



# The Pied Flyer

North East Norfolk Bird Club

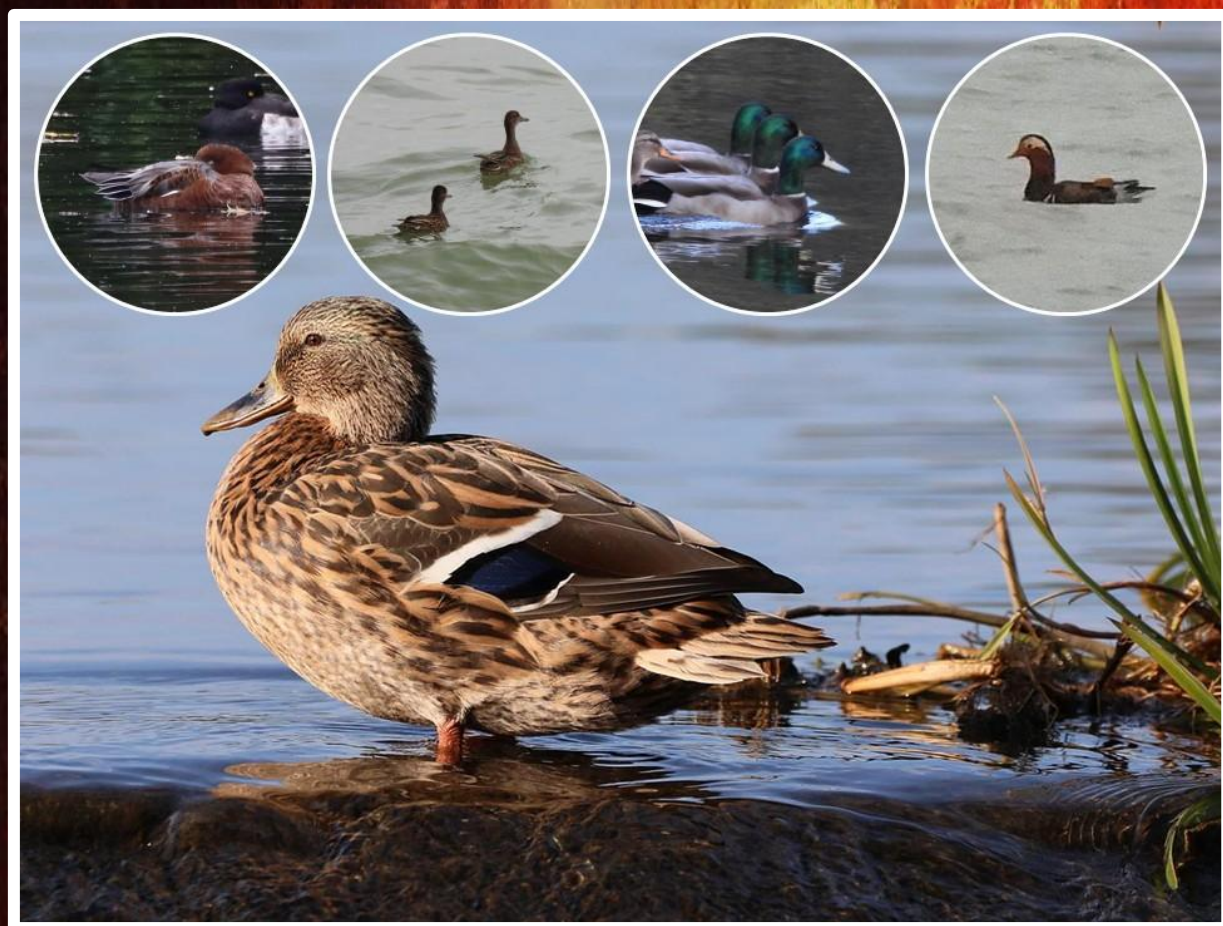


**November 2025 – Issue 125**

**The NENBC Monthly e-Newsletter**

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**Through a Lens**





By Trevor Williams



I won't lie, it's not always been easy to come up with something to say in this bi-monthly column, which I've written now since the first year of this newsletter - over a decade ago. Sometimes a theme has thrown

itself at me but at other times I've struggled to find a focus. But not so this month! For 'dear reader' this is **my final Chair's Corner, before I stand down from the job at our AGM in just 4 weeks.**

This club is special. It was created to fill a gap - a gap in the record books. Making sure that sightings of birds in this corner of Norfolk would be shared more freely and the data kept for the future. We wanted to be a welcoming club, which valued beginners as much as the experts. We wanted to be sociable - to provide information, education and entertainment. We wanted to be meaningful. I think we've gone a long way to achieving that.

This has been a team effort - too many to name individually - but across the decade many people have made a lasting contribution. It's been my very great pleasure to be a part of it.

So what of the future - what, I am asked, will I do with all this spare time? Well folks you won't be surprised to know that I've still got unfinished business. For generations bird clubs and birders have taken from nature - me included. Now it's pay-back time. The speed and impact of climate change, loss of habitat - as our ever-burgeoning population seeks places to live, work and play - almost always at the expense of nature, and the ever-present chemicals and plastics in our countryside are all having an accelerating detrimental impact on our wildlife. The very thing that defines us as a tribe is under threat and some species are in terminal decline. So I'll be spending more time on practical conservation - trying to reach what I regard is a healthy equilibrium - an hour spent on conservation for every hour I spend birding! Now there's a challenge.

**Let me finish by saying a huge thank you to everyone who has been a part of this wonderful club past and present. Keep it up!**

## **Looking back – here's Trevor's first 'official' Chair's Corner from the November 2015 edition of The Pied Flyer:**

It's been a fabulous autumn for birding in North East Norfolk, as one friend put it, 'the best autumn birding this millennium'! The recent wave of scarce and rare migrants began on the 11<sup>th</sup> October, the day of the last NENBC outdoor meeting to Cley NWT. We'd seen a few birds of interest in the morning, as Andy Clarke our Outdoor Events Coordinator reported on page 5 below, but nothing to compare with the fabulous, confiding and long-staying Isabelline (Daurian) Shrike, which was found on Beeston Common that afternoon. It was followed, later that day, by a Pallas's Warbler near Sheringham and by a host of rare migrants from the east over the next couple of weeks. The list of 'celebrities' to make it onto the NENBC year list included Yellow-browed Warbler, Olive-backed Pipit, Red-flanked Bluetail, Rough-legged Buzzard, Great Grey Shrike, Shore Lark & Bluethroat - for further details see Paul Laurie's Monthly Round-up from page 12 in this Newsletter.

With the total number of sightings logged on the club website so far this year approaching the six thousand mark, it's clear that the NENBC has already made a significant impact on bird finding, recording and reporting in this area. That, together with a well-attended programme of indoor meetings during the winter months - we've already got this season's series of talks off to a great start, first with Richard Porter and more recently Andy Clarke - and a number of special events like the 'Big Sit' and the Club Social and Activities Evening, back in May, is all evidence that our new club is off to a flying start.

If we are to continue with that success, and ensure that the club sticks to its aims 'to bring together people with a love and concern for birds in our area, to share knowledge and information, encourage participation in exploring our rich wildlife heritage and promote awareness of our threatened natural environment. ... (striving) to be a sociable, inclusive and informative club which plays a vital role in the local birding community', it needs to be properly run. As a new club, run on democratic principles, we need to ensure that we have a constitution in place to guide our elected committee to use club resources to best effect. You can help us do that by attending the December Quiz Night, which starts with a short but essential AGM! Looking forward to seeing you all there...



By Carol Thornton



## Welcome to our November newsletter!

October was a busy month for NENBC events. Our annual Coordinated Seawatch was on the 11<sup>th</sup> and a good number of members got their listings off to a great start for the club's new seawatching badge despite the less than ideal weather on the day, on this occasion too calm. Write-ups of the morning from [page 28](#). We additionally ran one of our new Pop-Up Seawatches on the 23<sup>rd</sup> at Cromer where the weather brought on from Storm Benjamin should have been ideal. Alas, those of us that braved it could barely stand up and ended up squished in the landward side of the North Lodge Park shelter seeing very few birds! It was also our Autumn Walks Week and we had a good number of members who turned out to enjoy these varied enjoyed this You can read all about it from [page 23](#). As well as all this we delivered the usual mid-week and weekend walks and the end of month evening talk; read about them [here](#) too.

Looking forward we are back to our standard offer of events for November but get the date in your diary for our **Christmas Social on the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> December** – see [page 15](#). This always popular event coincides with our **AGM** for which we will be sending out the obligatory emails next week. You'll need to book to attend at the hall so we will be asking you to get in touch with us with that nearer the time.

A quick plug for our partner organisation, local wildlife conservation charity [Felbeck Trust](#). A few tickets still available for their fundraising social event on 21<sup>st</sup> November at Cley Village Hall with local musicians Bandwidth. Details on [page 14](#). A worthwhile cause and a good night out!

'Through a Lens' for the front cover last month was 'Ducks' and we had a great selection to choose. Here are my favourites, from the top left, Wigeon [David Griffiths], Teal [Mark Clements], Mallard [Doug Cullern], Mandarin [Mark again] and Mallard [Steve & Barbara Lines]. For December, our theme will be 'Robins' so get clicking!

Here on the left are my **favourite member photos** from October, selected from the ones that didn't make it on to our monthly NENBC Bird Highlights section of the more unusual species. Great Spotted Woodpecker [Jane Crossen], Red Kite [Steven & Barbara Lines], Ringed Plover [Richard Farrow], Starling [Doug Cullern], Cormorant [Richard Farrow]. Thanks all!

## Welcome to our new members – look forward to seeing you soon!

\* Patrick Lott \* Christine Parkin \*  
\* Martin Tickler \* Sonia Spinks \*  
If you have any queries, just drop us an email





By Paul Laurie

All records are from the NENBC website and submitted by members unless otherwise stated.

≈ 8,455 individual records covering 181 bird species were added in October

**October 2025:** A good month for scarce species with records including **Grey Phalarope**, **Glaucous Gull**, **Little Auk**, **Bearded Tit** and **Shorelark** as well as reasonable numbers of **Yellow-browed Warblers**. The highlight was a **Pallas's Warbler** at Sidestrand. The five-year average for species recorded in October on the club website is 8,600 (2020 – 2024). In 2025 there were 8,455 records. The average number of species reported for the same period is 175, in October 2025 we recorded 181 species.

**Barnacle Goose:** One record of four birds west past Sheringham on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**White-fronted Goose:** A single east past Weybourne Camp on the 19<sup>th</sup> was the first record of the autumn.

**Whooper Swan:** On the 5<sup>th</sup> a single flew west at Sheringham. On the 7<sup>th</sup> a group of seven birds moved west along the coast being reported from Beeston Bump, Sheringham and finally Weybourne. All so on the 7<sup>th</sup> a single adult was photographed flying south-west over Saxlingham. The last record of the month was a family of four birds seen over Weybourne Camp and reported over Kelling Heath. *Photo 1 courtesy of David Griffiths*



**Mandarin:** On the 9<sup>th</sup> a female was present on the Dilham Canal. A series of records during the last week of the month included coastal records from Cromer East Cliff of a female/immature west on the 27<sup>th</sup> and then on the 29<sup>th</sup> a drake west off Sheringham and then Weybourne. On the 30<sup>th</sup> a female was seen at Gunthorpe. *Photo 2 courtesy of Steven & Barbara Lines*



**Pochard:** An irregular species in the NENBC area and only recorded at Felbrigg Park this month. A pair on the lake on the 12<sup>th</sup> and then a flock of eight birds on the 14<sup>th</sup> that left the area in an easterly direction. *Photo 3 courtesy of Trevor Williams*



**Velvet Scoter:** On the 7<sup>th</sup> a bird flew east off Cromer East Cliffs. On the 13<sup>th</sup> 4 – 5 birds were seen west past Cromer East Cliffs then past Sheringham and finally Weybourne.

**Long-tailed Duck:** During the last week of the month one - two birds were seen offshore at Weybourne & Sheringham with a drake west off Weybourne on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Coot:** On the 12<sup>th</sup> a calling bird was recorded via Noc-Mig over Sheringham.

**Red-necked Grebe:** Between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> singles were recorded on the coast between Mundesley & Weybourne.

**Whimbrel:** A late bird was seen flying west with Curlew on the 10<sup>th</sup> at Weybourne.

**Ruff:** One – two birds recorded on pig fields at Saxlingham from the 8<sup>th</sup> until the 31<sup>st</sup>.



**Purple Sandpiper:** From the 5<sup>th</sup> until the 30<sup>th</sup> a single was reported by eleven members on the coastal protection rocks at Sheringham. *Photo 4 courtesy of Mark Clements*



**Woodcock:** Migrants were seen at Cromer East Cliffs on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Weybourne on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Happisburgh on the 21<sup>st</sup>, two at Weybourne on the 28<sup>th</sup> and one on the 31<sup>st</sup> around Weybourne Camp.

**Jack Snipe:** One report of a bird on Sheringham Golf Course on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Grey Phalarope:** Two birds present off Weybourne & Weybourne Camp on the 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> and a single offshore at Mundesley on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Sabine's Gull:** An unaged bird was reported off Sheringham on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Glaucous Gull:** A juvenile was found at Weybourne on the 26<sup>th</sup> and was present the next day then on the 28<sup>th</sup> two birds were seen at both Sheringham and Weybourne. *Photo 5 courtesy of Geoff Snelson*



**Little Auk:** Several reports between the 25<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> that may relate to just two birds moving east and west along the coast between Mundesley & Weybourne Camp. Four sightings were reported from Sheringham on the 27<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 6 courtesy of Mark Clements*



**Puffin:** One west at Mundesley on the 24<sup>th</sup> was the only report.

**Leach's Petrel:** One east on the 27<sup>th</sup> off Weybourne.

**Cattle Egret:** Two birds appeared around Felbrigg Park Lake on the 27<sup>th</sup> and were present until the 31<sup>st</sup> at least. *Photo 7a courtesy of Ken Thornton and inset 7b with frog, Andrew Crossley*



**Great White Egret:** On the 1<sup>st</sup> four birds passed east at Weybourne and inland at Saxlingham on the 21<sup>st</sup> a group of three birds flew south at 10.30am.

**Hen Harrier:** A male present on Beeston Common on the 7<sup>th</sup> and a "ringtail" flew south-west over Cromer on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Long-eared Owl:** A roosting bird was found at Gunthorpe on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Short-eared Owl:** Incoming migrants through the month were seen at Weybourne on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Sheringham on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Weybourne Camp on the 19<sup>th</sup> when two birds were also seen at West Runton and finally, for the month, one at Sheringham on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Hobby:** One flew east over Beeston Bump on the 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Ring-necked Parakeet:** On the 19<sup>th</sup> a bird flew west over West Runton village.



**Hooded Crow:** Mundesley was once again home to this bird between the 18<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Bearded Tit:** Typically, mobile in October with four birds at Happisburgh on the 1<sup>st</sup> and one on the 17<sup>th</sup> around Beeston Common. *Photo 8 courtesy of Bob Cobbald*



**Shorelark:** On the 27<sup>th</sup> a bird was found on Weybourne Cliffs and was seen on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, on the 30<sup>th</sup> two birds were present. *Photo 9 courtesy of Mark Clements*

**Swallow:** On the 28<sup>th</sup> a bird was seen over Sheringham Golf Course.

**Yellow-browed Warbler:** A great series of records in October starting on the 14<sup>th</sup> with one at Weybourne increasing there to three by the 18<sup>th</sup> and still one bird present on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Beeston Common had singles on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Sites with single records were Muckleburgh Hill on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Aylmerton on the 16<sup>th</sup>, Trimingham on the 17<sup>th</sup> and on the 18<sup>th</sup> birds at Sheringham Golf Course/Cemetery. *Photo 10 courtesy of Jane Crossen*

**PALLAS'S WARBLER:** A bird found at Sidestrand on the 19<sup>th</sup> and present the next day was twitched by eight club members. The ninth record for the club since the first at Sheringham on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2015. All records singles; with six records from the north-east coast sites of Happisburgh (3), Trimingham (2) and Sidestrand (1). The longest staying bird was one at Weybourne Camp November 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> 2021. *Photo 11 courtesy of John Hayward*

**Lesser Whitethroat:** An eastern race of this species was seen on Weybourne Camp on the 28<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Song Thrush:** High count of 59 south-west over Saxlingham on the 19<sup>th</sup> during a substantial thrush movement. *Photo 12 courtesy of Mark Clements*

**Mistle Thrush:** Common and widespread in the club area a count of 30 birds around Sheringham Cemetery on the 12<sup>th</sup> easily the highest number recorded during the month. *Photo 13 courtesy of Jane Crossen*

**Redwing:** Small numbers reported from coastal sites during the month including a peak of 412 west over Beeston Common on the 17<sup>th</sup> the same day 3200 birds flew west over Saxlingham. On the 19<sup>th</sup> a further 1980 were seen to flew south over Saxlingham. *Photo 14 courtesy of Jane Crossen*

**Fieldfare:** At Saxlingham birds seen on Vis-Mig peaked on the 17<sup>th</sup> with 1326 west then on the 19<sup>th</sup> a further 670 birds flew west. *Photo 15 courtesy of Jane Crossen*

**Ring Ouzel:** Only reports were from Saxlingham with one on the 13<sup>th</sup> and two on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Black Redstart:** On the 12<sup>th</sup> a bird was found at Bale feeding on insects attracted to sugar-beet waste. On the 24<sup>th</sup> a bird was found in Sheringham and was still present on the 30<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 16 courtesy of Trevor Williams*

**Redstart:** On the 6<sup>th</sup> a bird was found at West Runton and on the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> a bird frequented Beeston Common. Inland a bird was reported around Selbrigg Pond and on the 17<sup>th</sup> a bird was found in Sheringham Cemetery. *Photo 17 courtesy of Mark Clements*



9



10



11



12



13





**Yellow Wagtail:** A late bird was seen at West Runton on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Brambling:** One - eight birds reported from many sites during the month with high counts of 26 west over Beeston Common on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 57 south over Saxlingham on the 19<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 18 courtesy of Andrew Crossley*

**Hawfinch:** Three birds over Beeston Common on the 8<sup>th</sup> and one over Sheringham on the 10<sup>th</sup> were the only records.

**Common Crossbill:** Nine locations recorded birds this month; Aylmerton & Beeston Common had the most records and Weybourne Heath the most reliable site. On the 1<sup>st</sup> seven birds were in trees at Saxlingham before they flew south and seven birds were over Aylmerton. Beeston Common recorded seven on the 8<sup>th</sup> and eleven on the 9<sup>th</sup> and then 25 on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The highest count on Weybourne Heath was a flock of twenty on the 13<sup>th</sup> while the highest recorded total was 39 east, in three flocks, over West Runton on the 19<sup>th</sup>. A bird flew in off the sea at Cromer East Cliffs on the 11<sup>th</sup> and the furthest inland record was of three birds on Buxton Heath on the 16<sup>th</sup> when Aylmerton recorded a flock of ten and a single bird.





Three were seen at Selbrigg on the 12<sup>th</sup> and four over Muckleburgh Hill on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. There were no reports in the last week. *Photo 19 courtesy of Mark Clements*

**Lapland Bunting:** Three records of singles all flying west. On the 9<sup>th</sup> over Sheringham Golf Course, on the 10<sup>th</sup> past Beeston Regis and on the 15<sup>th</sup> at Paston.

**Snow Bunting:** One – two mobile birds present around Weybourne between the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup>. On the 19<sup>th</sup> three birds were seen at Happisburgh. One bird Sheringham on the 25<sup>th</sup>, two birds Weybourne on the 26<sup>th</sup> and one bird at Mundesley on the 27<sup>th</sup>. On the 28<sup>th</sup> four birds were feeding on newly sown ground at West Runton by the 30<sup>th</sup> the number had increased to eight birds with five remaining on the 31<sup>st</sup>. *Photo 20 courtesy of Richard Farrow*

20



## November: What to look forward to .....



**November:** The sea often becomes the focal point in November as the gatherings of **sea-ducks**, **divers** and grebes increases and scanning through them can produce **Velvet Scoter** and **Slavonian Grebe**, a species not recorded yet this year in the NENBC area. The large flocks of **Pink-footed Geese** will attract their cousins with **Bean**, **White-fronted** and “**Lesser White-fronted**” all possible. A northerly blow will see more **Little Auks** along the coast as well as small numbers of **shearwaters** and **skuas**. A mild spell of weather may encourage a **Hoopoe** or **Pallid Swift** to visit, and November is a good month for **Red-rumped Swallow** and **Richard’s Pipit** records. Farmland walks are worth the effort with the possibility of a “**white-winged**” gull in with the pigs or a **scarce bunting** among the feeding finches. If it is to be a **Waxwing** (*library photo courtesy of Mark Clements*) winter then they will begin to arrive in numbers during November.





## Noc-Mig Highlights

Calling all those members out there who dabble in nocturnal recordings of over-flying birds ... please do pop your confirmed records on the website. They don't count towards your Star or Green badges but they are an interesting addition to our data. Supporting sonogram images welcome. But what about those off-the-wall identifications the analysis software comes up with? The advancements in technology are great but they are a guide rather than a definitive ID so you do need to check your recordings yourself using website databases like Xeno-Canto or BirdNet for example. Please don't log these 'dodgy' records on the website, but do drop us an email to let us know your best 'if only' records of the month!



12-Oct	Wigeon		Sheringham	Andrew Clarke	Nocturnal flight calls (12) over garden, 0340; presumably small flock of migrants
12-Oct	Moorhen	1	Sheringham	Andrew Clarke	Nocturnal flight calls (very loud) over garden, 0127
12-Oct	Coot	1	Sheringham	Andrew Clarke	Nocturnal flight calls over garden (6), 0010
12-Oct	Oystercatcher	1	Sheringham	Andrew Clarke	Nocturnal flight calls over garden, 0250

## Ringed Bird Highlights

Just a reminder to folk logging ringed birds on our website. Although we send our data off en masse to the county recorder through BirdTrack uploads, we don't directly contact ringing coordinators of individual projects – that needs to be down to you if you have a sighting. Project coordinators love to get data on their birds – after all, that is the reason for ringing them - so here is a reminder on how to do it from Chris Lamsdell: “Please report your colour ring birds to the relevant project co-ordinator which can be found through the EU Colour Ring website <https://cr-birding.org/>. Locally ringed Turnstones (red flag three letters starting JAA), Black-headed Gulls (red rings starting 2C00) and Marsh Tit (white rings 00-99) can be reported through <https://iceni.shinyapps.io/sightings/>. Metal only rings can be reported to the BTO <https://app.bto.org/euring/lang/pages/rings.jsp>”



## Mediterranean Gull – Jane Crossen, Sheringham Cemetery

15-Oct	1	In playing field to the east of the cemetery. Bird was ringed but it was disturbed before I could get a decent view of the ring. With thanks to MC who thinks it could be a German-ringed bird. Record shots only unfortunately.
18-Oct	1	In playing field. Was ringed (silver) but the grass is quite long so I couldn't get a good view before it flew.
20-Oct	3	Playing field area. One ringed - really clear view of it and I've sent the details to the possible ringing site. Will update when I hear back. It's possibly a Spanish ringing.
21-Oct	3	Another ringed bird amongst them. This one was definitely different to yesterday's ringed bird as it only had a silver ring. Very difficult to see - the playing field needs mowing!

B[5A25]

Metal: ESAMX04716

Taxa: Larus melanocephalus

Capture date (dd/MM/YYYY): 23/01/2024

Place: ENTRE ROTA Y CHIPIONA, CADIZ

Coordinates: 36°37' N / 6°20' W

Sex: Unknown

Age: Nacida hace más de 2 años (Euring 6)

Other: Costa Ballena

OFICINA DE ANILLAMIENTO

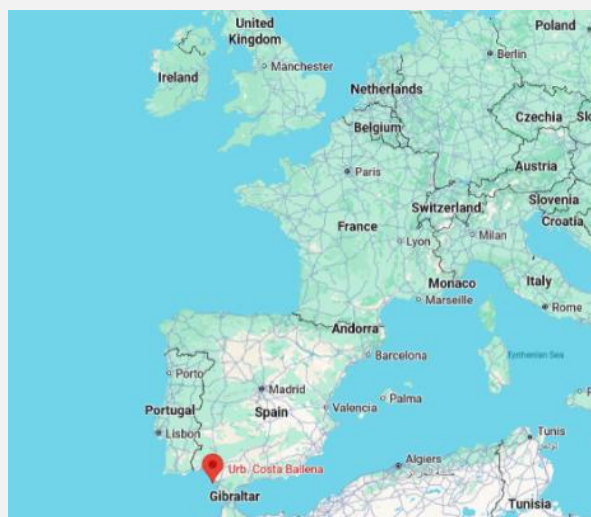
Centro de Registro de Datos

Ringing/Recovery Data List:

Code	Material	Class	Color	Color I	Capture date	Campaign	Group	Ringer	Registry type
ESAMX04716	METAL	--	--	--	23/01/2024	Camp 2024	ZAMALLA	Manuel Vázquez Castro (660019)	ANILLAMIENTO
5A25	PVC	Ring	Dark Blue	White	23/01/2024	Camp 2024	ZAMALLA	Manuel Vázquez Castro (660019)	ANILLAMIENTO

List of observations :

Date	Place	Coordinates	Observer	Kms	Days
15/10/2025	--	52°56' N / 1°11' E	Jane Crossen (JaneCrossen)	--	--
20/10/2025	--	52°56' N / 1°11' E	Jane Crossen (JaneCrossen)	0.0	5





## Member Highs, Lows and Ponderings

All member comments are taken from the notes section of the website. We are getting a lot more detail on the birds and their activities these days which makes these summaries longer, but much richer, so please keep it up everyone!



**Brent Goose** | "All West bar 1 (LOST PRESUMABLY!) 2 HOUR SEA WATCH | Russell Page | Weybourne Camp | 18<sup>th</sup>

**Pink-footed Goose** | "700+ in stubble field near edge of area near Crostwight church. Been building up during the past few weeks. Had quick scan but didn't see any other species." | Steven & Barbara Lines | Ridlington | 17<sup>th</sup>

**Mute Swan** | "Flying west. Heard the wing noise before seeing them. Nice to see something interesting when you're just hanging out the washing!" | Stephanie Witham | North Walsham | 12<sup>th</sup>

**Woodpigeon** | "2 adults under seed feeder in back garden, juv on windowsill and then flew into the conservatory, easily to catch because it had a growth on its beak " | Val Stubbs | Weybourne | 18<sup>th</sup>

**Great Black-backed Gull** | "most gulls have now left the pig fields but the GBBG number is increasing." | Paul Laurie | Field Dalling & Saxlingham | 8<sup>th</sup>

**Sandwich Tern** | "One west offshore & a second at east end sitting with Black-heads but possibly ill as gaping." | Moss Taylor | Weybourne Camp | 28<sup>th</sup>

**Arctic Skua** | "3 hour coordinated seawatch - pale phase adult west and nearly missed as was overhead and then flew over town! 3 hour coordinated seawatch" | David Griffiths | Sheringham | 11<sup>th</sup>

**Great Northern Diver** | "East with red throated. Very good size comparison. One hour seawatch" | John Hurst | Mundesley | 20<sup>th</sup>

**Cattle Egret** | "With Cattle near Lake ,waited ten years to see this species in our club area ! Many thanks to Andrew Crossley for spotting." | Doug & Jenny Cullern | Felbrigg Park & Lake | 27<sup>th</sup>



**Cattle Egret** | "they spend a considerable amount of time picking ( presumably ) insects off the cattle , while the cattle are lying down." | Phil Borley | Felbrigg Park & Lake | 31<sup>st</sup>

**Grey Heron** | "Hunting on bank of The Mermaid ." | Stu Buck | Burgh-next-Aylsham | 31<sup>st</sup> – *this one is in as I mis-read it as "Hunting on the back of the Mermaid"!*

**Little Owl** | "Really nice sighting. I heard a lot of alarm calls and I mean, A LOT! It clearly wasn't a Sparrowhawk. Something was being mobbed by a Blackbird which saw it off to another tree and then another tree and then another tree! Ended up in the south east corner where even the Long-Tailed tits were having a go!! Fascinating. I've never seen one there before. Rubbish record shot! But was lucky to get that." | Jane Crossen | Sheringham Cemetery | 21<sup>st</sup>

**Kestrel** | "on ground in beach car park being annoyed by seven magpie surrounding it, however was not intimidated by them and constantly jumped towards the magpies in an effort to persuade them to clear off" | Phil Borley | Weybourne | 10<sup>th</sup>

**Peregrine** | "male & female off-shore together - earlier the male went west with fresh Blackbird kill - during 11/2 hour sea-watch" | Trevor Williams | Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs | 13<sup>th</sup>



**Jay** | "All engaged in hiding acorns" | Dave Billham | Beeston Common | 21<sup>st</sup>

**Magpie** | "A surprising amount of 'Jay-harassing' taking place by these birds" | Dave Billham | Beeston Common | 21<sup>st</sup>

**Carriion Crow** | "Including a bird with Hooded Crow in its background." | Tony Pope | Weybourne Heath | 16<sup>th</sup>

**Hooded Crow** | "A 'I don't believe it ' moment. Our favourite has returned to find it's ash tree no longer available so now perching in the adjacent conifer. Now flown south. The conifer is by just north of the yellow salt bin on the south high street ." | John Hurst | Mundesley | 18<sup>th</sup>

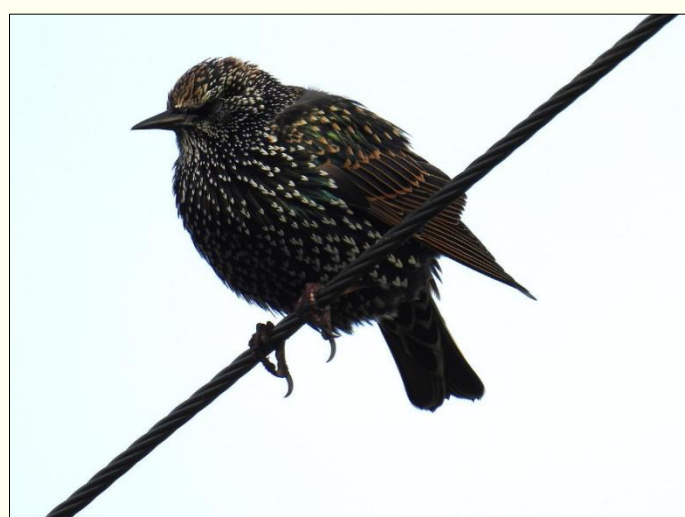
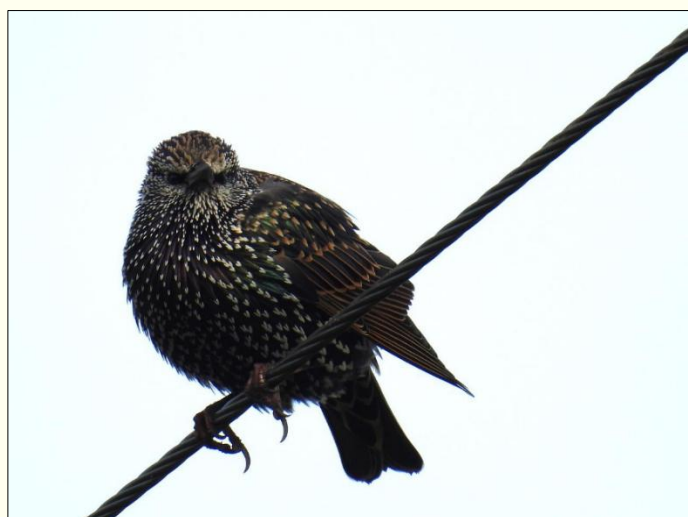
**Blue Tit** | "An amazing total garden/Butts Lane today. 5 together in one birdbath and 2 in an adjacent water feature all at same time." | Dawn & Tim Wright | Upper Sheringham | 29<sup>th</sup>

**Pallas's Warbler** | "Cracking gem of a bird. Many thanks to the finder. Always a joy to see this little sprite with its yellow wing-bars, supercilium, central head stripe and rump!" | David Griffiths | Sidestrand | 19<sup>th</sup>



**Starling** | "250x Rough estimate - hardly any at first but started to drop in over a four-hour period. Some were very tired. Lovely birds - we shouldn't ignore the beauty of common birds!" | Jane Crossen | Sheringham Cemetery | 18<sup>th</sup>

**Starling** | "1270x 1040 west and 230 'in'/west (7 15 to 8 15 am approx). A big day for Starlings coming in off/moving today with many, many more seen up until dusk in the Sheringham area" | Dawn & Tim Wright | Weybourne Cliffs | 31<sup>st</sup>



**Starling** | "All overhead from same direction - from north. ?? Connected to large influx noted on morning seawatch" | Stu Buck | Buxton & Little Hautbois | 31<sup>st</sup>

**Blackbird** | Very dishevelled F flew across garden, landed on aerial of no 31, clucking vociferously - I suspect it had just escaped from a Sparrowhawk attack" | Val Stubbs | Weybourne | 11<sup>th</sup>

**Song Thrush** | "migrant birds , my fav ,greyish backed, striking birds" | Brian Shaw | Weybourne | 20<sup>th</sup>

**Mistle Thrush** | "In the cemetery area. I've never seen as many Mistle Thrush in this area as I have this year and they've all been very vocal." | Jane Crossen | Sheringham Cemetery | 21<sup>st</sup>



## Conservation Corner - can you help??

Would you be interested in joining or team of article writers for the Conservation Corner slot? We really want to continue with this thought-provoking and varied theme but we do need folk to have a go at putting 'pen to paper'. Can you help? If you don't fancy writing an occasional article, please let us know any suggestions for what you'd like to see covered in this spot and we'll get researching!

## WhatsApp Groups.....



The club runs two WhatsApp groups:

**NE Norfolk sea-watching** is administered by Trevor Williams and is for any active and participating seawatchers along the north east Norfolk coast whether they are club members or not.

**NENBC Alerts** is administered by Tony Forster and is solely for club members to share news of interesting birds within the club area – no gossip allowed!

The advantage of both these groups is that you can get instant details about a bird sighting rather than having to rely on looking at the website later in the day and missing out. If either of these groups are of interest, drop us an email on [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) and we'll put you in touch with the appropriate administrator. You'll need to provide your mobile number and sign up to the group rules. Both groups are free but to get the most out of them you'll need to be able to use the internet on your phone when you are out and about.

## WhatsApp group for general NENBC communications

### Mobile numbers required to sign up!

This new group has been set up so we have a means of contacting members quickly and easily without going through the email / website route. We plan to use it for things like ....

- 📱 sending out reminders a day or two before scheduled club events
- 📱 letting folk know where we are running a short-notice 'Pop-Up' event outside of our published schedule
- 📱 advising to any last-minute changes to scheduled events

Unlike the other WhatsApp groups, this one will be set up so that only the Admins can send messages out; **members won't be able to respond** via it so there shouldn't be a lot of traffic on it. It **won't be used as a bird alert** so won't duplicate the purposes of our other two.

If you are interested in signing up, then **please let Carol have your mobile number**. Please be aware that like all WhatsApp groups, your number will be visible to all those on the group. There isn't a way to hide them.

## Contributions to the Newsletter .....

The newsletter is reliant on input from others, is certainly much richer from having a wide range of articles included and we could really do with some of your interesting stories! You really don't have to be a birding 'expert' to write something for our newsletter. It can be long or short, with or without photos, whatever suits. Please have a think about whether there is anything you could write about for a future publication. The copy deadline for any issue is the last day of the previous month, but it would be good to know in advance if you are planning to submit an article.

*Looking forward to hearing from you!*

Club Sponsor **Bird Ventures** offer a 5% discount on own-branded wild bird food to NENBC members all year. Have a look at the Bird Ventures website [www.birdventures.co.uk](http://www.birdventures.co.uk) as they also supply feeders and much more with good advice and help for garden bird enthusiasts. Free local delivery available

Bird Ventures, The Wildlife Shop,  
9B Chapel Yard, Albert Street,  
Holt, Norfolk NR25 6HG

Telephone 01263 710203  
[salesbirdventures@aol.com](mailto:salesbirdventures@aol.com)

Opening Hours:  
Monday  
10:15am–4:00pm  
Tuesday to Saturday  
9:00am–4:00pm  
Sunday Closed



## Restocking our 2<sup>nd</sup> hand bookstall

We could do with some more book donations for our birds and other nature stall at our indoor events. We have rather a lot of Field Guides to the rest of the world so don't really need any more of those, but we could do with some more reading material from a bit closer to home. If you have any books languishing on your shelves that might suit, bring them along to one of our events or let us know on

[nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk)

## Speaker Suggestions .....

We are always on the lookout for recommendations for speakers for our indoor programme, or ideas you may have of subjects you'd like us to find a speaker on. If you have any thoughts, please drop Alan an email on [ahstevens52@gmail.com](mailto:ahstevens52@gmail.com)

Thank you!



# What's On?

General Event Information – please see our **website** or ‘upcoming events’ in this newsletter for **fuller details** of what we have on offer



## Overview

-  Talks on the last Thursday evening of the month at Gresham Village Hall from Sep-Nov and Jan-Apr, also available live via Zoom
-  Walks around Felbrigg Park on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday morning of the month Sep-Jul
-  Varied monthly weekend walks and the odd evening one from Sep-Jul
-  Special events including:
  -  Coordinated Seawatch
  -  Walks Weeks
  -  Christmas Social & AGM
  -  New Year's Day Birding Challenge
  -  NENBC Big Sit
  -  Global Big Bird Day activities
  -  Birding for Beginners Course
  -  Short-notice themed ‘pop-up’ sessions

Car-sharing is always encouraged, or even better, walking or cycling.

## General Walks Information

Please wear clothing suitable to conditions - footpaths can be muddy at any time of the year.

**YOUNG PEOPLE:** Children are always welcome if accompanied by well-behaved adults and we would be happy to see young members aged 16 and 17 attend unaccompanied with prior written consent from a parent or guardian who has also supplied a phone number where they can be contacted in an emergency.

**DOGS:** We regret no dogs.

**EQUIPMENT:** Binoculars are always recommended to gain full enjoyment from your birding and for some of our walks, a scope is definitely useful but don't forget you'll have to carry it!

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Unfortunately most of our walks aren't suitable for wheelchair users but please do contact us on [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) to see which of our events are or could be adapted to be so.

**BADGES:** Birds seen on club-area walks count towards individual Star badges & if you walk or cycle from home, they also count towards your Eco-Badges.

**BOOKING:** For the Felbrigg Park Walks no booking is required so just turn up on the day if you fancy it, although it is always nice to know to expect you so feel free to let us know! For the other, generally weekend, walks, and Walks Week, we sometimes require advance booking and if this is the case it will say so on our publicity

## General Talks Info

**LOCATION:** Our indoor events are benenerally held at Gresham Village Hall and unless otherwise stated they start at 7:30pm. Most are also available live via Zoom. The postal address is East Beckham Road, Gresham, Norfolk, NR11 8RT but note the published postcode might not take you to exactly the right spot! If you are coming through Aylmerton and Lower Gresham, turn right by the church (just after the school) and the hall is on your left. If you are coming through Gresham, turn left at the church (just before the school) and the hall is on your left. If you are dropping down from East Beckham, the hall is on your right opposite the church.

**AT THE HALL:** Those of you attending in-person at the hall for our regular evening talks can expect a selection of home-made cakes plus tea, coffee, hot chocolate, wine and cold drinks during the interval and of course the chance to socialise with other members. We can cater for gluten-free or other requirements if you let us know in advance. We have a 2<sup>nd</sup> hand ‘natural world’ book stall for you to purchase from / contribute your no-longer-required stock to, supplies of our club publications to buy (including our annual bird reports), a display of member photos and details on our upcoming events. We are happy to offer members' old birding equipment for sale at our events (or in our newsletter) with a contribution going to club funds.

**NO BOOKING REQUIRED BUT...:** It is always nice to know if you are coming to an evening talk but by no means essential so if it takes your fancy on the evening, please just turn up as we would love to see you! If you want the Zoom link though, you will need to let us know in advance!

**ACCESSIBILITY:** The hall is wheelchair accessible. The level car park at the hall is shingle but we can reserve a space next to the entrance if you need it.

**PARKING:** Access to the hall car park is off East Beckham Road, opposite the church. There is additional parking on the road along the side of the church itself and an overflow car park has kindly been offered to us by Gresham Village School. The school car park is located on Cromer Road to the left of the school as you face it and at the left-hand end of the row of houses – about a 300m walk from the hall. Please park considerately to allow maximum number of cars in the car parks and on the road but with enough space for passing traffic to be able to get through, including agricultural vehicles. We can send you a map of the locality on request.



## Upcoming Events

In the coming weeks we have a couple of our regular **Felbrigg Park Walks**, a monthly mid-week favourite, an early November trip out of area to the popular **RSPB Titchwell Marsh Nature Reserve** followed by **Holkham Estate** in December. Our **November Evening Talk** this month is about Bird Migration from the ever-popular Aldina Franco. Don't forget to get the date in your diaries for our **Christmas Social and AGM** which this year is on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December. Look forward to seeing you at these events soon.

### Felbrigg Park Monthly Walk 9:00am to 11:00am with Trevor Williams

This sociable walk caters for all levels of birding ability so come and give us a try. We take a leisurely stroll around the park and lake, route dependent on the local bird and other wildlife recently reported or likely to be present on the day. We see around 40 bird species on an average walk and even on the 'worst' of days more than 30. And there is a café stop at the end of the walk.

20<sup>th</sup> November | 17<sup>th</sup> December

Please come and join us on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month (except August), you would be most welcome!

**NO BOOKING REQ'D | PARK & MEET:** Main Felbrigg Hall car park – free for National Trust members | **DISTANCE:** 2 miles | **ACCESSIBILITY:** Not suitable for wheelchair users but could be for those with limited mobility – please get on touch. | **FACILITIES:** Café and loos at the Hall | **BADGES:** In area so all appropriate individual records count towards club badges.

### Holkham Estate 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Walk with Janice Darch and other Com members Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November | 9:00am to 1:00pm

We'll be checking out the beach, doing a bit of seawatching from the dunes, scanning the fields around Lady Anne's Drive and observing from the hides. We hope to see Shore Larks and Snow Buntings, seabirds, ducks and geese.

**NO BOOKING REQ'D | PARK & MEET:** Lady Anne's Drive and meet at the café The Lookout at the far end of the drive. Parking fee £7-£13.50 | **DISTANCE:** approx 3 miles | **ACCESSIBILITY:** Some of the walk is on paths and boardwalks but some will be on sand and uneven terrain so not suitable for wheelchair users or those with limited mobility. | **FACILITIES:** Toilets are available and there is a café. | **BADGES:** Not in the club area so species can't count toward club badges this time – sorry!

27<sup>th</sup> November 7:30pm to 9:30pm  
Gresham Village Hall and via Zoom

### "Bird migration in an increasingly human dominated planet" a talk with Prof Aldina Franco

The talk will explore how bird migration is changing due to global environmental change, human conflict (e.g war in Ukraine) but also rewilding. Aldina's research group has been investigating changes in the migratory behaviour of birds, including white storks in Portugal and in the UK, and greater spotted eagles in Eastern Europe. In Portugal, the majority of the white storks are no longer migratory while only 40 years ago the majority of storks crossed the Sahara desert and overwintered in the Sahel region from Senegal to Lake Chad. White storks have been reintroduced in the UK, after being absent for more than 600 years, new migratory routes and strategies have been established. This talk will explore the drivers and mechanisms behind changes in migratory behaviour.



Doors open 18.30

Dancing – Bar – Raffle

Tickets £15 including delicious vegetable chilli and sides

Tickets available from Eventbrite – search 'Felbeck'

This is a charity fundraising event in support of local conservation charity Felbeck Trust



# **Christmas Social and AGM**



**Come and join us  
for a lovely  
sociable evening  
in the lead up to Christmas!**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December  
7:30pm to 10:00pm  
Gresham Village Hall**

**If you haven't already, get the date in your diaries!**

**The Annual General Meeting element will additionally be available online via Zoom but the rest of the evening will be hall-based.**

**We'll get the business side of things sorted first as we start the evening off with our AGM, a chance to vote on various aspects of the club and to listen to a Review of 2025 with outgoing Chair Trevor Williams.**

**THOSE WHO ATTEND AT THE HALL IN PERSON can later enjoy the fun of our CHRISTAMS SOCIAL EVENT which will consist of a light-hearted QUIZ from last year's winning team Kirsty, Tim, Stu and John along with a HOT AND COLD BUFFET AND DRINKS. We will have team tables spread out in the large hall, there will be prizes available and party hats are very much encouraged throughout.**

**We will need ADVANCE BOOKING for both the hall and the Zoom bit nearer the time.**





**By Alan Stevens**

Still in our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year with its theme of migration between Africa and the UK, for our October meeting we welcomed Martin Tickler who came to speak about a species spending our summer with us, House Martins, about which we have not had a dedicated talk before.

Martin's background includes studies at Cirencester Agricultural College followed by two years on cattle and sheep stations in Western Australia. On his return to the UK, he joined the Game Conservancy (now the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust) as a trainee Game Consultant and spent his working career covering the Eastern Counties with regular visits to France and occasionally Denmark. Always interested in natural history his passion for House Martins began over 40 years ago when a pair arrived to nest at his cottage in Suffolk. Last season the colony consisted of 34 pairs in a mixture of natural and artificial nests. He was closely involved with the BTO House Martin Survey and nest recording work and now contributes to House Martin Conservation UK and to the Suffolk Birds Group campaign to help these declining birds.

**Note to Zoomers:** I am sorry that the sound wasn't so good at the start of this month's talk. We resolved the issue it would appear by using 2 mics and those that stayed reported back that this made a big difference. If it was your first time Zooming with us and you opted out, I hope your experience won't make it your last!



With 40 years of experience with these summer visitors Martin had much to relate and started with a quick look at HM (House Martin) nests, natural and artificial, how they are colony nesters, the importance of 'the mud season' and when we can expect to see breeding under way. His earliest records show 1<sup>st</sup> May with later broods fledging in



October and even November. He explained that HM are natural cliff nesters beneath overhangs but that they are now far more familiar under overhangs on buildings with the most favoured spot being at the top of a gable wall where it adjoins say a chimney, and the nest can be 'stuck' to three sides. He told us that textured wall paint offers an advantage in grip and in his experience results in the collapse of fewer nests and gave tips on the spacing of artificial nests which should be sufficient to allow natural nest building in between. An observational tip we were given was to tempt HMs into artificial nests by imitating poo at the entrance hole with a chalk mark – clever idea that as it gives the impression that the nest has been used before. Artificial nests can also be modified to provide a step below the entrance. On cliff faces they check for the 'crumbliness' of the surface to make sure that their nests won't lose adhesion and this behaviour is replicated on the walls of buildings.



Martin looked at the courtship of HM, at how males close their tail feathers into a pin when attracting a mate and how the pair select a nest site together.

Moving on, our speaker turned our attention to the nesting process of HMs. A complaint levelled at HMs and Swallows is the mess they create with their droppings which can lead householders to destroy nests, although not so much today as in the past. A droppings board beneath the nests can minimise this but the board must be installed with a gap between its back edge and the wall otherwise the HMs will build under the board!



Birds returning early, often to the same nest/nest site, use old nests as shelter until conditions are optimal for breeding. They rest and sleep, recover from the journey and wait. During the winter nests are used for shelter other species with our speaker having recorded 18 Wrens in one nest. Martin told us that HMs are increasingly found on new housing developments still under construction as they are a source of mud for nest building although the houses, lacking eaves are unsuitable. Building is carried out during the morning and stops in the afternoon to allow the mud to dry. In the evening and the early morning, the work in progress is defended. Mud is the essential



ingredient for nest building and the birds find it at the margins of natural water sources, ponds and rivers, farmyards, building sites (as above) and almost anywhere a hopefully reliable source can be found. Martin has noticed unexpected places an example HMs picking mud from under a dripping crop sprayer while he ruminated 'What was in the sprayer?' Martin stressed what we can do to help HMs during the breeding season by simply providing and maintaining a supply of mud for them especially during a dry spell. This will also encourage them to nest nearby. Obviously, clay-based mud is stronger than sand. Old nests are readily adopted and repaired. Nesting building takes place over 10 days or so in good weather. Over his 40 years of monitoring Martin has seen broods of between 1 and 5 with later broods being smaller from later arrivals and success, as with other species, is weather dependant.

HM nests are susceptible to invasion by House Sparrows and Blue Tits also adopt them and we heard that nests are predated by Great-Spotted Woodpeckers and attacks by Goshawks have been recorded. There is some thought around the anti-bacterial properties of white feathers which are frequently carried to nests and Martin had noticed in the past that feathers were being taken from the roadside when shed from lorries transporting chickens – one of many little observations related.

Drawing towards the end of his talk Martin ran through a number of facts to round off the nesting process of HMs, incubation is carried out by both parents in short 20 minute shifts, that they do not carry eggshells away from the nest, fledging usually happens at 24/5 days, small chicks are disposed of, vocal changes in the chicks as they call for food from the parents, when ready to fledge the young are taken out one at a time on a short trip, perhaps just around the house, and are helped back by one adult hanging on to the outside of the nest for identification. Add to all that helpful ID tips, the black spot on females rump indicates she is close to the end of the breeding cycle, juveniles have white wing bars and a photo of feeding on the wing and the reader will start to appreciate that this talk was packed with a lot a useful information and certainly too much to relate here.

Martin concluded the evening with a look at 'House Martin Conservation UK & Ireland' of which he has been a long-time supporter. Like many supporting similar organizations he gave his time free to visit us, without expenses and for a donation to the charity. He gave us an evening where I feel he gave us an excellent insight into House Martins while they are with us, made all the more interesting by his detailed observations and with a smattering of humour to go with it!

***'House Martin Conservation UK and Ireland is a registered charity dedicated to the care and protection of these Red List birds with an aim of raising awareness of the species in communities and encouraging action to improve their nesting opportunities. Not limited to the UK, the charity also has an international vision gathering data on all factors affecting the fortunes of these wonderful little Hirundines'***





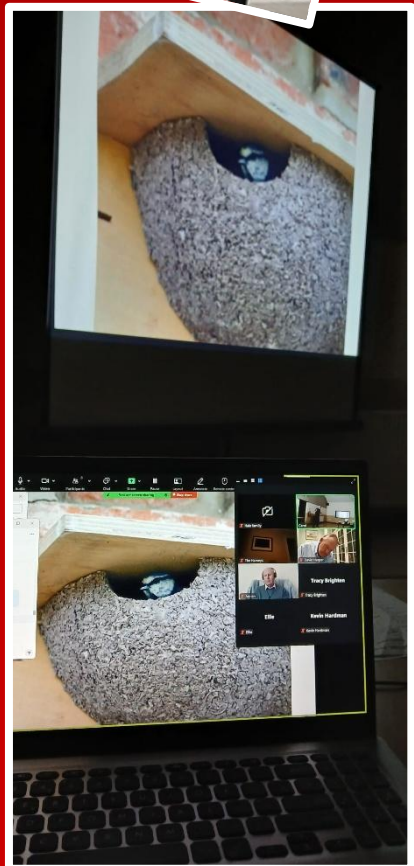
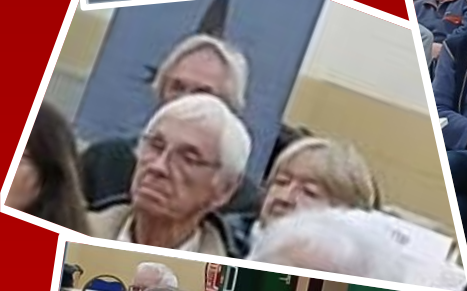
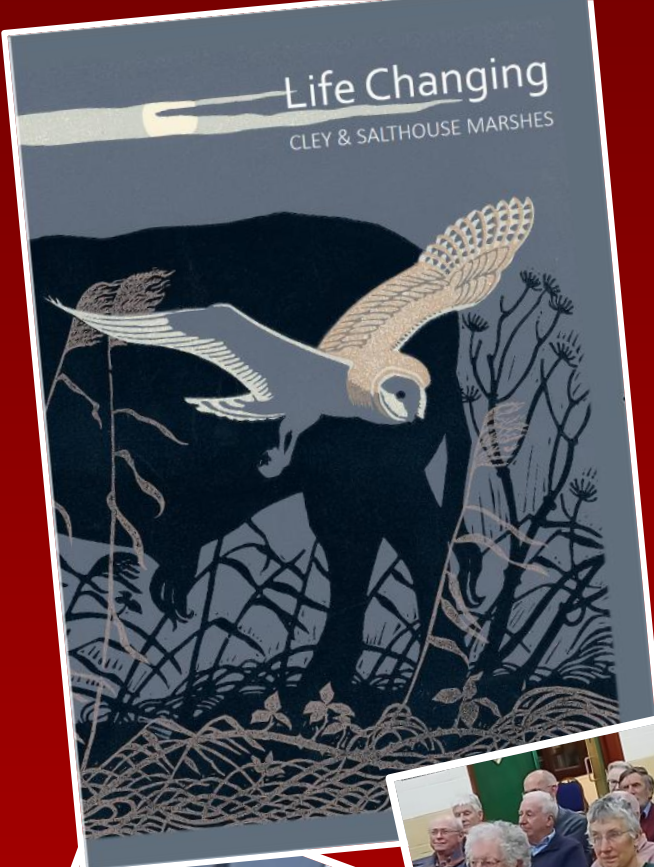
# Life Changing

CLEY & SALTHOUSE MARSHES

We were very pleased to have club member David North along again for the evening, signing copies of his new book on Cley & Salthouse Marshes.

David has made a limited number of these copies available for purchase to NENBC members at a special membership discount price of £15 and they will be available for purchase at this autumn's indoor meetings. Each copy sold will provide a donation to NENBC of £1 and all profits from the book support Norfolk Wildlife Trust's conservation work at Cley and Salthouse Marshes.

If you haven't yet got your hands on a copy, don't hesitate – it is a lovely book and would make a great Christmas present!







By Dave Billham

After the previous month's downpour, the mild threat of drizzle for the October walk posed no problem, and sure enough the turn-out of members willing to defy the weather was much improved. A total of eighteen members gathered in the car park, including Jane, new to the club and on her first walk, accompanied by Joy, a long-standing member. Many of us were wondering what October would bring; so far, autumn migration movements had been slow in coming, but perhaps, with a touch of east in the wind, today would be different. As it turned out, we sighted six species we had not yet seen in 2025, and one species not seen on a Wednesday walk since I started keeping the records, so all in all, a good result for the allotted two hours.

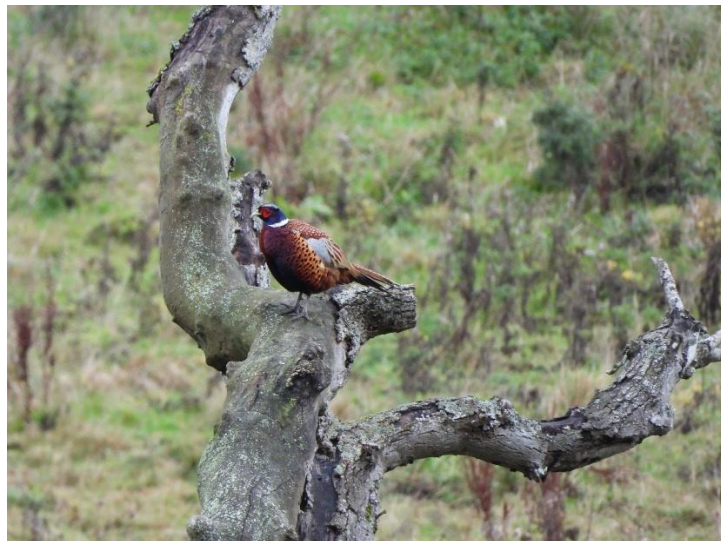
Trevor was leading the walk, and we once again had Carol as the group's back-stop to ensure we lost no-one along the way. As Trevor briefed us, we were keeping an eye on what was in and over the car park; **Robin**, **Rook**, **Jackdaw**, **Woodpigeon**, **Wren**, **Pied Wagtail** and **Blackbird** were all noted, as was a group of three **Herring Gull** over followed by a small flock of **Starling**; surprisingly, the first time we had recorded this species since the March walk. The decision had been made to try to cover a variety of habitat in the course of the two hours, so we started by heading into the woods behind the house.

A lone **Blue Tit** on the house parapet, which immediately dropped out of sight, was the first species added to the list, rapidly followed by a pair of **Chaffinch** in the top of a tall tree. Closer examination revealed there were other birds with them, and production of a scope discovered what we had been hoping for; a few **Brambling** with the Chaffinch. Pausing to watch for a while, we could see that there were around a dozen Brambling all told, a good start indeed. As we were checking them out, four **Redwing** flew overhead; hooray, more arrivals. Next on the list, and also at the top of a tall tree, was a lone **Collared Dove**, the first record of this species this year. Further into the woods, Val caught a glimpse of a **Great Spotted Woodpecker** as it swapped trees; brief, but on the list.

Emerging into an open riding, we saw **Carriion Crow**, and could hear the calls of **Nuthatch**; these latter were then seen moving around the lower branches of some scrubby bushes. As we watched them we could also hear some piercing alarm calls, which turned out to be **Coal Tit**, though what was disturbing them could not be

determined. A **Skylark** passed over us, calling as it did so, as did more Redwing. One keen-eyed member spotted **Goldcrest** on the edge of the trees, another species seen for the first time on a Wednesday walk since the start of 2025. A **Cormorant** passed over us on its way to the lake, as did a flock of **Goldfinch**, though they did not appear to be heading for the lake! By now we had reached Sexton's Lodge, and here we moved back into the woods, where we found **Great Tit**. Some also heard the call of a **Jay** – though some did not, as they were too busy chatting, myself included.

Further into the woods a **Treecreeper** was seen, and a further Redwing in a tree. Also in a tree, though this time a dead one, was a male **Pheasant**, looking resplendent in his isolation.



Emerging onto the path above the water meadows **Teal** and **Moorhen** were observed on the scrapes, along with another Jay, a visible one this time. Descending down the gentle slope to the lake, we added to the list those birds we could see on the water; **Mallard**, **Gadwall** and **Mute Swan**. A **Grey Heron** was stood motionless over on the far bank, waiting for something edible to appear, and a few **Black-headed Gull** were patrolling the lake margins. A shout from Trevor alerted us to a single **Wigeon**, which was circling the beck in the distance, before dropping down and being lost to sight. This was another species noted for the first time this year. A few keen ears picked up the song of a **Mistle Thrush**, and a **Kestrel** was watched as it hovered over the water meadows. As it turned out, this was to be the only raptor we saw on the walk, as amazingly even the ever-regular Buzzard were remaining obstinately out of sight, probably due to the weather.





Next on the list was a **Common Gull** as it passed over the lake, followed by some **Long-tailed Tit**; a small flock being seen actively looking for food in the lakeside trees.



Reaching the end of the dam wall, we turned onto the path bordering the water's edge. Suddenly there was a brief, explosive call from the bushes; **Cetti's Warbler**! Despite staying awhile, it refused to appear and also remained silent; that two second burst was all we were going to get. Trevor revealed that he had had a similar experience during the waterbird count. This was the first sighting of this elusive-though-loud warbler since I started keeping the walk records five years ago.



Further along the lake bank a flock of twenty or so **Siskin** were seen, and a few obligingly perched in the open in a tree on the opposite bank of the lake, allowing time for a scope to be erected so that those who were unfamiliar with these winter arrivals could get a good look. Trying to get those with binoculars onto them proved to be much harder, with a good few minutes-worth of directions required, but get them there we did! This was yet another species sighted for the first time this year.



Further on, a few thin squeaks alerted some to a passing **Meadow Pipit**. With time running out we were now headed up towards the house, but passing some bushes favoured by Stonechat, one member thought she had spotted one. We stopped to search, and managed to pick up a **Magpie**, but the chat was not found. As a consolation, we did find three **Greenfinch** in the scrub by the beck. Resuming our route back to the house we picked up our last species for the walk; a very, very distant flock of **Pink-footed Geese**, yet another first for the year.

Back at the house we got together to be told by Carol of the club's upcoming events and talks, and the morning's total was revealed; a creditable **44 species** seen and heard, not too bad for two hours on a grey morning. To be fair, however, this time we did remain dry, unlike the previous month. The café was beckoning for those who wanted coffee and cake; unfortunately I had a previous commitment and had to miss this opportunity to chat and warm up. If you have not tried a Wednesday Walk before, why not come along and give it a go? Everyone is welcome, you never know what will turn up, and a friendlier bunch of folk would be hard to find!





## Last Month's Weekend Walk

Trimingham to Overstrand Walk | Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October



By Janice Darch

Due to very strong westerly winds I decided to lead the inland section of the walk first and return to Trimingham along the coast with the wind behind us. We set off from Trimingham Village Hall, where there was a Pied Wagtail on the roof, and entered the wooded disused railway track where we soon gained some shelter. Birds were keeping very low but we managed to tease a Wren to show, and had half hidden views of Blue Tit while a Goldcrest played hide and seek between the upper parts of the conifers. Rooks were on a field and there was a profusion of Wood Pigeons throughout the walk. A covey of Pheasant was at the edge of a ploughed field while a group of Red-legged Partridge showed well. Overhead we saw a lone Grey-lagged Goose. At Fox Hills Wood we surprised a Buzzard. Coming out of the woods at Hungry Hill we saw a small flock of Starling on the chicken farm buildings and more Pied Wagtails on the farm buildings. After descending the hill to Overstrand we headed for the coastal footpath eastwards. Crows were on the fields. The coastal walk gave us two Gannets, several Cormorants, Black-headed and Herring Gulls and a Kestrel patrolling the cliffs. Despite the winds sadly there was little movement if seabirds. Meadow Pipits were on the fields. Five of us enjoyed the walk seeing some lovely scenery and in the course of the morning we managed to see 23 species of birds. *Photos Sarah Hanson*





# Walks Week!

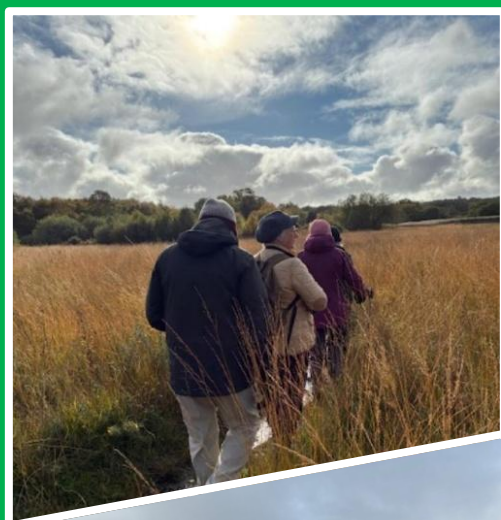
Many thanks to all of our walk leaders and those members who rolled up for our Autumn Walks Week this year. We scheduled 8 walks but had to cancel 2 – no interest in the Happisburgh walk (why not folks – it is a great spot!?) and circumstances contrived against us and we had to pull the Cromer Ridge above Overstrand one. We plan to be doing things a bit differently going forward so look out for our 2026 plans in next month's newsletter.

## **WALK #1: Beeston Birds | Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October**

Francis Farrow with Sarah H, Jenny F, Stephanie W, Paul & Alison R

Five members joined me for the walk around my local patch. Beeston Common lies just east of Sheringham and is sandwiched between the town and Beeston Regis. It is 63 acres (25.5 Hectares) of mixed habitat, comprising, open grassland, wetland, heath, scrub and secondary woodland.

We met at the layby at 10.30 on a blustery morning with the local jets roaring overhead – not ideal for picking up any soft calls of secretive warbler migrants! At the first good area of Blackthorn scrub we spotted **Redwing** eating the sloes and **Blackbirds** periodically 'exploded' from the interior to fly nosily off in all directions. A small flock of **Goldfinches** were also present and a Greenfinch was briefly seen. We checked out the marsh in the NE corner where a Hen Harrier had been seen two weeks earlier but only a **Pheasant** was noted. As we walked along the eastern edge of the central marsh a small brown bird flew up from the path to a nearby willow. It stayed just long enough to be identified as a female **Reed Bunting**. This was the first record of this former breeding species on the Common this year. The willow scrub at the end of the marsh held a small flock of **Long-tailed Tits** but sadly no Yellow-browed Warbler followed them this time. At the next patch of Blackthorn scrub we had fleeting views of a **Goldcrest**. Our walk through the wooded section at the south end of the Common did not hold any particular birds except **Woodpigeon** and **Jay** feeding on acorns, although over the wet wood we enjoyed watching a female **Sparrowhawk** out manoeuvre a mobbing **Carrion Crow**. As we returned via the heath a **Green Woodpecker** flew past and for once was unusually silent. At the top of Pill-box Hill (the highest point) we had good views of a pair of **Buzzards**, a Sparrowhawk and also heard the call of a **Great Spotted Woodpecker**. A return down the western side of the central marsh added a brief fly over call of **Linnet** and some serious barking from local rival male Muntjac. We completed our tour by checking out some willow scrub with the hope of finding an elusive Yellow-browed Warbler but it was not to be. Our small group had, however, visited the area's birding 'hot-spots' and although no great rarities were found we recorded 30 species during a very enjoyable and mainly dry walk.





## WALK #2: Cromer Golf Course Loop | Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October

Trevor Williams with Kevin & Jane H, Jonathan W, Jonathan A, Val S, Jo K, Joe & Blas W

Nine of us assembled in North Lodge Park in Cromer at the start of our Walks Week walk, a three mile loop taking in beach, clifftops and woods. Before we set off the nearby tower of Cromer church produced our first highlight - the resident pair of **Peregrine**. With the tide still on the rise we started by walking east, past the line of beach huts, looking out to sea. Early highlights on or over the sea included **Razorbill**, **Gannet**, **Red-throated Diver** and **Shelduck**. A slow climb up the steps through the scrub of the under-cliff produced a mobile tit flock which included a very obliging **Goldcrest**. Once on the edge of the golf course we continued east to the Turf Slope and the area of 'the quarry'. More migrants were observed - **Jay**, **Meadow Pipit** and **Fieldfare** while **Buzzard** and **Red Kite** soared overhead. The return route took us through Happy Valley and Warren Woods finishing our two and a half hour walk at the Friends Bistro, for a welcome coffee and cake.



Great company, healthy exercise and some good wildlife - a total of 37 birds were recorded and a couple of late butterflies, Comma and Red Admiral. Thanks as always to my companions

## WALK #3: Blickling Lake & Woods | Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> October

Alan Stevens with Tracy B, Jenny F, Sue K

Meeting in the car park at around 9.00am the weather was dull but kind to us, the previous days of wind and rain having passed through. Straightaway we were given a display by let's say 500 cacophonous corvids charging about all over the place. They had perhaps been spooked by a predator, which we looked for without success, and after a few minutes they resettled with the **Wood Pigeons** that had been accompanying them. The flock was a mix of **Rooks** and a few **Crows** but mainly **Jackdaws** which were to feature along our walk, always present in noisy numbers there seemed barely a tree without them present. Before leaving the car park we ticked Jay, four **Redwings** flying over and a **Robin** singing from a Hawthorn bush beside the ticket machine refusing to be put off by people complaining loudly about how they didn't understand how to pay.

Deciding to move on from all this excitement we decided on a clockwise walk so left the carpark towards the Park Gates entrance. At the gates we had a brief chat about the Spotted Flycatchers that have been a feature there for a couple of years or so and Tracy picked up on a lone **Chaffinch** high in a tree. Unexpectedly, we added only **Black-headed Gull** to our list before reaching the south end of the lake. Here we were greeted by a pair of **Mute Swans**





that made their way over the lake to have a look at us. I am not aware of any breeding success at Blickling this year and club records appear to confirm this. Disappointingly the only waterfowl present here, **Mallard** in moderate numbers. Before moving on we noted **Blue Tit**, **Wren** and **Blackbird**.

Walking along the west side of the lake we added only three **Cormorants** flying over but we did spend a long time looking at what turned out to be a distant Blackbird again picked up on by 'eagle-eye' Tracy. Turning our attention back to the water we found a juvenile **Great-Crested Grebe**, always nice to see here and we watched as it surfaced with a fish. On the east side of the lake we found **Pheasant**, **Herring Gull**, **Great Tit** and **Stock Dove** before we had a bit of mammal excitement when we stood and watched an otter making its way up and down the lake. While looking at the otter Jenny picked up on a single Little Grebe dodging in and out of the reeds on the far side of the lake, a nice find.

**Buzzard**, **Long-tailed Tit** and **Moorhen** were added to the list and then the highlight of the morning when a **Cetti's Warbler** gave us a couple of bursts of its wonderfully loud call. The first NENBC record from this location for this year with the first having been noted on a 'Walks Week' in October 2022. A small group of **Siskins** flittered around the top of veteran oak as we strolled on and a **Kestrel** sat atop a dead tree. Approaching the end of our foray a **Dunnock** popped out of a hedge, 20 **Pink-footed Geese** passed to the south over Aylsham Church, and we watched a mixed flock of tits make their way between trees in twos and threes at a time.

As usual, the walk took a little longer than usual as we stopped not only to look for birds but at fungi and anything else catching our attention and thanks to Tracy, Sue and Jenny for coming along.



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### **WALK #5: Circuit of Muckleburgh Hill | Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October**

Colin Blaxill with Jane H, Kala N, Paul & Alison R, Sue K, Chris R, S Lines, Jo & Deric K

There was quite a bit of interest in this walk so we upped the numbers cap to accommodate everyone. The walk was quiet bird wise but there was constant chatter all the way round, with several people finding new friends with similar interests so we don't think there was any worries about having a slightly larger group! We started off from Weynor Gardens by walking the path along the eastern edge of Muckleburgh Hill and followed along the edge of the airfield, where we saw a pair of **Buzzard** being mobbed by corvids. Most small birds were heard rather than seen but **Goldcrest** were recorded throughout the circuit. We made the climb to the summit of the hill and given the good conditions, could see Wells in the distance with no trees to interrupt the view. From here we worked our way across to the west gate and out of the club area. The only noticeable birds here were good numbers of **Red-legged Partridge** and a lone **Red Kite** over the track to the Kelling Quags. The Reading Rooms at Kelling proved a popular break with most opting for a hot drink plus some cake! Our return followed the field edge along the north side of the road up to The Pheasant Hotel where we used the lower route back to Weynor Gardens. Nothing new was added and we finished the walk with just 24 species. A disappointing total but everyone seemed to have enjoyed the experience which is part of the joy of a group walk.



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### **WALK #7: Bottom of the Bump | Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**

Dave Billham with Stephanie W, Jane H, Sue K, David B, Paula R

It was drizzling slightly as I walked down Beeston Common to our meeting point in the layby, and I was wondering if we might be down on numbers. However, no-one had been put off by the wet; Stephanie, Jane, Sue, Paula and David were ready and waiting. Unfortunately Jane's other half, Kevin, was unwell, so could not attend. After a brief



about our route and what we might see, we set off for Beeston Priory, our first port of call. On the way we saw **Jay**, including one sitting in the classic 'acorn in the beak' pose, **Woodpigeon** and **Blackbird**, with a flock of three **Redwing** briefly in view above us. The path to the priory provided us with **Magpie**, **Robin**, **Coal Tit** and a calling **Pheasant**, and David picked out a **Goldcrest** in the lower branches of a pine tree.

Arriving at the priory ponds, a pair of **Mute Swan** were the most obvious residents, along with a much less obliging **Moorhen** lurking in the vegetation on the pond margin. **Feral Pigeon** were still in the holes in the walls that they had nested in, and the calls of **Goldfinch** alerted us to a small flock in the treetops. After a pause here we moved to the field gate overlooking the paddocks; a number of **Rook** and **Jackdaw** were on the grass, along with a flock of **Starling** and a single **Carrion Crow**. A lone **Grey Heron** was stood hunched nearer the hedge line, and David spotted three **Red-legged Partridge** doing their best to be invisible. With some on the walk being new to birding, the various corvids present enabled us to look at the finer points of their ID. Next we headed off down the road leading to the railway line on the far side of the paddocks; as we walked a **Sparrowhawk** flew above us. Following the railway line, we got to a point where we could see the paddocks again, only to find them deserted, with the exception of the heron. We could only surmise that the Sparrowhawk's passage had seen them off. Reaching the allotments we found **Chaffinch**, **Great Tit**, **Blue Tit** and **Dunnock**, plus further Goldfinch. We then crossed the railway line onto the common by the cliffs, where we were greeted by a pair of **Kestrel** hunkered down on top of a tree; as we looked at them they were joined by some Jackdaw. Walking towards Beeston Bump a **Stonechat** was found, which obliged us with extended views as it perched conspicuously on various brambles and a **Linnet** took flight from a bush, calling as it went.

Reaching the bump a question was asked; over or around? Around we went, where we found a tit flock, and a small flock of **House Sparrow**. On the far side of the bump we got a brief glimpse of a **Meadow Pipit** as it disappeared over the cliff edge, and a Kestrel, probably one of the birds in the tree, appeared near us and started hunting. It got closer and closer, and ended up directly in front of us, at very close range; stunning views of this lovely hawk. Reaching the Beeston Hills putting green we found two **Herring Gull** and one **Common Gull** 'pattering' on the grass, trying to charm worms from the soil, a new sight for most of the group. As we watched, we realised there were a few **Pied Wagtail** on the grass too, then David spotted a **Grey Wagtail**, which flew onto a nearby roof. It was surprising that such a tiny area held four species new for the walk!

Going down to the seafront, the tide was out, and the groyne contained a good selection of gulls, handily grouped close together so that we were able to go through gull ID. **Great Black-backed Gull**, **Black-headed Gull** and,





of course, further Herring Gull were all seen. The local **Turnstones** were also out in force, though we could find no sign of Purple Sandpiper, and a couple of **Cormorant** were on the groyne markers. We had now reached the slipway used by the fishing boats, and checking the time I realised that if we now turned back towards the layby we would arrive pretty much spot on the two hour mark; perfect timing. There was one fly in my ointment though; we had not been to a café as stated in the walk description! “Do we want to go to a café?” I asked. The answer, a resounding yes! “Do you mind being late back to the layby?” No! So along the promenade to Salt we went, chosen to allow us to carry on birding as we refreshed ourselves. A pair of **Brent Geese** heading west, and a small flock of Staring in off the sea were added to the log.

Eventually we headed back up through the east side of town and across the lower commons towards the layby, adding **Collared Dove** as the final species seen, along the way. By now the sun was appearing more frequently, and we had managed to stay dry, so spirits were high. Despite over-running by more than an hour, everyone seemed to have had a good time. With plenty of opportunity to chat as we went, we had also had the chance to get to know each other too. All this, and we had managed to find **39 species** too; a good morning all round.

## WALK #8: Spout Hill | Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November

John Swallow with Stephanie W, Chris R

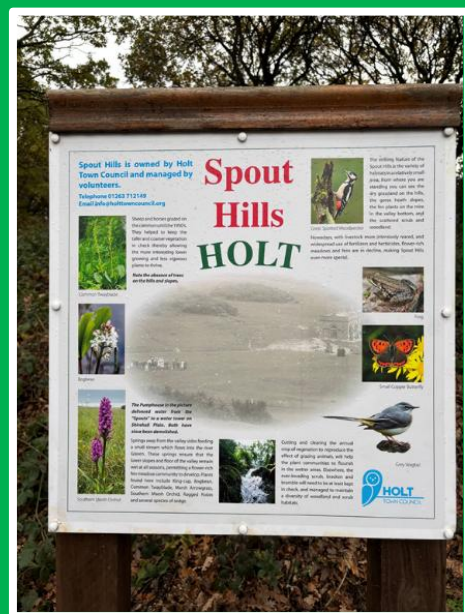
On a rather blustery overcast morning our group of three, myself, Stephanie and Chris met at our allotted rendezvous point outside the Wandering Whelk, Holt at 9am. I explained that this was a short stroll across to Spout Hills, mentioned that the paths may be slippery this morning and we set off down Town Close to meet the short footpath leading to the A148.



With low expectations we crossed the road and thence to the entrance into Spout Hills. We immediately had lovely views of two **Red Kites** as they slowly floated towards the south.

Calling **Long-tailed Tit** then attracted our attention as we rounded the upper grassy slopes, one of several tit flocks we encountered comprising **Blue, Coal and Great Tits** with one or two **Goldcrests**. Entering the Oak woods we came upon calling **Nuthatch**, squabbling **Jays**, **Robin** and **Wren**. I had hoped to see a few Redwing but just a couple of **Blackbird** were the only thrushes present and no grey wagtail, present during my earlier recce, were to be heard or seen today. A few corvids, **Rook** and **Magpie** gracing the far slopes and fields with a few **Black-headed and Herring Gulls** drifting by overhead completed the birding scene.

The allotted 90 minutes passed quite quickly and after making a circuit of the site we were soon back at the entrance after logging a modest 18 species. We had enjoyed our unhurried walk thankful that the forecast rain didn't happen and coffee was taken at the Wandering Whelk afterwards before heading home. We all felt that Spout Hills is an over-looked gem so close to the busy Market Town of Holt.







For this annual event we have teams at a series of sites with good sea views, each led by an experienced seawatcher, to record the number and species of all the birds we see flying along the coast throughout a 3-hour time frame. As well as passing on our love of seawatching, by sharing our sightings across locations and noting timings, we can also calculate flight speed data. This event attracts beginners and experts alike so is always popular. Don't worry if you missed it this year and next autumn seems a long way off as we are now running pop-up events at short notice throughout the year where you can learn about the joys of seawatching and seabird ID from one of our able volunteers. We advertise these on the website when conditions are promising with about 48hrs notice or you can contact Carol on [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) with your mobile number and we'll get you added to the NENBC Comms WhatsApp Group for event notifications.

**A few observations .....** "We fix the date of the annual NENBC coordinated seawatch well in advance, so people can put it in their diaries. We choose an autumn date with suitable tides, hoping for an onshore wind to make things interesting. This year the weather did not play ball, for we were greeted by light winds and a flat calm sea. But at least this did allow the birds to be seen more easily, and the relatively light passage meant that some birds could be tracked unequivocally along the coast. With groups of keen eyes at Sheringham, Cromer and Mundesley together with a lone outpost at Happisburgh we were hoping for some excellent speed checks. We managed ten, which is an excellent return. Highlights were six different **Red-throated Divers** (both east and west), a flock of five **Common Scoter** seen at three locations and an intriguing group of **Brent Geese** heading west. They were noted as two groups of four, one close behind the other, at Happisburgh and Cromer, but they had temporarily merged when passing Mundesley before splitting again. And how did a superb male **Eider** heading east close in at Sheringham and Happisburgh get missed in between? Not everybody notes passing gulls, usually assuming that they are usually local birds moving out from roost and often difficult to count amongst lingering birds, so we currently have very few speed checks for these (though we did get one for an adult **Mediterranean Gull** drifting east). So a productive morning overall, and the light passage meant that we could savour the passing birds rather than panicking to make sure they were all recorded and none were missed! But maybe we will have better luck with the weather next year." *Andy Clarke*

### Happisburgh with Andy Clarke

"I arrived at Happisburgh to find the community car-park still locked. No matter as there was ample room in the parking area just outside the official car-park. The traditional sea-watching location at Happisburgh is now perilously close to the cliff edge, so this year the watch-point was a grassy area above the ramp down to the beach and by the start of the cliff-top path to Cart Gap. Conditions were not auspicious, with little wind and a flat sea. But this did mean it was easy to pick out the auks and divers on the sea, one of which was showing a striking rear flank-patch and proved to be a fine first-year Black-throated Diver, conveniently beside a winter plumaged Red-throated Diver. Seabirds and waterfowl were few and far between, with the highlights being a fine male Eider west, family groups of Brent Geese heading west, a trio of Rock Pipits along the cliff (migrants?) and a Bonxie (Great Skua) heading east at mid-distance. If this was the same bird that Julian noted passing Mundesley, it took its time getting to Happisburgh! In between a series of large dogs trying to knock my tripod over, there was a welcome visit from local club member John Cole, but otherwise this was the loneliness of the long-distance sea-watcher!"





## Mundesley with Julian Thomas

"Once again the long arranged coordinated sea-watch coincided with less than ideal conditions with views of a calm sea stretched to a rather misty horizon but seven of us were lured out with at least the expectation of a pleasant three hours in the shelter at Mundesley and the hope of the odd surprise. On the calm sea it was easy to spot loafing and fishing birds, and there were quite a few Razorbills and Red-throated Divers on view, as well as 'bottling' Grey Seals, and also the less frequent Common Seals. There was a steady trickle of birds throughout the sea-watch, with Gannets, Red-throated Divers, and Razorbills heading in both directions, and Common Scoter and Brent Geese heading purposefully north-west. A variety of gull species included a few elegant Mediterranean Gulls. A Great Skua (we preferred the Shetland name of Bonxie) headed south-east, a welcome sight as this is a much declined species, and a brief Manx Shearwater was another bonus species. Thanks to Stephanie Witham, Bob Farndon, Richard Kershaw, Bob Cobbald and others for their company"

Mundesley



## Cromer with Trevor Williams

"Half a dozen of us gathered at the cliff-top shelter in North Lodge Park for the annual Club coordinated sea-watch, whilst other members were dotted along the coast at various points. After the excitement of Storm Amy the previous week the weather had turned benign so we had pretty low expectations. Despite the conditions - which were flat calm with mist obscuring the horizon - we did manage to accumulate a list of 14 'sea-watch' species during our three hour session. The highlights were a juvenile Shag which flew west, close inshore, at the start, a close pale-phase Arctic Skua which was speed-checked at Sheringham and numerous adult winter Mediterranean Gulls feeding off-shore. We had several potential speed-checks amongst the multitude of small groups of Brent Geese as they flew west between Happisburgh and Sheringham - best of luck to Andy sorting those out. But perhaps the most surprising bird was a calling Crossbill, picked up by John, which flew over the top of the shelter before disappearing inland. This event was also the launch of our new blue sea-watching badge (for details see last month's newsletter or the note on the News section of the website). For those who stayed the course and saw all the species they will have earned themselves 270 points - over a quarter of the way to a badge! Thank you to Martin Hammond, Loz Malabar, John Swallow and Carol & Ken Thornton for their company and hope to see you all again at future pop-up events, if not before." Photos Arctic Skua and Red-throated Diver





"Fifteen club members, including myself, took part in the annual club co-ordinated seawatch from Sheringham prom, by the tank shelter. The weather on the day was calm with, what wind there was, from totally the wrong direction. Not a howling gale from the north west which is hoped for and is usually when the most and best seabirds are seen. Despite this minor setback all those present had an enjoyable morning, at least the lack of many birds to see allowed for more general banter and socialising, it also made it easier to see birds passing by and to take in the ID of various birds in flight, sometimes at considerable distance. Special thanks to Jane, who when I asked for help, promptly volunteered to write the records for the day. Upon asking if she would rather get a good look at any birds going by without any distractions, I received a polite, but classic female response of, I can multi task, being a male of mature years I knew better than to argue with that one. Many thanks to Doug Cullern, Thomas Wright, Kala Nobbs, Mike McConnell, Dave Billham, David Griffiths, Sarah Hanson, Jane & Kevin Hardman, Francis Farrow, Rob Harris, Ollie & James Allison and Claire Brayne for joining me."

All in all, 26 species were reported by observers across the 4 sites, not all passing seabirds, but all of interest on the day. Thanks for coming everyone!

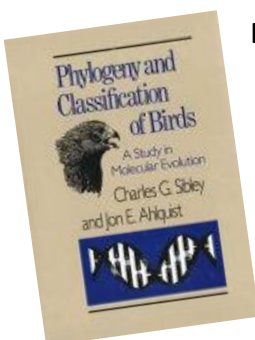
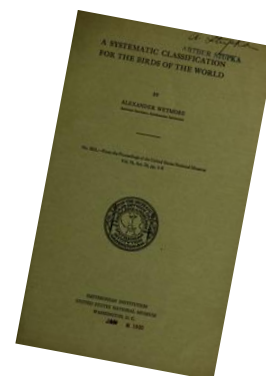
Species	Sheringham	Cromer	Mundesley	Happisburgh	Species	Sheringham	Cromer	Mundesley	Happisburgh
Arctic Skua	*	*			Herring Gull		*	*	
Black-headed Gull	*	*	*		Manx Shearwater			*	
Brent Goose	*	*	*	*	Mediterranean Gull	*	*	*	*
Common Crossbill		*			Oystercatcher	*			
Common Gull	*		*		Peregrine		*		
Common Scoter	*	*	*	*	Razorbill	*	*	*	
Cormorant	*	*	*	*	Red-throated Diver	*	*	*	*
Eider				*	Rock Pipit	*			
Gannet	*	*	*	*	Sandwich Tern			*	
Great Black-backed Gull		*	*		Shag	*	*		
Great Skua			*	*	Teal		*	*	
Grey Wagtail	*				Turnstone	*			
Guillemot	*				Wigeon		*		

## The New World Order (for birds!)

By Andy Clarke

Older club members will recall the days when you opened a field guide and you knew exactly where to find the divers, the hawks or the warblers. This traditional sequence of orders and families was established by the American ornithologist Alexander Wetmore in the 1930s, with the aim of placing related groups together, starting with this most 'primitive' (ostriches) and ending with the most 'advanced' (finches). Although there were some adjustments to the sequence, notably by the Dutch ornithologist Karel Voous in the late 1970s, the Wetmore order long provided the familiar sequence for UK and North American birders.






But that all changed when two American researchers first used genetic techniques to examine the relationships between bird groups and uncovered some surprises. The results were published in a ground-breaking book in 1990 that shocked the ornithological community and initiated much argument. Since then there has been an explosion in molecular genetic studies of birds, leading to frequent changes in names, much splitting and lumping of species, and changes in the sequence of families. All this work has revealed unexpectedly close relationships between New World vultures and storks, between falcons and parrots, and between hummingbirds and swifts. It has also prompted a considerable adjustment to the sequence of species within families.





To add to the complexity (confusion?) a number of different world lists have been proposed, with the two major contenders for birders being the Clements list used mainly in the US and the IOC (International Ornithological Committee) list used mainly in Europe; other lists are also available.

It had been evident for years that an agreed list of the world’s birds was badly needed to simplify scientific work and aid conservation, but producing this agreed list has taken a long time and much work. The result is **AviList**, the first version of which was published in June 2025 (see: <https://www.avilist.org>). This list is being adopted by scientific and conservation organisations worldwide, and will be updated annually as research into bird relationships continues. Not everybody welcomes this, and on-line birding fora are littered with complaints from birders about losing species from their lists, or bemoaning the continuing change. But a major function of an agreed world list is to reflect current knowledge of the relationships between birds and as knowledge advances so the list will continue to change to reflect this.



AviList is a collaborative global effort to produce a single current consensus taxonomy for the birds of the world, along with key information on taxonomy and nomenclature. The checklist is free for download by anyone, and we encourage its use by ornithologists, birders, biologists, conservation practitioners, administrators, legislators, and any other stakeholders in bird classification. Our hope is that a consistent standard for avian taxonomy will reduce confusion arising from incongruent taxonomic sources, make information easier to exchange and aggregate, and clarify species limits for professional and amateur students of birds alike. AviList provides a rationale for the adoption of specific arrangements in the case of controversial taxonomic complexes and points to species groups in which additional research is required, with the hope to assist taxonomists in prioritizing issues. AviList is a living document that is continually updated according to the most recent evidence. The first version was published in June 2025 and future revisions are planned once a year.

Sequence	Taxon rank	Order	Family	Family English name	Scientific name	Authority	Bibliographic details	English name AviList	Decision summary	Range
30590	genus	Passeriformes	Fringillidae	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies	<i>Acanthis</i>	Borkhausen, MB, 1797	Deutsche Fauna, oder kurzgefasste Naturgeschichte der Thiere Deutschlands. Erster Theil. Säugthiere und Vögel 3 p.258			
30591	species	Passeriformes	Fringillidae	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	(Linnaeus, C, 1758)	Systema Naturae per Regna Tria Naturae, Secundum Classes, Ordines, Genera, Species, cum Characteribus, Differentiis, Synonymis, Locis. Tomus I. Editio decima, reformata 1 p.182	Redpoll	The polytypic <i>Acanthis flammea</i> complex is treated as a single species based on genetic evidence. Although formerly separated into three species ( <i>A. flammea</i> , <i>A. hornemanni</i> and <i>A. cabaret</i> ), mitochondrial, nuclear, and genomic DNA analyses show a lack of divergence and high levels of gene flow (Mathiesen et al. 2008; Mason & Taylor 2015), with phenotypic variation largely determined by a chromosomal inversion that shows a latitudinal (rather than a taxon-specific) gradient in its distribution (Funk et al. 2021). However, there is evidence of assortative mating where the taxa come into secondary contact, and the three taxa are generally	
30592	subspecies	Passeriformes	Fringillidae	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies	<i>Acanthis flammea flammea</i>	(Linnaeus, C, 1758)	Systema Naturae per Regna Tria Naturae, Secundum Classes, Ordines, Genera, Species, cum Characteribus, Differentiis, Synonymis, Locis. Tomus I. Editio decima, reformata 1 p.182			northern Euras
30593	subspecies	Passeriformes	Fringillidae	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies	<i>Acanthis flammea rostrata</i>	(Cooper, E, 1861)	Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia 13 p.378			breeds northw
30594	subspecies	Passeriformes	Fringillidae	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies	<i>Acanthis flammea cabaret</i>	(Müller, PLS, 1776)	Des Ritters Carl von Linné ... vollständigen Natursystems Supplements- und Register-Band über alle sechs Theile oder Classen des Thierreichs p.165			formerly restrict
30595	subspecies	Passeriformes	Fringillidae	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies	<i>Acanthis flammea exilis</i>	(Cooper, E, 1862)	Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia 13 p.385			expanded range
30596	subspecies	Passeriformes	Fringillidae	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies	<i>Acanthis flammea hornemanni</i>	(Holbein, CP, 1843)	Naturhistorisk Tidsskrift (Kroyer) 4 p.398			Scandinavia et

What does this all mean for NENBC?

The key impact of AviList for NENBC is that it will be adopted as the official British List by the British Ornithologists’ Union (BOU) and because the BOU list is used by bird.club, the list we use in NENBC will change. It is not clear exactly when this change will happen as the BOU have yet to issue their new British List, although the Norfolk Records Committee have already moved to AviList for their recently published 2024 report. When the new BOU British List is formally published, avid NENBC listers will sadly lose a few species as Lesser Redpoll, Common Redpoll and Arctic Redpoll will become simply Redpoll, Carrion and Hooded Crow are once again lumped, and Amur (Stejneger’s) and Siberian Stonechats are merged.

The British List does not include generic groups (such as ‘auk species’ or ‘diver species’), nor does it include hybrids. The architecture of the bird.club web-site does not allow these to be added, so any sightings of the well-known wandering Ruddy Shelduck x Egyptian Goose hybrid, or the West Runton Carrion x Hooded Crow will need to be entered under Ruddy Shelduck or Hooded Crow respectively, and the hybrid status recorded in the ‘Comments’ section. Although bird.club will add the species to your count of species seen in the NENBC area, the Peer Review group will ignore these hybrids when assessing lists for silver or gold badges! Similarly we would ask that records of ‘auk species’ for example are entered under Guillemot or Razorbill, with the relevant note in the Comments section.

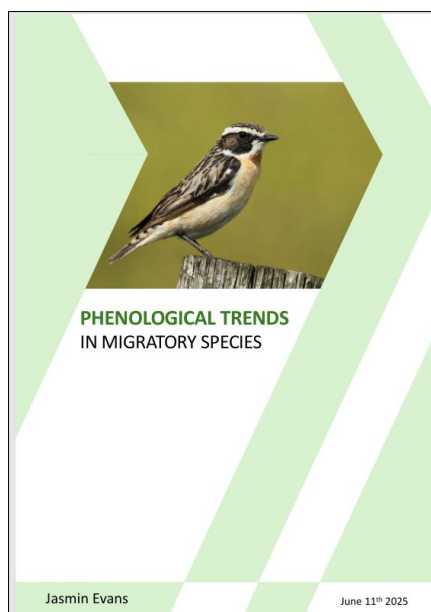
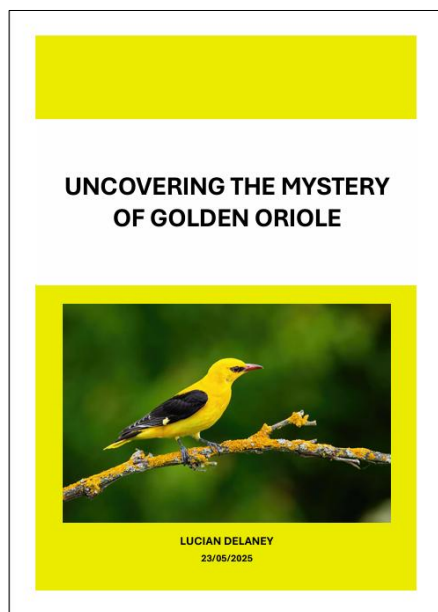
What is not yet clear is what will happen with subspecies. The main AviList includes all recognised subspecies, which is why the list is so long. Some of these subspecies are easily recognised in the field (for example Blue-headed Wagtail) whereas others are not. It is not clear to what extent the new BOU list will contain subspecies, but if it does, then these will carry through to the NENBC bird.club list. If it does not, we are unable to add them to bird.club list and we will need to continue to use the Comments section to record distinctive subspecies. The move to AviList will introduce some technical issues for handling NENBC records, but it is important that we move with the times, so that our records remain useful to the wider world. More news when we have it!

Photos: Arctic Redpoll Moss Taylor, Common Redpoll Trevor Williams, Lesser Redpoll Mark Clements





We were delighted to be back working with the University of East Anglia's Environmental Science department again this year. This is where, along with other organisations, we pitch real-life environmental consultancy projects to a group of 3<sup>rd</sup> year students in the capacity of 'client' and we get selected by 'consultant' students in line with their areas of interest. Working on the briefs provided by us, they research and document their topic, feedback regularly via Zoom or in-person, and at the end of the process present us with an individual consultancy report. This time we worked with three students. Below is part of the brief for the third of these along with the **Executive Summary** from the student consultant. If you would like to be emailed the full consultancy reports for any of these projects then just let us know.



## Phenological Trends in Migratory Species by Isabella Twigg

### Phenological Trends in Migratory Species

Using data published in the Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report, compile a time-course of arrival and departure dates for migrant birds in Norfolk. Examine these data for major trends such as long-term shifts in arrival or departure dates (and thereby length of stay), whether patterns vary between species wintering in different areas, and compare these results with those from elsewhere in UK or Europe, to establish how general these patterns might be. Differences in phenology may allow distinction between factors operating primarily in UK that influence the timing of migration, and those operating mostly in Africa. Summarise results in a report which includes simple but informative tables, graphs or maps

**Disclaimer:** This material is based upon work supported by **Isabella Twigg** for ENV-6031B Environmental Consultancy module in the School of Environmental Sciences, UEA. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations are those of the author and do not reflect the views of the School of Environmental Sciences, UEA its employees or its administration.

### Executive Summary

#### Context

This report examines how climate change is affecting the migration patterns of birds passing through Norfolk, with a focus on whether these trends differ based on where species winter. In this case, I focused on species that migrate from Northern Africa and further north in Europe. The subject aligns with the North East Norfolk Bird Club's (NENBC) 10th anniversary project, which aims to explore UK–Africa migratory connections and investigate changes in migratory behaviour over time.

#### Purpose

The purpose of the report is to analyse long-term phenological data, specifically arrival date, departure date, and duration of stay for 20 bird species, using records from 1954 and between 1988 and 2023. By comparing these patterns with average temperature anomalies from Norfolk, Africa and Northern Europe, the study evaluates the extent to which regional climates influence migration timing.

#### Aim

By using statistical analysis, my report offers clear findings that show that migration patterns do vary depending on wintering location as species show different sensitivities to climate conditions. My findings provide valuable insight into the role of climate change in shaping phenological trends.



## Key Findings

### Group 1 (wintering in Africa from Norfolk):

I discovered these species are more influenced by Norfolk's local climate (53.3%) than Africa's climate (46.7%).

Turtle Dove, Common Swift, Barn Swallow, Yellow Wagtail, Nightingale, Whinchat, Northern Wheatear, Common Whitethroat, Garden Warbler, Pied Flycatcher

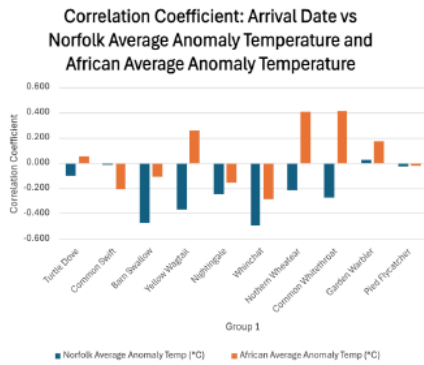


Figure 7 - Correlation Coefficient: Arrival Date vs Norfolk Average Anomaly Temperature and African Average Anomaly Temperature.

Warmer springs led to earlier arrivals in Norfolk (60%).

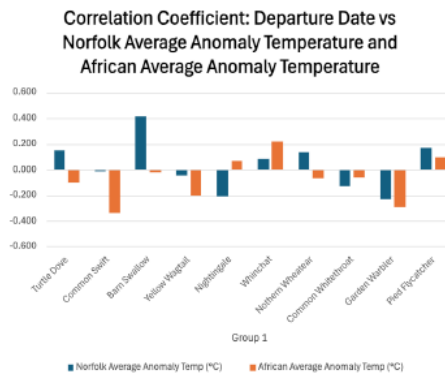


Figure 8 - Correlation Coefficient: Departure Date vs Norfolk Average Anomaly Temperature and African Average Anomaly Temperature.

Warmer autumns were frequently linked to later departures from Norfolk (40%).

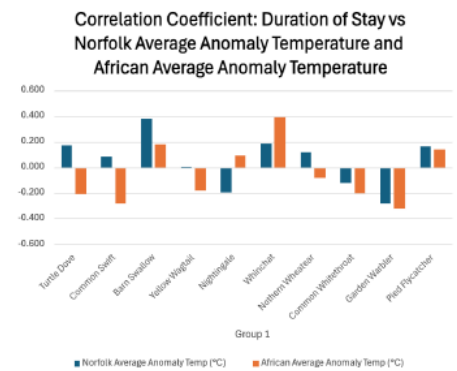


Figure 9 - Correlation Coefficient: Duration of Stay vs Norfolk Average Anomaly Temperature and African Average Anomaly Temperature.

Warmer African climates led to shorter Norfolk stays (50%).

### Group 2 (wintering in Norfolk from Northern Europe):

I found Group 2 is more influenced by Northern Europe's climate (53.6%) than Norfolk's (46.4%).

Bewick Swan, Water Pipit, Shore Lark, Jack Snipe, Long-tailed Duck, Hen Harrier, Red-necked Grebe, Great Northern Diver, Pink-footed Goose, Merlin

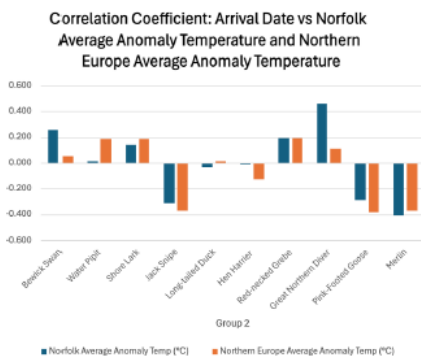


Figure 10 - Correlation Coefficient: Arrival Date vs Norfolk Average Anomaly Temperature and Northern Europe Average Anomaly Temperature.

Warmer Norfolk conditions caused later arrivals, while warmer Northern Europe conditions caused earlier arrivals (33.3%).

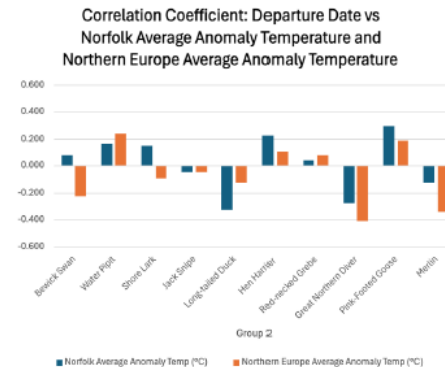


Figure 11 - Correlation Coefficient: Departure Date vs Norfolk Average Anomaly Temperature and Northern Europe Average Anomaly Temperature.

Warmer Northern European temperatures were linked to earlier departures from Norfolk (44.4%).

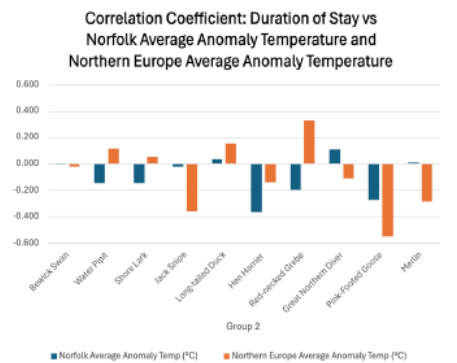


Figure 12 - Correlation Coefficient: Duration of Stay vs Norfolk Average Anomaly Temperature and Northern Europe Average Anomaly Temperature.

Warmer Northern European temperatures led to shorter stays in Norfolk (55.6%).

## Climate Trends:

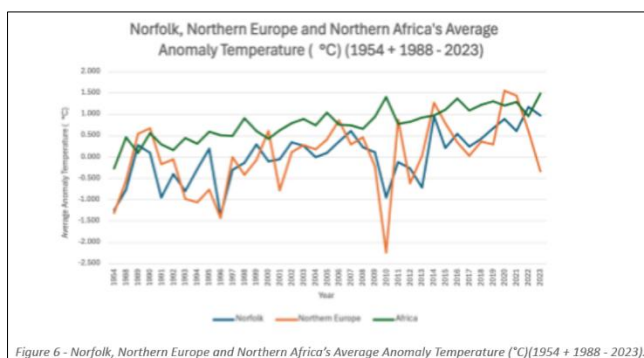


Figure 6 - Norfolk, Northern Europe and Northern Africa's Average Anomaly Temperature (°C)(1954 + 1988 - 2023).

All regions showed increasing average temperature anomalies from 1954 and between 1988 to 2023, indicating a consistent warming trend across Norfolk, Northern Europe, and (Northern) Africa. This demonstrates that all three regions are typically getting warmer.

**Weak but consistent correlations:** All correlations between phenological trends and climate were below  $\pm 0.5$ , but patterns of regional and species-specific sensitivity align with existing literature, highlighting that climate amongst other factors such as physiology constraints, migration distance, and habitat influences phenological trends.



# Activities at Kartong Bird Observatory (KBO) Summer 2025

By Naffie Sarr



Regular readers will remember Naffie Sarr, the young birder from KBO who Roger Walsh spoke to us about in his very well-received talk in January. We had hoped that Naffie would be spending the summer in the UK undertaking a host of varied bird survey and related activities with a range of conservation organisations to supplement the wonderful work she is doing back home, part-funded by an NENBC International Bursary. Unfortunately, her visa was unexpectedly declined but Naffie continues to do some excellent work at the observatory and we will support some of her activities in 2025. Here's a round up from her of what she has been up to in the past few months .....

Since the 2024/25 winter season finished in April, my KBO colleagues and I have been running weekly bird ringing sessions at Kartong every Friday. The rainy season this year has not been that strong, so we managed to fit in most of the ringing sessions planned. While some mornings have been fairly quiet, we have encountered some interesting birds, including seeing and hearing an African Cuckoo around the quarry wetlands in July and catching the first White-headed Lapwing for the observatory in early August.



*First White-headed Lapwing to be ringed at KBO (August 2025)*

The rest of my KBO work over the summer has involved weekly surveys of the colour-marked Spur-winged Lapwings around the quarry wetlands and Hooded Vultures around the village of Kartong. As a team we have contributed over 200 sightings to our long-term monitoring project on these species.



*Out in Kartong recording birds for World Migratory Bird Day (October 2025)*

With the KBO team we have taken part in two World Migratory Bird Day counts this year. For the first, in May, we travelled to the village of Kuloro which is about an hour drive inland from Kartong, where we recorded lots of forest species, including Spotted Honeyguide and Northern White-faced Owl. For the second World Migratory Bird Day in early October, we stayed around Kartong to see what migrant waders, terns and gulls had arrived in the recording area and were pleased to see the first returning Ospreys of the autumn. Our records from these surveys contributed to the massive African Bird Atlas project.

As vice-president of the Gambian Youth Bird Club, I helped organise a seven-day birdwatching trip to the inland areas of The Gambia at the beginning of September. This was a great opportunity to meet up with other bird guides and wildlife conservation enthusiasts and to visit some of the brilliant wildlife sites in the country, visiting sites at Tendaba, Baobolong National Park and Jakhaly Ricefields.

I have been lucky enough to take part in some other workshops over the last couple of months. At the end of September, I took part in the Experimental Bioacoustics and Communication Exchange workshop run by long-term KBO collaborators from the Max Planck Institute in Germany. This was a brilliant week spent learning about acoustic science in the natural world and working closely with students from the University of The Gambia. More recently, I took part in a one-day workshop run by the Great Institute which focused on the importance of mangroves to the local communities.



*Presenting results from our bioacoustics workshop with the Max Planck Institute (September 2025)*

Finally, last weekend we visited the amazing Pirang wetland areas, which were once a shrimp farm, but now comprise a series of shallow lagoons and ponds gradually being reclaimed by the mangroves. These ponds are perfect for wading birds and we recorded 14 species during our survey of the site for the Wader Conservation World Watch day.




**It's Out! The 2024 Norfolk Bird and Mammal Report is available now!**

If this is not something you usually treat yourself to, then please do consider giving it a go this year. All our NENBC records which we submit to BirdTrack feed into this county report.

Contents page shown below. It has some very interesting articles in it too, including one on the Norfolk Records Committee.

Copies available for purchase at NWT Cley, via Wildsounds, other bookshops and direct from **Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society**.

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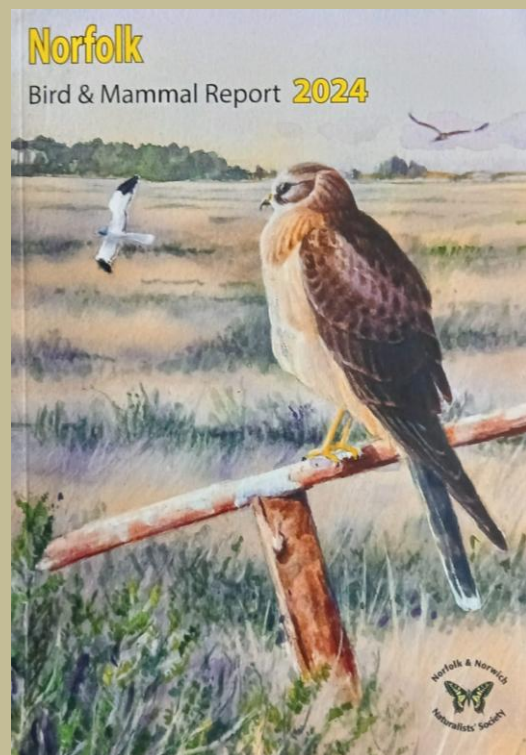
The Norfolk Records Committee	
Mick Sault	
Background	
Details on the Norfolk Records Committee (NORF) website are available at <a href="http://www.norfolkrecordscommittee.co.uk">www.norfolkrecordscommittee.co.uk</a> . Potential candidates are identified and discussed by the existing members and until recently the aim has been that they should not have already served on the Committee. However, the Committee has recently decided to amend the selection process so that every third year the majority is held by new members. The practical effect is that from 2023 onwards there have been two members serving a second term, which brings additional experience to the long and thoughtful process of nomination and election-making. Where there is more than one candidate, elections by a simple majority vote by the voting members of the Committee.	
A recent association has been the decision that rather than new members being 'stewards in at the top' and 'graduating', they now spend a period shadowing the Committee. They are not only helpful in the nomination but also the election-making process, but take no part in the nomination process or decision making and so solely those as observers.	
In addition to the five members of the Committee, the Committee Secretary has a key role in managing the work of the Committee as well as acting as a liaison between the Committee and the County Recorder. The Committee Secretary does not have a vote on either record assessment or new member selection. If any member of the Committee decides to vote before their five-year term expires, the Committee Secretary, in conjunction with both the County Recorder and the remaining Committee members, will arrange for an ex-member to be co-opted back onto the Committee.	
The Committee meets once a year (usually in July) in conjunction with any outstanding issues around submissions from the previous year which may have been pending or held and	

Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report 2024

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Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report 2024

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## Check This Out!

A few bits and bobs in the news in the past month ...



- [Birding The Fens in winter: where big skies meet big flocks - BirdGuides](#) [24-Oct]
- [It is time for urban goshawks in the UK? - BirdGuides](#) [16-Oct]
- [Keith Betton: what the duck? - BirdGuides](#) [12-Oct] – if you enjoyed one of Nigel Redman's Presidents' Pieces touching on his love of stamps then take a look!
- [Whooper Swans hit hard as bird-flu outbreak worsens - BirdGuides](#) [07-Nov]
- [RBBP report: Hoopoe and Temminck's Stint breed in UK for first time in 30 years - BirdGuides](#) [07-Nov] A report summary is available [here](#).
- [Mixed-species diver pair successfully breeds in Scotland - BirdGuides](#) [30-Oct]
- [Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2025 winners announced - BirdGuides](#) [19-Oct]
- [Mass culling of cormorants won't save European fish stocks, BirdLife warns - BirdGuides](#) [15-Oct]
- [Flamingo missing from Cornwall park appears to be in France - BBC News](#) [10-Nov]
- [Thriving St Albans peregrine falcon chicks spotted miles apart - BBC News](#) [15-Oct]
- [Owl rescued from North Sea platform and released back into wild - BBC News](#) [14-Oct]
- [Bird migration is changing. What does this reveal about our planet? – visualised | Birds | The Guardian](#) [16-Oct]
- [LIFE on the Edge: Celebrating five years of coastal success](#) [24-Oct]
- [BTO Migblog – 7 Nov 2025 BTO](#)



# The Super Green Badge Challenge

Episode 15 – April 2025 to November 2025



By Val Stubbs

By the end of February, I had recorded 151 birds in my Super Green quest. So how am I getting on eight months later?

**30<sup>th</sup> April 2025** Our usual walk around the block over the cliffs and back up Beach Lane took us past the Hope reedbed. There had been reports of a **Grasshopper Warbler** reeling there for a couple of days, and sure enough, there it was, doing its grasshopper impersonation.

**19<sup>th</sup> May 2025** The Hope reedbed was once again the focus of local birders, with a female Red-backed Shrike seen by a number of club members. Having missed out on the immature bird that had been seen here in September 2024, I was determined to catch up with this one. However, when I arrived, there was only a single birder wandering half-heartedly up and down the road, with the bird having disappeared from view. Unsurprised, I began to make my way back up Beach Lane, when I spotted a bird perched in a dead tree in the middle of the reedbed and was able to get my scope onto it – success, my first ever shrike, even if not the best view as it was silhouetted against the sky. I quickly attracted the attention of the other birder, but while my head was turned the **Red-backed Shrike** had left its perch and was nowhere to be seen. I wonder whether he ever caught up with it?

**30<sup>th</sup> May 2025** The siren call of the Hope reedbed was heard again towards the end of May. Unfortunately, we had visitors and were unable to head down to try to find it. Finally, we set off on a family walk, with a toddler, a baby and two dogs in tow. Before we set off, I had a quick listen to the call of the Marsh Warbler, courtesy of Merlin (I hadn't even known that Marsh Warblers were a thing until a couple of days before) – it was always a long shot, but you never know. Having walked down Mill Lane and along the cliffs, spotting boats and bees for the children, the young family were ready to head back, but Nick and I decided to linger for a few minutes, and lo, the sound of the **Marsh Warbler** carried over the reeds and several other birders helped us to locate the bird, which was skulking in the long grass and occasionally hopping up onto a Teasel for a burst of song. Happy birthday to me!

**9<sup>th</sup> September 2025** On my first seawatch for a while, I joined Phil B to see what was about. I had managed to catch up with the **Shag** that was loafing about at Sheringham a few days earlier and was hopeful that this bird, which had proved mobile along the coast, might put in an appearance. In fact, we were treated to two, on the sea and diving. A little while later, a distant duck appeared. While the markings were difficult (impossible!) to see, the structure of the bird enabled us to identify it as a **Shoveler**. So two green birds for the price of one that day!

**28<sup>th</sup> September 2025** Another seawatch, another chance for a green bird. Phil B called a pair of Egyptian Geese, which I picked up in my binoculars, but was unable to see any colour on them, and despite trying desperately to get onto them with my scope – with Phil constantly describing their location – I failed completely, and had to put them down as the ones that got away. Most frustrating.

**3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025** At the end of October I had cataract surgery, and on one of my first outings, wearing sunglasses to block out the bright sunlight, we did our usual loop, taking us past the Coastguard Cottages and back along the cliffs to Weybourne Beach. I had taken my binoculars out of habit, but hadn't expected to use them. However, I spotted two birds low over the water heading west, probably Cormorants, I thought, but something made me lift my binoculars and I was amazed by the unequivocal sight of two **Egyptian Geese**, flying along a similar trajectory to the ones I had previously missed. Even with my dark glasses I could see the wing markings and the colour of the necks – what a revelation!

That brings my total to **157 Super Green birds – only 18 to go**, and maybe with my improved eyesight I might be able to rack them up a bit more quickly (ever the optimist!).



*Library photo courtesy of Mark Clements  
Egyptian Goose*



# Contemplating Conservation

## A Promising Year for Norfolk Little Tern



*James Appleton*

The RSPB are reporting “**signs of hope for England’s Little Terns after 2025 breeding success**” with the stats in from the breeding colonies they monitor.

The following is taken from recent report on the RSPB website:

“After decades of declines, one of the UK’s smallest and most threatened seabirds, the Little Tern, has continued to show signs of recovery. Little Terns, which weigh less than a tennis ball and migrate thousands of miles from West Africa each spring, nest on sand and shingle beaches around the UK coast. Their numbers have fallen by 39% since the 1980s due to loss of breeding habitat, disturbance, and predation, but recent conservation work is helping them recover.

- Eccles in Norfolk, part of the RSPB-led Beach Nesting Birds Project in Norfolk, had a standout year with 455 Little Terns fledging, up from 319 chicks across the whole of East Norfolk in 2019 and the highest number since Little Terns started nesting there in 2002.
- Beacon Lagoons on the Humber Estuary, led by Spurn Bird Observatory in partnership with the RSPB and other local partners, saw the highest number of breeding pairs in over 50 years (105) and 110 chicks fledging.
- The RSPB’s Pagham Harbour in West Sussex had 21 Little Tern chicks fledge, up from 0 in 2024.
- Chesil Beach, Dorset, where the RSPB leads on the Chesil Little Tern Recovery Project, saw its fourth consecutive productive year with at least 39 chicks fledging. This is a major increase from just three fledged in 2021.



*Mark Clements*



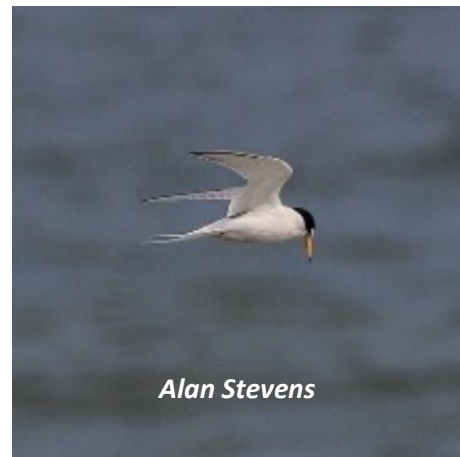
*Richard Farrow*

These successes come after years of decline, due to threats including loss of safe places to breed, increasing recreational disturbance, coastal development and predation. Thanks to long-term conservation partnerships, beach-nesting birds are showing encouraging signs of recovery, and across the England Little Tern numbers have risen by 6.7% since 2019. Since 2014, partnership projects such as the Little Tern LIFE Recovery Project, Solent Seascape Project, and LIFE on the Edge have worked with reserves focusing on enhancing and restoring nesting habitats,



improving predator management, and engaging local communities to reduce disturbance. Nationally, in collaboration with Natural England and others, the RSPB is delivering a Beach Nesting Bird Programme to protect these sites and secure the future recovery of Little Terns and other beach nesting species such as Ringed Plover and Oystercatcher.

Chantal MacLeod-Nolan, Seabird Project Recovery Officer from the RSPB, said: "Little Terns were in a downward spiral for years, so it's wonderful to see early signs that they might be climbing back. It's not all smooth sailing from here, especially with the potential for them to be hit by evolving threats such as avian flu, but it's really encouraging to see these amazing birds improving when given the right protections. None of this would be possible without the incredible dedication of volunteers and local communities, so a huge thank you to everyone for getting involved and helping to protect the internationally important wildlife that is nesting on our doorsteps."



*Alan Stevens*

The news comes just after World Migratory Bird Day on 11 October, which highlights the global journeys of species such as the Little Tern and the importance of protecting the coastlines they depend on. England's East Coast Wetlands — stretching from north Norfolk to Lincolnshire — were added to the UK's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites in 2023 in recognition of their international significance for migratory birds."

**The local good news story was also picked up by BBC Look East [Mariam Issimdar and Debbie Tubby] in October, from which the following summary was produced:**

The RSPB said 455 chicks were born from 270 pairs of little terns nesting on Eccles beach. The charity said the numbers made it the biggest tern colony in the UK this year. The Eccles site, which began with only 12 pairs of birds in 2002, has seen numbers increase yearly. The birds arrive in the summer from West Africa, before returning home with the fledglings in the autumn. Their breeding ritual involves males offering a fish to the female, who often reject it if too small, forcing the suitor to find and return with a larger offering. The chicks hatch about 21 days after the eggs are laid and are still dependent on their parents for food for a similar length of time, before being taught how to fish and fly. This year's fledglings are expected to return in two years' time, the RSPB said.

RSPB team leader Pam Hallesy has been monitoring the site this summer, with the support of 66 volunteers and says: "The birds constantly talk to each other. It's the sound of summer for me - that little chatter."

In the past, they have bred on the beaches of North Denes, Winterton and Kessingland in Suffolk, but this year all the birds returned to Eccles. The RSPB is keen to encourage them to spread their wings further along the coast. Human disturbance is believed to be the main reason they no longer breed at North Denes.

"The birds did try to come there this year; sadly we had some anti-social behaviour the night they were prospecting so they came here [to Eccles] instead," Pam Hallesy explained.

Although sand makes for ideal camouflage for the chicks and eggs, being on low ground makes them vulnerable to being trampled unwittingly by beachgoers and dogs off leads, or eaten by predators such as kestrels and foxes. High tides and bad weather can also impact numbers.

"If you can save species just by doing silly little things like putting your dog on a lead, or walking around a fence, why would you not do it? We can all share the beach can't we and give the birds the best chance we can." Pam Hallesy.



*Dave Billham*





## What's That Song?



Many of us find it difficult learning or remembering bird song whilst others seem to have a natural knack for it, a bit like a foreign language or music skill. Can you recognise a bird from the description of its voice though? The descriptions come from three different books, but they all refer to the same bird – no

wonder it is so confusing! As you can see, some books go into more detail than others. Answers are on the last page of this newsletter, along with a link through to a website where you can listen to an audio excerpt and decide which description resonates best with you! Solution [at the end of this newsletter.](#)

"Calls variable: loud, rough or grating, with rolled 'r'; sparrow 'shrree' or 'speew'; softer, flatter or down-slurred 'shrroo'. 'Explosive' shouted notes distinctive; quiet notes from undisturbed birds."

*from WILDGuides BRITAIN'S BIRDS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition - An identification guide to the birds of Britain and Ireland 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition by Hume, Still, Swash, Harrop and Tipling*

"Call typical, especially when flushed or on migration, a frothy, grating or hoarse, drawn-out and uninflected (or faintly down-slurred) 'pshee' (or 'shreep'; some House Sparrows can sound similar, but on other hand is very different from Skylark's calls). Straight, less typical, weaker 'cheep' calls heard at breeding site, and sometimes given by vagrants. Song simple, delivered in deeply undulating song-flight, a grinding 'tschivü- tschivü- tschivü- tschivü'."

*from Collins BIRD GUIDE 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition by Mullarney, Svensson, Zetterström*

"It usually calls on taking off and sometimes while flying over; the most frequent call is a harsh 'schreep', quite similar to a House Sparrow, but longer."

## Wordsearch



This month, we have the 20 species or races recorded on the NENBC website in November 2024 for which we have just one or two records – you never know what might crop up on your walks at this time of year so keep your eyes peeled! For the purposes of this puzzle, ignore any hyphens, apostrophes, brackets and spaces. Solution is at the end of this newsletter.

X C M G O D H C K O R K X N H R W A Z Z S K A F Z  
W L K K P B G D L C B B P J V I A Z S J R R B T D  
H O F P C A T T L E E G R E T O R O F X A W J H Z  
E G R S O D S F C X L I T T L E O W L L T D C K F  
N H B R F W O D K X N J F O G T G T F A L R N I F  
H L X N A P O C H A R D O B Y W O X V P W L Z C J  
A K I A G P Y E R P S O P S N E J L N L A C B T A  
R B T I Z S S S U V L R H G Z W W W N A T C N H C  
R Q P U A C S E R S Y E O M P O K E X N E G Q L K  
I A D W F Z D F E U A W Q J D W U S P D R C G C S  
E G R E Y P A R T R I D G E T W X O B B P P X L N  
R Z Q D A A V P W K T L R V Z W F O L U I K C E I  
V K U B R X F A E P E A B R R G R G P N P A Z R P  
I Y U W R K T S D L E W B I X B A A F T I B Z V E  
G A P O B E O B H G I H R C K N E D M I T R H V G  
X F T L R Q H O N D N Z L H T K T A B N O M C S F  
U J N L R Z R O M X B B N A U K R N R G P S N H S  
L O B A T I L A Y O B X G R I O C A P D U G A P D  
I B Z W I E R S P N I C X D P G B C I M E R L I N  
B I Z S U S V X W Z Z E X S R Y O B Y C I D K F J  
E M W R I N G N E C K E D P A R A K E E T I T S Y  
V H C F O S J J V N D X E I C T O A N U W C X I H  
F F P Q O U T E Z L M L T P E B T R A T S D E R T  
X R G P P B H Y C D K I S I F V D J J W Y S H M E  
A J X Z R G B H O W Z H Q T E H V M M O Y P P Z J

Canada Goose  
Cattle Egret  
Grey Partridge  
Lapland Bunting  
Long-eared Owl  
Pochard  
Redstart  
Richard's Pipit  
Sooty Shearwater  
Swallow  
Tree Sparrow  
Water Pipit  
Bearded Tit  
Hen Harrier  
Jack Snipe  
Little Owl  
Merlin  
Osprey  
Ring-necked Parakeet  
Scaup





No new ‘Accepted’ records from the Norfolk Records Committee [NRC] for our area since our last newsletter but their current ‘**NRC work in progress**’ file has been updated to 13-Oct-25. The British Birds Rarities Committee also have a ‘**BBRC work in progress**’ file available on their website [Dec-24].



2025  
Club  
Stats

454 individual members  
across 303 households

80,929  
bird records logged

249  
bird species reported

NENBC Website



A huge thanks to everyone who has uploaded records to our website so far this year date – nice to see some of our new members getting to grips with the website. It is very much appreciated by us and the bodies we send the data on to for inclusion in the county reports. Not started adding records yet? Plenty of time to get going this! If you need any assistance, just drop Carol a line on [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) or through the messaging element of the website. Please keep adding all your sightings to our website at [www.bird.club/clubs/north-east-norfolk-bird-club](http://www.bird.club/clubs/north-east-norfolk-bird-club) (or typing ‘NENBC’ into your search engine will get you there). Let us know if you have forgotten your password and need it resetting or need assistance on how to upload your records.


Prolific Posters January-October 2025

We now have records from 131 members so far this year. Phil B’s lead is unassailable it would seem, with over 184,000 points in the first 10 months of the year. A group of three members each have scores of over 70,000 points, and we now have 17 members in the 10,000+ points club. Can we make it to 20 by the end of the year?

Rank	Birder	Points
1	Phil Borley	184,700
2	Tony Pope	74,220
3	Valerie Stubbs	72,740
4	Mark Clements	72,160
5	Philip Cartlidge	59,190
6	Doug & Jenny Cullern	29,590
7	David Griffiths	26,210
8	Trevor Williams	23,450
9	Paul Laurie	19,090
10	Peter Geary	15,110
11	John Hurst	14,690
12	Stephanie Witham	12,990
13	Russell Page	12,750
14	Colin Blaxill	10,420
15	Andrew Clarke	10,330


Rank	Birder	Points
16	Stuart Jones	10,320
17	Ann Gladwin	10,270
18	Julia & David Ivison	9,830
19	Stella Baylis	9,590
20	Dawn & Tim Wright	9,580
21	Andrew Kershaw	8,940
22	Alan Stevens	8,630
23	Di & Richard Farrow	8,090
24	David Barrass	7,730
25	Ollie Allison	7,410
26	Bob Farndon	7,330
27	Moss Taylor	6,830
28	Michael Harcup	6,790
29	Peter & Sue Morrison	6,680
30	Roger Unite	6,630

Social Media – a couple of bits from social media in the last few weeks. This is something we really haven’t got to grips with of late so if you can tag us in any of your BlueSky posts or indeed have an interest in social media and can help us out, please do get in touch!




Ken T  
@velociraptor500.bsky.social

Blackbird in the garden at the weekend. When not feasting on the Rowan berries it was taking the grapes that were still on the vine, favours the white rather than the red just for information.



29 October 2025 at 19:18




BTO | British Trust for Ornithology  
@btobirds.bsky.social


Worrying reports of bird flu (avian influenza) are coming in, including an outbreak in Whooper Swans in the Fens. Other waterbirds are also being affected, and cases are rising.

☞ Sick Whooper Swan by Kane Brides

#UKBirding #BirdingWales #BirdingScotland




6 November 2025 at 20:08 (©) Everybody can reply



Helen Day  
@btflwayhome.bsky.social

I bought these old RSPB magazines for their CF Tunncliffe cover pictures. They look so good together (with that delicious typeface!)



7 November 2025 at 19:50 (©) Everybody can reply

## Star Badges

### No new achievers this month

Currently, **5** members have achieved **GOLD STAR** status, **22** members have been awarded **SILVER STAR** status and a fabulous **86** members now hold the **BRONZE STAR** status.

**For any of the club events that take place in the club area you can include all of the species you see or hear so join us for a walk. It always helps to get on to more birds when you are in a group of like-minded folk.**

Keep up the good work everyone – star badges are within everyone's reach!



Number of bird species recorded in the NENBC area since joining the club:

**BRONZE [100]** self-certified  
**SILVER [200]** peer reviewed  
**GOLD [250]** peer reviewed  
**PLATINUM [300]** peer reviewed

We will notify members when they achieve the Bronze badge but for the higher-level badges, members should notify us on [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) when they are ready for their website records to be peer reviewed by the Peer Review Group.

**NOTE:** The Norfolk Birds Rarities Committee is a little behind at the mo in assessing submitted description species (rarities) for acceptance. This is having an impact on our ability to award badges as we only confirm a rarity for badges once accepted by NBRC so apologies if you are waiting and thank you for your patience.

## Eco-Badges

### No new achievers this month but a couple of members now really close!

We currently have **27** members who have achieved their **GREEN ECO-BADGES** [Coastal: 16 | Inland: 11] and **9** who have achieved **SUPER-GREEN** [Coastal: 8 | Inland:1].

Those of you wanting to submit, please let us have a list of species, dates seen and locations that is derived from your website records (we can help you download your data) as we can't yet tell on our website if you are driving or not! If you need help getting your list of species downloaded, please ask!



**NOTE:** For these badges, electric bikes are considered motorised transport!

Number of bird species recorded in the NENBC area at or from home without the use of motorised transport since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 (or date of joining if later):

**GREEN ECO-BADGE:** 75 species required for lists with only inland sites / 100 for lists with any coastal locations

**SUPER-GREEN ECO-BADGE:** 125 species required for lists with only inland sites / 175 for lists with any coastal locations

Lists to be submitted by members from their club website records to [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) along with a declaration that award requirements have been met.

## Sea-watching Badge

**We are delighted that we have already had 3 submissions from our uber-seawatchers for our new badge which we only launched on 11<sup>th</sup> October! The Peer Review group will be reviewing them in the next few days so watch this space!**

Those of you wanting to submit, please let us have a list of the dates and locations of your qualifying seawatching sessions and the species generating points on those occasions that reflect your website entries. Note that you will need to ensure that you have **added to the comments on the website duration of any of your qualifying seawatches and it might help to add 'BLUE BADGE'** against any qualifying species too. Shout if not clear!



You must earn a total of a thousand points through a combination of time spent sea-watching and species recorded.

**Getting Points:** You get a once-only bonus of 100 points for attending a club seawatch, for all other watches 10 for every ½ hour spent watching, plus variable points for the first sighting of each of the species on our published list (see website) - 10 for the easy species, 15 for the more difficult or scarce and 20 for the rare ones.

Lists to be submitted by members from their club website records to [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) along with a declaration that award requirements have been met.

Why not get going on your own badge journey today!?





Given the level of activity in our skies these past few months, I thought this was apt!

### **The Birds Discuss the Aeroplane** *(Anonymous)*

Said the Owl: "It's a marvel! I never have heard  
Of such a gigantic, impossible bird."  
Said the Vulture: "Its wings are of awkward design,  
But as big as a hundred, a thousand, of mine."  
Said the Swallow: "It's one of the funniest things,  
For often I've seen it with two pairs of wings."  
Said the Thrush: "What a clatter and whir are its cries!  
And it won't sing a note except when it flies."  
Said the Eagle: "It climbs most amazingly high;  
I've met it a mile or more up in the sky."  
Said the Buzzard: "It soars with a beautiful grace,  
And it curves and it dives at a wonderful pace."  
Said the Duck: "I have seen one afloat on the sea,  
That rose from the water exactly like me."  
Said the Hawk: "It's astounding! Again and again  
I've seen the bird capture and carry off-men!"  
"But sometimes it tumbles," the Whippoorwill said,  
"And lies on the ground like a bundle of lead."  
"And one," said the Crane, "with a terrible sound  
Exploded, and fell, all afire, to the ground."  
"Dear me!" said they all, "what a puzzling affair!  
It's the queerest of creatures that fly in the air!"

The bird voice variously described was that of a **Richard's Pipit**. Click on the bird name to take you through to the xeno-canto website where, if you click on any of the play arrows on the left of the page, you will be able to hear the song. Don't forget to have your sound turned on and the volume up! Here's a link to the **BTO Bird Facts Richard's Pipit** page too. *Photos from Stu Buck, John Hayward, Tony Forster, David Griffiths*

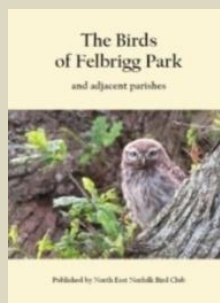


This month's **Wordsearch Solution:**  
BIRDS RECORDED IN THE NENBC AREA IN  
NOVEMBER 2024

X	C	M	G	O	D	H	C	K	O	R	K	X	N	H	R	W	A	Z	Z	S	K	A	F	Z
W	L	K	K	P	B	G	D	L	C	B	B	P	J	V	I	A	Z	S	J	R	R	B	T	D
H	O	F	P	C	A	T	T	L	E	E	G	R	E	T	O	R	O	F	X	A	W	J	H	Z
E	G	R	S	O	D	S	F	C	X	L	I	T	T	L	E	O	W	L	L	T	D	C	K	F
N	H	B	R	F	W	O	D	K	X	N	J	F	O	G	T	G	T	F	A	L	R	N	I	F
H	L	X	N	A	P	O	C	H	A	R	D	O	B	Y	W	O	X	V	P	W	L	Z	C	J
A	K	I	A	G	P	Y	E	R	P	S	O	P	S	N	E	J	L	N	L	A	C	B	T	A
R	B	T	I	Z	S	S	S	U	V	L	R	H	G	Z	W	W	N	A	T	C	N	H	C	
R	Q	P	U	A	C	S	E	R	S	Y	E	O	M	P	O	K	E	X	N	E	G	Q	L	K
I	A	D	W	F	Z	D	F	E	U	A	W	Q	J	D	W	U	S	P	D	R	C	G	C	S
E	G	R	E	Y	P	A	R	T	R	I	D	G	E	T	W	X	O	B	B	P	P	X	L	N
R	Z	Q	D	A	A	V	P	W	K	T	L	R	V	Z	W	F	O	L	U	I	K	C	E	I
V	K	U	B	R	X	F	A	E	P	E	A	B	R	R	G	R	G	P	N	P	A	Z	R	P
I	Y	U	W	R	K	T	S	D	L	E	W	B	I	X	B	A	A	F	T	I	B	Z	V	E
G	A	P	O	B	E	O	B	H	G	I	H	R	C	K	N	E	D	M	I	T	R	H	V	G
X	F	T	L	R	Q	H	O	N	D	N	Z	L	H	T	K	T	A	B	N	O	M	C	S	F
U	J	N	L	R	Z	R	O	M	X	B	B	N	A	U	K	R	N	R	G	P	S	N	H	S
L	O	B	A	T	I	L	A	Y	O	B	X	G	R	I	O	C	A	P	D	U	G	A	P	D
I	B	Z	W	I	E	R	S	P	N	I	C	X	D	P	G	B	C	I	M	E	R	L	I	N
B	I	Z	S	U	S	V	X	W	Z	Z	E	X	S	R	Y	O	B	Y	C	I	D	K	F	J
E	M	W	R	I	N	G	N	E	C	K	E	D	P	A	R	A	K	E	E	T	I	T	S	Y
V	H	C	F	O	S	J	J	V	N	D	X	E	I	C	T	O	A	N	U	W	C	X	I	H
F	F	P	Q	O	U	T	E	Z	L	M	L	T	P	E	B	T	R	A	T	S	D	E	R	T
X	R	G	P	P	B	H	Y	C	D	K	I	S	I	F	V	D	J	J	W	Y	S	H	M	E
A	J	X	Z	R	G	B	H	O	W	Z	H	Q	T	E	H	V	M	M	O	Y	P	P	Z	J



## Back Page Club Info .....



**The Birds of Felbrigg Park** is a systematic review of the records of all 220 species seen in and around the park over the past 50 years, indicating their current status and highlighting, for the rarer species, every recorded sighting. The publication includes photographs and artwork from local artists. The book is now reduced to £3.00 (postage extra) and all profits from the sale of this book go to Felbeck Trust, our local wildlife conservation charity:

[www.felbecktrust.org.uk](http://www.felbecktrust.org.uk)

For Annual Reports or The Birds of Felbrigg Park, contact Carol on [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk).

**Club Sponsor:** A 5% discount on Bird Ventures branded wild bird food is available to NENBC members at their shop in Holt all year on production of a current NENBC Membership Card. Have a look at the **Bird Ventures website** as they also supply feeders and much more with good advice and help for garden bird enthusiasts. **Bird Ventures, The Wildlife Shop, 9B Chapel Yard, Albert Street, Holt, Norfolk NR25 6HG, Telephone 01263 710203, Email [salesbirdventures@aol.com](mailto:salesbirdventures@aol.com)**



### The NENBC objectives:

- Encourage and share the enjoyment of birdwatching in North East Norfolk with people of all abilities and experience.
- Promote diversity and inclusion in all its activities.
- Gather and collate data on birds in the recording area.
- Share information between members.
- Participate in regional and national surveys incorporating the recording area.
- Administer the Club in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Promote the conservation of birds and wildlife within Norfolk.
- Liaise with other conservation groups within the local area and more widely.
- Hold regular indoor and field meetings and social events throughout the year.
- Put the interests of birds first and respect other people, whether or not they are interested in birds, in line with the birdwatchers' code.

**Monthly mid-week bird walks** around Felbrigg Park on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from September to July / Varied **monthly weekend bird walks** to a range of local birding hotspots from September to July / **Occasional evening walks** in the spring and summer / **Monthly evening talks** on the last Thursday of the month from September to November and January to April - refreshments provided / An annual **Big Sit** birding event at a number of locations across the club area in May, recording the total number of species seen from one spot between dawn and dusk / Autumn **Global Big Day** birding challenge / Annual **Coordinated Seawatch** event along the coast in the autumn recording visible migration / A **Birding for Beginners** workshop series combining practical and theoretical elements of birdwatching / **New Year's Day Birding Challenge** / **Occasional master-classes, lectures, workshops and conferences** to develop better skills and understanding of the birding world / A combined **Christmas Social and AGM Evening** in December