWY) and at Low Newton on 19th (CB). There were eight at Tynemouth on 24th (CB), seven at Lincoln Hill on 19th (SW). Reports of five birds came from St Mary's Wetland, Warden and Low Cocklaw, Berwick. Smaller numbers were at Whitley Bay, Bamburgh, Humshaugh, Colt Crag Reservoir, Branton GP, Newbiggin, Wark, North Tyne and Heatheridge, with singles reported at many locations throughout the county. There were many records of song, notably from Cramlington, where singing birds were present at different locations throughout the month (DM).

Two-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus plumbeitarsus*

One was found at Budle Point on 28th (RA) but not definitely identified until 29th, when it finally showed well enough to be photographed and sound recorded (CGK/RA). The bird was present on 30th, but still elusive (JBu, IBDa/KDa, IF).



The Two-barred Warbler

Budle Point

Duncan Watson

1st October.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

A single bird at Low Newton (JD) and two on Holy Island (MJC) on 17th marked the beginning of an influx which culminated with six at Holy Island (IK) and five at Craster (MJC) on 29th. There were four at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 21st (JBu), three at St Mary's Island on 24th (AC), and three at Druridge Links on 29th (IDR), of which one bird was caught and ringed. Two more were ringed at Howick Hall on 28th (PHa/AHa). There were two at Budle Point between 28th and 30th (CGK/GPK) and two on the Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 29th (ASJ). Singles were reported from Newbiggin, the cemetery and Marden Quarry, Whitley Bay, Longhoughton Quarry, Hauxley, Ridley Park, Blyth and Waren Mill near Bamburgh.



Yellow-browed Warbler

St. Mary's

Jack Bucknall

28th September

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

An adult and three newly fledged young were at Cocklawburn on 1st (MHu). There were two at Holywell Pond on 6th (MN) and one at Prestwick Carr on 6th (STH).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

There were two at Druridge Bay CP on 6th (CB), one at Druridge Links on 9th (IDR) and one at St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

A juvenile was at Druridge Links on 9th (IDR).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

11 birds, comprising ten first-year birds and one adult, were caught at Mickley Square on 6th (DLe). There were 10 at Howick Hall on 6th (PHa/AHa) and six at Hauxley on 18th, of which four were ringed and two were retrapped from 2019 (HRS). There were five at Craster on 29th (MJC) and four at Druridge Links on 10th (IDR). Three were at Bamburgh on 9th (BRS), Tynemouth on 17th (CB) and Brierdene, Whitley Bay on 24th (MSH). Reports of two birds came from Marden Quarry, Whitley Bay, Chugdon Wood, Ellington, Whiteadder Water, Berwick, Big Waters NWT and St Mary's Island. Singles were at Derwent Reservoir, Seghill, Coldwell, Gosforth Garden Village and High Heaton, Newcastle, Humshaugh, Low Newton, Holy Island and Lemmington East Cottage.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Two were at the Ash Lagoon Bank (Newbiggin) on 16th (AP) and singles were at Corbridge Common, Bewick Drift, Lynemouth, Tynemouth, Holy Island and Budle Point.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Single birds were at St Mary's Island on 18th (KE, AC) and at Budle Point between 20th and 23rd (CGK/GPK/RA).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

There were three at Holy Island on 17th (MJC/ADM) and two at Boulmer on 4th (BS). Singles were reported from Druridge, Tynemouth, Gosforth Garden Village, St Mary's Island, Low Newton and Bamburgh.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Four were at St Mary's Wetland on 4th (MSH). Two were at Brenkley on 5th (CB) and at Coldwell on 8th (SW). Singles were at Newbiggin, Big Waters NWT, High Heaton, Newcastle, Ellington, Druridge Links, Cresswell Pond and Derwent Reservoir, with the last of the month recorded at Tynemouth Haven on 28th (DLo).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

There were ten at Wark on 20th (PRM). Nine were at Corbridge Common on 27th (DLe) and eight were ringed. Six were at Hauxley on 26th (HRS), where four were ringed during the month, and six were at Holy Island on 27th (MJC). There were five at Grindon Lough on 10th (PRM) and four at Valley Park, Cramlington on 6th (DM), Warkworth Lane, Ellington on 27th (IDR/JF), and Bamburgh on 29th (BRS). Two were at Quarry Cottage on 10th (BS), Druridge Links on 28th (IDR) and Howick on 29th (MJC). Singles were reported from Seaton Delaval, Tynemouth, Leazes Park, Newcastle and Tyne Green CP, Hexham.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A maximum of 11 were at Druridge Links and Pools on 28th (IDR) and six were caught and ringed there during the month. Five were at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 27th (IDR/JF). Three were at Hauxley on 6th and four were ringed during the month. There was one at Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

There were three at Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo) and at Wark (North Tyne) on 27th (PRM). Two were at Haughton Castle on 8th (SW) and at Warkworth Lane on 27th (IDR/JF), and two were present throughout the month at Yearle (DGB/RHB). Singles were recorded at Berwick, Humshaugh, Warden, Cramlington, Gunnerton, Coldwell, Colt Crag Reservoir, Lincoln Hill, Tyne Green CP, Hexham, Budle Point, Derwent Reservoir, Heatheridge and Crooked Oak Lane.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Three were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th (MR). Two were at Haughton Castle on 8th (SW), Howick on 13th (JAR), Holy Island on 27th (MJC) and Craster on 29th (MJC). Two were retrapped at Hauxley on 12th (HRS). Singles were reported from Debdon, Rothbury, Valley Park, Cramlington, Humshaugh, Shotleyfield, Callaly, Walwick and Goodie Patch, Tweedmouth.



A Starling at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 29th September

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The highest count came from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), with 800 on 6th (TD). There were 620 at Cheswick on 15th (MHu), 600 at Howick Haven on 1st (AJR), and 500 at the evening roost at Big Waters NWT on 6th (GB). Quarry Cottage had a monthly maximum of 190 on 25th (BS), and there were 150 at Siloans Farm/MOD Range on 13th (JR). Monks' House Pool had 45 on 24th (IDR). Smaller numbers and singles were recorded at Druridge Pools and at Jesmond Dene.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

An adult male was at the excavations on Holy Island on 17th (MJC).



A Ring Ouzel on Holy Island 17th September by Mike Carr

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

An early morning influx of 45 birds was recorded at Hauxley on 18th (HRS). 10 birds were ringed there during the month (HRS). An influx of seven birds feeding on cotoneaster berries was at Yearle on 15th (DGB/RHB). There were two at Druridge Links on 10th (IDR) and one at Jesmond Dene on 13th (MJCo).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

One was at Marden Quarry on 28th (ASJ).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

184 were on Holy Island (nine at the Snook, 175 in the village) by 27th (MJC). Six flew SW at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 12th (TB). Five were at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 27th (KWY) and five flew S over Gosforth Garden Village on 28th (MHC). Two were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 26th (RMH) and there were singles on 28th at Crooked Oak Lane, Derwent Reservoir and Heaton. One bird was ringed at Howick Hall on 28th (PHa/AHa).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

There were six at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo), four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 24th (TB), and three at Druridge Pools on 20th (IDR/JF). Two were at the Snook (Holy Island) on 24th (MJC) and one flew in off the sea at Spital Bay (Newbiggin) on 21st (LJM).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

The highest counts came from Howick, with 35 on 20th (JAR). Nine birds were ringed at Howick Hall on 28th (PHa/AHa). Winnows Hill (Slaley) had 28 on 26th (STH) and there were 18 at East Cramlington LNR on 2nd (STH). There were flocks of 12 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (IFo) and nine at Whittle Dene on 6th (PCF). Smaller groups, pairs and singles were reported from Newcastle, Corbridge, Berwick, Yearle and Whittingham.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Two adults with four fledged young were at Guyzance on 8th (MJC). An adult was seen feeding a juvenile at Morwick on 8th (NFO). Singles were recorded at Newbiggin, Marden Quarry, Whitley Bay, Holy Island, High Heaton, Newcastle. Druridge Links, Fourstones, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth. One was ringed at Howick Hall on 20th (PHa/AHa). A juvenile seen briefly in a mixed tit flock in Gosforth on 30th (AJN) was the last recorded sighting for the month.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A 4km riverside walk at Wylam on 15th produced a count of at least 40 singing birds (EC). Hauxley Ringing Station recorded a maximum of ten on 6th, with eight birds ringed during the month (HRS). There was a maximum of six at Druridge Links on 10th (IDR), five at Holy Island on 25th (ADM) and at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 26th (RMH). Four were at Warkworth Lane on 27th (IDR/JF), three were at Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) and three singing birds were present at Quarry Cottage all month (BS).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Two were at Druridge Links on 17th (IDR) and on Holy Island on 17th (MJC/ADM). There were singles at Low Newton on 19th (CB) and at Tynemouth on 19th (DRW, MK).

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*
One was at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW, MK).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*
A single immature bird was seen in the public car park at Blyth Harbour on 29th (BS).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*
A first-year male was ringed at Corbridge Common on 4th (DLe), and a single bird at Linhope (Breamish Valley) on 9th (JEd) was the last sighting reported for the month.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*
A party of seven birds were feeding from the fence line near the south hide at North Pool (East Chevington) on 6th (IK). Four, including two juveniles, were at Alwinton on 1st (NFO). Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo) and singles were at Druridge Links and Howick. A single bird on Holy Island on 10th (MHu) was the last sighting recorded for the month.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*
A total count of 18 birds was recorded at Holy Island on 27th, including a group of nine in the North Dunes (MJC). 12 birds (six pairs) were noted between Jimmy's Pond and Newton Pool on 19th (CB) and there was a group of ten at St Mary's Island on 28th and 30th (AC, MSH, ASJ). Cresswell Pond had nine on 14th (TB) and Druridge Links & Pools had seven on 15th (IDR). Seven birds were seen between Bamburgh and Budle Point on 19th (KWY). Groups of six were at Newbiggin on 14th (NFO) and Howick on 29th (MJC). Debdon (Rothbury) had five on 1st (JD) and Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) had five on 30th (ASJ). A maximum of four birds was reported from Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo), Dunstanburgh Castle on 11th (JAR), Cocklawburn on 15th (MHu) and Lincoln Hill on 19th (SW). Groups of two to three were at East Chevington, Upper Coquetdale, Alnmouth, Craster and Boulmer. Singles were at Old Hartley, Carrycoats, Sharperton, Tynemouth, Ellington and Colt Crag Reservoir.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
There were seven at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 9th (AP) and six at Seahouses Farm (Howick) on 6th (JEd). Amongst six birds at Newton Point on 10th, one showed characteristics of the Greenland race *O.o. leucorrhoa* (JEd). Five female birds were at Dunstanburgh on 10th (DLo). There were three at Longhoughton Steel (Boulmer) on 4th (MKi), at Cresswell Pond on 8th (TRD/JD) and at Holy Island on 19th (MJC/ADM). Reports of two birds came from Druridge Pools on 6th (NFO), Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo), Cocklawburn on 15th (DF) and from Quarry Cottage, where there were two juveniles on 19th (BS). Single birds were seen at Ellington, Corbridge, Haughterslaw, Colt Crag, Grindon Lough, Beal Point, Big Waters, East Holywell, Whitley Bay, Tynemouth, South Harbour, Blyth and Old Hartley.



A curious Wheatear at Whitley Bay by Alan Jack on 24th September

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*
Two birds were seen at Warden on 6th (SW). Singles were noted at 14 other sites, with one singing at Felton.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
100 fed on a lawn on 6th at Alnmouth (JEd). 75 attended garden food at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS). 50 noted at Beadnell on 18th (CB). 30 – 45 were seen at Low Cocklaw, Northburn and Southfield Green (Cramlington) and Marden Estate in gardens. Gloucester Lodge Farm and Crooked Oak Lane (TBr/LJM/ASJ/DM/IFo).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
46 on 13th was the month's maximum count made at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) (TB). 25 flew S at Gosforth Garden Village on the morning of 14th where 12 did likewise on 12th (MJC). 15 were seen at West Chevington on 28th (NFO). One to eight were observed at a further ten sites this month.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*
Five were at Hauxley on 6th, with four of these ringed. Four were seen at Druridge Links on 20th. Smaller numbers were seen on several other dates at these two sites.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*
Three flew S at Druridge on 2nd, three were also at Coquet Estuary and Cresswell Pond on 4th and 8th (MSH/CSa/NFO). Two juveniles were at St. Mary's Island on 7th (ASJ). Two juveniles flew S at Newbiggin on 5th and 22nd (RS). Single birds were seen at four other sites with the last sighting at Boulmer on 18th.

Blue-headed Wagtail *ssp flava*

One fed below the promenade, on the beach at St. Mary's Island on 1st (AC).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Rather unusual was 12 seen to fly S at Tynemouth on the morning of 6th (DRW). Five were at Alwinton on 1st (NFO). Four were noted at Warden on 6th and four flew S. at Heatheridge on 27th (SW). Three were seen at Howick on 10th and three flew S at Alnmouth the following day (JAR/MJC). Three were also noted at Colt Crag, Jesmond Dene, N at Gosforth Garden Village and at Aydon during the month. One to two were seen at 32 other sites this month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

There were some high counts this month, with 25 - 50 counted at Boulmer, Lesbury, Bothal Pond and Linden Hall (DLo/MKi/TF/NFO). 14 - 25 were also seen at St. Mary's, East Holywell, Harbottle, Newbiggin and Holy Island (ASJ/MSH/MNC/MJC). One to twelve were noted at a further 12 locations during the month.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Singles were seen at Newstead on 9th, Druridge Pools on 18th and 22nd and at Monks' House Pool on 24th.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Large numbers heading S in the first week with 2,000 on morning of 7th at Warkworth, 1,055 on 4th and 1,250 the following day at Gosforth (MJC). At Tynemouth, 640 flew S in two hours early morning of 6th and 600, also in two hours, on 1st at East Cramlington LNR and 500 at Seaton Sluice and 400 at Ellington on 5th (DRW/MJC/TB). 150 - 328 flew S at six further sites up until 17th. 10 - 113 did likewise at a further 16 sites later in the month with numbers decreasing as emigration passed. One - ten were seen at eight other sites.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Two flew S at Druridge Links on 14th (IDR). Singles flew S on 4th at St. Mary's, 5th at Boulmer, 8th at Druridge and 19th at Beal and Holy Island.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Ten were counted at Holy Island's Excavations on 19th (ADM). Seven were at Boulmer on 27th (BS). Five juveniles seen at Tynemouth on 3rd could represent local breeding (CB). Four birds were at Annstead on 24th (DF). One to two were also seen at five other sites.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit *Spp Littoralis*.

One was noted at Budle Bay on 1st (CGK/GPK).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

60 were observed at Crooked Oak Lane on 1st (IFo). 23 were present at Snook (Holy Island) on 19th, presumed to be migrants (ADM/MJC). 16 were seen to fly S at Gosforth Garden Village on 21st. One - nine were seen at six further sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Small numbers arrived this month, with the peak count of 12 in the Vicar's garden at Holy Island on 19th (MJC/ADM). One to ten were on the island on several other dates. Seven were seen arriving at St. Mary's on 27th, before moving on westward, with two there on 24th (ASJ). Four flew S at Gosforth on 21st. Singles were present at four sites including on four dates at Tynemouth.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Four migrants were seen this month. One was watched feeding on the ground at Holy Island village on 14th and another arrived here from N on 17th and appeared to drop into the village (IK/MJC). At Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), one was seen on 27th in a treetop before flying W. The following day, another heard calling, arrived high from the E dropping down and past the observer. It paused briefly in a tree before also heading W (ASJ).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Eight at Howden and Slaley were the highest counts this month (CB/RMH). One to four were noted at another 17 sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Up to 50+ were feeding on rosehips at St. Mary's on several dates (ASJ/MSH). 30+ noted at Hexham on 24th (RMH). One to 11 seen at a further six sites this month, including a family party of six at Newbiggin (RS).

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

On Holy Island, 16 were near Emmanuel Point on 10th (MHu). A minimum of three were among a Linnet flock at Beal on 19th (MJC).

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Some large flocks were noted this month, with 400 at Cresswell and Crooked Oak Lane on 8th and 28th respectively (TRD/JD/IFo). 250 were in a field at Stag Rocks on 16th and at St. Mary's Island on 24th, the latter flock dispersing when the weedy field in which they were feeding was ploughed (DF/ASJ). 200 were in fields south of Boulmer on 29th with 160 there on 14th (TRD/JD). 150 plus were seen at St. Mary's on 18th (MSH). 120 were counted at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo). A

maximum count of 110 was at Druridge Pools from several daily counts (IDR). 110 at Old Hartley on 26th probably involved some of the St. Mary's flock (MNC). Flocks of 30 – 90 were observed at 11 sites and two to 52 were at ten further sites during the month.

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

One was seen at Tynemouth on 17th and a probable arrived from N at Holy Island's churchyard on 19th (CB/MJC).

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

There was a total count of 180 from several flocks at Corbridge Common on 21st, with 24 birds ringed (DLe). A mobile, constantly moving flock of 150 - 250 was seen at Holystone on 2nd (DRo). 78 at Colt Crag on increased to 150 plus the following day (MR/AJH). 73 were counted over four hours on 3rd, flying S at Gosforth Garden Village (MJC). 72 were at Slaley on 14th, 42 of which were trapped and ringed (RMH). 42 were noted at Colt Crag on 28th (MR). One -28 were seen at a further 17 sites during the month.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

32 were observed at Corbridge Common on 15th (DLe). 21 in two flocks flew S on 27th at Woodhorn (TB). 12+ were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th, 12 birds were noted at Debden on 3rd (PRM/IRD). Ten were at Callaly on 15th and between Featherstone and Lambley on 29th (TRD/JD/AJ). At the coast, at Budle Point, nine were seen on 30th (IF). One to seven were at a further 15 locations, including three birds flying S at Gosforth during the month.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

120 were noted on 18th at Derwent Reservoir, increasing to 200 by 21st (IFo). Numbers in a regular flock at Druridge Pools area varied during the month from 38 up to 120 (IDR). 110 were seen feeding on Meadowsweet at Cocklawburn on 8th (MHu). 80 were at Warkworth on 1st and 70+ at Wark on 5th (JAR/PRM). 50 – 60+ were seen at Holy Island, St. Mary's Island, Holystone and East Cramlington LNR, Derwent Reservoir and Slaley this month. Elsewhere, one to 48 were noted at 16 other sites.

A Goldfinch on 20th September
by Chris Barlow at Druridge Pools



Siskin *spinus spinus*

120+ were at Corbridge Common on 15th, with 11 ringed here (DLe). 100 observed at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). 90 flew S at East Cramlington LNR on 1st and 96 did likewise at Gosforth Garden village in one hour, on the morning of 21st and 59 on 14th and 38 on 10th (MJC). 80+ were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th, with 60 at Prestwick Carr that day (PRM/STH). 53 flew S. at Boulmer on 4th and 50 S at Tynemouth on 12th (BS/DRW). At Marden Quarry, 48 were counted on 27th (PRM). 40 were seen at Colt Crag on 14th (MR). One to 39 were seen at a further 17 sites, including 39 flying S at Druridge on 10th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citinella*

14 were near Holywell Dene on 30th (ASJ). Ten+ were seen at Bamburgh on 29th (BRS), six at Glororum on 19th and at Aydon on 24th (KWY/RB/MB). One to four were seen at seven other sites.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

One was found on Holy Island in the Vicar's Garden on 19th (MJC/ADM).



A Little Bunting on Holy Island on 19th September by Mike Carr

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

15 were found in a game crop at Beal Point on 20th (MJC). 13 were at Druridge Pools on same day and at Holy island on 24th (IDR). Eight were noted at St. Mary's on 16th (ASJ). Seven were seen at Cocklawburn on 29th (MHu) and one to five were noted at six further sites.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius Lapponicus*

Nine were seen in the Quarry area of Holy Island on 20th and remained with the numbers increasing to 14 by 25th (IBDa/KDa/MJC/IK *et al.*). Three flew calling from a crop field at St Mary's, then circled the wetland on 16th and three were also seen at Beal on 20th (ASJ/MJC). Singles were noted at Snook, Boulmer and Druridge during the month, with a probable at Newbiggin on 27th.



A Lapland Bunting on Holy Island
20th September by Mike Carr

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The first of the season involved singles on 17th at Holy Island and a male flying S at St. Mary's Wetland on 18th (MJC/ASJ). A welcome garden first was one S at Gosforth Garden Village on 22nd (MJC). Another single flew S at St. Mary's on 24th, with probably this bird seen later that day at Whitley Bay promenade (MSH/ASJ). It or another was also seen at St. Mary's on 29th (ASJ). A single bird was also present on 29th at the regular site of Blyth South Beach (LJM).

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

A continued presence in the county with one at Alnmouth on 6th (MKi) and three there on 16th (TRD/JD).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

The regular sightings at Queen Elizabeth CP, Ashington continued with one on 19th September (CDH).

Hybrids

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

Single at Haughton Strother GP on 15th (SW).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

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), Helen Snaith (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.

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Hauxley Ringing Station, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower

Apologies for any accidental omissions

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RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641



Bulletin 2020 No 8
MONTHLY SUMMARY AUGUST 2020
19th October 2020
<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

CONTENTS

CRC replacement
 BIN Author Request
 WeBS sites available

HIGHLIGHTS

Pale-bellied Brent Goose	Very early return with first on 26th and up to 600 by end of month.
Ruddy Shelduck	Singles were still being seen at Derwent Reservoir and Hauxley.
Garganey	One to two at Budle Bay, East Chevington, Holywell and Monks' House Pool.
Scaup	Single record of a female at Druridge Pools on 19th.
Storm-petrel	One past Newbiggin on 14th.
Leach's Petrel	One on 28th moved N past St Mary's Island and Howick.
Great Shearwater	One on 29th was seen past Howick and Annstead Point.
Balearic Shearwater	One N past Druridge on 28th.
Red-necked Grebe	Unusual record of one off Newbiggin on 28th killed by a Great Skua!
Black-necked Grebe	Few sightings this year so singles at Druridge & Holywell were popular.
Great White Egret	Singles at Lynemouth, Castron and Cresswell Pond.
Little Egret	Peak count of 33 at Lindisfarne on 31st.
Golden Eagle	One seen in Harthope Valley on 9th.
Pacific Golden Plover	Summer-plumaged adult at Boulmer from 7th. Also seen at East Chevington.
Purple Sandpiper	Early returnees with one-two at Seaton Sluice and Newbiggin from 5th.
White-rumped Sandpiper	Summer adult at Druridge Pools on 5th.
Sabine's Gull	Adult offshore at Newbiggin on 28th.
Caspian Gull	Polish-ringed adult still at Amble harbour all month. Also juvenile at St Mary's.
White-winged Black Tern	Adult at Druridge Bay CP and East Chevington from 14th to 22nd.
Black Tern	Singles at Seaton Sluice and Newbiggin.
Long-tailed Skua	Major influx on 16th with 17 juveniles N. Also many reports elsewhere.
Black Guillemot	One in Seahouses Inner Harbour on 12th. Also one at Annstead Point on 17th.
Hobby	Several records during month.
Hooded Crow	Returning bird back at Craster / Howick
from 27th.	
Greenish Warbler	One on Holy Island between 12th and
19th plus another at Newbiggin	on 31st.
Barred Warbler	Singles on Holy Island, Budle Pt and St
Mary's.	
Icterine Warbler	Single at Cresswell Pond briefly on 19th.
Fieldfare	Interesting record of four at Holystone
on 23rd.	
Black Redstart	Female at St Mary's on 20th.

The DBCP White-winged Black Tern

17th August

Jack Bucknall

INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting will be via Zoom on 12th November .

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com



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

Three pale-bellied *hrota* race birds flew N at Boulmer on 21st (BS) and ten unraced birds flew N at Annstead on 24th (CGK et al.). A more general return occurred from 26th when northward movement of *hrota* race birds involved 100-109 at Annstead (DF) and Longhoughton Steel (IBDa/KDa/MKi), 60-67 N off Druridge Links (IDR), Newbiggin (TF/JFa/NFO) and Stag Rocks (TRD/JD), and 28 at Tynemouth (DRW), while 27 were at Fenham Flats (TRD/JD). A total of 162 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 26th-31st (SSWT). A further four to 43 flew N at Annstead (DF), Druridge Links (IDR), Longhoughton Steel (MKi), Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa et al.), Stag Rocks (DF), St Mary's (MSH/PRM) and Tynemouth (CB/DRW) between 27th-30th. In addition, 400 *hrota* race birds were at Beal saltmarsh on 31st (RA). Records of unraced birds involved as many as 600 at Holy Island causeway on 27th (DGB), a total of 248 N at Annstead Point between 24th-31st (CGK/GPK/DF et al.), and 35-37 N at Newbiggin (TF/JFa/NFO) and St Mary's (JBu/AC) between 26th-29th

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

50+ flew NW at Earsdon (Plant Centre) Flash on 31st (MSH), 15 W at Wark on 15th (PRM) and eight N at Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR). Peak counts were 625 at Grindon Lough on 20th (SW), 322 at Hauxley Reserve on 29th (HRS), 208 at Foxton Bends on 30th (DM et al.), 165 in fields at Seaton Point, Boulmer on 30th (BS), and 101-116 at Amble, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Holywell Pond and Killingworth Lake, and 56-91 at the AIn Estuary, Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Colt Crag Reservoir and Plenmeller Common. Counts of 25-40 also came from Druridge Pools and Pithouse Fell (Slaley), and six to nine at Arcot Pond and Castle Island.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Singles were at Cresswell Pond all month (TB/TRD/JD), Hauxley Reserve on 29th (LJM) and Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

170 flew SW at Arcot Pond on 27th (DM), a total of 82 flew S at Druridge Pools between 4th-12th (IDR) and one S at Seaton Sluice. A minimum of 1,000 was at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 830 at Big Waters on 28th was a record count for the site (AJJ per GB), 700 were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 12th (IFo), 340 at Budle Bay on 20th (DF), 250 at East Chevington on 16th (PRM), and about 100 at Arcot Pond (DM). Counts of 50-91 came from Bothal Pond, Earsdon (Beehive Flash), Earsdon (Plant Centre) Flash, Haggerston Castle, Hauxley Reserve and Pithouse Fell (Slaley), while 28-49 were at Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond and Seaton Point (Boulmer), and ten at Embleton Bog.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Gatherings involved 46 at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM), 32 at Howdon on 9th (CB), 17 at Hauxley Reserve on 29th (HRS), and 13-14 at Big Waters, Castle Island and Druridge Bay CP. Seven to nine were also at East Chevington, Elswick (River Tyne), Holywell Pond and Warkworth Gut.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Four flew N and 18 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and one N at Newbiggin on 17th (GB). A total of 26 well grown juveniles (three broods) were at Boulmer on 8th (BS), and 18 were at Castle Island on 23rd (DM/PJA). Four to six were at the Blyth Estuary (LJM), Cresswell Pond (TB) and Longhoughton Steel (GB), and one to two at Colt Crag Reservoir, Earsdon (Plant Centre) Flash, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Maiden's Hall Lake, and Tynemouth. More unusual were three juveniles at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo).

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

A female was at Derwent Reservoir between 1st-21st (IFo/MN), and one was at Hauxley Reserve on 18th and 29th (HRS).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A female plus 12 flying young were on the River Wansbeck, Low Angerton on 2nd (IRD), five (including at least two juveniles) were at Chollerford on 21st (SW), and a female and juvenile were on the River North Tyne at Wark on 1st (PRM). Single females were at Haughton Strother GP on 4th (SW) and Wark on 9th (PRM).

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Two were at Monks' House Pool on 12th and 14th (RA/GPK), and two were at Holywell Pond on 22nd (ASJ). Singles were at East Chevington on 22nd (MN), Holywell Pond on 13th and 20th (MN), and Monk's House Pool on 21st (JPL). More unusual was one at Budle Bay on 1st (per CGK).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice between 11th-29th (SSWT), and two N at Newbiggin (GB) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 29th. No large gatherings were reported. Peak counts were eights at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Budle Bay (DF) and Linton Ponds (GB), seven at Holywell Pond (KWY), five to six at East Chevington and Hauxley Reserve, and three to four at Druridge Pools, Holy Island Lough and Monks' House Pool. One to two were also at Earsdon (Plant Centre) Flash and Grindon Lough.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Singles flew N at Druridge Links on 27th (IDR) and Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT). Peak counts concerned about 30 at East Chevington on 16th (PRM), 26 (including a brood of five young) at Big Waters on 23rd (GB), 23 at Woodhorn Flashes on 14th (GB), 22 at Marden Quarry on 2nd (KWY), 20 at Linton Ponds on 20th (GB), and ten to 14 at Holywell Pond and Ladyburn Lake. Five to nine were at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools and Hedgeley GP, and three to four at Arcot Pond, Castle

Island and Hauxley Reserve. And twos were also at Monks' House Pool and St Mary's Wetland. Breeding data was as follows (in addition to previous months unless stated otherwise):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Linton Ponds	3	10 (4,4,2)	IF on 18th. Includes brood from July?
Big Waters	1	6	GB on 3rd. Initially a brood of ten young. Later went down to five young and the adult female disappeared while the young were only half-grown.
Druridge Bay CP	1	5	IRD on 21st.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

At Seaton Sluice, two N on 11th were followed by a total of 187 N and ten S between 28th-30th (SSWT). Other totals included 84 N at Newbiggin on 28th-29th (GB/TF/JFa), 64+ N at Tynemouth (CB/DRW) and 32 N at Snab Point (TB) on 29th, 51 N at St Mary's on 29th-30th (MSH), 21 N at Stag Rocks on 30th (KWY), 14 N at Hauxley on 29th (HRS), and 14 N at St Mary's on 28th (MSH/PRM). Numbers at Grindon Lough rose from 22 on 2nd to a peak of 58 by 30th-31st (PRM/SW et al.), 40 were at East Chevington on 30th (GB/AIB/DM), 23 at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo), and four to eight at Big Waters, Budle Bay and Longhoughton Steel. One to two were also at the Blyth Estuary, Branton GP, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve and Monks' House Pool.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and four S at Druridge Links on 4th (IDR). Largest concentrations were 233 at Big Waters (MM per GB), about 200 in Budle Bay on 26th (TRD/JD), 186 at Castron on 22nd (JD), 122 at Arcot Pond on 2nd (LJM), 51-95 at Castle Island, Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, Grindon Lough and Killingworth Lake, and 21-47 at the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Earsdon (Plant Centre) Flash, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition Park and West Allotment Pond. Counts of 11-14 also came from Embleton Bog and Warden. Breeding data was as follows (in addition to previous months unless stated otherwise):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holywell Pond	2	8 (4,4)	KWY on 1st.
Hauxley Reserve	1	3	HRS on 18th
Killingworth Lake	1	3	LJM. Small young on 23rd.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A total of ten flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice between 28th-30th (an August record for the site; SSWT), and one flew N at Annstead Point on 29th (CGK/GPK). Three were at Beal, Lindisfarne NNR on 31st (RA), and singles were at Budle Bay on 14th and 20th (DF/CGK/GPK), Longhoughton Quarry on 23rd (BS), and Monks' House Pool on 27th and 31st (RA/DF/KWY).

Teal *Anas crecca*

Seaton Sluice recorded a total of 792 N and 28 S in the month (SSWT). Other monthly totals involved 218 N and 20 S at Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa/NFO), 162+ N at Annstead (DF/CGK/GPK et al.) and 137 N at St Mary's (MSH/KWY), with most between 28th-30th, while 202 moved N at Tynemouth (CB/DRW) and 32 N at Stag Rocks (DF/KWY) on 29th-30th, 76 N at Hauxley on 29th (HRS), and 28 N and 56 S off Druridge Links on 28th (IDR). Peak site counts were 184 at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM), 134 at East Chevington north pool on 11th (GB), 79 at Budle Bay on 20th (DF), and 20-43 at Arcot and Holywell Ponds, Big Waters, Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs, Druridge Pools, and Hauxley Reserve. Ten to 15 were also at Castle Island, Linton Ponds and Plenmeller Common, and two to eight at Arcot Pond, Holywell Flash and Monks' House Pool.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 11th (SSWT). Apart from 31 at Holywell Pond counts were generally low, with five at Widdrington Moor Lake on 23rd (TF/JFa), three at Castron on 22nd (JD), and one to two at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, *Northumberlandia* (Cramlington) and Woodhorn Flashes.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

39 were at Bothal Pond on 25th (TF/JFa), 38 at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM), 30 at Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR), 21-24 at Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond and Marden Quarry, and 15-16 at Druridge Bay CP and East Chevington. Five to seven were also at Darden Lough and Linton Ponds, and one to three at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Big Waters, Grindon Lough and Monks' House Pool. More unusual was one, with Mallards, in Budle Bay on 21st (DF). Breeding data was as follows (in addition to previous months unless stated otherwise):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Woodhorn Flashes	4	15 (7,4,2,2)	GB/LAR. Broods of 4, 2 and 2 young on 'road pool' on 11th, and brood of 7 young on 'church pool' on 14th.
Killingworth Lake	1	1	LJM. On 23rd

Scaup *Aythya marila*

A female was at Druridge Pools on 19th (TB).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

60 were off Seaton Sluice on 11th (DLo), 29 at Snab Point on 5th (TB), and ten to 16 at Amble, Low Hauxley and Seahouses Harbour (DM/PRM). One to seven were off Druridge Links, Newbiggin and St Mary's. Three were feeding on the River Aln at Foxton Bends on 11th (GB/LAR).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

14 were at Seaton Sluice on 29th (DLo) and seven moved N and one S there during the month (SSWT). Four flew N at Longhoughton Steel on 9th (TRD/JD), three N and one S at Newbiggin between 17th-29th (GB/TF/JFa/STH), two N at Annstead on 29th-30th (CGK/GPK), and singles N at Cullernose Point on 10th (CSa), Whitley Bay on 15th (BS), off Druridge Links (IDR) and St Mary's (JBU/AC) on 28th, and Howick (BS), Stag Rocks (DF) and Tynemouth (CB) on 29th. Two were with Common Scoters off Druridge Links on 2nd (IDR).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 1,835 flew N and 559 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 428 N and 64 S on 9th (117 hours; SSWT), 131 flew N at St Mary's between 8th-30th (JBU/MSH/KWY), 118 N off Druridge Links between 9th-26th (IDR), 71 N at Hauxley on 16th (PRM), 33-44 N at Newbiggin (GB/NFO) and Tynemouth (CB), and four to 11 at five further coastal sites mainly between 26th-30th. About 500 were off Druridge Pools on 4th (IDR), 89 off Seaton Sluice on 29th (DLo), and nine at Longhoughton Steel. A drake was inland at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th (ASJ/SG).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Five were at the regular breeding site on 17th (TRD/JD). Five were also at Widdrington Moor Lake on 23rd (TF/JFa) and one there on 24th (TRD/JD).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of 29 moved N and 26 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including eight N and 17 S on 23rd (SSWT), 14 flew N at Druridge Links on 10th (IDR), and 12 N at Ellington on 1st (TB). Peak gatherings were 73 at Holy Island on 20th (MJC), 48 at the Blyth Estuary on 18th (MN), 19 at the Coquet Estuary on 23rd (TF/JFa), and 11-14 at Boulmer (BS) and Derwent Reservoir (IFo). Five to eight were also at Bygate Farm (Upper Coquetdale), Foxton Bend, Howick, Longhoughton Steel, Newbiggin, Seahouses harbour and the Tyne Estuary, three at Snab Point, and one to two at the Aln Estuary, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, Holy Island causeway, Stag Rocks and Wark.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Five flew N at St Mary's on 30th (MSH), five were at Boulmer on 7th (RB/MB), three at Seaton Sluice on 29th (DLo), and one to two off Druridge Links and Newbiggin. The brood of six young noted at Budle Bay last month all successfully fledged by the end of the month (DF/CGK/GPK *et al.*).

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Three females at Plenmeller Common on 24th was the only report (PRM).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Three were at Holystone on 1st (DRo) with singles present on other dates. One was with half-grown young by the roadside at Alnwick Moor on 12th (TRD/JD).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Five were at Hedgeley GP whilst two were at both Debdon (Rothbury) and Plenmeller Common.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

A very successful pair at Boulmer were accompanied by 16 fully grown juveniles on 30th (BS). 16 were at Newton Red House on 23rd (PG), a count of eight came from the Druridge Bay area on 22nd and seven were at Old Hartley also on that date. Four juveniles were with a calling adult at Denwick (DM) and singles were reported at Cresswell Dunes, Ellington and Football Hole (Newton).

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Birds were still singing in the first week of the month with two at Newton Red House until 7th (PG/TRD/JD) and singles at Great Whittington until 10th (ALT) and at Ryal all month (ALT).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

A grand total of 26 were at Spartywell on 14th (SW), a female was with 15 large juveniles at Seaton Point (Boulmer) and the peak at Druridge Pools was 13 on 19th (IDR). Singles were at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) and Castle Island.

Diver *sp.*

One unidentified bird headed S past Snab Point (Cresswell) mid-afternoon on 28th (IF).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total of 28 (18 N, ten S) past Seaton Sluice was above average for this month (SSWT). A total of five N were recorded past Annstead Point (Seahouses) between 24th-31st (CGK/GPK), three headed N past St. Mary's in one hour during the morning of 30th (MSH) with three were also seen from Cullernose Point (Craster) on that date. One to two were spotted throughout the month from many other coastal localities.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Singles were seen heading N in Druridge Bay on 26th (IDR), flying S past Boulmer on 27th (TRD/JD) and on the sea at Seaton Sluice on 30th (DLo).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One was watched heading N past Church Point (Newbiggin) at 09:48 on 14th (TF).

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Good prolonged views were had of one heading N past Rumbling Kern (Howick) at 08:50 on 28th (BS) whilst, in the early afternoon of the same day, another was seen heading N past St. Mary's (PRM).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Passage numbers were low in early August - 250N past Seaton Sluice in two hours on 9th being the one anomaly to this trend – and gradually built up during the month to a peak of 540N past Seaton Sluice during a full day on 28th (SSWT). Prior to that counts of one to 60 birds, all heading N, were reported on many days from several coastal localities with the month ending with peaks of 90N in one and a half hours past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 28th (TRD/JD) and 138N at Annstead on 30th (DF). The latest breeding record was from Snab Point with two adults and six large young still on nest ledges on 3rd (IDR/JF/TB).

Shearwater *sp.*

A large shearwater species headed N past Church Point (Newbiggin) on 30th (PG).

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*

Following a smattering of records mid-month – two N at Boulmer on 10th (CSa), three N past Longhoughton Steel on 16th (TF/JFa) and several singles elsewhere on similar dates – the pace of passage picked up in the final week and some very good counts were made. The monthly total of 70N at Seaton Sluice was the highest August total there since 2007 (SSWT), 62 were recorded heading N past Rumbling Kern, Howick in five hours on 28th (BS) with up to 33N in just over five hours at Newbiggin on the same day (NFO/JFa). The following day, on 29th, three hours of watching at Rumbling Kern produced 19N (BS) with 18N during a two-hour watch at Tynemouth in the afternoon of the same day (CB). Several other observers, scattered along the coast, reported sightings of one to 16 during the last few days of the month.

Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*

Two sightings of possibly the same bird on 29th – heading N past Rumbling Kern (Howick) at 06.59-07.05 (BS) and N at Annstead Point at 11.24-11.26 (CGK/GPK).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

In this very good month for Shearwaters, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded the highest August total for this species since 2003. A grand total of 879 (789N, 90S) were counted in 117 hours of watching with a peak of 146N on 30th (SSWT). Reports from elsewhere reflected these encouraging numbers with 134N in five hours at Rumbling Kern (Howick) on 28th (BS), 126N in just under four hours at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 14th (TF), a monthly total of 101 past Annstead Point (CGK/GPK), 83N in two hours at Spital (Newbiggin) on 17th (GB), 80 N in two flocks past Boulmer on 15th (ASJ) and many other reports of between 24-68 birds seen from various viewpoints throughout the month. Many other observers submitted sightings of one to 18 birds.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

One was very close, heading N past Druridge Pools area, then feeding with a Scoter flock on 28th (IDR).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Post-breeding numbers were well reported with a peak of 24 on 16th at Druridge Bay CP (PRM), 18 during a WeBS count at Caistron on 22nd (JD), 14 at Bothal Pond on 14th (TF) and 13 at both Hedgeley Lakes on 1st (IBDa/KDa) and Castle Island on 14th (GB). Big Waters peaked at ten on 9th (GB per AJJ), as did Holywell Pond on 22nd (KWY) and Castle Island on 23rd (DM). Late breeding records came from Killingworth Lake with an adult feeding two young on the main lake on 23rd (LJM), a pair feeding tiny young at Northumberlandia on 19th (LJM) and a pair with two half-grown young at Linton Ponds on 20th (GB). One to nine birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bakethin Reservoir, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Foxton Bends (R. Aln), Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Waggonway, Howick, Howick Hall Mill Pond, Linton Ponds and Woodhorn Flashes.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One flying S along the coast past Church Point (Newbiggin) on the afternoon of 28th was attacked by a Great Skua and downed into the sea. It may have resurfaced but was not seen again (NFO/JFa).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Single passage birds headed N at Seaton Sluice on 2nd and 9th (SSWT). The three pairs regularly reported at Big Waters all successfully bred with three, two and two young respectively on 3rd (GB). 11 was the peak at Widdrington Moor Lake on 23rd (TF/JFa), ten at Haughton Strothers on 4th included five juveniles (SW) and Bothal Pond's total of eight birds on 9th included four immatures (TD). One to four were at Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, offshore with a Scoter flock in Druridge Bay, East Chevington, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Killingworth Lake and on the sea at Seaton Sluice.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Singles were on the main pool at Druridge Pools on 19th (TB/IDR) and Holywell Pond on 20th (ASJ/MN).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Howdon peaked at 16 on 12th (CB), 15 were at Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) on 10th (LJM) and 23rd (DM), ten in the Coquet Estuary on 1st (RPo) and local inshore movement of six S, two N was the monthly total at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Eight were at Foxton Bends, seven were roosting at Old Waters (Warkworth) at high tide on 7th, with peaks of seven also recorded at the Aln Estuary, Budle Bay and Colt Crag Reservoir. One to six birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Beadnell, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, on the R. Tyne at Elswick, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Howick, Jesmond Dene, Longhoughton Steel, Monks' House Pool, St. Mary's, Snab Point (Cresswell), Warden and Wark. An extremely tame individual happily wandered around a Rothbury garden on several occasions mid-month (TRD/JD).

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Singles - maybe the same bird - were seen flying N over Lynemouth on 9th (TB), at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 16th (ADMc), at Caistron on 17th (DRO), West Chevington Pool on 22nd (ADMc) and Cresswell Pond on 25th-26th (IRD/NFO).



A Great White Egret at Cresswell Pond on 26h August by Neil Osborne



A Little Egret at Gosforth Park NR by Mike Carr 2nd August

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

At Lindisfarne NNR the highest count of the month was a total of 33 at Beal Saltmarsh on 31st (RA), followed by smaller totals of ten at Fenham Mill on 26th (TRD/JD) and eight at Holy Island Causeway on 27th (DGB). Following on from July, numbers at Cresswell Pond continued to be impressive at the start of the month with up to 24 individuals present in the first week (TB/MN/TRD/JD/MSH *et al.*) with numbers reducing thereafter, coinciding with the boost in figures further north at Lindisfarne. Elsewhere ten were at Castle Island on 10th (LJM), nine were roosting in one tree at the Wansbeck Estuary on 20th (MSH), eight were at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC) and nearby Foxton Bends on 14th (RPo) and the Coquet Estuary peaked at seven on 23rd-24th (CSa/KG). Six were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 1st (MJC) and Amble Old Water Estuary on 27th (IBDa/KDa) and one to five were seen at Amble Braid, Amble Harbour, Big Waters NWT, the Blyth Estuary, Borough Woods (Morpeth), Boulmer, Budle Bay, Druridge Bay, Hedgeley GP, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, Mitford, St. Mary's, Warren Mill and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers gradually increased throughout the month. During the first week 22 offshore at Druridge on 2nd (IDR) and 40 mostly N at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 3rd (IDR/JF) were the only double-figure counts. A minimum of 90N in half an hour past St.Mary's during the evening of 9th (MSH) was fairly typical of mid-month with many similar records received from several other locations. 118 were seen at Druridge on 16th and, on 17th, 140 flew N at Newbiggin in just over two hours, 150 were seen from Snab Point and 350 headed N at Tynemouth in two hours. By the final week movement numbers were significant with 582N in just over an hour at Annstead Point on 26th, 734N there the following day and 2,265 in two hours on 30th (DF). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 995N on 26th and 610N on 28th (SSWT).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice reported the usual increase in numbers in August with a monthly total of 23N and eight S (SSWT). 12 headed N past Cullernose Point on 16th (TRD/JD). 120 were on the sea in groups at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 26th (TRD/JD), three were at Longhoughton Steel and a single was in Blyth Harbour.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Little movement was noted at Seaton Sluice until 30th-31st when 117 headed N (SSWT). Blyth Harbour hosted 111 at roost on 24th (STH). The recent large numbers present across the islands at East Chevington continued this month with a peak of 78 on 5th (TRD/JD), 42 were in Druridge Bay on 9th (IDR) and 36 were at Amble Braid on 20th (IFo). Between 21-34 were at the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir and Hauxley NWT whilst 19 or fewer were seen at Airy Holm Reservoir, Amble Harbour, Bewick Drift (Lynemouth), the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Bay CP, Foxton Bend, Newbiggin, the R. Tyne (Elswick), Snab Point (Cresswell) and Warkworth Gut.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Four birds involving two adults over the reservoir and two young in the nest were seen from Elf Kirk (Kielder) (TRD/JD). Derwent Reservoir had three birds on 26th and up to two birds on 17 dates throughout the month (IFo *et al.*). Two birds were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th (MR) and two flew SW over Slaley Village on 22nd (PCI). Single birds were also at Hazelrigg on 6th (DF), Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th, 20th & 28th (MR), Emblehope Moor (Kielder) on 9th (PRM), in the nest from Mounces Viewpoint (Kielder) on 19th (TRD/JD), Haltwhistle Common on 28th (SW) and Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 31st (RA).



An Osprey over Haltwhistle Common by Steve Westerberg on 24th August

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

One was observed at Langleeford Hope (Harthope Valley) on 9th (EHa).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

At least six birds involving two calling broods were at East Cramlington LNR on 13th (MJC). A pair with at least two fledged young were at Boulmer on 22nd (BS). Three birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 1st (IFo), Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 2nd (MJC) and on Holy Island on 16th (IBDa/AH/ADM). Two birds were seen at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 2nd (KWY), Howick on 8th (JAR) and Holy Island on 16th and 19th (IBDa/KDa/MJC). Two were also at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo) and two were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th (TB). Single birds were reported from 24 locations throughout the month.



A Female Sparrowhawk lunches in Pete Clark's Heaton garden on 30th August

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Three juveniles were at East Chevington on 31st (IF), while a male and female were hunting at Boulmer on 3rd (BS). Two birds were seen at Holy Island, a "cream crown" flew high NW at the Snook and a female was at the Lough on 28th (MJC/ADM) and two birds were noted at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 31st (RA). Single birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holy Island, Laverock Hall (Blyth), Mounces Viewpoint (Kielder), Newham Bog and at Plenmeller Common.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

There were two sightings this month, with a male quartering in the Cheviots on 20th (AJ) and a ringtail on the Otterburn Ranges on 29th (JR).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Snods Edge on 29th (IFo) and single birds were at Carterway Heads on 5th & 24th (IFo), Derwent Reservoir on 14th and 28th (IFo) including one harassing an Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* and one at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (MN).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

At least eight birds were at Emblehope Moor (Kielder) on 9th (PRM) and at Hazelrigg on 19th (DF), six birds involving two calling broods of young were at East Cramlington LNR on 13th (MJC) and five birds were at Usway Burn, Uswayford (Upper Coquetdale) on 10th (DRo). A pair with two fledged young were at Stamfordham throughout the month (EC) and four birds were also at Crooked Oak (Derwent Reservoir), Holystone, Milkwell (Corbridge) and Wark (North Tyne). One to three birds were noted at 29 sites during the month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

East Chevington had three birds on 16th (PRM) and three were also there on 23rd (DM/PJA). Two birds were at Big Waters NWT on 16th (GB per MM) and singles were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Ellington Pond, and Linton Ponds and at St Mary's Wetland.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The largest number this month was 31 at Silverlink LNR (North Shields) on 23rd (KWY) and other double-figure counts were 15 at Arcot Pond on 2nd (LJM), 13 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 24th (GB), 12+ at Holywell Pond on 28th (PRM) and on 23rd 10 birds were at Castle Island (DM/PJA), Druridge Pools (IDR) and Killingworth Lake (LJM). One - seven birds were noted at 13 sites.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Peak counts this month were 80 at Holywell Pond on 3rd (MN), 54 at Linton Ponds on 18th (IF), 51 at Big Waters NWT (GB per MM), 45 at Bothal Pond on 9th (TD) and 41 at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM). One to fifteen birds were at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT and Howick Hall Mill Pond.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The monthly total recorded at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was 807 (131N, 676S). There were 240S at Tynemouth on 9th (DRW) and 215 at Budle Bay on 20th (CGK). Cresswell Pond had 130 on 5th (MN), Howdiemont Sands at Boulmer had 109 at the high-tide roost on 19th (MKi) and Beacon Point (Newbiggin) had 101 on 23rd (AP). 86 were feeding on the mini-golf course at St Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ). There were 56 at North Blyth staithes on 26th (LJM), 49 at Hauxley NWT on 29th (HRS) and 44S offshore at Druridge Pools on 9th (IDR). Warkworth Gut (Amble) had 32 on 23rd (DM/PJA) and there were ten at Castle Island on the Wansbeck on 14th (GB). Small groups were recorded calling in flight over Monkseaton on 12th and 10th (MSH), two were noted at Howdon on 16th (CB) and there were singles at Valley Park, Cramlington, Warden, Grindon Lough, Big Waters NWT and Shotleyfield near Airy Holm Reservoir.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A maximum of nine birds was recorded at Cresswell Pond on 5th (MSH) and four at Druridge Pools between 1st and 5th (IDR, JD), with juveniles present at both sites.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The highest count came from East Chevington, with 800 on 17th (MSH). There were 700 at Holywell Pond on 15th (ASJ/SPP), 600 at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IFo) and 555 at Grindon Lough on 25th (SW). There were flocks of 380 at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 6th (TF), 280 at Beal saltmarsh (Lindisfarne) on 31st (RA) and 250 at Monks' House Pool on 24th (DGB). There were 200 at Greenhaugh Waterhead on 10th (SW) and at the Aln Estuary on 22nd (MKi). Castron had 170 on 22nd (DRo) and Pithouse Fell (Slaley) had 150 on 2nd (MSH). The WeBS count at Castle Island on the Wansbeck was 144 on 23rd (DM/PJA). There were 138 at Newstead Flash and 125 at Newham Bog on 30th (DM/GB/AJB), 110 at St Mary's Island on 6th (ASJ) and 100 at Haggerston Castle on 22nd (GB). Smaller flocks were reported at Arcot Pond, Bamburgh, Big Waters NWT, Druridge Pools, Holystone and Woodhorn Flashes throughout the month.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest flocks were at Holy Island, with 3,000 on 15th (MJC) and St Mary's Island, with 1,000 on 30th (ASJ). Old Hartley had 900 on 30th (MNC) and Longhoughton Steel (Boulmer) had 635 on 16th (MKi). There were 450 at Cullernose Point on 1st (TD), 300 at East Chevington on 24th (TRD/JD) and 260 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 6th (AP). Grindon Lough had 225 on 25th (SW) and Derwent Reservoir had 150 on 31st (IFo). There were 60N at Ellington on 25th (TB), 28 at the Football Hole (Newton) on 1st (NFO) and 25 at Pithouse Fell (Slaley) on 2nd (MSH).

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*

A summer-plumaged bird was photographed at Longhoughton Steel (Boulmer) on 7th (MB/RB) and reported on 9th (SS/JR). It stayed there until 16th and was observed by many club members (TRD/JD, BS, IBDa/KDa, AMG/MG, MN, MKi, CB, IF, IDR/JF, PRM). It was then relocated at East Chevington on 20th (MN, TB) and finally recorded roosting with golden plovers at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st (AP).

A Pacific Golden Plover

Longhoughton Steel

Colin Bradshaw

3th August



Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The highest counts came from Budle Bay, with 50 on 17th (CGK) and Chare Ends (Holy Island) with 47 on 11th (MJC). Only four birds were recorded at Seaton Sluice during the month, with 1N on 14th and 3N on 29th (SSWT). Singles were at Snab Point, Cresswell, the Coquet Estuary, Tynemouth, East Chevington, Boulmer and St Mary's Island.



A Grey Plover at Seaton Point by Neil Osborne on 27th August

August's entry for Grey Plover should have omitted the opening sentence and begun '40 flew in to Ross Back Sands...'. Apologies to members and especially to AP, whose golden plovers were turned grey by an oversight of this section writer.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest flock was at Budle Bay, with 300 on 17th (CGK/GPK). Beal had 115 on 12th (DF) and Beacon Point (Newbiggin) had 72 on 18th (AP). There were 63 at North Pool (East Chevington) on 20th (TB), 61 at St Mary's Island on 27th (ASJ), 60 on Warkworth beach on 22nd (NFO), 55 at Amble on 16th (PRM), 44 at Castle Island on the Wansbeck on 14th (GB) and 43 at the Coquet Estuary on 10th (CSa). Smaller flocks were recorded at the Blyth Estuary, Snab Point, Cresswell, Stag Rocks, Bamburgh, the Holy Island causeway and Druridge Pools. Juveniles were noted at Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

There were two at Monks' House Pool on 5th (DF), Colt Crag Reservoir on 6th (MR) and East Chevington on 7th (ADMCL) and 17th (TF/JFa). Singles were at Druridge Pools, Cresswell Pond and Hedgeley GP.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Single birds were at the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 11th (MJC) and Colt Crag Reservoir on 14th (MR).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

There were 41S at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ), 30S at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 7th (AP) and 11S at Ellington Colliery on 26th (IDR). Eight were recorded at Budle Bay on 1st (CGK/GPK) and at Holy Island on 12th (IBDa/KDa), and there were 7N at Tynemouth on 29th (CB). There were five at Boulmer on 3rd (CSa) and at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC). Reports of smaller groups and singles came from the Coquet and Blyth Estuaries, Craster, Cullernose Point, Howick Bay, Cresswell Pond, Newton and Hartley.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The largest flocks were at Longhoughton Steel with 270 on 19th (MKi), the Coquet Estuary, with 158 on 19th (CSa), and Cresswell Pond, with 125 on 24th (MN). There were 95 on the mini-golf course at St Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ), 85 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st (AP), 80 at the Blyth Estuary on 18th (MN) and 60 at Alnmouth on 24th (JAR). Druridge Pools had 49 on 19th (IDR) and Hauxley NWT had 35 on 29th (HRS). There were 13, including a pair with a juvenile, at Plenmeller Common on 6th (PRM). Smaller groups and singles were recorded at Elswick on the Tyne, Castle Island on the Wansbeck, Gosforth, Big Waters NWT, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Amble, Whittingham, Wideopen, Monkseaton and Holywell Waggonway.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

There was a flock of 360 at Chare End (Holy Island) on 11th (MJC), far exceeding counts from other sites this month. Boulmer had eight on 2nd (TRD), including a bird in full summer plumage, and eight were also recorded on 9th (ADM) and 14th (IDR/JF). There were five at Newbiggin on 22nd (CB) and at the Blyth Estuary on 31st (BS). Only two birds were recorded during the month at SSWT, with a single at Seaton Sluice on 11th (DLo). Two were also at St Mary's Island, North Pool (Chevington) and Snab Point, Cresswell, and singles were at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond and the Aln Estuary.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The largest flocks were at the Coquet Estuary, with 62 on 8th (CSa) and Budle Bay, with 23, many in summer plumage, on 12th (RA). There were ten at the Aln Estuary on 11th (GB) and at East Chevington on 15th, including three juveniles (TF/JFa). Castle Island on the Wansbeck had seven on 17th (GB) and there were five at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (EHa) and at Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR). Four flew north at Whitley Bay (BS) and Seaton Sluice (SSWT) on 16th and there were four at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne) (RA) and Monks' House Pool (KWY) on 31st. There were three at the Blyth Estuary on 31st (BS), two S over Tynemouth on 7th (DRW) and singles at Holywell Waggonway Flash on 17th (MN) and Big Waters NWT between 22nd–26th (MM, GB).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Return passage resulted in records from most stretches of the coastline with the highest count being 84 feeding on the mini-golf course at St Mary's Island/Whitley Bay on 28th (ASJ). At Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer), 82 were present on 19th (MKi), 76 were at Warkworth Pier also on 19th (CSa), 30 were at Football Hole (Newton) on 1st(NFO), 25 at Annstead (Seahouses) on 3rd (DF), 23 were on the breakwater at Newbiggin on 8th (STH) and 20 were at Longhoughton Steel on 11th (GB). One-15 were reported from Amble, the River Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Holy Island, Howick Bay, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).



A Turnstone shows its colours to Alan Jack on 11th August at St. Mary's

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Light passage was noted at Seaton Sluice with 38N and 33S during the month with the first juvenile noted on 3rd (SSWT). The highest count this month came from Lindisfarne NNR with ca.200 noted at Chare Ends on 30th (DM) and Fenham Flats on 26th (TRD/JD) with approximately 50 at Budle Bay on 21st (DF). Birds were reported at the River Coquet Estuary from 15th with the peak count being 48 on 27th (CSa). Other counts in double figures were 27 at Boulmer on 16th (PRM), 20 at Cresswell Pond on 26th (NFO), 12 at the River Blyth Estuary on 31st (BS) and ten at both Amble on 16th (PRM) and the River Aln Estuary on 22nd(MKi). One to eight were seen at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Links, East Chevington, Holy Island, Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer), Longhoughton Steel, Newbiggin, Snab Point (Cresswell), Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), St Mary's Island and Tynemouth.



A Knot

Chris Barlow

Longhoughton Steel

August

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Well reported this month as birds passed through the area mainly on the coast and coastal wetlands but some penetrating as far inland as Grindon Lough. The highest counts came from the favoured Druridge Bay area with three on 2nd (TRD) increasing to a maximum of 18 by 15th (TF/JFa) and then down to six by 26th (NFO/CSa/AJR *et al.*). Surprisingly the peak count at nearby Druridge Pools was four on 19th (TB). Away from the Druridge Bay wetlands, the highest counts were 11 at Budle Bay on 23rd (CGK/GPK), five at Castle Island also on 23rd (DM), five at Holywell Pond on 24th (MN) and four in flight over Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th (TRD/JD). One-three were reported from Alnmouth, Beal saltmarsh, Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Earsdon (Plant Centre) Flash, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Holywell Pond and Waggonway Flash, Longhoughton Steel, Newbiggin, Newstead Flash, the River Coquet Estuary, St Mary's Island, Warkworth Gut and West Chevington.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

There was an influx of adults at the beginning of the month joined by juveniles near the month end. Single adults were seen at St Mary's Island on 1st (AC), Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 2nd (AP) and Cresswell Pond on 3rd-10th (TF/RB/MB *et al.*). The first juvenile appeared at the River Coquet Estuary on 20th (CSa) with two at Boulmer, Holywell Pond and St Mary's Island on 22nd (BS/KWY/AC *et al.*). Two juveniles were also at Budle Bay on 30th-31st (DF/RA/GPK). Single juveniles were reported from Beal saltmarsh, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Seaton Point (Boulmer) on dates between 22nd-31st (MN/CSa/BS)



Two Curlew Sandpipers at St Mary's by Alan Jack on 26th August



Sanderling *Calidris alba*

A minimum of ten was reported from St Mary's Island on 1st (MSH) increasing to a maximum of 160 by 22nd (ASJ/MSH/IF/IJ). At Druridge Bay numbers remained stable with a high of 38 recorded from 1st-28th (IDR/TRD). Elsewhere 50+ were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 27th (NFO), 28 at Football Hole (Newton) on 1st (NFO), 25 at Longhoughton Steel on 28th (MKi), 14 on Warkworth Beach on 7th (MKi) and 13 at Beadnell on 30th (DM). One-seven were seen at Alnmouth, Amble, Hauxley, Holy Island, Newbiggin and Snab Point (Cresswell). One was well inland at Colt Crag Reservoir on 17th (MR).

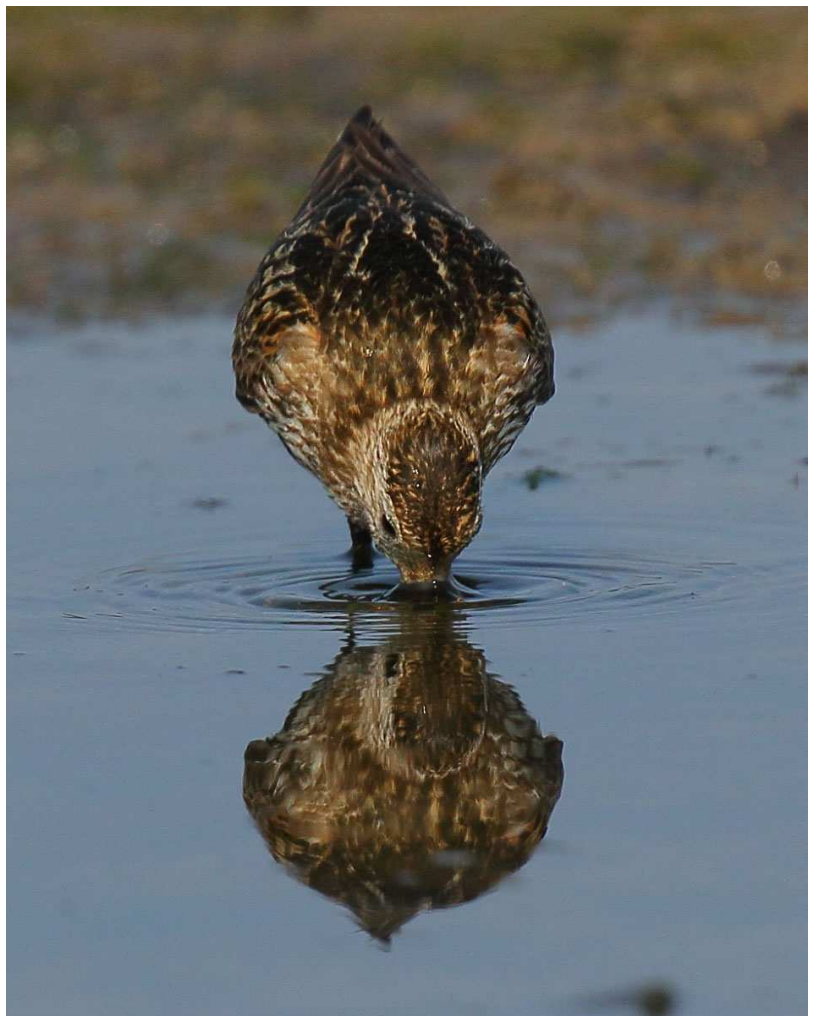


A Sanderling stretches
by Chris Barlow in August at Newbiggin

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Well reported this month, with records from many coastal stretches and freshwater wetlands. The maximum monthly count from Budle Bay was 400 on 16th (CGK/GPK) with 153 reported from Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 11th (MJC). At Amble, 60 were seen on 2nd (TRD) increasing to an estimated 120 on 16th (PRM) and reducing to 20 on 20th (IF). An accurate count of 108 was made at the River Coquet Estuary on 21st (RPo). Numbers at East Chevington varied from eight on 2nd to a peak of 120 on 16th (TRD/MN/PRM *et al.*). Other counts involved a minimum of 80 at Boulmer on 16th (PRM), 66 at Druridge Pools on 5th (IF/IDR) reducing to four by 24th (TRD/JD). Counts in double figures came from Alnmouth with 20 on 7th, 20 were also at Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) on 19th, and St Mary's Wetland on 23rd. 19 at Castle Island on 23rd, Longhoughton Steel attracted 15 on 11th, 12 were at Monks' House Pool on 2nd and ten were at Cresswell Pond on 24th. One-eight were present at Beadnell, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Earsdon (Beehive Flash and Plant Centre Flash), Football Hole (Newton), Grindon Lough, Holy Island causeway, Holywell Pond, the River Aln Estuary and Snab Point (Cresswell). An interesting series of nocturnal records were made at Monkseaton with one sound recorded at 3am on 5th and a minimum of four between 2am-4.16am on 10th (MSH).

A Dunlin reflects
St.Mary's
Alan Jack
11th August



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Only three reports this month with two at Newbiggin on 8th (STH) and singles at Seaton Sluice on 5th and 16th (SSWT).



Purple Sandpiper
at Newbiggin by Colin Bradshaw
22nd August

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Two were seen at Monks' House Pool on 2nd (JPL). Singles were recorded at Cresswell Pond on 10th and 24th-25th(AJR/AA/MN *et al.*), East Chevington on 11th, 22nd and 24th (GB/TF/TB *et al.*), Druridge Pools on 23rd (IDR), Colt Crag Reservoir on 24th (MR) and Beal on 30th (DF).

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

A much-appreciated adult, still in summer plumage was seen at Druridge Pools (Budge fields) on 5th (TRD/JD/MN/IF/IDR/TF/TB)

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

No reports received this month

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

East Chevington attracted 17 on 16th (PRM), ten were at Newstead Flash on 30th (DM) and nine at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC). One-five were seen at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond and Boulmer (flying west), Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Holystone and Holywell Waggonway Flash,

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Passage was well underway with sightings mainly from coastal wetlands and the lower reaches of rivers. The largest counts were seven at Castle Island on 23rd (DM), six were at the River Coquet Estuary on 10th (CSa) and six were at Monks' House Pool the next day (KWY). Three birds were at each of Hedgeley GP on 17th (TRD/JD) and Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo). Two were at East Chevington on 2nd (TRD) and Maiden's Hall Lake (West Chevington) on 18th (GB). Single birds were seen at Alnmouth, Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, Foxton Bends, Gosforth Park, Howick Bay, the River Aln Estuary, the River Blyth Estuary, the River Tyne (Elswick), Snab Point (Cresswell), St Mary's Wetland and Tynemouth during the month. Nocturnal migrants were heard over Morpeth on 17th (JFa) and Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) on 18th (MSH).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Well reported this month as passage increased. The maximum reported from Arcot Pond was four on 14th and 17th (GB) when a single had been present on 4th. Three were seen at Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK), Newstead Flash on 8th (CGK/GPK), Ogle Bridge on 25th (AHB) and Bothal Pond on 14th(TF). Two birds were at Branton GP, Castle Island, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Pond, Ogle Bridge and Linton Ponds. Single birds were recorded at Alnmouth, Berwick Bill Bridge (River Pont), Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington, East Cramlington LNR (flying south), Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holy Island, Holywell Waggonway Flash, Ogle Bridge and St George's Roundabout (Fulbeck). A nocturnal migrant was recorded flying over Gosforth Garden Village (Newcastle) on 19th (MJC).



A splendid in-flight image of a Green Sandpiper
Gosforth subsidence pond
By Mike Carr on 2nd August

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Passage at Seaton Sluice during the month was 57N and 132S (SSWT). Numbers built up at sites at the coast with 400 at the River Coquet Estuary on 15th (Csa), 230 at Budle Bay on 31st (CGK), 20 at nearby Beal saltmarsh on the same day (RA), 170 at the River Blyth Estuary on 18th and 24th (MN/LJM), 118 at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC) and 116 at Amble Braid on 20th (IFo). Counts in double figures came from Annstead with 54 on 3rd (DF), Beal with 53 on 8th (DF), Castle Island with 80 on 14th (GB), Cresswell with 12 on 17th (DLo), Druridge Pools and Links with 12 on 19th (IDR), Elswick (River Tyne) with a minimum of 11 on 12th (PRM), Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) with 94 on 19th (MKi) and Newbiggin with 38 on the breakwater on 8th (STH). One- nine were seen at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Monks' House Pool, Seaton Burn, Snab Point (Cresswell), St Mary's Wetland and Warden. A single nocturnal migrant was recorded at Monkseaton (Whitley Bay) on 10th (MSH).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Light passage continued this month with single birds reported from Alnmouth on 7th (MJC), Druridge Pools from 1st-8th (IDR/EHa/TB *et al.*), East Chevington on 11th-12th (TB/CSa) and again on 22nd, 23rd and 27th (MN/CSa), Holywell Pond on 22nd (MN/ASJ/KWY) and Monks' House Pool from 16th-19th (RA/DF/CGK/GPK).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A maximum of three was at East Chevington on 25th (ADMc) and 27th (CSa). Singles were at Bothal Pond on 19th (TF/JFa), Newbiggin GC (flying over) on 30th (STH/NFO), Warkworth Gut on 11th (AA), and Woodhorn Flashes on 30th-31st (DM/JFa).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Lindisfarne NNR attracted the highest numbers with 19 at Beal saltmarsh on 31st (RA). 13 at South Low (Holy Island causeway) on 30th (DM) and ten at Budle Bay on 23rd (CPK/GPK). The highest count elsewhere was 12 at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC). Four were at Castle Island on 14th (GB), four at Holy Island on 18th (GB), three were at Hedgeley GP on 27th (PA), two were at East Chevington on 8th (MN/RB/MB), two at St Mary's Wetland on 18th (MSH/AC) and two at Bothal Pond on 23rd (TD). Singles were reported from Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Cullercoats, Druridge Pools, Foxton Bends (River Aln), Lynemouth (flying S), Newbiggin, Seaton Sluice (flying N), St Mary's Island, Tynemouth and Warkworth on various dates during the month.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

No noticeable movements were recorded at Seaton Sluice but light passage was seen at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 28th with 500 N in three hours (MJC) and, on other dates, smaller numbers moved N at Hauxley, Longhoughton Steel and Tynemouth. At the Howick Bay colony at least 300 adults and juveniles were in flight or on the water on 1st with very few young still remaining unfledged (TD). Elsewhere, 134 were on the Blyth Harbour east pier on 24th and 80 at Cullernose Point on 16th. Offshore at Druridge Pools, several counts throughout the month recorded a maximum of 35 (IDR).

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

An adult, with a Kittiwake flock, fed distantly offshore at Newbiggin Church Point on 28th (JFa).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest gatherings were 1,050 in Budle Bay on 22nd (DF), 700 at Linton Ponds (IRD), 500+ at St Mary's Island (MSH) and 400+ at Earsdon Flash (MSH). Smaller counts of 150-300 came from Boulmer, Castle Island, Killingworth Lake and the Blyth Estuary, 80-100 at Cramlington and Newstead Flash and up to 30 at three Druridge Bay localities and at Bothal Pond and Jesmond Dene.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

From 14th-30th five juveniles moved N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) with four juveniles seen moving N at Annstead Point on 26th (DF/GPK), three adults were at Newbiggin (Spital) on 13th (BS) and two adults moved N at Tynemouth on 9th (DRW). All of the many other records were of single birds, mainly immatures, the great majority from the well-watched Druridge Bay sites of Druridge Pools and East Chevington but also Boulmer, Holy Island and Howick.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

The usual late-summer influx occurred when a huge gathering of 142 was at Cresswell Pond on 27th (ADMc) and large counts of 50+ came from Ellington on 30th (TB) and 40, including 13 juveniles, at Linton Ponds on 20th (IF). On other dates, smaller groups of 12-27 were seen at Cresswell Pond, Cresswell (Snab Point), Ellington, Newbiggin and Woodhorn Flashes and numerous sightings of up to eight came from localities in the Druridge Bay/Ellington area as well as frequent records of singles at Alnmouth, Beal, Budle Bay, Fenham-le-Moor and Holy Island (*many observers*). An analysis of the Budle Bay records suggested ca.20+ individuals with a maximum count of seven on 23rd of which all were aged as 3rd calendar year (CGK/GPK/DF *et al.*).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Surprisingly few were recorded with maximum counts of only around 50-60 in Budle Bay on two dates (DF); the first juveniles were seen here on 7th (CGK). Elsewhere, up to four frequented Druridge Pools (IDR), four were at Big Waters NWT (GB).and one or two at three other localities.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

At Hauxley, 40 moved N in one hour on 29th (HRS). At least 180 roosted in fields at Boulmer on 21st (BS) and 50 were at nearby Longhoughton Steel on 14th (IDR/JF). Castle Island and East Chevington North Pool held 20-25 towards the month end (DM) and there were 10-25 at other coastal localities including the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay and offshore at Druridge Pools. Colt Crag Reservoir and Derwent Reservoir held four and 11 respectively.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

At Budle Bay on 21st around 2,000 were 'loafing' there (CGK) and the estimated numbers there on 18th and 22nd were at least 1,000 with around 760 on 14th (DF); 250 were at Linton Ponds on 24th (IRD). A count of 51 came from the Coquet Estuary (MKi) and there was a maximum of 44 from 17 reports from offshore counts at Druridge Pools (IDR) with 40 at Castle Island and 20 at Newstead Flash. On 4th, 11 fledged young were at each of two industrial/business sites at Cramlington (LJM). .

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The returning Polish-ringed bird PKCS remained in Amble Harbour until at least 17th (TB *et al.*) and a juvenile arrived at St Mary's Island on 20th (AC) remaining there until at least 25th.

A Caspian Gull

St. Mary's

Jack Bucknall

25th August



Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Double-figure counts on dates throughout comprised 49 at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa), 31 adults at Budle Bay (DF), 22 fledged juveniles at Cramlington Admiral Business Park (LJM) and 15 at Druridge Pools (IDR). Numbers at coastal sites included two at Boulmer and Castle Island and up to seven offshore at Druridge Pools and Newbiggin, some moving S (IDR/DLo). Inland sightings were nine at Derwent Reservoir, six at Colt Crag Reservoir and one to three at Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene and Plenmeller Common.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

No exceptional movements were noted at Seaton Sluice with a maximum of 173 N on 26th (SSWT) but at Holy Island 450 per hour moved N over three hours off Emmanuel Head on 28th (MJC) and 100 per hour flew N at St Mary's Island on the morning of 26th (MSH). Groups passing over Longhoughton and Monkseaton were sound-recorded overnight on 11th and 12th (MSH/BS). The maximum of many counts of birds offshore from Druridge Pools was 90 on 26th (IDR), 71 roosted at Longhoughton Steel on 28th (MKi), 55 were on the scrapes at East Chevington on 5th (TRD/JD) and 40 were seen at Cresswell (Snab Point) on 26th (TRD/JD) and St Mary's Island on 9th (ASJ). Other smaller groups of 10-25 were recorded at Amble, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond and Hauxley with single-figure counts on other dates at many of the localities previously mentioned.



Sandwich terns at St. Mary's by Chris Barlow in August

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

There were few sightings, comprising only two, an adult and juvenile, at Boulmer (Seaton Point) on 29th (BS) and at Newbiggin (Church Point) on 17th (TF/JFa) and singles at East Chevington North Pool on 1st (ASH/TW) and Druridge Bay CP on 21st (IRD)..

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice from 2nd-16th was 31 (11 moving N, 20 S) (SSWT). A record count at Newbiggin, Beacon Point included 55 on 5th (AP), 15 flew S at Whitley Bay on 16th (BS), eight were on the Newbiggin breakwater on 8th (STH) and eight, including one juvenile, at Boulmer on 16th (PRM). Many reports of up to four, including good numbers of juveniles, came from 12 coastal localities ranging from Beal saltmarsh in the north to Tynemouth and included multi-sightings at Boulmer, Druridge Bay and Newbiggin.

Common Tern *S. hirundo*/**Arctic Tern** *S. paradisaea*

A mix of 228, mainly *hirundo*, flew S at Whitley Bay in the early morning of 16th (BS) and 190 moved N at Hauxley on 29th (HRS). Six reports numbering up to 50 came from Annstead, Bamburgh and Druridge Bay.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Up to 17th, good numbers were recorded from Seaton Sluice with 155 S on 2nd, 172 S on 5th and 100 S and 100 N on 14th (SSWT). A maximum of 100 gathered on estuary rocks at Tynemouth on 1st (DRW). East Chevington North Pool attracted a maximum of 53 with smaller numbers there throughout (TRD/JD *et al.*) and up to 20 were recorded regularly offshore at Druridge Pools (IDR) with 10-20 seen at Amble, Boulmer and Longhoughton Steel. Inland records consisted of five at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 1st (IFo) and a single at Big Waters on 5th (GB).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

On 28th, 2,000 flew N in three hours past Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) (MJC). Three records of 50 came from Seaton Sluice, Cresswell (Snab Point) and Tynemouth with a maximum of 35 from several counts offshore at Druridge Pools. Two unusual sightings were single birds, probably two individuals, seen dip-feeding and fishing at Big Waters on 4th and from 25th-29th (GB).

White-winged BlackTern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

This extremely rare visitor, a moulting adult, was found at Druridge Bay CP Ladyburn Lake on 14th and was to be seen there regularly until 22nd; during this period it made daily short visits to nearby East Chevington North Pool (DE/numerous observers).



The Druridge White-winged Black Tern

Alan Jack
22nd August

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Reports of single birds, probably one individual, flying N at Newbiggin on 17th and seen at Spital and Church Point (GB/TF/JFa). On 29th, one was recorded at Seaton Sluice (DLo).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

It was an excellent month for the species with the highest total recorded at Seaton Sluice since 2003 and it was close to the long-term average. In 117 hours of watching 59 were counted, comprising 55 N and 4 S, with a maximum of 27 N on 28th (SSWT). This passage on the peak day, 28th, was also witnessed at Howick with 25 N in five hours (BS), 20 N at Newbiggin (NFO) and 13 N at St Mary's Island (JBU/AC) with lower counts from a number of other widespread localities. The whole period 26th-30th was busy with sightings of up to eight at other sites such as Annstead, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cresswell (Snab Pont), Cullernose Point, offshore Druridge Pools, Hauxley, Holy Island, Longhoughton Steel and Tynemouth.

A smaller passage was recorded earlier in the month, from 9th-19th, with a maximum of four at Newbiggin on 14th (TF), three in Druridge Bay and Longhoughton Steel on 16th and one or two at Annstead, Boulmer, Cullernose Point, offshore at Druridge Pools, Newbiggin, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay. .

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

The only records from Seaton Sluice were of two singles moving N on 16th (SSWT). Single birds were also seen flying N on the 16th, offshore at Druridge Pools, Longhoughton Steel and Whitley Bay (IDR/IJ) and another single passed Snab Point on 17th (DLo). Other sightings recorded from 26th-29th were three offshore from Druridge Pools (IDR), Hauxley (HRS) and Howick (DS) and singles at Longhoughton Steel (TF/JFa/IBDa/KDa) and Newbiggin (NFO/JFa).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

At Seaton Sluice it was the best month for the species since 2003, although still below the long-term average. 115 were recorded (36 N, 79 S) in 117 hours watching, with a maximum of 16 N and 19 S on 28th. (SSWT). Numerous records came from the period 26th-30th including daily maxima of 21 at Annstead Point (CGK/GPK), 18 at Tynemouth (DRW), 13 at Newbiggin (TF/JFa), 12 at St Mary's Island, 11 at Holy Island (MJC), eight at Cresswell (Snab Point), four offshore at Druridge Pools, two at Hauxley and singles at Boulmer, Bamburgh and Longhoughton Steel.

Earlier in the month, from 7th-17th, a smaller influx was recorded with a maximum of ten at Longhoughton Steel on 16th and one to five at Annstead, Boulmer, the Coquet Estuary, Cullernose Point, offshore at Druridge Pools, Newbiggin, Tynemouth, Warkworth pier and Whitley Bay. A single was also seen at Snab Point on 2nd.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was 20, comprising 17 juveniles N on 16th, single juveniles S on 26th, N on 28th and an adult on 30th (the only adult recorded this month) (SSWT). Elsewhere on 16th three were seen at Boulmer (AMG/MG), offshore at Druridge Pools (IDR) with two at Annstead Point, Longhoughton Steel, Low Hauxley and St Mary's Island. During the period 23rd-28th, four passed N at St Mary's Island (JBU/AC) two at Newbiggin and singles at Boulmer, offshore Druridge Pools, Longhoughton Steel and Newbiggin.

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

The first seen this month at Seaton Sluice occurred from 26th-30th when 51 flew N, of which ca.27 were Guillemot (SSWT)

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Several counts in Druridge Bay offshore from Druridge Pools included totals up to 16 (IDR), 11 flew N at Hauxley on 29th and one to five were recorded on the sea at five other localities..

Razorbill *Alca torda*

There was only one record, from Boulmer, where two were present on 14th.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

A most unusual record was one swimming in the inner harbour at Seahouses on 12th (GW/TRD/JD) and, presumably the same individual was on the sea at nearby Annstead Point on 17th (RA).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

One to three were recorded, mainly birds flying N, on dates throughout at Druridge Bay, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

On 23rd 220+ were at Stakeford Railway Bridge (DM/PJA), 124 on mud flats at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 10th (LJM), 50+ at Spittal House Farm (Newbiggin) on 29th (RS) with three to 14 at three other locations.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

The regular site at Howdon held 43 on 28th (CB), 18 were at Cresswell Pond on 11th with 12 there on 26th (TB/NFO), eight at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th and one to five at eight other widespread localities.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

More than 230 were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 15th (DM) with birds present at Druridge Pools and Links on 12 dates the peak being ten on 20th (IDR) and seven at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 2nd (MJCo).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

A high count of 17 camw from Kirkley Mill on 13th, five at Ogle on 26th (AHB), four at Yearle on 19th and regularly at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (DGB/RS) with three at Wark on 4th and two at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 2nd (PRM/MJCo).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Two were at Holy Island on 16th & 18th (GB/LAR/AH/ADM) with singles seen from 11th to 19th. A juvenile was at Quarry House Moor on 2nd, East Chevington on 8th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 20th with one at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 31st.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Three were at East Chevington on 8th with a single there on 18th (TF/IF/JFa), two at Hareshaw Common (Bellingham) on 30th (PRM) and singles at Colt Crag Reservoir on 8th, Howick on 11th, Corbridge on 14th, Holy Island on 15th & 27th, A1 at Eshott on 16th, Acomb on 24th, Cresswell Pond and Howick Hall on 27th and Thropton on 30th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

On 30th two males and a female called at Rothbury (PRM) with two calling there most nights during the month (TRD/JD) and two were heard at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 22nd. Juveniles were noted at Henderson Hall (Newcastle) on 1st, Newbrough on 10th, Fulbeck (Morpeth) on the same date with singles at a further 17 widespread localities.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

The only report was of one near Big Waters NWT on 9th (GB).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One, presumably the same bird was seen at Holy Island on 11th, 16th, 18th & 28th (MJC *et al.*).

A Long-eared Owl gives Mike Carr the eye
Holy Island on 11th August



The July Long-eared Owl photograph was by Alan Jack

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Two were at Plenmeller Common on 6th and Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 23rd (PRM/BS). With singles at Boulmer on 8th, Plenmeller Common on 14th and Newbiggin by the Sea on 19th.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Two males were heard from the road at Slaley on 2nd (MH) and churred at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 3rd (TW).

Swift *Apus apus*

Well reported with the peak counts 75 over Chugdon Wood (Ellington on 6th (TB), 74 congregating at dusk at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 18th with 70 there on 2nd (MJC). At least 60 were at Belford on 6th (DF), 50+ at Bewick Drift (Lynemouth) on 1st (TB), Earsdon Plant Centre on 3rd (MN), 50 S at St Mary's Island on 2nd, at Druridge Bay CP on 22nd and 40 at Cullercoats on 1st and Hexham on 4th. 20 to 35 were at 11 locations with 30 still at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th. One to 18 were at 27 other widespread localities and recorded till the month end with 11 S at Ellington on 28th, five S at Chugdon Wood on 29th, two there on 30th and Glororum (Bamburgh) on 29th with the last a single S at East Chevington on 31st.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Three were at Branton GP on 22nd (IBDa/KDa), with two at Gosforth Park NR on 1st, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 2nd, Alnmouth on 7th, Holystone on 23rd and Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 30th. Singles were at Budle Bay on eight days during the month, Big Waters NWT on three dates and Howick on two with one at ten other widely spread localities.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

An adult was with two juveniles at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th with two there on 23rd, at Ellington on 28th (TB) and Spindleston on 24th (AMG/MG). Singles were at the two Ellington sites on four other dates during the month and 15 other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

More than one was at Derwent Reservoir on 13th and one there on 31st (IFo).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

10 birds were at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC) and four were seen at Holy Island on 16th (ADM) and at Widdrington Moor Lake on 24th (MN). Three birds were at Amble Braid, Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Gosforth Subsidence Pond and Holy Island. One - two birds were at 26 sites.



A Kestrel over Gosforth by Mike Carr on 1st August

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were noted throughout the month at Big Waters NWT, Branton, Boulmer, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Longhoughton Steel, River Coquet Estuary and Snab Point (Cresswell).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A probable female was at March Burn on 7th (AJR) and on 11th an adult flew over the A1068 at Widdrington Village towards Widdrington Moor Lake (TB). An adult was hunting Swallows *Hirundo rustica* over Holy Island Village on 15th (MJC) and it or another bird was on Holy Island on 16th (AH).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two juveniles were noted at Longhoughton on 2nd (BS) and two adults were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo). An adult and a juvenile were noted throughout the month at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK *et al.*). Single birds were reported from the following locations: Amble Braid, Beal, Benton (Newcastle), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), nr Colwell, Cresswell Pond, Cullernose, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Garden Village, Grindon Lough, High Hauxley, Holywell Dene, Longhoughton Steel, Old Hartley, Plenmeller Common, Seaton Point (Boulmer), St Mary's Island and Wark (North Tyne).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Picus viridis*

Six were at Preston Park (North Shields) on 16th (DLo) and two SE over the observer's garden at Heaton on 29th (PCI).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

A peak count of four came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 13th and 28th with two there on four other dates and at Ellington Dene on 2nd & 5th (TB). Two were also at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 7th, Howick on 10th, Arcot Pond on 27th, Beanley Plantation & Jesmond Dene on 30th and Cambois (railway line) and Derwent Reservoir on 31st. Singles were at the above sites in Ellington regularly and at four other locations.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A group of 17 was at Ellington on 27th (TB) with two to six at Druridge Pools & Links on seven dates (IDR) and five at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 30th (MJCo).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

More than 400 were at Bothal Pond on 12th (TD), 70 at Howdon on 28th (CB), 65 at Newcastle Town Moor on 26th (GB) and ten at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 16th (MJCo).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

There were large counts of 200 at Howick on 26th (JAR) and more than 150 at Bothal Pond on 12th (TD).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Two or more were regularly at Druridge Pools and Links with the peak 12 on 19th (IDR), six at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 9th (MJCo) and two at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 3rd.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One was at Craster on 27th (per NNBC) and at Seahouses Farm (Howick) on 28th (BS).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Eight was the high count at Grindon Lough on 6th (PRM), three at Thirlmoor Hill (Otterburn Ranges) on 22nd and The Lough (Holy Island) on 28th (JR/NA/MJC) with one to two at seven other upland locations.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Low numbers were recorded this month with two at Druridge Pools and Links on 20th (IDR) and singles at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 9th and Wark (N Tyne) on 14th.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

All reports were of singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 2nd, 17th and 24th and heard at Rothbury on 11th (IFo/TRD/JD).

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

An adult with three young was at Ellington Dene on 2nd (TB), three at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) on 24th and two at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo) with singles at the latter two locations on two - three further dates. Singles were at ten other locations.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Two or more were regularly at Druridge Pools and Links with the peak 12 on 20th (IDR), nine in a mixed tit flock at East Chevington on 23rd (DM/PJA) and a single at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 30th.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Four was the peak count at Druridge Pools and Links (IDR) with one to three present on five other dates and three at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 16th (MJCo).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

On 22nd at St Mary's Island 16 were in a crop field (ASJ), five at Ellington on 29th (TB), two to three south at Embleton Bog (Newham) on 30th with singles on three dates at Druridge Pools and Links and Longhoughton Steel on 11th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

A congregation of 83 was noted at dusk at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on the 18th with 20 there at dusk on 2nd (MJC), more than 40 at Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) on 16th and 23rd (PRM/DM/PJA), 24 S at Druridge Pools & Links on 3rd and 20 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th. 15 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 18th and 12 was the peak count at Druridge Pools & Links on 2nd with two to eight at three other locations.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

More than 140 were at Holywell Pond on 28th (PRM), 90 were in the village at Holy Island on 19th (MJC), 60 at Druridge Pools & Links on 2nd and at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr Shotleyfield) (IDR/IFo). 41 were congregating at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 18th (MJC) and 40+ at Stamfordham on 13th where it was noted as another poor breeding year (EC). On 14th, 40 moved E at Colt Crag Reservoir and 30 E on 24th, 40 S at Druridge Pools & Links on 20th and 32 on 3rd, 35 on wires at Ellington on 30th and 25 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th. Three to 20 were at eight other locations and a there was a nest with three large young being fed at Wylam Brewery Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 24th.



A classic 'Swallow on wire' image by Alan Jack on 31st August

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The minimum number of birds feeding at dusk at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 2nd was 80 with 32 there on 18th (MJC), more than 60 at Arcot Manor Balancing Pond on 12th (LJM), 60 in the village at Holy Island on 19th and 55 feeding at St Mary's Island on 28th. 50+ were at Holywell Pond on 28th with 50 at Holystone on 3rd, Druridge Bay CP on 22nd, Cullercoats on 23rd, 40 at Alnmouth on 7th, Newbiggin on 22nd, Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield) on 31st and 35 at Ellington on 24th. One to 25 were at five other locations with breeding confirmed at Southfield Green (Cramlington) and Humshaugh.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest flock was 18 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 7th (DM). 13 were in a mixed flock at East Chevington on 23rd (DM/PJA) and 11, also in a mixed flock, were in Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 22nd (TD). There were nine at Elswick on 12th (PRM) and eight at Northburn (Cramlington) on 29th (LJM). Smaller groups were noted at Chollerford, Humshaugh and Jesmond Dene, Newcastle.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A maximum count of 52 at Druridge Pools on 20th had declined to four by 22nd (IDR). Similarly, a count of 33 at different locations on Holy Island on 20th had declined to seven on 28th (MJC). There were 31 at Alnmouth on 7th (MJC) and a minimum of 25 at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 5th (MJC). There were 16 at Craster on 14th (MJC) and at East Cramlington LNR on 12th (MJC). Airy Holm Reservoir near Shotleyfield had 15 in a mixed flock on 15th (IFo), Howick Hall had ten on 7th (PHa/AHa) and Derwent Reservoir had ten on 19th (IFo). Smaller parties, including juveniles, were recorded at Budle Point, Tynemouth, St Mary's Island, Newbiggin and Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin, with one to two at Gosforth Garden Village, Grindon Lough, Elswick, Warden, Longbenton and Holywell Pond. Late singing birds were at Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Cresswell Pond and Fulbeck, Morpeth.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

There were 24 at Craster on 14th (MJC) and 15 at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 5th (MJC). Ten juveniles were at St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ) and ten were in a mixed flock at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo). A maximum count of nine were present at various locations on Holy Island on 16th (IBDa/AH/ADM). Smaller groups were reported from Alnmouth, Howick Hall and Humshaugh, with one to two birds at the Harthope Valley, Budle Point, Longbenton, Cramlington, Quarry Cottage and Seaton Burn. Late singing birds were at Linden Hall, Longhorsley on 24th (NFO), Tynemouth on 30th (CB), Arcot Pond on 30th (DM/GB/AJB) and Valley Park, Cramlington on 31st (DM).

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

One was on Holy Island on 12th (RA, TRD/JD) and 19th (MJC). One was also seen on the Ash Lagoon Bank (Newbiggin) on 30th (AP) and 31st (JFa).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

A total of 66 were ringed at East Chevington during the month (16 on 3rd, 31 on 18th, 19 on 31st, IF). There were five at Holy Island on 16th (IBDa/AH/ADM), four at Druridge Pools on 3rd (IDR) and three at Arcot Pond on 27th, including a late singing bird (DM). An adult was observed feeding two large young at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (PG). Singles were at Tynemouth, Airy Holm Reservoir, Newbiggin golf course and Big Waters NWT.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A total of 47 were ringed at East Chevington during the month (15 on 3rd, 325 on 18th, 7 on 31st, IF). Four juveniles were recorded at Branton GP on 9th (IBDa/KDa). Singles were at Holy Island on 11th (MJC) and 16th (ADM) and at Howick Hall on 14th (PHa/AHa).

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

One was at Cresswell Pond, in the hedge south of the hide, on 19th (NFO).

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

One was heard reeling at Arcot Pond on 7th (GB) and one was at Druridge Pools on 10th (IDR).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Parties of five were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 7th (IFo), Alnmouth on 12th (MJC), Craster on 14th (MJC) and Howick Hall on 31st (PHa/AHa). A female and three recently fledged young were at Druridge Pools on 3rd (IDR). Three were at St Mary's Island on 22nd (ASJ) and at Ellington on 31st (TB). There were two at Castle Island on 23rd (DM/PJA) and at Newbrough on 31st (PRM). Singles were noted at Warden, Gosforth Garden Village, Old Library, Cramlington. Arcot Lane and Pond, Budle Point and Humshaugh. A late singing bird was heard at Rothbury on 7th and 11th (TRD/JD).

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Seven were at Holy Island on 19th (MJC) and two were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 1st (IFo) and Howick Hall on 30th (PHa/AHa). A single was at Tynemouth on 14th (DRW).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Single first-winter birds were recorded at Holy Island on 16th (ADM), Budle Point on 18th (CGK) and St Mary's Island on 24th (DLo, AC/MSH *et al.*, MN, IJ).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

There were five (two adults and three juveniles) at Gosforth Garden Village on 3rd (MJC).

Two to three birds were noted daily at Budle Bay between 20th and 31st (CGK/GPK) and two were at Budle Point on 17th (RA). Two were at The Snook (Holy Island) on 17th (CSa) and at St Mary's Island on 24th (ASJ). There were singles at the Ash Lagoon Bank Newbiggin on 20th (GB) and at Howick on 31st (JAR).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

There was a maximum count of 11 (two adults and nine juveniles) at St Mary's Island on 20th (ASJ) and ten at Druridge Pools on 3rd (IDR). There were six at The Ash Lagoon Bank (Newbiggin) on 20th (GB). Howick Bay had four on 1st (TD) and Chugdon Wood, Ellington had four on 26th (TB). There were two at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 12th (DM) and at Airy Holm Reservoir on 24th (IFo). Singles were reported from Arcot Pond, Holy Island, Boulmer, Humshaugh, Derwent Reservoir and East Chevington.



A Whitethroat at St. Mary's by Colin Bradshaw on 23rd August

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Newbrough, Hexham had 20 on 31st (PRM) and Ellington Dene had nine on 1st (TB). There were two at Howick on 10th (JAR) and at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 26th (GB). Singles were noted at Valley Park (Cramlington) and Holy Island.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Reports of one to of six birds at Druridge Pools were submitted throughout the month, with a maximum of ten on 20th (IDR). There were three at Jesmond Dene, Newcastle on 2nd (MJCo).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

There were four at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 31st (TB) and three at Humshaugh on 23rd (SW) and at Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo). Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo), Branton on 7th (IBDa/KDa) and Harbottle on 12th (MKi). One was singing at Wansbeck Riverside Park on 9th (LJM) and there were also singles at Haggerston Castle, Airy Holm Reservoir, Valley Park, Cramlington and Milkwell, Corbridge.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

There were two at Wark on the North Tyne on 9th (PRM) and at Humshaugh on 22nd (SW). Singles were at Big Waters NWT, Derwent Reservoir, Holy Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Spindleston, Milkwell, Corbridge, Valley Park, Cramlington, Glororum near Bamburgh and Newbrough.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest flock was at St Mary's Island, with approximately 1,000 on 25th (ASJ). Big Waters NWT had 500 on 25th (GB), Howick had 300 on 18th (JAR), Marden Estate, Tynemouth had 250 on 19th (KWY), Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) had a maximum of 200 during the month (BS) and Derwent Reservoir had 120 on 2nd (IFo).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

A male was at Shepherd's Law on 30th (JD).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

There were two at Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR) and one at Jesmond Dene on 9th (MJCo).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

There were four at Holystone on 23rd (DRo).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

25 to 30 birds flew over Sandyford (Newcastle) on 27th (DHWB).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

There was one at Jesmond Dene on 9th (MJCo).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

21 were at Holystone on 29th (DRo) and 19 were at Howick on 8th (JAR). Ten flew over Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 10th (TD), and there were seven at Colt Crag Reservoir on 4th (MR) and at Leighton Hill MOD on 29th (JR).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Family groups of four were at Howick on 8th (JAR) and Holystone on 26th (DRo). A family group of three was at Linden Hall on 20th (NFO). Seven were noted at various locations on Holy Island on 19th (MJC). Reports of singles during the month came from Alnmouth, Derwent and Colt Crag Reservoirs, Humshaugh, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), the Ash Lagoon Bank (Newbiggin) and finally Beanley Plantation, which had one on 31st (TRD/JD).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Four were recorded at Druridge Pools on 20th (IDR). Three were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 23rd (BS) and at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 30th (MJCo).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Most of the reports for the month came from coastal sites, with a maximum of five at Holy Island on 12th (RA), two at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 15th (BS) and one at St Mary's Island on 15th (AC/MSH, IJ, BS). There were also singles at Boulmer, Howick and Gosforth Garden Village.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A female-type bird was at St Mary's Island on 20th (JBu, AC).



A Black Redstart at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 20th August

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A family group of three was at Eslington Park (Whittingham) on 4th (CW) and a group of three, including an adult male, was at Big Waters on 5th (GB). There were two at Hedgeley Hall on 18th (IBDa/KDa) and two juveniles at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo). Singles were reported from the Simonside Hills, Howick and Newcastle Exhibition Park.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

There was a maximum of nine recorded at various locations on Holy Island on 19th (MJC). A family group of five was at High Baulk near Great Whittington from 19th until the end of the month (ALT). Four juveniles were at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ). Four, including two juveniles were at Ryal on 11th (ALT) and a family group of four was at Chubden Hill (Whittingham) on 31st (CW). There were three at Newbiggin golf course on 20th (GB), at Boulmer on 22nd (BS) and at Plenmeller Common on 24th (PRM). Two were seen being chased off a fence by a Stonechat at East Chevington on 23rd (DM/PJA/DE). Singles were at Ellington, Druridge Pools, Derwent Reservoir and Tynemouth.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Breeding data

24/08/20	Druridge Pools & Links	8	Two family parties	IDR
06/08/20	Druridge Pools & Links	5	Family party	IDR
22/08/20	Druridge Pools & Links	5	Family party in dunes	IDR
04/08/20	Druridge Pools & Links	4	Family party	IDR
05/08/20	Druridge Pools & Links	4	Inc juvs	IDR
03/08/20	Druridge Pools & Links	2	Juvs	IDR
20/08/20	Newbiggin GC	5	plus inc several juvs	GB
18/08/20	Holy Island	2	juveniles (separate)	GB
19/08/20	Holy Island	2	Pair at Chare End Willows	MJC
16/08/20	Boulmer	4	4 juvs	PRM
19/08/20	High Baulk (S) nr Gt Whittington	4	Family group seen at this site to end of month	
22/08/20	Upper Coquetdale, Shillmoor Farm	4	juveniles.	JR/NA
0/08/20	Ellington, Chugdon Wood	3	Juveniles	TB
12/08/20	Derwent Reservoir	3	juvs still 2 on 16th	IFo
08/08/20	Derwent Reservoir	1	juv	IFo
30/08/20	Beanley Plantation	3	family party	TRD/JD
31/08/20	Howick	3	FAMILY	JAR
16/08/20	Harthope Valley, Langleeford Hope	2	Juveniles	EHa
01/08/20	Newton, Football Hole	1	juv.	NFO
08/08/20	Simonside Hills	1	1m 1 imm	TD
09/08/20	Big Waters NWT	1	a juvenile (not bred here!) found by I S Davidson.	Passage bird.
GB				

A maximum of eight, comprising two family parties, were at Druridge Pools on 6th (IDR). Six were at East Chevington on 10th (AJR) and at Hazelrigg on 23rd (DF). Five, including juveniles, were at Newbiggin golf course on 20th (GB). Four were at Holy Island (IBDa/KDa) and Monks' House Pool (DF) on 15th and at Snab Point Cresswell on 29th (TB). There were four juveniles at Boulmer on 16th (PRM) and at Shillmoor Farm, Upper Coquetdale on 22nd (JR/NA). A family group of four was at High Baulk near Great Whittington from 19th to the end of the month (ALT). There were three juveniles at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th (TB) and at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo). Family parties of three were at Beanley Plantation on 30th (TRD/JD) and Howick on 31st (JAR). Reports of one to two birds, including juveniles, came from Eslington Park, Whittingham, the Harthope Valley, Newton, the Simonside Hills, Big Waters NWT, Warkworth Gut and Lynemouth.



A Stonechat at East Chevington by Alan Jack on 22nd August

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Five juveniles were observed at Carshope (Upper Coquetdale) and at Ridlees Cairn (Otterburn Ranges) on 22nd (both JR/NA). There were two at Boulmer on 2nd (TRD), Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo), Cresswell on 23rd (CB), Lynemouth on 23rd (DM/PJA), Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 28th (ADM) and Beal saltmarsh on 31st (RA). Singles were at Grindon Lough, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Newbiggin, Warkworth Gut, Hedgeley GP, St Mary's Island, Hartley and Whittingham.



A Northern Wheatear at Newbiggin by Chris Barlow

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

An adult and juvenile were at Ellington on 2nd, with two adults there on 11th (TB). Ten sites held single birds this month.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A large count of 200 was made at Fourstones on 10th (Twi). 160 were noted at a Morpeth garden on 30th (TF/JFa). 80 were seen at Howick on 26th (JAR). 75 at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month (RS). 60 were at Foxton G.C. on 9th (JAR). 40 attended garden feeders all month at Kenton and 32 were counted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 31st (MRS/DM).

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

20 were seen on 7th at Newton Red House (TRD/JD). One to ten were noted at a further eight sites during the month.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Poorly reported with singles at two sites only.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Four were seen at St.Mary's on 2nd and 19th, the latter birds being juveniles (AC/ASJ). Four also at Monks' House on 8th and Cresswell on 23rd (CGK/GPK/TF/JFa). Three were at St. Mary's on 7th and 25th one on 7th being a "Channel" type and at Coquet Estuary on 19th (AC/ASJ/CSa). Two were seen at a further six sites and singles at 13 locations.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Seven were noted flying S on 30th (BS). Five were seen at Alnmouth and at Jesmond Dene this month (MJC/MJCo). Four were watched at Warden on 15th (PRM). Three were at Gosforth on two dates and at Felton on 6th. Two were seen at eight sites and singles at a further 14 places.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

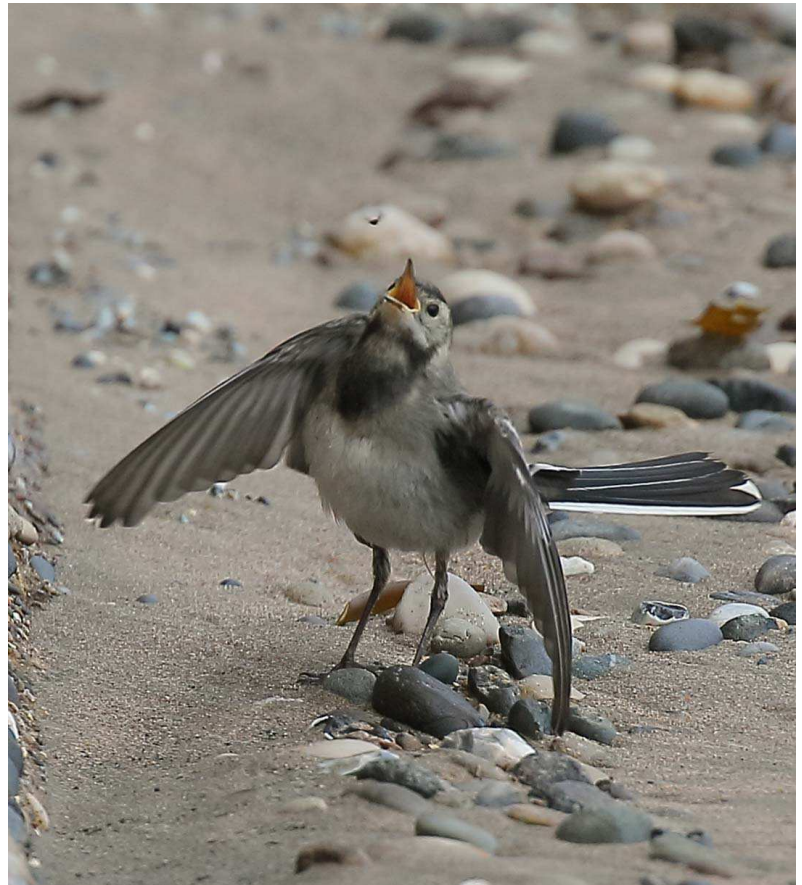
32 (27 juveniles), were feeding on sandflies on the beach and promenade wall at St.Mary's on 27th and 31 were at Bamburgh Cricket field on 11th (ASJ/KWY). 25 noted at Castle Island on 17th (GB). 24 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo). 12 were seen at Druridge and at Earsdon on 1st and 31st. Three to nine were at three sites and one - two were at a further ten locations.

A fly and a Pied Wagtail

St Mary's

Alan Jack

26th Aug

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

250 flew S on the morning of the 31st at Gosforth Garden Village with 120 the previous day. 60 also flew S at East Cramlington on 24th (MJC). 57 arrived at Colt Crag on 27th (MR). 45 flew S at East Chevington on 31st (IF). Also, on 31st, 40 were on wires at Chugdon Wood and a steady passage S was noted at both Earsdon and St. Mary's (TB/MSH/ASJ). Two to 20 were also observed at a further 14 locations during the month.

Tree pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Two were noted on Holy Island on 15th, one flew S at Tynemouth on 7th and one was seen in Simonside Hills on 8th (MJC/DRW/TD).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Three were seen at St. Mary's on 19th (ASJ). Two were at Snab Point and Blyth Harbour during the month (TB/STH). Singles noted at Cullercoats, Tynemouth and St Mary's.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

50 were seen at Humshaugh on 23rd (SW). 22 were at Druridge Pools on 20th, with lesser numbers present on other days (IDR). Four at garden feeders all month at Marden (Cullercoats).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A count of ten was made along the Sleek Burn on 17th (GB). Nine, two family groups, were at Howdon on 16th (CB). Six attended garden feeders in Rothbury during the month (TRD/JD). One to three were seen at 13 further sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

30 were seen at Humshaugh on 23rd (SW). 12 at Derwent Reservoir on 27th and eight at St. Mary's on several dates (IFo/ASJ). One to six were noted at five other sites.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

A foraging flock built up to 150+ at St. Mary's and was seen on many days (ASJ). 70 were noted in dunes and fields at Druridge on 22nd (IDR). 60 were seen at Humshaugh on 16th and Derwent Reservoir on 27th (SW/IFo). Up to 45+ were counted during the month at Druridge Pools and Links (IDR). One to – ten were also seen at ten other sites.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

A minimum of 80 were at Colt Crag on 6th (MR). 30 were seen in Harthope Valley on 9th (EHa). One - six were noted at 16 further sites which included several coastal/near coastal locations, as birds passed S.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

36 moved W at Grindon on 31st (PRM). 14 were observed heading N on 6th (IDR). 13 flew SE at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 5th. Parties of two, five and seven were noted over Gosforth Garden Village in the first week (MJC). Ten+ were seen at Rothbury on 30th (PRM). One to seven were seen at 12 other sites during the month, both in breeding areas and on passage.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

120 were at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 28th and 110 at East Holywell the previous day (MJC/MNC). Other notable flocks included 80 at Howick, 75 at Ellington and 65 at St. Mary's and Alnmouth (JAR/TB/ASJ). 60 were at East Chevington, 50 at Snab Point and 40 at Arcot Manor and Cambois during the month. One – 25 were also noted at a further 12 sites.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

80+ were at Holystone on 26th (DRo). 35 flew over Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 11th (TD) and 30 were at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo). Around 25 flew over a garden at Linden Hall on 18th (NFO). One – 20 were noted at 14 other locations, including passage birds seen at Gosforth and Cambois.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Few reports this month. Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd and a singing male was at Gosforth the previous day. Other singles were seen at seven other sites.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Ten to 12 were at St. Mary's on several dates (ASJ). Birds were present all month at Druridge Pools, with a maximum of nine on 5th (IDR). One to two were at a further eight sites this month.

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

Still present from last month with up to eight adults at Derwent Reservoir with three juveniles. Gradually diminished during month with four left by 28th. Known to breed ferally in Scotland.

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

Singles at Big Waters on 7th (GB) and Airy Holm Reservoir on 1st (IfO).

Birds of Unknown Origin**Lesser White-fronted Goose** *Anser erythropus*

(Additional record for June)

An un-ringed adult at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo) was thought to possibly originate from the re-introduction scheme in Scandinavia. Only present on the one day and known to move in Scandinavia northwards to breeding grounds at this time of year.

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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), Helen Snaith (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

RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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

BIN REQUEST

Mike Richardson is taking a well-earned retirement after 12 years of BiN duties and so I'll need a new author - or authors - for some really exciting species' groups:

- Gulls
- Skuas
- Parakeet, shrikes, crows and tits
- ~~Thrushes, flycatchers and chats~~ – **taken!**
- Finches to Buntings

If interested, please contact Andy Mould

highroller10@btinternet.com

WEBS SITES AVAILABLE

WeBS sites are available Leazes and Exhibition Parks.

My last request for new WeBS site surveyors in the April Bulletin was very successful so in case you missed an opportunity, here is another chance to get your own patch to survey for the nationwide contribution to the study of waterfowl.

The Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) is coordinated by the BTO and at its core are regular monthly counts of wildfowl, waders and gulls for all the main wetlands of the country. I am the WeBS coordinator of the inland waters of Northumberland with 53 on the books with counters at the moment. If you would like to undertake WeBS surveys at either or both these sites, please contact me, Tim Daley, at tim.birdman@gmail.com . I could provide more detail on what is required and how to get started.

Both the available sites are likely to be familiar to many of you, being part Newcastle's infamous parkland, namely the lakes at **Leazes Park and Exhibition Park.**

Both have good numbers of typical urban waterfowl and gulls but I note that Goosander is recorded most years and there is always the chance of something less usual dropping in. Leazes Park has a continuous recording history since 2002 while Exhibition Park was added to the survey in 2016. Neither site would likely take more than 30 minutes to survey and will certainly add interest to your birdwatching in the city.

Tim Daley

COUNTY RECORDS COMMITTEE

Paul Massey will complete his four year spell on the committee in December 2020. Hence there will be a vacancy on the CRC to be filled. Please could anyone wishing to apply to join the committee let the County Recorder Tim Dean know, either by email or letter. Applicants need to have a comprehensive knowledge of Northumberland's birdlife and will be required to attend three meetings a year to verify sightings in the county. It is envisaged that applicants will need to access online documents and have email access. A brief resume of birding credentials and experience should be forwarded when applying. This year there will be a cut off date for applications of 15th November.

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**October 2020 NTBC Bulletin
Photograph Supplement**



Red throated diver close ups at Seaton Sluice harbour by Colin Bradshaw on 11th October





A Knot at Saint Mary's on 6th October by Alan Jack

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A Caspian Gull at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 31st October



An Arctic Warbler by Tim Dean on 8th October on Holy Island



An Arctic Warbler on Holy Island on 9th October by Mike Carr



A Treecreeper at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 8th October



A Yellow browed Warbler on Holy Island. Mke Carr on 2nd October



A Goldcrest on Holy Island by Colin Bradshaw on 5th October



The Holy Island Lesser Grey Shrike by Alan Jack . 4th October



A smart Starling by Jack Bucknall at St. Mary's on 7th October



A Long-eared Owl on Holy Island by Mike Carr on 2nd October

Two arrivals on Holy Island
A Red-flaked Bluetail by Colin Bradshaw on 19th



A Rose coloured Starling on Holy Island by Chris Barlow

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 10

MONTHLY SUMMARY OCTOBER 2020

4th December 2020



CONTENTS

Free British Bird magazines.

A photograph supplement will be attached



The Holy Island Lesser Grey Shrike. Mike Carr on 4th October

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	A party of six stayed at Longhirst from 25th.
Ruddy Shelduck	One or two still present at Derwent Res and Haughton Strother.
American Wigeon	A drake was at Big Waters on 27th and 28th. A first-ever site record.
Green-winged Teal	A drake was present at Budle Bay from 22nd.
Red-crested Pochard	3 drakes and a female were at East Chevington on 1st.
White-billed Diver	Expected annually now with one seen well past Annstead Pt on 11th.
Storm-petrel	Two noted past Rockcliffe on 13th.
Fulmar	Only record of month was 8 miles inland at Lowick !
Red-necked Grebe	One past Seaton Sluice on 15th was the only record of month.
Spoonbill	A very late individual was at Holywell Pond on 9th.
Great White Egret	Singles at several sites though thought to be two mobile individuals.
Golden Eagle	One reported in College Valley on 16th.
Avocet	Late individual at Holy Island causeway on 21st.
Little Gull	Up to 300 past St Mary's on 7th and 8th.
Caspian Gull	Ringed 'PKCS' adult at Newbiggin on 6th. Also 1st Winter at St Mary's on 31st.
Long-tailed Skua	Two juveniles flew south over Straight Lonnen on Holy Island on 22nd.
Little Auk	One or two mid-month at several sites.
Stock Dove	The Howdon gathering reached 112 this month.
Turtle Dove	One on Holy Island near farm from 6th to 13th proved irritatingly elusive to some!
Hoopoe	A very popular bird from 18th to 28th in Woodhorn, Spittal and Lynemouth area.
Green Woodpecker	Singles at Hexham and Druridge. The latter highly unusual at this site.
Brown Shrike	A first county record. One stayed on Holy Island from 14th to 30th.
Lesser Grey Shrike	Another excellent find with one on Holy Island on 4th and 5th.
Great Grey Shrike	The Shrike theme continued with one at Boulmer from 6th to 9th.
Hobby	Two late individuals noted on Holy Island on 5th.
Bearded Tit	Up to six still at East Chevington during month.
Cetti's Warbler	Singles at Big Waters and East Chevington.
Siberian Chiffchaff	Singles at five sites.
Dusky Warbler	Singles at Spittal, Newbiggin and Holy Island. Large influx in UK this year.
Pallas's Warbler	Singles at Low Newton and Holy Island.
Arctic Warbler	Individuals at Tynemouth and Holy Island.
Two-barred Warbler	This first-ever in the county remained at Budle Point until at least 1st.
Blyth's Reed Warbler	Another superb find with the first site record at Druridge on 4th.
Barred Warbler	Singles at Holy island, St Mary's and Newbiggin.
Rose-coloured Starling	Juvenile on Holy Island from 17th to 21st.

Bluethroat	Immature male at Boulmer from 2nd to 4th.
Red-flanked Bluetail	Large influx with at least 4 on Holy Island. Singles at Bamburgh and Whitley Bay
Red-breasted Flycatcher	Several on Holy Island at start of month.
Black Redstart	Singles on Holy Island and at Boulmer.
Desert Wheatear	In a crazy month still they came. Fine female at Boulmer from 18th to 23rd.
Hawfinch	Three at Stocksfield and singles on Holy Island, Jesmond Dene and Hauxley.
Mealy Redpoll	Up to three on several dates on Holy Island. Also single at Craster.
Little Bunting	One on Holy Island on 16th.
Lapland Bunting	Widespread influx at many sites with peak of 8 on 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 will be by Zoom on **10th December Birds of the Camargue by Edward Towne**

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

CLASSIFIED LIST

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included 1,200 at Beal on 4th (MJC) rising to about 3,400 on 17th (ASJ) and 1,000 at the Budle Bay on 1st (DGB/RHB). Numbers at Lindisfarne NNR peaked at 4,200 (no date given; per IK). Interestingly, a pair accompanied ten juveniles at Beal on 24th and 28th and behaved as if a discrete family party. It was considered the offspring were probably from two or more nests (DF). A total of 26 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 23 N between 13th-15th (SSWT). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved a monthly total of 25 N at Seaton Sluice, including 18 N on 14th-15th (SSWT), six to seven N at St Mary's (MSH) and Stag Rocks (DF) on 14th-15th, two N at Newbiggin on 2nd (AP), 170 feeding on a *Zostera* bed at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 24th (IK), four at Boulmer on 14th (AMG/MG) and singles there and at Tynemouth on several further dates.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

67 flew W at Wark (North Tyne) on 12th (PRM) and 15 S at Druridge Pools on 26th (DM *et al.*). About 500 were on the shore at Hauxley on 10th and 386 were counted on the reserve later that day (HRS). Grindon Lough held an estimated 430 on 21st (PRM). Other peak counts were 200 at Warkworth weir on 6th (TB), 188 at Big Waters on 25th (GB), 162-164 at the Aln Estuary (MKi) and Derwent Reservoir (IFo), and 126-149 at Linton Ponds (CDH) and the Tweed Estuary (TBr). Counts of 33-50 came from Greenlee Lough and Killingworth Lake, 11 were at Bothal Pond, and seven over Druridge Links.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

3,750 were at Beal on 4th (MJC) and 3,000 at Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) on 17th (ASJ). Smaller numbers were noted mainly in the Budle Bay-Ross-Elwick area all month. Northerly movement included 120 at Tynemouth on 18th (CB) and 85 at Snab Point on 12th (TB). Southerly movement involved a total of 960 at Flagstaff Park (Berwick) on 4th (MHu), 166 at Beal on 5th (DF), 130 at Tynemouth on 2nd (CB), 76-94 at East Ord (MHu) and Ellington (TB) on 4th, and 20-47 at Belford, Druridge Pools, Hauxley, North Shields, St Mary's and Whitley Bay mainly on 4th. A total of 84 flew N and 44 S at Seaton Sluice on 12th-13th (SSWT), and 27 flew N and 80 S at Druridge Links on 4th (IDR/JF). Groups of 18-24 were at/over Low Newton, Snab Point and Widdrington Moor Lake, and smaller numbers at several further sites. Well inland, two were at Derwent Reservoir on 20th and one there on 26th (IFo). A leucistic bird was noted at Budle Bay on 13th (DF).



Barnacle Geese over
Holy Island
4th October
by Tim Dean

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

150 flew N at Longhoughton on 18th (BS) when 146 flew S at East Ord (MHu) and 37 S at Tynemouth (CB), 135 flew S at Muckle Moss on 19th (SW), 26 S at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IDR), and 130 W at Tweedmouth on 24th (MHu). A minimum of 1,200 were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo), 600 at Big Waters on 25th (GB), 501 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (SR), 500 at Branton GP on 16th (DGB/RHB), 390 at Budle Bay on 6th (DF), 125-220 at Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond and Low Cocklaw, and 92 at the Aln Estuary on 21st (MKi). Two to 14 were also at/over Bothal Pond, Cramlington, Druridge Pools, Kielder Water and Woodhorn Flashes.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A total of about 6,000 flew NE and SW at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 10th (TBr), 3,040 S at Boulmer on 16th (BS), 3,000 S at Ellington on 5th (TB), 3,000 N to roost at Dunstan Steads on 30th (PAs/JPL), a total of 368 N and 2,546 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 95 N and 1,480 on 6th (SSWT), 1,700 N at Low Newton on 28th (AJ), 1,500 N at Howick Hall on 30th (PHa/AHa), 1,300 (not local birds) high N at Holy Island on 14th (ADM), 1,200 W at Cocklawburn on 6th (MHu), and about 730-860 S at East Ord (MHu) and Sandy Bay (BSt) between 5th-18th. Totals of 100-390 flew over, in various directions, at Alnmouth, Berwick, Branton GP, Howick, Lesbury, Linton Ponds, Longhoughton Steel, Low Newton, Lynemouth, North Shields, Prestwick Carr, Shilbottle, St Mary's, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay on various dates between 2nd-30th, and flocks of 30-90 flew mainly S at Blyth, Byker, Chapel House (Newcastle), Cramlington, High Heaton, Little Mill, Morpeth, Newbiggin and Warkworth. Far fewer were noted well inland, with 300 E at Derwent Reservoir on 5th, plus 240 NE there on 8th, 40 SW on 6th and 28 E on 17th (IFo), 100-170 at/over Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Crooked Oak and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

At Budle Bay, 7,000 were noted on 7th, 11th and 31st (CGK/GPK/KWY *et al.*) with smaller numbers on various other dates, and 4,000+ S at Bamburgh on 30th were thought to be birds leaving the Budle Bay roost. Birds from here may also accounted for 1,500-2,000 at/over and Hunting Hall (near Lowick), Shoreston Hall and Waren Mill (DF/MSH). About 5,700 roosted at Goswick Sands on 22nd (DF) and up to 3,500 were noted regularly in the Holy Island area. Other large gatherings involved 3,500 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 1st (RPo), 3,000 roosting at Druridge Pools between 19th-22nd (IDR), 2,250 feeding in stubble at Longhirst on 30th (TD), and 800 in stubble at Dunstanburgh (JAR). Numerous flocks of 85-1,550 flying both N/NW and S at Druridge Pools/Links during the month may have been from the Druridge Pools roost, as 1,500 at Ellington on 11th (TB). Groups of 250-380 were in fields at Cheswick (MHu) and St Mary's Island (MSH), and 150-183 at Brier Dene Farm, Howick Hall and Woodhorn Flashes, and ten to 50 at Big Waters and Holywell Pond. A total of 1,550 geese, thought to be Pink-feet, flew S well out to sea off Newbiggin on 27th (GB).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

Six were found in fields near Longhirst Flash on 25th and remained until 31st (ADMc *et al.*).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

A total of 11 flew N and seven S (SSWT), and four to five flew S at Boulmer and Druridge Pools. Largest concentrations were 66 at QEII CP on 18th (CDH), 42 at Beal on 6th (DF), 38 at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM), 34-36 at Big Waters, Holy Island causeway, Howdon and the Tweed Estuary, and 16-21 at East Chevington and Holy Island Lough. Five to eight were at Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Hauxley Reserve and Monks' House Pool.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Seven flew N and 83 S at Seaton Sluice between 22nd-29th (SSWT). Southerly movement was prominent on 27th, with a total of 103 at East Chevington (plus an additional 31 on the north pool; MH/AA), 67 at Warkworth (IDR), 34 at Spital, Newbiggin (GB), 31 at Tynemouth (DRW) and 18-20 at Druridge Links (IDR) and Ellington (TB), while 42 flew in off the sea at Cocklawburn (TBr/MHu). A total of 75 flew S/SW at Budle Bay during the month (CGK/GPK/RA *et al.*). In addition, a total of 26 flew S at Newbiggin between 12th-23rd (AP), 17-24 S/SW at Cullercoats (ASJ), Earsdon (MSH) and St Mary's (JBu) on 29th, and 20+ were heard over Tynemouth during darkness on 25th (CB). Groups of 38-43 were at Big Waters (PG) and Warkworth (AMG/MG) on 27th, and ten to 19 at/over Beal, Bothal, Boulmer, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, East Holywell, Howick, Longhoughton Steel, Low Newton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs between 9th-29th. One to eight were also at/over Blyth, Boulmer, Branton, Budle Bay, Chatton, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, Crooked Oak, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington, East Cramlington, East Ord, Longwitton, Lynemouth, Newstead Flash, Newton Flash, Prestwick Carr, QEII CP, Rothbury, St Mary's, Tynemouth, West Ord and Wooler.



Whoopers over Cresswell Pond on 23rd October by Tim Dean

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

The monthly Seaton Sluice total was 16 N and seven S (SSWT), and five flew N at St Mary's on 14th (MSH). Numbers at Budle Bay varied from 300-616 between 4th-24th, with a peak of 628 on 22nd (DF/CGK/GPK *et al.*). Seven (juveniles) were at Boulmer on 8th (JAR), three at East Chevington north pool on 30th (STH), and singles at Druridge Pools and Hauxley Reserve.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

The 'regular' female was noted at Derwent Reservoir on four dates between 11th-27th and was joined by a male on the latter date (IFo/AJR). One was also at Haughton Strother GP on 9th (PRC).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A pair was at Swallow Pond on 8th (ASJ) and a duck at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (MR).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Four flew N at Hauxley on 3rd (HRS), and one N at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT). Budle Bay again held good numbers all month, with a peak of 78 on 25th (CGK/GPK *et al.*). Other peak counts elsewhere were 22 at East Chevington on 25th (AJR), 21 at Linton Ponds on 11th (TF), 15 at Druridge Pools (DM *et al.*), and ten to 12 offshore at Druridge Links, and at Hauxley Reserve, Holy Island Lough, Newton Flash, West Allotment Pond and Woodhorn Flashes. Five to seven were also at Bothal Pond, Marden Quarry and Monks' House Pool, three to four at Arcot and Holywell Ponds, and Grindon Lough, and one to two at Branton GP, Colt Crag Reservoir, Rockcliffe and Swallow Pond.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 17th (SSWT) and two N at Tynemouth on 11th (DRW). Peak counts were 116 at East Chevington on 1st (IF), 94 at Linton Ponds on 11th (TF), 27 at Woodhorn Flashes on 18th (CDH), 17-18 at Holywell Pond/Holywell Flash (DM/KWY), and ten to 14 at the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Embleton Quarry Pond, Marden Quarry, Newton Pool and St Mary's Wetland. Six were also at Caistron and three to four at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve and Howdon. More unusual was one at Budle Bay on 13th (DF).

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

At Seaton Sluice, 2,672 flew N and 208 S during the month, including 1,181 N and 12 S on 14th-15th (SSWT). Smaller numbers elsewhere included totals of 177 N at St Mary's (MSH) and 117 N at Hauxley between 3rd-17th (HRS), 155 N at Stag Rocks between 2nd-13th (DF), and 16-24 N at Berwick and Cocklawburn. Variable numbers were reported at Lindisfarne NNR and included peaks of 15,000 on 23rd (BS) and at least 22,000 (no date given; per IK). A maximum of 2,700 was noted in the Budle Bay section of the NNR on 7th (CGK/GPK *et al.*). Other peak counts elsewhere were 400 at East Chevington on 1st (IF/IFo), 380 at Cresswell Pond on 25th (AJR), 236 at the Coquet Estuary on 18th (MKi), 220-223 at Derwent Reservoir (AJR) and Grindon Lough (PRM), and 100-161 Big Waters, Branton GP and Colt Crag Reservoir. Groups of 60-68 were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, and Druridge Pools, while 15-48 were at Boulmer, Hauxley Reserve, Meadow Haven (Berwick), Merryshields GP, Newstead Flash, Rockcliffe and Warkworth Old Water. The species was heard over Chollerford during darkness on 14th (PRM).

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

A drake was discovered at Big Waters on 27th and remained on 28th (AJJ/GB *et al.*).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 29 flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and three flew S at Hauxley on 24th (HRS). At Derwent Reservoir, 156 on 4th rose to 237 by 24th (IFo). More modest counts elsewhere involved peaks of 95 off Boulmer on 25th (BS), 94 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 31st (probably including some from Derwent Reservoir; IFo), 80 at Merryshields GP on 23rd (IFo), 50-70 at Hauxley Reserve, Lesbury, Marden Quarry and St Mary's Wetland, and 31-47 at Arcot, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake and Monks' House Pool. Seven to 11 were also at Embleton Quarry, Grindon Lough, Holywell flash, QEII CP Lake, Shield on the Wall, Snab Point and Woodhorn Flashes. Mass courtship, involving 34 drakes, was noted at Lesbury on 16th (MKi).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

A total of 51 N and one S during the month was a record October total for Seaton Sluice and included 27 N on 5th (SSWT), and nine flew N at Tynemouth on 3rd (CB). At East Chevington north pool, 28 were noted on 5th and one to seven regularly during the month, and ten were offshore on 6th (ADM *et al.*). At Budle Bay, one to three were frequent all month and 17 were noted on 25th (CGK/GPK *et al.*). Four were at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (MR), and one to two at Beal, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Rockcliffe, St Mary's Wetland, the Tweed Estuary and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Teal *Anas crecca*

A moderate 641 flew N and 109 S at Seaton Sluice in the month, with few after 15th (SSWT), and 16-38 moved N at Hauxley and St Mary's. At Budle Bay, peak counts involved 600 on 11th (KWY) and 458 on 25th (DF). Maxima elsewhere included 407 at Grindon Lough on 1st (SW), 400 at East Chevington on 1st (IF), 319 at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (IFo), 120-137 at Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools and Holy Island 'rocket field pools', and 50-91 at the Aln Estuary, Arcot, Bothal, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Castle Island, Howdon and Low Cocklaw. Counts of 20-49 also came from the Blyth Estuary, Ellington, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool and Newstead Flash, while ten to 18 were at Big Waters and Middle Ord Pond.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

A drake, in eclipse plumage, was at Budle Bay between 22nd-31st (CGK/GPK *et al.*).

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A party of four (three drakes and one duck) were at East Chevington north pool on 1st (TB/IF/IFo).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 13th (SSWT). Peak counts were 21 at Bothal Pond on 30th (TD), five at Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR/JF), and three to four at Greenlee Lough (MRS), Killingworth Lake (LJM), Ladyburn Lake (IFo), Widdrington Moor Lake (NFO) and Woodhorn Flashes (DM.PJA). One to two were also at Grindon Lough, Linton and Swallow Ponds, and QEII CP Lake.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

A total of ten flew N at Seaton Sluice between 13th-15th (SSWT). The largest concentrations were 68 at Ladyburn Lake on 1st (IFo), 52 at QEII CP Lake on 1st (IFo), 37 at Hallington Reservoir on 19th (MR), about 30 at Druridge Pools on 14th (IDR/JF), and 12-20 at Bothal Pond, East Chevington, Killingworth Lake, 'Northumberlandia' (Cramlington), Tynemouth boating lake and Woodhorn Flashes. Two to seven were also at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond, Holywell flash, Merryshields GP, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Rockcliffe and West Ord.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Three flew S at Holy Island on 12th (SR) and one S at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT). Two were at Bothal Pond and one there on 18th (TD). Singles were also at East Chevington on 20th (ADMc) and 25th (AJR), Hallington Reservoir on 19th (MR), Holywell Flash on 9th (ASJ) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 23rd (SR).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

At Seaton Sluice, 192 moved N and 48 S during the month (SSWT), 26 flew N at Berwick pier on 14th (MHu), and one to two N and S at Druridge Links. Moderate counts included 28 at Blyth Harbour on 8th (STH), ten at Cocklawburn on 27th (TBr), and three to six off Druridge Links, Lynemouth, Seaton Sluice and Spittal Bay.



A pair of Eiders

Seahouses Harbour

10th October

Alan Jack



Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A monthly total of 30 N and six S was recorded at Seaton Sluice and included 25 N and six S between 13th-15th (SSWT). Northerly movement also involved four at Annstead Point on 11th (CGK/GPK/RA), three at Birling Carrs on 26th (CSa), St Mary's on 21st (ASJ) and Tynemouth on 16th and 29th (DRW), and two at Stag Rocks on 14th (DF). Three flew S at Boulmer on 24th (BS). A party of 11 drakes landed offshore at East Chevington on 23rd (MH/AA), seven were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 26th (CSa), and one to two off Druridge Links on four dates between 5th-31st (IDR).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 1,939 N and 136 S, including 498 N and 11 S between 13th-15th (SSWT), a total of 124 moved N at St Mary's between 3rd-17th (MSH), 45 N at Stag Rocks on 21st (DF), and 14-18 N and S at Berwick pier, Hauxley and Longhoughton Steel. Varied numbers off the Druridge Links-East Chevington area included a peak of 600 on 31st (IDR *et al.*); 60-65 were at Cambois (STH) and off Warkworth (CSa), and 40-42 at Cheswick Black Rocks (MHu) and Holy Island (ADM). Three to four were also at Howick, Rockcliffe and Stag Rocks.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 30th and three were with Eiders there on 29th, with one to three present between 20th-30th (SSWT/JBu). Three were off Ross Back Sands on 23rd (BS), and singles at Buston Links and off Warkworth on 26th (CSa) and off Druridge Links on 31st (IDR). More unusual were a duck at Hauxley Reserve on 31st (HRS) and a juvenile at Woodhorn Flashes between 25th-30th (AP *et al.*).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

The monthly Seaton Sluice total was 40 N and ten S (SSWT) and one flew N at St Mary's on 13th (MSH). One at East Chevington on 2nd increased to a peak of 17 by 20th (ADM *et al.*), seven were at West Ord on 25th (MHu), five to six at Branton GP (TRD/JD), Colt Crag and Derwent Reservoirs (IFo/MR), Hedgeley GP (TRD/JD) and West Ord (MHu), and three to four at Boulmer, Cambois, Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Ladyburn Lake and Widdrington Moor Lake. One to two were also at Birling Carrs, Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Castle Island, off Druridge Links, Rockcliffe and Stag Rocks.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

A total of ten flew N and 24 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 13 moved S at Stag Rocks on 21st (DF) and seven N at St Mary's on 7th (ASJ). Peak concentrations were 18 at Branton GP on 1st and 16th (DGB/RHB/IBDa/KDa), five at West Ord on 4th (MHu), and three at Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo), Corbridge (AJ) and Holy Island (PRM). One to two were also at Alwinton, Castle Island, Coupland (on a shallow flash pool), Derwent Reservoir, Linbriggs, Lynemouth and Rockcliffe.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 17 N and seven S (SSWT) and singles flew N at Druridge Links and St Mary's. Peaks were 19 off Cambois on 18th (STH), 16 off Druridge Links on 5th (IDR), eight at the Blyth Estuary on 20th (LJM), seven at Budle Bay (DF), and six at East Chevington north pool, while two were at Holy Island.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

A total of five males and three females were at Whitley Chapel on 7th and five males were at Steel Farm (Whitfield) on 27th (JF).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

A flock of 50 were spooked by a raptor at Yeavering Bell on 15th (JD).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

At least 80 at Bewick Moor on 24th were presumed releases (BS). Three were at Druridge Links and singles were at West Chevington, Widdrington Moor Lake and Widdrington Village.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Two coveys totalling 35 birds were at Druridge Links on 16th (IDR/JF), Boulmer peaked at 25 on 17th (BS) with similar numbers on other dates, 22 were at Little Mill on 11th (SW) and a total of 20 were in two coveys at Sandy Bay on 18th (GB). 14 were at both Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 25th (TB) and Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on 30th (RS), 13 were at Cresswell Home Farm on 4th (DM), whilst 12 were at both Waren Mill Caravan Park and Howick. Nine or fewer were at Beal, Big Waters NWT, Branton, East Chevington, Embleton, High Newton, West Chevington, Whitley Bay GC, Whitley Chapel and Woodhorn Flashes.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Regular counts were made at Druridge Links and numbers varied between four on 31st to a peak of 40 seeking refuge after a shoot on a neighbouring farm on 14th (IDR/JF). One to eight were at Arcot Lane Flash, Berwick Drift Copse, Chare Ends (Holy Island), East Cramlington Pond, Holywell Pond, Lynemouth, Spittal (Newbiggin), Warkworth Old Water and Woodhorn. A single white bird was at Mitford Hall.

Diver *sp.*

A loose flock of 15 probable Red-throated *Gavia stellata* flew S well offshore at Spital (Newbiggin) on 27th (GB).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total of 338 (171N and 167S) in 93 hours of watching at Seaton Sluice was classed as average for this month (SSWT). Smaller passage counts of up to ten birds were made throughout the county. At Druridge Bay there were regular double-figure counts of birds on the sea with a peak of 75 present on 9th (MK). Elsewhere, 53 was the maximum WeBS count from Spittal-Cocklawburn on 20th (TBr), 30 were viewed from Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 26th (CSa), 14 were in Spittal Bay during a NE gale on 13th and 11 were seen from Hauxley on 10th. Nine were at Holy Island North Shore on 16th and one to seven were seen from various other points all along the coast.



A Red-throated Diver in Seaton Sluice harbour by Colin Bradshaw on 11th October

Black-throated Diver *Gavia Arctica*

Three headed past the Watch Tower at Seaton Sluice during the month (two N and one S) and one was present on the sea on 14th (SSWT). Two were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 1st (MHu) and singles headed N past both Boulmer and Stag Rocks on 10th (ASJ).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was six (four N, two S) (SSWT). Only single birds were recorded elsewhere at Hauxley, Ross Back Sands, St Mary's and Tynemouth.

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

One flew N on 11th, first seen heading past Boulmer then later at Annstead Point at 11.49 (RA/CGK/GPK).

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One was seen from Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) during the morning of 13th (IJ).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

An extremely rare record on 22nd of one flying over a main road at Lowick - eight miles inland. The observer felt maybe it was caught up with a gull flock (TRD).

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*

Three heading N on 13th was the only record from Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Two were heading N in Druridge Bay on 11th (IDR) and singles headed N at Tynemouth on 11th and St. Mary's on 13th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

"A very poor October total" described the whole month's count of only 15N from the tower at Seaton Sluice. All sightings were between 11th-15th (SSWT). Six flew N at Seaton Sluice on 13th (DLo) and two headed N past St. Mary's on 13th (MSH/JBu).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Good numbers congregated at East Chevington North Pool with counts on various dates ranging from a low of six on some dates to a peak of 36 present on 8th (NFO). 25 were in the reserve at Hauxley on 31st (HRS), 16 at Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) on 17th (DM), ten at Caistron on 17th (TRD/JD), nine at Druridge Bay CP on 21st (KWY) and six at the Aln Estuary, Colt Crag Reservoir and Druridge Pools. Killingworth Lake held two adults and two juveniles on 13th (LJM) and one to five were also at Amble Braid, Big Waters NWT, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), on the R. Tyne at Corbridge, Embleton, Holywell Pond, Holywell Waggonway, Howick Hall Pool, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), St. Mary's Wetland, Swallow Pond, Tyne Green CP (Hexham), West Ord (Berwick) and Woodhorn South Road Flash.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

One was sighted heading N past Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

The peak counts came from Killingworth Lake with two adults and two juveniles present on 13th (LJM) and 24th (MSH). Seaton Sluice recorded a monthly total of three – two flying N and a single on the sea on 28th-29th (SSWT) and three were also at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 1st (IFo). One to two birds were at Buston Links (Alnmouth), Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holywell Pond, QE11 CP, St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island), St. Mary's and Stag Rocks.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auratus*

Two were regularly present in the St.Cuthbert's Island area (Holy Island) during the second half of the month (IK). A pair were at East Chevington from mid-month and were seen displaying to each other on separate occasions (NFO/AATF *et al.*). Singles were at Druridge Bay, the Heugh (Holy Island), Seaton Sluice and Spittal Bay (Berwick).

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

An immature bird was roosting at Holywell Pond on 9th (PRC/ASJ).



The Holywell Pond Spoonbill by Alan Jack on 9th October

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The monthly movement total of ten seen at Seaton Sluice (five N and five S) appeared to be random movements of local birds with no immigration (SSWT). Numbers at the regular Howdon site peaked at 17 on 4th (CB), seven was the peak at both Hauxley on 10th (HRS) and Boulmer on 14th and 30th (AMG/MG), six were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo) and Druridge Pools on 5th (IDR/JF) and five were in the Blyth Estuary on 20th (LJM). One to four were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Castle Island, Exhibition Park (Newcastle Town Moor), Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Linton Ponds, Little Mill, Low Newton scrape, Old Hartley, Plenmeller Common, St. Mary's, Tyne Green CP (Hexham), the Wansbeck Estuary, Warkworth and Warkworth Old Water. One juvenile was bold enough to drop into an enclosed garden to check out a wildlife pond at Chapel House (IK).

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Reports of single birds on different dates suggested a roving individual, first seen at West Chevington on 8th (NFO), then Budle Bay on 9th (only the second site record – CGK), Warkworth Gut on 18th (IRD) and Branton GP on 25th (IBDa/KDa).

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Ten were at Castle Island on 17th (DM). Numbers in the Lindisfarne NNR area varied from single sightings on some dates to a peak of nine at Beal on 4th (MJC). A similar picture emerged from Budle Bay with one to eight birds regularly seen with the peak on 18th (DF). Cresswell Pond had a maximum count of five on 7th (IFo), four were at Warkworth on 9th and 21st (AJ/CDH) and at Branton GP on 31st (IBDa/KDa). Three headed N over Druridge Links on 2nd and one to two birds were at Alnmouth, Annstead, Ashington, Cocklawburn, the R. Coquet, East Chevington, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Waggonway, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Kitty Brewster (Blyth) Longhoughton, Long Nanny, St. Mary's, St. Mary's Wetland, Seahouses, the R. Tweed and Estuary, Tynemouth, Warkworth Weir, the Wansbeck Estuary, West Ord and Wylam.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Most large passage sightings were recorded from early to mid-month and included a large proportion of juveniles. Daily totals at Seaton Sluice peaked at 3,405N on 11th and 4,280N, 120S on 13th (SSWT). Timed counts also hit a high on 13th with 1,300+ per hour N at St.Mary's during the morning - estimated from a 20-minute spot count of 326 (MSH), then 1,580N per hour at Spittal Bay during the afternoon (MHu). 1,000+ per hour headed N at St.Mary's on 11th (MSH) and large counts from elsewhere included 1,000 past Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 13th (IJ), 900 per hour past Seaton Sluice on 5th, 451N in just over an hour at Annstead on 5th (DF), 400 in just under an hour at Druridge on 11th (IDR), 367N in an hour at Stag Rocks on 13th (DF) and "hundreds" past Hauxley on 3rd and 10th (HRS). A more modest afternoon count of 150, mostly heading N past Seaton in an hour and half, was made on 13th (DLo) and lower numbers came from several other locations. Numbers dropped off dramatically in the second half of the month with only one report after 18th of eight N at Stag Rocks. Fishing groups included 77, mostly juveniles, inshore at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 12th (MHu), 60 in a "frenzy" at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 15th (MHu) and 50 offshore at Boulmer on 9th (TRD/JD).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Included in the monthly total of 114 (26N and 88S) at Seaton Sluice was what appeared to be a genuine movement of 51 birds heading S on 8th (SSWT). The roost at Meadow Haven (Berwick) peaked at 35 on 26th (MHu). Ten were offshore at Hauxley on 10th (HRS), six were in Blyth Harbour and five at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh). One to two were seen at Druridge Bay, Holy Island, St. Mary's and St Mary's Wetland.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Numbers varied at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) throughout the month but 136 on 29th was the largest flock a regular observer has ever seen there (MHu). 109 were in Blyth Harbour on 8th (STH), 22 at Castle Island on 17th (DM), 20 at Hallington Reservoir on 19th and 17 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (MR). The monthly peak at Derwent Reservoir was 16 on 21st (IFo), 12 were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 26th and ten at Branton GP on 31st. Ten were at East Chevington North Pool on 26th (DM) and eight or fewer were at nine other locations with counts of eight and six at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on different dates being unusually high for that site. Two *sinensis* race birds were at Linden Hall.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

An unsexed bird was reported in the College Valley on 16th (EHa).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Five birds were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 1st (MJC), and three birds were in the Hauxley area on 10th (HRS) and at the Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 20th (MJC). Two birds, a 1s calendar year male and a female, were hunting all month at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin-by-the-Sea). Two birds were at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) and at Tynemouth on 4th (DM/KWY) and two were at St Mary's Island on 5th and 8th (MSH), The Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 9th (MJC). Two birds were also noted at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (IFo) and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 22nd (KWY). Single birds were reported from 39 locations throughout the month.

Goshawk *Accipter gentilis*

A juvenile male was at a site near Bywell on 8th and 15th (BNR) and an unsexed bird was seen at Branton GPs on 8th (IBDa/KDa).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Four birds, a male, a female and two juveniles, were noted going to roost at East Chevington on 11th (SW), with up to three birds being seen there on nine dates throughout the month, and two birds were at Holywell Pond on 8th (ASJ). Single birds were seen away from the Druridge Bay area at Budle Bay on 6th (CGK/RA), Boulmer on 18th (BS), S at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT) and at Embleton GC on 30th (Pas).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Two ringtails were noted hunting at a confidential site on 25th (MH), a ringtail flew over the observer's house at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 8th (TBr) and an adult male was noted at another confidential site on 28th (MR).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Four birds, a pair and two juveniles, were near Bywell on 8th (BNR), and four were at Crooked Oak Lane on 21st (IFo). Three birds were noted at Crooked Oak Lane on 9th (IFo), near Bywell on 15th (BNR), Carterway Heads on 17th (IFo) and at Derwent Reservoir on 20th (IFo). One to two birds were at Bywell, Carterway Heads, Combhills (Slaley), Crooked Oak Lane, Derwent Reservoir and at Styford Hall.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

25 birds were observed at Allen Banks on 25th (MJC). Four birds were seen at Bywell on 8th (BNR), three were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 1st (MJC) and at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 6th (RB/MB). One to two birds were at over 40 sites during the Month.



A Buzzard at Gosforth subsidence pond by Mike Carr on 1st October

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Four birds were at East Chevington North Pool on 20th (ADMc). Two birds were at Caistron on 17th (JD), East Chevington North Pool on 19th (TB) and St Mary's Wetland on 21st (ASJ). Single birds were seen or heard at QEII CP on 6th (IRD), East Chevington on several dates (ADMc *et al.*), Holy Island Lough on 16th (MJC), Druridge Pools on 24th (IDR), Big Waters NWT on 25th (GB), Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 27th & 29th (AC/KWY), Holywell Pond NR on 30th (DM) and at Hauxley NWT on 31st (HRS). On 5th, a rail sp flushed from the North Dunes on Holy Island was almost certainly a Water Rail (MJC) and a migrant bird was noted at The Snook (Holy Island) on 15th (MJC/ADM).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

23 were at Hauxley NWT on 10th (HRS), 19 were seen at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 13th (GB), 17 were at QEII CP on 18th (CDH) and 15 were noted at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM). One - eight birds were at Castle Island, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington NR, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Flash, Holywell Pond and Linton Pond

Coot *Fulica atra*

168 Birds were at East Chevington on the 1st (IFo) and 170 birds on 2nd (TRD/JD), 109 birds were at QEII CP on 7th (IFo) and 152 birds were present there on 18th (CDH). 65 birds were seen at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM) and 62 were at Linton Ponds on 18th (CDH). Big waters NWT had 25 birds on 25th (GB) and 24 were at Woodhorn Road Flash, also on 25th (DM/PJA). One - seven birds were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Embleton Quarry, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond and Howick Hall.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

There were flocks of 111 at Budle Bay on 20th (DF) and 80 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st (AP). Cullercoats Bay had 74 on 30th (MN) and Howick had 60 on 31st (JAR). There were 47 at Hauxley NWT on 17th (HRS) and 40 at Warkworth Gut on 2nd (JAR). 36 were at Snab Point on 4th (DM/GB/LAR) and 34 were at the Blyth Estuary on 24th (LJM). There were 18 offshore at Druridge Links on 9th (IDR) and 14 at Little Beach (Berwick) on 12th (MHu).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

There was a late record from September of two feeding on mud in front of the hide at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (JB). In October, a single bird was seen feeding with oystercatchers in pools alongside Holy Island causeway on 21st (IK).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest flocks were at Derwent Reservoir, with 800 on 4th (IFo), and Budle Bay, with an estimated 600 on 30th (DF). East Chevington and Boulmer had 500 on 1st (IF) and 19th (DF) respectively. There were 475 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (SR), 420 on St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ), 360 at Druridge Links and Pools on 9th (IDR), and 300 at Haydon Bridge on 30th (TWi). Grindon Lough had 270 on 21st (PRM) and there were 250 at Low Newton on 4th (DGB/RHB) and at Seahouses on 17th (DGB/RHB). There were 240 at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 4th (TD), 226 at Cocklawburn on 27th (MHu) and 220 at New Water Haugh on the Tweed on 4th (MHu). Airy Holm Reservoir had 140 on 20th (IFo) and Big Waters NWT had 110 on 25th (GB). Smaller flocks were reported from the Tweed Estuary, Widdrington Moor, Prestwick Carr, Ellington, East Stobswood, Hauxley, Murton Craggs and Woodhorn South Flash. Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 75 (21N, 54S) from 24th (SSWT) and the Castle Island WeBS count recorded 18 on 17th (DM/GB/PJA/LAR).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The highest count came from Cullercoats, with 5,000 on the sand off Snook on 19th (CB), and Boulmer, with 3,200 on Longhoughton Steel on 7th (BS). On the Emblestones (Newton) a flock of 250 on 1st had increased to 2,000 by 6th (TRD/JD). Holy Island had 2,000 on 8th (TRD/JD) and Old Hartley had 1,800 on 11th (MNC). There were 1,500 on St Mary's Island on 9th (IJ, MSH) and 1,200 at Embleton on 5th (JAR). Cocklawburn also had 1,200, in three large groups, on 27th (MHu). Widdrington Moor Lake had 1,000 on 18th (TB) and the WeBS count at Grindon Lough on 16th produced a monthly maximum of 800 (MRS). There were 800 at Amble Braid on 30th (TRD/JD) and 730 on the Coquet Estuary on 18th (MKi). Great Bavington had 550 on 7th (MR) and there were 520 on the rocks at Newbiggin on 23rd (STH). Smaller flocks (480 to 100 birds) were recorded at Warkworth Gut, Low Newton, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), East Chevington, Druridge Links, Derwent Reservoir, Murton Craggs, Beukley (Stagshaw), Budle Bay and Stannington. Reports of smaller numbers came from Colt Crag Reservoir, the Blyth Estuary, Earsdon Flash (Plant Centre), West Chevington, with a single bird N at Hauxley.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Seaton Sluice recorded only two birds N on 5th (SSWT), but Budle Bay had 48 on 20th (DF) and Boulmer had 20 on 14th (AMG/MG). There were 16 at Hauxley on 18th (HRS) and 15 at the Coquet Estuary on 11th (CSa). There were six at Warkworth Gut on 2nd (JAR). Single birds were at East Chevington, the Blyth Estuary and Holy Island.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest flocks were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) with 58 on 6th (AP,) and the Blyth Estuary, with 51 on 20th (LJM). There were 35 at Holy Island Harbour on 22nd (TRD/JD) and a maximum of 34 at Chibburn Mouth (East Chevington) on 15th (MH). St Mary's Island had 21 on 4th (KWY) and Boulmer had 19 on 25th (BS). There were ten at Annstead, Seahouses on 9th (DF). Smaller groups were recorded at Seaton Sluice, Amble Braid and Low Newton.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

On 2nd, single birds were reported S from Beacon Point (Newbiggin) (AP), Brierdene, Whitley Bay (IJ) and S over Whitley Bay Cemetery (ASJ).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The highest numbers were recorded at Budle Bay, with 253 on 8th (DF), and Boulmer, with 250 on 1st (JAR). Old Hartley had 110 on 4th (MNC), and St Mary's Island had 90 on 30th (DLo). There were 75 at Hauxley on 24th (HRS), 74 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 19th (AP), and 65 at Cocklawburn on 15th (MHu). Low Newton had 58 on 16th (AMG/MG) and Druridge Pools had a maximum of 54 on 25th (IDR/JF). There were 46 at Calot Shad on the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu), and 44 at the Coquet Estuary on 2nd (MKi). East Chevington had 25 on the North Pool on 30th (STH) and the Blyth Estuary had 24 on 20th (LJM). Smaller groups were at Monks' House Pool, Holy Island, Big Waters NWT and Holywell Waggonway Flash. The Castle Island WeBS count recorded a single bird on 17th (DM/PJA/GB/LAR).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

The high-tide roost at St Cuthbert's Island (Lindisfarne) peaked at 889 on 4th (ASJ). There were 29 at Boulmer on 25th (BS) and 22 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 1st (AP). Little Beach (Berwick) had eight on 12th (MHu), Hauxley NWT had six on 31st (HRS) and the Coquet Estuary had five on 18th (MKi). There were seven N at Seaton Sluice between 5th and 16th (SSWT). Smaller numbers were seen at Amble Braid, the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay and St Mary's Wetland.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

East Chevington had 17 on 11th (SW), Amble Braid had 11 on 21st (MK), and Budle Bay had a maximum of nine on 25th (DF). There were four at Warkworth Gut on 9th (AA) and two at Boulmer on 30th (AMG/MG). Singles were recorded at the Coquet Estuary, Holy Island and Hauxley beach.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Berwick Little Beach produced the highest numbers with 104 seen on 1st reducing to 58 by 26th (MHU). At Cullercoats, 42 were present on 14th declining to 30 by 30th (MN). Other counts in double figures came from Football Hole (Newton) with 40 on 25th (TD), Newbiggin with 27 on 8th (STH), Seahouses with 22 on 20th (RHB/DGB). Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) with 20 present on 4th (DGB/RHB), 18 were at Howick on 31st (JAR) and 15 at Holy Island harbour on 16th (TRD/JD). One to eight were reported from Amble Braid, Calot Shad (River Tweed), Boulmer, Druridge Links, Low Newton scrape, Seaton Sluice and St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The high numbers were reported from Lindisfarne last month had reduced with a maximum of approximately 100 at Budle Bay on 21st declining to 30 by 28th (DF/TRD/JD). Numbers in the Warkworth Gut-River Coquet Estuary area ranged from 50 on 2nd to eight on 27th (JAR/CSA/MKi *et al.*). Elsewhere 25 were counted at St Mary's Island on 10th (MSH), 12 at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 16th (TRD/JD) and 12 at Boulmer on 25th and 30th (RB/MB/BS). One-five were seen at the Cocklawburn, the River Blyth Estuary and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

There were much reduced numbers and reports this month. At Low Newton scrape, six were present on 1st increasing to nine by 16th with the last report being three on 16th (DF/TRD/JD/AMG/MG). Three were reported from East Chevington on 1st (IFo) and on an unspecified date at Widdrington Moor Lake (ADMc). Two were seen at Druridge Pools on 27th (IDR) and singles at St Mary's Island on 4th (BS) and Cresswell Pond (ADMc).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Two birds were seen at Budle Bay from 1st-10th (CGK/GPK/DF/ASJ).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The highest numbers were present at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) during the month with 96 counted on 7th (AP), 165 on 10th (STH) and an estimated 220 on 22nd (MH). At Boulmer 24 were seen on 25th (BS) increasing to 90 on 30th (AMG/MG). There were 82 birds reported at St Mary's Island on 5th with a decline to 20 by 8th (ASJ/KWY/DLo). The peak count during the month at the favoured location of Druridge Bay was 22 on 24th (IDR) and the same number was at Berwick Little Beach on 26th (MHu) and Budle Bay on 27th (DF). Elsewhere, 20 were present at East Chevington on 19th, 19 at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 21st and 12 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 14th and 15th.



A Sanderling washes at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 2nd October

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

As last month, Budle Bay held the greatest numbers, with birds present all month, the peak numbers being present on 8th and 21st with 200 being counted (DF). Maximum counts at other locations were, 108 at Amble Braid on 1st (IFo), 80 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 28th (TRD/JD), 77 at Boulmer on 25th (BS), 52 at Berwick Little Beach on 26th (MHu), 31 at the River Blyth Estuary on 20th (LJM), 22 at Druridge Pools and Links on 3rd (IDR/JF) and 20 at Low Newton scrape on 1st (TRD/JD). One-11 were reported from Colt Crag Reservoir, East Chevington, East Holywell, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, St Mary's Island and Warkworth.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritime*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 13th (SSWT). Birds had returned to the favoured area of Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) with three noted on 2nd increasing to a maximum of 105 by 28th (DF/IRD/TRD/JD *et al.*). Much smaller numbers were reported from other locations with ten at Cullercoats on 30th being the highest. One-seven were seen at Berwick Little Beach, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Druridge Links, Football Hole (Newton), Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer), Holy Island, Newbiggin, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Seaton Sluice, Snab Point (Cresswell), Tynemouth, Warkworth Gut and Whitley Bay.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Single birds were seen at Budle Bay from 7th-29th (CGK/GPK/ASJ/DF *et al.*) and at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (AA).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Migrants were noted at several coastal sites with two at the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 16th (TRD/JD) and two on 27th (the Snook and Excavations- ADM). Single birds were reported on 9th, 14th & 15th. Single birds were seen at St Mary's Island on 3rd, 4th & 14th with one 'in-off' on 31st. Other coastal sightings were at Tynemouth on 14th, Druridge Links on 15th, Warkworth beach on 17th and Budle Point on 21st. Inland, one was at Colt Crag Reservoir on 22nd and at Ordley on 30th.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Immigration continued this month following the first few birds of the autumn in September. An impressive count of six was made at a wet field adjacent to Arcot Pond on 25th (STH). On 2nd, two arrived from the north at St Mary's Wetland before one leaving quickly afterwards (ASJ). Two were also present at Big Waters NWT on 25th (GB). Singles were observed at Colt Crag Reservoir, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holy Island (Chare Ends, Lime Kilns, the Snook), Newbiggin GC, Ogle Bridge, 'in-of' at Snab Point (Cresswell) and Valley Park (Cramlington).



A Jack Snipe above Gosforth subsidence pond on 1st October by Mike Carr

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Mainly low numbers were reported with a few individuals seen arriving at the coast. Three flew N and 1 S at Tynemouth on 11th with 1 S on 27th (DRW). One was also reported 'in-off' at Seaton Sluice on 12th (SSWT). The highest count was 20 at Bothal Pond on 4th (TD) and 14 were at Big Waters NWT on 25th (GB). All other reports were of less than ten with eight at Arcot Pond on 25th and 27th (STH/LJM), five at Grindon Lough on 1st (SW), five at East Chevington on 21st and 26th (IRD/TRD/JD). Four flew over Druridge Links on 15th (IRD/JF) and four were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Howdon and Prestwick Carr. The maximum count at St Mary's Wetland was three on 8th (DLo). One-two were seen at Arcot Lane Flash, Druridge Pools, Felton, Hauxley, Holy Island and New Water Haugh (River Tweed).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at East Chevington on 25th (AJR). Singles were seen at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th & 7th (MR), Branton GP on 6th (IBDa/KDa) and Longhirst Flash on 30th (TD).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

A count of roosting birds at Budle Bay revealed 410 birds on 14th (DF). A high tide roost at St Mary's Wetland contained over 160 birds on 25th (MSH). Other coastal concentrations were 120 at Amble on 2nd (MKi), 118 at Berwick Little Beach on 26th (MHu), 98 at the River Blyth Estuary on 20th (LJM), 85 at Newbiggin on 8th (STH), 65 at Newton Flash on 25th (TD) and 42 at Cullercoats on 30th (MN). One-six were seen at Bothal Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Druridge Pools and Links, Lynemouth, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Warkworth Old Water.



A Redshank poses in the sun for Alan Jack. St. Mary's on 22nd October

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

An adult was present throughout the month at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK/TB *et al.*). A juvenile was at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 19th (AP).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Numbers reported from Beal saltmarsh area (Lindisfarne NNR) varied throughout the month with a minimum of one and a maximum of 19 both reported on 20th (MJC/DF/ASJ). One-three were seen at Alnmouth, Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond and Holy Island causeway on various dates during the month.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Movement N was noted on a number of days including 300/h at Berwick, (Spittal Bay) on 13th (MHu) and at Druridge Links on 15th (IDR/JF), 220/h at Annstead on 5th (DF) and ca.100/hour at Stag Rocks on 13th (DF). Very few were sighted elsewhere.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest gatherings of ca.500 were recorded at Berwick (West Ord) on 4th (MHu) and in a roost at Boulmer on 19th (MKi) with 300-400 on other dates at Berwick (Spittal Bay) (MHu), Budle Bay and Stag Rocks (DF). Lower counts of 100-200 also came from these sites and elsewhere, at Cramlington (DM), the QEII CP (CDH) and in fields at Druridge Links (IDR); 50-100 were recorded at Bothal Pond, offshore at Druridge Links and Holywell Pond and up to 50 at three other sites.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

A very significant influx was seen at Seaton Sluice from 4th when 41 moved N, 50 fed offshore on 5th with a peak of 277 N on 8th (SSWT); this influx was also recorded on 7th at St Mary's Island with 200+ feeding offshore (ASJ). The only other records were two to five at Newbiggin and Seaton Sluice on 13th-14th.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Good numbers remained from the late summer influx with the largest counts of ca.50 at Newbiggin on 8th (STH) and Newbiggin (Spital Rocks) on 19th (ADM). Elsewhere, 15-25 were recorded on several dates at Ellington (TB) and Newbiggin (Quarry Cottage) (RS), an October monthly record count of 14 came from Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 11 were at Boulmer and Druridge Pools. Many sightings of one to four birds, with occasionally up to nine, came mainly from the well-watched Druridge Bay sites, Ellington and Newbiggin but also Boulmer, Budle Bay, Holy Island, Longhoughton Steel, Low Newton, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth. The numbers reported dropped off markedly beyond mid-month although eight were seen at Boulmer on 31st. One individual, recorded at St Mary's Island on 10th had been marked in Denmark in 2009 and had been seen regularly in the county at various sites from Beadnell to Killingworth Lake in six of the 12 years from 2009-2020 (MSH).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A peak count of 2,500 at Budle Point on 18th was noted by the observer to be much lower than in previous years (CGK); Hallington Reservoir held 820 on 18th (MR) and 600 roosted on the sea offshore from Druridge Links on 23rd (IDR). Smaller numbers elsewhere comprised 290 at Juniper (BNR) and 80-200 at Budle Bay, Hedgeley GP, Milkwell (Corbridge) and on the River Tweed (A1-Border). Several counts throughout of birds on the sea at Druridge Links produced a maximum of 30 (IDR), 11 were at Holywell Pond and three were found on a WeB Survey at Grindon Lough (MRS).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

On the Coquet Estuary on 2nd, a gathering of 86 included 78 adults (MKi) and counts of 30-80 came from the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay, East Chevington North Pool, Newbiggin and the Tweed Estuary (Calot Shad). Several counts throughout of birds on the sea at Druridge Links produced a maximum of 16 (IDR). Ten were at Castle Island and Hartley and a single was at Grindon Lough.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

A 1st-winter bird seen on the Coquet Estuary on 28th was the only sighting (CSa).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The gull roost in Budle Bay contained ca.1,350 on 10th, 1,200 on 23rd, ca.800 on 20th and 361 on 22nd (DF) and 1,305 were found in the Tweed Estuary during a WeB Survey on 18th (TBr/MMcN). Other large totals were 400 at Amble Braid (IFo), 240 in the Blyth Estuary (STH) and 203 in the Coquet Estuary (MKi). Several counts throughout of birds at Druridge Links and Pools produced a maximum of 30 (IDR) with 30 at Castle Island and 18 at Holywell Pond (DM).

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The Polish-ringed adult, yellow 'PKCS' was seen at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 6th (AP/AT) and a 1st-winter bird was at St Mary's Wetland on 31st (AC/JBu).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Few remained in the county with a maximum of five at Grindon Lough on 16th (MRS) with four there on 1st (SW). Elsewhere only one or two were present at a dozen or so other sites, namely Amble Harbour, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Hallington Reservoir, Hedgeley GP, Holywell Pond, Low Newton scrape, Newstead Flash, West Ord (Berwick). Single birds at both West Ord (MHu) and Holywell Pond (KWY) were described by the observers as 'dark-phased or dark-backed' individuals.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

A record October monthly total at Seaton Sluice comprised 37 N and 8 S with a peak of 21 N on 4th and the latest a single N on 13th (SSWT). At Stag Rocks, 20 were present on 2nd (IRD) but thereafter records, up to 17th, comprised only three to four at Druridge Links and St Mary's Island and one to two at Chevington Burn beach, Druridge Links, Hauxley, Holy Island, Longhoughton Steel, Low Newton, Seahouses, Stag Rocks, Tynemouth and the Tweed Estuary; the last late-stayer was a juvenile fishing at Boulmer on 30th (BS).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

There were two records only of singles at Bamburgh and Seahouses on 1st (DGB/RHB).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

On 2nd, a single was at Stag Rocks (IRD) and the last sighting was an adult moving N at Seaton Sluice on 13th (SSWT).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

A low total for the month at Seaton Sluice was 17 N including peaks of nine on 13th and five on 15th (SSWT). Three flew N at Hauxley on 24th (HRS), two N at St Mary's Island on 13th (JBU), with a single N there on 14th (MSH) and a single moved N at Holy Island also on 14th (NFO).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

As for the previous species, there was a low monthly total at Seaton Sluice with 17 N and three S (SSWT).

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Two juveniles flew S over the Straight Lonnen on Holy Island on 22nd (IF).

Auk *sp*

Several notable northerly movements were recorded from 8th-13th. At Seaton Sluice, 1,750/hour passed on 8th, 875/hour on 10th and 250/hour on 13th (SSWT). Elsewhere, at St Mary's Island, movements of 240+/hour on 13th and 100+/hour on the 11th were recorded (MSH) and at Druridge Links on 11th a passage rate N of 30-40/minute was noted (IDR).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 13th (SSWT) and on the same day one was seen flying N at St Mary's Island (JBU); on 29th, a single in Druridge Bay 'hurtled' through the observer's view as he 'scoped Guillemots on the sea (MH).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

At Hauxley on 10th, 840 flew N (HRS) and 300 were counted at Rockcliffe on 13th (IJ). Smaller numbers of up to 17, either on the sea or flying N, were seen on dates throughout from a dozen sites along the coast from Berwick to St Mary's Island.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Up to six were on the sea offshore from Druridge Links on three dates (IDR) and singles were seen at Berwick (Spittal Bay) and Rockcliffe.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

A total of five flew N at Seaton Sluice from 10th-13th (SSWT) with one N at St Mary's Island on 13th (MSH). Two were at Ross Back Sands on 23rd (BS).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Around 250 fed in fields at Woodhorn Flashes on 18th (CDH), 180 at Crooked Oak Lane on 9th (IFo), 54 at Stakeford Railway Bridge on 17th, 41 at Cullernose Point on 14th and one at Druridge Pools and Links on 10th.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

A high count was of 112 at Howdon on 18th (CB), 12 at Crooked Oak Lane on 9th and Allen Banks on 25th (IFo/MJC) with one to eight at nine other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Three-figure counts included 750 at Craster on 22nd (MJC) and 500 S at Tynemouth from 07.00-09.30h on 27th (DRW) with 25 at Longhirst Flash on 30th (IDR/JF) and one to eight at four other locations.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

A juvenile was at Holy Island from 6th to 13th (AH *et al.*).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

There were good numbers with 55 at Craster on 22nd (MJC), 32 at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 23rd (IFo), 18 at Holy Island Village on 26th and 14 there on 4th (STH). 15 were at Kirkley Mill on 20th, 14 at Ogle on 11th (AHB) with four to ten at five other locations.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

There was just one multiple count of two at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 9th (MJC), possibly being the two fledged survivors from a brood of six (IK). Singles were noted on several dates at Bamburgh-Seahouses, Derwent Reservoir, Plenmeller Common on two dates and at 13 other widespread localities with two more A1 road casualties at Belford and Alnwick both on 2nd.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

At Howick two called throughout the month (JR) with possibly two at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD) and singles generally calling at Hauxley on two dates and 12 other locations. One road casualty was at Alnwick on 30th.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

One was in the pier bushes at Tynemouth on 10th. This is apparently the second record there following one in 1984 (DRW) and one was disturbed from a tree at Kirkley Mill on 4th (AHB).

Asio sp.

One flew across the A1 near Bamburgh on 3rd (ADM).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

One was by the Tin Church (Low Newton) on 1st (DRW), Druridge Pools on 3rd (IDR/JF), in off at Hauxley Beach on 11th (AJ), at Tynemouth on 14th (DRW) and Holy Island on 16th and 27th (IBDa/KDa/ADM).

A Long-eared Owl spies Mike Carr
Holy Island on 2nd October

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

Three were at the Snook (Holy Island) on 5th with passage apparent from 14th to 16th. Two were in-off at Tynemouth and Seaton Sluice on 16th and a single in-off at the latter site on 14th (DRW/SSWT) at Druridge Links on 15th (IDR/JF) and Newbiggin by the Sea and St Mary's Island on 16th (AP/ASJ). Singles were at Holy Island regularly and at St Mary's wetland on two dates and seven other locations.

Swift *Apus apus*

One late bird went S at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 4th (TB).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

All reports were of single birds regularly at Corbridge, on two dates at East Chevington, St Mary's Island and Seaton Sluice and at 15 other widespread localities.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

On 18th a bird flew over the observer's head inland of the ash lagoons at Woodhorn and dropped down 1km away toward Lynemouth (GB). It was re-found at Spital Point (Newbiggin) on 20th (TB) and subsequently stayed in the area until 28th. It was often in Lynemouth Power Station compound where it was seen by many.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Six was the high count at Allen Banks on 25th, three were at Gosforth subsidence Pond on 7th (MJC), at Kielder Forest on 18th (PRM) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th (TB). Passage was apparent with three at Holy Island on 5th, two there on 2nd and 17th, Hauxley on 24th and singles at the above and nine other coastal sites during the month. Inland two were at East Cramlington Pond NWT on 27th and singles were at seven other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

One N at Druridge Links and Pools on 18th was an outstanding record (IDR) with one at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 30th (AJR).

Falcon sp

A large dark falcon which appeared larger than a Peregrine was seen briefly on Holy Island on 16th (MJC/ADM).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Five birds were seen at Holy Island on 2nd with two at The Snook and three at the Straight Lonnen (MJC/ADM). Four birds were on Alnwick on 25th (MH). Three birds were observed at Holy Island on 9th and 14th (MH/MJC/ADM), St Mary's Island on 27th (MSH) and at Crooked Oak Lane also on 27th (IFo). One to two birds were at 35 sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds were at Holy Island on 11th (IBDa/KDa) and on 14th (NFO); single birds were also noted on Holy Island throughout the Month (ADM/TRD/JD *et al.*). On or near the coast, single birds were seen at Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Beal, Bewick Drift (Lynemouth), Cullercoats, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Horton, Seaton Sluice and at St Mary's Island. One flew across the field at eye level at Longhirst Flash on 28th (TD).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Two reports of late birds came from Holy Island on 5th with two birds seen (IBDa/KDa) and a juvenile noted at the Straight Lonnen (MJC/BCh).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Three birds, two adults and a juvenile, were noted at Budle Bay throughout the Month (CGK/GPK); two adults were at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd and 29th (IFo). Two birds were seen on marker posts at Pilgrim's Way (Lindisfarne) on 20th (IK) two birds were at Tynemouth on 10th and 16th and on several dates later in the month (DRW/MK). Single birds were seen at 23 sites during the Month.

A Peregrine over Newton Pool
6th October by Tim Dean

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Picus viridis*

There was a high count of 18 at Whitley Bay on 17th (ASJ), 16 the peak monthly count at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 7th and at Walker Park (Newcastle) on 7th (MJC/ASJperSPP). Two to five were at North Shields on six dates (DLo) and one to three at three other locations.

Brown Shrike *Lanius cristatus*

On 14th a first-winter bird was found at Chare Ends (Holy Island) (ADM) and remained till 27th being seen by many.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

Found on 4th at Chare Ends (Holy Island) by Tim and Jonathan Drew from Scotland, it was seen subsequently by many at Straight Lonnen and near the Castle, staying till the 5th.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

One at Seaton Point (Boulmer) found by John Rutter stayed until 8th.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Well recorded with seven found on Kielder Forest Drive on 18th (PRM), six at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo), five at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 5th and Ellington on 8th (TB) with one to four recorded on many dates. Four were at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 1st, Coupland on 15th and North Wood (Holystone) on 16th with one to three at 28 widespread localities.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Seven was the peak count at Druridge Links and Pools on 10th with four there on six dates (IDR) and at Howick on 16th (JAR). Regarded as a rarity at Holy Island, two were there on 11th and 17th and Embleton Quarry on 21st.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

An evening roost gathering at West Monkseaton numbered around 1,000 on 26th with about 500 leaving a roost in a mixed flock at Brownieside on 15th (ASJ). 240 were at Juniper on 28th, 100 all month at Yearle and 80 at Howdon on 25th with two to nine at Druridge Links and Pools during the month.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Around 500 were in a mixed flock leaving roost at Brownieside on 15th (ASJ), 160 at Juniper on 28th (BNR), 29 at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo) and one to 15 at Druridge Links & Pools (IDR/JF)

A Rook at Bamburgh

by Alan Jack

on 10th October



Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

On 9th, 90 were at Tynemouth (KWY), 59 at East Hartford on 7th (LJM), 51 feeding on shore at Hartley on 19th (CDH), 45 in River Blyth Estuary on 31st (LJM) and 16 the peak count at Druridge Links & Pools on 25th with two to 15 there during the month (IDR/JF). One to five were at six other locations.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

The long-staying bird was at Howick on 22nd (BS) with the individual returning to Linton for the 3rd year on 23rd and seen again on 26th (AT/GB/LAR/DM).

Raven *Corvus corax*

A group of eight were atop a hill at Yeavinger Bell on 8th (TRD/JD), four at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 14th (MJC), three at Howick Hall on 8th (PHa/AHa) with one to two at Holy Island on three dates and at 14 other locations.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

There was a good count of 26 at Allen Banks on 25th (MJC), 17 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 9th (MR) with 13 at Craster on 22nd and seven at Alnmouth on the same date. More than six were at Bamburgh on 18th, at Hauxley on 24th with five there (one ringed, one re-trapped) on 4th and Ord Moor (Berwick) on 18th. One to four were at Druridge Links, Hauxley and Holy Island regularly and eight other locations.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Two were at Mouldshaugh (Felton) on 23rd and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 30th & 31st with singles there on three dates and at East Raw on 5th (NFO).



A Marsh Tit at Linden Hall
Neil Osborne on 30th October

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Three were at Brierdene (Whitley) Bay on 6th with two there on 2nd (LJM/IJ) and at Craster on 14th & 22nd, Derwent Reservoir on 15th and 17th and Slaley Hall on 30th. Singles were at 12 other widely spread localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

At Bamburgh 23 were trapped and ringed during the month with 12 the peak count at Druridge Links and Pools on 14th, 11 on 4th and 10 on 1st with one to nine there on 20 other dates (IDR). Nine were at Embleton Quarry on 21st, four at Warkworth Old Water on 27th and two at Holy Island Village on 17th. Ringing returns at Hauxley were three ringed, three re-trapped of six on 2nd, two ringed of six on 14th, five ringed of five on 5th, two ringed of five on 10th and one ringed of four on 17th. Four of six were caught and ringed at Druridge Links & Pools on 18th and three of three on 15th.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Bamburgh ten were trapped and ringed during the month, six were at Big Waters on 28th with five the peak count at Druridge Links and Pools on three dates and one to four there on 11 other dates. At Hauxley three were ringed of five on 10th, and two ringed of two on 4th with two of two caught and ringed at Druridge Links and Pools on 15th and one on 18th.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Six flew over reed beds at south pool East Chevington on 2nd with one there on 19th and a female on 22nd (TRD/JD/TB).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Birds generally moving S numbered 191 at Boulmer on 21st and 116+ on 7th (BS), 135 at Craster on 22nd (MJC), 110 at Beal on 20th (DF), 109 at the Snook (Holy Island) on 14th and 32 there on 16th (MJC/ADM). At least 50 were over Druridge Links & Pools on 4th and 40 on 18th, 26 in a stubble field at East Hartford on 7th and one to 25 at 20 other widespread localities.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

One flew S at Tynemouth on 1st (KWY).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A high count was of 17 at West Hartford on 1st (STH), nine at Druridge Links & Pools on 7th and at Ellington on the same date (IDR/TB). Six were at Low Newton on 1st with six S at Budle Point on the same date, five S at Boulmer on 6th and 18th, four at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd and one to three at ten other locations recorded until the 31st.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Four flew S at Druridge Links and Pools on 6th (IDR) and at Warkworth Pier on 7th (TBr), three at Druridge Links and Pools on the same date with one to two at East Ord, Berwick, Stocksfield, Newbiggin and Lynemouth, the last being one with Swallows at Howick on 22nd (BS).

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

At Big Waters NWT, one was heard on 1st (AA, AJJ) and 6th, when it was also briefly seen, and then heard throughout the month (GB). This is a second record of the species for the site. At East Chevington, one was also heard throughout the month (IF, TRD/JD, NFO, SW, TF, STH). One was heard at Woodhorn Flash (Road Pool) on 25th (AP).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

By far the largest flock was reported from Heaton (Newcastle) with 60 on 10th (PCI). There were 35 in two parties at Bamburgh on 18th (BRS), 30 at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 7th (MJC), and 30 at the Kielder Forest Drive on 18th (PRM). Ellington had 24 on 5th (TB) and Hauxley NWT had a maximum of 20 on 18th (HRS) and 22nd (IF). Ten birds were ringed and one re-trapped there during the month (HRS). At Druridge Links 11 out of a maximum of 18 were caught and ringed on 15th (IDR/JF). There were 16 at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 21st (MSH) and 15 at Boulmer on 21st (BS), at Alnmouth on 22nd (MJC), and Big Waters NWT on 25th (GB). Parties of 14 were at Tyne Green CP (Hexham) on 17th (AJH) and at Warkworth Old Water on 27th (IDR). Smaller groups were reported from Carterway Heads (Crooked Oak), Yearle, Brierdene (Whitley Bay), Ordley, Humshaugh, Craster, the railway line at Cambois, Holywell Pond and Cramlington. Seaton Sluice recorded a party of seven birds on the island on 19th, a first for the site (SSWT).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

There were six at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 7th (TB) and five on Holy Island on 3rd (MJC/ADM). Singles were at Tynemouth on 4th (MK) and Berwick on 5th and 8th (MHu). The latest record was a single bird in Holy Island village on 15th (MJC/ADM).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

The early October falls brought 32 to Holy Island on 4th, with six at the Snook and 26 in the village (PRM), and 30 to Tynemouth on 3rd (MK). Six of the Holy Island birds were identified as the Scandinavian ssp *P. c. abietinus* (MJC/ADM) and one as the Siberian ssp. *P. c. tristis* (MJC, JD). A single *P. c. tristis* was also at Tynemouth on 1st, having been present for the previous week (CB). 23 birds were ringed at Hauxley during the month (HRS). Druridge Links had a maximum of 11 on 7th (IDR) with a *P. c. tristis* on 23rd (IDR). There were 11 at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 7th (MJC) and ten at Howick Hall on 6th, of which two birds were ringed (PHa/AHa). Craster had six on 14th (BS) and a *P. c. tristis* on 22nd (MJC). St Mary's Island had five on 3rd (AC), and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) also had five on 7th (TB). Smaller numbers were reported from Marden Quarry, Brierdene and the Cemetery (Whitley Bay), Derwent Reservoir, Berwick and Exhibition Park (Newcastle Town Moor). Singing birds were at Woodhorn, Low Newton, Stocksfield, Newton Red House, Beaconhill (Cramlington), Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and Bamburgh, which also had a *P. c. tristis* on 21st (IF).



A Siberian Chiffchaff at Tynemouth. Colin Bradshaw on 1st October

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One was found by Ross Ahmed near the school in Holy Island village on 14th (PRM, TRD/JD). It was thereafter reported from 15th to 20th (MJC/ADM, IF, IBDA/KDa, MNo/PNo, DF, IDR/JF, GB/DM/PJA/LAR, AMG/MG) with the last sighting on 23rd (TB). One was also present at Spital (Newbiggin) on 18th (GB) and at Hauxley NWT on 21st (MK).

The Holy Island Dusky Warbler

. Tim Dean on 14th October

**Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

One was at Low Newton on 14th (AMG/MG) and one was at Crooked Lonnen, Holy Island from 16th to 18th (MJC, TRD/JD, CB, AH/IBDA/KDa).

A Pallas's Warbler

Low Newton

Alan Jack

15th October

**Yellow-browed Warbler*****Phylloscopus inornatus***

110 records were submitted for the species this month as the influx of late September continued. The maximum counts were seven at Druridge Links on 4th ((IDR/JF), six at Holy Island on 2nd and 4th (MJC/ADM, STH), four at Budle Point from 1st to 5th (CGK/GPK/RA), and four at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 8th (ASJ). There were three at Bamburgh GC on 2nd (IDR/JF) and at Hauxley on 10th, where one bird was ringed on 17th (HRS). There were two at Craster on 1st (CSa), at Low Newton on 1st and 2nd (DRW, TRD/JD, AMG/MG), and at Tynemouth from 2nd to 4th (DRW, CB, MK). At Whitley Bay, two were at Marden Quarry on 3rd (ASJ), the Cemetery on 14th (IJ, MK), and St Mary's Island on 21st (MSH). Two were at Boulmer on 7th (BS) and at Howick Burn mouth on 22nd (BS). Singles were reported from Beal, Newbiggin, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), North Shields, Berwick, Heaton (Newcastle), Woodhorn, Hexham and Alnmouth.

A Yellow-browed Warbler

Mike Carr

Holy Island

2nd October



Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*

One was found at Tynemouth on 3rd (MK) and seen on 4th (CB, KWY, DM/GB/LAR) and 5th (DRW), with the last sighting on 6th (MK). One was by the Lindisfarne Hotel on Holy Island on 8th (TRD/JD, IK) and 9th (MJC) and one was observed feeding in a garden whitebeam at Crossgates (Holy Island) on 21st (IK).



An Arctic Warbler at Tynemouth by Duncan Watson on 5th October

Two-barred Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides plumbeitarsus*

The bird found by Ross Ahmed on 28th September at Budle Point was still present on 1st (IJ, TRD/JD, IF) but not seen or heard again after mid-morning on 2nd (CGK). This is a first record for the county.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

One was at Druridge Links on 4th (IDR/JF, DM/GB/LAR).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Singles were at Druridge Links (IDR/JF) and Budle Point (CGK/GPK) on 4th.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

The highest count came from Holy Island, with 30 on 5th (CB). Hauxley NWT had 13 on 5th, and 18 birds were ringed there during the month (HRS). There were ten at Budle Point on 4th (CGK/GPK) and at Howick Hall on 30th (PHa/AHa). Druridge Links had nine on 14th (IDR/JF), as did Cambois railway line (STH). Smaller groups were recorded at Tynemouth, Bamburgh, Old Hartley, Beal, Embleton, St Mary's Island, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Rockcliffe and Low Newton. Singles were reported from Brierdene and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Newbiggin, Derwent Reservoir, Boulmer, Woodhorn and Alnmouth,

A Blackcap
Holy Island
5th October
Colin Bradshaw



Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Two were present at Budle Point on 4th and 5th (CGK/GPK). Singles were at Holy Island from 2nd to 5th (MJC, PRM, CB), St Mary's Island on 4th (TD, MSH), and Druridge Links on 4th (IDR/JF).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

There were two at Holy Island on 15th (IJ), another on 17th (CB), one at the Ash Lagoon, Newbiggin on 8th (AT), and one at St Mary's Island on 16th (ASJ).



A Barred Warbler from Holy Island on 17th October by Chris Barlow

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

There was a maximum of seven at Holy Island on 4th (PRM), including a sandy-coloured bird which could not be seen well in heavy rain. Two were ringed at Bamburgh on 11th, and one of these was re-trapped on 30th (BRS). Two were also ringed at Druridge Links on 15th (IDR/JF). A bird showing characteristics of the Siberian ssp. *S. c. blythi* was present and photographed at Budle Point between 4th and 6th (RA/CGK/GPK). Singles were reported from East Chevington, Howick Hall, St Mary's Island, Hauxley, Boulmer and Newbiggin.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Singles were recorded at Craster on 1st (MKi), Woodhorn on 4th (DM/GB/LAR), Holy Island on 4th (MJC/ADM), Waren Mill between 9th and 10th (CGK), and Druridge Pools on 15th (BB).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Large falls took place between 3rd and 4th, with maximum counts of 308 from Holy Island on 4th (PRM), 250 at St Mary's Island on 3rd (AC), 136 at Hauxley on 4th (HRS), and 110 at Druridge Links and Pools on 4th (IDR/JF). There were 100 at Bamburgh Castle wood and dunes on 5th (ADM), 80 at Budle Point on 4th (CGK/GPK/RA), 60 at Tynemouth on 3rd (MK) and at Howick Hall on 6th (PHa/AHa). These flocks dispersed rapidly, particularly on St Mary's Island, where numbers were down to 100 by 4th (TD, MSH). Smaller groups were noted at Craster, with 30 on 14th (BS), Low Newton, with 25 on 15th (ASJ), and Newbiggin, with 22 on 4th (DM). There were 15 at Snab Point, Cresswell (GB) and at Bewick Drift Copse (DM/GB/LAR) on 4th, 12 at Old Hartley on 5th (MSH), and ten at Boulmer on 5th (PMHa/RMHa). Smaller numbers were recorded at Colt Crag Reservoir, Cambois railway line, Whitley Bay Cemetery, Rockcliffe, Ridley Park (Blyth) and Alnmouth. Singles were at Grindon Lough and Exhibition Park (Newcastle). 63 birds were ringed during the month at Hauxley (HRS) and 11 at Druridge Pools (IDR/JF).



A Goldcrest lives up to its name. Alan Jack on 4th October on Holy island

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

The highest count came from Druridge Links and Pools, where there were 26 on 14th (IDR/JF). There were 16 at Craster on 22nd (MJC), 13 at Holy Island on 16th (ADM) and 12 at Hauxley on 24th (HRS). Reports of smaller groups came from Bamburgh, Warkworth Old Water, Fulbeck (Morpeth), Boulmer and Quarry Cottage, with a regular single in a North Shields garden. 18 were ringed at Hauxley during the month (HRS) and six at Druridge Pools (IDR/JF).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Four were at Humshaugh on 17th (SW) and at Sidwood (Tarsset Burn) on 18th (SW). Three were at Chugdon Wood, Ellington on 11th (TB) and at the Kielder Forest Drive on 18th (PRM). There were two at North Shields on 14th (MNC) and at Harbottle on 25th (MKi), and singles at Craggside (Rothbury) on 6th (PG) and Woodhorn Church on 18th (GB).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

There were nine at Allen Banks on 25th (MJC), four at Craster on 22nd (MJC) and three at Kielder Forest on 18th (PRM). There were two at Hauxley on 2nd, where two birds were ringed during the month (HRS), and two at Alnmouth on 22nd (MJC). Singles were recorded at Holy Island from 2nd to 27th, with birds showing characteristics of British ssp. *C. f. britannica* on 4th (PRM) and Northern ssp. *C. f. familiaris* on 5th (CB). Another possible *C. f. familiaris* was at St Mary's Island on 8th (JBU). One was ringed at Druridge Pools on 15th (IDR/JF). Singles were also reported from Valley Park (Cramlington), Sidwood (Tarsset Burn), Derwent Reservoir, Humbleton, North Seaton, Boulmer, Tyne Green CP (Hexham), Woodhorn Church and The Avenue, Seaton Delaval.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

A juvenile was on Holy Island on 17th and 18th (BC, MJC/ADM, IBDA/KDa, MNo/PNo).

A Rose-coloured
Starling with cousins
on Holy Island
seaweed.

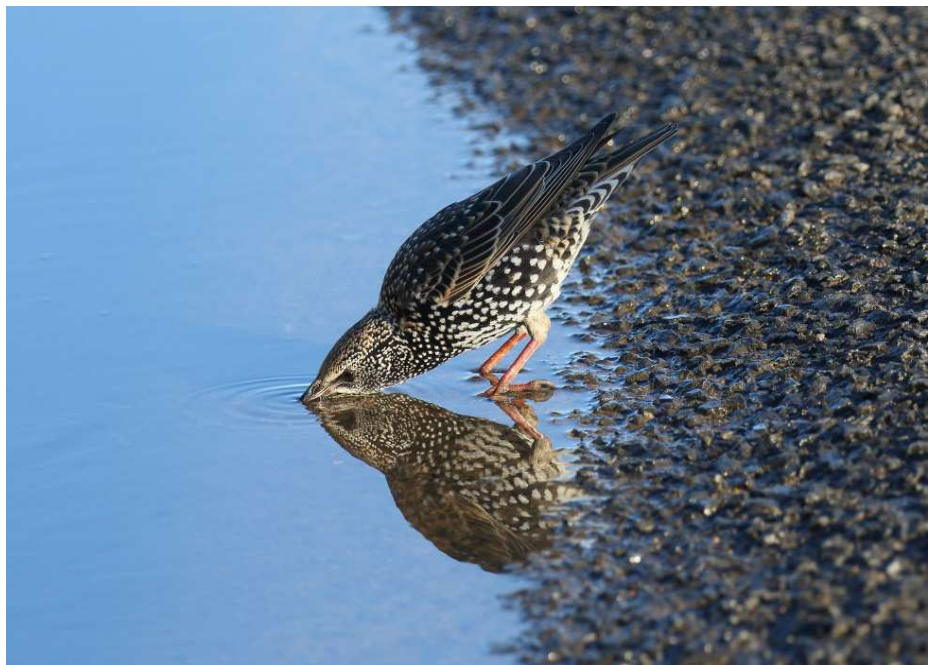
Duncan Watson

17th October

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Large murmurations over the lough were observed on Holy island on 14th (110,000, TRD/JD) and 21st (7,000, IK). Gosforth Park NR had 3,000 on 30th (MJC), Big Waters NWT had 2,000 on 6th (GB) and Elwick had 2,000 on 23rd (BS). There were 1,000 at East Chevington on 1st (IF), 800 at Bewick Moor on 24th (BS) and 650N at dusk at Druridge Links on 15th (IDR/JF). Boulmer had 650 on 21st (BS), Howick had 500 on 4th (JAR), Crooked Oak Lane had 300 on 27th (IFo), and 225 birds at East Hartford on 14th were thought to be recently arrived migrants (LJM). There were 200 at Great Bavington on 7th (MR) and at Derwent Reservoir on 21st (IFo), and 150 at Hauxley on 4th (HRS). 120 were present at Quarry Cottage throughout the month (BS).

A thirsty Starling at St. Mary's
Alan Jack on 22nd October



Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Seaton Sluice recorded one in off the sea on 23rd (SSWT). Holy Island had a maximum of three on 3rd (MJC/ADM). Singles were at St Mary's Island on 3rd (ASJ), Budle Point (GPK), Wooler Common (DRi) and Craster (BS) on 14th, and Bamburgh on 18th (BRS).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The highest count came from Holy Island, with 116 on 15th (MJC/ADM). There were 40 at Embleton Quarry on 21st (IDR) and 30 at Hauxley on 24th, where five birds were ringed during the month (HRS). At Derwent Reservoir on 17th, 25 were counted in a 200m stretch where there would normally be one or two (IFo). There were 20 at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 22nd (KWY) and 18 at Druridge Pools and Links on 30th (IDR), where one bird was ringed on 15th (IDR/JF). Smaller numbers were at Cambois railway line, Berwick, Warkworth Old Water and Big Waters NWT. A male bird with white feathers on the wings and body was at Quarry Cottage and Spital throughout the month (BS).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Influxes of birds were observed from mid-month onwards, with 500 in off the sea in several flocks at Tynemouth on 19th (ASJ). Numbers at Derwent Reservoir increased from 200 on 14th to 400 by 20th (IFo). There were 350 at Blindburn (Upper Coquetdale) on 20th (TRD/JD), 300 at Humshaugh on 16th (SW) and at Alnwick Moor and the Aln Valley on 25th (MH), and 250 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (SR). 220 flew over Branton GP on 31st (IBDa/KDa) and 200 were roosting at Muckle Moss on 19th (SW). Mixed flocks of fieldfares and much smaller numbers of redwings were recorded arriving on 31st, with 300 at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), 200 at Longdyke (Shilbottle) (MKi), and 100 at St Mary's Island (JBU). There were also 150 at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK) and 138 at Druridge Links (IDR) on 31st. Sipton Shield (Allendale) had 120 on 16th (TWi), as did Yearle on 24th (DGB/RHB) and Crooked Oak Lane on 27th (IFo). There were 100 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 27th (IFo). Flocks of below 100 were reported at Longhirst Flash, Slaley Hall, Juniper, Hauxley, Ellington, Holy Island and Colt Crag Reservoir. Flocks of 50 were at Butterknowes (Rothbury), Milkwell (Corbridge) and Steel Farm (Whitfield). Smaller numbers were at Chapel House (Newcastle), Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Big Waters NWT, East Cramlington LNR, Ordley, Lesbury and Vallum, with groups of below 20 noted at locations throughout the county, ranging from Kielder Forest to Exhibition Park, Town Moor (Newcastle).

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

The largest flocks were at Derwent Reservoir, with 500 SW on 14th (IFo), at Holy Island, with 300 over on 4th (IBDa/KDa), and at Humshaugh, with 200 on 16th (SW). Hauxley recorded 150 on 31st, with five birds ringed there during the month (HRS). There were 70 over Branton GP on 11th (IBDa/KDa), 60 at Allendale on 24th (CB) and at Arcot Pond on 27th (LJM), and 50 at Milkwell (Corbridge) (RB/MB) and Butterknowes (Rothbury) (NFO) on 26th. Airy Holm Reservoir, had 45 on 14th (IFo). There were 40 at Budle Point on 4th (GPK), at Heaton (Newcastle) on 11th (PCI), and over Linden Hall on 15th (NFO). In the influx of mixed fieldfare flocks of 31st, 30 were recorded at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 20 at Longdyke (Shilbottle) (MKi). Reports of groups of below 40 came from Stocksfield, Ellington, Ordley, Howick Hall, Big Waters NWT, Cramlington and Prestwick Carr, with groups of ten to 20 birds being observed at Longhirst Flash, Little Mill, Low Cocklaw (Berwick), Cambois railway line, Bamburgh, Tynemouth, Whitley Bay and Embleton Quarry.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

There was a large influx on Holy Island on 4th, with 351 birds counted (166 at the Snook, 185 at the village, PRM). Numbers were down to 34 by 15th (MJC/ADM). Hauxley had 11 on 4th, with one bird ringed (HRS), and Craster had 11 on 22nd (MJC). There were eight at Woodhorn on 4th (DM/GB/LAR) and seven at Druridge Links and Pools on 4th (IDR/JF). Cocklawburn had six on 27th (TBr) and Colt Crag Reservoir had four on 5th (MR). Smaller numbers were at Snab Point (Cresswell), Newbiggin, Boulmer, Tynemouth, Bamburgh, Embleton Quarry and Lynemouth Power Station.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

The largest group was at Milkwell (Corbridge) with 12 on 19th (RB/MB). There were seven at Bamburgh on 30th (BRS), six (three pairs) at Colt Crag Reservoir on 2nd (MR), four at Flagstaff Park (Berwick) on 4th (MHu) and four at Hauxley on 31st (HRS). There were two at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 4th (GB/DM/LAR) and at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 21st (IF). Singles were at Woodhorn, Cragside (Rothbury), Big Waters NWT, St Mary's Island, Longhirst and East Stobswood.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

There were four on Holy Island on 4th and 5th (PRM, MJC/ADM), and two at Budle Point on 1st (JD/TRD) and St Mary's Island on 4th (MSH). Singles were at Tynemouth on 3rd and 4th (MK, DRW) and at Beal on 4th (MJC).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

The falls of 4th produced 372 on Holy Island (152 at the Snook and 220 in the village, PRM), a number which had reduced to 37 by 13th (MJC). Hauxley had 65 on 4th, with 24 ringed during the month (HRS), and Druridge Links and Pools had 45 on 4th (IDR/JF). At St Mary's Island, numbers increased from 20 on the morning of 4th to 50 by the evening (MSH). At Tynemouth, birds were observed on the beach on 3rd (CB), with numbers coming to 30 on 3rd and 4th (MK, KWY). At Budle Point, 30 birds were present daily between 1st and 5th (CGK/GPK). 35 were counted between Howick Haven and Craster on 4th (JAR), and there were 45 at Craster by 22nd (MJC). Beal had 12 on 4th (MJC) and Bamburgh had 13 on 5th. There were 12 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 5th (MR) and 11 at the Blyth Estuary on 20th (LJM). Smaller numbers were reported from Snab Point (Cresswell), Quarry Cottage and Spital, Embleton Quarry, Big Waters NWT and Whitley Bay Cemetery, with singles at Lyne Burn Mouth and Warkworth Old Water.

Bluethroat *Luscinia siveica*

One showed well at Boulmer near the beach car park between 2nd and 4th (TRD/JD, AMG/MG, BS, MKi, STH).



The Bluethroat from Boulmer on 4th October by Chris Barlow

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

A first-winter bird was found on the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 3rd (ADM) and another first-winter bird was found on 4th (MJC/ADM, IBDa/KDa, MNo/PNo, TRD/JD, PRM, SVM). A third first-winter bird was found on 16th (ADM). Sightings were reported on 5th (MJC/BCh, AMG/MG), 8th (IBDa/KDa), 13th (PRM, ASJ), 15th (IJ, MJC/ADM, IBDa/KDa), 17th (DF, DM/GB, LAR/PJA, ASJ) and 19th (AMG/MG). One of the birds was ringed on 16th and remained until 22nd (IK). It was reported on 17th (IDR/JF) and photographed on 19th (CB). A first-winter bird was also present at Whitley Bay Cemetery between 17th and 19th (NT, MNC, JBu, DLo, CB, IJ, IF, TB, CDH, AC, ASJ) and another was trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 18th (BRS).



A Red-flanked Bluetail on Holy Island
19th October by Colin Bradshaw

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Two were at the Green Shiel excavations on Holy Island on 4th (CSa), with two singles observed on the island on the same day (TRD/JD, IBDa/KDa).



A Pied Wagtail chases lunch at Blyth. Alan Jack on 1st October

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

One to two birds were on Holy Island on 3rd to 4th (MJC/ADM, PRM, IBDa/KDa, ASJ, TRD/JD), with a last sighting of one on the Straight Lonnen on 8th (JD/TRD).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

One was present in the harbour area at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT) and singles were also at Holy Island on 5th (IBDa/KDa) and 16th (JD/TRD, MJC) and at Boulmer on 17th (BS), 19th (MKi) and from 21st to the end of the month (BS).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

There was a maximum count of 15 on Holy Island on 4th (MJC/ADM). Singles were at Low Newton on 1st (DRW), St Mary's Island on 3rd (AJ, AC), Tynemouth on 3rd and 4th (DRW), Whitley Bay on 4th (JBu) and Bamburgh on 5th (ADM), with a late bird at Budle Point on 14th (GPK).



A Redstart at Boulmer. Chris Barlow on 4th October

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Single birds were at the Ash Lagoon (Newbiggin) (AT), Whitley Bay (JBU) and St Mary's Wetland (MK) on 4th.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

The largest groups were at St Mary's Island, with ten on 1st (ASJ), and Holy Island, with ten on 19th (CB). There were eight at Druridge Links on 16th (IDR/JF) and seven between the Hadston T-junction and East Chevington on 19th (STH/IFo). There were six at Howick on 22nd (BS) and at Cocklawburn on 27th (TBr), and six were present throughout the month at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK). There were five at East Chevington on 21st and four at Old Hartley, comprising an adult pair and two young, on 3rd (MNC). There were also four at St Mary's Island on 3rd and 4th (TD, DLo), Embleton on 5th (JAR), and Prestwick Carr on 11th (STH). Smaller numbers were at Boulmer, Bamburgh, Plashetts-Great Bavington, Seahouses, Lynemouth Power Station, Colt Crag Reservoir, Blyth, Harbottle, Hauxley, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Warkworth Old Water. Singles were reported from Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Monks' House Pool, Ellington, Derwent Reservoir, Newbiggin, the Wansbeck Estuary, Thorngraston Common, Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale), Tynemouth, Featherstone Common and East Stobswood.



A Stonechat at Gosforth subsidence pond by Mike Carr on 1st October

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Two were at Low Hauxley village on 8th (CSa). A female of the Greenland ssp. *O. o. leucorhoa* was at Little Beach (Berwick) on 1st (MHu). Singles were recorded at Blyth, Berwick, St Mary's Island, Craster, Boulmer, Holy Island, Embleton, Ellington, Cullercoats Bay and Newbiggin, with a late female or first-winter bird at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 21st (CDH).

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti* 23rd

Found by JR and SS at Seaton Point (Boulmer) this female bird was observed on 18th-23rd (TRD/JD *et al.*).

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Three, including a singing bird were seen along Forest Burn on 5th and at Allenbanks on 25th (NFO/MJC). Two were noted near Wooler on 10th and at Felton on 11th. Two were also on the River Pont at Berwick Hill on 18th where a pair were seen last month too (accidentally omitted from September bulletin) (AHB). Singles were seen at a further seven sites this month.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

The largest counts this month were made at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) where 85 often attended garden feeders and at Holy Island village, with 70 – 80, many on feeders, on 17th and 22nd (IDR/JF/TRD/JD). 27 spent the month at Yearle (DGB/RHB). 25 were seen at High Chibburn on 10th (IDR). One to ten were noted at five other sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

A total of 350 were seen to fly W at Budle Point over five days of watching during the month (RA/CGK). 60 + were noted at Branton on 7th (IBDa/KDa). Tynemouth saw 36 flying S on the morning of 22nd and 53 on 27th (DRW). 20 birds were noted at East Holywell on 6th (MNC). One to 16 were also noted at 17 other sites. Omission from September bulletin; 16 at Ogle Bridge on 16th (AB).

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

At Hauxley, 20 were counted on 24th (HRS). 15 + were seen at St. Mary's on 4th (MSH). 12 were noted on 4th at Druridge (IDR/JF). One to ten were at 11 further sites.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Five were found at Allenbanks on 25th (MJC). Elsewhere, two were seen at eleven locations and single birds noted at a further 39 sites within the County during this month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Around 40 roosted in the grounds of Freeman Hospital (Heaton) on 19th (PCi). 30 birds were noted at Holy Island, mostly in the village on 2nd (MJC/ADM). 23 fed at the mouth of the Lyne Burn on 17th (AP). One to seven were seen at five other sites.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Two were seen at Cocklawburn on 27th (AM per TBr). Singles were at Hauxley on 4th and at Seaton Point on 6th and 7th.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

63 flew S at Newbiggin on 27th (GB). 55 gathered at St. Mary's Island on 16th, before moving off S (ASJ). 34 flew S at East Cramlington in two hours on 28th (STH). 22 birds were noted at Colt Crag on 7th (MR). One to 16 were observed, mostly moving S at a further 17 locations during the month.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Two were seen at Holy Island on 4th, with probably one of these seen later that day in same area (SR/CSa).

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

An impressive count of 132 birds was made at Holy Island on 20th, from North Shore, along East Shore to the Heugh (MJC). 18+ were seen at Boulmer on 7th (BS). 17 were counted at the two above sites on two other dates. One to eight were seen at a further 12 sites this month.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Eight were noted at Budle Bay on 31st, where two were present all month (CGK/GPK).

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

A single was present at Newbiggin on 21st (AP).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

A large migrant flock numbering 250 arrived at Strawberry Field (Holy Island) on morning of 9th. 52 were in the village and surrounds on 2nd (IK/MJC/ADM). 130 were counted at Crooked Oak Lane on 5th (IFo). At Juniper, an influx occurred on 28th of 26 birds (BNR). One – 16 were seen at 12 other sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

46 were at Holy Island on 14th. Five to 35 also present on the island in the first two weeks of the month (MJC/ADM/PRM/ASJ *et al.*). Seven arrived from E at St. Mary's on 12th and seven flew S at Craster on 22nd (ASJ/MJC). One to six were seen at 24 other sites during the month.

A Brambling
St. Mary's
by Alan Jack
6th October



Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Three arrived from E at Stocksfield on 8th (BNR). One was seen at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 3rd, one was seen flying with Greenfinches near Paddy Freeman's (Newcastle) on 11th and another was noted flying S at Hauxley on 17th (MJC/PCi/HRS).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A good count of 21 was made at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 6th (RB/LB). 11 were seen in the Hauxley area on 24th and eight noted at Rising Sun C.P. on 29th (HRS/ASJ). Seven were at Cambois on 18th (STH). One to six were also noted at 29 further locations.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

30 + were at St. Mary's on 21st and at Snab Point the following day (MSH). 25 were seen at Tynemouth on (KWY). 20 flew N at Gosforth Garden Village on 1st and 17 did so at Druridge Links on 15th (MJC). One to ten were at 11 other sites during the month.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

Well recorded this month, with a peak of 200 on saltmarsh at Long Nanny on 25th (TD). A flock at Chare Ends (Holy Island) peaked at 150 on 19th (IK). 94 were also at Snook on 27th, with lesser numbers noted here on several other dates during the month (ADM *et al.*). Flocks of 30 – 45 were seen at Beal, East Chevington, Long Nanny and Chugdon Wood during the month, with one to 20 at a further 11 sites.



Twite
the Snook Holy Island
Mike Carr on 15th October

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Some large gatherings were recorded, with flocks of 300 seen at Waren Mill caravan park on 5th, Crooked Oak Lane on 29th, with 250 here on 5th (GPK/CGK/IFo). 200 were at Lynemouth on 4th, 190 at Druridge Links on 6th (TB). 135-160 noted at Embleton and Old Hartley. 100 were at Holywell Pond on 23rd (KWY). Four to 80 were observed at a further 14 sites.

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

Three flew over the village at Holy Island on 2nd with two here at Straight Lonnen on 9th and another two in the village, at the School, then flying SW (MJC/ASJ). A single bird was observed at Craster on 14th (BS).

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

Around 120 were watched at Linden Hall on 29th (NFO). 80 were at Ordley on 18th (BNR). 75 flew S at Tynemouth in 90 minutes on morning of 22nd (DRW). 40 were noted at Howick Hall on 6th (PHa/AHa). 11 – 45 were seen at five sites and one to ten at a further 19 during this month.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

192 were observed flying W at Budle Point during eight days from 1st to 8th (CGK/RA). 36 also flew SW at Craster on 22nd (MJC). 27 flew S at East Cramlington LNR on 28th (STH). One to 19 were observed during the month at 38 locations, most involving arrival from E or southward passage. 12 and eight were lingering at Rising Sun C.P. and Druridge Bay C.P. on 25th and 2nd respectively.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

A flock at Druridge Links peaked at 135 on 6th (IDR). 80 were seen at Budle Bay throughout the month (CGK/GPK). 70 + were seen at Monkseaton, St Mary's Wetland and Derwent Reservoir and up to 60 at Druridge and Heaton during the month. Four to 50 were seen at a further 17 sites.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

69 were counted moving S at Newbiggin on the morning of 27th (GB). 45 were seen at Druridge Pools area on 29th, with lesser numbers present on several dates (IDR). 39 flew S at East Cramlington on 28th (STH). 26 did likewise at East Chevington South Pool on 26th (DM *et al.*). 20 also flew S at Heaton on 27th (PCi). One to 19 + were noted at a further 26 sites this month.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

36 were counted at Craster on 22nd and about 35 were seen at Low Cocklaw on 9th (TBr). 18 were part of a mixed finch flock at East Holywell on 6th (MNC). Ten were at Newstead and Felton in the third week and one to eight were found at nine other sites.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

One was seen briefly at the harbour (Holy Island) on 16th (JD).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

42 was a good count at Druridge Links on 14th, with lesser counts made throughout the month (IDR/JF). 15+ were noted at St. Mary's on 16th (MSH/ASJ). 11 were observed at Snook (Holy Island) on 4th (PRM). One to ten were noted at ten further locations.

Lapland bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Eight were seen at North Dunes "excavations" area of Holy Island on 4th. Three birds flew W in this area on 20th (CSa/STH/MJC). A total of four was observed in flight at several sites on Holy Island on 2nd and three seen at Chare Ends on 17th (MJC/ADM/DM *et al.*). Two flew W at Budle Point on 2nd (CGK/ME). Single birds were seen at St. Mary's on 3rd and 16th (AC/ASJ). Singles were also noted at Howick, Boulmer, Druridge and Warkworth Pier, as well as several further sightings at Holy Island (Tbr/IBDa/KDa/BS/IDR/JF).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Five was the peak count this month, made at Ross Links on 25th (GPK). Four were watched flying N along the dunes at Chevington on 15th (MH). Singles were seen at three sites at Holy Island during the month, sightings on two dates at St. Mary's and others were at Druridge Bay, Sugar Sands and Boulmer (JBU/ASJ/MJC/BS *et al.*).

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

The regular sightings at Queen Elizabeth CP, Ashington continued with one on 18th (CDH). There were also two at Bothal Pond on 20th (TF).

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One was involved in a tussle with a Carrion Crow at Juniper on 7th (BNR).

African Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs africana*

A male was photographed on a feeder in a Settlingstones garden on 23rd (BC). It was also seen on 24th and 25th but not subsequently. An unusual record.

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

There were singles at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IDR) and at Big Waters on 25th (GB).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

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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), Helen Snaith (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.

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RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc., is always welcome and very much appreciated.
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Please email Alan Janes on darkchantinggoshawk@yahoo.co.uk if you're interested.

Many thanks,

Alan



A Red-flanked Bluetail
the Straight Lonnen Holy Island
Mike Carr
5th October

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 11

MONTHLY SUMMARY NOVEMBER 2020

4th January 2021



CONTENTS

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	A party of six still at Longhirst on 1st. Also up to five at Holywell on 19th.
Ruddy Shelduck	One or two still present at Derwent Res.
Gadwall	High count of 114 at Linton Ponds on 22nd.
American Wigeon	A drake was seen again at Big Waters on 22nd.
Green-winged Teal	The drake remained at Budle Bay all month.
Scaup	One well inland at Colt Crag Res on 21st.
Smew	Redhead seen flying with Common Scoter north past Seaton Sluice on 21st.
Sooty Shearwater	A late bird past Druridge on 19th.
Red-necked Grebe	Singles past Seaton Sluice and at Ross Back Sands plus two off Holy Island.
Bittern	Single sighting at East Chevington on 5th.
Spoonbill	A very late individual was at Holywell Pond on 9th.
Great White Egret	Two at Hedgeley GP on 11th, singles at Caistron, Branton GP & East Chevington.
Little Egret	Peak count of 17 at Fenham on 4th.
Honey-buzzard	Late record of a juvenile photographed at Swallow Pond on 4th roosted overnight.
Coot	High counts of 190 at QE II CP and 170 at East Chevington.
Avocet	Late record of one at Cresswell Pond on 9th.
Ruff	Up to three at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools plus single at Budle bay.
Purple Sandpiper	Up to 250 at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh all month
Little Stint	Late record of one at Seaton Pt, Boulmer on 6th.
Woodcock	High numbers at Holy Island with 37 counted on 8th.
Spotted Redshank	Singles at Newbiggin, Budle Bay and Castle Island
Greenshank	Up to six at Fenham plus singles at Beal and Budle Bay.
Bonaparte's Gull	Adult at Budle Bay on 27th. Presumed returning bird from recent years.
Little Gull	Singles at East Chevington and Boulmer.
Iceland Gull	Juvenile at Longhoughton Steel on 20th.
Caspian Gull	First-winter at Woodhorn on 1st and then QE II CP on 2nd.
Sandwich Tern	late record of one south past Seaton Sluice on 8th.
Arctic Tern	Late record of single at Budle Bay on 1st.
Little Auk	Only singles seen at St Mary's and North Blyth on 1st.
Swift	Very late record of a juvenile at St Mary's and Seaton Sluice from 14th to 20th.
Hooded Crow	Returning wintering bird at Howick all month.
Shore Lark	One at Newbiggin from 4th to 7th then St Mary's on 7th and 8th. Also one at Ross.
Swallow	Late singles at Cresswell Pond, Holy Island on 8th and East Chevington on 16th.
Cetti's Warbler	Singles at Big Waters and East Chevington.
Siberian Chiffchaff	Single at Druridge Pools from 6th to 8th.
Dusky Warbler	Late migrant at Seaton Pt, Boulmer on 9th and 10th.
Ring Ouzel	Late bird on Holy Island on 8th.
Red-flanked Bluetail	First inland county record with one ringed at Airy Holm Res on 6th.
Whinchat	Very late record of one at Blyth on 6th. Only two days short of latest in 1948
Richard's Pipit	Only county record of year with one at Beal on 2nd.
Buff-bellied Pipit	Another county first with one found at Amble beach on 18th and 19th.
Hawfinch	Up to 13 seen at Abbey Mills, Morpeth from 4th.
Mealy Redpoll	Only record a single at Tynemouth on 4th.
Lapland Bunting	Singles over Budle Pt and on 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 will be via Zoom on 14th January.

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson seaswan@btinternet.com

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

Records of birds belonging to the pale-bellied *hrota* race involved 250 at Fenham Flats on 25th (SVM/AJM), and five N at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 15 at Fenham Flats on 25th (SVM/AVM), five at Beal (DF), four N at Seaton Sluice between 3rd-8th (SSWT) and singles at Boulmer and Newbiggin. Ten un-raced birds were at Boulmer on 27th (AMG/MG).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Variable numbers at Grindon Lough during the month included a peak of 402 on 26th (PRM). Peak counts from other sites were 174 at Big Waters on 15th (GB), 145 at Hauxley Reserve on 4th (HRS), 130 at Yarrow Slake on 6th (MHu), 120 at the Aln Estuary on 17th (JAR), and 70 at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st (PRM). Groups of 28-29 were also at Bothal and Coanwood Ponds, Newcastle Leazes Park and QEII CP, and seven to 11 at Druridge Pools and Shield on the Wall.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

At Cocklawburn, about 100 flew W on 17th (BWG) and 46 N on 5th (MHu). Variable numbers in the Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh area included 1,060 on 2nd, 1,800 on 6th and a peak of about 2,300 on 23rd (DF et al.). About 100 were at Beal on 10th (DF). One to eight were also at Boulmer Haven, Druridge Links, Grindon Lough, QEII CP and Waren Mill. A white individual was noted at Budle Bay during the month (CGK/GPK).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

A total of 270 (in two flocks) flew over Craggside heading towards Castron on 3rd (JD), about 100 flew over Low Cocklaw on 28th (TBr), and about 30 S at Heaton on 21st (PCI). Peak concentrations were 500 at Big Waters on 22nd (GB), 426 roosting at Budle Bay on 10th (DF), 233 at Kimmer Lough on 12th (MH), 190 at Waren Mill on 27th (DGB/RHB), and 134-149 at Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve and Holywell Pond. Parties of 52-88 were also at Plenmeller Common, Sandyford Moor and Yarrow Slake, while 32-44 were at Coanwood Pond and St Mary's Wetland, and two to 12 at/over Bothal Pond, Cramlington and East Holywell.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

At Seaton Sluice, a total of 570 flew N and 3,582 S during the month (a record November count; SSWT), while 500-744 flew S at Boulmer (BS), Cocklawburn (MHu), Druridge Pools (IDR/JF) and Hauxley (HRS) on several dates, and 300-450 N at Cocklawburn, High Heaton and Linden Hall. Large numbers roosted at Budle Bay early in the month, with a peak of 12,000 on the morning of 4th (CGK/GPK/RA et al.) dropping to 2,450 on 10th (DF) and 2,000 by 27th (DGB/RHB). Also at Lindisfarne NNR, about 2,000 flew S at Holy Island Snook on 3rd (ADM) and 1,930 were at Beal on 10th (DF). Away from this area, 2,000 were noted flying W at Widdrington on 17th (IRD), about 2,000 flew into East Chevington from the S on 28th (TRD/JD), 1,720 were at Ulgham on 25th (IRD), 1,200 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 16th (TRD/JD), up to 1,200 regularly over Low Cocklaw (DF), and 956 at Druridge Pools on 2nd (IRD). Groups of 200-500 were at/over Belford, Earsdon, East Holywell, Jesmond Dene, Linton, Lowick, Old Hartley, Seahouses, Tynemouth and West Chevington, and 100-180 at Alnmouth, Amble, Big Waters, Birling Carrs, Cramlington, Ellington, Morpeth, Newton Red House, North Shields, Rothbury and Wideopen. Smaller numbers were at many of the above sites, plus several others during the month, with most along the coastal strip. Further inland, parties of 29-70 were at/over Castron, Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough.



Pink-footed Geese at Backworth
22nd November by Colin Bradshaw

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

Six, first noted in October, were near Longhirst Flash on 1st (TD/ADM/NFO). Five were at East Holywell on 19th (MNC/KWY).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Two flew S at Seaton Sluice on 24th (SJH). Peak counts were 69 at QEII CP on 15th (CDH), 55 at Caistron on 15th (JD), 47 at Big Waters on 7th (DM), 40 at East Chevington on 19th (KWY), 38 at Howdon (CB), and 14-21 at Hauxley Reserve, Killingworth Lake and the Tweed Estuary. Five to seven were at West Ord and Whiteadder Water, and two to three at eight further sites.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A notable 476 flew S at Budle Bay on 2nd-3rd, including 276 on 3rd (CGK/GPK/RA et al.) and a total of 161 S at Seaton Sluice between 1st-23rd was a record November total for the site (SSWT). Southerly movement was also evident at several further sites: totals of 156 at Boulmer between 3rd-26th (JAR/CSa), 42 at St Mary's Island on 3rd and 26th (AC/MSH), 36 at Newbiggin on 6th (AP), ten to 12 at Alnmouth (RPo) and Berwick pier (BWG), and five to nine at Beal, Druridge Links, Howick, Longhoughton and Tynemouth. A party of 14 flew W at Wark (North Tyne) on 5th (per EAW), ten flew E at Airy Holm Reservoir on 6th (IFo), ten flew in off the sea at Druridge on 3rd (TD), and one to six N at Druridge Links and Tynemouth. About 60 were at Goswick Sands on 3rd (DF), 67 (five juveniles) at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (TD), 40 (11 juveniles) at Budle Bay on 17th (MJC), 26 at East Chevington (IRD), and ten to 19 at Beal, Blanchland, the Coquet Estuary, Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene), Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Earsdon and Shortridge Hall. One to eight were also at Bothal Pond, Broomlee Lough, Craggside, Craster, Hauxley Reserve, Low Newton scrape, QEII CP Lake, Shield on the Wall, Warkworth Gut, West Ord and Widdrington Moor Lake. A group of 18 were distantly at sea off Lynemouth power station on 26th (PG).



A Whooper over Tim Dean at East Chevington on 5th November

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 41 flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), one flew S at Spittal Bay on 24th (MHu), and one W at Humshaugh on 12th (SW). At Budle Bay, 520 on 2nd (CGK/GPK) fell to about 175 by 7th (JR) and 60 by 29th (TD). Three to four were at the Blyth Estuary and East Chevington, and singles at Bothal Pond, Boulmer and Druridge Pools, and well inland at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo).

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (CB) and one on 30th (IFo).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A drake was at West Ord on 15th (EHa).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Budle Bay held peaks of 86 on 17th (MJC) and 84 on 28th (DF/CGK). Numbers elsewhere were much more moderate and included 20 at East Chevington on 28th (TRD/JD), 15 at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR/JF), 12 at Hauxley Reserve on 4th (HRS), and tens at Bothal Pond (TF) and Linton Ponds (TF). Three to five were also at Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island, Marden Quarry and St Mary's Wetland, and one to two at Grindon Lough, Holywell and West Allotment Ponds, and Howdon.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Four flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice on 10th (SSWT). Linton Ponds held a peak of 114 on 22nd (TF), 56 were at East Chevington on 17th (MH/AA), 55 at Woodhorn Flashes on 16th (AT), 35 at Marden Quarry on 11th (AC), 30 at Big Waters on 15th (GB), 20-29 at Hedgeley GP and Swallow Pond, and 13-14 at the Blyth Estuary, Holywell Pond and St Mary's Wetland. Five to eight were also at Branton GP, Caistron and Hauxley Reserve, and singles at Druridge Pools and Holy Island 'rocket field'.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

A total of 373 flew N and 42 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 307 N and 31 S on 8th-9th (SSWT), and 130 moved N at Tynemouth on 8th (CB). At Budle Bay, 2,000 were noted on 2nd and 640-900 during the rest of the month (CGK/GPK/JPL et al.). Peak counts elsewhere involved 310 at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo), 276 at Grindon Lough on 13th (PRM), 230 at Branton GP on 27th (TRD/JD), 220 offshore at Alnmouth on 9th (RPo), and 117-190 at Bothal Pond, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools, Linton Ponds, Newstead Flash, New Water Haugh and Woodhorn Flashes. Groups of 60-70 were at Big Waters, Boulmer and Low Cocklaw, and 19-40 at Coanwood Pond, Colt Crag Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve, Havannah NR and Merryshield GP.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

The drake, first noted in October, was reported at Big Waters occasionally until at least 28th (GB/AJJ). What was thought likely to be the same individual was noted at Milkhope on 28th (MP per GB).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

The monthly Seaton Sluice total was 12 N and two S (SSWT). Peak gatherings were 227 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo), 115 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 22nd (IFo), 80 at Boulmer on 16th (JAR), 77 at Broomlee Lough on 29th (PRM), 50-68 at Coanwood and Holywell Ponds, Colt Crag Reservoir, Newcastle Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary, and 30-49 at Bothal, Linton and West Allotment Ponds, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry, Merryshields GP, St Mary's Wetland and Whiteadder Water. Ten to 28 were also at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition Park and West Ord.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

25 were at Fenham Flats on 2nd (RA), six at Budle Bay on 6th and 28th and two there on 4th (CGK/GPK), five flew N at Holy Island Snook on 29th (ADM), four were at East Chevington on 3rd-4th and two to three there occasionally to 30th (TD/IFo et al.), and one at St Mary's Wetland on several dates between 10th-27th (AC/ASJ/MSH et al.).



A Pintail at St. Mary's on 10th November by Alan Jack

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 245 flew N and 39 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Peak counts involved 560 at Budle Bay on 29th (DF), 446 at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (IFo), 350 at Holy Island on 29th (RA), 264 at Grindon Lough on 27th (SJH), 110-141 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, Druridge Pools and Plenneller Common, and 70-80 at Colt Crag Reservoir, off Druridge Links and Gosforth Park NR. Groups of 26-45 were also at Howick Hall, Low Cocklaw, Monks' House Pool, Newstead Flash, St Mary's Wetland and Throckley, and ten to 15 at Alnmouth, Hauxley Reserve and Middle Ord Pond.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

The drake, first noted in October, was at Budle Bay until at least 29th (DF/CGK/GPK et al.).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Bothal Pond attracted a peak of 20 on 1st (TF), ten were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 9th (TRD/JD), and ten at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (CDH). An unusual record involved two at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 9th-10th and one on 11th (GB). Singles were also at Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and Woodhorn Flashes.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 8th (SSWT). Largest concentrations were 67 at Ladyburn Lake on 4th (IFo), 44 at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (CDH), 39 at QEII CP Lake on 15th (CDH), 34 at Castron on 15th (JD), and 20 at Bothal Pond (TD). Ten to 15 were also at Big Waters, Linton Ponds, Merryshields GP and Newcastle Exhibition Park, six to nine at Arcot and Coanwood Pond, and Grindon Lough, and one to three at eight further widespread sites.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Five flew S at Druridge Links on 15th (IDR), and three N at Seaton Sluice on 27th (SSWT). Singles were at Holy Island on 29th (RA) and well inland at Colt Crag Reservoir on 21st (PRM).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A total of 448 flew N and 54 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and one S off Druridge Links. Gatherings involved 104 at Blyth Harbour on 28th (STH), 90 off Ross Back Sands on 29th (MJC/DJC/TW), 48 at Stag Rocks-Budle Point on 28th (MJC), 21-26 at North Shields Fish Quay and Sandy Bay, and 12-17 at the Coquet Estuary and off Seaton Sluice.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), two flew N off Druridge Links on 19th (NFO), and one N at St Mary's on 20th (AC). Four were off East Chevington on 15th (TF), four at North Blyth on 27th-28th (PRC/ASJ/MN), twos off Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu), Druridge Links on 2nd and 30th (NFO), and Holy Island on 29th (RA), and singles off Beadnell, Goswick and Warkworth on single dates.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A monthly total of 1,989 N and 920 S was a record November total for Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Totals of 110 moved N and 36 S at Tynemouth on 3rd and 21st (DLo/DRW) and 62 N and 88 S at Seaton Sluice on 21st-22nd (GB/STH).

A concentration off Druridge-East Chevington all month peaked at about 500 on 1st (IDR et al.), a peak of 500 off Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT), 300 were at Blyth Bay on 13th (MSH), 201 off Cambois on 26th (AT), 100-150 off Cresswell (TRD/JD), Newbiggin (GB), Seaton Sluice (MN) and Warkworth (CSa), and 50-76 at Alnmouth, Cocklawburn and Goswick. Groups of 24-43 were also at Holy Island and Stag Rocks, and ten to 19 off Boulmer, Cullercoats, Howick and Ross Back Sands. An unusual freshwater record involved a duck at Druridge Pools (main pool) on 27th and 29th (PRC/IDR). A group of 160 scoter (sp.) was off Warkworth on 14th (JAR).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

At Seaton Sluice, five flew N and five S during the month (SSWT), and singles N at St Mary's Island on 19th (JBu) and S at Newbiggin on 22nd (GB). A total of 58 was counted from Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC) and a peak of 39 at nearby Stag Rocks on 26th (MJC), while 18 were at Holy Island on 29th (RA) and ten at Goswick on 27th (JBu). Two to three were also at Cocklawburn, Football Hole, Seaton Sluice (Rocky Island) and St Mary's Island, and singles at Beadnell, Budle Bay, Hauxley Reserve, North Blyth and Tynemouth. One, first noted in October, was at Woodhorn Flashes until at least 27th (AP et al.).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A lowly 56 N and seven S was the monthly total at Seaton Sluice (SSWT), five flew N and one S at Tynemouth on 28th (DRW), and two N at Newbiggin on 21st (STH). Peak counts involved 47 at East Chevington north pool on 17th (MH/AA), 42 at New Water Haugh on 29th (MHu), 23 at Castle Island on 11th (AT), and ten to 18 at Bolam and Widdrington Moor Lakes, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Derwent Reservoir, Embleton Bay, Holy Island, Howick, Linton and Swallow Ponds, Longhoughton Steel, Stag Rocks-Budle Point and West Ord. Five to nine were also at Birling Carrs, Bothal Pond, Cambois, Low Newton-Dunstanburgh, Grindon Lough, QEII CP Lake, and the Tweed Estuary, and three to four at Boulmer, Branton GP, Broomlee Lough, Castron, Colt Crag Reservoir, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Killingworth and Ladyburn Lakes, and Sandy Bay. One to two were at four further sites.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' flying N with Common Scoters at Seaton Sluice on 21st was a good sea-watching record (SSWT).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Six flew N and eight S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including seven S on 26th (SSWT), four flew N at Boulmer Haven on 27th (BS), and singles N at Stag Rocks and Tynemouth. Moderate numbers involved peaks of eight at Longhoughton Quarry on 1st (BS), six at Branton GP on 27th (TRD/JD), six at Broomlee Lough on 29th (PRM), and three to five at Berwick Little Beach (TRD/JD), Castle Island (GB), Holy Island (RA/ADM) and Killingworth Lake (LJM). One to two were also at/over Airy Holm Reservoir, East Chevington, Howick, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Wark (N Tyne).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Five flew N at Newbiggin on 21st (STH), three N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and two S at Newbiggin on 22nd (GB). 50 were at Holy Island on 29th (RA), 16 off Druridge Links on 26th (IDR), 12 at the Blyth Estuary on 4th (IFo), ten at Stag Rocks on 27th (MJC), and six to eight at Alnmouth (RPO) and Budle Bay (AJR). Three were at East Chevington, and one to two at Birling Carrs, Cresswell, Druridge Pools and the Tweed Estuary.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Four males and three females were at Knock Shield (Sinderhope) on 1st (CB), two males and four females at Gairshield (Whitley Chapel) on 27th (TWi) and four birds were at Allenheads on 2nd (CB). Singles were at Plenmeller Common, Pithouse Fell (Slaley) and a rare sighting in the Cheviots of a male in Harthope Valley on 4th (TRD/JD).



A Black Grouse at Knock Shiel by Colin Bradhaw on 1st November

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

In the Pennines, 100 were at Allendale Common on 2nd (CB), up to 18 at Plenmeller Common on various dates (PRM/SJH), 15 at Coanwood Common on 30th (SJH) and ten at Rowley Burn on 19th (AJH). In the Cheviots, 18 were at Hedgehope on 4th (IRD), eight in the Harthope Valley also on 4th (TRD/JD), six at Bewick Moor, three at Linhope Spout (Upper Breamish Valley) and three also at Twizell (Sandyford Moor). Away from these two main strongholds 15 were near the "Golf Ball" at Alnwick Moor on 21st (TRD/JD).



A Red Grouse on Alnwick Moor by Tim Dean on 21st November

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

21 were seen at Holywell on 21st (GPK), a covey of 12 were at Great Ryle (Whittingham) on 4th (CW), seven were in the Harthope Valley on 4th (TRD/JD) and six at Plenmeller Common on 7th (SJH). Two were at Ross Back Sands and a single was calling at Alnwick Moor.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Druridge Links continued to provide some decent counts with a peak of 21 on 22nd (IDR/JF). 15 were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) all month (RS), 14 were at Loanend (Horncliffe) on 15th (MHu), 12 at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 1st (TF), a single covey of ten at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 21th (TBr) and peaks of ten at both Cocklawburn and Gairshield (Whitley Chapel). Nine were at Boulmer and between Low Newton - Dunstanburgh whilst eight or fewer were at Allenheads (near Lime Kiln), Big Waters NWT, Blyth Road Fields, Football Hole (Newton), Littlehoughton, Longhoughton, Knock Shield, Maiden's Hall Lake (West Chevington), Snableazes (Longhoughton) and West Ord.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Regular counts were made at Druridge Links with numbers varying between three on 23rd to a peak of 36 on 29th (IDR/JF). 15 were in the Harthope Valley on 4th (TRD/JD), ten were in the wood at Hauxley on 9th (HRS) and four at Ellington Pond on 22nd (IDR). A male with four females visited a Rothbury Garden daily to feed under the bird feeders, becoming so tame that they started pecking on the window when the food ran out! (TRD/JD).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total of 272 (74 N and 198 S) in 61 hours of watching at Seaton Sluice was about average for this month (SSWT). Smaller passage counts of up to 12 birds were made throughout the county on various dates. At Druridge Bay there were regular double figure counts of birds on the sea with numbers varying from three on 22nd (IDR/JF) to at least 50 on 2nd (NFO). Peak counts at other sites included 50 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 25th (CSa), at least 25 at Boulmer on 22nd (BS), 24 between Stag Rocks - Budle Point on 28th (MJC), 21 on the sea at Newbiggin on 21st (STH), 18 at Ross Back Sands on 7th (MJC), 15 in Alnmouth Bay on 22nd (RPO), at least 15 at Budle Point on 28th (CGK), 12 at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 12th (MHu) and ten at Cheswick on 10th (TRD/JD). One to nine were seen at Calot Shad (Tweed estuary), Cambois, Cresswell, Embleton Bay, Football Hole (Newton), Holy Island, Howick Scar Farm, Longhoughton Steel, Spittal Bay (Berwick), St. Mary's Island and Tynemouth Pier.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia Arctica*

Single passage birds, all heading N, were seen at St. Mary's and Church Point (Newbiggin) on 4th (ASJ/TD), Seaton Sluice on 8th (SSWT), Druridge Links on 19th (IDR) and Tynemouth then Church Point (Newbiggin) on 22nd (DRW/GB). Three were on the sea at Middle Skerr (Cocklawburn) on 29th (BWG), two were at Cheswick Beach on 7th (JJo) and singles were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Budle Point, off Chevington Burn, Cullercoats, Ross Back Sands and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

At Seaton Sluice the high monthly total of 17 (seven N, ten S) continued the good autumn for this species (SSWT). Up to four were at Stag Rocks towards the end of the month (MJC), three were at Holy Island on 29th (RA) and two were at both Ross Back Sands on 22nd and 25th (MJC/SVM/AJM) and at East Chevington on 29th (TF). Singles were seen from many other points all along the coast throughout the month, often close inshore.



A one-eyed Great Northern Diver. 17th November on Druridge pool by Peter Tapsell

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Correction - October's report of one seen from Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) during the morning of 13th (IJ), should have read two.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

The Watch Tower at Seaton Sluice noted the first returning bird on 10th with one to two birds regularly seen thereafter (SSWT). A single headed N during two hours of watching at Newbiggin on 21st (STH). Six were at Snab Point cliffs on 21st (GB). Thereafter numbers at other breeding sites started to increase with a return of at least 26 on the sea off Howick cliffs on 28th (BS) and, at Holy Island, 99 were on the Ness End nesting site and a further single bird at the Castle nest site on 29th (ADM).

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*

One flew N very close in, just past the breakers, off Druridge Links on 19th (IDR).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Some good counts were made in the county with peaks of 28 in the Castle Island area of the R. Wansbeck on 29th (STH), 20 at East Chevington on 4th (IFo) and 19 at Hauxley NWT on 4th (HRS). A regular wintering group on the sea at Boulmer comprised five birds on 14th (BS) and five were also at Castron on 15th (JD), Howick Hall Pool on 30th (PHa/AHa) and Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 27th (TBr). Four were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) and Druridge Pools whilst one to three birds were at Annstead Burn (Seahouses), Big Waters NWT, the Blyth estuary, Broomlee Lough, Calot Shad (Tweed estuary), Coanwood Pond, Fenham (N. Northumberland), Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer), Killingworth Lake, Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP), Linton Ponds, Nelly Moss Lake North (Craggside), QE11 Country Park, Stobswood, Wallington, Warkworth, West Allotment Pond, and West Ord.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

The only sighting from the tower at Seaton Sluice was one heading N on 19th (SSWT). Two were at Holy Island on 29th (RA) and one was seen at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC) and 25th (SVM/AJM).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Two flew S at St. Mary's on 27th (ASJ). The peak count came from Chibburn Links (Druridge) with five on the sea on 2nd (NFO) reducing to two by 17th (MH/AA) and a single by the end of the month. Unusual for the time of year, Killingworth Lake still held four birds on 2nd (LJM) reducing to two by 23rd (MSH). Single birds were at Alnmouth Bay, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Cresswell Pond, Fenham (N. Northumberland) and Tynemouth (a scarce record here).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auratus*

Passage sightings were both of single birds, one heading S at Newbiggin on 16th (AP) and one N at Tynemouth on 21st (DRW). Numbers at favoured haunts increased as the winter set in. Counts from Ross Back Sands rose to eight by 29th (MJC/DJC/TW), seven was the peak between Stag Rocks - Budle Point on 28th (MJC) and seven were also at Holy Island by 29th (RA). Up to four were off Longhoughton Steel on 9th (MKi/DL), two were at Cocklawburn on 14th (RA) and single birds were seen with a group of Scoter at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) and at Spittal Bay (Berwick).

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Brief views were gleaned of one in the south east corner of East Chevington NWT on 5th (JD).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

The regular roost at North Blyth staithes peaked at 15 on 10th (STH), eight gathered on the east side of Widdrington Moor Lake on 9th (TRD/JD), eight were on the East Pier at Blyth Harbour on 28th (STH) and seven were at Boulmer on three separate dates (AMG/MG). Five were at Old Hartley, four at Arcot Pond and Hauxley, three at Linton Ponds and two at Monk's House Pool. Singles were seen at Airy Holm Reservoir, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Broomlee Lough, Chollerford, Coanwood Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Park, Howick Hall Pool, Wark (North Tyne) and Whittingham.

A Grey Heron has become a frequent visitor to a Rothbury garden.

Photographed close up from Tim Dean's lounge

20th November



Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Last month's roving "individual" may well have been two birds as they were seen together at Hedgeley Lakes on 11th (IBDa/KDa). Singles were spotted heading S at East Chevington on 4th (MN), at Branton GP on 12th (IBDa/KDa) and during a WeBS count at Caistron on 14th (JD/TRD) – the first ever record for this site.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Numbers in the Lindisfarne NNR area varied from a peak of 17 at Fenham on 4th (RA) to three at Holy Island on 29th (ADM). Six were at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC), four were in Budle Bay on 2nd (AMG/MG) and three were at Branton GP and Castle Island. Twos were at Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Monk's House Pool and Warkworth Gut whilst single birds were seen at Abbey Mill Fields (Morpeth), Bamburgh Beach, the Coquest estuary, Gosforth GC, Gosforth Park NR, Hedgeley Lakes, High Stanners (Morpeth), Mitford, Newbiggin, Newcastle Great Park West Pool, Seahouses GC, Seaton Sluice, St. Aidan's Dunes (Seahouses), St. Mary's, St. Mary's Wetland, Whiteadder Water (Berwick) and Yarrow Slake (R. Tweed estuary). One at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 9th was the observer's first ever record in Hexham after 50 years (AJR/AJH).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers reduced to a trickle with low numbers reported from Seaton Sluice in a monthly total of 108 and none at all after 24th (SSWT). One to ten were reported from several other coastal viewpoints, again none after 24th.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The only potential passage records were four N and 12 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), seven heading N past Boulmer Haven at dusk on 27th (BS) and a single N at Druridge Links on 15th (IDR). Numbers in the Bamburgh/Budle Bay area fluctuated with a peak of 164 counted between Stag Rocks - Budle Point on 28th (MJC). 29 were at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC) and a count of 17 in an evening roost at Blyth Harbour on 16th was the observer's highest count for years only for it to be surpassed the following day with a count of 18 birds including six colour-ringed individuals (STH). One to five were at Cocklawburn, Little Beach (Berwick) and Spittal Bay (Berwick).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The old pier structure at Amble Harbour held a total of 96 on 24th (CSa), 86 were at North Shields Fish Quay on 4th, 66 attended an evening roost at Blyth Harbour on 16th, with 58 there during the day on 28th (STH) and 31 were in Warkworth Harbour on 22nd (SW). 25 were seen between Stag Rocks – Budle Point on 28th (MJC), 24 in the Tweed estuary at Calot Shad on 6th, 15 in Alnmouth Bay on 22nd and a group of 15 were heading E along the R. Tyne at Merryshields GP on 18th. A roost at Budle Bay held 12 birds on 10th and 12 were at Stag Rocks on 26th. Nine or fewer were at Abbeyfield Meadows, Airy Holm Reservoir, Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Broomlee Lough, the Coquet estuary, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and on the R. Tyne at Newcastle Business Park. Four at Linden Hall on 10th included at least three *sinensis* race birds (NFO).

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

A juvenile was photographed on 4th soaring with several Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo* at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) and roosted overnight in the trees nr the visitor centre (ASJ *per* MM). It was also seen to fly S in the morning of 5th (ASJ *per* PF).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Holy Island on 8th (MJC), Gosforth Park on 19th (DLo) and at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 27th (TBr). Single birds were reported at 27 sites including a male which flew out of a hedge in the observer's garden and caught a live House Mouse *Mus domesticus* and proceeded to eat it on the garden fence at Northburn (Cramlington) (LJM).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

A male and a female were displaying near Alnwick on 21st (TRD/JD) and single birds were at Preston Hall on 4th (JPL), Barhaugh Fell on 12th (SJH), Caistron on 14th (TRD/JD), an adult male was at a confidential site in the North of the County on 16th (MH) and a bird was noted at Whittingham on 21st (CW).

Harrier sp

A bird was quartering a fell at 16:10h in fading light (SJH).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Three birds, an adult male, a 2nd year male and a cream crown, were at East Chevington on 4th (MN) and one or two birds were seen there on several dates. A red wing-tagged bird was at Linton Pond on 1st (TF) and other single birds were at Druridge Pools, Linton Lane, Warkworth Lane (Ellington) and Widdrington Moor Lake.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

A male flew W over the wetland at St Mary's Island on 10th (JBU/AC) and ringtails were at two confidential inland sites on 13th and 16th (SJH/MH) and a male was at another inland site on 26th (TWi)

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Four birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 13th and two birds were there on 9th, two birds were also at Kiln Pit Hill on 12th, near Whittonstall on 18th, Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 20th and 22nd (all IFo). Single birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir (near Shotleyfield), Blanchland, Crooked Oak Lane, Pithouse Fell (Slaley), Snods Edge and Spring House (Slaley).

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

On 4th a probable flew S over the observer's garden at High Heaton (Newcastle) (PCI).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were seen in a spiral at Sinderhope (Allendale) on 3rd (CB). Three birds were noted at Ninebanks (CB) and Prestwick Carr (IK) on 3rd, Barhaugh Fell on 12th (SJH), West of Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 24th (MKi) and at Plenmeller Common on 26th (PRM). One to two birds were at over 24 sites during the Month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Five birds were at East Chevington on 6th (IRD) and four birds were there on 3rd & 22nd (IDR/SW). Two birds were at Gosforth Park NR on 3rd and 5th (MN/KWY), St Mary's Wetland on 3rd (MSH/AC), East Chevington on 4th (IFo) and 15th (TF), Prestwick Carr (IK) and Druridge Pools (IDR) on 10th. Single birds were at 13 sites including the returning bird from last winter at Northumberland Park (North Shields) from the 1st (MNC *et al*).



A photogenic Water Rail
Northumberland Park
13th November by Duncan Watson

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

The highest count this Month was 27 birds at QEII CP Lake on 15th (CDH), followed by 21 at Hauxley NWT on 4th (HRS) and 20 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 11th (GB). 14 birds were noted at QEII CP Lake on 2nd (LJM) and 10 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 22nd (CDH) and at Tyneview Park Benton (Newcastle) on 30th (CDH). One to nine birds were at ten sites during the month.

Coot *Fulica atra*

The highest counts were 190 birds were at QEII CP Lake on 15th (CDH). 170 were at East Chevington on 19th (KWY) and 110 were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo). Other high site counts included 72 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 2nd (LJM), 42 at Woodhorn Flashes on 16th (MSH), and 41 at Big Waters NWT on 15th (GB), 32 at Stobswood on 27th (PRo), and 31 at Linton Ponds on 15th (CDH). One to fourteen birds were also seen at Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

The largest flocks were at St Mary's Island, with 175 at the high tide roost on 30th (ASJ), and at Budle Bay, with 140 on 28th (CGK). There were 84 at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu) and 63 at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 19th (AP). Longhoughton Steel had 48 on 26th (MKi) and Howick had 46 on 29th (JAR). There were 40 on the beach at dusk at Druridge Links on 19th (IDR) and 31 at Birling Carrs, Warkworth on 18th (MKi). Numbers below ten were recorded at Buston Links (Alnmouth), Amble dunes, Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer), Hauxley shore and Derwent Reservoir..

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A single very late individual (the same as seen at Holy Island on 21st October?) was at Cresswell Pond on 9th (TRD/JD).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Cresswell Pond and Budle Bay had the largest flocks, with 750 on 3rd (TD) and 700 on 4th (CGK/GPK) respectively. There were 615 at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IDR/JF), 600 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo) and 600 at Grindon Lough on 5th (SJH). St Mary's Island had 520 on 27th (ASJ) and Seaton Sluice recorded 493 (15N, 478S) during the month, with 428S between 10th and 14th (SSWT). There were 460 at the Coquet estuary on 6th (RPo), 310 at Cocklawburn on 5th (MHu), 300 at East Holywell, Whitley Bay on 20th (MSH), and 300 at Widdrington Moor on 25th (IRD). Boulmer had 280 on 11th (JAR), New Water Haugh on the Tweed had 260 on 15th (MHu), East Chevington had 250 on 4th (MN) and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had 225 on 26th (TD). There were flocks of 144 at East Hartford on 4th (LJM), 120 flying E of Big Waters NWT on 15th (GB), 110 at Middlemoor, North Charlton on 16th (MH) and 100 at Prestwick Carr on 2nd (IK). Smaller flocks were recorded at Warkworth Gut, Rowley Burn (Hexhamshire), High Heaton (Newcastle) and Hauxley NWT. Eight were at Arcot Manor (Cramlington) on 5th (DM) and a single bird was briefly at Tynemouth on 28th (DRW).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

There were an estimated 4000 birds in flight over Beal sands on 10th (DF). There were 2600 at the Coquet estuary on 17th (RPo) and 1900 at St Mary's Island on 2nd (ASJ). Amble Braid had 800 on 9th (TRD/JD), and Grindon Lough and Blyth Links had flocks of 700 on 5th (SJH) and 23rd (MN) respectively. There were flocks of 600 at Budle Bay on 10th (TRD/JD), Ross on 22nd (TRD/JD), and Boulmer on 25th (AMG/MG). Alnmouth had 550 on 6th (JAR), Seaton Sluice had 500 on 25th (MSH), and Longhoughton Steel had 500 on 26th (MKi). There were 400 over Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo), 350 at Middlemoor, North Charlton on 16th (MH) and 320 in the field in front of Druridge Farm on 22nd (IDR/JF). Widdrington Moor had 230 on 28th (IRD) and Low Newton scrape had 200 on 24th (NNBC, WMB, JPL). There were 140 at Broomlee Lough on 29th (PRM) and 100 flying E of Big Waters NWT on 15th (GB). Flocks of 50 to 20 were reported from Morpeth, the Town Moor (Newcastle), Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Cullercoats and East Holywell (Whitley Bay). Smaller numbers were at the Football Hole (Newton), Alnwick Moor and Rowley Burn (Hexhamshire), with a single at Linden Hall (Longhorsley).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The largest number of birds reported was 110 at the high tide roost at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK). There were 41 at Seaton Point, Boulmer on 11th (BS) and 35 at Birling Carrs, Warkworth on 22nd (RPo). Howick had 17 on 29th (JAR), Beacon Point, Newbiggin had eight on 21st (AP), and there were five at Amble on 21st (GB). Singles were at Little Beach (Berwick), Cocklawburn, Long Nanny (Newton), the Blyth estuary and Low Newton beach.



A Grey Plover on Boulmer shore
Colin Bradshaw on 29th Novemebr

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

The highest count came from Budle Bay, with 334 on 18th (DF). There were 53 at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 13th (AP), 48 on Ferguson's Roof, Blyth Harbour on 16th (STH), 46 at the burn mouth at Chevington on 12th (AB/LB) and 41 on the beach at Druridge Links on 14th (IDR/JF). Lower numbers were recorded at Annstead (Seahouses), Warkworth Gut, Cocklawburn and Boulmer..

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Longhoughton Steel had the largest flock, with 390 on 22nd (BS). There were 250 at Warren Mill on 27th (DGB/RHB), 190 at St Mary's Island on 27th (ASJ) and 110 at Cresswell on 29th (CB). 80 were roosting at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 20th (AP). Cocklawburn had 76 on 5th (MHu), Druridge Pools had 74 on 30th (IRD) and Caistron had 70 on 14th (TRD/JD). There were 65 at Warkworth Gut on 14th (JAR), 63 in a flooded field at Throckley on the Tyne on 25th (AA), and 60 at Howdiemont Sands, Boulmer on 25th (IDR). Buston Links, Alnmouth had 58 on 5th (IDR/TAC), Birling Northfield Farm had 52 on 10th (RPo), and Woodhorn flashes and East Chevington had 47 on 1st (AP) and 4th (MN) respectively. There were 45 at Howick on 10th (JAR) and 32 at Whiteadder Water, Berwick on 27th (TBr). Numbers below 20 were reported from Hauxley NWT, the Blyth estuary, Amble dunes and Scotswood (Newcastle), with singles at Elswick (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Castle Island (Wansbeck estuary) and Big Waters NWT.



Curlews at Hartley by Iain Johnstone

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

By far the largest flock was at Beal, with 800 on 21st (DF). There were 18 at Boulmer on 11th (JAR), 15 at Longhoughton Steel on 29th (CB), and 12 offshore at Rumbling Kern at Howick on 1st (TRD/JD). Three birds were noted at the Coquet estuary, Hauxley, Amble dunes and Budle Bay, and there were singles at Newbiggin and the Blyth estuary.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Budle Bay had a maximum of eight on 17th (MJC) and two were at Holy Island on 7th (RA).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Reports from the Boulmer area varied from five on 20th to 150 on 29th (CB/JAR/JD/TRD). Counts came from the length of the coastline, with 114 feeding at Sandy Bay (Newbiggin) on 6th (STH), 105 at St Mary's Island on 27th (ASJ), 85 being the highest count made at Stag Rocks on 16th (DF), 55 at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK), 40+ at Whitley Bay beach on 7th (MSH), 36 at Annstead (Seahouses) on 12th (DF) and 30 at both Berwick Little Beach on 12th and Amble Dunes on 19th (TRD/JD/IDR/JF). Three to 20 were reported from Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Cocklawburn, Howick, and Newbiggin.



A Turnstone at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 13th November

Knot *Calidris canutus*

The favoured sites of Lindisfarne NNR held the highest numbers with a minimum of 600 at Beal on 21st (DF), at least 370 at Budle Bay on 30th (DF) and 350 at Ross Back Sands on 25th (SVM/AJM). Lower numbers were reported from these sites on other dates during the month. Other than Lindisfarne NNR, the only notable concentration was in the River Coquet estuary/Amble/Birling Carrs area. 47 were at the River Coquet Estuary on 23rd (CSa), 42 were seen Birling Carrs on 18th (RPO), and 25 at Amble Braid on 9th (JD/TRD). Other counts came from Longhoughton Steel where 19 were counted on 22nd (BS), Seaton Sluice where 18 were on the rocks below the watchtower on 19th (SSWT) and Cresswell Pond, which attracted 12 on 9th (JD/TRD). One-nine were seen at the River Blyth Estuary and Boulmer.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Few birds remained this month with three at Druridge Pools on 13th reducing to one on 29th (IDR). Two were with Lapwings at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (TD) with a single at Budle Bay on 7th (AJR).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Newbiggin and Boulmer remained the favoured haunts again this month, with the maximum count at Newbiggin being 140 in the bay on 4th (IFo) but only 20 seen at Church Point on 22nd (GB). A bird at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) was washed into the sea on 13th but managed to get back to shore (PG). At Boulmer, birds were reported up to the 16th when the maximum count was made, which was 120 (JAR). Elsewhere, 56 were at St Mary's Island on 30th (ASJ), 51 at Druridge Bay beach on 26th (IDR), 41 were counted at Holy Island on 29th (ADM), 32 were seen at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu) and a minimum of 30 were present at Whitley Bay on 7th (MSH). At Birling Carrs (Warkworth), 24 were seen on 7th declining to two by 18th (RPO). Other counts were 18 at Alnmouth on 6th and ten at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 21st. One to nine were reported from Amble, Berwick Little Beach, East Chevington and Hauxley.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Numbers increased from last month at Budle Bay, with a high of 520 counted on 11th declining to 310 by 30th (DF/CGK). Notable counts from other sites were, 200 between Seaton and Longhoughton, on 29th (CB), 160 at the River Coquet Estuary on 9th (CSa), 136 at nearby Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 22nd (RPO), 123 at the River Blyth Estuary on 16th (LJM), 89 at Warkworth on 22nd (SW) and 62 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 17th (AP). Other double figures counts were 41 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 13th and 18 at St Mary's Island on 28th. One to eight were at Amble dunes, Berwick Little Beach (*alpina* race), Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, and Low Newton.



A 'northern' long billed *Alpina* race Dunlin
Berwick
12th November
Tim Dean

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) was well populated with a maximum of 200 counted on 16th (DF) and at least 200 between there at Budle Point on 28th (MJC). Much smaller concentrations were noted at other locations with the highest counts being, 45 at Low Newton on 15th (CB), 28 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 20th (AP), 19 at Birling Carrs on 4th and nearby at Amble on 24th (CSa) and also at St Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ). Other counts in double figures were made at Tynemouth, with 15 seen on 1st, Boulmer, with a minimum of 14 on 11th, Amble dunes/Wellhaugh Point, with 14 on 19th and Holy Island with ten on 29th. One to eight were seen at Berwick Little Beach, Cocklawburn, Cullercoats, Hauxley beach, Howick, Seaton Sluice, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Whitley Bay.



A Purple Sandpiper at St. Mary's

10th November

Jack Bucknall

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

A single bird was seen at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 6th (MKi).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

A very obvious and notable arrival of birds, seen the length of the coastline and at some inland localities, occurred during the whole of the month. Sightings are detailed in the table at end of bulletin and give a full picture of the influx;

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

The six birds in a wet field near Arcot Pond remained from last month and were seen on 5th (STH). Also in the south east of the area, four birds were at each of Big Waters NWT and Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 15th (GB/MJC), a maximum of three were seen at St Mary's Wetland on 25th (ASJ) and two were at West Hartford on 8th (STH). Singles were reported from Hedgehope on 4th, Holy Island on 8th, Arcot Pond on 13th, East Chevington on 15th, Fen Letch (Middle Stobswood) on 26th and Stobswood on 28th.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The highest numbers were seen at West Hartford where 31 were present on 8th (STH), St Mary's Wetland where 25+ were seen on 12th (MSH), Cresswell Pond where 21 had gathered on 9th (TRD/JD) and Arcot Pond where 20 were counted on 4th (DM). Double figure counts came from Howdon with 13 on 28th (CB), a wet field near Arcot Pond with 11 on 5th (STH), Big Waters with 11 on 15th (GB) and Bothal Pond with 11 on 22nd (TF). One-seven were reported from Alnmouth, Arcot Lane Flash, Boulmer, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Gosforth Park, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Hauxley, Holy Island, Shotleyfield, Stobswood, The Loddem and Tynemouth ('in-off').



A Snipe at Druridge Bay by Peter Tapsell on 10th November

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at Hedgeley GP on 11th (IBDa/KDa) and singles were seen at Big Waters NWT on 4th (ASJ) and at Branton GP on 10th (IBDa/KDa).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

The highest numbers were reported mainly during the first week with much lower numbers reported during the remainder of the month. The highest count was made at Warkworth Gut where 280 were present on 2nd (JAR). At Sandy Bay (Newbiggin), 172 were feeding on 6th (STH), 163 were recorded at St Mary's Island on 9th (KWY) and the peak count at Budle Bay was 162 on 5th (DF), although relatively low numbers were reported during the rest of the month with a high of 25 on 28th (CGK/GPK). At The River Blyth Estuary, the maximum count was reached on 16th with 89 reported (LJM), the River Coquet area produced a count of 76 on 25th (MKi) and the maximum reported from the Druridge Pools and Links area was 57 on 23rd with fluctuating numbers there on other dates during the month (IDR). At Boulmer, 52 were present on 3rd with numbers declining to 17 by 24th (MKi). Other counts were 24 at Newton scrape on 21st (TD), 20 at Hauxley NWT on 4th (HRS) and 15 at Amble dunes on 19th (IDR/JF). One to five were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Howdiemont Sands (Boulmer) and Howick.

October correction 410 reported at Budle Bay on 14th should read "118".

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A single was reported at Newbiggin on 1st, 7th and 16th and at nearby Castle Island on 14th (AT/NFO/PRC/AP/GB). This probably being the same bird reported in the same area last month. Another was at Budle Bay from 1st-4th (CGK/GPK/DF/AMG/MG).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

All sightings were made at Lindisfarne NNR. Six were at Fenham on 4th (RA), one was at Budle Bay from 1st-4th (CGK/GPK), and one was reported from Beal from 3rd-21st (DF).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Very light movement N was noted at Seaton Sluice on 14th and 28th (SSWT), with 42 N offshore from Druridge Links on 19th (IDR) and 36 S at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ). Very few records came from elsewhere.

Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

One lucky observer recorded an adult, a very rare visitor, at Budle Bay on 27th (MJC), very possibly a returning bird which has been recorded at this time of year almost annually since 2013 at Bamburgh and Farne Islands.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

A flock of 290 followed the plough in a High Buston field on 4th (MKi) and smaller groups of 100-200 were seen at Arcot Manor (Cramlington) (DM), Killingworth Lake (LJM), the QE II CP Lake (CDH) and the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) (DM). Many counts throughout at Druridge Pools recorded up to 175 with an average of around 50-60 (IDR) and groups of 25-60 were at Arcot Pond, Amble, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, High Heaton, Howick, Jesmond, Leazes Park and Seahouses. Ringed birds from Denmark and Norway were seen at High Heaton (LMi), and a Polish bird was at Stag Rocks (AMG/MG).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Unusually late immature birds, possibly the same individual, were seen at Boulmer on 21st (BS), East Chevington on 28th (TRD/JD) and Druridge Bay on 30th (NFO).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Up to 30 were seen regularly coming to food at Quarry Cottage, Newbiggin throughout (RS) and another record from Newbiggin was 26 on 10th (STH). Elsewhere, apart from five at Longhoughton (BS), all other sightings comprised one or two at widespread coastal localities between Goswick-Druridge Bay and inland at Arcot Pond, Earsdon, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holywell Pond and Linton Lane.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Widely reported with by far the largest count of 4,000 at Budle Point on 2nd (CGK). Smaller gatherings of ca.600 were at Amble Braid, the Coquet Estuary, offshore at Druridge Links and Mickley Square, 400 at Derwent Reservoir, 200 at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) and 100+ at Grindon Lough. Other localities where 20-50 were recorded comprised Big Waters, Colt Crag Reservoir and High Heaton with single figure counts from Arcot Pond, Cramlington, Jesmond and the River Tyne at Newcastle Business Park.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The largest counts were 166 at Castle Island (AT) and 100 at Spital Point (Newbiggin). Gatherings in Budle Bay on dates throughout ranged from 46-84 which included birds of all ages with the majority being adults (DF) and at Druridge Pools numbers ranged up to 45 (IDR). Boulmer and the Coquet Estuary held 20-25 and one or two were elsewhere at Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Howick and the River Tyne at Newcastle Business Park. A 1st-winter bird seen in Blyth Harbour had been ringed, Black JJ611, in Alesund, Norway in late June this year (STH).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

The only sighting was a 1st-winter bird at Longhoughton Steel on 20th (BS/TRD/JD).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argentatus*

Three-figure counts were 325 in Budle Bay (DF), 300 in the Coquet Estuary (CSa), 200 in the Blyth Estuary (IFo) and 157 at Big Waters (GB). Smaller gatherings comprised 82 on the River Tyne (Elswick-Newcastle Business Park), 61 in Jesmond Dene, 10-30 at Druridge Pools, Howick and Seahouses and one to five at Alnmouth, Buston Links and Grindon Lough.

***Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

A 1st-winter bird was on Woodhorn Road pool on 1st (AP) and, almost certainly the same individual, was at the nearby QE II CP Lake on 2nd (MJC)

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Very low numbers remained with two seen at Derwent Reservoir on 1st reducing to one, recorded there occasionally up to 18th (IFo) and also two at Grindon Lough on 5th.(SJH). Beyond that date, single birds were also at Big Waters, Brandon GP, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, North Shields Fish Quay and on the Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

A very late bird flew S at Seaton Sluice on 8th, the first November record there since 2015 (SSWT)

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

A 1st-winter bird was at Budle Bay on 1st which, interestingly, flew off high W (CGK/GPK).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Two flew N at Boulmer on 11th (BS) and an immature flew S offshore from Druridge Links on 15th (IDR)

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

One lingered offshore at Boulmer on 14th (BS).

Auk *sp* (Guillemot/Razorbill)

On 19th at Seaton Sluice, 780 flew N and three S in five hours and on 30th, 320 moved S in two hours (SSWT). Elsewhere on 19th, 200 were seen moving N offshore from Druridge Links (IDR) and 123 flew N at Stag Rocks (DF). At Ross Back Sands on 22nd, 40 were counted (MJC) and a similar number were at Stag Rocks on 27th (MJC).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Single birds were seen on 20th, moving N at North Blyth (PRC) and St Mary's Island (AC).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

On 27th, 65 were seen between Stag Rocks-Budle Point (MJC) and counts of 10-30 came from Alnmouth Bay, Boulmer, Low Newton-Dunstanburgh, Newbiggin and Ross Back Sands from 19th-22nd. Up to eight were recorded at eight other coastal localities from Berwick-Tynemouth Pier on various dates throughout



A Guillemot just off St. Mary's island promenade
by Mike Potts on 13th November

Razorbill *Alca torda*

On 27th, 25 were recorded between Stag Rocks-Budle Point (MJC) with 13 off Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC). Other counts of one to seven came from five widespread coastal localities, all in the second half of the month.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

A gathering on the conical roof of Kingston Park Shopping Centre peaked at 480 on 30th with over 300 there on 9th & 16th and 210 on 23rd (AHB). 167 were at Old Eldon Square on 2nd and 164 at Leazes Park on the same date (DM), 135 at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 22nd (IFo) and 100 at Blyth Town Centre on 26th (RS). On 2nd 86 were at Haymarket (Newcastle) and 80 at Hexham on 19th with three to 14 at three other locations.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

At dusk 96 flew in to roost at Howdon on 8th (CB), 86 in stubble near Kiln Pit Hill on 3rd, 14 at Crooked Oak Lane on the same date (IFo) and 12 at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 15th with one to five at five other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

A high count of 250 was made at Crooked Oak Lane on 8th (IFo), around 230 on Brussel Sprouts at Murton Craggs on 15th (MHu), 160 at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 27th (TBr) and 80 SW over Chapel House Estate (Newcastle) on 2nd (MH). The peak count at Druridge Pools and links was 14 on 29th with six at Ellington Colliery on 30th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

There were good counts of 21 at Wark (N.Tyne) on 20th and 20 at West Moor on 23rd with 16 there on 8th (PRM/NFO) whilst declines at Berwick Hill with 6 on 11th and seven at Ogle on 26th compared to 12 and 13 in November 2019 (AHB). Up to eight were at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) during the month with seven at Low Steads (Boulmer) on 25th and one to three at three other locations.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Three were at Derwent Reservoir on 29th with two there on 28th and singles on 2nd and 25th (IFo). Two were at Druridge Pools on 2nd and East Chevington on 2nd and 16th with two at Seaton Point Boulmer on 9th (IRD/BS). Singles were at East Chevington and Druridge on five other dates and at Longhoughton regularly, Nunwick on 5th, Branton on 16th, Brocolitia on 26th and Holy Island on 29th. One road casualty occurred at Hebron (near Morpeth) on 22nd.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two males at Havannah NR and a female further away on 8th (GB), two heard throughout the month at Howick & Longhoughton (JAR/BS), a pair at Wark (N.Tyne) on 6th (EAW) and possibly two at Fulbeck (Morpeth) regularly (TD). Singles called regularly at Rothbury and Waren Mill (Bamburgh) and Jesmond Dene with one roosting in the same tree at Heaton Park (Newcastle) on six dates from 2nd to 28th. Singles were also at six other widely spread localities.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

The territorial male sang at Shiremoor from 28th (CGK) and one was at Druridge Farm on 3rd (TD).

Long -eared Owl *Asio otus*

One roosted at Backworth on several dates (CGK/GPK) and one flew over the A68 at Minsteracres on 10th (PRM).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

On 3rd two were at Allendale Common (CB) with singles 'in-off' at Beacon Point (Newbiggin-by-the-Sea) on 4th (AP), Brocolitia on 19th (PRM), Alnwick Moor on 21st (TRD/JD) and Quarry House Moor on 26th (MH).



A Short-eared Owl on Allendale Common. 3rd November by Colin Bradshaw

Swift *Apus apus*

A juvenile was around St Mary's Island from 14th until 20th (SSWT *et al*).



The late Swift at St Mary's on 17th November by Alan Jack

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at Stanners (Morpeth) on 12th with a single there on 8th (ADMc) and a male and female at Boulmer on 21st (BS). Singles were regularly at Alnmouth, Budle Bay, Borough Woods and Scotch Gill (Morpeth), Tynemouth, Wark and at 18 other widely spread localities.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

On 7th three were at Wark (N.Tyne) (PRM) with two at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 5th (MJC), at Holy Island on 8th (ADM/AH) and at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 20th (IFo). Singles were regularly at Hauxley, Heaton Park (Newcastle), Holy Island, West Denton (Newcastle) and Valley Park (Cramlington) and at 12 other locations.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Two were at Blanchland on 20th (MJC) and a single at Tarsset Burn (Sidwood) on 8th (SW).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Five birds were observed between Low Newton and Dunstanburgh on 21st (MJC); four birds were at Holy Island on 3rd (ADM) and at Allendale Common also on 3rd (CB). Three birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo). One to two birds were noted at 29 sites.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Two birds flew over the road together at Widehope on 1st (TRD/JD) and two juvenile females were on Holy Island on 8th (MJC/ADM). Single birds were on or near the coast at Beal Salt marsh (Lindisfarne), Boulmer, Fenham, Goswick, Holy Island, Howick, Low Newton, Seaton Point, and (Boulmer) and at St Mary's Island. Inland birds were at Alnwick Moor and Humshaugh.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two adult birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th and 9th (IFo) and two birds flew N interacting at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT). Single birds were seen at on or near the coast at Boulmer, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, Earsdon, Elwick, Fenham, Foxton Bends (Alnmouth), Holy Island, Howdon, Lynemouth, Old Hartley, Tynemouth and Widdrington Moor Lake. Inland birds were noted at Alnwick Moor, Berwick Hill (Blagdon), Corby's Crag, High Heaton (Newcastle), Humshaugh and Plenmeller.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

There were large gatherings at Gosforth Subsidence Pond of 23 on 14th and 16 on 3rd (MJC), 20 at Moorside Allotments (Fenham Newcastle) on 17th (LAR), nine east over High Heaton (Newcastle) at dusk on 4th and seven at Walker Park on 7th. One to six were regularly in the Heaton area with six at North Shields on 2nd and 5th and Jesmond Dene (Newcastle) on 7th. Singles were at Jesmond Dene and East Ord (Berwick).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On 5th six were at Gosforth Park NR (KWY), four the peak at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 16th & 29th being noted daily there (NFO). Three were at Arcot Hall on 7th and Caistron on 15th (DM/JD) with two at ten locations and singles at a further 13.

A Jay

Rising Sun

Alan Jack

6th November

Magpie *Pica pica*

A high count of 13 fed in a stubble field at Mickley Square on 25th (DLe), with five at Howick Scar Farm on 16th and a peak of four at Druridge Pools and Links on 10th with one to three there regularly (IDR). Four were at Wallsend GC on 21st and singles at Ellington and Cramlington where it flew off with a live House Martin.



Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost gathering of 3000 was at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 15th (MJC), 2000 at the Loddam on 23rd with 200 there on 16th (SW) and around 500 at Lambley Mineral Water Treatment Reedbed on 12th (SJH). 200 were at Lincoln Hill on 10th 80 at Knock Shield on 3rd and 65 at Howdon on 28th and Ellington Colliery on 30th. One to 18 were at three other locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

On 3rd 180 were in a stubble field at Howick (JAR), 70 at Ulgham on 25th (IRD), 52 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo) with 48 at Buston Links (Alnmouth) on 12th and 15 at Druridge Links on 29th (IDR/TAC/JF).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

A large count for St Mary's Island was of 70+ on 3rd (MSH/AC), 64 at East Hartford on 1st (LJM) with a peak of 26 at Druridge Pools and links on 29th two to 19 being there on many other dates (IDR/JF). 18 were at Town Moor (Newcastle) on 11th with one to five at five other locations.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Present all month at Howick with records from 14th to 18th (TF/MJC/PRC).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Four was the high count at Harthope Valley on 4th and Craggside (Rothbury) on 23rd (TRD/JD/IRD). Two were at Goswick on 6th, Plenmellor Common E. on 19th, Harthope Valley on 22nd, Ravens Crag (R. Alwin) on 22nd, Dunstanburgh Castle and Fen Letch (nr Middle Sobswood) on 26th and Coanwood Common on 30th. Singles were at a further six locations.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

There were high counts from ringing sessions on Corbridge Common with 29 (eight new, 21 retrapped) on 28th and 22 (eight new, 14 retrapped) on 7th (DLe) with three ringed at Hauxley on 9th and one on 10th (HRS). Five were at Gosforth Park on 19th (DLo) and four at Ellington Dene on 30th with three at Alnmouth Village on 5th and White House Farm (Berwick) on 29th. One to two were at six other locations.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

A walk at Benridge (Morpeth) on 7th found three (IRD) with two at Abbey Mill Fields (Morpeth) on 8th (ADMc) and singles there and at three other locations nearby regularly during the month. Two were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 9th and 14th and at Newton Red House on 19th with singles at Linden Hall regularly and a further three locations.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Three were at Prestwick Carr on 10th (IK) with two were there on the same date and at Linden Hall on three dates during the month (NFO). Singles were at these locations and an encouraging 18 other widespread localities.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

There was a peak count of 11 at Druridge Pools and Links on 8th and one to nine there on many other dates in the month (IRD/JF) with nine (3 ringed) at Hauxley on 9th, at Ellington Dene on 30th and five at Ellington Pond on 22nd. One to two were at three other locations.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Five (one ringed) were at Hauxley on 9th (HRS), five at Ellington Dene on 30th with four the high count at Druridge Pools & Links on 17th and one to three there on many other dates and at two other locations (IDR/JF/TAC).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Set aside / stubble attracted 93 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 4th with 37 between Beacon Lane and Arcot Manor on 5th (STH/DM), 40 at Goswick on 6th (MJC) and light passage west at Budle Point of 30 on 3rd (CGK). More than ten were at Old Hartley on 28th (MSH) with eight at St Mary's Island on 6th (ASJ) and one to six at nine other locations.

Shore Lark *Elemophila alpestris*

One was at Newbiggin from 4th to 7th viewed by many although finder not identified and possibly re-found on 8th at St Mary's Island (JBu/ASJ) with one found at Ross Back Sands on 7th (MJC).



The Newbiggin Shore Lark on 7th November by Alan Jack

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

On 1st one flew S over Cresswell Dunes (ADMc) with one around Gertude Jekyll Garden at Holy Island on 8th (ADM) and flying S along beach at East Chevington on 16th (TRD/JD).

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Single birds were heard during the month at East Chevington (TD, AT), mostly in the vicinity of the North Pool (TRD/JD, MH/AA, TF), and two were reported on 27th (CSa). There was also one heard at Big Waters NWT (PG, TD) and reported regularly all month (AJJ/GB).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Smaller flocks were reported this month, with the largest number being 26 observed leaving their roost in laurels at Prudhoe on 23rd (DLe). Ellington Dene (IDR) and Howick Hall (PHa/AHa) both had 25 on 30th and Druridge Pools had a maximum count of 24 on 11th (IDR). There were 21 in two flocks at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo). Wark on the North Tyne had 20 on 1st (PRM), as did Gosforth Park, Newcastle on 19th (DLo). Hauxley NWT recorded 15 on 4th, with one ringed on 9th (HRS). Marden Quarry, Whitley Bay had 14 on 15th (KWY). 12 were at Yearle throughout the month (DGB/RHB) and there were also 12 at Southfield Green, Cramlington on 1st (DM) and at Humshaugh on 9th (SW). Parties of ten were reported from Hexham, Shotleyfield, Lambley, Grindon Lough, East Chevington and Park Wood (Bothal).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Hauxley RS ringed two birds on 9th, of which one was a Siberian *P. c. tristis*, and another two on 10th (HRS). There were three at Northumberland Park, North Shields on 13th (DRW) and two near the burn mouth at Lynemouth on 10th (MN). Singles were reported from Fenham (north Northumberland), Stocksfield, Druridge Pools, Tynemouth and Whiteadder Water (Berwick), with birds still being present at Druridge Pools (NFO) and Amble Braid (CSa) on 30th.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One found at Seaton Point, Boulmer by Daniel Langston on 9th was still present there on 10th (MKi).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

At Benton, Newcastle a male and female were observed feeding and then flying off together on 27th (MP). A female was at Jesmond Dene, Newcastle on 14th (LMi) and a male was there on 23rd and 28th (PCI).

Singles were reported at Derwent Reservoir, Holy Island, Tynemouth and Howick Hall, with a female bird killed by flying into a window at Hexham on 26th (AJR).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

A single bird was at Druridge Pools between 1st and 4th (IDR/JF, TD).



The Lesser Whitethroat at Druridge Pools by Peter Tapsell on 3rd November

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Much smaller numbers were recorded than last month's totals, with the maximum being ten at Howick Hall on 16th (PHa/AHa) and five at Flagstaff Park, Berwick on 2nd (MHu). Druridge Pools had three on 9th (IDR), as did Dipton Mill Wood, Hexham on 13th (AJH). Two birds were ringed at Hauxley, one on 9th and one on 10th (HRS). Two were at Southfield Lea (Cramlington), Colt Crag Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Ellington Dene, and singles were reported at other locations in Cramlington, at Holy Island and at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A tour of Holy Island produced 44 birds on 8th (MJC/ADM), with 15 of them being in the village. Druridge Pools and Links had 16 on 8th (IDR/JF) and Low Cocklaw, Berwick had 15 on 2nd, counted during a 4km circular walk (TBr). Three birds were ringed and five retrapped at Hauxley on 9th (HRS). There were six at Ellington Dene on 30th (IDR) and singles at Alnmouth on 5th (IDR) and at Howick Scar Farm on 16th (IDR).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Three were at Humshaugh on 7th (SW) and at Arcot Hall GC, Cramlington on 7th (DM). Singles were reported from other locations in Cramlington and from Woodhorn Church, the Harthope valley, Wallington, Harbottle, Milkwell (Corbridge), Jesmond Dene and Heaton Park (Newcastle) and Warden (nr Hexham).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Tyne Green, Hexham had six on 5th (MJC). There were two at Airy Holm Reservoir, Shotleyfield on 6th (IFo) and at Gosforth Park, Newcastle on 19th (DLo). One was ringed at Hauxley on 9th and one retrapped on 10th (HRS). Singles were recorded at Woodhorn Church, Beal saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR), Southfield Lea (Cramlington), Holywell Dene, Linhope Spout (Upper Breamish Valley), Wark (North Tyne), Humshaugh, Holy Island, Derwent Reservoir, Caistron, Warden (nr Hexham), Big Waters NWT, Jesmond Dene and Heaton Park (Newcastle), Park Wood (Bothal), Rothbury and Murton (near Berwick).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The highest count came from Newcastle Great Park, with 10,000 coming in to roost on 13th (LAR). 7,000 S were seen at first light over Brunton Park, Gosforth on 9th (GB). 5,000 came in to roost at Big Waters on 8th (GB) and 4,000 at East Chevington on 2nd, where murmuration was observed. There were 1,100 at the Minewater Treatment reedbed, Lambley on 12th and 500 at Howick on 13th (JAR) and at Kiln Pit Hill on 26th (IFo). Linden Hall, Longhorsley had 450E on 10th (NFO) and West Hartford had 400E on 8th (STH). Druridge Pools & Links had a maximum count of 350 on 21st (IDR/JF) and there were 300 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Shotleyfield on 10th (IFo). Smaller flocks were reported from High Heaton and Old Eldon Square (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Amble dunes, Quarry Cottage and Buston Links (Alnmouth).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

There was one on the Straight Lonnen, Holy Island on 8th (MJC).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Influxes were increasing this month, with 495 over Holy Island Village at dawn and large numbers at other locations on the island making a total count of 843 on 8th (MJC/ADM). 300 arrived at Hauxley on 9th, where 35 were ringed (HRS). Druridge Pools & Links recorded 149 on 8th (IDR/JF). Passage was also noted at Seaton Sluice, with small numbers in mixed thrush flocks coming in off the sea between 5th and 10th (SSWT), and at Gosforth Garden Village, Newcastle, with many birds over during the evening and into the early morning on 9th and 10th (MJC). A notable count of 27 birds was reported from High Heaton, Newcastle on 7th (LMi). Seaton Point, Boulmer had 50 on 11th (BS) and St Mary's Island had 35 on 11th (ASJ). Marden Quarry, Whitley Bay had 20 on 8th, rising to 25 by 15th (KWY), and an influx of 18 birds was recorded at Castlehills, Berwick on 6th (MHu). Large numbers were still being reported later in the month, with 56 between Brockwell and Westwood Grange, Cramlington on 28th (LJM), 32 at Low Cocklaw, Berwick on 28th (TBr) and 30 at Howdon, also on 28th (CB). There were 27 between Stag Rocks, Bamburgh and Budle Point on 27th (MJC). Reports of smaller numbers came from Ellington, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Ross Back Sands, Howick and Alnmouth. A white-headed male with white spotting on the body, seen earlier in the year, was at Little Beach, Berwick on 12th (TRD/JD).



A natty Blackbird at Berwick
Tim Dean on 12th November

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Small numbers in mixed flocks were reported in off the sea at Seaton Sluice between 5th and 10th (SSWT). The largest flocks were at Humshaugh, with 1000 on 7th (SW) and Holy Island, with 977 on 8th (MJC/ADM). Big flocks were already present at the Hagg, Allendale, which had 600 on 1st (CB), and Barley Hill, Derwent Reservoir, which had 450 on 2nd (CB). There were 250 at Whittingham on 11th (CW) and at Low Cocklaw, Berwick on 28th (TBr). Flocks of 200 were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 9th (IFo), Prestwick Carr on 10th (IK) and Milkwell, Corbridge on 19th (RB/MB). Yearle had 160 on 4th, 12th and 13th (DGB/RHB). Flocks of 150 were at Knock Shield on 1st (CB), Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Ridley Common (CB) on 2nd, Ordley on 11th (BNR), Blanchland on 20th (MJC), and Chollerford (SW) and Prestwick Carr (IK) on 26th. Smaller flocks of 100 and below were reported at numerous locations throughout the month.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

605 flew over Holy Island Village at dawn, with a total of 778 being counted on the island on 8th (MJC/ADM). Influxes were noted at Seaton Sluice, with small numbers in mixed thrush flocks coming in off the sea between 5th and 10th (SSWT), and at Hauxley, where 100 birds arrived on 9th (HRS). Some were in a mixed flock of 28 birds at Howick on 9th (JAR) and large numbers flew over Gosforth Garden Village, Newcastle between 10th and 11th (MJC). Prestwick Carr had 300 on 10th (IK) and there were 130W over Abbey Mills, Morpeth on 12th (IF). Low Cocklawburn, Berwick had 100 on 21st (TBr). There were flocks of 59 at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 15th (MJC), 54 at West Ord, Berwick on 29th (MHu), 51 at Stocksfield on 6th (BNR) and 50 at East Cramlington Pond NWT on 10th (MNC). Smaller flocks were noted at widespread locations throughout the month.

A Redwing

Rising Sun

Alan Jack

22nd November

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

There were 86 on Holy Island on 8th (MJC). Some were in a mixed thrush flock of 28 birds at Howick on 9th (JAR). Druridge Pools had six on 8th (IDR/JF), St Mary's Island had five on 11th (ASJ), and High Heaton, Newcastle had three on 7th (LMi). One bird was ringed and another re-trapped at Hauxley on 9th (HRS). Two were at Newton Red House on 15th (PG), Jesmond Dene, Newcastle on 22nd (LMi) and between Stag Rocks, Bamburgh and Budle Point on 28th (MJC). There were singles at Seaton Point (Boulmer), Buston Links (Alnmouth), Ross Back Sands and Howdon.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Howick had the largest flock, with 30 on 16th (JAR). There were five at Yearle on 22nd (DGB/RHB) and four at Fulbeck, Morpeth on 2nd (TD). Druridge Links had three on 7th (IDR/JF). There were two at West Hartford on 1st (LJM), Sinderford on 4th (CB), Wark, North Tyne on 7th (PRM), Jesmond, Newcastle on 9th (LMi), Whittingham on 12th (CW) and Spital, Newbiggin on 22nd (GB). Singles were at Belsay Hall, St Thomas's Church in the Haymarket (Newcastle), Gosforth Park, Ellington Pond, Grindon Lough, Milkwell (Corbridge) and Seaton Point (Boulmer).



A Mistle Thrush at Sinderhope by Colin Bradshaw on 4th November

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Holy Island had 23 on 8th (MJC), Low Cocklaw, Berwick had 15 on 2nd (TBr) and Budle Bay had 12 on 28th (CGK). There were six at Druridge Pools on 8th (IDR/JF), three at Church Point, Newbiggin on 10th (STH), and three at Hauxley on 10th, where one bird was ringed on 9th (HRS). There were three at Howick Scar Farm on 16th (IDR), two at Alnmouth on 5th and at Ellington Dene on 30th, and a single bird was at Ellington Pond on 22nd.

A Robin at St. Mary's

10th November

Jack Bucknall

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

A first-autumn male was trapped at Airy Holm Reservoir, Shotleyfield on 6th (IFo).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Two female-type birds were at Holy Island on 8th (MJC/AH). Two were also at North Blyth on 9th (ASJ), where a late single was recorded on 28th (MN). A single bird was observed at the base of Tynemouth Pier from 3rd to the end of the month (DLo, DRW, ASJ, MN, KWY) and one was at Church Point, Newbiggin between 8th and 12th (TF, STH, MN, TD). One was at Boulmer on 9th (MKi) and 13th (BS) and a female-type bird was at Rumbling Kern, Howick on 12th (PRC).



The popular Black Redstart at Tynemouth Pier

Alan Jack on 30th November

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

There are only three previous November records for this species, on 8th November 1948 at Hartley, 1st November 1959 at Newton Pool and 3rd–4th November 1989 at Hauxley. This month has produced two, with one at Blyth Road Fields on 6th (IJ) and one at Newburn on 26th (ASJ). The Newburn bird is therefore 18 days later than the previous county record set at Hartley.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

There were ten at Low Newton between the Long Nanny and Newton Pool on 15th (CB) and eight at Boulmer between Seaton and Longhoughton on 29th (CB). Six were at Chevington on 10th (MH) and at Chibburn links on 17th (MH/AA). Three pairs were noted between Low Newton and Dunstanburgh on 21st (MJC) and there were six between Stag Rocks, Bamburgh and Budle Point on 27th (MJC). Holy Island had five on 8th (MJC/ADM), Druridge Links had four on 7th (IDR/JF) and Warkworth Gut had four on 14th (JAR). Three were at Howick on 5th (JAR), Seaton Sluice (KWY) and Goswick (MJC) on 6th, Amble Links on 19th (KWY) and Old Hartley on 22nd (MNC). Pairs and singles were reported from coastal and inland locations throughout the county.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Four were seen at Blanchland on 20th (MJC). Three were at Warden and Mitford during the month, and two were seen at Jesmond Dene and Felton and singles were at a further eight sites.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

80 was the high count during the month of a flock, regularly attending feeders at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) (RS). 40 were counted at Spital (Newbiggin) on 14th, increasing to 50 by 22nd (GB). 38 were at High Heaton on 7th (LMi). Around 30 roosted in garden Holly all month at Marden Estate and 30 remained all month at Cullercoats Bay (ASJ). Five to 13 were noted at five other sites.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

70 fed in a field at Milbourne on 28th (SJL). 60 were noted in fields at Blyth on 12th (IJ). Around 35 were at Low Cocklaw on 29th (TBr). 30 were noted at Druridge Links on 7th and at Blyth on 27th. 26 seen at Howick on 7th and 25 on feeders at Newton Red House all month. One – 15 were also noted this month at 14 other sites, including six at garden feeders at Marden Estate (Cullercoats).

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Six were seen at both Holywell Dene and Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 6th (ASJ). Five were noted on 5th Druridge Links and four at Ellington Dene on 30th (IDR). One to four were seen at a further four sites.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Two were seen at four locations this month, at Warkworth Gut, High Heaton, Druridge Links and North Blyth. Singles observed at another 30 widespread sites.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

18 gathered pre-roost at East Chevington on 6th (IDR). Six were at Boulmer on 17th and included a bird showing an unusual head pattern, leading to discussion as to possible race (IF). Five seen in dunes at Seahouses on 5th (IDR). Four were noted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 14th and at St. Mary's on several dates (DM/ASJ). One to three also seen at three other sites.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

One was seen at Beal saltmarsh on 2nd (RA).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

25 were in fields at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 7th with 22 at Ross Back Sands on same day (STH/MJC). A total of 20 were seen below Ros Castle on 26th (MH). 15 were noted at St. Mary's on 11th (ASJ). 12 were seen at East Stobswood on 15th and 12+ at Old Hartley on 28th. 10 + were at East Holywell on 22nd (MNC). One to eight were also seen at 12 sites.

Buff- Bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*

This, the first record of this American species, to be found in the County, was discovered on the beach at Wellhaugh Point, Amble on the afternoon of 18th by Clive Saunders and was present until dusk the following day and seen by many local birders.

Buff-bellied Pipit

19th November

Amble

Colin Bradshaw



Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

26 were counted at Holy Island on 21st with 21 seen across the island on 8th (ADM/MJC). 20 were seen at Amble on 19th and 21st with lesser numbers present on subsequent days. 16+ were at Boulmer on 1st, 15 were at Howick Burn Mouth on 23rd, 12 + were seen at Newbiggin on 4th and 12 at St. Mary's Island on 11th and Holy Island on 29th (AB/LB/TD/ASJ/ADM). One to eight were also noted at a further eight sites.



A Rock Pipit at Cheswick by Tim Dean on 12th November

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Three plus were seen at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

120 were counted at Crooked Oak Lane on 8th and were present until at least 26th (IFo). Birds noted at Druridge Pools and Links all month, with a peak count of 45 on 27th (IDR/JF). 22 were on Holy Island on 8th (MJC). 20 were seen to arrive from the East on the morning of 3rd (CGK). One to eight were also at eight other sites.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

25 at Kingswood Burn on 7th was the month's peak count (AT). 14 was the maximum at Crooked Oak on 20th, of birds seen there all month (IFo). On Holy Island, two were seen on 7th and 8th. One to two were at a further eight sites.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Birds were first found on 4th (ten) and were observed throughout the month at Abbey Mill and at nearby Mitford Castle, with numbers varying but 13 was the peak count. They were usually to be found feeding in the Hornbeam trees here (ADM *et al*).



A Hawfinch from the Morpeth flock

Tim Dean

5th November

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

17 were seen on 21st at Rising Sun C.P. including a flock of 12 (ASJ). 12 were at Wansbeck Estuary on 9th (STH). Up to seven were in gardens at Morpeth and Rothbury during the month and, also at Berwick on 6th. One to six were seen at 29 further sites.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

A pre-roost gathering at Linden Hall this month increased to a peak on 16th of 70 (NFO). 50 + were at St. Mary's on a number of dates (MSH/ASJ). 50 Roosted at Freeman hospital (Newcastle) on 15th (LMi). One to 12 were noted at 12 other sites.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

A large mobile flock frequenting the dunes and links between Cresswell Pond and Druridge as far north as the coal road during the month, was counted from photographs at 200-227, with lesser counts made on other dates (NFO/ASJ/IDR/JF). A group at Long Nanny peaked at 93 on 15th (CB/AMG/MG/SVM). Another flock numbering 79 was seen at Ross Back Sands on 22nd, with 35 there on 7th (MJC). 50 were at Beal Saltmarsh on 2nd. 42 were counted at Warkworth on 10th, at Fenham on 4th and Longhoughton Steel on 29th. 35 were at Boulmer on 5th. Nine fed at North Blyth on 25th ten were there on 27th. Two to eight were seen at four other sites.



A Twite

North Blyth

Alan Jack

20th November

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

A large flock of 600 was seen at Warkworth G.C. on 25th (CSa). 250 on 3rd at Crooked Oak Lane, increased to 300 by 11th remaining until at least 26th (IFo). 160 fed in stubble at Howick on 12th (JAR). 120 were seen at Old Hartley on 22nd and 100 were near Kin Pit Hill on 3rd. 70 were feeding among weeds at East Chevington on 15th (ASJ). 60+ were seen near Earsdon on 23rd (MNC). One to 35 were noted at nine other sites during the month.

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

The sole sighting this month was of one arriving from NE calling, into trees at Tynemouth Haven on 4th (ASJ).

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis caberet*

200 were Hillside (Rothbury) on 8th (TRD/JD). 50 were noted at Linden Hall on 7th (NFO). One to 30 were seen at a further 12 sites this month.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

The Hexham area produced the biggest counts this month, with 27 at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 5th and 21 at Letah Wood on 26th (MJC/AJH). Nearer the coast, the wintering group at Rising Sun C.P. peaked at 18 on 27th, with males occasionally singing (ASJ). 16 flew W at Abbey Mills near Mitford on 7th with one-eight birds also seen here on three other dates (ASJ/ADM). Nine were seen at Linden Hall on 27th (NFO). Eight seen heading W at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 20th (DM). One to six were observed at 13 other locations, including passage and coastal birds at Holy Island, Cullercoats, Arcot Pond, Big Waters and East Cramlington and Druridge.



A Crossbill at Rising Sun
25th November by Alan Jack

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Feeding flocks of 125 at Druridge on 8th and 120 at East Chevington on 20th were the largest groups seen this month, with lesser numbers present at these sites all month (IDR/JF/ASJ). 55 were counted at St. Mary's on 21st (ASJ). 45 seen at Horton Park (Cramlington) on 7th and at Howick the following day (LJM/JAR). 40 were seen at Ross Back Sands on 22nd (MJC). One -34 were also observed at 14 sites.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

100 + were counted at Rowley Burn on 19th and 100 seen at Caistron on 15th (AJH/JD). One to 20 were seen at a further 20 sites during the month.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

30 feeding in a ploughed field at Milbourne on 28th was the peak count made this month (SJL). 14 – 16 were noted at Low Cocklaw, Holywell, Beaconhill and Beacon Lane to Arcot (Cramlington) and Howick burn mouth. One to eight were at a further eight locations.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

An impressive 40 were at Druridge Links on 7th, with nine trapped and ringed, with lesser numbers during the month (IDR/JF). 20 were in stubble at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 4th (STH). One to 12 also observed at ten further sites.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

There were two sightings of single birds this month, with one at Budle Point on 3rd and at Holy Island on 7th (CGK/RA).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A large flock of 41 was observed at Holy Island on 29th (RA). Nine were at Ross Back Sands on 7th, with five also there on 22nd (MJC). Six frequented North Blyth during the month and were at Hauxley, flying S on 3rd (ASJ et al/CSa). Elsewhere, one to four were seen at an impressive 17 sites.



A Snow Bunting at Blyth on 10th November by Alan Jack

ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN

Escapes

No sightings

Hybrids

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

There was a single at Big Waters on 22nd (GB).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

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Berwick Wildlife Group, 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), Helen Snaith (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

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

RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

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

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

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

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

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

The November 2020 Woodcock influx

Date	Location	No	Observer(s)	Notes
01/11/20	Boulmer	1	BS	
	Howdon	1	CB	
03/11/20	Tynemouth	1	DLo	Flew into vegetation at base of pier
	Hexham	1	BNR	Flew across road in front of observer's car
04/11/20	Fenham (Lindisfarne NNR)	1	RA	
	Beacon Point (Newbiggin)	2	AP	'in-off'
06/11/20	St Mary's Island	1	KWY	
	Warkworth dunes	1	CSa	1 'in-off' narrowly avoiding Peregrine
07/11/20	Cupola Bridge	1	AT	
	Newbiggin	1	ASJ	The 'Mound'
08/11/20	Holy Island	37	MJC/ADM	2 Snook, 3 Chare Ends beach-Heugh, 1 Harbour, 8 Village, 3 Crooked Lonnen, 14 Straight Lonnen, 2 Excavations, 1 North Shore, 1 East Shore, 2 Lough
	Tynemouth	3	DRW	
	Prior's Park(Tynemouth)	2	CB	
	Beal	2	MJC/ADM	On road
	Druridge Links	1	IDR/JF	
	Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay	1	IJ	
	St Mary's Island	1	IJ	
09/11/20	Berwick	1	MHu	Flagstaff Park
11/11/20	St Mary's Wetland	1	ASJ	
14/11/20	Seaton Sluice	1	IF	
15/11/20	Marden Quarry	1	KWY	
	Caistron	1	JD	
16/11/20	Beacon Point (Newbiggin)	1	AP	'in-off'
20/11/20	Tynemouth	1	DRW	
	Low Cocklaw (Berwick)	1	TBr	
	Beacon Point (Newbiggin)	2	AP	'in-off'
21/11/20	Holy Island	1	ADM	Snook
	Amble	1	GB	'in-off'
22/11/20	Arcot Hall GC	2	STH	
23/11/20	Boulmer	1	MKi	Howdiemont Sands
24/11/20	Druridge Links	1	IDR	
25/11/20	Ross Back Sands	1	SVM/AJM	'in-off'
26/11/20	Druridge Links	1	IDR	
	Tynemouth	1	DRW	
27/11/20	Boulmer	2	AMG/MG	
	Shoreston	2	DF	Flushed from garden
27/11/20	Blyth Road fields	2	IJ	
	Brierdene (Whitley Bay)	1	IJ	
	Druridge Links	1	IDR	
	Morpeth Common	1	IRD	New arrival
	Howick	1	JAR	1 found freshly dead on 29th
	North Shields	1	KWY	Preston cemetery
	Woodhorn	2	AP	
28/11/20	Stag Rocks-Budle Point	3	MJC	
	Howdon	2	CB	
	Boulmer	1	BS	
	St Mary's Wetland	1	KWY	
29/11/20	Holy Island	7	AH/ADM/SR	Inc 4 at The Snook
	Druridge Pools	3	TF	
	Ford Moss	2	EHa	
	North Shields	1	CB	Flew over road
	Snab Point (Cresswell)	1	PRC	'in-off'
	Ross Back Sands	1	MJC/DJC	
	Juniper	1	BNR	
30/11/20	Tynemouth	1	ASJ	'in-off' at Priory
	Beacon Point (Newbiggin)	3	AP	'in-off'
	Seaton Sluice	9	SSWT	'in-off' including five on 30th



A Great Northern Diver at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 23rd Novemeber



The late Swift at St. Mary's by Jack Bucknall on 17th November

Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

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

Bulletin 2020 No 12

MONTHLY SUMMARY DECEMBER 2020

4th February 2021



CONTENTS

BIN 2020 – Your club needs you - authors please.

Classified List order changes in January 2021 to follow BOU revisions.

CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Todd's Canada Goose	One noted at Hadston Carrs from 9th to 14th.
Tundra Bean Goose	Separate singles at Blyth on 7th and Druridge on 27th.
Whooper Swan	High count of 117 at Hadston on 9th.
Ruddy Shelduck	Two still present at Derwent Res on 27th.
American Wigeon	The drake at Grindon Lough was seen on 5th and 7th.
Black Scoter	The drake was refound at Cheswick on 9th and was still being seen to 24th.
Red-necked Grebe	Two off Holy Island and singles at Ross Back Sands and Annstead Point.
Marsh Harrier	Many sightings of this now regularly wintering species.
Whimbrel	Only second ever December record with one wintering at Cambois
Ruff	Up to four at Druridge during month.
Grey Phalarope	Singles passing N at Low Steads on 5th and Newbiggin and Druridge on 24th
Spotted Redshank	Singles wintering at Blyth and Tweed Estuaries
Greenshank	One wintering at Ross Back Sands on 3rd.
Glaucous Gull	Juvenile at North Shields Fish Quay on 25th and 26th.
Iceland Gull	One or two at Tynemouth, North Shields, Big Waters and Seahouses.
Yellow-legged Gull	Adult at North Shields Fish Quay from 8th to 20th.
Sandwich Tern	Latest county record with one south at Ross Back Sands on 13th.
Great Skua	Six north past Boulmer on 4th and single south past Newbiggin on 24th.
Pomarine Skua	Singles past Seaton Sluice on 5th and Tynemouth on 6th. Unusual in December.
Hooded Crow	Returning wintering birds at Howick and Morpeth.
Cetti's Warbler	Singles still at Big Waters and East Chevington.
Black Redstart	Singles at Tynemouth, Annstead Pt and North Blyth.
Water Pipit	Four at Shorestone, three at Druridge and one at Gosforth.
Hawfinch	Two at Gosforth Park on 28th.
Twite	Extraordinary large flock of 300 inland at Fulbeck, Morpeth on 31st.
Mealy Redpoll	Up to five at Gosforth and three at Holystone.
Lapland Bunting	One or two at Ross Back Sands and St Mary's.

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 by Zoom on 11th February -details will follow.

FIELD TRIPS

On hold for the next few months.

Contact Steve Anderson
seaswan@btinternet.com

A popular Hooded Crow

Howick

15th December

Chris Barlow



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

Brent Geese belonging to the pale-bellied *hrota* race involved 800 feeding at Beal on 7th (DF), at least 600 at Budle Bay on 31st (DF), 400 feeding on pasture at Chesterhill (near Budle Bay) on 28th (DF), 150 on fields near Holy Island Castle on 9th (TRD), a total of 13 N and one S at Seaton Sluice between 7th-25th (SSWT), four SW at Druridge Links on 29th (IDR/JF), and two to three N at Druridge and Howick on 24th. Three colour-marked birds, believed to be from the East Canadian/High Arctic population that normally winter in Ireland, were at Beal on 22nd (confirmation awaited; DF). Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds involved 150 at The Ouse, Holy Island on 30th (ADM), 12 N at Seaton Sluice between 1st-5th (SSWT), ten in fields near Holy Island Castle on 9th (TRD), and two at Chesterhill (near Budle Bay) on 28th (DF). An adult *hrota* bird together with a first-winter *bernicla* race bird were at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth on 25th (MSH). Unraced birds included 1,100 at Lindisfarne on 15th (ASJ) and three N at Newbiggin on 24th (TF/JFa).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

A total of 20 flew N at Druridge Pools between 11th-31st (IDR/JF). Peak counts were 589 at Grindon Lough on 18th (PRM), 272 at Hauxley Reserve on 9th (HRS), 250 at Castron on 5th (JD), 236 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), and 140-189 at Big Waters (GB) and Druridge Pools (IDR/JF), 88 at Killingworth Lake (LJM), and 25-46 at Bothal Pond, Heddon Haughs, QEII CP and West Ord. Two to four were also at the Tweed Estuary and Wark (North Tyne).

An individual of the race known as 'Todd's Canada Goose' *B.c.interior/parvipes* was discovered feeding with Pink-footed Geese in stubble fields at Hadston Carrs on 9th (JFa) and remained until 12th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Variable numbers in the Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh area included a peak of 2,300 on 22nd (MJC), and 550-2,100 regularly between 3rd-31st, while 360 were in fields near Belford on 11th and 600 there on 12th (DF). One to two were also at Grindon Lough, Hadston Carrs and QEII CP.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

A peak of 1,000 was at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (MHu), 437 at Big Waters on 22nd (GB/DM), 330 were at Budle Bay on 28th (TF/JFa), 310 at Hauxley Reserve on 9th (HRS), 300 at Bellasis Bridge on 5th (MH), 260-280 at Castron (JD) and Druridge Pools (IDR/JF), 210 flew round New Water Haugh before moving S on 28th (MHu), and 135 were at Woodhorn Flashes (AP). Counts of 19-43 came from East Holywell, Grindon Lough and Hadston Links, and one to three were at/over Bothal Pond and Kielder village.

'grey goose' (sp). *Anser*

18 flew S offshore at Cocklawburn on 22nd (MHu).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

The Seaton Sluice monthly total was 446 S (SSWT), 160 flew N and 315 S at Druridge Pools between 6th-30th (IDR/JF), and about 30 N and 130 S at North Seaton between 17th-31st (BSt). Southerly movement also involved 350 at East Ord on 7th (MHu), 300 at Holy Island on 30th (ADM), 110 at Cheswick on 9th (MHu), and 220 flew SW at Amble on 19th (PRM), while 400 flew N at Benton on 7th (AJ), and 50 N at Seghill (IF). A group of 95 flew E at Jesmond Dene at 2355h on 18th (LMi), and 22-30 in various directions at Amble, Howick, Prestwick Carr and Seghill. Large numbers were centred on the Bell's Pond-Druridge Pools area, where peak numbers were about 7,500 (in several skeins) on 31st (IDR), and 3,000 at nearby Hadston Carrs on 8th (JFa). Significant concentrations elsewhere (perhaps including some overlap between sites) involved 3,000 at Budle Bay on 31st (DF/NFO), 3,000 at Brier Dene Farm on 31st (MNC), 2,000 at Doddington on 16th (PHa/AHa), 2,000 at St Mary's Island on 28th (IJ), 1,500 at East Holywell (MSH), 1,000+ at Blyth Links on 30th (MN), and 700-800 at High and Low Newton (NFO/JAR), and Newham Fen (DF). Counts of 220-400 came from Belford and Low Cocklaw, and 55-78 at Big Waters and Lucker, Milkwell (Corbridge). Fewer were noted further inland, with 250 over Castron on 5th (JD), 120 SE at Otterburn on 29th (TWi), 100 at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 20th (RB/MB), and 47 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Singles were at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth on 7th (MSH) and with about 2,500 Pink-footed Geese at Druridge Farm on 27th (TF/JFa/IDR/JF). The latter was thought to be a different individual from the former due to a different bill pattern (MSH).

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Seven Eurasian *albifrons* race birds were found at New Water Haugh, River Tweed on 26th (MHu) and were still present on 27th (including three first-winter birds; TBr/MMcN/CH). An adult of the same race was at East Holywell on 20th (MSH) and an adult, probably also belonging to the *albifrons* race, was at Budle Bay on 31st (DF).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak numbers were 61 at Castron on 5th (JD), 55 at QEII CP Lake on 13th (CDH), 34 at East Chevington on 16th (IRD), and 22-25 at Big Waters (GB/DM), Howdon (CB) and Killingworth Lake (LJM). Seven to eight were at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) and Monks' House Pool, and three to four at/over Ellington, Hadston and Howick.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Flocks of 23 and ten flew S at Seaton Sluice on 18th (SSWT), 12 flew N at East Chevington on 15th (IFo), ten NW at Druridge Links on 13th (IDR/JF), ten S Ellington on 18th (TB), five S at Boulmer on 14th (CB), and three S at Hexham on 27th (AJH). A herd in the Hadston Carrs area included a peak of 117 on 9th (IF) and a count of 113 on 10th included 25 juveniles (NFO). A flock of 40-45 at Birling (Warkworth) between 19th-22nd included eight juveniles (CSa/IRD *et al.*), and 22 circled East Chevington on 15th (MH). Five to eight were at Bothal Pond, Castron, Craggside, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington north pool and Low Newton scrape, three to four at Budle Bay, Fenham Flats and Grindon Lough, and singles at QEII CP Lake and Yarrow Slake.



Whooper Swans at Hadston
13th December
Colin Bradshaw

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Two flew N and three S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and two flew N at Hauxley on 25th (SW). A total of 590 was counted from The Snook (Holy Island) on 8th (SW), 445 were at Fenham Flats on 15th (ASJ), 144 at Budle Bay on 9th (DF), 14 at the Blyth Estuary on 28th (BS), and ten at Howdon on 13th (CB). Two to three were regularly at Boulmer and Druridge Pools, and one was at East Chevington. The only inland record involved two at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo).

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 27th and 29th (IFo).

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

At Budle Bay, a peak of 79 was noted on 6th (DF) and 29-74 regularly between 9th-21st (CGK/AJR *et al.*). Other peak site counts were 28 at Linton Ponds on 28th (STH), 22 at Druridge Pools on 10th (AJR), 21 at Holy Island 'rocket pool' on 27th (MJC), 18 at East Chevington north pool on 3rd (IFo), and ten to 12 at Embleton Quarry Pond (PAs), Newham Bog (DF) and West Allotment Pond (KWY). Four were at Monks' House Pool and St Mary's Wetland, and one to two at Big Waters, Branton GP, Cresswell Pond and Hauxley Reserve.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT). Peak concentrations were 71 at Linton Ponds on 28th (STH), 55 at the Blyth Estuary on 28th (BS), 30 at Marden Quarry on 13th (KWY), 20 at Embleton Quarry Pond on 5th (PAs), and 15-18 at Big Waters (GB) and Howdon (CB). Four to nine were found at Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Castron, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Monks' House Pool, QEII CP Lake, and St Mary's Island, and one at Hauxley Reserve.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Five flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and 31 moved N at Druridge Links on 6th (HRS). Variable numbers at Budle Bay included 1,000 regularly all month (JPL), 600 on 28th (TF/JFa), and 300+ on 12th (CGK). Other peak site counts were 400 at the Coquet Estuary on 12th (CSa), 385 at Cresswell Pond on 8th (IRD), 360 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), 364 at Big Waters on 31st (AJJ per GB), 350 at Cresswell Pond on 13th (CB), 346 at Linton Ponds (a 20-year WeBS count peak; CDH), 320 at Grindon Lough (AJR), 200-275 near Belford (DF), Branton GP (IBDa/KDa) and Druridge Pools (IDR/JF), and 107-193 at Amble, Bothal Pond, and off Boulmer and Cullernose Point. Counts of 40-72 came from Castron, Hauxley Reserve, and New Water Haugh-Yarrow Slake, and 18 were at Merryshields GP.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

Single drakes were at Grindon Lough on 5th and 7th (SJH) and Big Waters on 19th (AJJ per GB).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Large gatherings included 219 at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo), 194 at Big Waters on 31st (AJJ per GB), 114 at Calot Shad, the Tweed Estuary on 24th and 112 at nearby Yarrow Slake on 14th (MHu), 98 at Branton GP on 28th (IBDa/KDa), 92 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 26th (IFo), 88 at Merryshields GP on 18th (IFo), and 53-61 at Druridge Pools (IDR/JF), Grindon Lough (SJH), Hauxley Reserve (HRS) and Killingworth Lake (LJM). Counts of 23-45 came from Arcot Pond, the Blyth Estuary, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Jesmond Dene, Linden Hall, Marden Quarry, Newcastle Exhibition Park, QEII CP Lake, St Mary's Wetland, and 13-16 were at Dukes Pond, Heddon Haughs and Shield on the Wall.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

109 were at the Fenham Flats section of Lindisfarne NNR on 15th (ASJ). Away from this core area peak numbers were much more modest: up to four at Druridge Pools between 8th-13th (NFO/TB *et al.*), four at Hauxley Reserve on 9th (HRS), and one to two at Budle Bay, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Marden Quarry, St Mary's Wetland, and Widdrington Moor Lake. One flew N at Hadston Carrs on 8th (JFa).

Teal *Anas crecca*

A total of 49 flew N and ten S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and 19 flew N at Druridge Links on 5th-6th (IDR). Peak counts were 442 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), 390 at Holy Island 'rocket field' pools on 6th (IK), 337 at Druridge Pools on 13th (IDR/JF), 318 at Grindon Lough on 11th (SJH), 294 at Budle Bay on 3rd (DF), 288 at Big Waters on 31st (AJJ per GB), 270 at Middle Ord Pond on 13th (MHu), and 124-161 at Arcot and Linton Ponds (STH/LJM), while 60-82 were at Bothal Pond and St Mary's Wetland. Groups of ten to 47 were at Alnmouth, Backworth Pond, Belford, Hauxley Reserve, Howick, Monks' House Pool, Newburn Haugh and Plenmeller (Blackshield Bog).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Killingworth Lake held a peak of 15 on 8th (LJM), five were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 22nd (IRD), three at Bothal Pond on 5th (IRD), and singles at Big Waters, Branton GP, East Chevington, Merryshields GP and Woodhorn Flashes.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

65 were at Caistron on 5th (JD), 52 at Killingworth Lake on 8th (LJM), 48 at Ladyburn Lake on 15th (IFo), 32 at Tynemouth Boating Lake on 31st (AC), 22-25 at Bothal and Linton Ponds (TD/STH) and QEII CP Lake (CDH), and 14-18 at Big Waters, Branton GP, Druridge Pools, Merryshields GP and Marden Quarry. Five to nine were also at Howick, Milkhope, Newcastle Exhibition Park, *Northumberlandia* (Cramlington) and Woodhorn Flashes, and one to four at six further sites.



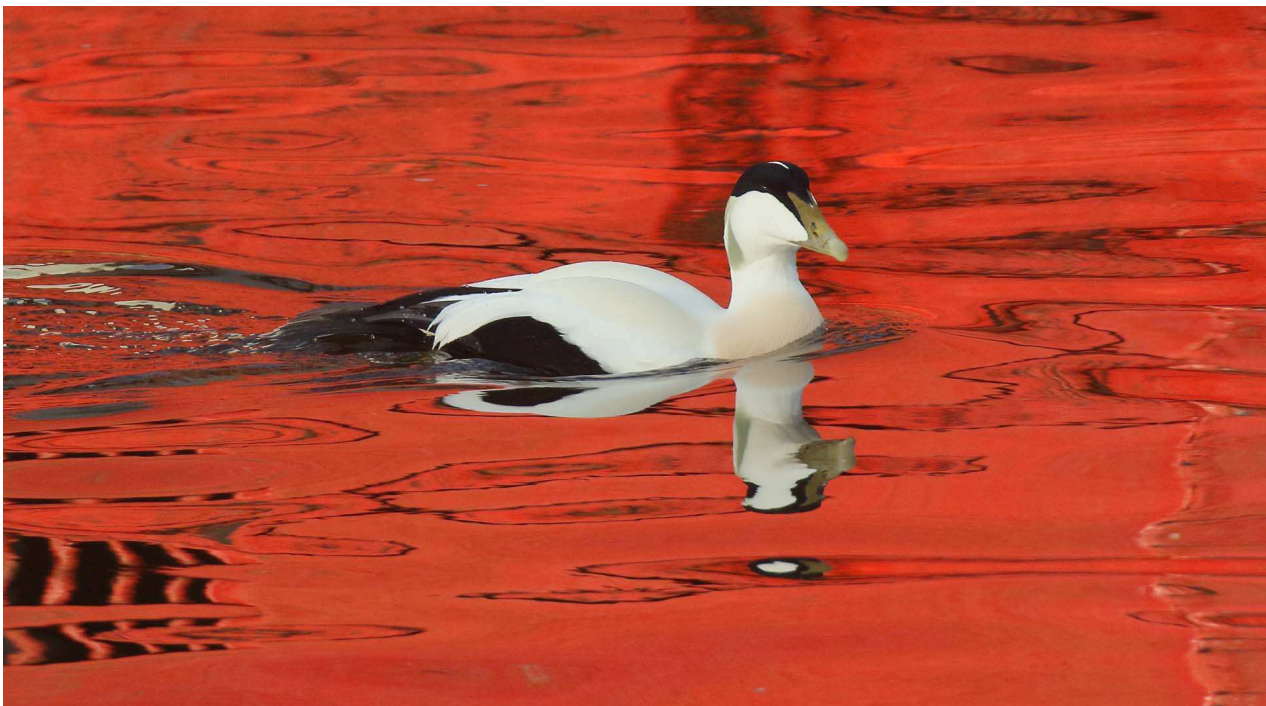
A hybrid Tufted /Pochard on Killingworth Lake 25th December by Chris Barlow

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Most reports came from Druridge Pools where three were noted on five dates between 6th-23rd (TD/TF/MKi/ADMc *et al.*), and two on 29th (IDR/JF). Two were at East Chevington north pool on 4th (ADMc).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 74 N and 25 S (SSWT), and one flew N and one S at Druridge Links on 6th (IDR). A total of 258 was counted around Holy Island (north and east shores, and castle and harbour areas) on 27th (MJC), 127 were at Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC), 102 at Blyth Harbour on 1st (STH), 34-38 at Annstead Point (IDR) and North Shields Fish Quay (MSH), 20-26 at Amble and Embleton, 11-18 at Newbiggin and Spittal Bay, and five at Cocklawburn.



Eider drake in the red sea. A boat reflects on 7th December at NSFQ by Alan Jack

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Four were off North Blyth on 1st (TB/IF/LJM/MN). Two were offshore at Druridge Links on 6th when a further two flew N, and one was there on 27th (IDR). Northerly movement also involved two off Ross Back Sands on 13th (MJC), and singles at Tynemouth on 1st (DRW), and Druridge Links (IDR) and Newbiggin (TF/JFa) on 24th, while one flew S at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

A monthly total of 570 N and 118 S at Seaton Sluice was a record December total for the site (SSWT), and 19 moved N at St Mary's Island on 6th (MSH). A flock offshore at Druridge-East Chevington peaked at 550 on 6th (IDR), 117 were off Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC), 100 off Seaton Sluice on 8th (SSWT), 52-60 at Cheswick Black Rocks (MHu) and Cullernose Point (AMG/MG), and ten to 32 off Blyth South Beach, Cocklawburn and Holy Island. Two to five were also at Meadow Haven (Berwick), Snab Point and Stag Rocks. More unusual were singles on the River Coquet at Warkworth weir on 2nd (CSa) and on East Chevington north pool on 4th (ADMc).

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

The regular drake was off Cheswick on 9th (noted as being aggressive towards Common Scoters; TRD) and 22nd (TD/MN/TW).

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

In the north of the county peak counts were 41 off Ross Back Sands on 3rd (MJC), 20 at Holy Island harbour on 21st (TF/JFa), 20 at Stag Rocks on 9th (DF), four at Spittal-Cocklawburn on 14th (TBr/MMcN), and one to two at Annstead Point, Beadnell, Howick and Meadow Haven. More unusual was one at Cheswick Quarry Pond on 30th (TD). Further south, the monthly total at Seaton Sluice was five N and four S (SSWT) and singles flew N at Tynemouth on 1st and 6th (DRW), and Newbiggin on 24th (TF/JFa), two to three were at East Chevington north pool on 9th and 11th (IFo/ADMc), two at nearby Ladyburn Lake on 28th (TB/CSa), and one at North Blyth. Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 8th (ADMc) and at Woodhorn Flashes on 3rd and 27th (CDB/IF).



A Long Tailed Duck at Woodhorn on 27th December by Chris Barlow

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

A total of 11 moved N and six S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), four flew N at Newbiggin on 24th (TF/JFa), and one to two N at Druridge Links and Tynemouth.

East Chevington attracted good numbers with a peak of 69 on 12th (TF/JFa), 33 were at Castle Island on 19th (STH), 27 at the Tweed Estuary on 28th (MHu), 24 at Ladyburn Lake on 3rd (IFo), 23 at Holy Island on 27th (MJC), 20 at Football Hole (PAs), and ten to 17 at Big Waters, Branton GP, Cambois, Howick Haven, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, and the Tweed Estuary. Five to eight were also at Caistron, Druridge Pools, Embleton, Grindon Lough and off Ross Back Sands, and three to four at Bothal Pond, Football Hole, Howick, Milkhope Lake, Warkworth and West Ord. Display was noted at Killingworth Lake on 31st (GB).



Goldeneyes at Killingworth Lake
29th December
Chris Barlow



A Duck Goldeneye at Killingworth on 17th December by Alan Jack

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

One flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), two flew S at Tynemouth on 13th (DRW), and one E at North Shields Fish Quay on 26th (MN). Seven were at Killingworth Lake on 10th (ASJ), and one to two at Airy Holm and Derwent Reservoirs, Arcot, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Holy Island, Newburn Haugh and Wark.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

A peak of 25 was noted at Holy Island on 21st (TF/JFa), 13 were off Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC), 12 off Druridge Links on 31st (IDR), five to seven at Alnmouth Bay (RPO), the Blyth Estuary (MN) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and three to four at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley and Stag Rocks. Singles were also noted at Castle Island, Newbiggin, North Shields Fish Quay and West Ord. Singles flew N off Druridge Links on 9th (IDR/JF) and Tynemouth on 6th (DRW).



A Red breasted Merganser on Killingworth Lake on 17th December by Alan Jack

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Decent counts included 27 at Coanwood Common on 7th (SJH), 25 at Lord's Lot (Hexhamshire) on 24th (AJH) and 23 at Lordenshaw (Simonside) on 9th (IRD). Smaller numbers came from elsewhere with six at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 2nd (TBr), five calling on Blanchland Moor on 28th (IFo), three territorial males, one with a hen, on Alnwick Moor on 9th (MH) and four birds just beside Hadrian's Wall at Steel Rigg on 30th (AJH). Only three territorial males were found in two hours at Plenmeller on 2nd (MH) and a male was displaying to its mate at Quarry House Moor on 15th (MH/AA).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

80 were at Bewick Moor on 12th (BS), ten at Druridge Lane on 28th (TB) and four at Coanwood Common on 7th (SJH). Four were shot at Druridge Pools on 21st (IDR). Two were at Startup and singles were at Bilton Banks, Fowberry Farm and Widdrington Village.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Coveys/groups of 24 birds were between Seghill-East Cramlington on 6th (SJL) and at Beal on 27th (MJC). 18 were at Hemscotthill Links (Cresswell) on 2nd (IDR), 17 at nearby Druridge Links on 20th (IDR/JF), 14 between Ulgham and Widdrington on 15th (ADM), 14 also at Quarry Cottage (Newbiggin) on several dates and 13 at Ross Back Sands on 13th. Counts of 11 came from Fowberry Farm, a game crop near Northumberlandia (Cramlington), Old Hartley and Stannington. Nine or fewer birds were seen at Big Waters NWT, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, New Moor (Ashington) and near Tranwell Wood.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*,

Regular counts made at Druridge Links saw numbers reduced from previous months and varying between a peak of 15 on 27th and 28th to a low of only two on 30th (IDR/JF). Elsewhere three were at Big Waters, three males at Old Hartley, two birds at Fowberry Farm and a single at Arcot Pond.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total passing Seaton Sluice was 197 (99N and 98S) in 36 hours of watching (SSWT). Other passage counts included ten N at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 30th (ADM), 17N and one S at St. Mary's on 6th (MSH), 11N at Druridge Links on 11th (IDR) and ten or fewer from several other coastal points. In Druridge Bay 46 were off East Chevington Burn mouth, some still in breeding plumage, on 1st (MH/AA), with lower counts of 26 in the bay on 6th and 18 on 31st (IDR). 17 were in Alnmouth Bay on 12th (RPo), 15 were at Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC), 12 between Cambois-North Blyth on 28th (BS) and 11 off Hauxley on 25th (SW). Nine or fewer were seen from many other sites along the coast.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia Arctica*

Two were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 9th (AJR) and singles were seen on various dates at Alnmouth Bay, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Church Point (Newbiggin), Druridge Bay, The Heugh (Holy Island), Holy Island Harbour, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Ross Back Sands.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

At Seaton Sluice the monthly total of 11 (seven N, four S) was a site record for December and continued on from the good autumn for this species (SSWT). At least six, and possibly more, were at Stag Rocks on 9th (DF), with regular sightings of smaller numbers on other dates, three were on the sea in Druridge Bay on 11th with another one watched flying N (IDR) and two were at both Ross Back Sands on 13th and Budle Point on 18th. Elsewhere, singles were seen either on the sea or heading N at Boulmer, Cambois, Cheswick, Howick, Newbiggin and Tynemouth.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

115 headed N past Howick in 90 mins on 24th (BS) and the peak movement witnessed at Seaton Sluice was 33N in two hours on 11th (SSWT). Many birds made early returns to breeding cliffs. At Holy Island 88 were on nesting ledges at Nessend Cliffs on 27th (MJC), increasing to 97 there and a single at the Castle on 30th (ADM), 34 were in Howick Bay on 14th (AMG/MG), 28 around the cliffs at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 11th (AA), 24 were on Crag Point (Old Hartley) on 17th (MSH), 21 at Tynemouth priory on 14th (ASJ) and seven at the nesting cliffs at Bamburgh GC on 9th (DF). 12 birds were at Ross Back Sands and one to nine were seen at several other coastal points.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

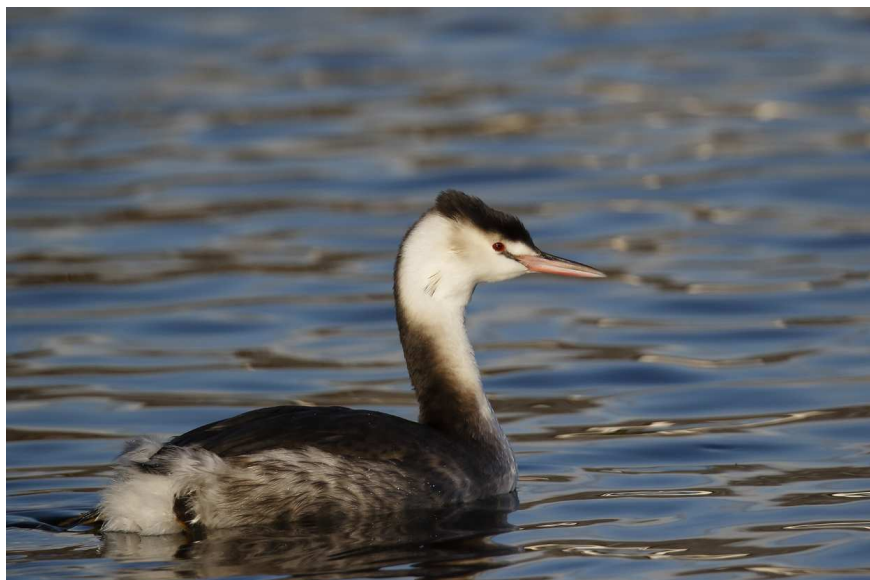
Numbers varied at East Chevington with the peak count being 21 on 25th (SW). Much smaller counts were made elsewhere with six being the peak at Cresswell Pond on 19th (MN) and Howick on 29th (PHa/Aha), totals of five seen at QE11 CP Lake on 13th (CDH), Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary) on 14th (MHu) and on the sea all month at Boulmer (BS) and four at the Aln Estuary, Long Nanny (Newton) and Warkworth. One to three were at 17 other sites.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Regular sightings were made of one around Holy Island throughout the month, mainly around the harbour area and the south of the island (TF/JFa/IK/TRD/MJC). Probably the same bird was seen from Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC). One was at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 22nd (IRD).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

A single headed N at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 24th (TF/JFa). Birds were regularly seen offshore in Druridge Bay with a peak of four on 9th (JFa). At Killingworth Lake an adult was relentlessly "persecuting" a juvenile on 5th (CDB) and singles were seen at Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, QE11 CP Lake and Seaton Sluice.



A juvenile Great Crested Grebe at Killingworth Lake on 5th December by Chris Barlow

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auratus*

The traditional favoured winter haunts of Holy Island Harbour and Ross Back Sands peaked at 16 on 21st (TF/JFa) and ten birds on 3rd (MJC) respectively. The only sighting from elsewhere was a single at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 9th (DF).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Nine were present during a WeBS count in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (TBr/MMcN), five were on the East Pier at Blyth Harbour on 1st (STH), Hauxley NWT also held five on 9th (HRS) as did Linton Ponds on 13th (CDH). Four were seen at Holy Island and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), One to three were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Annstead Point, Arcot Pond, Berwick Coastwatch, Big Waters NWT, Breamish Valley, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Howick, Humshaugh, Jesmond Dene, Lucker, Monks' House Pool, QE11 CP Lake, Shorestone, Stag Rocks, Tynemouth, Walker, Wark and Whittingham.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Peak counts of three were made at Branton GP on 16th (IBDa/KDa) and at Holy Island causeway on 18th (DGB/RHB). Two were recorded at Annstead Burn (Seahouses), Brunton Park, Druridge Pools, The Snook (Holy Island), Swallow Pond (all month) and Warkworth Gut. Singles were at Annstead Point, Ashington (R. Wansbeck), Belford, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Dinnington, East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Horton Burn (Cramlington), Howick, Longhoughton Steel, Long Nanny (Newton), Prestwick Carr, Seghill and St.Mary's Wetland.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Passage numbers were moderate throughout the month with Seaton Sluice recording a monthly total of 158 (133N, 25S), counts at Boulmer producing 72N in 30 mins at dusk on 4th and 40N in 60 mins on 5th (BS) and Snab Point (Cresswell) experiencing 14N in half an hour on 23rd (JR). One to eight were seen from several other coastal locations and, on 6th, a group of six followed a fishing boat inland up the R. Tyne as far as North Shields (ASJ).

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The Tower at Seaton Sluice recorded 45 heading S on 7th, with only five or fewer seen on other dates (SSWT). An extensive search around Holy Island on 27th found a total of 58 birds on the North and East shores plus the Castle and Harbour areas (MJC) whilst 40 were in the Harbour area alone on 8th (IK). Ross Back Sands held varying numbers throughout the month with a peak of 50 present on 3rd (MJC), 30 were at Stag Rocks on 15th (ASJ) and 29 were roosting on Cambois Pier (R. Blyth) on 17th (AC). 14 were in Blyth Harbour on 1st and 20th (STH), with the same number between Sptittal-Cocklawburn during a WeBS count on 14th (TBr/MMcN), and one to 11 were at several other locations.



A Shag at Blyth
27th December
Chris Barlow

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

North Shields Fish Quay regularly attracted good numbers with a peak of 110 present on 1th (ASJ). On 30th 96 flew into Alnmouth Bay and started feeding (JAR), 81 flew S at Hauxley NWT on 9th with 54 entering the reserve (HRS), Blyth Harbour peaked at 67 on 1st (STH) and both Amble and East Chevington had maximum counts of 59 individuals on separate dates (PRM/MH). At Holy Island a total of 38 were on the North and East shores plus the Castle and Harbour areas on 27th (MJC). 20 were at Ross Back Sands on 3rd (MJC) and nine or less were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Annstead Point, Big Waters NWT, Black Middens (Tyne Estuary), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Links, Newburn Haugh (R. Tyne), QE11 CP Lake and Wark.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Newburn Haugh (R Tyne) on 3rd (PRM), two birds were at Humshaugh on 5th, 16th and 20th (SW) and two were at Holy Island on 27th (MJC). Single birds were noted at 23 sites during the month.

A Sparrowhawk in a Kenton garden

Mike Smith

18th December

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Three birds, an adult male and two females, were at East Chevington on 15th & 18th (MH/IF) and two males and a female were there on 26th (ADMc) and up to two birds were noted there throughout the month (ADMc *et al.*). Single birds were noted away from East Chevington at Newham Fen on 3rd (DF), Druridge Pools on 6th, 11th and 12th (ADMc/TD), Widdrington Moor Lake on 22nd (IRD) and at Holy Island harbour on 28th (TF/JFa).

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Only two sightings involved ringtails at a site in the North on 13th (JHa), and another at an inland site on 15th (MH/AA).

Red Kite *Milvus Milvus*

Five birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 14th (IFo) and two birds were there on 20th, 21st & 27th (IfO). Four birds were at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 17th (IfO), two birds were at Crooked Oak Lane on 13th, 29th and one bird was seen on 29th (IFo). Two birds were at Blanchland on 15th (MJC) and single birds were seen at Carterway Heads on 8th, Kiln Pit Hill on 13th, Snods Edge on 20th (all IFO). A bird which flew over the observer's garden at Rothbury was his first sighting there in 16 years (TRD/JD).

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Seven birds were in the air together at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), four birds were at Plenmeller on 2nd, of which one showed shotgun fraying to its primaries (MH), four were also at Newham Fen on 12th (DF) and at Wark (North Tyne) on 27th (PRM). Three birds were seen worming in flooded fields at Gainslaw on 13th (MHu) and three were at Embley (Hexhamshire) on 27th (AJH). One - two birds were at 17 sites during the Month.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

East Chevington had three birds on 5th (IRD) and two birds were noted at St Mary's Wetland on 3rd (ASJ), East Chevington on 9th (IFo), Big Waters NWT on 22nd (DM), Druridge Pools (IDR) and Gosforth Park NR (MN) on 31st. Single birds were at Big Waters NWT, Brunton Park (Gosforth), Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Low Newton Pool, Low Newton Scrape, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Northumberland Park (North Shields) and West Hartford. A bird was noted at Wooler Common on 29th (per NNBC).

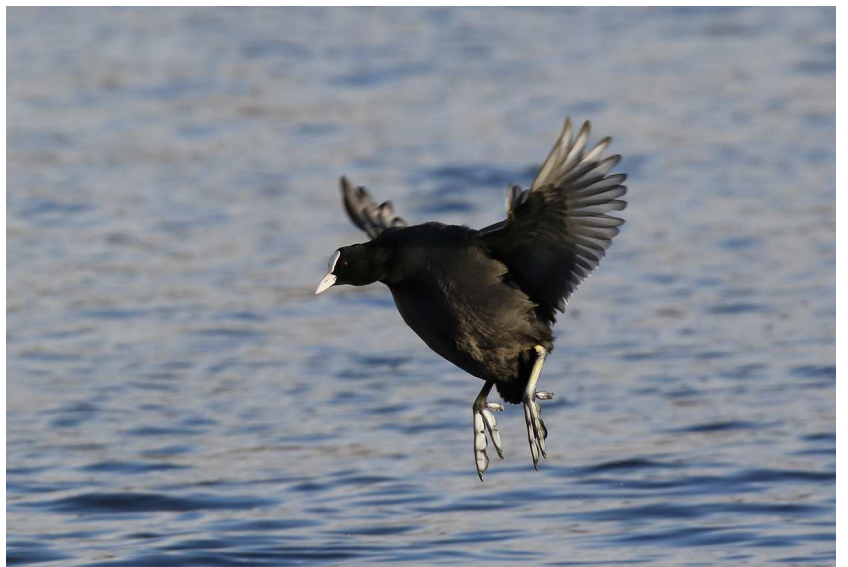
Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

21 birds at Chirton Park Dene (North Shields) on 5th (MSH) and 20 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 15th (GB) were the highest counts this month. 14 birds were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 8th (NFO) and 12 were at Big Waters NWT on 22nd (DM). One-eight birds were at seven sites during the month.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Amendment: The 110 birds that were reported at Derwent Reservoir last month on 4th (IFo) should have read East Chevington.

222 birds were counted during a WeBS count at QEII CP Lake on 13th (CDH) and 214 were noted there on 9th (STH). Other high site counts were 150+ birds at East Chevington also on 9th (MN), 85 birds at Linton Pond 27th (IRD), 81 at Killingworth Lake on 8th (LJM) and 63 at Big waters NWT on 22nd (DM). One to six birds were also seen at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT and Monks' House Pool.



A Coot lands on Killingworth Lake on 29th December by Chris Barlow

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

There were 128 at St Mary's Island on 22nd (ASJ) and 118 at Cocklawburn on 17th (MHu). Holy Island had 103 on 27th (MJC) while Cullercoats Bay and Budle Bay had 100 on 6th (MN) and 28th (TF/JFa) respectively. There were 81 at Amble Links on 10th (CSa), 74 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 21st (AP) and the WeBS survey of Spittal-Cocklawburn yielded 69 on 14th (TBr/MMcN). 60 were in the fields at Cheswick on 30th (TD) and there were 50 on the beach at Snab Point, Cresswell on 23rd (JR). Smaller flocks were noted at Whitley Bay, the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Links, Warkworth, Hauxley NWT and Seahouses, with numbers below 20 at Boulmer, Seaton Sluice, the Tyne Estuary, Bamburgh and Derwent Reservoir. There were reports of two birds at Merryshields GP, Norham and Branton GP.



An Oystercatcher at Seaton Point on 14th December by Colin Bradshaw

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

The highest counts came from Budle Bay with 2,000 on 19th (DF), from Cresswell Pond with 1,250 on the high-tide roost on 13th (CB) and from Warkworth Gut with 1,000 on 10th (AJR). There were 735 at the Coquet Estuary on 9th (MKi), 350 at East Chevington on 9th (MN), and 246 at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu). Seaton Point (Boulmer) had 231 on 1st (BS) and the flash at Low Newton had 220 on 27th (TD). Seaton Sluice had 200 on 30th (DM), a substantial increase on the 88S between 2nd/18th recorded at the Watch Tower (SSWT). 190 were at the Aln Estuary on 20th (MKi) and the WeBs survey recorded 189 at the Tweed Estuary on 12th (TBr/MMcN). Bewick Moor had 150 on 12th (BS), Hauxley NWT had 147 on 9th (HRS), Derwent Reservoir had a monthly maximum of 130 on 18th (IFo) and Holy Island had 124 at the Rocket Pool on 27th (MJC). There were 120 at Prestwick Carr on 10th (STH), Ellington on 17th (TB) and Plessey North Moor Farm, Cramlington on 22nd (LJM). St Mary's Wetland had 100 on 25th (MSH), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had 94 on 30th (TF/JFa) and Big Waters NWT had 90 on 13th (GB). Reports of smaller numbers came from Druridge Pools, Longhorsley, Blagdon and Grindon Lough. The lowest count of the month came from the WeBS at Grindon Lough, with one on 14th (MRS).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest flocks were at Budle Bay with 3,000 on 18th (CGK) and Gloucester Lodge Farm (Blyth) with 2,600 on 19th (BS). 2,500 formed a spectacular golden carpet at the Coquet Estuary on 9th (MKi). There were 2,000 at Fenwick on 17th (JAR) and 1,500 at St Mary's Island on 1st (ASJ). Boulmer had 848 on 13th (BS), Seaton Sluice had 400 on 13th (IRD) and Newton Pool at Low Newton had 350 on 29th (AJH). There were 330S in two flocks at Druridge Pools on 29th (IDR/JF). Cresswell Pond had 250 on 26th (TRD/JD), Cheswick had 200 on 22nd (TD), and Howick had 150 on 29th (JAR). Smaller numbers were recorded at Ord Moor (Berwick), Prestwick Carr, Church Point (Newbiggin), Byrness and Big Waters NWT.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

The largest flock was at Seaton Point (Boulmer) with 82 on 12th (BS). There were 59 feeding on the mud flats at Fenham-le-Moor on 15th (ASJ), 38 at Budle Bay on 17th (DF), and 31 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 27th (RPo). The Berwick Coastwatch recorded four on 15th (MHu). Numbers below ten were also observed at Church Point (Newbiggin), Howdiemont Sands-Longhoughton Steel and Low Newton, with singles at Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay), Holy Island Harbour, Druridge Pools, the Coquet Estuary and the Football Hole (Newton).

A Grey Plover
Seaton Point
Colin Bradshaw
14th December



Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

There were roosts of 60 on Ferguson's roof (Blyth Harbour) on 11th (STH), 50 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 19th (AP), and 41 at the Chibburn Mouth (Druridge Bay) on 14th (MKi). 33 were feeding on the beach in front of the fishing huts at Holy Island Harbour on 8th (IK) and there were also 33 at Budle Bay on 18th (CGK). The Long Nanny (Newton) had 31 on 28th (NFO), Boulmer had 25 on 16th (BS), and Cocklawburn had four on 17th (MHu).

November bulletin correction Ringed Plover number stated as 334 should read 33.



A Ringed Plover 22nd December - St. Mary's Island - Jack Bucknall

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

There was one with ten curlews at Cambois, in a field just west of the village, on 20th. The bird has been present for several weeks (BS).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

The highest count came from Longhoughton Steel again with 582 on 27th (BS). Budle Bay had 415 on 15th (DF), the Long Nanny (Newton) had 200 on 27th (TD) and the Coquet Estuary had 130 on 22nd (CSa). There were 126 at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu) and 120 at High Chibburn Farm (Druridge) on 28th (IDR/JF). There were 95 birds feeding in fields at Howick on 29th (JAR) and 90 at Cheswick on 30th (TD). Hauxley NWT recorded 85 on 9th (HRS), and there were 80 at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 15th (MSH). A maximum of 70N at Seaton Sluice on 19th (SSWT) accorded with a count of 69 birds at St Mary's Island on 22nd (ASJ). Warkworth had 65 on 30th (JAR), East Chevington had 54 on 9th (MN) and Holy Island had 45 on 21st (TF/JFa). There were 39 at Branton GP on 5th (IBDa/KDa), 36 feeding in a flooded field at New Water Haugh on the Tweed on 20th (MHu), and 34 at Newburn Haugh on the Tyne on 3rd (PRM). The Berwick Coastwatch recorded eight on 15th (MHu). Two birds were at Boulmer on 15th (CDB) and there was one W down the Aln valley at Whittingham on 30th (CW).



A Curlew

John Richards

Budle Bay

9th December

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Holy Island causeway had 200 on 18th (DGB/RHB), rising to 300 on 21st (TF/JFa). There were 45 at Boulmer on 10th (AJR) and 35 at Budle Bay on 21st (TF/JFa). Hauxley NWT recorded eight on 9th (HRS). There were three at the Blyth Estuary on 7th (LJM) and two at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 7th (TD).



A Bar-tailed Godwit at Seaton Point on 14th December by Colin Bradshaw

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

An adult and a first-winter bird were at the Rocket Field on Holy Island on 27th (MJC) and Budle Bay had two on 28th (TF/JFa).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

A count of birds on the north and east coasts, plus the harbour and castle area of Holy Island, produced a total of 152 birds on 27th (MJC). Other notable counts were 70 in the bay at Newbiggin on 9th (STH), 66 at Berwick Little Beach on 15th (MHu), 50 at Stag Rocks on 28th (JPL), 43 at Budle Bay on 18th (CGK) and 32 at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 22nd (IDR). One-19 were seen at Amble, Blyth, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Seaton Sluice, Snab Point (Cresswell), the River Tyne Estuary and Tynemouth. A scarce inland record was of two at Holywell Pond from 25th-31st (CGK/PRC).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

At Meadow Haven (Berwick), 46 flew S on 15th (MHu). Numbers at Budle Bay increased markedly with a maximum of 1,200 reached on 18th. Amongst this group were three colour-ringed birds; two from arctic Norway and the other from the Ythan Estuary in Aberdeenshire. (DF/CGK/JPL *et al.*). Away from Budle Bay, 600 were on the mudflats at Lindisfarne NNR on 15th and 400 near Holy Island causeway on 21st (ASJ/TF/JFa). Numbers were much lower elsewhere with a maximum of 32 at Boulmer on 27th (BS) and 23 at nearby Howdiemont Sands-Longhoughton Steel area on 17th(MKi). The River Coquet Estuary attracted 22 on 15th (JFa) and 14 were at Seaton Sluice on 30th (DM). Two-three were at Newbiggin and Druridge Pools.



A Knot feeding at Holy Island on 15th December by Alan Jack

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were reported from Druridge Pools all month with the high being four on 26th (IDR/JF/IFo *et al.*)

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Newbiggin and Boulmer were again the most attractive areas for this species with the highest counts being 225 at Boulmer on 10th (AJR) and an estimated 200 at Church Point (Newbiggin) on 7th (TD). Druridge Bay beach held birds all month with a maximum of 140 seen on 5th declining to four by 31st (IDR/JF/IRD *et al.*). Counts received from other locations were 61 at Berwick on 8th (SW), 51 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 15th (IFo), 38 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 5th (RPO), 35 at Low Newton on 9th (AJR), 23 at Berwick Little Beach on 15th (MHu) and 21 at Holy Island on 27th (MJC). Three to 18 were reported from Cocklawburn, East Chevington, Embleton, Football Hole (Newton) and Whitley Bay.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The highest concentrations remained at Lindisfarne NNR with this month's peak count being 800+ at Fenham-le-Moor on 15th (ASJ). Other counts from Lindisfarne NNR were 150 at Holy Island causeway on 21st (TF/JFa) and 135 at Budle Bay on 6th (DF). Counts received from the Blyth area were 300 on 5th (MN), 180 at a high-tide roost on Ferguson's roof (Blyth Harbour) on 11th (STH) and 151 at the estuary on 7th (LJM). At Boulmer, numbers fluctuated between 15 on 1st and 250+ on 23rd (BS/CB/TRD *et al.*). Other notable counts were 191 roosting at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 18th (AP) and 133 at the River Coquet Estuary on 3rd (RPO). Three-40 were reported from Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hauxley, Holy Island (Harbour and Rocket field) and Newbiggin.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The regular Stag Rocks flock reached a maximum of 220 at a high-tide roost on 15th, declining to 100 by 30th (ASJ/PAS/JAR *et al.*). Numbers were smaller at other sites with 50 at Newton Point on 27th (PAs), 40 between Seaton Point and Boulmer on 14th (CB), 24 at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 9th (MHu) and the peak in the Newbiggin area was 15 at Church Point on 7th (TD). One to 12 were present at Amble, Berwick, Blyth, Craster, Hauxley, Holy Island, North Blyth, Seaton Sluice, Snab Point (Cresswell), St Mary's Island and Tynemouth.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Immigration was still evident this month with newly arrived birds noted at East Chevington on 3rd (STH) and St Mary's on 5th (CB). At Longhoughton, four were feeding in a field after dusk on 25th (BS) and three were present at Longhorsley Moor on 3rd (LB/AB). Singles were reported from Edlingham Craggs, Haydon Bridge, Howdon, Linden Hall, Newstead, Northumberlandia (Cramlington), St Mary's Wetland and Whittingham.

Jack Snipe *Limnocyrtus minimus*

A notable concentration of seven was at West Hartford on 1st (STH). The peak count at St Mary's Wetland was three on 13th (MSH) with a single noted on 5th on seaweed at high tide. Other singles were seen at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT and Ross Back Sands.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Birds were present throughout the month at St Mary's Wetland with the peak count being 58 on 12th (AC). Budle Bay attracted 57 feeding on saltmarsh on 22nd (MJC) and West Hartford retained numbers from November with 32 still present on 1st (STH). At Hauxley NWT, 19 were present on 9th (HRS), 15 were at Howdon on 25th (CB) and 12 were seen at Big Waters NWT on 13th (GB). One to eight were reported from, Alnmouth, Arcot Pond and flash, Brenkley, Caistrion, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Holy Island Lough, Humshaugh, Longhorsley Moor, Middle Ord Pond (Berwick), Monks' House Pool and Newburn Haugh.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Singles were at Berwick Hill Bridge on 17th (AHB) and Doddington on 22nd (RDi).

Redshank *Tringa tetanus*

The highest counts were generally made in the SE of the area with 230 at a high-tide roost at St Mary's Wetland on 12th (AC), 186 a few miles further north at Newbiggin bay on 9th (STH), a minimum of 150 at the River Blyth Estuary on 30th (MN), 112 at Cresswell Pond on 15th (IFo) and 110 at St Mary's Island on 22nd (ASJ). Significant counts from the north were, 140 (WeBS count) at the River Tweed Estuary on 12th (TBr/MMcN) and 100 at Holy Island causeway on 21st (TF/JFa). Other reports from the River Tweed were 94 at Yarrow Slake on 14th (MHu) and 68 at New Water Haugh on 26th (MHu). The largest group reported from Lindisfarne NNR was 75 at Budle Bay on 21st (TF/JFa). Birds were present at Druridge Pools and Links throughout the month with a high of 65 on 21st and a low of two on 3rd (IDR). Other concentrations reported were 52 at Hauxley on 25th, 45 at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 8th, 39 at North Blyth on 1st, 39 at the River Coquet Estuary on 15th, 30 at Stag Rocks on 18th, 27 at Boulmer on 15th, 20 at Cheswick on 30th and 15 at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 22nd. Two-seven were at Tynemouth and Seaton Sluice. Birds were still noted inland with one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd and two at Bothal Pond on 20th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A single bird was at Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary) on 15th (BWG) and another was seen at the River Blyth Estuary on 19th-20th (BS/LJM).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

A late or wintering bird was at Ross Back Sands on 3rd (MJC).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

A few were seen throughout the month at Seaton Sluice with a maximum of 80 feeding well offshore on 5th (SSWT). The maximum numbers were 149 moving N in half an hour into a NE gale at Boulmer on 4th (BS) and 27 S at Stag Rocks on the same day (AA). Elsewhere, on other dates, 14 were offshore at Druridge Links with one to three at three other localities..

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Offshore from Druridge Links 800-1,200 came in to roost on the sea at dusk on 27th-31st (IDR), 800 were counted in a field at Widdrington (IF) and 320 were on the River Tyne at Hexham at dusk on 22nd (DLe). Smaller counts of 100-150 came from Bothal Pond, Hadston Carrs, Killingworth Lake and the QE II CP Lake with 25-50 at Druridge Pools/beach, Hauxley NWT, High Heaton (Paddy Freeman Park lake) and Shorestone.

Five ringed birds were noted at the High Heaton lake comprising two adults carrying BTO rings (one from RSPB Saltholme), adult birds from Norway and the Ythan Estuary and a 1st-winter from Finland (LMi). Ringed birds were also at the QE II CP Lake including two from Norway and one from Finland (IF).



A Black-headed Gull at Gosforth subsidence pond by Mike Carr on 31st December

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

An immature passed N at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT) and an immature was seen on the sea at Tynemouth on 6th (DRW). On 12th an immature was in the Tweed Estuary (TBr/MMcN) and two days later an adult and an immature were recorded in a WeB Survey at Spital, Berwick (MMcN).

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

Three counts at Newbiggin towards the month end included up to 25, the majority being adults (TB/STH), and records of five to nine came from Druridge Links, the QE II CP Lake, Seaton Sluice and Woodhorn Flashes. All other sightings were of single birds at Amble, Big Waters, Blyth Harbour, Cambois, Cresswell, Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Linton Pond and St Mary's Island.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

A mixed roost of 2,200, comprising this species and Black-headed Gulls, was at Wansbeck river mouth at dusk on 20th (BS). Other gatherings were 1,500 coming in to roost on the sea off Druridge Links on 27th (IDR/JF), 100-350 at Airy Holm Reservoir (nr. Shotleyfield), Alnmouth Bay, Budle Bay, the Coquet Estuary, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hadston Carrs, Merryshields GP and at Wark (North Tyne) where birds were flying towards the roost at Kielder Water. Smaller counts of up to 90 came from eight further localities.



A Common Gull

Gosforth subsidence pond

Mike Carr

31st December

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Four counts in Budle Bay varied from 52-127 of which 15-20% were adults (DF/CGK). Elsewhere, 107 were at Castle Island (STH), 42 in the Tweed Estuary (TBr/MMcN) and 17 in a roost at Yarrow Slake (MHu). A number of reports throughout from Druridge Links included up to six birds (IDR) with singles also at Big Waters and Grindon Lough.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A 1st-winter bird frequented the North Shields Fish Quay on 26th but was not reported there again (AC/DRW/IJ/MN); however, a 1st-winter seen at East Chevington on 30th was possibly the same individual (AP).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Two immature birds, 1st- and 2nd-winters, were at the North Shields Fish Quay on 16th (ASJ/AJ) and many further sightings throughout, from the Fish Quay and the nearby Black Middens, comprised single immature birds, almost certainly the same two individuals (*many observers*). Another 1st-winter was in Seahouses Harbour on 30th (ADM) and at Big Waters, a returning bird seen in previous winters appeared again there on 27th and 31st, now in adult plumage (GB).



An Iceland Gull by Alan Jack on 11th December at NSFQ

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Large gatherings were 1,200 in fields at Hadston (IF), 603 in the Tweed Estuary (TBr/MMcN), 500 feeding in stubble fields at Hadston Carrs (JFa), 425 in Budle Bay (DF), 400 at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa) and 340 at Gainslaw (MHu). Groups of 100-200 were in the Blyth Estuary, Druridge Bay CP, Monks' House Pool and Yarrow Slake with up to 60 at nine other mainly coastal localities. On 18th, some 30 at the NS Fish Quay were of the Northern *argentatus* race PRM).

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

Five records from 9th-18th were of a single adult bird which frequented the North Shields Fish Quay (AC *et al.*).



A probable Yellow-legged Gull at North Shields on 9th December by Jack Bucknall

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Two were at Grindon Lough on 14th (MRS) and single adults at Cambois, Castle Island and Wylam (Close House).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

An adult was seen heading S at Ross Back Sands on 13th, the latest-ever county record (*previous record 8th December 2001*) (MJC).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

On 4th, six flew N at dusk into an ENE gale (BS) and on 24th a single flew S at Newbiggin (Church Point) (AP).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

One flying N at Seaton Sluice on 5th was the first December site record since 2007 (SSWT) and an immature was seen in King Edward's Bay (Tynemouth) on 6th before flying out to sea (DRW) .

Auk *sp*

On 5th, 698 flew N at Boulmer in an hour (BS) and on 24th 90, including several Razorbills but mainly Guillemots, flew N in 1.5 hours (BS).

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

At Seaton Sluice, 250 passed N in three hours, by far the largest movement of the month, but few were seen on other dates (SSWT); 66 were counted offshore at Druridge Links on 24th (IDR).

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Several records of 10-40, either on the sea or passing N, came on dates throughout, recorded at Alnmouth Bay, offshore Druridge Links, Holy Island, Newbiggin, Ross Back Sands and Snab Point. Smaller totals of one to five came from nine other widespread localities.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

The largest count was 25 at Hauxley and fourteen sightings of one to eight came from other localities, mainly in Druridge Bay but also Holy Island, Newbiggin and Ross Back Sands.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

Two were in Budle Bay on 28th (JPL).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

There were a number of three-figure counts with a peak of 450 at Kingston Park Shopping Centre on 7th (AHB), around 170 at the Forum Centre (Wallsend) on 28th (CDH), 125 at Weetslade Colliery CP on 30th (GB), 120 at Blyth Town Centre on 1st (RS), 112 at Alnwick Town Centre on 23rd and 101 at Commissioners Quay (Blyth) on 7th. Two to 50 were at six other locations.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Top count was of 80 at Howdon on 13th (CB), 48 at Crooked Oak Lane on 7th with 18 there on 13th (IFo), 38 feeding in a stubble field at Blagdon on 25th (SJL) and one to four at six other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

A large feeding flock around 3,000 was near the T-junction at Druridge Bay on 5th with 1,500 on 10th and 1,000 on 9th (IF/JFa). On 29th 600 were at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), 500 at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 17th and Warkworth on 30th (JAR), 320 at Stanington on 19th and 250 at Whittingham on 8th (SJL/CW). One to eleven were at four other locations.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

There was a high count of 52 at Berwick Hill on 11th with 20 there on 23rd (AHB), 20 at Slaley Village on 15th (RMH), 16 at Brandon (Breamish Valley) on (IBDa/KDa), 13 at Ogle on 24th (AHB) and 12 at Wark (N.Tyne) on 14th (PRM). Two to ten were at Ashington, Newbiggin and Gosforth.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Two were at Derwent Reservoir on five dates from 7th to 23rd (IFo) with single birds seen hunting at East Chevington on three dates in the first half of the month, possibly preying on Starling (MH/AH). In North Tyneside singles were reported regularly at three sites with single birds regularly at Druridge Pools / Links during the month, Haughton Strother on 3rd, Holy Island on 9th, Howick on 15th, Corbridge on 16th, Longhorsley on 25th, Felton on 27th and Hemscott Hill links on 31st.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Two called most evenings during the month at Low Cocklaw (Berwick), (Fulbeck) Morpeth, Rothbury and Shiremoor (TBr/TD/TRD/JDCGK) with two also at Whittingham on 13th and Earsdon on 30th (CW/AC). Single birds were at Twice Brewed on 7th, Jesmond Dene and Shilbottle on 11th, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay on 21st.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Two were at Creighton Pools (Embleton) on 21st (PAs) with territorial males singing regularly at Shiremoor (CGK) and one at Big Waters on 29th (GB).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

A confidential roost in the south east of the county used for the last six years held five on 7th and six on 28th (GB) with 5+ reported hunting regularly on the observer's patch in the south of the county (CGK).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Two hunted at Holywell Pond on 15th, one remaining until month end (ASJ) with one at Hazlerigg on 1st and Long Nanny (Newton) on 28th (CD/NFO).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

At Boulmer a male and female were seen most days during the month (BS) with singles on many dates. Two were at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 12th and a single there on 31st (MNC) with singles regularly at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Borough Woods (Morpeth), Seaton Sluice, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) and Wark. Singles were also at nine other widespread localities.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Three were at Gosforth Park NR on 29th with two there on 28th (MJC) and at Yearle (pair) on 1st, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th, Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads) on 17th and Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 31st. Singles were at 14 other widespread localities.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

There were just two reports of singles, at Kielder Forest drive on 11th (ADM) and East Woodburn on 29th (TWi).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Six separate birds were observed in the Breamish Valley on 1st (TD); four birds were at Alnwick Moor on 9th (MH). Three birds were at Longhoughton on 2nd (JAR), Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IfO), Prestwick Carr on 29th (GB) and on Holy Island on 30th (ADM). One - two birds were noted at 39 sites during the month.



A Kestrel poses for Alan Jack at Tynemouth on 1st December

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were at Beal on 1st (DF), River Coquet Estuary on 2nd (CSa), Holy Island on 8th (SW/IK), Bellingham on 14th (PRM), Bedlington on 15th (JR), North Shields Fish Quay on 16th (ASJ), Cheswick (BWG) and Monks' House Pool (IDR) on 22nd.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two adult birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 8th (IFo), two birds were chasing each other at Doddington on 16th (PHa/AHa) and two were also seen flying at the same time at Prestwick Carr at dusk on 29th (CDB). Single birds were noted at 17 sites during the month.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Eight were at North Shields on 27th (DLo) with two to six on three other dates at various locations. Eight was the monthly maximum at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 28th (MJC) with three over Exhibition Park on 3rd, at Heaton Park on 31st and more than two at Jesmond Dene on 2nd.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On 29th eight were at Gosforth Park NR (MJC), three at Ellington on 31st (TB), one to two at Milkwell (Corbridge) on several dates with two at six other locations and singles at a further four.

Magpie *Pica pica*

A roost at Whitelea Chase (Cramlington) attracted 60 on 14th (STH). 57 was the peak count at Balliol Business Park (Longbenton) roost on 9th with 46 on 31st and 34 on 21st being well down on previous years (ADM). 22 were at Howdon on 13th and went to roost at Cramlington on 15th with one to four regularly at Druridge Pools and Links and one to six at a further six locations.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Around 1,000 gathered in trees late afternoon at Fawdon (Newcastle) on 5th (GB), 120 fed in stubble field at Howick on 31st (JAR), 65 at Hadston (Druridge Bay) on 13th (CB) and 22 at Sleafy Village on 15th (RMH). Two to 12 were at five other locations.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

There was a high count of 250 at Cresswell on 13th (CB), 72 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo), 36 at Shorestone on 22nd (IDR) and 30 at Hadston (Druridge Bay) on 13th (CB). Four to 16 were at three other locations.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

50 were near the T-junction at Hadston (Druridge Bay) on 10th (IF), 30 Arcot Lane on 22nd, at Town Moor (Newcastle) on 15th and 16th (DM/GB) and 26 on the beach eating shellfish at Hadston (Druridge Bay) on 25th (SW). Two to 28 were at Druridge Pools & Links during the month with two to three at Howick and Shorestone.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

One was at Seahouses Farm junction (Howick) all month (MJC *et al.*) and one at Sewage Works / Climbing Tree Farm (Morpeth) on 25th and 30th (ADM/TF).



A Hooded Crow by Mike Carr at Howick on 1st December

Raven *Corvus corax*

Six flew S over Winnows Hill (Sleafy) on 31st (PCI), five at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 2nd (TBr) with two at Lordenshaw on 9th, Kielder Forset Drive on 11th, Howick on 14th, Holy Island on 15th, Beal on 29th, Edlingham on 30th and Commonburn (Cheviots) on 31st. Singles were at eight other locations.

Corvus sp.

360 flew S at Ord Moor (Berwick) on 20th (MHu).

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

A ringing session at Corbridge Common found 43 consisting of 29 re-traps and 14 new (DLe) with 18 ringed on 6th and 10 on 22nd at Sleafy Hall (RMH). Ten were at Kielder Forest Drive on 11th and Holystone Woods on 17th (ADM/IRD) with four on garden feeders at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 12th and one to two at Alnmouth, Longhorsley and Wark.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Three were at Nunnykirk on 12th (IRD), two at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on four dates with singles on a further six, two at Warkworth on 14th, Felton on 18th and East Linden on the same date. Singles were also at Mitford and Rothbury.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Seen regularly at Prestwick Carr with seven on 31st, the peak being two pairs and a single (CDB), six on 21st (IK) and one to three on four other dates. Three were at East Linden on 18th, two at Heighley Gate (Morpeth) on 9th, Derwent Reservoir on 18th, Westriding Wood (Whittonstall) on 25th and Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 31st. Singles were at a further 14 other locations.



A Willow Tit at Prestwick Carr on 30th December by Chris Barlow

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 4th at Humshaugh 83 were ringed at a CES site with 50 in a mixed Tit flock there on 16th (SW) whilst at Slaley Hall nine were ringed on 6th and five on 22nd (RMH). One to eight were at Druridge Pools and Links during the month and one to four at four other localities.

Great Tit *Parus major*

13 were in the Blagdon / Stannington area including seven on feeders at Stannington Church (MH) with just one to two reported from Druridge Pools and Links, Howick and Prestwick Carr.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

There was a wintering flock of 40 at Blagdon on 30th (SJL), 30 at St Mary's Island on 28th (IJ), eight at Shorestone on 22nd (IDR) and six S over Gosforth Subsidence Pond and at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 31st (MJC/STH). Singles were at R. Blyth Estuary and over Druridge Pools and Links both on 28th.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

One was heard singing at East Chevington on 5th (TD), 9th (MN) and 12th (TF/JFa). At Big Waters, one was heard singing throughout the month and seen briefly on 22nd (DM, GB). One was also heard at the road pool, Woodhorn on 17th (AP).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest numbers were at Gosforth Park NR, with 27 on 28th (MJC), Druridge Links, with 25 on 12th (IDR/JF), Ellington, with 22 at Chugdon Wood on 31st (TB) and Longhorsley Moor with 20 on 3rd (AB/LB). Howick had 16 on 20th (PHa/AHa), Newburn Haugh on the Tyne had 15 on 3rd (PRM), and Yearle also had 15 on 11th (DGB/RHB). There were 14 at Blanchland on 15th (MJC) and flocks of 12 at Warkworth, Milkwell (Corbridge) and Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay). Smaller parties were reported at Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads), Wark (North Tyne), Cramlington, Seaton Burn, Embleton, Holystone and Derwent Reservoir. Garden visitors were observed at Tynemouth, Fulbeck (Morpeth), and Longdyke (Shilbottle).



A Long-tailed Tit at Prestwick Carr on 30th December by Chris Barlow

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

A maximum of two (one a possible Siberian) were at Druridge Pools on 5th (TD) and 19th (IDR/JF), and singles were at Alnmouth on 2nd (IDR), Combhills at Slaley on 15th (RMH) and Woodhorn on 20th (AP).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Three (one male, two females) were in a garden at Tynemouth on 12th (DRW). Garden sightings of female birds were also reported from High Heaton (Newcastle) on 28th (LMi) and Gosforth on 29th (AHB). At Gosforth Garden Village, a female was present from 19th until the end of the month (MJC).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

20 were at Kielder Forest Drive on 11th (ADM) and ten were at Pundershaw in Wark Forest on 31st (PRM). Singles were at Druridge Pools and Links, Low Stead (Howick), Milkwell (Corbridge) and at various locations in Cramlington throughout the month.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

The highest counts came from Druridge Pools and Links, with 16 on 28th (IDR/JF), and Holy Island, with 11 on 30th (ADM). Smaller numbers were recorded at Shoreston (Seahouses), Prestwick Carr and Whittingham, with singles at Alnmouth and Quarry Cottage.



A Wren at Tynemouth-on 17th December by Colin Bradshaw

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

There were four at Humshaugh on 4th, 28th and 29th (SW), and four at Gosforth Park NR on 28th (MJC). Three were at Hareshaw Linn, Bellingham on 15th (IRD) and at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 29th (ASJ) and 31st (MNC). Two were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th and 31st (TB), at Norham on 19th (SW), and at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 2nd and 27th (RB/MB). Singles were at Blagdon, Darras Hall, Crooked Oak (Carterway Heads), Bedlington, Hexham, Arcot Hall GC (Cramlington), Lincoln Hill, Berwick and Harbottle.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Gosforth Park NR had 11 on 28th (MJC). There were two at Longhorsley on 11th (AB/LB) and at Humshaugh on 27th-28th (SW). Singles were reported from Branton GP, Wylam, Cramlington, Big Waters NR, Wark (North Tyne), Milkwell (Corbridge) and Hexham, where one was singing on 28th (AJH).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

4,000 were feeding in stubble fields at Hadston Carrs (Druridge) on 8th (JFa). 2,000 were observed leaving their roost in great swirls at East Chevington on 15th (MH) and a murmuration of 1,000 came in to roost at Haydon Bridge Railway Station on 1st (SJH). 1,000 were feeding in a stubble field at Newsham (Blyth) on 8th (SJL) and there were 1,000 at Kiln Pit Hill on 19th (IFo). Smaller flocks were at Shoreston (Seahouses), Fowberry Farm (Bamburgh), Druridge Pools & Links, Grindon Lough, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and Howick, and a single bird was at Ellington Colliery on 4th (IDR).



Starlings at St. Mary's Island - 22nd December by Jack Bucknall

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The maximum monthly count from Prestwick Carr was 40 on 25th (MH). A 1.5km walk along Horton Burn, Cramlington produced 30 on 2nd (LJM). There were 25 at Backworth Pond on 21st (MNC), and 20 at Howdon on 13th (CB). Druridge Pools & Links had 14 on 10th (IDR/JF), and Holy Island had 14 at the Straight Lonnen on 27th (MJC). Smaller groups were reported at Shoreston (Seahouses), Milkwell (Corbridge) and Dinnington and there was a coastal influx of seven birds at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The largest flock was 250 at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 17th (TBr). Prestwick Carr had 150 on 31st (PCF). There were 140 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), 125 at Burntshieldhaugh (Hexhamshire) on 27th (AJH), and 125 at Longhorsley on 28th and 30th (AB/LB). Budle Bay and West Ord (Berwick) had flocks of 120 on 12th (CGK) and 20th (MHu) respectively, and there were 115 at Shoreston on 22nd (IDR). Flocks of 100 were at Lucker on 14th (JPL), Hemscott Hill, Cresswell on 15th (TB), Dinnington on 30th (PCF) and Pundershaw, Wark Forest on 31st (PCF). Fulbeck (Morpeth) had 95 on 31st (TD) and there were 70NW at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 31st (STH). Smaller flocks were at New Moor (Ashington), Brenkley (Blagdon), Felton, Big Waters NR, Low Newton and Lincoln Hill. Groups of ten and below were observed at widespread locations throughout the county. There was a mixed flock of 150 Fieldfares and Redwings at Dilston (Corbridge) on 2nd (AJH).



A Fieldfare at Prestwick Carr on 31st December by Chris Barlow

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

There were 230E at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 15th (STH), observed leaving a plantation roost after sunset. 175 were feeding on holly berries at Mickley Square on 23rd (DLe) and 100 were at Burntshieldhaugh (Hexhamshire) on 27th (AJH). New Moor (Ashington) had 75 on 6th (TB) and Prestwick Carr had 60 on 31st (CDB). There were 55 at Norham on 19th (SW) and 50 mixed with the flock of 250 fieldfares at Low Cocklaw on 17th (TBr). Smaller flocks were at Backworth Pond, Felton, Big Waters NWT, Brenkley (Blagdon), Beal and Gosforth Subsidence Pond. Groups of 20 and below were reported from Arcot Lane (Cramlington), Wark (North Tyne), Milkwell (Corbridge), Druridge Pools & Links, Stocksfield and Holy Island. There was a mixed flock of 150 redwings and fieldfares at Dilston, Corbridge on 2nd (AJH).

A Redwing

Prestwick Carr

31st December

Chris Barlow

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Modest numbers were reported this month, with a maximum of five at Budle Bay on 22nd (MJC) and at Druridge Links on 31st (IDR/JF). There were three at Cocklawburn on 17th (MHu), two at Alnmouth village on 2nd (IDR), and two at Howdon on 25th (CB). Singing birds were at Brandling Park, Jesmond (Newcastle) on 2nd (GB) and at East Cramlington LNR on 21st (LJM).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

There were 27 in the saltmarsh at Budle Bay on 22nd (MJC), and an unusually high count of 14 at Druridge Links on 30th (IDR/JF). Twizell, near Ogle, had eight on 19th, and there were four birds perching together at the Aln Estuary on 20th (MKI). Seaton Point (Boulmer) had three on 14th, as did East Ord (Berwick) on 18th (MHu). There were two at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 5th (TBr). Singles were at Milkhope (Blagdon), Warkworth, Big Waters NWT and Shoreston (Seahouses), with singing birds at Gosforth Subsidence Pond, Linden Hall (Longhorsley), Ross Back Sands, and Yarrow Slake (Tweed Estuary).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

16 were singing at dawn at Southfield, (Cramlington) on 18th (DM), and nine were singing at Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 2nd (LJM). There were seven at Prestwick Carr on 31st (CDB, a monthly maximum of four at Druridge Pools & Links on 28th (IDR/JF) and two at Alnmouth village on 2nd (IDR). Singles were at Low Stead, Howick and Annstead Point, Seahouses.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

One was at North Blyth on 1st (TB) and the long-staying female/juvenile bird at Tynemouth Pier remained present throughout the month (IF, MN, PRM, DRW). One was on the shore at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 29th and 31st (AP) and an impressive male was at Annstead Point (Seahouses) on 22nd (IDR).



A Black Redstart at Tynemouth on 14th December by Alan Jack

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

There were six between Seaton Point and Boulmer on 14th (CB), six between Howick and Boulmer on 15th (CDB), and six at Druridge Pools & Links (IDR/JF) and at Cheswick (TD) on 30th. There were five at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu), five at the Snook (Holy Island) on 7th (IK) and five at Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC). Four birds were reported at Alnmouth Dunes, Alnwick Moor, Budle Bay, Monks' House Pool and East Chevington, and three were at Prestwick Carr, Old Hartley and Amble. Pairs were at St Mary's Island, Longhorsley Moor and West Hartford, and Berwick Coastwatch recorded a pair on 15th (MHu). Single birds were seen at several inland locations, including Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon), Upper Coquetdale, Beaconhill (Cramlington) and Ros Castle (Hepburn Wood).



A Stonechat at St. Mary's Island - 22nd December by Jack Bucknall

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Six birds were noted along the Upper Coquet on 6th (TRD/JD). On 1st, three were seen at Allensford and in the Breamish Valley (AJN/TD). Three were also at Felton on 2nd and Blanchland on 15th, including singing birds (NFO/MJC). One was in Jesmond Dene on 2nd with two there on 11th. Singles were seen at a further four locations.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

The largest count made was of 120 at Ellington Colliery on (IDR). 39 were counted in 1.5km of Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 2nd and 47 was an excellent count on garden feeders at Northburn there on 16th (LJM). 37 were noted at Slaley on 15th (RMH). 30 were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 14th (CB). 22 – 28 fed at garden feeders and roosted in a Holly tree all month at Marden Estate (Cullercoats) (ASJ). Three to 15 were at three other sites this month.



House Sparrow bathtime at Boulmer on 15th December by Chris Barlow

Tree Sparrow *Passer Montanus*

50 were noted in fields at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 18th and 28th (IF). Also in Blyth, a minimum of 30 were at Newsham on 8th and at Hadston 27 were counted on 5th (SJL/ASJ). Garden feeders at Linden Hall attracted 21 on 17th (NFO). Up to 17 were at Sleafy Hall all month, where 12 were ringed (RMH). One -12 were noted at a further 16 sites during the month, including ten at feeders at Tynemouth and six likewise at Marden Estate, Prestwick Carr and Weetslade.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Four birds were seen at Druridge Pools on 28th (IDR). Two were noted at three sites and singles at two others.



A Dunnock by Mike Carr - Gosforth 28 Dec 2020

Yellow Wagtail sp.

One of unconfirmed race was observed briefly in flight on 31st at Prestwick Carr (CDB).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Four were seen at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 10th (MJC). Two were noted along the Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 5th, with one - two there on several further dates (LJM). Single birds were observed at 30 other locations this month.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

11 were seen at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 10th, with nine there on 31st (MJC). Three were also seen at Newcastle Town Moor, Druridge Links and St.Mary's Island and Weetslade during the month. Two were at Shoreston on 22nd and singles were seen at a further eight sites.



A Pied Wagtail

Howick

15th December

Chris Barlow

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Small numbers are overwintering, with 15 seen at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 31st and 13 at Prestwick Carr on 5th being the largest groups (STH/MH). Birds well inland unusually, involved nine at Crooked Oak Lane on 29th and eight at Brough Law (Ingram) on 22nd (IFO/NFO). Six were seen at West Hartford on 1st and five at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) (LJM). Three were at St. Mary's Wetland on 10th and two were seen at Fenham Le Moor on 15th, with two also at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 31st (ASJ/MJC). Single birds were seen at a further five sites, including one in the Cheviots.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Four were noted at Shoreston on 22nd (IDR). One to three were seen on many dates at Druridge Pools and one was seen at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 9th (IDR/NFO/TF/MJC *et al.*).

A Water Pipit
Budge Field
15th December
Peter Tapsell

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

20 were counted between Holy Island's North Shore and Harbour on 27th, with 13 noted on 31st (MJC/ADM). 15 were at Boulmer on 16th and 12 there on two other dates (BS/CB). 11 were watched at St. Mary's Island on 3rd. Six were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 15th and four at Tynemouth on 4th (ASJ). One to three were seen at six other sites during the month.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Four were seen at Budle Bay on 12th and 22nd (CGK/MJC). Nearby, three were noted at Ross Back Sands on 20th (MJC). On 30th, two were noted at North Shore (Holy Island) (ADM). A single was seen at Amble on 19th (PRM).

A Rock Pipit-
showing-*littoralis*-
features

Tynemouth
7th December
Colin Bradshaw



Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

A large flock at Crooked Oak of 170 on 5th had, by 20th, increased to 200 (IFO). A minimum of 100 were at Benridge Moor on 11th. 75 were feeding at Stickley Farm (Cramlington) on 14th (SJL). Numbers seen at Druridge on many dates during the month peaked at 60 on 30th (IDR/JF). One to 25 were also seen at six other sites, including at garden feeders at Marden Estate (4) and Chapel House Estate (1).

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

A minimum of 14 at Crooked Oak was the peak count on 17th of the birds present this month (IFO). Very few were noted elsewhere, with one at feeders at East Cramlington and at Low Cocklaw and Hexham.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Two remained in the Abbey Mill fields (Morpeth) area on 10th and two flew past Gosforth Park on 28th (ADM/MJC).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

23 were counted at Walker Riverside Park on 28th (ASJ). 14 was the maximum that fed at garden feeders at Rothbury all month (TRD/JD). 12 were noted at Gosforth Park and at Rising Sun C.P. on 29th and 30th and nine were at Gosforth Subsidence Pond on 25th (MJC/ASJ). One to eight were also seen at an impressive 31 locations.



A Bullfinch by Mike Carr at Gosforth on 25th December

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

A pre-roost gathering observed on several days at Linden Hall, peaked at 70 birds on 20th (IFO). Elsewhere, one to ten were noted at 12 sites.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

Some large gatherings were noted this month, with 300 with other finches in a weedy field at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 31st being the largest. 225, counted from photos, frequented the dunes at Cresswell on 15th. 150 were seen at Druridge Links on 27th and at nearby Hemscott Hill that day. Lower numbers were seen on other days, some overlap no doubt being involved here (IDR/JF/TF/JFa). 60 -76 were the peak counts this month made at The Snook (Holy Island) (ASJ/SW). 45 were at Guile Point on 9th (IBDa/KDa). 14 - 40 were observed at seven sites. Three to ten were at three sites including, unusually, St. Mary's all month.

Linnet*Linaria cannabina*

Several notable flocks were seen, with 300 feeding in a game crop at Benridge Moor on 11th and 300 also at Crooked Oak on 17th, the flock present since 1st (SJL/IFO). 200 were watched at Lincoln Hill and at Warkworth Lane on 27th (SW/SJL). 170 were seen at Stannington on 19th and 150 in fields at St. Mary's on (SJL/ASJ). Possibly a different flock was made up of 150 birds at Catraw Farm (Stannington) on 5th (MH). Near Heighleygate on 9th, 150 were also seen feeding in stubble (SJL). 140 were noted at Warkworth on 30th (JAR). Flocks of 120 were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 6th and at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 16th (IFO/SJL). Also at Cramlington, 100 were at Stickley Farm on 14th (SJL). One -55 were also seen this month at a further 14 sites.



A Linnet at Tynemouth on 1st December by Alan Jack

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

Five were watched at Gosforth Park N.R. on 29th, with three seen there the previous day and two at the nearby Subsidence Pond on 31st (MJC). Three were with Lesser Redpoll at Holystone on 6th (TRD/JD).

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis flammea caberet*

A feeding flock of 150 was seen at Holystone on 6th (TRD/JD). A flock seen on several dates at Gosforth Park, peaked at 120 on 28th (MJC). 62 were also seen on 31st at Gosforth Subsidence Pond (MJC). 60 were at Caistron on 5th and 40 at Rising Sun C.P. on 18th (JD/ASJ). 30 + were watched at Longhorsely Moor on 3rd (AB/LB). One to 15 were noted at seven other sites.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Two flocks totalling 31 flew W at Lynemouth Dene on 16th (MJC). The wintering group at Rising Sun C.P. remained, with ten to 14 seen on 1st and 2nd, reducing by the month's end to six (ASJ/IF/CB). Eight were seen at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 1st and at Lucker on 2nd (DM/RPo). Seven flew N at Melkridge on 6th when five were at Holystone (SJH/TRD/JD). One to four were at nine other sites.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

70 – 150 were observed in dunes and fields at Druridge Bay on 1st and 5th and 20th (TD/ASJ/MH/AA *et al.*). 83 were counted at Blagdon on 18th (SJL). 65 were at Cresswell dunes on 5th and 60 at Howick the following day (ASJ/JAR). 44 were seen at Warkworth on 11th and 42 at Tynemouth on 30th and 41 near Gosforth Park on 10th (RPo/ASJ/MJC). One to 38 birds also seen this month at 16 other sites.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Around 100 were in the Breamish Valley on 1st (TD). About 80 were at Hyon's West Wood on 23rd and 80 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (DLe/IFo). 60 + were noted at Big Waters on 13th and 60 seen at Gosforth Park and Alnwick during the month. 50 were seen at Warren Burn on 7th and 40 at Felton on 17th and 35 at Rising Sun C.P. on several dates (GB/MJC/RPo/NFO/ASJ). One to 30 were also watched at a further 12 localities this month.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

On 20th, 67 was the count at Humshaugh (SW). 30 were in stubble at Stannington on 5th (MH). 25 were seen near Felton on 2nd (NFO). 14 -20 noted at four other sites and one to nine were at a further 17 sites during the month.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

The peak count was 20 at Longhorsley moor on 30th (AB/LB). 12 were seen at Warkworth, Hadston and Northumberlandia this month (RPo/ASJ/SJL). Ten were at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 18th with six at St. Mary's on several dates (IF/ASJ). Six were also seen at Warkworth and Druridge Pools (JAR/IDR/JF). One to five were at a further 17 sites.

Lapland Bunting *Lapponicus calcarius*

Two were found at Ross Back Sands on 13th and 20th (MJC). A single was at St. Mary's on 14th and 17th (AC/MSH).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

20 flew in at Bamburgh and headed N on 2nd (DF). Six to eight frequented North Blyth all month (ASJ/MN/LJM *et al.*). Five were at Ross Back Sands on 13th, with one there earlier on 3rd (MJC). Two were seen at St Mary's on 14th and 17th (AC/MSH). Two were watched at Holy Island on 27th and singles were at Newbiggin, Howick and Beadnell during the month.

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

One was on the River Tyne at Howdon on 13th (CB).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

One now frequents the River Coquet in Rothbury with the bread-fed mallard by the pedestrian bridge over the river. (TRD/JD). First seen on 9th.

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

There was a single at Big Waters on 13th, presumably the same individual as in November (GB).

Birds of Unknown Origin

No sightings

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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), Helen Snaith (Tits to Stonechat), Alan Jack (Dipper to Buntings).

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

RECORD SUBMISSION

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

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

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

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

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com

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

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

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. Subs are due on 1st October each year. Membership forms can be downloaded from the club website.

If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know. Our bank details are on the membership form.

For membership enquiries please contact ntbc@jobentley.plus.com

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

Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

NTBC WEB SITE

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

There are:

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

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

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

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

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

BIN 2020

Your Club Needs You!!!

We are still short of a volunteer – or volunteers – for the following sections of BiN 2020:

- Gulls
- Skuas
- Parakeet, shrikes, crows and tits

If we can't get these sections covered, then BiN 2020 might be delayed and/or we may need to look at producing in a different format.

Please contact Andy Mould at highroller10@btinternet.com ASAP if you can help.

Many thanks



Twites and Linnets

St. Mary's Island

17th December

Jack Bucknall