



The Pied Flyer

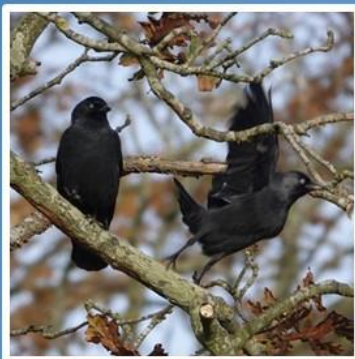
North East Norfolk Bird Club

December 2024 – Issue 114

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

President's Piece	Page 2	Last Month's Talk: Birding Ghana	Page 16
A Note from the Editor	Page 3	It's An Ill Wind	Page 19
Membership News and Statistics	Page 4	A Year at Weybourne Camp: November 2024	Page 20
NENBC Bird Highlights	Page 5	Birding Trip: Isle of Man	Page 21
November 2024	Page 5	A Day Out at Wheatfen	Page 22
NENBC Ringed Bird Records	Page 9	Contemplating Conservation: Wild Bird Populations ..	Page 24
What To Look & Listen For in December	Page 9	Member Highs, Lows & Ponderings	Page 26
Club Notices	Page 10	Check This Out	Page 27
What's On?	Page 11	Ficedula Fun	Page 28
Walks: Felbrigg Park / Buckenham Marshes	Page 11	Data, Records & Posts	Page 29
Christmas Social & AGM	Page 12	Cultural Birds: Christmas	Page 30
New Year's Day Birding Challenge	Page 12	Ficedula Fun Solutions	Page 32
Last Month's Felbrigg Walk That Wasn't!	Page 13	Back Page Club Info	Page 33
Last Month's Winterton Walk	Page 15		



Through a Lens



By Nigel Redman

When I heard about the 'family party' of Lesser White-fronted Geese (hereafter referred to as Lesser Whitefronts) that has turned up in Yorkshire, I was rather pleased, and just a little bit envious (why didn't they come to Norfolk?). The group arrived at Flamborough on 9 November, and they have remained in the area since then. The 'family' actually consists of four adults and three juveniles – so, quite an extended family. I would have expected a family party to comprise two adults and one or two juveniles, but maybe Lesser Whitefronts just do things differently. I suppose it could be two families.

Lesser Whitefront is globally threatened and one of the world's rarest geese, with an estimated world population of around 16,000–27,000 individuals. The species has been declining for decades, especially in Europe, and this is reflected in the occurrence of vagrants in Britain. Back in the early 1950s, there used to be an average of around three birds per year, but now it is fewer than one per year, discounting birds that are obviously or presumed to be of captive origin. As we all know, birds that have escaped from captivity are a perennial problem with wildfowl.

Most Lesser Whitefronts breed discontinuously in arctic Russia. The western Siberian population winters in Transcaucasia and western Asia, and the subpopulation in NE Siberia winters in eastern China and Japan. A third subpopulation in Norway, comprising only around 100 birds, winters in Greece. However, an ongoing reintroduction programme has been underway for many years in Sweden, currently numbering around 15 breeding pairs. These birds winter in the Netherlands, and the birds in Yorkshire are from this population – rings on one of the

adults proves this. Unfortunately, this population is not considered to be self-sustaining and therefore not countable. It is also a little controversial, with some people suggesting that they should be eliminated as they threaten the existence and integrity of the wild Norwegian birds. It seems unlikely that the two populations would ever meet as they have different migration strategies, but there were some heated exchanges on social media after the Yorkshire birds turned up.

There are 17 records of Lesser Whitefront on the NENBC database, which relate to seven individual birds (some of which may be the same birds). None of these are likely to be wild birds, and all are presumed to be of captive origin. The group of seven birds in Yorkshire has much stronger credentials. Admittedly they come from the reintroduced breeding population that migrates from Sweden to the Netherlands, but the ringed male in Yorkshire was released as a juvenile in Sweden in July 2018, and has therefore made the relatively short migration across the North Sea at least a dozen times. Some of the 'family' are unringed. Although they presumably also come from the Swedish population, it's not certain that they do. Maybe there are other factors at play with the Swedish reintroduction programme, but I think that this family group of Lesser Whitefronts is something to celebrate, whether they are countable or not. And why did they decide to take a break from the flat landscapes of Holland and explore the delights of Yorkshire? It's just a shame they didn't choose Norfolk.

The Lesser White-fronted Goose family party at Flamborough Head (John Hewitt).



A Note from the Editor

By Carol Thornton

Hi folks. Welcome to our December issue, the last of 2024 before we kick off our 10th anniversary celebrations for 2025! As always, full details of our schedule of events are on our website.

Later this week is our **Christmas Social and AGM** at **Gresham Village Hall on Thursday 12th December from 7.30pm**. If you haven't already let me know you will be coming, please do so ASAP so we can sort out refreshments to suit. We will start with our AGM 'Review of the Year' with club chair Trevor (which will be additionally available via Zoom) followed by our much more anticipated annual get-together (sorry Trevor!) – great company and the chance for a chat, full hot and cold buffet with desserts and mulled wine & mulled apple juice plus our fun Birdy Quiz produced by last year's winners Mark Boyd & Chris Tucker and Richard & Susan Fisher. We are sorry but the social bit will be in-person only. Looking forward to catching up with lots of you then!

Landscape photo update – Thanks so much to all of you who have been so kind as to trawl your archives or get out with your cameras to get photographs of our listed club locations to me. They have been invaluable in getting our 10th Anniversary Commemorative Book suitably illustrated and in the new year we will be refreshing our locations pics and texts on our website, hopefully ensuring that every photo up there will have been taken by a club member. To that end, do please keep them coming!

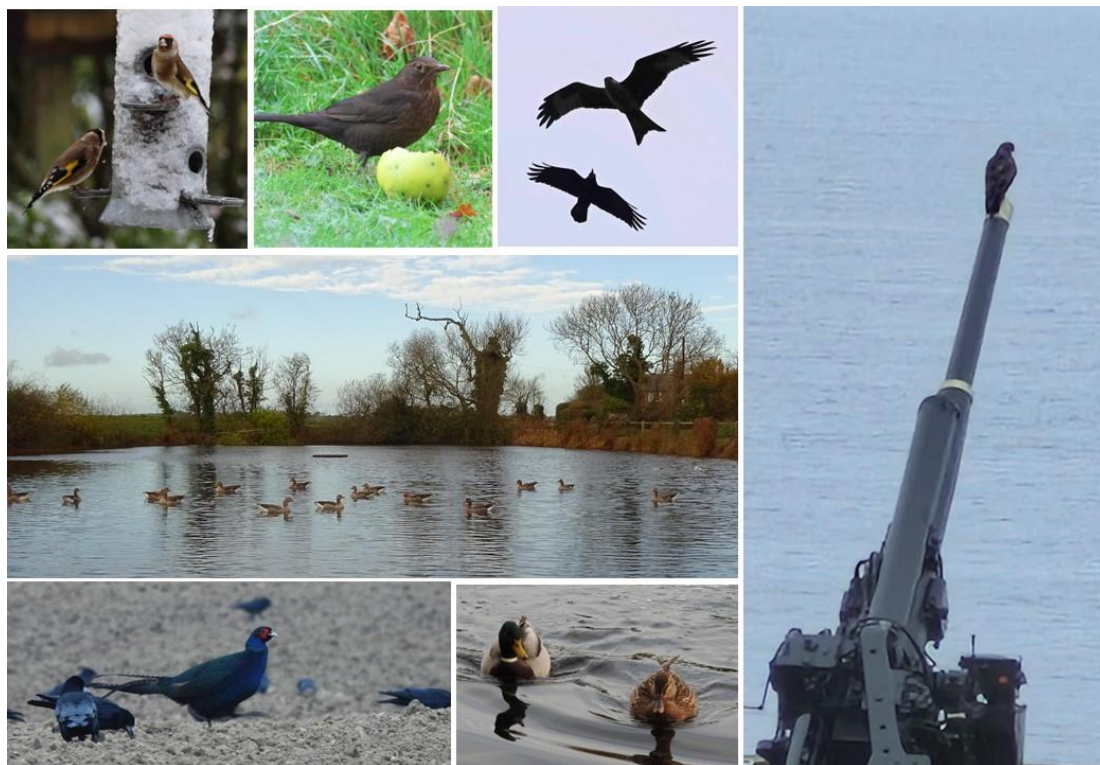


Newsletter Assistance

I could really do with some assistance from you with the newsletter. It would make a huge difference to me and the time it takes each month if I could get some additional regular contributors who could pen a series of articles of any length (perhaps a theme for the year?), a stock pile of stories that could be used as and when, or one-offs of seasonal interest. Short or long, with pics or without, reflective, funny, inspiring - anything that will be of interest to our members.

I am already planning on doing a series in 2025 on a couple of things – 'My Favourite Bird' and 'A Favourite Birding Experience' so if there are any stories out there that you want to tell, please get in touch. In line with our 10th anniversary celebrations we will also be reproducing some great articles from the past decade of newsletters and additionally weaving through narratives around African / UK migrants in line with the theme of our 10th Anniversary Conference in June.

Please get your contributions coming in! Thank you



Last month's **Through a Lens** subject for the front page was **CORVIDS** and our cover images this time are from Carrion Crow (Richard Farrow), Jackdaw (Andrew Crossley, Philip Cartledge) and Magpie (Ken Thornton). Thanks all! The **theme for December is Robins** of course!

Left is my pick from November of some great photos from our website of the more common birds that don't make it to the Monthly Bird Highlights section: Goldfinch, Blackbird (Ken Thornton), Rook with Red Kite (Francis Farrow), Greylags at Paston (Stephanie Witham), Pheasant (Mark Clements), Mallard (Doug Cullern) and Buzzard (John Snow).

If I don't catch up with you at the Social / AGM, on one of the December club walks or out and about in the festive rush, I wish you the very best for Christmas and the New Year and don't forget to get those records of your New Year's Day birding on our website.



441 individual
members across
287 households

82,352
bird records
logged

240 bird species
reported

Please keep adding all your sightings to our website at 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** from [page 29](#).

Club Achievement Awards

Star Badges

No new achievers this month but the Peer Review Panel are reviewing at a few soon so we are looking forward to a few more coming through!

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 when they are ready for their website records to be peer reviewed by the Peer Review Group.

Eco-Badges

Congratulations to Trevor Warren on the achievement of his Super-Green Coastal Badge. See the November Talk write-up for a pic of him being presented with his certificate and badge.

We currently have **26** members who have achieved their **GREEN ECO-BADGES** [Coastal: 16 | Inland: 10] and **7** who have achieved **SUPER-GREEN** [Coastal: 6 | 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 1st 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 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.

≈ 6,200 individual records covering 158 bird species were added in November

There were 6,198 records submitted for November which is 447 less than those submitted for the same period last year and 871 less than the previous month of October. A total of 158 species was recorded which was 15 less than was recorded in the same period in 2023.

The more interesting species this month were Velvet Scoter, Sooty Shearwater, Yellow-browed Warbler, Richard's Pipit and Lapland Bunting with summaries of records of all of the less common species in our area last month listed below:

Brent Goose Records throughout the month from Weybourne to Bacton with high counts of 444 past Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs during a 2 hour seawatch on 2nd, all but one west and up to 278 west past Weybourne on the same date. *Photo 1 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Barnacle Goose Records on three dates – 1 with Pink-feet Weybourne Cliffs on 13th, 83 west Sheringham in one group on 16th and between 60 and 74 west past Cromer to Weybourne on 18th. *Photo 2 courtesy of Trevor Williams*

White-fronted Goose An adult and 2 juveniles on the 10th at an unlisted location and around 10 with Pink-feet at West Runton on 10th. On 29th, a mix of 24 adults and juveniles east along the prom at Sheringham and then out to sea heading north-east and then reports of 5 in off sea at Weybourne plus 12 east with Pink-feet there too. *Photo 3 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Whooper Swan Reports of 5 and 6 around Weybourne on 1st plus 4 adult and 1 juvenile west over the Weybourne area on 7th.

Garganey Two at Felbrigg Park & Lake on 20th.

Scaup A single west at Sheringham on 4th and 2 east there on 19th.

Velvet Scoter Reports from 5 dates during month. On the 15th there were 2 past Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs and up to 7 east and west around Weybourne; on 17th a pair on the sea and west at Weybourne; on 18th 2 west at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs speed-checked from Sidestrand and 1 west from Cromer Pier 3 hours later; one west at Sheringham on 20th; and 4 east together at Cromer Pier on 21st. *Photo 4 courtesy of Trevor Williams*

Long-tailed Duck there was a drake west at Sheringham on 3rd then no more sightings until the 20th with singles west with Common Scoter from Mundesley, Sheringham and Weybourne Camp, the 24th with singles again east from Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs (female type) and Weybourne with a drake on the sea at Weybourne on 30th.

Goosander Twenty six reports from November mostly along the coast. High counts on the 20th with 8 west at Sheringham and 6 (5 red-heads and one drake) off Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs and Mundesley. The only inland records were from Felbrigg Park & Lake with a drake there on 29th. *Photo 5 courtesy of Mark Clements*



Red-breasted Merganser Fairly regular reports from 1st to 20th between Weybourne Camp and Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs with high counts of 8 west during a 4 hour seawatch at Cromer on 20th, and 6 west Weybourne on 15th.

Grey Partridge A single record of three birds at Kelling Heath on 11th.

Red-necked Grebe Eleven records of singles feeding offshore and flying both east and west from Weybourne Camp along to Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs between 3rd and 30th.

Grey Plover Five west off Weybourne Camp on 20th and a single west from Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 22nd. The other 4 reports were from West Runton of 2-6 birds between 25th and 28th. *Photo 6 courtesy of Martin Browne*

Bar-tailed Godwit One over fields at Weybourne Cliffs in the company of a Curlew on 13th plus 2 west at Sheringham and 7 at Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 22nd during a 2 hour seawatch.

Knot One on the main slipway at Sheringham on 7th, 2 at Weybourne on 17th and 12 west at Sheringham on 22nd. The other records were from the 20th with up to 59 birds west during seawatches from Cromer Lighthouse & east Cliffs, Sheringham and Weybourne Camp. *Photo 7 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Purple Sandpiper Two birds west off Weybourne Camp on 20th and one west with Dunlin from Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on the same day. All other records were of 1-2 birds at Sheringham from 19th to 28th. *Photo 8 courtesy of Geoff Snelson*

Woodcock Two birds in the grounds of Thornage Hall on 13th with singles from 17 coastal and inland sites throughout the month.

Jack Snipe Two in rough grazing with Common Snipe at Felbrigg Park & Lake on 17th and one at Sustead on 22nd.

Kittiwake Records on 10 days between 11th and 28th with high counts on the good seawatching days of the 11th (150 past Cromer Pier) and 12th (109 Cromer Lighthouse and East Cliffs and 167 Sheringham). The 19th brought the maximum counts with 157 past Weybourne Camp (132 west and 25 east) plus 468 past Sheringham (206 east and 262 west) during seawatches. *Photo 9 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Little Gull One off Sheringham on 3ed, 2 Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs on 5th, up to 22 predominantly east at Sheringham on 11th plus 5 Cromer Pier, 18 east Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs 13th and 1 west at Sheringham on 20th.

Mediterranean Gull records of 1-2 birds throughout the month along the coastline with a single inland at Edgefield on 24th. *Photo 10 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Caspian Gull A single in an Edgefield pig field on 9th and also at Buxton & Little Hautbois on 10th.



Arctic Tern A juvenile west at Sheringham on 2nd and a juvenile west again at Weybourne on 10th.

Great Skua the fifteen records were predominantly of singles with 3 at Sheringham (1 west and 2 east) on 11th and 5 east during a seawatch at Cromer Pier on the same date plus 2 at Weybourne on 15th (1 west and 1 east),

Pomarine Skua A single east at Sheringham on 2nd plus up to 5 east at Sheringham on 11th, including 1 dark juvenile, plus a minimum of 6 offshore and east at Cromer Pier on the same date.

Arctic Skua Eight reports of 1-4 birds on 5 days from 2nd through to the 20th, predominantly west.

Little Auk Reports of singles close inshore on 3rd, 17th, 19th, 21st and 22nd with 2 at Sheringham on 19th and records of up to 7 birds during seawatching sessions on 20th.

Puffin One in from east and settling on sea and one west Weybourne on 15th.

Red-throated Diver Over 100 records throughout the month with 108 Sheringham on 11th and 138 Cromer Lighthouse & east Cliffs on 11th plus 104 Sheringham in 28th.
Photo 11 courtesy of Mark Clements

Black-throated Diver Records on 5 dates all of singles between Weybourne and Cromer Lighthouse and East Cliffs – 2nd, 5th, 10th (some really close views at Weybourne), 15th and 19th.

Great Northern Diver In ones and twos throughout the month from Weybourne / Weybourne Camp, Muckleburgh Hill, Sheringham and Mundesley.

Fulmar Singles west from Cromer Pier on 18th, east close in at Cromer Lighthouse 8 East Cliffs on 24th and east Sheringham on 27th with 2 east and on west from there the following day.

Sooty Shearwater One record of a single east off Cromer pier on 11th.

Cattle Egret One flew south at Little Barningham on 29th.

Great White Egret Singles east at Sheringham on 7th, east at Selbrigg Pond on 9th, west over Beeston Common on 26th, Brinton on 27th with 2 east over Weybourne Cliffs on 29th.
Photo 12 courtesy of Mark Clements

Osprey One perched in a tree at Haveringland Great Wood on 17th. *Photo 13 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Goshawk One in tree at Swanton Novers on 9th and one flying through the tree canopy at Sheringham Park on 10th.
Photo 14 courtesy of Mark Clements

Hen Harrier A male west offshore at Weybourne / Weybourne Camp on 4th.

Long-eared Owl Two at Sheringham heading west on 2nd, joined briefly by a 3rd bird which the observer said appeared to be a Short-eared Owl.

Kingfisher Fourteen records this month, all of singles, and with the exception of Weybourne on 3rd, Beeston Common on 15th and Beeston Regis on 28th, they were all at inland sites – Selbrigg Pond, Burgh-next-Aylsham, Felbrigg Park & Lake, Wolterton Park and Baconsthorpe. *Photo 15 courtesy of Mark Clements*

11



12



13



14



15



Merlin A single east offshore a Weybourne on 30th.

Peregrine Reports of mostly singles at Cromer throughout the month with 2 on 22nd (including the female in off the sea carrying a Woodcock) and both adults on tower on 28th. Away from Cromer, 1 at Holt Country Park & Lowes on 16th, Weybourne on 19th, 24th and 30th, Weybourne Camp on 24th, Sheringham on 20th and 22nd and Hempstead on 30th.

Ring-necked Parakeet Heard overhead behind Weybourne Village Hall on 2nd and then seen in Weynor Gardens, Kelling the following day, perched up before being pursued by Jackdaws.

Raven Two drifting over Felbrigg Park & Lake on 8th and a single heard calling with other corvids in Upper Sheringham on 21st.

Marsh Tit Up to two at Selbrigg Pond on 30th with singles there on 9th and 11th, plus at Felbrigg Park & Lake on 14th, Gresham on 23rd and Weynor Gardens, Kelling on 28th. *Photo 16 courtesy of Ken Thornton*

Bearded Tit Four in Hope Reedbed at Weybourne on 3rd and 2 there on 15th, vocal but elusive.

Yellow-browed Warbler Singles at Weybourne Camp 2nd and 3rd, Southrepps Common 3rd and 4th and Mundesley on 13th.

Dartford Warbler Just 4 records of singles, heard only on 2nd and 3rd, glimpsed on the 13th and a final record from the 28th.

Firecrest Singles at Beeston Common on 3rd, 15th, and 26th and at East Beckham on 26th. *Photo 17 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Black Redstart Singles at Weybourne on 4th (adult male), picked up on a trail-cam in a Sheringham garden on 14th and on the prom just west of Cromer Pier on 21st.

Tree Sparrow A single at West Runton on 25th.

Richard's Pipit A single west over Weybourne Camp on 5th calling continuously. Reported a few minutes earlier flying west over coastguard cottages.

Water Pipit Feeding on scrape at Weybourne Camp on 26th before flying west - the habitat on the scrape is now ideal for this species.

Rock Pipit Singles at Sheringham on 12th and 14th and at Weybourne Camp on 13th.

Brambling Just a few records of 1-3 birds during the month, the largest being a flock of 20 with Chaffinch in North Walsham. *Photo 18 courtesy of Ken Thornton*

Hawfinch Two over Weybourne Camp and the Muckleburgh Collection on 5th, one at Sheringham Cemetery on 8th and Ingworth on 30th. Also, a single feeding on Rowans on Beeston Common from 5th to 7th. *Photo 19 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Lapland Bunting One flew over Sheringham Cliffs with two Skylark on 21st.

Snow Bunting Two at West Runton on 10th, but otherwise just singles – west along beach at Sheringham Cliffs on 4th, West Runton on 8th, Sheringham and Weybourne Camp on 14th and Weybourne on 14th and 17th.

16



17



18



19



NENBC Ringed Bird Records in November

Just a reminder to folk logging ringed birds on our website. Although we send our data off en masse to the county recorder through BirdTrack uploads, we don't directly contact ringing coordinators of individual projects – that needs to be down to you if you have a sighting. Project coordinators love to get data on their birds – after all, that is the reason for ringing them – so here is a reminder on how to do it from Chris Lamsdell:



Please report your colour ring birds to the relevant project co-ordinator which can be found through the EU Colour Ring website <https://cr-birding.org/>. Locally ringed Turnstones (red flag three letters starting JAA), Black-headed Gulls (red rings starting 2C00) and Marsh Tit (white rings 00-99) can be reported through <https://iceni.shinyapps.io/sightings/>. Metal only rings can be reported to the BTO <https://app.bto.org/euring/lang/pages/rings.jsp>

Mute Swan

- “family party - one bird colour-ringed - during 2 hour farm survey” Trevor Williams | Ingworth | 30th

Turnstone

- “Seen by The Crown - included JAC - first viewing of the bird I've had this autumn (ringed here 15.2.23)” | Jane Crossen | Sheringham | 21st | *photo right*
- “Group including bird with leg flag JAC” | Roger Emmens | Sheringham | 24th
- “Including leg flag JAC” | Roger Emmens | Sheringham | 28th



What to Look and Listen For in December



There should still be plenty to see right across our recording area during December. Birds of prey can often be in evidence and the local **Red Kite** roost at Little Barningham should be starting to ramp up. **Hen Harrier** and **Merlin** are both possible during the month and why not see if you can find a local **Barn Owl**? Seawatching is still a good option this month. If you aren't venturing far, why not take the opportunity to take some pics of your local or garden birds and pop them on our website? We are always pleased to get photos we can include in our publications from members.

From our 2023 Annual Report: “The highlight in December, another excellent month, was the immature **Red-breasted Goose** reported on a couple of occasions at the end of the month near Holt. A **Tundra Bean Goose** was in with Pink-feet at Thornage and we had reports of both **Bewick's Swan** and **Whooper Swan**. A **European Storm Petrel** was off Cromer and **Red-necked Grebe**, **Slavonian Grebe** and **Black-necked Grebe** were all in evidence during the month along the coast where we additionally had reports of **Little Auk**. **Lapland Bunting** and **Corn Bunting** were both noted in December in a flock of Skylark.” *Russ Malin*



Historical December Records by Russ Malin

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

In the history books, the first record of Pale-bellied Brent Goose involved a bird off Sheringham on December 31st 1981, although it was only in the 1990s that they began to be recorded more regularly, especially on autumn passage.

A Greenland White-fronted Goose (photo right courtesy of Alan Jones) was at Sharrington on December 6th 2008 and the first Norfolk record of Black-browed Albatross was a bird seen flying east off Mundesley on December 31st 2002.

The first Norfolk record of Laughing Gull was a first-winter bird at Walcott on Christmas day in 1991. It remained in the Walcott, Mundesley and Paston areas, with visits inland to Witton and Ridlington, until January 8th 1992. Sticking with North American gulls, a first-winter Ring-billed Gull was found by the same observer that found the Laughing Gull on the 21st December 1992, also at Walcott.

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 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.

Restocking our 2nd 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

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

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 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

Opening Hours:

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



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

Thank you!

Membership Renewal - Subscriptions for 2025












We hope you will continue to support the club in 2025 by renewing your membership with us for our exciting 10th anniversary year. The subs, which are due on 1st January, remain the same as last year:

2025 calendar year membership of £15 per household to include a copy of the club's printed 2024 Annual Bird Report which we hope will be ready for publication in the summer, or £12 without the report.

Our preferred method of payment is by standing order, but one-off payments can be made electronically to the club account (Account Number: 20842968 / Sort Code: 30- 94-34; TSB) or by posting a cheque to the membership secretary Colin Blaxill at Caitlins, Bernard Close, High Kelling, Holt NR25 6QY. Cheques need to be made payable to "North East Norfolk Bird Club" and not NENBC. If you want to pay by cash then catch Colin or one of the other Committee Members at one of our events.

Many thanks for your continuing support and engagement

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 3rd 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 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

Wednesday 18th December | 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 5th January | 12:30pm-5:30pm |

Buckenham Marshes Walk

with Janice Darch and friends

One of our series of **NENBC 10th ANNIVERSARY WALKS**, revisiting some the old haunts we haven't been to for a while.



No advance booking needed but it would be useful to know if you are coming.

The walk for wintering geese and ducks, with the option of staying on at the end of the afternoon to watch the Rooks gathering for the evening roost which Buckenham is famous for. The target birds for this trip are the small wintering flock of geese, maybe even Taiga Bean Geese, with the White-fronted Geese - the grazing marshes along the River Yare between Buckenham and Cantley is the only regular English site for this species. The flock can roam widely, so be prepared for a good walk if the flock is feeding towards Cantley. The marshes are good for other wildfowl including flocks of Wigeon, Teal and Gadwall and raptors such as Marsh Harrier are common. The Rook roost is famous, has featured on TV programmes and is even mentioned in the Doomsday Book.

MEET: Buckenham Station, TG 351056. Nearest post code is NR13 4HN.NR25 7RJ, car park on right just before |

ACCESSIBILITY: The walk is on roads and footpaths but isn't suitable for wheelchair users. | **FACILITIES:** None | **BADGES:** Outside the club area so unfortunately records can't count for Star Badges or Green Eco-badges this time.



AGM & Christmas Social

Thursday 12th December from 7.30pm
Gresham Village Hall



We are all looking forward to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) (well sort of!) and Christmas Social event (yay!) so hopefully we will be able to get many of us there in person at Gresham Village Hall for a Christmas catch up.

The AGM element will additionally be available online via Zoom but the rest of the evening will just be hall-based.

We'll get the business side of things sorted first as we start the evening off with our AGM - a chance to vote on various aspects of the club and to listen to a Review of 2024 with Chair Trevor Williams.

THOSE WHO ATTEND AT THE HALL IN-PERSON can later enjoy the fun of our **CHRISTAMS SOCIAL EVENT** which will consist of a light-hearted **BIRDY QUIZ** from Mark, Chris, Richard and Susan, last year's winning team, along with a **HOT AND COLD BUFFET AND DRINKS**. We will have team tables of up to 4 spread out in the large hall, there will be prizes available and **party hats** are very much encouraged throughout.

ADVANCE BOOKING: Please contact Carol on nenbc@aol.co.uk to **CONFIRM IF YOU WILL BE ATTENDING** in-person as by Tuesday so we can make appropriate arrangements for food and tables – you are still welcome if you haven't made your mind up by then, but please let us know as soon as you can. If you have any dietary requirements, just email them in and we will do our best to ensure there are appropriate refreshments for you. If you need the Zoom link for the AGM element, then get in touch sooner rather than later as last minute we are likely to be a bit tied up, and also if you want the quiz Powerpoint slides sent on after the event.

Look forward to seeing lots of you next week!



NENBC New Year's Day Birding Challenge



Don't forget our 1st of January Birding Challenge **How many species of bird can you record in the NENBC area on the first day of the new year?** Will you get more than you got last year? Or something unusual or in an unusual spot? Perhaps you could consider taking on the challenge without using your car this year – all your club-area records would count towards your Green Eco-Badges - or car-sharing and driving to just one site and walking out from there? Don't fancy going out in the cold at all? Then just record all the birds you see from your home from the comfort and warmth of your living room – every one of them is important! Not in the club area this year? Then drop us an email telling us where you were and what you saw or heard.

Log your club area sightings on the our website at the end of the day and we'll write up the results in the next newsletter.

Last Month's Club Mid-Week Walk

The Felbrigg Park Walk that wasn't | 20th November



By Dave Billham

Photo from Andrew Crossley - Felbrigg Lake the following day

Following a forecast of high winds from the north it was decided to cancel the walk at short notice. Not the best forecast for a wood and parkland walk but not bad for the seawatchers [see page 19](#).

Carol got the message out as quickly as possible, but in the event the NT did not close the park, and four club members turned up on the morning. Once they had realised that they were going to be the only ones there, the 'fab four' decided to have a walk of their own, which Stuart Jones has kindly written up for this newsletter. A creditable 34 species noted, (Stuart thought 35, but he did what I almost invariably do and double-recorded a species!) including the second 'walk' sighting for the year of Treecreeper (last noted in February) and of course the four Goldeneye, a species not recorded on a walk morning before (or, much to her disappointment, by Carol after the event). Great sighting! Thanks to Stuart's note-taking I am able to include the species seen in the totals for the year, which should appear in January's newsletter. As an aside, Peter G and myself did see a Goldeneye that morning too, but ours was whizzing past Sheringham half a mile or so out to sea, and we certainly did not enjoy the extended cracking views the fab four got.

By Stuart Jones

Turns out it was a wonderful clear cold autumn morning. The Beeches, Oaks and Ash in their rustic rainbow of still green, going to red, orange, tan and yellows shot through with the green holly. Beautiful show every year. The fab four started in the car park with a flock of 4/5 **Redwings** past the house toward the lake, **Jackdaw** virtually everywhere, **Carrion Crow** scattered amongst them and a single **Great Tit** was singing in the large trees in front of the house. Entering the woods from the road, a **Common Buzzard** was heard, a few **Rooks** scattered around the grass near the large old Oak trees, and a **Blackbird** dashed away from us calling the usual alarm call. As we reached the "mother" Oak (you know the one we've ALL been inside), single **Moorhen** and 3 **Teal** seen on the little pond opposite. A **Herring Gull** was seen and heard overhead, then a lovely **Grey Wagtail** was spotted along the stream feeding the lake. A single **Robin** flew out and away, **Woodpigeon** overhead and a **Jay** squawking in the woods was seen.

Looking towards the lake a **Mute Swan** cygnet was seen, 2/3 **Goldfinch** in the top of a Bramble bush. A **Snipe** then suddenly dashed straight up in front of Richard, we thought we'd lost it - that was it, but then we caught one basking near reeds in the Autumn sun, and on further investigation two more in the sun then two in the watery shade; 5 in total!! We spent possibly too long looking at them but it was worth getting a bit cold. A **Pheasant** was heard in the shrub area past the wooden bridge, then a few **Greenfinches** were



darting around the tree tops as we headed to the lake. Four or five **Mallard** were splashing around and diving, pecking at each other, a **Coot** dashed away disgusted! A pair of **Gadwall** (one of my favourites) were seen, followed by **Tufted Duck** and **GOLDENEYE** a first for me, yay, 4 of them. Two **Black-Headed Gull** on the lake and some flying around, a Jay flew out from the side of the viewing fence and a **Cormorant** the opposite way. Coming to the dam end of the lake on the Weavers Way a slight drumming then sighting of **Greater Spotted Woodpecker** - discussion about the plight of the Lesser Spotted maybe a good future subject? A **Coal Tit** flittered around the trees near our heads and we heard a **Nuthatch** soon to be seen ascending the trunk of an Oak, then coming down three or four times pecking at a fallen tree a few metres away. Fleeting view of a **Treecreeper** as it swiftly circled a couple of Oak tree trunks then gone.



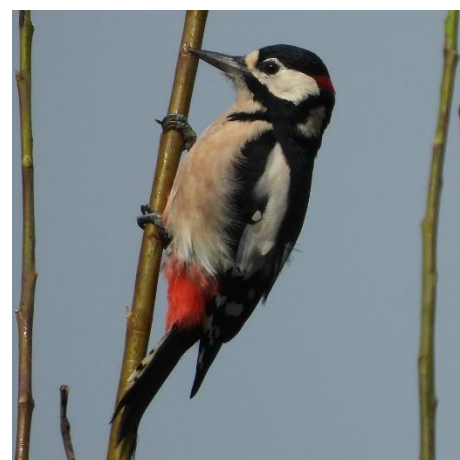
Heading to the stream fed by the lake a Buzzard shot out of the undergrowth and away over the tree canopy. Then one **Grey Heron** flew along the stream, legs dangling down; the neck and head of another was spotted in the long grass and sedges; two - could be a pair? A **Kestrel** just a few seconds later flew along the field in front of us then hovered, turned and went back over our heads to hover in the distance. Heading to the church uphill, **Starlings** were seen amongst the cows munching away then suddenly one jumped on a cows back; ungainly trying to balance on the cows bottom but failed and flew down back amongst the cows! We discussed whether any native British birds peck the ticks off cattle - any ideas out there? Heading back from the church Jackdaws behaving the same on the sheep as the Starlings! Then a pair of **Pied Wagtail** bobbing away were spotted amongst the sheep with a juvenile, 3 in total. I make that **34** Species and some more questions/subjects. A wonderful autumnal morning. *Library photos: Ken Thornton*



By Biddy Fisher

Felbrigg November walk? Oh no there isn't! Oh yes there was!

Four members turned up for the monthly Felbrigg NENBC walk only to find they had missed the cancellation notice posted the previous evening. Undaunted, Biddy, the two Richards and new member Stuart set off and enjoyed two hours on a cold, bright, sunny and breezy morning and had totally enjoyable bird walk. It may not have been an official walk but we saw over 30 species, all recorded by Stuart. Walking anti-clockwise we went to the lake, around it and then back over the open land towards the church. The **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, Snipe, the **Treecreeper** and the Goldeneye were notable for me. The autumn leaves created a wonderful atmosphere and the clear weather added to the ease of spotting. *Library photos: Dave Billham and Andrew Crossley*

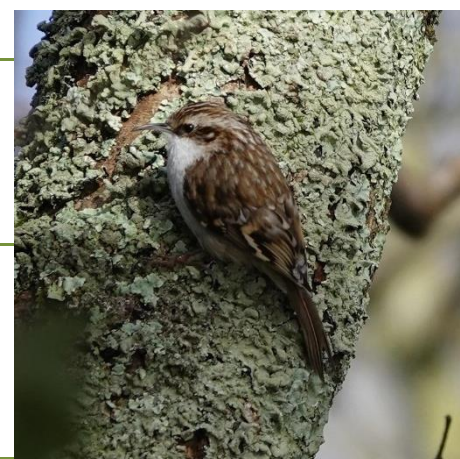


By Richard Fisher

Didn't see email in time, 4 of us turned up and had a most enjoyable and productive walk. Glad we went!

By Richard Kershaw

It was a crystal clear sunny morning if close to freezing but very enjoyable nonetheless.



Last Month's Club Weekend Walk

Winterton Dunes and Somerton Estate | 17th November



By Janice Darch

This walk took us back to an area we have visited several times in the past. Four of us enjoyed sunny weather, habitats ranging from allotments, pastures and paddocks, arable farmland, saltmarsh, dunes, shingle, sand and sea. During our walk we saw **42 species of birds**, Grey Seals and Red Deer. We started with Blackbirds, Robins, Wrens, Woodpigeons, Blue and Great Tits, Goldfinches, Jackdaws, Rooks and crows from the car park followed by a scan of Winterton churchyard. A distant flock of Greenfinches was visible in a tree on the horizon and Magpies were in trees closer to us. Next we spent some time looking at the allotments where we added Dunnock to our list. It was a nice surprise to find that the community garden was open and had been lovingly tended and improved since our last visit. Here, in the moat, we found Mallards. In the paddocks we saw Pheasant and a Kestrel hovered. Along the lanes we walked we found some feeders and added Coal Tit and House Sparrow to our list. Two Red Deer hinds ran through the break between woods and rough ground putting up two Woodcock which was a good surprise. Onto the cow pastures and the wetter habitats we had a flock of gulls including Black-headed, Herring, Common and Great Black-backed Gulls and a mixed group of geese, Pink, Greylag, Egyptian and Canada. A Mute Swan, two Little Grebes and a Grey Heron were in a drain. The ploughed fields had numbers of Starlings, Linnets, Skylarks and Lapwings together with Woodpigeon and a Stock Dove. Buzzards and a Red Kite were overhead. The Dunes were quiet but the shore and sea yielded Common Scoter, Red Throated Divers, Cormorant, Sanderling and a Turnstone and at this time of year adult and young Grey Seals.

Photos from Trevor Warren



Last Month's Club Evening Talk

"Birding Ghana - discovering the Gold Coast"

With Nik Borrow

zoom



A smaller audience than usual, due, we suspect, to the dodgy weather (so foggy and cold!) and the Gresham road closure. All those who made it had a great time lots of cake, Trevor Warren getting his Super-Green Eco Badge, plenty of Zoomers, non-member visitors and a fantastic talk and visual feast from Nik

Thanks everyone!



By Alan Stevens

Our last talk of 2024 saw the return of club member Nik Borrow. We are lucky as a club to have several very experienced birders amongst us who are happy to give of their time to share their experiences and expertise with us. Nik is no exception and having spent around 35 years visiting West Africa he has a wealth of knowledge of the region which he weaves with his professional talents as an accomplished artist, photographer, field guide and author. He is the co-author of the Helm Field Guides 'Birds of Ghana' and 'Birds of Western Africa'. With Ghana being home to about 770 species this was going to be an interesting evening.

Nik got underway with an overview of Ghana. From the mid 15th century until 1957 it was fought over and colonised by seven European / Scandinavian countries as they sought control over its gold, ivory, pepper and slave trade. It shares a time zone with the UK, as it does with many palearctic migrants, which gave a lead into the clubs theme for next year's 10th Anniversary and the birds we share with Africa and the East Atlantic Flyway. For his talk Nik took a broad geographical approach starting in the south with the Guineo-congolian rain forest and then moving north through a mosaic of farmland to the Guineo-congolian / Sudanian transition, on to the Sudanian Woodland and wooded grassland and finishing the far north taking in reserves and the like along the way. Nik touched on the countries bordering Ghana and how they differ.

Then we moved on to the coast bordering the Gulf of Guinea, beaches, lagoons, remnants of colonial rule and communities centred around fishing and, of course the birds. At this point I have to say that these notes on Nik's talk cannot, due to constraints of space, even begin to list all the birds he referenced during his talk, so a number have been chosen for inclusion. African Royal Terns were first up followed by Sandwich and Common Terns providing an immediate lead back to migration to the UK and ringing recoveries. The results of an RSPB coastal bird count from 1985-86 provided a surprise result with the Curlew Sandpiper emerging as the most populous. Moving into the mangroves Sunbirds and Weavers abounded and the parasitic relationship between the Bar-breasted Firefinch and Wilson's Indigobird was explained.

The Guineo-congolian rain forest came next with its 220 bird species, 81% of which are endemic. For focus the Kakum National Park was chosen with its 347 sq kms of mixed deciduous and evergreen open canopy. Hornbills were brought into focus and the different species found there before moving on to Barbets with an emphasis on the Yellow-spotted Barbet and its recent split into two species, east and west, identical in appearance and only differentiated by their calls. Rollers and Bee-eaters followed on and then Yellow-billed Turaco where Nik explained the two sub-species and the endemic pigmentation separating them. The decline in numbers of the African Grey Parrot was explained before quickly moving through a host of other species from Sunbirds to Weavers, Flycatchers to Greenbuls and Nightjars explaining their individual characteristics from ID to distribution, nesting and status *et al.* Hendrick Pel a 19th century Dutch zoologist was mentioned and the species named after him including Pel's Fishing Owl, and Pel's Flying squirrel, inevitably one of a number of mammals included a talk about Africa.

Next stop was the Ankawa Conservation Area described by Nik as a magical place of pristine forest of around 500 sq km abounding with rare mammals and, of course, birds. Shiny Blue Kingfishers, Finfoot Ducks, White-crested Tiger Herons, Eagle Owls among the seemingly endless show of species described in detail and including the Nkulengu Rail and the story behind it's call as a dip in to the culture of the country.

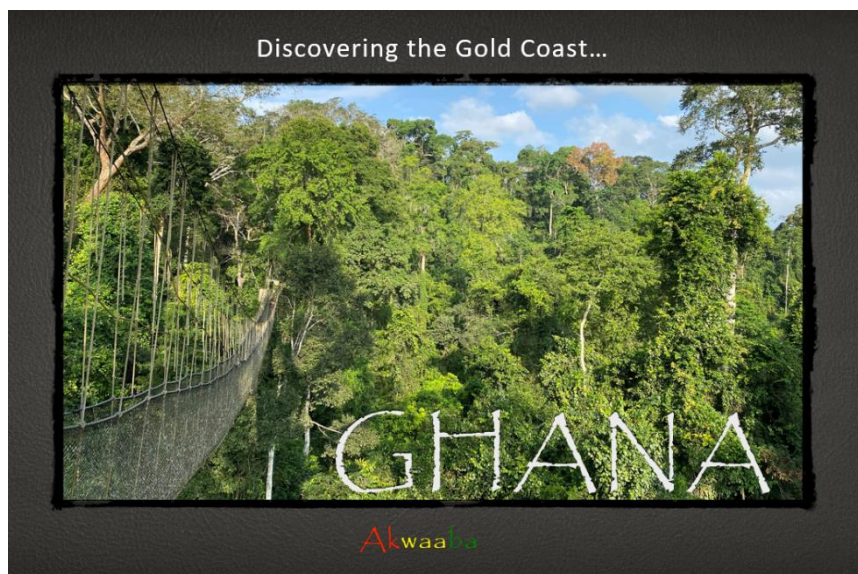
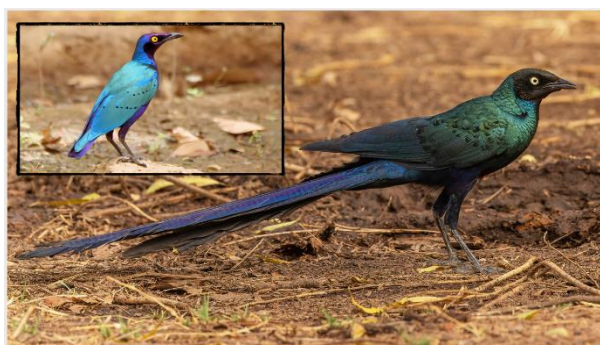
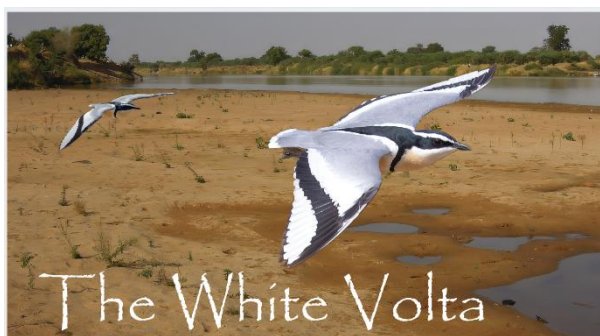


The Atewa region came next, 17,400 hectares of upland evergreen forest, important for rare plants, primates, butterflies and frogs and bird wise home to Nimba Flycatcher and the near threatened Blue-moustached Bee-eater. It is also the source of three important rivers. Nik explained how the region is being de-graded by logging, and the subsequent regrowth of the forest floor, and by basalt mining polluting the rivers and the effect on water quality to major centres of population. A link back to the UK came with Wood Warbler commonly wintering in Ghanaian forests and the European Honey Buzzard with two ringing recoveries from the UK. A while was spent looking at the remarkable, and alas vulnerable, Yellow-headed Picathartes. A startling bird with its yellow head and black 'headphones' it is an endemic to Ghana only rediscovered in 2003. With a population of only about 2500 and poor breeding outcomes it's future appears tenuous.

Moving north we arrived at the Mole National Park with its forest and savannah and starting with a look at some mammals including elephants, Common Patas Monkey and antelopes. Back to the birds we looked at doves and pigeons before turning to Franklins, Hornbills, Rollers and Bee-eaters again. The role of fire in the region was talked about and an overview of some species of birds of prey followed by plovers and grouse before alighting on the amazing Standard-wing Nightjar and the males spectacular breeding plumage.

To conclude our trip through the country Nik finished in the far north and the White Volta River where to round off we were introduced to the Egyptian Plover. As rightly pointed out by Nik, a beautiful bird, especially in flight, which not only buries its eggs in the sand but also, partially, it's chicks to keep them cool. As a tale to end his talk Nik related the dissention between Herodotus and Aristotle as to the identification of this plover' also known as 'The Crocodile Bird'.

Nik's talk was another 'tour d force' about a country so rich in wildlife, and especially from the members' viewpoints, birds. His encyclopaedic knowledge easily related to the audience, and with fantastic photographs made for the best of club evenings by the end we could see why he has been drawn back there so often. I guess a few members left thinking that joining one of his tours should be on the wish list. If you don't manage that then look out for a talk by Nik for a guaranteed quality couple of hours.





Little Auk – Mark Clements

Trevor Williams: “It was the afternoon before our monthly Felbrigg mid-week walk. With winds forecast to peak at over 40 mph (conditions when the National Trust usually shut the park) and an ‘amber’ warning for ice and snow, we reluctantly took the decision to cancel. A rare occurrence in our ten years of running the walk. In the event there was no snow or ice the following morning and the high winds didn’t come until later in the day. Apologies to any members who didn’t see the message on our website or get an email and turned up anyway – I gather they had a nice walk! (See “The Walk that wasn’t!” on page 13)

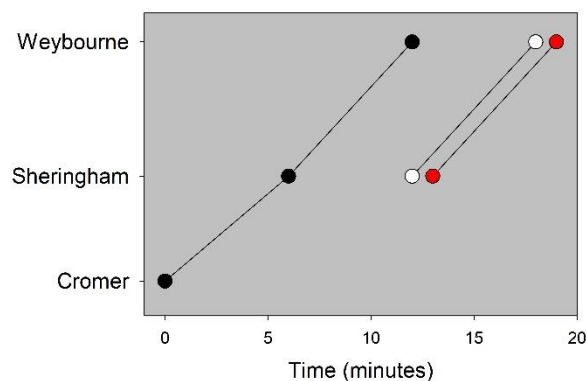
In the event, whilst the weather may not have been ideal for a walk in the park, it was certainly good for sea-watching - which is what I decided to do instead. Despite the biting cold the birding was so good I stayed for four hours - my normal stint is only two! A Red-necked Grebe on the sea just east of the shelter was a good start and the action continued from then on. Thankfully I was joined by two more Club members, Stu and later Phil, and between us we managed to see over 25 ‘sea-watch species’, recording large counts for many. Three Little Auk - two east and one west, double figures of ‘sawbills’ (Goosander & Merganser), good numbers and variety of other ducks, over a thousand Dunlin and half a dozen more wader species – all amounted to probably the best sea-watch from North Lodge Park since I started using the cliff-top shelter there during covid. Analysis of records produced some interesting speed-checks but we quickly gave up trying to send ‘real time’ messages via the Club sea-watching WhatsApp group – too many birds going through too quickly.

A sea-watching day to remember - ‘it’s an ill wind’ as they say. “

Andy Clarke: “Having looked at the forecast the night before, I decided an early seawatch might be productive. A strong northerly in mid-November; maybe there would be Little Auks! I arrived in the shelter at Sheringham a little before sun-up to find many of the regulars already in place. As the light strengthened it became clear that a major movement of ducks was underway, with flocks of Wigeon, Teal and Common Scoter streaming west, together with occasional groups of Eider and Shelduck. In addition there were Goldeneyes, Goosanders and Red-breasted Mergansers, a Velvet Scoter and best of all, two different Long-tailed Ducks in the scoter flocks. The surprise was a huge westward movement of Dunlin, with small flocks passing continuously, sometimes close but also more distant and difficult to pick up in the deep wave-troughs. Even better was that two of the closest flocks had a Little Auk travelling with them. Success! Later we had at least four more Little Auks, but these were moving east. Other highlights were a Red-necked Grebe along the tide-line and a Great Northern Diver.

When so many birds are moving it is difficult to get speed checks, mainly because of being sure that the same birds are being timed and Cromer, Sheringham and Weybourne. But we did manage a respectable ten measurements, including seven species of duck – and a Little Auk! A memorable seawatch indeed.”

Legend: Speed checks for Shelduck (black symbols), Red-breasted Merganser (white symbols) and Eider (red symbols). Only for Shelduck could we be sure the same birds were timed at Cromer. All three species were moving west at the same speed (70 km/h)





Part of the large flock of Barnacle Geese flying west on 16th

By Moss Taylor

This is the 11th in a monthly series this year of the wildlife at Weybourne Camp during 2024 ...

The main interest in November centred on seawatching as there were very few passerines of note actually on the Camp.

A skein of 84 Barnacle Geese flying west close inshore on 16th was by far the largest number recorded at the site and two days later a skein of 74 also flew west, surely the same birds, but where had they been in the meantime? White-fronted Geese are infrequently seen over the Camp, so 12 flying east with Pink-feet on 29th was noteworthy. A party of 5 Whooper Swans (including one juvenile) flew west on 1st and 6 flew east later the same day. Six days later 5 again flew west, including one juvenile, presumably the same birds. The return westerly flight of Shelducks from their moulting area in the Heligoland Bight peaked at 40 on 19th & 37 on 20th, while a pair of Pochard west offshore on 20th was of interest. Seaduck were well represented during the month with 132 Eiders west on 13th, and peak counts on 15th of Velvet Scoter (5 west & 2 east), 3 drake Goosanders and 6 Red-breasted Mergansers all west. Also a female-type Long-tailed Duck flew west on two dates and a drake was on the sea with the flock of Common Scoters on 30th.

North-westerly winds on 20th resulted in a good passage of over 1100 Dunlin and 2 Purple Sandpipers, while a Woodcock flew west offshore and landed on the windfarm rig, and 2 Little Auks and a Black Guillemot also flew west. A Jack Snipe on the scrape on 9th was only the second of the autumn. Occasional Bonxies were recorded and a Puffin on 15th. Following 2 Black-throated Divers flying east on 2nd, one was seen almost daily from 10th to 19th, while up to 2 Great Northern Divers were noted throughout the month. The only diurnal raptor of note was an adult male Hen Harrier flying west offshore on 4th and an 'eared owl' flew west 2-3 miles offshore on 15th.

A pair of Bearded Tits was present at Weybourne Hope on two dates, the last Yellow-browed Warbler was seen on 3rd and a party of 12 Long-tailed Tits flew west on 24th. Fieldfares were notable by their absence and the only record concerned 6 flying west on 21st. The second Richard's Pipit of the autumn flew west on 5th, having been seen a few minutes earlier at the Weybourne coastguard cottages. A Water Pipit was feeding on the scrape on 26th, 2 Hawfinches flew west to the north of Muckleburgh Hill on 5th and a female Snow Bunting was present on the beach and coastal footpath on 14th & 17th.

This month's records in particular are largely the result of Phil Borley's dawn visits to the beach car park.

Hello, in September My parents and I paid a visit to the Isle of Man for 10 days. Getting to the ferry terminal at Liverpool was a challenge as the Car wouldn't start up to get onto the ferry due to a flat battery (fortunately the ferry company are used to hybrid cars and managed to get the car on board). I took the train all the way from Cromer to Liverpool just changing at Norwich. Having met Mum and Dad on the vessel, we had a rough crossing over the Irish Sea. And found our way to our accommodation in Colby.

The collection consists of six postage stamps from the Isle of Man, each featuring a different bird of prey. The stamps are arranged in two rows of three. Each stamp includes the Isle of Man coat of arms in the top left corner, a denomination in the top right, the bird's name in the bottom center, and the text 'ISLE OF MAN' in the bottom left.

- Top Row:**
 - kestrel £0.18**: A Red-footed Booby (Larus marinus) with a blue head and neck, a yellow beak, and reddish-brown wings and back. The name 'KESTREL' is in the bottom left.
 - peregrine £1.28**: A Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus) with a blue head and neck, a yellow beak, and a white body with dark barring. The name 'PEREGRINE' is in the bottom left.
 - buzzard £1.28**: A Common Buzzard (Bubo agilis) with a brown head and back, a yellow beak, and a white body with dark barring. The name 'BUZZARD' is in the bottom left.
- Bottom Row:**
 - falcon £1.51**: A Common Nighthawk (Nyctalestes noctula) with a brown head and back, a yellow beak, and a white body with dark barring. The name 'FALCON' is in the bottom left.
 - sparrowhawk £2.31**: A Common Nighthawk (Nyctalestes noctula) with a brown head and back, a yellow beak, and a white body with dark barring. The name 'SPARROWHAWK' is in the bottom left.
 - owl £2.72**: A Common Nighthawk (Nyctalestes noctula) with a brown head and back, a yellow beak, and a white body with dark barring. The name 'OWL' is in the bottom left.

 <p>Male Bluebird</p>	 <p>Male House Finch</p>	 <p>Male House Sparrow</p>	 <p>Male American Goldfinch</p>	 <p>Male American Crows</p>	 <p>Male American Robins</p>	 <p>Male American Cardinals</p>
 <p>Male American Goldfinch</p>	 <p>Male American Robins</p>	 <p>Male American Cardinals</p>	 <p>Male American House Sparrows</p>	 <p>Male American Crows</p>	 <p>Male American House Finches</p>	 <p>Male American Bluebirds</p>

The image displays ten postage stamps from the Isle of Man, arranged in two rows of five. Each stamp features a different bird species and includes the text 'ISLE OF MAN', 'POSTAGE', and 'ROW'.

- Top Row (Left to Right):**
 - 1st: A small bird with a white breast and brown back, perched on a branch. Text: 'ISLE OF MAN', 'POSTAGE', 'ROW'.
 - 1st: A black and white bird with a white breast and black back, perched on a branch. Text: 'ISLE OF MAN', 'POSTAGE', 'ROW'.
 - 1st: A small bird with a white breast and brown back, perched on a branch. Text: 'ISLE OF MAN', 'POSTAGE', 'ROW'.
 - 1st: A small bird with a white breast and brown back, perched on a branch. Text: 'ISLE OF MAN', 'POSTAGE', 'ROW'.
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- Bottom Row (Left to Right):**
 - 1st: A small bird with a white breast and brown back, perched on a branch. Text: 'ISLE OF MAN', 'POSTAGE', 'ROW'.
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 - 1st: A small bird with a white breast and brown back, perched on a branch. Text: 'ISLE OF MAN', 'POSTAGE', 'ROW'.



A Day Out at Wheatfen



Some of the key species that can be seen at Wheatfen are illustrated on 12 marker posts that you will find around the reserve. The posts are also shown on the map (■).

These markers indicate the typical habitat for the species although you may also see them in other parts of the reserve.



Footpaths

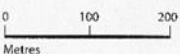
Summer Path
Access only during the summer months

A walk exploring Wheatfen can take anything from half an hour to a full day, depending on what you find!

Here is a guide if it is your first visit:

Long walk (1 hour) 2.5k

Short walk (30 mins) 900m



Metres



Marsh Harrier
Circus aeruginosus
Close to extinction in the UK just a few decades ago, these magnificent birds now thrive in the Broods.



Chinese Water Deer
Hydropotes inermis
Although this species is non-native, by trampling and grazing the fen it encourages a wealth of flowers to flourish.



Marsh Pea
Lotyrus palustris
Clambering up reed stems and other vegetation, this fen plant has increased in abundance due to our regular winter mowing.



Yellow Flag Iris
Iris pseudacorus
In May and June, the flag iris become beacons for nectar seeking invertebrates, including the swallowtail butterfly.



Grass Snake
Natrix natrix
Stacks of cut reed provide the perfect place for grass snakes to bask.



Silver-washed Fritillary
Argynnis paphia
July and August are the months when these large, orange butterflies can be seen nectaring on bramble.



N



Galeruca
Galeruca laticollis
This beetle is not found elsewhere in the UK. In late summer the adults can be spotted on creeping thistle.



Swallowtail
Papilio machaon britannicus
This exotic looking butterfly is the largest in Britain. Anything other than sunshine tends to see swallowtails grounded, skulking in the reed beds.

Norfolk Hawker
Aeshna isosceles
From late May through to August, this distinctive dragonfly can be seen hawking the dykes.

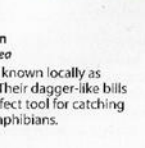


Otter
Lutra lutra
The dykes of Wheatfen provide the perfect habitat for this master of the waterways.

Indian-feather Moss
Timmia megapolitana
Found nowhere else in the UK, it is a mystery how this moss came to Wheatfen. It favours carr woodland and thrives in the flood-zone close to the water's edge.



Grey Heron
Ardea cinerea
Hérons are known locally as 'hansers'. Their dagger-like bills are the perfect tool for catching fish and amphibians.



By Val Stubbs

Following on from the talk given at the NENBC Club evening back in January by Wheatfen's warden, Will Fitch, we promised ourselves a trip there in the summer.

We finally got around to it in September. We contacted Will a few days ahead of our visit and he was there to welcome us on our arrival. We were also greeted by the song of a Robin in the car park. Will led us towards the two small broads, telling us about the habitat management as we walked. A Jay flew across the reedbed and somewhere a Buzzard mewed. Within the reeds, a Cetti's Warbler sang out and behind us a Water Rail squealed from one of the dykes.

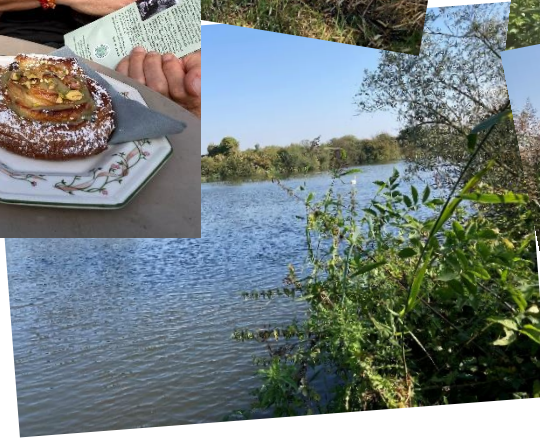
At the first broad, three Little Grebes swam and dived, while two Moorhens skulked in the reeds at the back. A couple of Mallards floated idly on the still water and a Cormorant flew across the skyline. We meandered back to the car park so that Will could get on with his work. A Coal Tit was calling from the scrub. As we parted company, Nick quipped "So where's the café?", to which Will responded, "Well actually, there's a Portuguese patisserie a couple of hundred metres down the lane". Well, nothing was going to stop us now! We walked back along the Lane, where a Carrion Crow was calling, and sure enough there was a sign to Teles Patisserie (Tues-Sun 10.00-16.00). We treated ourselves to a delicious pastry each and our beverage of choice. While we sat savouring our refreshments and enjoying the autumnal sunshine in the courtyard, we could hear the "schizzick" call of a Pied Wagtail, but it took ages for us to finally locate it on the roof of one of the farm buildings. Three Collared Doves were perched in a dead tree, while two Jackdaws flew over, "chacking". With the warmth of the sun, a couple of Buzzards were circling on the thermals, mobbed by a group of Rooks. As we finished the last crumbs, several Starlings whizzed over the courtyard.

Reinvigorated, we made our way back onto the reserve, taking the path around the perimeter this time. A Mute Swan was moping about on a small pond by the thatched information hut, while a juvenile Moorhen poked about at the edge. In the field beyond the reserve, a pair of Magpies strutted about, cackling. Amongst the tall reeds, the scarlet leaves of large Guelder Rose bushes caught the sunlight, with their iridescent berries gleaming like Venetian glass. Eight Cormorants were lurking in a dead tree beyond the reedbed. The only sound was the sighing of the wind rustling the reeds. In the distance, flashes of silver in the sunlight proved to be a handful of Black-headed and Herring Gulls.

We had been warned by Will to wear wellies, as it might be a little wet underfoot due to the exceptionally high tides, and it turned out he wasn't joking – as we approached the River Yare, the ground became increasingly squelchy and by the time we reached the viewing point over the river, the water on the paths was several inches deep. A Greenfinch was piping in the willows and we heard the acidic "pitchou" of a Marsh Tit. We tried to proceed along the Summer Path, but it soon became evident that discretion was the better part of valour as the mud made an attempt to suck one of Nick's wellies into the ooze. We beat a retreat and took the next path left which led us over a bridge where we watched fish of assorted sizes attempting to swim against the tide in the clear water. Undeterred by the still-rising water levels, I was determined to make it to the second viewing point onto the river, so I squelched and waded along the path, to be rewarded with the sight of a very regal looking Great Crested Grebe paddling along. I wasn't sorry to make my way back and rejoin Nick, as the water was now beginning to approach the top of my wellies. As we headed away from the river, we heard a Chiffchaff and a Cetti's warbler, both singing as though spring were in the air.

Off the main path, we spotted a Blue Tit, and in one of the dykes four Cygnets watched us curiously as we passed, making those cute little noises that they do. We rounded off our visit by returning to the small broad, where we disturbed a Grey Heron, which flapped off with a disgruntled "gnork". We then sat on the bench overlooking the broad for a few minutes of mindful communing with nature.

We can thoroughly recommend a trip to this beautiful site, which boasts lots of stunning dragonflies and damselflies, as well as butterflies (including Swallowtails in May-July). But do try not to go when there are exceptionally high tides, unless you don't mind losing a welly – or worse!





A new DEFRA report update has revealed that the UK's birds continue to decline, with habitat loss, pesticide use, climate breakdown and bird flu all to blame. Data shows that all bird species have faced population decline during the past five years. UK birds continue 'alarming' decline, report shows - BirdGuides

The full report, updated on 12th November, is available on the government website and called Wild bird populations in the UK and England, 1970 to 2023 - GOV.UK. It includes graphics that illustrate the uncomfortable story told, along with detailed notes on the graphs and charts shown which we haven't included here, so worth looking at in full but here is a brief summary taken directly from the report:

Why monitor bird populations

Bird populations have long been considered to provide a good indication of the broad state of wildlife in the UK. This is because they occupy a wide range of habitats and respond to environmental pressures that also operate on other groups of wildlife. In addition, there are considerable long-term data on trends in bird populations, allowing for comparison between trends in the short term and long term. Because they are a well-studied taxonomic group, drivers of change for birds are better understood than for other species groups, which enable better interpretation of any observed changes. Birds also have huge cultural importance and are highly valued as a part of the UK's natural environment by the general public. Although bird indicators can reflect the health of the natural environment more widely, those presented in this publication should not be used in isolation to infer the status of all other species groups.

Native breeding wild bird populations

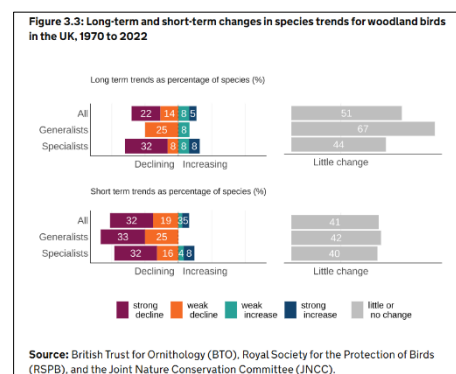
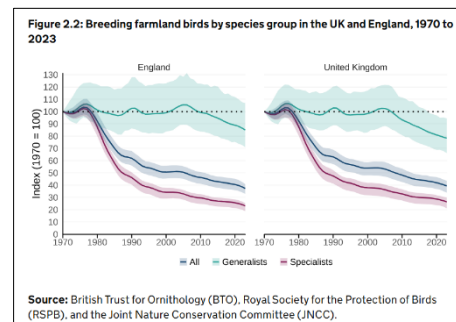
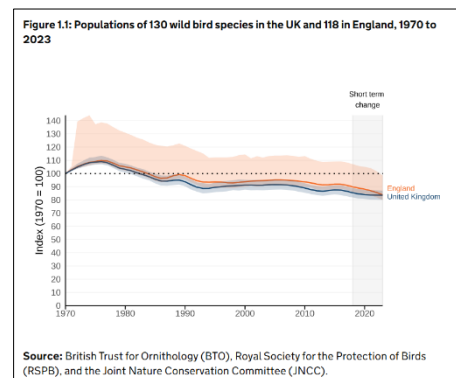
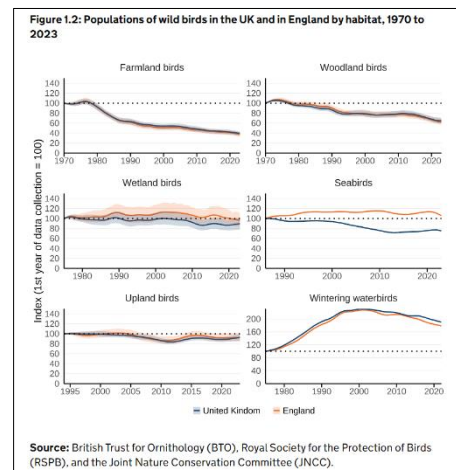
The 'all bird species' index has declined by 16% in both the UK and in England since 1970. Following an initial upturn, this has shown a shallow decline between the mid 1970s and the early 1990s. The index then remained relatively stable until 2015, since when it has shown a modest but continuous decline, with the UK indicator declining by 2% and England by 7% in the 5 years since 2018. The overall decline observed in the all species indicators, each composed of more than 100 species trends, masks considerable variation in the different habitat indices and in individual species trends.

Breeding farmland bird populations in the UK and England

Farmland bird populations have declined by 61% since 1970. The most severe population declines occurred between the mid 1970s and the early 1990s, largely due to the negative impact of rapid changes in farmland management during this period. Although the rate of decline has slowed since this period, the populations have continued to decline at a fast rate, declining by 9% in the 5 years since 2018. The long-term decline of the farmland bird indicator in the UK has been driven mainly by the decline of those species that are restricted to, or highly dependent on, farmland habitats (the 'specialists'). The remaining species included in the indicator are 'generalists'. These generalist species have seen severe population declines since the mid 2000s, contributing to the fast decline observed in the farmland bird indicator over the same time period.

Breeding woodland bird populations in the UK and England

Woodland bird populations have declined by 35% in the UK and 38% in England since 1970. The rate of decline has accelerated in the last decade, declining by 10% in the UK and 12% in England in the 5 years since 2018. The long-term decline of the woodland bird indicator in the UK has been driven mainly by the decline of those species that are restricted to, or highly dependent on, woodland habitats (the 'specialists'). However, the increased rate of decline observed in the last 5 years has been driven by declines in populations of both the generalist and specialist species alike.



Breeding water and wetland bird populations in the UK and England

The water and wetland bird indices have declined by 10% in the UK and 4% in England since 1975. However, this is not a meaningful change due to the lower level of confidence in the indicator.

In the UK the water and wetland bird index has remained fairly stable for most of the period since data collection started in 1975 but declined between 2005 and 2010 and fluctuated at this level since then. In the 5 years since 2018, the indicator has shown little to no change. In England, the index trends have followed a similar pattern but with the overall index being above the baseline until 2020, when it declined due mainly to trends observed in the wet grassland species. The overall index has been in general decline since the mid 2000s, and declined by 7% over the most recent 5-year period. The overall indicators for both the UK and England mask large differences in the trends of the individual habitat subgroup indices found within this group of birds, reflected in the wider confidence intervals.

Breeding seabird populations in the UK and England

The indicators for seabirds in the UK and England show different trends. Although seabird populations can vary by region and colony, the difference in the UK and England seabird indicators is strongly influenced by small differences in their species composition. In particular, the England index is strongly influenced by the inclusion of gannet, reliable trends of which are not available for the UK overall. The UK seabird indicator has declined by 25% since 1986. The population showed a steady decline between 2000 and 2013 but has since shown relatively little change in the 5 years since 2018. The England seabird index shows a different trend, having shown little or no change over both the long term as there is a high degree of uncertainty around their estimates. Data collection for seabirds was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and trends in some seabird species have been negatively impacted by the onset of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) since 2020. However, it is unlikely that the full effect of HPAI can be seen from the data currently available

Breeding upland bird populations in the UK and England

Upland bird populations have declined by 7% in the UK and 8% in England since 1994 although uncertainty in the England indicator means this is not a significant change. The UK and England indicators both show little to no change over the short term, although there is some variability amongst individual groups of species. Upland generalists have increased in both the UK and England over the short term, whereas upland specialists have declined over the past five years in England.

Wintering waterbird populations in the UK and England

Wintering waterbird populations have increased by 90% in the UK and 78% in England since 1975/1976. However, since the early 2000s the index has been in decline, with a drop of 8% in both England and the UK over the most recent five year period. Over the short term this decline is mostly driven by wildfowl rather than wader species. This indicator relates to numbers of these species during the winter period from September to the following March each year.

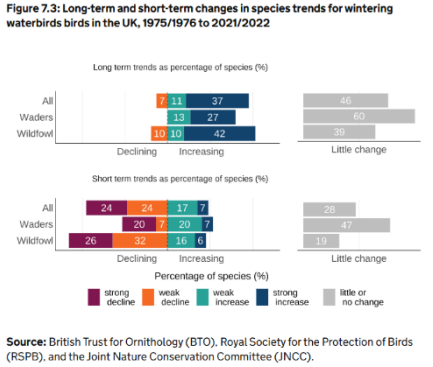
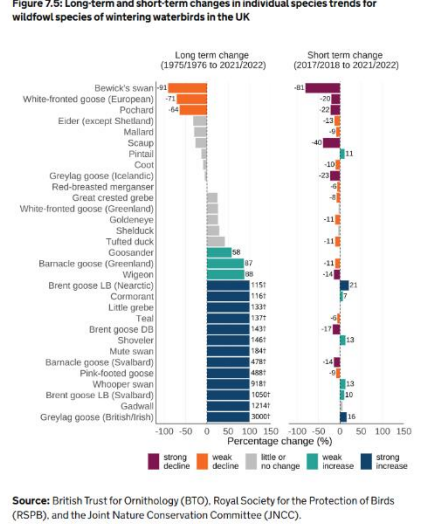
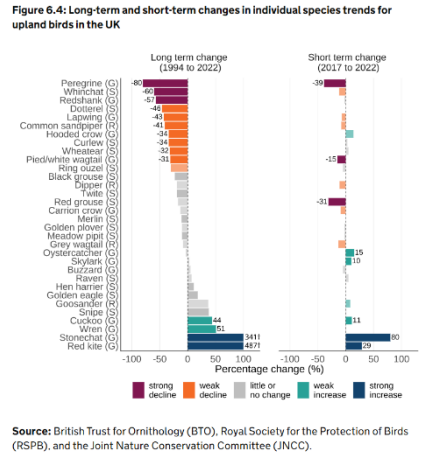
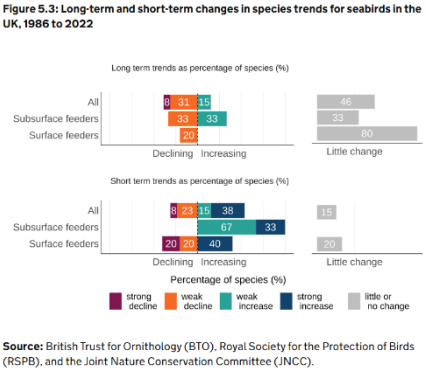
The bird population indices have been compiled in conjunction with BTO, JNCC and the RSPB from a wide range of sources, principally:

- the [Common Birds Census](#) (from 1966 to 2000)
- the [BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey](#) (from 1994 to 2023)
- the [BTO/ Waterways Bird Survey](#)(from 1974 to 2007)
- the [BTO/JNCC/RSPB Waterways Breeding Bird Survey](#) with support from the Environment Agency (from 1998 to 2023)
- the [BTO/RSPB/JNCC Wetland Bird Survey counts](#) (from 1975/1976 to 2022/2023)
- the [WWT Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme](#) in partnership with the JNCC and Scottish Natural Heritage
- the [Seabird Monitoring Programme](#) (from 1986)
- the Periodic Seabird censuses supplied by JNCC, RSPB, the Seabird Group, SOTEAG (Shetland Oil Terminal Environmental Advisory Group) and other partners
- Monitoring of scarce and rare breeding birds by the Statutory Conservation Agency and RSPB Annual Breeding Bird Scheme (SCARABBS) and the [Rare Breeding Birds Panel](#) (from 1970 to 2023)

Table 4: Long and short-term trends at a glance for water and wetland birds in the UK and England

Index	Time period	Species number (UK / England)	Long-term change UK	Short-term change UK	Long-term change England	Short-term change England
All	1975 to 2023	26 / 26	-10%	2%	-4%	-7%
Fast flowing water	1975 to 2023	4 / 4	-18%	-2%	-21%	-10%
Reedbeds	1975 to 2023	4 / 4	21%	15%	25%	11%
Slow flowing and standing water	1975 to 2023	6 / 6	8%	-14%	10%	-18%
Wetland meadow and wet grasslands	1975 to 2023	8 / 8	-49%	7%	-30%	-6%

Source: British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).





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!

Barnacle Goose "83 West, thanks to PG's scope!" | Dave Billham | Sheringham | 16th

Greylag Goose "14x More wild ones coming in for winter and staying in the pond at Hillside Shire Horse Sanctuary" | Ellie Farrow | West Runton | 10th

Pink-footed Goose "80x Flew low east, appeared to have recently come off a field, not in formation" | Stella Baylis | Antingham & Bradfield | 10th

Pink-footed Goose "1000x Est. of birds foraging on beet field. One Barnacle Goose with them." | Tony Pope | Weybourne Cliffs | 13th

Pink-footed Goose "200x Flying EastSuch a lovely sight to see first thing in the morning !!" | Anne Sims | Gresham | 26th

Shoveler "30x Approximate count, very difficult to view the lake as ever, but some previous holes in the hedge have grown over and not been kept as holes" | Stella Baylis | Antingham & Bradfield | 10th

Pheasant "North of Happisburgh road between Walcot telephone exchange and Ridlington church. Both males. One totally white. No optics so unable to say if albino. About 30 (35?) years ago there was a white male in the same area and a second one the other side of Ridlington by Hole House. The bird was still there 25 minutes later went I went back." | John Cole | Ridlington | 9th

Lapwing "48x At Gunton station, flew over north-west, always good to see something when waiting for a train" | Stella Baylis | Southrepps Common | 25th

Ringed Plover "On the beach west of Overstrand, a fairly unusual sight along this stretch of the beach" | Stella Baylis | Overstrand | 26th

Little Auk "2 west. 4 east. 1 eaten by gull" | Phil Borley | Sheringham | 20th

Black-throated Diver "Literally less than 20ft offshore when it appeared right in in front us briefly before diving and moving West mostly underwater affording brief views as it neared the club boundary." | Tony Forster | Weybourne | 10th

Sparrowhawk "Large female crossed the canal to land in a tree scattering pigeons. May be the source of recent reports I have had of a goshawk" | Bob Farndon | Dilham Canal | 26th

Red Kite "Flew across my garden peering down at me !!!" | Anne Sims | Gresham | 4th

Buzzard "Robbing sparrowhawk of a fresh (but well eaten) woodpigeon carcass. I saw a flurry of wings at about 15 yards - sparrowhawk dashed off leaving buzzard standing on path with the carcass. It saw me and flew off." | Tony Pope | Kelling Heath | 10th

Kestrel "Hovering over clifftop grassland, amazingly still despite the wind that was strong enough to blow me off my feet" | Val Stubbs | Weybourne Cliffs | 24th

Peregrine "Female watched coming in off the sea carrying prey - probably a Woodcock. Later male stooping at Teal in front of shelter" | Trevor Williams | Cromer Lighthouse & East Cliffs | 22nd

Chiffchaff "Garden/Butts Lane. An interesting bird as showed plumage characteristics of the race 'abietinus'. Chased off by Blue Tits and not seen again - no call heard." | Dawn & Tim Wright | Upper Sheringham | 7th

Blackbird "In clifftop fields before all heading high inland as one loose flock. My fascination with migrating blackbirds continues." | John Hurst | Paston | 20th

Blackbird "At least 5 actually in my small garden. The resident male is having a tough time keeping others away from the feeders" | Nik Borrow | Sheringham | 21st





















Chaffinch "250x Seen from Hadfields garden centre car park, east North Walsham. Part of a large flock with Greenfinch and a few Brambling, probably at least twice this size, but difficult to count. They just kept coming over for a several minutes, some occasionally pausing in trees for a few seconds. The largest flock I've seen for several years and a real delight. Hope they find somewhere good to feed." | Stephanie Witham | North Walsham | 22nd

Siskin "Flock 30+ Siskins seen in the tree tops initially but then dropped down to a feeder stream to the lake to bathe. Once they had finished bathing it was back to the treetops to preen and dry off." | Ken Thornton | Felbrigg Park & Lake | 25th

Check This Out!

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



-  [The Aylsham Swift Project](#) was busy in November preparing Christmas decorations and gift ideas for the Aylsham Christmas Tree Festival displays at the end of last month. Short of Xmas ideas yourself? Why not buy something from this or any of our other local wildlife charities as a Christmas gift? All our local organisations are also most appreciative of donations so if you aren't sending cards this year and are looking for a charity to donate too instead, then look local!
-  [Getting back to birding - BirdGuides](#) [01-Dec]
-  [Movements of Polish Mediterranean Gulls revealed - BirdGuides](#) [4-Dec]
-  [Urgent need to revive English hedgerows - BirdGuides](#) [02-Dec]
-  [Young birders celebrated with top awards - BirdGuides](#) [30-Nov]
-  [White-tailed Eagle to be reintroduced to Exmoor - BirdGuides](#) [26-Nov]
-  [Whooper Swans found dead under power lines - BirdGuides](#) [20-Nov]
-  [Scheme to prevent wildlife poisoning is failing, says Wild Justice - BirdGuides](#) [16-Nov]
-  [Ancient cow herd helps reserve's Pied Flycatchers - BirdGuides](#) [15-Nov]
-  [Worst-ever breeding season for UK Slavonian Grebes - BirdGuides](#) [12-Nov]
-  [Nature scheme helping patient wellbeing - BirdGuides](#) [10-Nov]
-  [Pheasants found to have bird flu - BirdGuides](#) [06-Nov]
-  [Essex Police arrest man after thousands of wild birds eggs seized, news via @RareBirdAlertUK](#) [03-Dec]
-  [Rare breeding birds continue to colonise the UK , #birds #birding #ornithology news via @RareBirdAlertUK](#) [04-Nov]
-  [New research reveals bird 'divorce rates' linked to rainfall | ScienceDaily](#) [Macquarie University: 28-Nov]
-  [Wisdom: World's oldest known wild bird lays egg at '74' - BBC News](#) [04-Dec]
-  [Record number of whooper swans at Lincolnshire wildlife reserve - BBC News](#) [27-Nov]
-  [Escaped Lincolnshire emu recaptured after four weeks on the run - BBC News](#) [22-Nov]
-  [Turtle Doves set to benefit from a new farming partnership RSPB](#) [03-Dec]
-  [What were the outcomes for nature at COP29? RSPB](#) [03-Dec]





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.](#)

“Call distinctive, ringing, squeaky ‘tluee’, ‘tilu’ or ‘tzy-ee’. Also hard, harsh rattle or churr; fast medley from treetop flocks. Song fast, twittery, squeaky with trills and light, buzzy, wheezy notes.”
from *WILDGuides BRITAIN'S BIRDS 2nd Edition - An identification guide to the birds of Britain and Ireland 2nd Edition* by Hume, Still, Swash, Harrop and Tipling

“Two similar disyllabic whistled calls with characteristic ring, one descending and the other rising. ‘tilu’ and ‘tluh’; the two are freely mixed together by overhead parties. A stifled, rattling call, ‘tetete’, is also heard. Song is a flowing series of twittering and trilling notes with traces of mimicry (some are masterly mimics), now and then broken by a drawn out choking or wheezing note.”
from *Collins BIRD GUIDE 3rd Edition* by Mullarney, Svensson, Zetterström

“Call, frequently given in flight, is a clear, loud ‘tsuu’ or a ringing ‘tszing’. Song is a sweet twittering that includes a drawn-out wheeze.”
from *RSPB Handbook of British Birds 4th Edition* by Peter Holden and Tim Cleeves

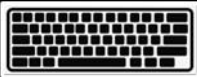
Wordsearch



This month, we have the 14 species or races recorded in December 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.](#)

Bewick's Swan
Black-necked Grebe
Black-tailed Godwit
Caspian Gull
Corn Bunting
Green Sandpiper
Hen Harrier
Knot
Long-tailed Duck
Red-breasted Merganser
Ruff
Shoveler
Tundra Bean Goose
Whooper Swan





No 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 [14th Oct 24]. The British Birds Rarities Committee also have a 'BBRC work in progress' file available on their website [11th Mar 24].

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

NENBC Website

A huge thanks to the 131 of you who have uploaded records to our new website this year to date covering over 82,000 records. It is very much appreciated by us and the bodies we send the data on to for inclusion in the county reports. During November, 70 of you logged records which is great but that is still only quite a small percentage 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 get back to it before the end of the year. Your records count, whether they are rarities or the birds you see every day and we really want them to feature in the 2024 Bird report.

Most recorded species for November was Blackbird with 223 records. The rest of the top 5 were made up of Black-headed Gull, Blue Tit, Robin and Woodpigeon.

At the other end of the spectrum, we had single records of the following species: Canada Goose, Cattle Egret, Garganey, Grey Partridge, Lapland Bunting, Long-eared Owl, Pochard, Redstart, Richard's Pipit, Sooty Shearwater, Swallow, Tree Sparrow, Water Pipit

The location with the most records overall was Weybourne (1,109) followed by Sheringham, Beeston Common, Bodham and Felbrigg Park & Lake. The location with the most species reported was Weybourne (108) followed by Sheringham, Felbrigg Park & Lake, Beeson Common and Beeston Regis.

Social Media ...

You reposted

mary walker
@maryewalker24

Marvellous evening at Wensum Valley Bird Watching Society tonight with Nick @themarshTit educating us about Bolivia, its topography, indigenous people, varied wildlife and birds. Fantastic 🙌

11:30 pm · 21 Nov 2024 · 951 Views

You reposted

Mick Saunt
@saunt_mick

Superb seawatch at Cromer this morning with quality and quality. A proper cold-weather movement with no fewer than 15 Goosanders including a flock of 6,500+ Teal and c. 1700 Dunlin. Also Purple Sand, LT Duck, Velvet Scoter, several Little Auks and two SEOs in/off.

3 pm · 20 Nov 2024 · 1,934 Views

You reposted

Ken T
@Velociraptor500

Bramblings visiting the garden early this morning. Normally a January visitor so assume the weather condition (-2 C) had something to do with it.

6:55 pm · 21 Nov 2024 · 276 Views

You reposted

jane crossen
@bridgetjanejone

First glimpse I've had of Turnstone JAC (ringed Sheringham 15.2.23) this autumn. 41 Turnstones seen this morning @NENBC_Info

3 pm · 21 Nov 2024 · 270 Views

You reposted

Dawn Balmer
@DEBALMER

Welney was packed with waterfowl today though with much of the washes frozen the duck were packed in at the back and tricky to scan through. Lots of Pintail, Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler. Few hundred Whooper Swan and two Bewick's Swan

9:09 pm · 21 Nov 2024 · 1,463 Views

Page 29

Cultural Birds – Alternative 12 Days of Christmas



By Jane Crossen – we couldn't resist repeating Jane's take from 2023...



On the 12th day of Christmas my true love sent to me ...

...twelve **Snipe** a-drumming



... eleven **Buzzards** mewing



... ten **Magpie** squawking



... nine **Turnstone** turning



... eight **Waxwings** waxing.



... seven **Swans** a flying



... six **Pink-feet** honking



... five **Gold-en Plover**



... four calling **Owls**



... three **Fieldfare**



... two **Turtle Doves**



... and a **Robin** in
a Christmas tree

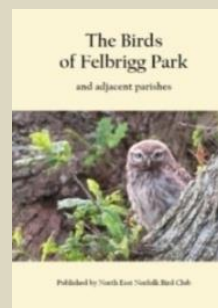


A close-up photograph of a small bird, likely a finch, perched on a thin, brown branch. The bird has a bright yellow body with prominent black stripes on its wings and back. It has a small, dark eye and a short, pointed beak. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The branch it sits on has a few small, yellow buds or flowers.

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



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

For Annual Reports or The Birds of Felbrigg Park, contact Carol on 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**



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 3rd 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