



# The Pied Flyer

North East Norfolk Bird Club



**October 2024 – Issue 112**

**The NENBC Monthly e-Newsletter**

**Contents** - if something is underlined, you can Ctrl-click / press on it etc to jump to an external website link or that point in the newsletter

<u>President's Piece</u> .....	Page 2	<u>NENBC Coordinated Seawatch 2024</u> .....	Page 23
<u>A Note from the Editor</u> .....	Page 3	<u>A Year at Weybourne Camp: September 2024</u> .....	Page 26
<u>Membership News and Statistics</u> .....	Page 4	<u>NENBC Alerts WhatsApp Update</u> .....	Page 27
<u>NENBC Bird Highlights</u> .....	Page 5	<u>UEA Environmental Consultancy Projects</u> .....	Page 28
<u>September 2024</u> .....	Page 5	<u>Contemplating Conservation: To Kill 4 Conservation?</u> ....	Page 30
<u>NENBC Ringed Bird Records</u> .....	Page 10	<u>Member Highs, Lows &amp; Ponderings</u> .....	Page 33
<u>What To Look &amp; Listen For in October</u> .....	Page 11	<u>Check This Out</u> .....	Page 34
<u>Club Notices</u> .....	Page 12	<u>Ficedula Fun</u> .....	Page 35
<u>What's On?</u> .....	Page 13	<u>Data, Records, Posts &amp; Tweets</u> .....	Page 36
<u>Walks: Felbrigg Park / Winterton Dunes</u> .....	Page 13	<u>Cultural Birds: Gannets</u> .....	Page 37
<u>Talk: Shelduck Migration with Ros Green</u> .....	Page 14	<u>Ficedula Fun Solutions</u> .....	Page 38
<u>Last Month's Felbrigg Walk</u> .....	Page 15	<u>Back Page Club Info</u> .....	Page 39
<u>Last Month's Mini Talks</u> .....	Page 17		



**Through a Lens**



By Nigel Redman

Birders often have a passion for collecting all things bird-related, and not just ticks and lists. Bird books are an obvious example, and most birders have a fairly decent collection of books – I have to confess that I am well and truly guilty of this particular addiction. I love my books and they give me a great deal of pleasure and knowledge, although I am now running out of space! Other popular collectibles include paintings, sculpture, t-shirts, optics, even pin badges – but not stuffed birds or their eggs any more, thankfully.

Like many birders, I have a few original artworks and sculptures, but one of my minor passions is bird stamps. Like many boys of my generation I collected postage stamps as a child (did girls collect stamps – except Carol\*? I went to an all-boys school and didn't really know any girls until I left school!). I was encouraged by my father, who had a modest collection himself, mainly of British stamps. Not surprisingly, I also collected British stamps, keeping them in special Stanley Gibbons albums. There were many empty spaces in my albums, but I bought all the new issues as they came out, until one day I realised that the Royal Mint was just taking us for a ride. It was quite expensive for a struggling student to buy new sets of stamps every couple of months. So, I gave up on my British collection and decided to switch to bird stamps. It was very low key from the start. I only collected used stamps, steamed off envelopes that I received in the post. I resolved not to purchase new sets of stamps except in exceptional circumstances. Like the Royal Mint, many countries around the world issue new stamps with incredible regularity, and birds on stamps are one of the most popular thematic subjects. There are literally thousands of birds stamps in the world, and to collect them seriously would have cost a lot more than keeping my British collection up to date. My collection grew slowly but steadily over the years and decades. Friends would collect them for me too, and occasionally I would swap stamps with other collectors. I keep them all in two big albums, filed by country rather than taxonomically. Being mostly used stamps, often heavily franked, the collection is not worth much in monetary value, but the stamps do look very splendid when displayed on the black pages of my albums.

With the double-whammy of the advent of self-adhesive stamps and the near-death of letter writing, stamp collecting has become a very marginal interest, and one which might almost die out altogether. After all, there are so many more exciting things for boys to fill their spare time with these days. Even to me, it does now seem to be a slightly odd thing to do, but I have enjoyed

collecting bird stamps, and over the years I have amassed a collection of around 2,500 different stamps. I don't know how many species this represents, but it must be at least 1,500. Astonishingly, they come from no fewer than 190 different countries or territories, but there are still at least 20 or 30 countries for which I have no stamps at all. It's much harder to find new ones now, but I definitely get a thrill when I do. I wonder how many other NENBC members collect bird stamps. Surely, I am not alone?



A few of my favourite bird stamps. How many can you name? Several are now extinct or critically endangered, and one was only discovered about 20 years ago. I have seen 8 of them. [Answers on [page 38](#)]

**\* Carol here, just to set the record straight – girls did collect stamps too, amongst very many other random things in my case! I like to make presents for my family at Christmas and sticking themed stamps on plain purchased craft boxes got me very excited one year – possibly less so those who received them but hey, it is the thought that counts!**





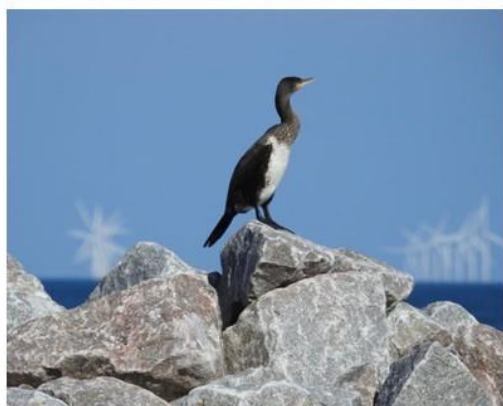
By Carol Thornton

**Hi folks. Welcome to our October issue! As always, full details of our schedule of events are on our website.**

It was great to get back into the swing of things in September with our new season of walks, talks and events. Our regular [Felbrigg Park walk](#) kicked us off on the 18<sup>th</sup> with a larger than usual crowd – hope to see you all back next month! I was particularly pleased to pick up a Mediterranean Gull towards my Super-Green (Inland) badge there. It was one of my bogey-birds on my walks out from home so I now need ‘just’ 5 more species to hit the 125 target! We had a largely enjoyable [Coordinated Seawatch](#) on 21<sup>st</sup>, although it was a little quiet on the birding front for some of us, but hey, we had a chance to catch up with folk in the slack time! Our 1<sup>st</sup> talk evening of the autumn was our ever-popular [Member Mini-Talks Night](#). Four fab speakers, an eclectic mix of topics and a great crowd in person and online. Read about them all in our write-ups in this newsletter.

Last month’s **Through a Lens** subject for the front page was **BIRDS IN THE GARDEN** and our cover images this time are from Doug Cullern (Blackbird, Woodpigeon), Andrew Crossley (Robin, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Chiffchaff) and Alan Stevens (Buzard, Grey Heron). Thanks all! The **theme for October is – THRUSHES AND FINCHES**.

Below is my pick from September of some great photos from our website of the more common birds that don’t make it to the Monthly Bird Highlights section: Starling (Richard Farrow), Magpie (Andrew Crossley), Cormorant (Doug Cullern), Kestrel (Richard Farrow), Magpies (Trevor Williams), Wheatear (Jane Crossen) and Herring Gull (Doug Cullern).





Welcome to Our New Members - we look forward to seeing you soon!

**\* Paul Pearson \* Tim Willey & Jane Sedgwick \***  
**\* Wendy & Dave Cutting \* Hugh & Susan Matthews \***

436 individual  
members across  
284 households

66,761  
bird records  
logged

230 bird species  
reported

Please keep adding all your sightings to our website at [www.nenbc.co.uk](http://www.nenbc.co.uk). Let us know if you have forgotten your password and need it resetting or need assistance on how to upload your records. More information from our website records, Twitterings and social media presence in **Data, Records, Posts & Tweets** from [page 36](#).

## Club Achievement Awards

### Star Badges

**No new achievers this month but we are looking forward to a few more coming through soon!**

Currently, **4** members have achieved **GOLD STAR** status, **21** members have been awarded **SILVER STAR** status and a fabulous **83** 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.

### Eco-Badges

**No new achievers his month but plenty of time to get going in this new season!**

We currently have **27** members who have achieved their **GREEN ECO-BADGES** [Coastal: 16 | Inland: 10] and 5 who have achieved **SUPER-GREEN** [Coastal: 5 | 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!



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.



By Carol Thornton

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

≈ 5,688 individual records covering 180 bird species were added in September

There were 5,688 records submitted for September which is 1,145 less than those submitted for the same period last year and 726 more than the previous month of August. A total of 180 species were recorded which was 9 more than was recorded in the same period in 2023. Listed below are summaries of the less common species in our area last month. Highlights this month included **Velvet Scoter**, **Leach's Petrel**, **Sooty Shearwater**, **Manx Shearwater**, **Balearic Shearwater**, **Hoopoe**, **Red-backed Shrike**, **Yellow-browed Warbler**, **Red-breasted Flycatcher**, **Siberian Stonechat** and **Lapland Bunting**. See below for write-ups.

**Brent Goose** The first record of the season was a single west a Sheringham on 13<sup>th</sup> with plenty of sightings along the length of the coast from then onwards, predominantly during seawatches and with all sessions showing predominantly westward movement. High count was 88 west and 17 east at Weybourne on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Barnacle Goose** Two birds west at Sheringham on 27<sup>th</sup> and a single west at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Mandarin Duck** A male and 3 female at the top end of Felbrigg Park lake on 28<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 1 courtesy of Andrew Crossley*

**Garganey** A single west with Common Scoter at Sheringham on 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Velvet Scoter** Three west at Mundesley on 18<sup>th</sup> and a single west at both East Runton (Coastwatch Station) and Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 28<sup>th</sup>. All records were with Common Scoter.

**Red-breasted Merganser** One west at Weybourne on 17<sup>th</sup> and one, also west, East Runton (Coastwatch Station) 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey Partridge** Four records of a single with a Red-leg covey at Weybourne Camp between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Red-necked Grebe** One west at Sheringham on 5<sup>th</sup> and one east at Happisburgh on 21<sup>st</sup> during the club Coordinated Seawatch on 21<sup>st</sup>,

**Whimbrel** Records throughout the month at the coast, mostly of singles, but with 2 west at Sheringham Cemetery on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2 east at Weybourne on 11<sup>th</sup> and plus 3 singles west during a seawatch at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 28<sup>th</sup>. High count was 7 west at Weybourne Camp on 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** Nine west Sheringham on 5<sup>th</sup>, with a single west there on 27<sup>th</sup> plus a single west at Weybourne on 14<sup>th</sup> with 2 west there on 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Knot** Records from Weybourne Camp on 2<sup>nd</sup> (3) and 7<sup>th</sup> (1), Sheringham on 5<sup>th</sup> (1) and 16<sup>th</sup> (4), Bacton on 6<sup>th</sup> (6), Weybourne on 10<sup>th</sup> (1), 11<sup>th</sup> (up to 6) and 14<sup>th</sup> (2), West Runton on 14<sup>th</sup> (5) and East Runton (Coastwatch Station) on 28<sup>th</sup> (1).

**Curlew Sandpiper** A single west close in at Sheringham on 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Purple Sandpiper** First record of the season was on 12<sup>th</sup> at Sheringham where a single was “fraternising with the Turnstones” followed by further singles sighted at Sheringham on 24<sup>th</sup> and Weybourne on 29<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 2 courtesy of Richard Farrow*



**Woodcock** A record of a single at Felbrigg Park on 30<sup>th</sup> with the possibility of a further 2 near the church there.

**Kittiwake** Records from 1<sup>st</sup> through to 23<sup>rd</sup> with larger movements on 5<sup>th</sup> (up to 84 a Weybourne, 75 at Mundesley, 48 at Sheringham), 12<sup>th</sup> (35 at Mundesley), 13<sup>th</sup> (up to 120 a Sheringham, 25 a Mundesley and 113 at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs) and 14<sup>th</sup> (101 at Weybourne). *Photo 3 courtesy of Mark Clements*

**Sabine's Gull** Two east from Weybourne (juvenile) and 2 west, distant, Sheringham on 5<sup>th</sup> plus one in from the north east at Sheringham on 6<sup>th</sup> and a juvenile west there on 12<sup>th</sup>. On 13<sup>th</sup>, a juvenile west from Sheringham loosely associated with flock of Sandwich Terns and juvenile Kittiwakes for a nice comparison, presumably the same bird seen later off East Runton, Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs pursued by Arctic Skua, and also at Sea Palling.

**Little Gull** A single east at Sheringham and Weybourne on 5<sup>th</sup> plus on 27<sup>th</sup>, 10 east past Weybourne Camp, up to 97 east at Sheringham and 3 east at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs.

**Mediterranean Gull** Records of mostly singles throughout the month from predominantly coastal locations with high counts at Mundesley of up to 6 west on 28<sup>th</sup>. The only inland record was of a single in a mixed gull flock at Felbrigg Park during the September club walk. *Photo 4 courtesy of Trevor Williams*

**Caspian Gull** A juvenile was east close inshore at Weybourne Camp on 1<sup>st</sup>. All other records, mostly singles, were from Sheringham. The high count was 4 east there on 1<sup>st</sup> (three 1<sup>st</sup> calendar year and one 2<sup>nd</sup> calendar year) with other records on 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 5 courtesy of Mark Clements*

**Sandwich Tern** Records throughout the month, including plenty of double-figure counts. Triple-figure counts were on 1<sup>st</sup> Weybourne (157), on 2<sup>nd</sup> Weybourne Camp (203), on 3<sup>rd</sup> Weybourne (147), on 4<sup>th</sup> at Sheringham (126), on 5<sup>th</sup> Sheringham (314) and Weybourne (up to 390) and on 11<sup>th</sup> Weybourne (151).

**Arctic Tern** Two east at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 6<sup>th</sup>, one feeding with tern flock at Weybourne on 11<sup>th</sup> and up to 5 at Sheringham on 27<sup>th</sup>, with at least one juvenile reported.

**Black Tern** Mostly singles from Weybourne (3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>), Sheringham (13<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>), Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs (12<sup>th</sup>) and Weybourne Camp (14<sup>th</sup>). Up to 14 were reported at Sheringham on 4<sup>th</sup>, 3 there on 9<sup>th</sup> plus 4 at Weybourne on 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Great Skua** Thirty records of mostly 1-3 birds during seawatches throughout the month off the Weybourne sites, East Runton, Sheringham and Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs. High counts were 7 east at Weybourne on 6<sup>th</sup> and up to 30 east at Sheringham on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Pomarine Skua** Singles east at Sheringham on 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, Weybourne Camp on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> and Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 27<sup>th</sup>. Three were reported slowly east close inshore at Sheringham on 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Arctic Skua** Over 70 records from the usual coastal viewpoints throughout the month of mostly single figure counts, with 10 double-figure counts. The high count was of 109 mainly east at Sheringham on 27<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 6 courtesy of Russell Page*

**Long-tailed Skua** A juvenile dropping in off Weybourne Camp to feed before heading east on 9<sup>th</sup>, a

3



4



5



6



juvenile west at Sheringham on 12<sup>th</sup>, singles off Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs and Sheringham on 13<sup>th</sup>, plus up to 2 juveniles east from Cromer Lighthouse & Cliffs and Sheringham on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Black Guillemot** Singles reported on 4 days – the 12<sup>th</sup> west Sheringham and Weybourne, the 25<sup>th</sup> Weybourne and Weybourne Camp, the 27<sup>th</sup> Sheringham plus the 29<sup>th</sup> Weybourne, where it was recorded as a first winter bird.

**Puffin** One west Weybourne on 20<sup>th</sup>, 2 east at there and a single at Sheringham on 21<sup>st</sup> plus a single east at Sheringham on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Red-throated Diver** Over 100 records of mostly single-figure counts throughout the month. High counts were all at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs during seawatches on 25<sup>th</sup> (57) and 28<sup>th</sup> (63). *Photo 7 courtesy of Trevor Williams*

**Black-throated Diver** One east at Sheringham on 13<sup>th</sup>, one east at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs during the Coordinated Seawatch on 21<sup>st</sup> and another single east there on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Great Northern Diver** Singles east at Sheringham on 13<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> with one east at Weybourne on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Leach's Petrel** Three east at Sheringham on 27<sup>th</sup> during an afternoon seawatch.

**Fulmar** Nearly 30 records throughout the month of mostly single-figure counts. An influx on 12<sup>th</sup> with small groups and singles totalling 18 west at Mundesley but a fantastic 503 west at Sheringham during a 5½ hour afternoon seawatch.

**Sooty Shearwater** Seventeen records over 6 days this month. Mostly 1-2 birds during seawatches but higher counts during longer seawatches from Sheringham on 5<sup>th</sup> (10 birds), 12<sup>th</sup> (27, mainly west late afternoon and early evening) and 27<sup>th</sup> (11 mainly east).

**Manx Shearwater** Forty records of mostly single-figure counts throughout the month. There was the largest movement of birds on 5<sup>th</sup> with high counts of 72 past Sheringham in the middle of the day and 65 in the late afternoon, with up to 42 recorded from Weybourne and 15 Mundesley, all but one record reported heading east.

**Balearic Shearwater** Singles east from Sheringham on 5<sup>th</sup> and again on 6<sup>th</sup>, also reported from the Weybourne sites on the same day. A single was also west at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Spoonbill** A single east at West Runton on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2 high east together at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Great White Egret** One east at Weybourne on 10<sup>th</sup>, Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 14<sup>th</sup> and Sheringham on 26<sup>th</sup>. Two west past Sheringham on 15<sup>th</sup>, Weybourne and West Runton on 25<sup>th</sup> and up to 2 birds around the Weybourne sites on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Osprey** A single in off the sea from the north east at Sheringham on 4<sup>th</sup>, making landfall just east of the town.

**Hoopoe** An obliging individual reported from a front garden in North Walsham on 24<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 8 courtesy of Trevor Williams*

**Kingfisher** Singles recorded at Brinton, Mannington Hall park, Felbrigg Park, Selbrigg Pond and Mundesley.

**Wryneck** One bird at Woodhill Caravan Park, West Runton on 1<sup>st</sup> and Beeston Regis on 8<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 9 courtesy of Mike Bailey*

**Merlin** An individual landed on the beach at Weybourne Camp on 7<sup>th</sup> and a juvenile male was reported at Trimingham on 20<sup>th</sup>.



**Hobby** Singles reported throughout the month from a variety of locations – Southrepps Common, Felbrigg park, Beeston Common, Weybourne Camp, West Runton, Sheringham, Sheringham Cemetery and Wolterton Park. Three were recorded together at Hempstead on 16<sup>th</sup> hawking insects. *Photo 10 courtesy of Mark Clements*

**Peregrine** Male and female adults recorded generally singly around Cromer throughout the month and further afield singles at Sheringham, Trimingham (juvenile on 20<sup>th</sup>), Walcott, Aylmerton and Mundesley. *Photo 11 courtesy of Jane Crossen*

**Red-backed Shrike** On 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> a first calendar year bird was reported predominantly at Weybourne Camp, with an additional record on Weybourne Cliffs on 3<sup>rd</sup>. This “beautifully marked immature” was seen catching several solitary bees. *Photo 12 courtesy of Stu Buck*

**Marsh Tit** Singles at Mannington Hall Park on 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, in a member’s garden at East Beckham on 16<sup>th</sup> with two on Beeston Common on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Yellow-browed Warbler** The first records were of a single on 22<sup>nd</sup> at Beeston Common with further reports from there and Beeston Regis until 28<sup>th</sup>. Singles also reported from Weybourne Camp on 26<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> with 2 there on 29<sup>th</sup>. Other records were from Weynor Gardens Kelling on and Weybourne Heath on 28<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 13 courtesy of Mark Clements*

**Willow Warbler** Records of up to 3 birds at Sheringham Cemetery on 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, with other records from Weybourne Camp (2) and Beeston Common (3) on 2<sup>nd</sup>, with up to 1-2 birds there on 6<sup>th</sup> and a single at Cromer on 7<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 14 courtesy of Francis Farrow*

**Lesser Whitethroat** The majority of reports were from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> of generally singles at Weybourne Camp, Beeston Common, Cromer, Upper Sheringham and Beeston Regis, with Sheringham Cemetery having records of up to 4 birds. One later record from Beeston Common of a single on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Dartford Warbler** Just one report of a pair feeding in heather on Kelling Heath on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Firecrest** Singles in an Aylmerton garden on 19<sup>th</sup> singing and on Beeston Common on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Nuthatch** Plenty of records throughout the month from 12 mainly inland locations including Beeston Common, Knapton, Aylsham Woodgate Nursery, Southrepps Common and Blickling Park, where at least 6 were reported on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Spotted Flycatcher** Records in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the month through to the 13<sup>th</sup> from Sheringham Cemetery

10



11



12



13



14



(up to 4 birds), Kelling Heath, Beeston Common, Weybourne Camp, Trimingham, Southrepps Common and Blickling Park. *Photo 15 courtesy of Francis Farrow*

**Pied Flycatcher** Up to 3 birds were reported at Sheringham Cemetery between 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, with other records of 1-2 birds coming from Beeston Bump and Common, West Runton and Weybourne Camp in the same time period with one later record of a single at Happisburgh (Doggetts Lane) on 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher** A single record of a single bird from gardens along Doggetts Lane, Happisburgh on 21<sup>st</sup>. *Photo 16 courtesy of John Haywood*

**Redstart** Forty records from 1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> and then a further 8 from 18<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>. The first batch were from predominantly coastal-band sites with a high count of 9+ at West Runton on 1<sup>st</sup> and the later ones were only of singles. *Photo 17 courtesy of Jane Crossen*

**Whinchat** At least 12 birds were reported at West Runton on 1<sup>st</sup>, with the majority of the records of 1-3 birds in the first half of the month from Beeston area, Felbrigg Park, West Runton, Paston, Sheringham Cemetery and the Weybourne sites. Five late-month records of 1-2 birds were from Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs, Northrepps and Weybourne.

**Siberian Stonechat** A non-breeding male was at Weybourne Camp on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Wheatear** Over 100 Wheatear records throughout the month from more than 20 predominantly coastal-belt locations. High counts were around 45 in small groups at West Runton late afternoon on the 1<sup>st</sup> and over 50 at Weybourne Camp and Sheringham Cemetery on the 6<sup>th</sup>, described as a "fantastic spectacle of a big arrival of this species".

**Tree Sparrow** West Runton was the place to be to see a single Tree Sparrow amongst up to 100 House Sparrows around the café between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 18 courtesy of Stu Buck*

**Yellow Wagtail** Singles at Beeston Common on 1<sup>st</sup>, Northrepps on 22<sup>nd</sup>, Sheringham Cemetery on 6<sup>th</sup> with 2 there on 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Grey Wagtail** Nineteen records of 1-3 birds throughout the month from a range of locations, with 4 at Overstrand on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Tree Pipit** A single west at Beeston Common on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Rock Pipit** Eleven records starting with a single east at Weybourne Camp on 13<sup>th</sup>. Other records of 1-2 birds from several coastal locations but with 4 at Weybourne on 29<sup>th</sup>, 6 at Weybourne Camp on 28<sup>th</sup> and 7 west at Sheringham also on that date.

**Brambling** A single at Beeston Regis Heath (Stone Hill) on 25<sup>th</sup>.



**Hawfinch** A single flying north a Sheringham on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Twite** Two east at Weybourne on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Lesser Redpoll** A single calling overhead a Sheringham Cemetery on 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Common Crossbill** Four flying west calling over Weybourne Camp on 7<sup>th</sup> and 2 west over Beeston Common on 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Lapland Bunting** Singles west over Sheringham Cliffs & Golf Course on 13<sup>th</sup>, east at Happisburgh during the Coordinated Seawatch on 21<sup>st</sup> and west at Weybourne Camp on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Snow Bunting** Singles at Weybourne Camp on both 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. *Photo 19 courtesy of Trevor Williams*

19



## NENBC Ringed Bird Records in September










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 ...

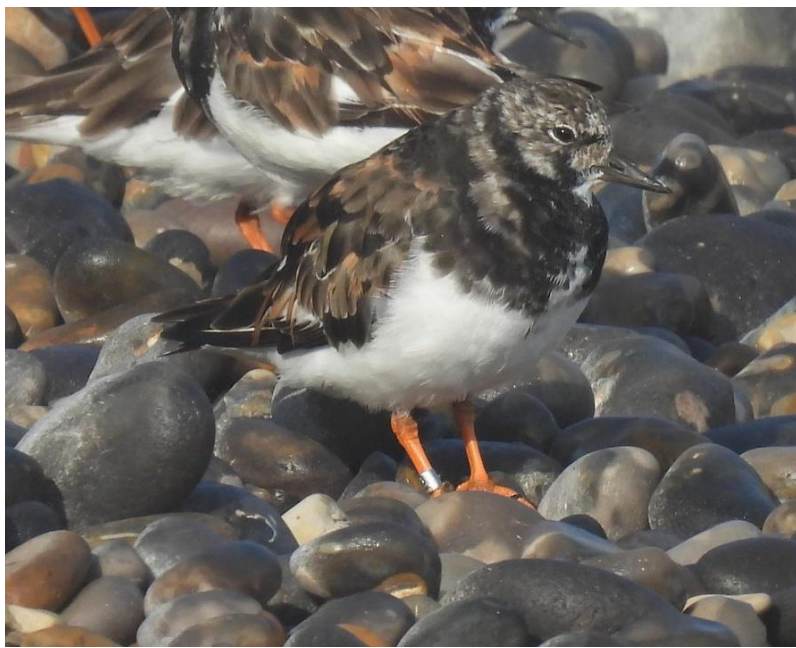
Please report your colour ring birds to the relevant project co-ordinator which can be found through the EU Colour Ring website <https://cr-birding.org/>.

Locally ringed Turnstones stones (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 report to the BTO <https://app.bto.org/euring/lang/pages/rings.jsp>

**Turnstone:** Photos: Roger Emmens and Jane Crossen

-  "18x JAA is back! The Canadian ringed bird (2017). This is third party report (a club member) but I've seen photo evidence." | Jane Crossen | Sheringham | 4<sup>th</sup>
-  "c15 including Canadian ringed bird JAA." | Di & Richard Farrow | Sheringham | 1<sup>st</sup>
-  "x19 Rocks in front of the tank. JAA was there." | Jane Crossen | Sheringham | 9<sup>th</sup>
-  "x6 East slipway beach inc JAA" | Peter Geary | Sheringham | 15<sup>th</sup>
-  "22x East beach slipway 1 metal ringed bird right tarsus" | Peter Geary | Sheringham | 19<sup>th</sup>
-  "22x ...as well as the seawatch! Bird with leg flag JAA" | Roger Emmens | Sheringham | 21<sup>st</sup>
-  "27x Including JAA and the bird ringed in Sheringham (I think in 2022) with a single silver ring which is upside down." | Jane Crossen | Sheringham | 25<sup>th</sup>





### MISSING: Can you help?

The cob at Selbrigg Pond, though returned after the presumed dog attack that took place in June, never fully settled back in, even to the point he was found walking halfway from the pond to Bodham one day and had to be returned. It was reported that one of his legs looked swollen, which may be as he was prone to walking off, plus his foot had become cut and possibly infected. He has now totally disappeared and has not been seen for 3-4 weeks as of 12<sup>th</sup> October. If anyone sees a Mute Swan with an **orange code 4FTF and metal ring W37593**, Francis the owner of the pond would, as we would, appreciate knowing if he has taken up residence elsewhere, but we suspect he may have succumbed. He was originally ringed by the RSPCA 29/3/16 after a fishing hook injury to his bill, hence aka Scarface. If you do see him, please log it on the website and let the Carol know. Thanks.

Chris Lamsdell

## What to Look and Listen For in October



Winter thrushes should be arriving soon with Blackbird numbers increasing, together with Redwing and Fieldfare. Check out Blackbird flocks for Ring Ouzel and look out for Snow Bunting and Lapland Bunting near the coast. Short-eared Owls should also put in an appearance this month. Geese numbers should continue to build and once the Pink-footed Goose flock has settled into the fields it is always worth scanning through them to see if there are other species such as Bean Goose hidden amongst them. October should also prove to be another good month for sea-watching at any suitable spot along the coast.

The underlined links in this section are to some very helpful BTO Video ID Guides for the confusion species concerned.

**October 2023** really had a little bit of everything with late summer migrants, autumn rarities and some proper winter species! A Lesser White-fronted Goose of presumably feral origin was noted at Weybourne Camp and Velvet Scoter and Long-Tailed Duck were both reported. Black-throated Diver were seen off the coast along with Red-necked and Slavonian Grebe. A Glossy Ibis was spotted over Weybourne Camp before settling for a day at West Runton. Sheringham reported Sabine's Gull and a family party of Roseate Tern were off Weybourne and there was a supporting cast of Black Guillemot and Puffin. A case of déjà vu from October 2022 with Pallid Swift being seen at both Trimingham and West Runton. A Siberian Chiffchaff was at Weybourne Camp and a couple of Yellow-browed Warbler were in the area. Two elusive Waxwing were present at Sheringham Cemetery, and we were lucky enough to have two reports of Richard's Pipit plus a Tawny Pipit was at Happisburgh. Just to remind us winter is looming, we also had reports of Shore Lark, Twite, Lapland Bunting and Snow Bunting.

### Historical October Records

by Russ Malin

Records taken from "Rare and Scarce Birds in North-east Norfolk"  
by kind permission of the author Moss Taylor

There are, perhaps unsurprisingly, plenty of historic October records of note. An adult drake Surf Scoter was seen flying west off Cromer and Weybourne on October 20<sup>th</sup> 1991 during a heavy passage of Common Scoter. In 2002 a White-billed Diver was west off Sheringham on October 5<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 4 Glossy Ibis flew east offshore on October 18<sup>th</sup> between Weybourne and Happisburgh. In 1969 a Long-billed Dowitcher was found at a pool by Weybourne Hope reed-bed on October 30<sup>th</sup> and was seen later the same day at Cley, where it remained until November 4<sup>th</sup>. In 1881 the third Norfolk record of Tengmalm's Owl concerned an individual that was 'taken' alive at Cromer Lighthouse in the early hours of October 30<sup>th</sup>. As in the previous month, October has played host to some scarce and rare warblers. Dusky Warbler was ringed at Dead Mans Wood on October 10<sup>th</sup> 1982 and a Radde's Warbler was found at Happisburgh on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1991. A Hume's Warbler was found at Mundesley on October 20<sup>th</sup> 1999, where it remained until the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Perhaps one of the most enigmatic species, the Wallcreeper was shot at Stratton Strawless on October 30<sup>th</sup> 1792. It was described in a letter from Robert Marsham to Gilbert White: "my man has just now shot me a bird which was flying about my house; I am confident I have never seen its likeness before. But on application to Mr Willughby I conclude it is a Wallcreeper or Spidercatcher". On examination of a coloured sketch of the primaries it was considered to be a female, or immature male. Remarkable! Dead Mans Wood crops up again with the third Norfolk record of Black-throated Thrush. A first-winter female was ringed on October 31<sup>st</sup> 1993. After releasing it joined a party of Redwing flying south and was relocated in Sheringham Park where it was seen going to roost. The second Norfolk record of Pied Wheatear concerned a female on the cliffs at Dead Mans Wood on October 30<sup>th</sup> 1983. Finally, in 1996 Norfolk's first Blyth's Pipit was located close to the Weybourne Coastguard Cottages on October 14<sup>th</sup> and, finally, a female/immature Rustic Bunting was found on September 16<sup>th</sup> 1993 at, you guessed it, Dead Mans Wood, Sheringham.

## Conservation Corner – can you help??

Would you be interested in joining or team of article writers for the Conservation Corner slot? We currently have two members writing excellent articles alternate months but a bit of back up would be very handy for months when they have other commitments.

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.

## 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!*

## 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!

## 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)

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



**Summary of our annual offer directly below with info after that of upcoming events. Our website is the place to go for the most up to date and detailed info.**

-  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

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

### INFO FOR ALL WALKS:

Please wear clothing suitable to conditions - footpaths can be muddy at any time of the year - and continue to respect social distancing on the walk if appropriate.

**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.

**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 Status 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 that are led by Janice, booking is essential and numbers are limited to 15. Please book with Janice at least 2 days prior to the walk on [janicedarch@gmail.com](mailto:janicedarch@gmail.com)

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October | 9.00am-11.00am |  
**Felbrigg Park Monthly Walk**  
 with Trevor Williams



No advance booking needed

*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 regularly see over 40 bird species on an average walk and even on the 'worst' of days more than 30*

**MEET:** Main car park | **PARKING:** Although access to the grounds is free to all and parking is free in the main car park for National Trust [NT] members with their machine-validated membership card, a parking fee is payable via the machines for non-NT members (£5 per vehicle at time of writing). Sexton's Lodge car park at the western end of the estate however remains free to all users and you can walk up from there along the internal estate road to the start point. | Check out the [NT website](#). | **DISTANCE:** up to 2-mile circular walk |

**ACCESSIBILITY:** The walk is usually 'off-road' along dirt footpaths and tracks, across fields, through woods and can include a few stairs by the lake. As such, this event isn't suitable for wheelchair users. | **FACILITIES:** Toilets and café facilities available at Felbrigg Hall. | **BADGES:** Walk within the club area so records count for Star Badges plus Green Eco-badges if non-motorised transport conditions are met.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November | 9.00am-1.00pm |  
**Winterton Dunes and Somerton Estate Walk** with Janice Darch



Booking required via Janice by 5pm on the Thursday before [janicedarch@gmail.com](mailto:janicedarch@gmail.com) (15 places)

*This walk will take us through the Somerton Estate and return through Winterton North Dunes. The are good for Brambling, finch and tit flocks, Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers, overhead Marsh Harriers are common and we have been lucky enough to see Common Cranes overhead on past walks. The dune coast can be very good for late autumn migrants and species such as Bluethroat, Wryneck, Red-backed Shrike and Barred Warbler are possibilities! Short-eared Owls can sometimes give stunning views in the dunes. Shore birds such as Dunlin and Sandling are usually on the shoreline and offshore scoter flocks are often seen. Grey Seal may already have started their breeding season on the beach. If there are any interesting birds on the South Dunes we will extend the walk to include them if people wish.*

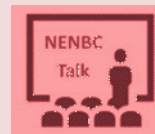
**MEET:** In car park | **PARKING:** Somerton Road Playing Fields free car park, Winterton-on-Sea NR29 4AW | **DISTANCE:** 5 miles | **ACCESSIBILITY:** Easy tracks but sandy surfaces so probably isn't suitable for wheelchair users. | **FACILITIES:** Loos available in the village only | **BADGES:** Outside the club area so unfortunately records can't count for Star Badges or Green Eco-badges this time.

## Monthly Evening Club Talk

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October | 7.30pm-9.30pm |

Gresham Village Hall and via Zoom

zoom



### “Shelduck migration in relation to offshore wind farms”

*A talk with Ros Green*

**A BIT ABOUT THE SPEAKER AND THEIR TALK:** Ros Green will present the results of her PhD research so far, studying the migration of Common Shelduck in relation to offshore wind farms. She's been GPS tracking their migration for five years and is also using stable isotope analysis to understand where they moult and spend their winters. She'll show you how she intends to use BTO (BirdTrack) data, bird club data and other data sources to understand this species' migration better and explain how the growing number of offshore wind farms might impact this migration. Bio: Ros is a part-time PhD student studying at the University of Liverpool, whilst continuing her previous role as Research Ecologist at the British Trust for Ornithology. She's been a professional avian behavioural ecologist for over a decade, focussing mostly on seabirds, waders and (now) ducks. She used to live in Thetford but has now relocated to the Welsh borders. For further info see: <https://shelducks.co.uk/> and [Ros Green](#) | [BTO - British Trust for Ornithology](#)

**AT THE HALL:** Those of you attending in-person at the hall 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 2nd 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.

**BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS:** It is always nice to know if you are coming to the hall 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 are intending to join via Zoom though, you definitely need to let us know in advance so we can get the link out to you in good time. You can get in touch via [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk).

**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.

**DIRECTIONS:** Gresham Village Hall, East Beckham Road off Church Lane, 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.

**PARKING:** Access to the hall car park is actually 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.

# Last Month's Club Mid-Week Walk

Felbrigg Park | 18<sup>th</sup> September



By Dave Billham

A heady total of twenty members turned up for the first monthly Felbrigg walk of the club's newly-started events year, including some new recruits – welcome! – all wondering what the morning would bring. Warm and windy with no rain forecast, waterproofs were not required, despite there being a low-ish grey overcast stealing the hoped-for blue sky. Hopefully this would not deter autumn migratory movement, though after a brief flurry of arrivals a few days earlier it had turned much quieter once more. As always, however, the morning would tell its own story.

Trevor and Carol welcomed us all, and in his brief Trevor said that we would take a longer route across the fields in the hope of finding signs of movement. Whilst waiting for everyone to assemble in the car park, those birds that could be seen or heard were recorded; a rather limited number as it transpired with **Rook**, **Jackdaw** and **Woodpigeon** seen whilst a **Robin** serenaded us from a nearby hedgerow. Now, whilst being one of the world's lovelier couples, Nick and Val S. have been known, on occasion, to arrive slightly after the arranged start time; however, as they are invariably the only ones who can be bothered to carry a scope around for the duration of the walk, they are well worth waiting for! So when they joined us we were surprised to see that they were sporting a newish and lighter-to-carry scope (still, however, the only one amongst the whole group), and in Nick's case an even newer pair of sandals. At first sight we thought that his old ones, damaged on the July walk, had been repaired, but no – a new pair of the same sort! So with everyone present, and fingers crossed for some good

sightings, we set off to pick up the track that runs towards the rear of the church.

For quite some way we added nothing to the list at all, until we eventually spied a flock of between twenty-five to thirty **Swallow** hunting over the grass in the valley in front of us. One member called out a **Wheatear** he had seen on a fence some two hundred yards away; unfortunately it dropped to the ground before any of the rest of us were able to get onto it. Despite moving closer it did not reappear. Distant **Carrion Crow** and **Jay** were the only other species noted on the grassland. Arriving at the bridleway a **Stock Dove** flew over us from our right, followed by three **Goldfinch** going the same way. A **Magpie** searching the base of a small line of trees was also seen. At one point a number of the Swallow were observed lined up on a fence in a dip in the ground; as Wynne A. said, it is not often you get a chance to view these birds well from above.

As we passed the distant church a **Blue Tit** and a pair of **Chaffinch** were found in the hedgerow, and further along our route we could see, through a field entrance, that there was a considerable flock of gulls in a ploughed field ahead of us. On getting closer we found a large number of **Common Gull**, with much smaller counts of **Black-headed Gull** and **Herring Gull** on the flock's edges. On further observation it was thought that a **Mediterranean Gull** was also present in the middle of the field; a call for the scope to be brought forward confirmed this, and those who wanted to were able to get super views as it obligingly stood still in one spot for us. Walking on we found a few **Great Tit** in the adjacent hedge, and four **Pied Wagtail**

engaged in a frenetic bout of aerial chasing in the field beside us. A flock of finch-type birds flying off to one side of us was spied too late to be positively identified, but were probably Linnet. A pair of **Chiffchaff** were found next, and a call from Trevor regarding 'a dark centre to its tail' had Nick K. and myself searching the hedgerow for a bird, only to eventually realise that the reference was more likely to a deer in the distance! An unseen **Wren**, singing from the depths of another hedge was the last species noted on the bridleway.



Turning onto the Burma Road we found a second flock of gulls, mainly Black-headed Gull this time; a very distant flock of geese flying along the horizon were, unfortunately, too far away to be heard or identified. More audible was a calling **Common Buzzard**, probably a juvenile, and a calling **Blackbird**.

Arriving at the wall overlooking the water meadows two **Grey Heron** were spotted, along with a **Kestrel** sat on a fence post; a second large flock of finch-type birds were, this time, positively identified as **Linnet**. Some of our number lurked at the back avoiding the inquisitive cows at this point.....



On reaching the lake a single **Mute Swan** was the most obvious resident, though **Mallard** and a pair of **Moorhen** were also present. Some of the trees bordering the lake were taking on an autumnal appearance; in one of them were sat a pair of **Cormorant**. A shout alerted us to a lone **Snipe** whizzing overhead; after a circle or two it dropped into the water meadows to our left. A low, sandy bank near the path was found to be alive with bees, entering and leaving small holes in the loose ground, unfortunately none of the few of us present knew precisely what species they were. One species we could identify,

however, was a male **Reed Bunting**, which was sat in a bush near the footbridge.



With time running out we set off along the final path back towards the house. A small flock of five or six thrush that flew over us proved to be **Mistle Thrush**, a welcome addition to the list. The final species we added, as we neared the house, was **Green Woodpecker**, bringing the total to **34** for the two hours. Not as good as we had hoped for, and quiet for mid-September, but a couple of unexpected species as a bonus. After re-grouping at the house there followed a round-up of upcoming events, then it was time for home or the café; this time I had to head for home, so any scandal revealed in conversation at the café has not made it into this newsletter!



As regular walk attendees will know, there is no walk in August, as this is the 'quiet month' outside of the club's calendar. However, this did not prevent our leader Trevor and one other member forgetfully turning up on the third Wednesday of that month! Come nine-o'clock, and after wondering where everyone else was, the penny finally dropped, but as they were there, they decided to have a walk anyway. Well, it would have been a shame not to!

It was lovely to see club member Kate, who moved away from Norfolk to the south west a few years back now, squeezing in a club walk on her trip back to see family.



# Last Month's Club Evening Talk

## Member Mini-Talk Night 2024 ...

### 4 talks by club members

zoom



By Alan Stevens

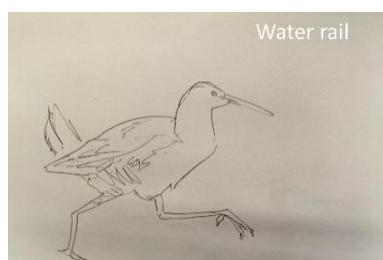
The first of our autumn meetings saw four of our members take to the floor to tell us something of the birds in their lives all in very different ways. These occasional meetings never fail to surprise us with the talent and knowledge amongst our membership with an excellent turnout there to hear from our speakers. **"It was great to see so many attendees!"** We also managed to get the Zoom up and running with better sound and picture quality, but apologies for the slight early hiccup listeners! **"It is very inclusive to enable members to join in who don't live close by or maybe who don't feel up to attending."**



Photo above: Kirsty, John, Val and Mark – thank you!



Goldfinch



Water rail

### **"150 Norfolk Birds in 2023" with Mark Boyd**

First up for their twenty-minute slot was artist and birder Mark Boyd. By way of background, Mark first visited Cley in 1972 when he saw 126 species, including 20 lifers. A working life spent in nature conservation communications, he escaped to Holt permanently just before lockdown and has hardly left the county since. He worked with British Birds magazine in the 1980s and spent 24 years at Sandy. He is Features Editor for the member magazine of the Beds, Cambs and Northants Wildlife Trust, teaches wildlife art workshops with Art Safari Ltd, is a bird ringer, and at the last check had seen 399 bird species in Britain.



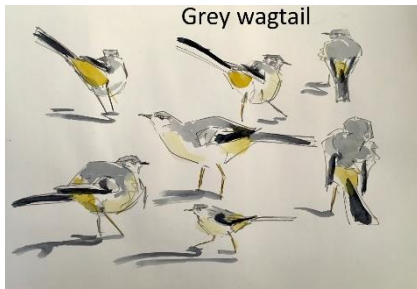
Pintail



Raven



So, with a life steeped in birds, Mark's talk was titled '150 Norfolk Birds in 2023', reflecting his ambition to paint 150 birds in a year. He actually managed 152 and all illustrated by an amazing fast-moving slide show of them all in just 20 minutes or so. To achieve his target of 150 birds Mark obviously had to try and encompass birds from across the whole spectrum of species found in Norfolk and we were treated to these observed in all their differing environments and habitats be they over the sea, by water, on fields, in trees or hedges.



Mark explained that he is not an artist in the realism sense of the word but that his interest lies in the shape of birds and what flows from that approach so, while this work does not depict his subjects in fine detail, there is no mistaking what it is portraying.

He told us that enjoys working at times with charcoal for black and white images and with watercolour. Some birds are shown in isolation with no background while others often have a sparse suggestion of habitat and other birds associating with them. Then there are those in startlingly bright colour, some almost abstract in form. The artist's depiction of birds at times strays from pencil and paint as he turns his hand to depictions of birds by bending wire, folding paper and creating collages.

I think we all found Mark's presentation and work captivating, exciting and inspiring, capturing the essence of our birds, their shapes, attitudes and characters that jumped off the pages of his sketch pads.

**"The artwork was fantastic – really makes me want to get out there and give it a go."**



### **"Bird Behaviour" with Val and Mick Taylor**

Following on from Mark we had two fairly new members to the cub in Val and Mike Walker, with Val giving the presentation which showcased Mike's photography.

Val and Mick have been fortunate enough to embark on a number a trips abroad pursuing their twin passions for wildlife and photography. Their talk centred on bird behaviour and was an abridged version of a longer talk, one of several they have given to differing groups.

So, from birds drawn we moved to birds photographed while Val confirmed that they love watching and recording birds displaying for territory and mates, as well as nest building feeding and preening to maintain their plumage. Cracking images of Snowy and Great Egrets in Florida illustrated how birds have developed plumage especially for display purposes and how, with this and physical attitudes, go to extraordinary lengths to attract mates. Plumage as we are aware is grown for this purpose and colour changes also occur as they can with beak and cere colour, well-illustrated by shots of a Great White Egret. While explaining about the birds Val added that they always try to photograph in natural habitats and keep backgrounds diffused. The next example featured an Anhinga highlighting the differing characteristics of male and female where the former's breeding plumage features elongated neck feathers with a colour change and also to that of the eye ring. The Little Bustard was chosen to illustrate the physical lengths gone to in courtship with its strutting and jumping.

Photographs followed of birds singing when they often present as excellent photographic opportunities on song posts. Rosy Starling,



Nightingale, a Reed Warbler in Spain and the usually skulking Cettis Warbler which can be caught out in the open when trying to attract a mate were excellent examples.

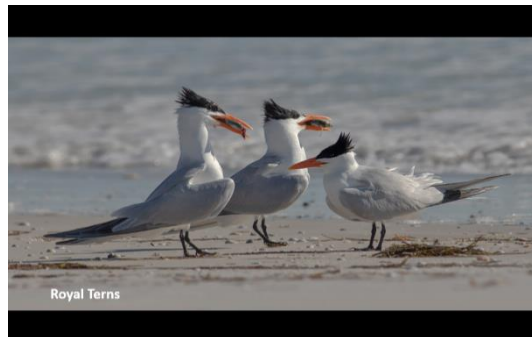
Back to plumage and we were treated to photographs of Black-bellied Plover showing plumage change from no 'black-belly' to the 'black-belly' of breeding plumage. A more radical change in plumage was drawn to our attention with the Ruff. If the budding photographers among us want to try and capture this Val suggested a visit to Pensthorpe would be an idea to try our hand with the captive birds there.

It is perhaps impossible to talk about plumage and not reach the outer limits of display that lay with the Peacock as a shot from Sri Lanka showed but at the same time our own Great Crested Grebe with its own courtship performance can be equally admired. The offering of gifts is another courtship ritual and this was shown with images of Royal Terns, males offering fish to females often in competition – 'who's got the biggest fish then?'

This talk was rounded off with beautiful images of European Rollers, Grey Hornbills, Willets, and Black-tailed Godwits all showing breeding plumage and courtship behaviour. Perhaps the best images were of a pair of Black-winged Stilts taken in the Po Valley detailing courtship, and then an elegant parallel walk they undertake, side by side after mating.

Val finished with "That's all we have time for this evening but hope this has given you a pleasant reminder of why we love watching birds...." Val and Mick, it did!

**"The photos were worthy of being on the front of calendars! Also, I liked the emphasis on bird behaviour and how their plumage plays its part."**

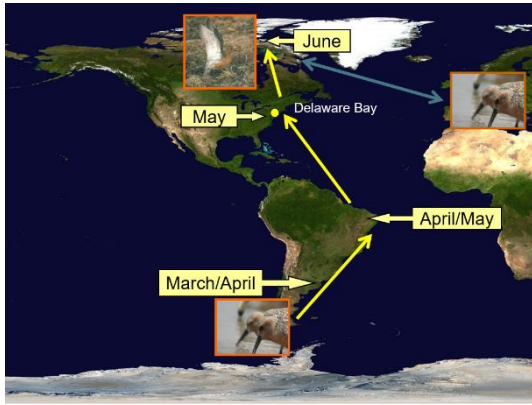


During the half time break for refreshments, club members Suzanne and John Taylor had a stall selling their 2025 Barn Owl calendar as part of their **Taliswood Barn Owl Nest Box project**. Here's what they have to say: "The prime aim of our project is to help increase Barn Owl numbers by identifying suitable sites (internal/external) where Barn Owls have been seen and put up nest boxes to provide safe and secure places for them to roost and hopefully breed in future years. We hope this help will contribute to an improvement in the numbers recorded around North Norfolk and the surrounding areas." The project is reliant on donations and sales to fund the increase in nest boxes so if you missed John & Suzanne last month, or want more info on their endeavours, you can contact them through their website [Taliswood Wildlife Photography \(taliswoodphotography.co.uk\)](http://Taliswood Wildlife Photography (taliswoodphotography.co.uk)).



Huge thanks to **Jane and Hilary** in the kitchen serving drinks and their home made cakes.

Post-break, after a quick rundown of upcoming events, we were delighted to see the **Super-Green Eco-Award (Coastal)** presented to one of our Vice Presidents Francis Farrow by our President Nigel Redman. Well done Francis!



### **“Delaware Bay - Shorebird Paradise?” with Kirsty Turner**

After the break it was the turn of Kirsty Turner to take to the floor. Kirsty is a past RSPB staff member, a wader ringer, and a local science teacher. Her talk was to centre on an ongoing study of the Western Atlantic Flyway focussing on Delaware Bay on the north-east coast of the USA.

Kirsty told us that she has been fortunate to make two visits to Delaware with a UK team working alongside US teams to help monitor and catch waders in the bay where spawning Horseshoe Crabs provide the birds with a refuelling stop as they head for their Arctic breeding grounds.

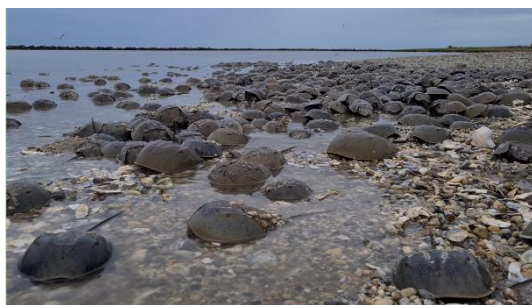
After locating Delaware Bay on the map we were told that most American waders using the east coast on migration stop there to feed with an example being drawn from Red Knot which arrive in immense numbers and are joined by Dunlin, Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Willet, Short-billed Dowitcher and Semi-palmated Sandpiper. Accompanying images drove home the sheer numbers of birds using the bay area.

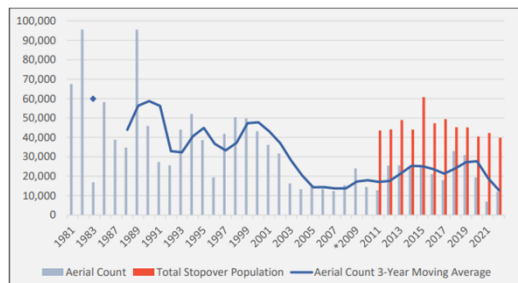
Kirsty then explained that the reason the birds stop there is because of the food available to them, a common theme on migration anywhere. The source of the food is the eggs laid by Horseshoe Crabs. Exhausted migrants can quickly recover condition feeding on this rich resource as illustrated by an image of a Red Knot on arrival and then a few days later when it had recovered weight and colour.



The Horseshoe crab we learnt are among nature's more unusual creatures having been around for 300 million years and are not true crabs. Their numbers are vast but had declined to a point where it was impacting not only their own survival but also that of the bay area as a stopover for waders and therefore the future of the waders themselves. They have been used as fertilizer, harvested as bait and are also the source of lysate used in testing for bacterial infections.

A graph showing of the decline in Red Knot numbers between 1981 and 2021 showed a drop from more than 40000 birds to between 10-15000. While the analysis came with caveats the underlying trend was startling. The loss in numbers of crab was having a clear effect on bird populations.





**Figure 1. Estimated numbers of rufa red knots in Delaware Bay, 1981–2022.**  
 Notes: (1) Aerial counts (gray bars) and total stopover population estimates (red bars) cannot be compared as they measure different things. (2) Single-year aerial counts at different points in time should not be compared to assess trends; the moving average (blue line) is a more appropriate indication of aerial count trends. (3) Only New Jersey was surveyed in 1981. (4) No aerial counts were conducted in 1984 or 1985. (5) Ground counts were substituted for aerial counts in 2009, 2012, and 2020.



The crabs themselves have a long journey to maturity with males taking 9-10 years and females longer at 12 years so any recovery plan must be a long run to achieve success. When mature, the females lay about 80,000 eggs 10cm below the surface of the water but only when the water is at 15°C. As a result of protections put in place the number of crabs is now increasing and the numbers are astonishing with in the early 2000s there being an estimated 45 million male and 15 million females ( or thereabouts!) But while crab numbers have increased this has yet to be reflected in bird counts.

Kirsty ran through the work carried out with flags and re-sightings, which while not finalised will be published, and also showed routes traced from geotags on birds focussing on Ruddy Turnstone, their journey to breeding areas and the variety of routes chosen by birds on migration both north and south.

The talk was concluded by an overview of the bay and the question as to whether it is a paradise for shorebirds. Initiatives must be continued and expanded upon and to this end Red Knot have been afforded extra protection, which obviously benefits other species as well. Among other measures the flyway is being studied for impacts on birds with an example being the breeding grounds of Snow Geese.

Kirsty finished by reminding us that there are gulls in the bay as well and there are Skimmers, weird birds she said but among her favourites perhaps.

Kisty's was a cracking talk and offered a contrast in the evening with some science – really a 90 minute talk in 20 minutes.

### **“Short or Tall Stories? – You Decide!” with John Hurst**

To conclude the evening John Hurst took over the mic. Many of you will know John, if only from meeting him out and about, as someone always ready to share his knowledge and experience of birding interspersed with the odd tale or two. A snapshot background for those of you who do not know John. He is a professional watercolourist and author, well known for his exhibitions along the Norfolk coast depicting the landscape and its heritage. As an observer of birds, he will sometimes include them in his studies, particularly when exhibiting at Cley Marshes Visitor Centre. As a club member since its formation, John says he has been honoured to have his work featured in the annual reports and newsletters. He has written and illustrated six books including the journeys of John Wesley, Norfolk coastal walks, local social history and a fifty-year celebration memoir all of which had a charitable element attached to them. Most of these publications include first hand stories, sometimes irreverent, tragic, or simply funny.

Now, John contributed to our first Members' Evening in 2019 when he left us all thinking, tales of his childhood certainly resonated with many of us, but also laughing – what were we to expect?

It is not possible to say much about John's talk without giving too much away, after all he may one day talk elsewhere when, you the reader are there, and I will have given the game away. Likewise, for anyone other than himself to relate his tales in print would not do them justice.

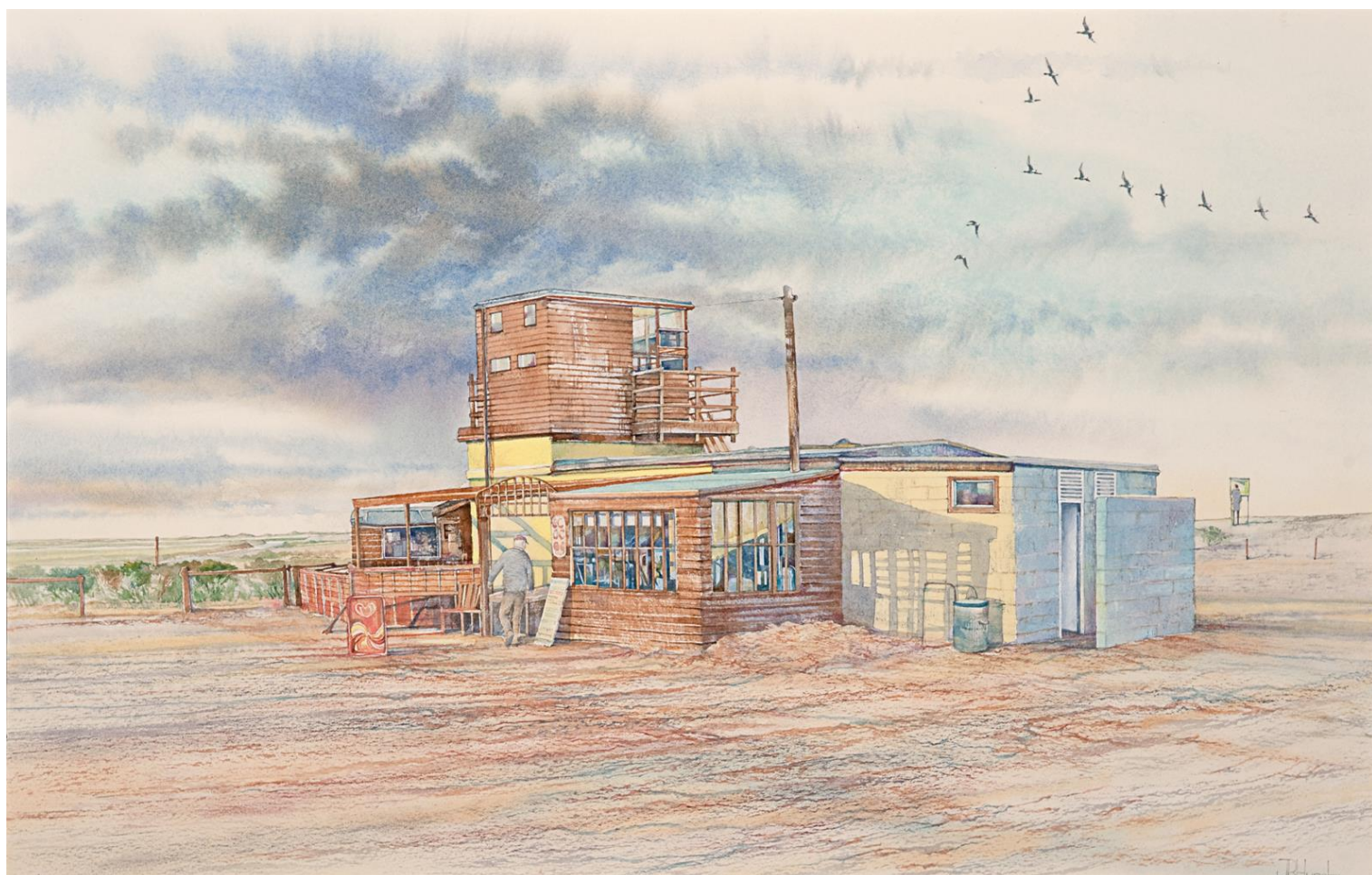
Sufficient here to say that, in his own inimitable raconteur style, his stories, weaved around birds, covered recollections as diverse as 'Ron and the Grimsby Attack', 'Brent. Born with a beak', a tale from Cley and



the old café there, another from Baconsthorpe Castle, 'Little Brown Job and Trouser Pockets', one about a Grey Heron titled 'Smoked Ham Only', stories of birds bought ashore by crab boats, 'Georges' Prize Cow' and 'Joey. Weetabix and Centipedes.'

Reminiscences of his childhood on a Lincolnshire farm, his parents, neighbours and 'Rookie' the Rook his best friend lent a very personal touch to his talk.

Reading the above you may be asking yourself 'Whatever is that all about?' You had to be there to understand and you would have enjoyed it and left laughing like us!



---

**A great evening was had by all. It is a while away, but we are always on the lookout for folk for our Member Night mini talk sessions, the next one coming up in 2025. Could one of the speakers next year be you? Please do get in touch! [Ahstevens52@gmail.com](mailto:Ahstevens52@gmail.com)**

---

# NENBC Coordinated Seawatch 2024

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September



If you didn't make it to our Coordinated Seawatch this time but you'd like to have a go at seawatching, you don't need to wait until next year. Many of our members seawatch on a regular basis so drop us a line and we'll get you in touch so you can join them on a session.

What's a coordinated seawatch? Well, it's our fun annual event where we set up camp at a few spots along the coast for 3 hours and record all the birds we see flying by and that's exactly what we did on a bright Saturday morning last month. Those of us who don't do it regularly learn about seawatching from folk who do and afterwards any data we collect can contribute to our Flight Speeds project. This year we had sites at Happisburgh, Mundesley, Cromer North Lodge Park and Sheringham Tank, all in touch via our WhatsApp Seawatching Group. **Thirty three** species reported across the 4 sites, with species only recorded at one site **highlighted red** and those reported at all sites **highlighted green** ...

## TEAM HAPPISBURGH | with Andy Clarke

Thanks to Chris & Kathrin Turner and the 2 locals who also rolled up - let us know who you are as we didn't write it down or get your pic!

"An early morning drive to Happisburgh provided an opportunity to watch a glorious sunrise (apart from the fact I was driving east). I arrived to find the village car-park entrance has been eaten away by the sea, and much of the traditional sea-watch spot also. However it is still possible to access the car-park, and I managed to find a safe spot from which to sea-watch. I was expecting to be on my own, so I set off early to set up. Almost the first birds were three passerines flying east along the cliffs – a single rattling call identified at least one of them as a Lapland Bunting; good start! I was soon joined by Chris and Kathrin, and then for a short period two local birders who knew of NENBC but were not part of the event. The weather was warm, so I was over-dressed, the wind was light and the haze made picking up distant birds tricky. Birding was quiet, with the main feature being a steady passage of Gannets east, a trickle of Red-throated Divers east, and a few Brent Geese west. Highlights were an adult Mediterranean Gull west and a smart Red-necked Grebe east. We called it a day at 10.30, and after a coffee back at the car I



Andy Clarke

Brent's coming W. RNGrebe E, Lap Bunt E.

08:24

wandered off to look for migrants in the village and cliff-top fields. A small flock of actively feeding Wheatears at the old coastguard lookout was the highlight. Perhaps I should have tried Doggetts Lane as later in the day a Red-breasted Flycatcher was found there..."

"We approached the cliff top in beautiful sunshine and a slight breeze. This was ideal conditions for a couple of novices, but maybe not what the experienced sea watchers had hoped for. Happisburgh is on the edge of the NENBC area, the edge of a rapidly receding cliff line and in some ways it feels like the edge (or more remote side) of Norfolk. Above all, it is a peaceful and friendly spot with a spectacular medieval church. We'll leave the bird counts, speeds and behaviour to Andy's expert hand, but would like to mention 3 things for any newer members or novices that might be considering a sea watch. Firstly, we learnt a lot during the three hours. Secondly, we felt welcome and benefitted from the greater knowledge of club members who are happy to share information and pass on their passion. Finally, thank you to all the NENBC honorary committee members for organising this event."

**Reported 14 species:** Brent Goose, Common Gull, Common Scoter, Cormorant, Gannet, Lapland Bunting, Mallard, Mediterranean Gull, Red-necked Grebe, Red-throated Diver, Sandwich Tern, Sparrowhawk, Teal, Wigeon

### TEAM MUNDESLEY | with Julian Thomas

Thanks to John Hurst, Stella Baylis, Stephanie Witham, Robert Digby, Bob Cobbold

"During the session a dog walker stopped by for a chat, and of course commented on how fortunate we were with the weather on the day – light winds and a cloudless sky. He was somewhat taken aback when John told him we really wanted a north-westerly gale and squally conditions! Before the event an Arctic Skua showed a poor sense of timing by disappearing just before 7:30 am and from then on there was a steady trickle of Gannets, mostly flying south-east, punctuated by small flocks of Common Scoter, Teal, Brent Geese, and a few Red-throated Divers. No longer a staple on sea-watches because of avian influenza, a Bonxie flew steadily and purposefully north-west. A few Mediterranean Gulls and a Guillemot loafed around on the sea and mammal interest was provided by Grey Seals. As always at this venue freshly baked muffins were offered to all participants and hopefully compensated for the somewhat indifferent sea-watching."

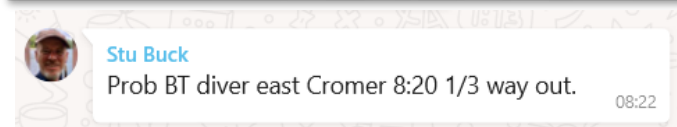
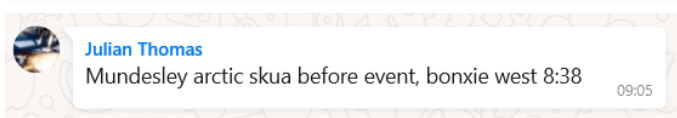
"Very enjoyable, good weather (too good), good company, Julian's blackcurrant muffins and some seabirds...."

**Reported 17 species:** Black-headed Gull, Brent Goose, Common Gull, Common Scoter, Cormorant, Gannet, Great Skua, Guillemot, Herring Gull, Jackdaw, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Mediterranean Gull, Red-throated Diver, Sandwich Tern, Teal, Wigeon, Wood Pigeon

### TEAM CROMER NORTH LODGE PARK | with Trevor Williams

Thanks to Emma Hurrell, Ken & Carol Thornton, Hugh Matthews, Stu Buck, Nick Kimber, Ann Gladwin

"As the beautiful orange sun came up, eight of us rolled up for another session at Cromer. Trevor did the usual run down for newbies and rusties, explaining the location and names of landmarks out at sea, how to use the clock system and the fraction of the way to the horizon to call out bird position, reminding us of the importance of specifying direction of flight, giving the average length of time it generally took for different species to get from one side of our panoramic view to the other - one of the many positives of seawatching with a regular who knows their patch well like that! He encouraged folk to shout out when they saw something so everyone could get on it even if they had no idea what it was (that was all of us at one point or another!) .... and then we were off. Now it wasn't



the frenetic pace of some of our past seawatching sessions but it didn't really matter. We had some good birds coming through for us to identify and the excitement of looking out for species spotted at one of the other locations and WhatsApped so we knew it was coming our way (How long will it take to get here? How far out will it be? What sort of flight pattern does it have? I CAN'T SEE IT!!!, Have we missed it?) – I don't think we saw any of them actually! We had time to discuss the ID features of various species as they passed by including our highlight, a Black-throated Diver, which Stu subsequently recorded on the website with our collective assessment "Looked large. Dark backed. Straight back and necked. Never lifted head. Projecting feet." The time seemed to go very quickly and before we knew it another Coordinated Seawatch was over – roll on next year!

**"Another enjoyable sea watch - I think this may have been my 4th at Cromer. Whilst it was a misty start, it did brighten up. Gannets weren't in short supply. However, compared to last year, there were very few Red-throated Divers (I personally didn't spot one!)"**

**Reported 16 Species:** Black-throated Diver, Brent Goose, Common Gull, Common Scoter, Cormorant, Curlew, Dunlin, Gannet, Kittiwake, Peregrine Falcon, Razorbill, Red-throated Diver, Sanderling, Sandwich Tern, Shelduck, Teal [plus auk species]

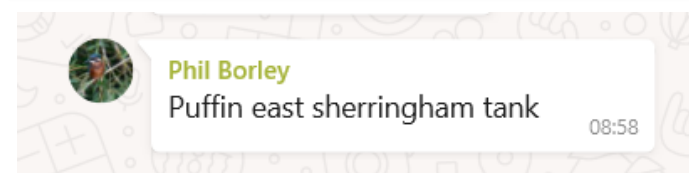
## TEAM SHERINGHAM TANK | with Phil Borley

Thanks to Roger Lougher, Val Stubbs, Alan Stevens, Brian Wilson, Roger Emmens, Francis Farrow, Thomas Wright, Jackie & Steven Sonsino. Apologies if we missed anyone – in the excitement we forgot to take a roll call!

"As usual, Sheringham attracted the largest crowd of participants, despite the busyness of the annual 1940s weekend clashing – they should have checked with us first! We spread out along the secluded prom section and set our scopes seaward. Val did the recording of species for the first half of the event and Alan covered for the second part - always important jobs and good to share. Most birds passing through were Cormorant and Gannet but our highlights during a quiet session were a Great Crested Grebe and a Puffin, both heading east, but not picked up by any of the 3 sites further in that direction despite our WhatsApped messages. Conversely, coming the other way, we didn't manage to pick up a Black Guillemot that was reported on WhatsApp separate to our coordinated event. That is how it falls sometimes with seawatching – the peaks and the troughs of the waves can hide low-flying birds, their flight paths don't always follow the profile of the coastline meaning they are further out to sea from some observation points than others, they can drop down onto the sea at any point and light and haze can also play havoc with your view. You don't always see everything, but there is always the chance you might see something special!"

**"Just about enough birds to maintain interest while in good company and enjoying a little banter."**

**Reported 18 species:** Black-headed Gull, Brent Goose, Common Gull, Common Scoter, Cormorant, Gannet, Great Black-backed Gull, Great Crested Grebe, Guillemot, Herring Gull, Kittiwake, Pintail, Puffin, Red-throated Diver, Sandwich Tern, Shelduck, Teal, Wigeon [plus auk species]



## Anyone wanting to buy a used scope?

Talking of seawatching, club member David Bamford is selling his current scope and tripod. He says ....

"It's a TSN1, with, I'm told, an excellent Silk tripod. From memory I paid around £100, and I'm happy to take close to that for it. It's in full working order and exactly as I bought it. I've just not used it so will be delighted if someone gets some enjoyment out of it."

If you are interested, please contact Carol on [nenbc@aol.co.uk](mailto:nenbc@aol.co.uk) and we'll put you in touch with David.



Juvenile Yellow-legged Gull

### By Moss Taylor

**This is the 9<sup>th</sup> in a monthly series this year of the wildlife at Weybourne Camp during 2024 ...**

Well, September was certainly the month for seabirds, even if the sightings at Weybourne Camp did not compare with the rarities seen at Sheringham, at least in part due to the bay effect at Weybourne.

The first of our wintering geese appeared during the month with Pink-footed on 10<sup>th</sup> and Brent on 15<sup>th</sup>. A pair of Mute Swans took up residence on the scrape on 14<sup>th</sup> and remained until 25<sup>th</sup> when they departed to the east, perhaps they will return and nest next summer.

The only waders of note in September were a single fly-over Green Sandpiper on 2<sup>nd</sup>, a Greenshank on 15<sup>th</sup> and a Purple Sandpiper on the beach on 29<sup>th</sup>. An Oystercatcher took advantage of the softer ground after rain, feeding for a couple of days on the airfield.

Despite an unusual number of sightings of Sabine's Gulls along the north Norfolk coast in September, just two juveniles flew east past the Camp on 5<sup>th</sup>, while juvenile Yellow-legged and Caspian Gulls were recorded on a few occasions, including a Yellow-legged Gull that came to bread on 16<sup>th</sup>. Sandwich Tern passage peaked on 5<sup>th</sup> with a total of 397 flying east, while up to 4 Black Terns were recorded on four dates.

Bonxies were unusually scarce, presumably as a result of the effects of bird flu, with a maximum of only 7 east on 6<sup>th</sup>. Single Pomarine Skuas were noted on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, and the highest count of Arctic Skuas was 14 west (including one flock of 9) and 3 east in a northerly gale on 27<sup>th</sup>. A juvenile Long-tailed Skua flew slowly east, dipping to feed from the surface of the sea, on 9<sup>th</sup>. An obliging Black Guillemot, in transitional

Pair of Mute Swans on the scrape



Post-juvenile Oystercatcher



plumage, spent the morning of 25<sup>th</sup>, off Weybourne beach before flying off to the east, and was again present on 29<sup>th</sup>, and a single Puffin flew west on 20<sup>th</sup>. Single Balearic and Sooty Shearwaters flew east on 6<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> respectively, while Gannet passage peaked at 312 east on 1<sup>st</sup>. A Great Northern Diver flew east on 29<sup>th</sup>.

A total of 10 Buzzards was recorded on 28<sup>th</sup>, of which six flew west in a loose flock in mid-morning, while the first Merlin of the autumn was present on 7<sup>th</sup>.

An impressive gathering of 500 hirundines, mainly Swallows and House Martins, was resting on the beach during a rain shower on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Single Spotted Flycatchers were found on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, at the same time that good numbers were recorded on Blakeney Point, and during the same period up to 3 Pied Flycatchers and 4 Redstarts were present. High counts of Wheatears included 38 on 1<sup>st</sup> and 65 on 6<sup>th</sup>, during a major influx along the north Norfolk coast. A party of 4 Crossbills flew west on 7<sup>th</sup> and the first Rock Pipit was noted on 13<sup>th</sup>, Lapland Bunting on 15<sup>th</sup> and Snow Bunting on 28<sup>th</sup>. The first 'rarity' of the autumn was a 1cy Red-backed Shrike at the east end on 1<sup>st</sup>, which showed well two days later.

A 1cy male Siberian Stonechat that was initially found to the west of the Camp, did the decent thing and followed the local Stonechats into the scrub north of the RAF buildings on 25<sup>th</sup> and had even moved far enough east to enter the western-most border of the NENBC recording area by 28<sup>th</sup>. Despite Yellow-browed Warblers being recorded at many sites around the Norfolk coast, it was not until 26<sup>th</sup> that one was eventually found in the willows by the scrape, remaining until the month's end and being joined by a second bird on 29<sup>th</sup>.

As always, this monthly report would not have been possible without the valuable contributions from Phil Borley, who always covers the 'early shift', and other members of the NENBC.



One of the six Buzzards passing west on 28<sup>th</sup>



1cy Red-backed Shrike



Yellow-browed Warbler.

## NENBC Alerts: WhatsApp Group

Quarterly Update: 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September



By Tony Forster

**Group membership is 58 | List Total 105**

It would be fair to say July and August were extremely quiet with just 11 messages while things took off in September with over 40 messages, 36 species, which added an additional 9 species to the group list.

Just to be sure I'd gone back through all the messages since we started, confirming just 4 records needed to achieve bronze status. The 100<sup>th</sup> species, fittingly, turned out to be Red-breasted Flycatcher reported by John Hayward near Happisburgh.

Kittiwake was the first new list addition accompanied by Stu Buck's stunning photo followed by Tree Sparrow, present in the flock of 100 plus House Sparrows, both new records. Taking the list total to 105 were Yellow Wagtail, Arctic Skua, Leach's Petrel, Siberian Stonechat and Water Rail. Other notable species recorded in the area but not via this group were an earlier Red-breasted Flycatcher (Sheringham cemetery, Sept 9th), Roseate Tern (3), Bee-eater (7) Sabine's Gull (2), Hawfinch (3), Caspian Gull (20+), Tree Pipit (5), Black Tern and Sooty Shearwater.

Just a reminder if you have any concerns regarding access, privacy or accessibility please don't hesitate to contact either myself or Trevor as group admins to talk it through or if it is clearly not practical don't feel any pressure to make the record public, you'll be forgiven (eventually 😊). Many thanks for all your records.



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 independently with three students and jointly alongside [Felbeck Trust](#) with a fourth. Below is part of the brief for the fourth 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 ask.

## Ecological grief - is nature bad for you?

We know that green spaces and being in nature have wide-ranging health benefits including reducing our stress responses. During Covid-19 and the associated lockdowns the wider benefits of being outdoors, both physical and psychological, came into sharp focus. In spite of these well-evidenced benefits, it might also be that for people with a deep engagement with nature, through work or leisure, the opposite is true. Anecdotally anxiety, sadness and mental health distress is reported by those who have a deep engagement with nature. The term 'ecological grief' has been coined to describe mourning of the loss of ecosystems, landscapes, species and ways of life. There is some literature on the adverse impact of climate change on mental health and wellbeing but we lack in-depth understanding of how people reconcile the paradox of engaging deeply with nature and the increasing distress and anxiety this may cause. The project is intended to scope the extent of this problem, gauge responses from a cross-section of people enjoying nature or participating in wildlife conservation work - helping draft a new narrative. Understanding individual attitudes to declines in nature could help engagement and mobilisation towards a more connected response to the global threats we face.

## Ecological grief - is nature bad for you? by Paloma Guerrero Tene

**Disclaimer:** This material is based upon work supported by **Paloma Guerrero Tene** 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

#### Purpose and Aims

This report evaluates whether Ecological Grief is experienced by people close to nature, and if so, how they manage this through different strategies to better their mental and physical health.

The aims of this project include:

- Carry out questionnaires and follow-up interviews for the general public and in collaboration with the people in Felbeck Trust and North East Norfolk Bird Club.
- View and analyse trends on ecological grief and obtain people's personal strategies on combating this mental issue.
- Provide recommendations on how to develop and promote more supportive ways of thinking and discussing nature, mental health and climate change.

### Background

1 in 4 people in the UK will experience mental health issues per year (Mind, 2017). Mental health and ecological grief are paired as ecological grief is the psychological and physical symptoms people feel due to climate change and the overall decrease in nature. Eco-anxiety is being acknowledged as a mental health issue as more people are experiencing this, as environmental changes worsen. However, there needs to be a better understanding and more research which would benefit the victims on how to deal with this the environment overall.

Eco-anxiety can make people feel either miserable or motivational. Misery due to the hopelessness they feel, making them give up. Motivational as there is hope in what they do, and sometimes even driven by emotions such as anger, which motivates them even more. By knowing different people's strategies to deal with this, it can be used to educate the wider crowd and anyone who suffers with ecological grief.

### Methodology

This research was carried out through a questionnaire and interviews. This has allowed to view the different opinions and experiences between older people and younger people through questionnaires and follow-up interviews.

### Findings

Questionnaire. 71 respondents in total. Felbeck Trust have 19 respondents, NENBC have 22 respondents, Other have 18 respondents and Young have 12 respondents (18-24 years old). Felbeck, NENBC and Other were above 55 years old.

Felbeck Trust (F) and NENBC (B) respondents:

**Mental symptoms: Most feel anxious and stressed due to the environment, especially NENBC respondents (F 68.5%, B 81.9%)**

Physical symptoms: Some experience physical symptoms (F 5.3%, B 18.2%)

Most witness environmental changes on a regular basis (F 89.4%, B 72.7%)

Most compensate reducing carbon footprint outdoors and indoors (aver. F 86.9%, B 91%)

Nearly 2/5 of Felbeck Trust and 1/2 of NENBC respondents feel their efforts made a difference

### Other and Young respondents:

Mental symptoms: Most Other feel anxious and depressed for the environment (77.8%). Very little Young respondents feel anxiety for this (16.6%)

Physical symptoms: Some Other experience physical symptoms (22.2%)

Most Other witness environmental change regularly (89.4%). Not all young do (41.7%)

Both compensate by doing eco-friendly actions (aver. 86.1%)

2/3 of Other and 1/3 of Young agree their actions made a difference

## Follow-up interviews

Some quotes that stood out from the interviews:

"I'm emotionally stable but It does make me angry"

“[they] felt incredibly sad, affect their health. Some even stepped down thinking they couldn’t do anything to help” [talking about people they knew invested in nature]

“Social isolation, stopped coming out, not respond to emails”

“some people have brought themselves out of that grief by researching and looking through the positives”

“had long conversations and talk them out of it”

“Very angry”

“Promises broken from government”

“Not watch news”

## Recommendations

I have given four different recommendations

## 1) Develop education programs

Since ecological grief is a niche and has negative stigmas surrounding it, people need to be taught. Conducting workshops and session with the general public as well as members of NENBC and Felbeck Trust. This could be brought up to university talks to educate and inspire the youth. We must be able to sympathise in order to understand.

## 2) Community groups

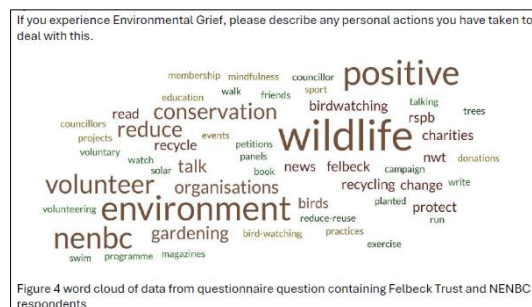
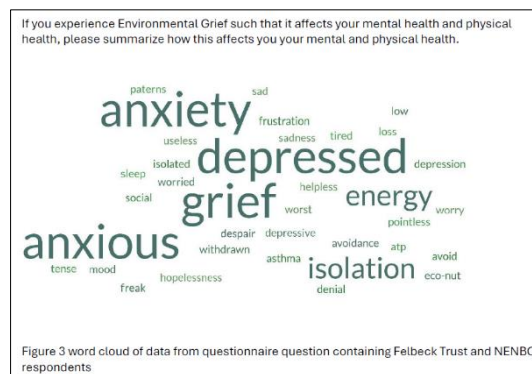
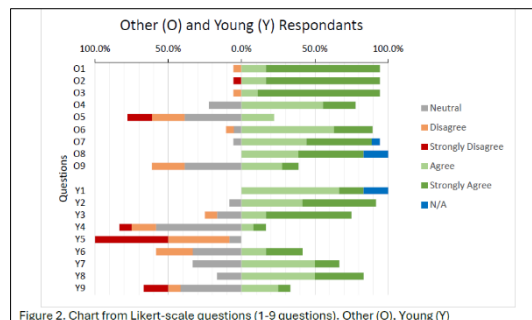
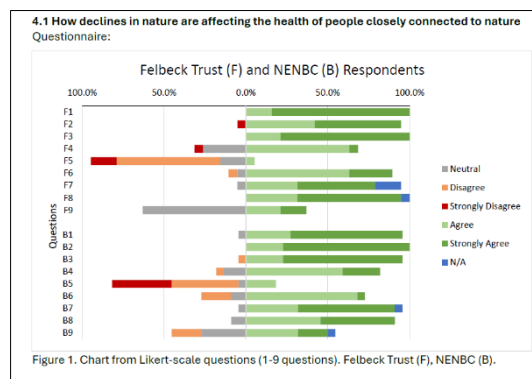
After the stage of educating people, people may realise they have ecological grief. Findings suggested people like to talk to others and read positive articles, which could be shared. This gives people a sense of community, lets them out of the rabbit hole, and are able to share strategies.

### 3) Promotes through media

In order to carry out recommendations 1 and 2, this needs to be promoted on platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, organisations websites. Felbeck and NENBC have all of these, so it would require to post to gain traction.

#### 4) Mental health professionals

Whilst building support groups may help people dealing with ecological grief, some people may need more personal and intensive help, so contacting professional help. Professionals have tools and ideas which could be specific to the person's needs.



# Contemplating Conservation

## Killing for conservation: an ethical dilemma



By Tracy Brighten

Humans have a complex and changing relationship with animals, ranking them in a hierarchy of affection and utilisation according to cultures, values, preferences, and prejudices. Take vultures, for example. These magnificent birds are victims of prejudice and persecution. By contrast, the golden eagle, another magnificent bird, is much admired. Water voles are endearing, yet rats invoke disgust, not helped by labels of pest and vermin. Even the same animal may be valued differently. Elephants may be protected for posterity or killed for pseudo-medicine, trinkets, and trophies. In her thought-provoking book *Beak, Tooth and Claw*, Mary Colwell explores how wild animals are utilised, exploited, controlled and protected, asking why foxes, crows, badgers, and hen harriers are protected by some yet killed by others.

Our conflicting and changeable attitudes towards animals is problematic when deciding how to conserve nature, especially when killing is involved. Culling is an emotive topic. After all, nature conservation is concerned with protecting animals. On social media, I see conservation scientists at loggerheads with animal rights activists. Passionate about wildlife conservation but also believing individual animals have the right to life, I can empathise with the strong emotions on both sides.

Culling operations tend to create conflict and division, especially when the target species is one that we love. But what should we do when native species are threatened by animals introduced by humans? When native animals have not evolved alongside the newcomers, they are at greater risk of predation, competition for food, and contraction of new diseases. Do we try to correct human mistakes and restore nature's balance to a point in time, or do we accept that species will become extinct, richness in diversity lost, and ecosystems put at risk? While some culling projects have been successful, others have failed, especially when driven by political motives rather than scientific evidence. Operations in New Zealand, Australia, and the UK highlight potential problems as well as best practice.

### Finding the most effective and humane way to protect New Zealand's birds.



In New Zealand, possums, stoats, rats, and feral cats threaten to wipe out native bird species, including the national icon—the flightless, ground-dwelling, near-blind kiwi. But finding the most effective, ethical, and humane way to manage predator populations is no easy task. Predator-proof fencing keeps predators out on peninsulas or small areas to allow the recovery or reintroduction of species, but this is costly and impractical for larger areas.

Deploying traps on foot is not cost-effective here either or even feasible in remote locations with impenetrable native bush. To control predator populations, especially in years when a beech tree mast provides plenty of food, 1080 is thought to be the best option to protect native birds until humane alternatives are developed.

Having lived in New Zealand, I am aware of the silence in forests where predators are prevalent compared to predator-free areas like the enclosed [Zealandia Ecosanctuary](#) in Wellington and offshore islands like [Tiritiri Matangi](#) near Auckland. In fact, this island did fall silent after human settlers arrived. First, Māori brought rats and dogs and cleared forest to grow crops. European settlers arrived in the 1850s with their cats, sheep, and cattle, and cleared much of the remaining forest to graze animals. Before human settlers, the only mammal on Tiritiri was a bat. Forest birds soon disappeared, victims of hunting, mammalian predation, and habitat loss. Farming ceased in the 70s, then in the 80s and 90s, a dedicated and visionary team started the process of restoring the island's habitat. Supported by the Department of Conservation (DoC) and [Forest and Bird](#) (New Zealand's "leading independent conservation organisation"), the



lighthouse keeper turned ranger and his wife and volunteers from the mainland planted trees and started a seed nursery. Non-native predators were killed, and biosecurity measures put in place. Today, the island is singing again, a sanctuary for rare birds like kokako, stitchbird, and takahe. *Kiwi photo credit: [Denisbin on Flickr](#) and Takahe photo credit David Brighten*

### Aerial 1080 use divides communities.

Both the DoC and Forest and Bird support the use of 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) bait pellets because 1080 is highly effective, especially in expansive areas of impenetrable bush. However, opinions vary among conservationists, farmers, hunters, dog owners, and animal rights advocates.

The topic is highly controversial and divisive, even within communities. Some Māori in Northland said they should be consulted under the Treaty of Waitangi about 1080 poison drops, while others support DoC's measures to restore Northland forests. Farmers don't want to see their unfenced animals poisoned if they wander into baited bush, deer hunters aren't happy about deer being non-target victims, and dog owners are reluctant to keep pets on leads or avoid areas for a given period after a poison drop. In terms of animal welfare and cruelty, death by 1080 is slow and painful. On the other hand, people don't want the mainland to fall silent as native birds are wiped out, and conservationists know the importance of birds to forest ecosystems, especially with pollination and seed dispersal.

### Australia targets feral cats to save native fauna.



Across the Tasman Sea, Australia has its own conservation challenge. In 2015, the Australian government announced a controversial plan to cull two million feral cats by 2020 to save native bird, lizard, snake, and small mammal species from extinction. A trap, neuter, release (TNR) solution was disregarded for being too slow to be effective. *Feral cat photo credit: Another Eye on Flickr*

Criticism of this culling target from environment and ecology researchers included the unreliability of feral cat population estimates at the time; the difficulty in measuring progress in numbers of cats killed; and the cull target not linked to specific conservation outcomes, i.e., increases in threatened native species populations. Scientists questioned the focus on killing cats, which could give the impression of conservation action while distracting from other threats such as habitat loss and climate change,

which are more politically sensitive threats to manage. They also point out the high reproductive rate of feral cats and potential for reinvasions. If culling is not at a high enough intensity, feral cats from surrounding areas will immigrate into areas where culling has taken place.

For cat control to have a lasting effect on feral populations, it needs to be intense, sustained, and carried out over large areas, say critics of the 2020 cat cull target. To be most effective, control also needs to be focused on areas that contain, or could potentially contain, native species threatened by cats. Critics also emphasise the need for an integrated approach to threatened species conservation, so that other threats are tackled too.

Further criticism is around the ethics of culling. Justifying their feral cat eradication policy, the Australian Government said, "Acting on feral cats is net-humane because it saves millions of native animal lives." But William Lynn, research scientist in animal and sustainability ethics at Clark University in the US, challenges this utilitarian approach. He says that although the war on cats in Australia and the US is driven by the moral responsibility to repair the harm done to nature, it ignores the value of individual animals while prioritising biodiversity. Lynn considers how we help "people, animals and nature to thrive across the planet into perpetuity". He says, "Sustainability must be both scientifically and ethically sound. Its facts and values need to be transparent and accountable to society, while its goals must serve the good of the entire community of life."

University of Sydney researcher Sophie Riley also questions the focus on cats. Specialising in environmental law, animal law and environmental ethics, Riley was concerned about a culling policy that ignored societal and ethical values. She says legal classifications of invasive, pest and feral will cause a reliance on and normalisation of killing and diminish the prospect of finding an alternative. Riley accepts that free-roaming cats predate native fauna and spread toxoplasmosis, but she does not support lethal measures without evidence. General poisons kill indiscriminately with potential to harm native species. Ethicists advocate for the least harmful measures to be used first and foremost. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) is a better option to control cats, says Riley. Rather than immediately removing large numbers of cats from an environment, TNR allows monitoring and evaluation of ecosystems as neutered cats die out.

The impact of feral cats – and foxes – on Australian wildlife is substantial, shown in a 2022 study that included researcher Tim Doherty, a critic of the initial culling policy for reasons explained above. Last year, the Federal Environment Minister released a draft feral cat management plan. This plan seems to have taken past criticism on board, and focuses on eradicating cats from islands and enclosed conservation areas where there is less chance of recolonisation. The plan also prioritises cat control where there are important populations of native species highly vulnerable to cats. Habitat management will provide more vegetation and cover to help reduce cat impacts and improve native mammal populations. Reforms of laws and regulations for pet and feral cats in all states has been proposed. New technology is also being considered, including traps that use artificial intelligence (AI) and an AI audio deterrent that emits high-pitched sounds to create a virtual fence.

Another alternative to culling is to introduce predators, but this needs careful consideration, otherwise, the introduced predator could become a problem. In Australia, dingoes may keep feral cats under control, although studies show mixed outcomes, and the reintroduction of Tasmanian devils to the mainland has been suggested, which may also help control feral cats.

Feral cats are not prevalent in the UK (unlike domestic cats), but in his book *Cull of the Wild*, investigating the ethical and practical considerations of killing in the name of conservation, Hugh Warwick reports an equally endearing non-native mammal on the run. When American mink escaped (or were set free) from fur farms in the UK, the impact on water voles was devastating; populations declined by 90% between 1989 and 1998, and the situation is even more critical now. Equipped to escape predators such as foxes by slipping into rivers and aquatic predators by darting into burrows, water voles have not evolved to deal with mink, a predator at ease on land and in water. Restoring wetland habitat is essential for water voles long-term, but without removing mink, we simply provide them with more voles. Tony Martin who leads a successful eradication project in East Anglia told Warwick he wants to put right the human mistake in introducing them. He does not demonise mink – if there was an alternative to killing mink to save water voles, he would take it. *Water Vole photo credit: Terry Whittaker on NWT website*



### Predator eradication projects on UK islands.

Reading Hugh Warwick's conversations with project leaders on the islands of Lundy, Scilly, and Orkney, it is evident that eradication projects take meticulous planning, public engagement, and determination. Although those involved would rather not kill animals, native species populations are recovering on these islands.

On Lundy, a key habitat for seabirds including Manx shearwaters, puffins, and guillemots, warden Rosie Ellis has her eye on rats. In 1939, there were 3,500 puffins on Lundy, but by 2000 there were only 13 with no successful breeding since 1986. Manx shearwaters had produced no chicks since 1959. Two main reasons were the decline in sand eels and rats eating eggs and chicks. Animal Aid opposed slaughter saying commercial fishing, pollution management, and protection of breeding sites would help seabird populations without killing rats. But those problems are harder to solve, requiring political will and action. The project aim was seabird recovery, not killing rats, a subtle but important distinction. Eradication lasted from 2002 to 2004 followed by two years of monitoring before Lundy was declared rat free. By 2023, surveys found more than 10,000 pairs of Manx shearwaters and more than 12,000 puffins. Rats could easily return via ferries, boats, and shipwrecks, so monitoring is ongoing. *Manx Shearwater photo credit: Mark Clements and Puffin photo credit: Makabera on Pixabay*



In charge of the RSPB Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project, Jaclyn Pearson also measures the success of the rat eradication project in seabird population increases rather than rats killed. Advised by experts from New Zealand, there were many considerations, including seasonal timing to make sure bait was laid when rats don't have a litter of eggs and chicks. The first poison bait was laid in 2013 and a year later, Manx shearwaters bred successfully for the first time in decades. Community involvement is key to long-term success, Pearson tells Warwick, with islanders and visitors vigilant and following biosecurity guidelines to prevent new arrivals. Otherwise, the project time and cost, not to mention all the rat lives lost, would be wasted.

On Orkney, stoats were first recorded in 2011. Stoats are prolific breeders and were soon affecting ground-nesting birds and Orkney's vole populations. The RSPB Orkney Native Wildlife Project was set up – a team of people and dogs led by Sarah Sankey. Traps were bought from New Zealand and advice received on stoat control. Before any traps were set, an extensive public information and feedback process took place to get the public and landowners on side. Like on Lundy and Scilly, it was made clear that the reason for the project is to protect wildlife, not to kill stoats. The first traps were set in 2019, activated by weight so they would not harm voles. By April 2023, over 4,300 stoats had been caught and shot, and there has been an increase in signs of voles and some wading birds.

Sceptical about whether success on Orkney can be achieved while cats are roaming, Warwick asked Sankey about cats on North Ronaldsay. She said they pose a similar threat to stoats, but without public support, any project to control numbers would fail.

### Do we have a right to decide who lives and who dies?

Humans have destroyed wild animals' habitat, polluted their environments, depleted their food sources, and exploited them for food, sport, clothing, pseudo-medicine and more. We surely have a responsibility to reduce our negative impact going forward but also to restore habitats and wildlife species we have harmed in the past. But deciding on the methods and how far back in time we go to find a restoration target is complex. Some say we should let nature take her course. "It's nature" is often an argument used by owners of free-roaming cats to defend them hunting birds, but keeping cats as pets is not nature. We can't have it both ways. Killing some animals to save others will divide opinion, but unless we want to witness mass extinction caused by human activities, and be left with only a few species, we need to work out how best to restore the balance.

Successful conservation projects do not take place in a silo. Decisions should involve multiple disciplines, including conservation science and environmental and animal ethics, and involve communities, landowners, and businesses. Policymakers and conservation groups can ensure the least harm by following scientific evidence, considering species interactions and impacts, and prioritising animal welfare. Culling for conservation must be a last resort to solve a time-critical and specific conservation problem; it must be targeted, time limited, measured, and reviewed. Finding non-lethal or natural solutions is a priority too. Ultimately, conservation decisions must be grounded in compassion and empathy for all animals.

## Monthly 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!

**Mute Swan:** "I watched as the parents tried to show the four young how to fly. There was a lot of splashing as wings hit the water, but I think it would be fair to say that they need a lot more practice !" | Andrew Crossley | Felbrigg Park | 12<sup>th</sup>

**Egyptian Goose:** "The male has returned to the resident female, they've been hanging out together for a couple of days now on the pond at Hillside Shire Horse Sanctuary." | Ellie Farrow | West Runton | 17<sup>th</sup>

**Stock Dove:** "Victim of the peregrine as verified by the remains" | Bob Farndon | Walcott | 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Gannet:** "4 east; 8 west (7 10 to 10 45 am). So few compared to yesterday with one juv looking very tired." | Dawn & Tim Wright | East Runton | 28<sup>th</sup> | and " 121 east" | Phil Borley | Sheringham | 27<sup>th</sup>

**Cormorant:** "12x Many powering about and sitting on every beacon in view from the Tank" | Claire Brayne | Sheringham | 12<sup>th</sup>

**Cormorant:** "One seen to catch a small flat-fish just off the beach. It was then robbed by an Imm. Great black backed gull." | Tony Pope | Weybourne Camp | 26<sup>th</sup>

**Grey Heron:** "Had our field cut a couple of days ago since when this Grey Heron and a Buzzard have made the most of easy access to voles and frogs/toads." | Alan Stevens | Gresham | 9<sup>th</sup>

**Sparrowhawk:** "Sat on the feeding station. Suddenly dived into the side of the adjacent Beech hedge completely disappearing, as it did so half a dozen House Sparrows popped out the top, I never saw it emerge but minutes later it was on the feeding station again. After a drink it flew off." | Di & Richard Farrow | Sheringham | 31<sup>st</sup>

**Buzzard:** "Pushed peregrine off its kill and one took possession." | Bob Farndon | Walcott | 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Tawny Owl:** "Maybe 2 birds, hooting and kewick calls heard, they have been extremely vocal over the past few weeks and I am hearing them most nights, sometimes very close to the house" | Stella Baylis | Southrepps Common | 9<sup>th</sup>

**Green Woodpecker:** "Male, female and, great to see, a juvenile. Not seen one this year so lovely to see them all sitting on the same telegraph pole!" | Jane Crossen | Sheringham Cemetery | 18<sup>th</sup>

**Kestrel:** "Flew towards the windscreen of our car going through the village quite scary." | Doug & Jenny Cullern | Edgefield | 14<sup>th</sup>

**Peregrine:** "watched for several minutes chasing a turnstone at a considerable height over the prom, stooping at turnstone four times but failing to catch its target." | Phil Borley | Sheringham | 13<sup>th</sup>

**Magpie:** "together in road in deep conversation - winter fuel allowance perhaps?" | Christopher Mason | Aylmerton | 10<sup>th</sup>

**Magpie:** "It was 'Two for Joy' as another nearby.2 | David Hobart | Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs | 21<sup>st</sup>

**Swallow:** "Alarm calling, probably because of the Hobby!" | Stella Bayliss | Southrepps Common | 1<sup>st</sup>

**House Martin:** "Estimate c95 birds feeding high over Franklin Hill area with many drifting E. Part of an afternoon influx to the area." | Dawn & Tom Wright | Sheringham | 26<sup>th</sup>

**Wren:** "x8 Probably more - all being very aggressive!" | Jane Crossen | Sheringham Cemetery | 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Spotted Flycatcher:** "x4 Astonishing to see them feeding frantically very close together (one was in the same bush as a Pied) - hedgerow in field west of the cemetery - feeding on flies from the dung heap. There were a lot of flies!" | Jane Crossen | Sheringham Cemetery | 1<sup>st</sup>

**Whinchat:** "Feeding from hedge and abandoned bench near bonfire remnants. Lovely views. Lovely birds. Such beautiful markings - especially on the back and head." | Jane Crossen | Sheringham Cemetery | 7<sup>th</sup>

**Siberian Stonechat:** "1W/non-breeding male; watched for 45 minutes in scrub below old RAF building, during which time it entered the NENBC area just once (when harassed by a local Robin). Otherwise it always foraged just to the west of the NENBC area boundary." | Andy Clarke | Weybourne Camp | 28<sup>th</sup>

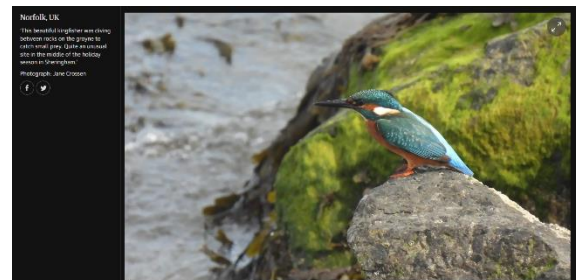
**Wheatear:** "On bare field adjacent to the footpath from Pit Common, very camouflaged against the brown field, only spotted them when the white rump flashed as they flew" | Stella Baylis | Southrepps Common | 9<sup>th</sup>

## Check This Out!

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



- 🐦 **Congratulations to Jane Crossen** who had her Kingfisher photo published in [The Guardian online](#) "Readers' Best Photographs" section - it's quite an achievement when you realise photographs are sent in from all around the world!



- 🐦 **Beeston Regis welcomes 'the Swoose' home** "A hybrid bird, known as the Swoose, has returned to its North Norfolk home after it was tracked down to a museum in London. The Swoose was hatched at Abbey Farm in Beeston Regis, near Sheringham, on April 10 1911 and was the result of breeding between a swan and a goose." *Jack Warren, NNN reporter.* Read the full article on the NNN website: [Beeston Regis welcomes 'the Swoose' home](#) | North Norfolk News. Image courtesy of Ayre and Co Taxidermists



- 🐦 **Escaped crane causes culling controversy - BirdGuides** [09-Sep]
- 🐦 **'Stunning' new Norfolk wetland opens to public - BirdGuides** [03-Oct]
- 🐦 **Charities call for greater transparency over Sizewell C - BirdGuides** [28-Sep]
- 🐦 **First Kittiwake hatches at artificial nesting platform - BirdGuides** [24-Sep]
- 🐦 **Farmers asked to limit hedge cutting - BirdGuides** [23-Sep]
- 🐦 **Yellow-browed Warbler ringing project launches - BirdGuides** [21-Sep]
- 🐦 **Scientists quantify energetic costs of the migratory lifestyle in a free flying songbird | ScienceDaily** [Max-Planck-Gesellschaft | 18-Sep]
- 🐦 **New six-stamp set features birds central to Manx folklore - BBC News** [06-Oct]
- 🐦 **The true Global impact of species-loss caused by humans is far greater than expected, study reveals | Phys.org** [University of Birmingham | 03-Oct]
- 🐦 **Kleptoparasitic skuas forcing seabirds to regurgitate fish could be spreading avian flu - @RareBirdAlertUK** [24-Sep]
- 🐦 **'You could single-handedly push it to extinction': how social media is putting our rarest wildlife at risk | Endangered species | The Guardian** [25-Sep]



## 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.](#)

"Simple, far-carrying, soft, quick repetition of quite low, hollow 'poo-poo-poo'."

*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*

"When agitated and excited a high, noisy 'scheer' with traits of Collared Dove and distant Black-headed Gull. Also a dry rolling 'cherrr' in mate/brood-feeding and other situations. Song a trisyllabic hollow, muffled 'oop-oop-oop', repeated several times; weak at close range yet carries.."

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

"Call is a soft, low, resonant 'hoop, hoop, hoop' that carries a surprising distance."

*from RSPB Handbook of British Birds by Peter Holden and Tim Cleeves*

## Wordsearch

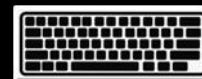


This month, we have the 16 species or races recorded in October 2023 for which we have just one record for each – you never know what might crop up on your walks at this time of year so keep your eyes peeled! For the purposes of this puzzle, ignore any hyphens, apostrophes, brackets and spaces. [Solution is at the end of this newsletter.](#)

Black Guillemot  
Black-tailed Godwit  
Corn Bunting  
Hobby  
Jack Snipe  
Lesser White-fronted Goose  
Little Tern  
Pochard  
Raven  
Redstart  
Sabine's Gull  
Shore Lark  
Slavonian Grebe  
Tawny Pipit  
Twite  
Whitethroat

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





Some new rare bird records have been 'Accepted' by the Norfolk Records Committee [NRC] for our area since the last newsletter. You can view their current '**NRC work in progress**' file on their website [24<sup>th</sup> Nov 23]. The British Birds Rarities Committee also have a '**BBRC work in progress**' file available on their website [11<sup>th</sup> Mar 24].

Here are some bits and bobs from our website and social media...



## NENBC Website



A huge thanks to the **129** of you who have uploaded records to our new website this year to date covering **69,925** records. It is very much appreciated by us and the bodies we send the data on to for inclusion in the county reports. **During September, 75 of you logged records which is great** but that is less than 20% of our membership. For those of you who haven't used it before, our website is easy to use so please give it a go. If you haven't logged your records for a while (like the Editor!), do try and make October the month you get back to it. Your records count, whether they are rarities or the birds you see every day.

**Most recorded species for September** was surprisingly Cormorant with 153 records. The rest of the top 5 were made up of Robin, Chiffchaff, Gannet and Herring Gull. No longer a Blackbird in sight!

At the other end of the spectrum, we had **single records** of the following species: Brambling, Curlew Sandpiper, Dartford Warbler, Fieldfare, Green Sandpiper, Hawfinch, Lesser Redpoll, Mandarin Duck, Osprey, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Reed Warbler, Ruff, Tree Pipit, Twite, Woodcock and Yellow-legged Gull.

The **location with the most records** overall was Weybourne (950) followed by Sheringham, Beeston Common, Weybourne Camp and Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs.

The **location with the most species reported** was Weybourne Camp (111) followed by Weybourne Camp, Sheringham, Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs and Beeson Common.

The **member posting the highest number of records** was Phil Borley again last month (1,075), followed by Tony Pope, Philip Cartlidge and Trevor Williams.

The **member posting the highest number of species** was also Phil Borley (140), followed by Dawn & Tim Wright, Mark Clements, Tony Pope and Andy Clarke.

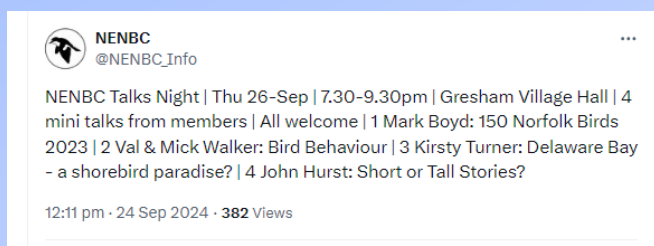
**We are a bit down on record numbers this year, and photos, so if you get the time we'd love to see you adding more of your sightings.**

## NENBC Twitterings from (the platform formerly known as) Twitter



We very much welcome users tagging us **@NENBC\_info** to keep us posted and so we can Retweet them but please refrain from posting any discussion that could be construed as abusive, derogatory or inflammatory to or by other users – thank you!

Please continue to tag us **@NENBC\_info** in your own Tweets as we don't have much being posted at the mo, in fact we only managed to post 2 of our own with no retweets as we are snowed under with other stuff. If you fancy helping us out with our Twitter / X account then please do get in touch as we would be very happy to hear from you!





## **Gannet**

**By David North**

# *Close to shore A gannet*

# *D i v e s*

*Photos: Philip Cartlidge, Moss Taylor, Richard Farrow*



The bird voice variously described was that of a **Eurasian Hoopoe (Upupa epops)**. 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 BirdFacts: Hoopoe** page.

*Photos from Paul Williams, Mark Clements, Moss Taylor*



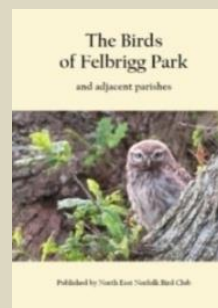
## This month's **Wordsearch Solution:** BIRDS RECORDED IN THE NENBC AREA IN OCTOBER 2023

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

**Answers to Nigel's questions on bird stamps, clockwise from top left: Bee-eater (Dubai), Pink-headed Duck (India), Yellow-breasted Bunting (Hong Kong), Dodo (Mauritius), Ward's Trogon (Bhutan), Bugun Liocichla (India), Rarotonga Monarch (Cook Islands), Gyrfalcon (Sweden), Spoon-billed Sandpiper (USSR), Great Northern Diver (Canada), Slender-billed Curlew (Morocco), and [centre] Raso Lark (Cape Verde).**



## Back Page Club Info .....



**NENBC Annual Bird Reports** are compiled from the records and photographs added to the club website by members since we were established in January 2015 and complemented by articles on club activities. Member price for the most recent report is £3 and back-copies £2 (postage extra).

**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 £5.00 (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