



August 2025 – Issue 122

The NENBC Monthly e-Newsletter

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Through a Lens



By Nigel Redman

A breeding seabird colony is one of the greatest of all avian spectacles, and NW Europe hosts some of the best in the world. We are fortunate that Britain has many fabulous seabird colonies, although in Norfolk we have to rely on seawatching to see our seabirds.

I have spent the last three weeks in Svalbard, the most northerly islands of Europe, and during this time I made three visits to perhaps the most impressive auk colony in Europe, if not the world. The towering cliffs of Alkefjellet (which is Norwegian for 'auk mountain') hold some 60,000 pairs of Brünnich's Guillemots, as well as five thousand Kittiwakes. The 100-metre basalt cliffs can only be accessed from the sea, but there is no better way to see this spectacle than from a small zodiac drifting slowly along the base of the cliffs. The sight (and smell!) of thousands upon thousands of guillemots on the narrow cliff ledges is unforgettable, while thousands more are continually flying overhead, to and from the cliffs, and thousands of others are floating around on the calm waters below. It is truly magical, and even non-birders cannot fail to be moved by the experience.

But the most remarkable feature of these guillemots is their breeding strategy. They return to their ledges in May, and lay just a single egg. After hatching, the chick is fed by both parents until it is about three weeks old. The chicks are generally very hard to spot on the ledges as they are closely guarded by the adults from the ever-present marauding Glaucous Gulls. Then, encouraged by its parents, the chick leaps off the ledge, and glides down to the sea below, landing clumsily on the water and closely followed by its father. The young bird is barely half the size of the adults and cannot fly, and so the parent stays with it for the next month or so until the juvenile is fully independent. They quickly go out to sea, and ringing studies have shown that most if not all juveniles from Svalbard go to the waters off SW Greenland and Newfoundland until they reach maturity and are able to return to Svalbard to breed.

Most remarkably, breeding is synchronised so that most of the chicks will jump in a very narrow window of two or three days. This year, on my third visit to the colony, we timed it perfectly. It was Day 1 of 'Jump Day' and we were there early in the morning. There were dozens and dozens of tiny juvenile guillemots on the water, calling frantically to their parents, who called back regularly to maintain contact. Our zodiacs were surrounded by guillemots. There were still thousands of adults on the cliffs above us, so there were many more juveniles up there waiting to jump. Young guillemots typically leave their breeding ledges at night, or in low light levels, but in Svalbard it does not get dark again until September. Nevertheless, most birds presumably leave during the 'night', when they may get a little more protection from opportunistic predators. The Glaucous Gulls were on high alert, with almost fully-fledged juveniles to feed, and Arctic Foxes were patrolling the base of the cliffs for any birds that had missed their target. It was indeed a great privilege to witness one of the world's greatest avian spectacles on perhaps the best day of the year to do so.

As our long hot summer begins to come to an end, autumn migration is already underway. Waders have been trickling through for a while, and passerines are on the move too. It

won't be long before the first of our winter visitors begin to arrive and, in Norfolk, September heralds the arrival of Pink-footed Geese. I can report that they are on their way! Yesterday, on 18 August, I saw many Pinkfeet here in Svalbard. Flocks both large and small, totalling several hundred birds, were all noisily heading southwards. Some stopped for a last meal of precious arctic flora before moving on, while others kept flying south. I wondered if these birds are the ones that we will see in Norfolk next month.

The 300-foot basalt cliffs of Alkefjellet are the summer home of over 60,000 pairs of breeding Brünnich's Guillemots.



Brünnich's Guillemot chick (centre) with adults on a cliff ledge, Alkefjellet, Svalbard, 8 August 2025.



Brünnich's Guillemot chick with adult on the water, immediately after leaving its ledge, Alkefjellet, Svalbard, 16 August 2025.





By Carol Thornton

Welcome to our somewhat late August newsletter – sorry!

Hope you have all been enjoying the summer. Personally, I have been in my garden a lot more than out and about of late. We are seeing so many more flocks of passerines coming through in large numbers than we have ever had in August before. We don't have as many feeders up as in the winter as normally the food remains uneaten but we seem to be continually filling them at the mo. Most days we are having 50+ Blue Tits and regularly 12+ Great Tits, 15+ Long-tailed Tits, 12+ Greenfinch at a time and a range of other species in lower numbers in a continual stream. Nuthatch has been a regular summer visitor this year after several years of just occasional sightings. Kestrel and Sparrowhawk are, as you would imagine, regular visitors on the hunt for a meal. House Sparrows, which have a colony just down the road but have stubbornly refused to visit our patch for the last 13 years, are gracing us with their presence too daily. Not sure if this is a good thing or a bad thing as we are definitely seeing fewer species and volumes out on the fields (apart from pigeons!) and in the local hedgerows. Anyone else up on the garden volumes this year or is it just us? Ooo – and whilst we are on gardens, we rather excitingly had a Polecat on our wildlife cam the other night! Still never seen one in 'real life' though. In another first for me, I recently posted my first 'live' message on our WhatsApp group NENBC Alerts having recently updated my phone so I can use the internet when out (yes I know – I am rather a stick-in-the-mud!). I was delighted when 4 mins after my post of a Marsh Harrier and location info just outside Gresham, fellow village resident and club member Alan careered round the corner on his bike, cycle helmet at a jaunty angle, in time to see the harrier before it departed and added it to his Super-Green list for birdwatching from home without the use of motorised transport. This is exactly what this group is for!

In this month's newsletter we have a summary of our planned events up to the end of the year so get those dates in your diaries. More info on the website soon and in future newsletters. If you can offer up a small-group walk as leader for Walks Week in October, please do get in touch – perhaps somewhere we haven't been to before or a shorter / flatter route that would suit some of us that are less speedy/mobile than we used to be or areas that have a café stop en route or at the end. Your choice!

'Through a Lens' for the front cover last month was 'Raptors' and we have Buzzard (Philip Cartlidge), Kestrel (Andrew Crossley), Sparrowhawk (Jane Crossen), Kestrel (Richard Farrow), Kestrel (Jane Crossen) and Sparrowhawk (Ken Thornton). For August, our theme will be '**Woodpeckers**' so get clicking!

Here are my **favourite member photos** from July that didn't make it on to the Monthly Bird Records section of the more unusual species – Green Woodpecker from Richard Kershaw, Blackbird and Eider from Richard Farrow and Starling from Doug Cullern. Thank you and keep those photos and records coming!





By Paul Laurie

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

≈ 4,500 individual records covering 152 bird species were added in July

July 2025: During the month 4,546 records were logged; the five-year average for July is 7,000. A good total of 152 species recorded in July 2025 beat the five-year average of 148. Fifty-six members logged records in last month against a five-year average of 67. No rare birds were reported this month.

Brent Goose Mid-summer records of singles west past Weybourne on the 5th and 23rd of the month.

Barnacle Goose A pair landed on the beach at Weybourne Camp on the 20th, spent twenty minutes resting before continuing westwards. *Photo 1 courtesy of Ollie Allison*

Common Scoter A constant presence off the coast this month with the highest counts being 190 at Weybourne on the 1st and then on the 24th sightings included 165 west at Cromer Lighthouse, 226 west at Sheringham and 350 at Weybourne.

Red Breasted Merganser A group of seven west on the 1st at Weybourne was the only record. One to two birds in July are not unusual but a group of seven is exceptional.

Quail On the 5th a bird was calling from the cereal field just south of the Swanton Novers Watch Point. On the 17th a bird was heard on Kelling Heath.

Turtle Dove The only record away from the traditional site was a bird west at Swanton Novers on the 23rd of the month. *Photo 2 courtesy of Doug Cullern*

Avocet Two birds east past Cromer Lighthouse on the 19th was the only record.

Black-tailed Godwit A flock of ten flew west on the 26th, seen from Cromer Lighthouse.

Curlew Sandpiper One flew west on the 8th past Weybourne beach.

Little Stint On the 22nd a bird was reported feeding on rock pools between East and West Runton. This constitutes the fifteenth record for the club.

Little Gull Two records of single birds at Weybourne on the 11th and the 28th.

Mediterranean Gull Recorded along the coast in various numbers during the month with the peak off Weybourne of 56 on the 12th of July. *Photo 3 courtesy of David Griffiths*

Caspian Gull Highest count was of three birds by Cromer Pier on the 12th of the month. *Photo 4 courtesy of Mark Clements*



Yellow-legged Gull There were one to two birds reported between the 12th and 23rd from Cromer Sheringham and Weybourne. *Photo 5 courtesy of Mark Clements*

Roseate Tern A bird flew west past Weybourne Camp on the 16th of July.

Puffin One bird off Weybourne on the 6th of the month.

Cory's Shearwater East at Weybourne on the 7th of the month.

Grasshopper Warbler Birds were heard "reeling" at Weybourne on the 1st and Mannington Hall on the 3rd.

Black Redstart A bird was seen in a members garden the 11th.

Wheatear The first of the autumn were birds at Weybourne Camp on the 1st and 9th. The latter being a juvenile.

Crossbill In July 1 to 2 birds seen and heard from Aylmerton, Kelling Heath and Sheringham.



August: What to look forward to



The autumn begins in earnest this month and can often produce special birds such as the **Lesser Grey Shrike** at the end of the month in Cromer in 2015 and the **Greenish Warbler** found at Sidestrand in 2020. Sea-watching can be exceptional in the last week of the month with strong north-west winds giving sighting of **Long-tailed Skua**, **Balearic Shearwater** and **Black Guillemot**. In 2019 on the 2nd day of the month a **Sooty Tern** passed first Weybourne and then Sheringham. In easterly winds we may see the first of the commoner migrants with **Pied Flycatchers**, **Redstarts**, **Wryneck**, **Red-backed Shrike** and **Dotterel** all possible. **Icterine Warbler** is a scarce visitor to North East Norfolk with only five records in total though two of those were in August often lurking in hedges and spinneys. During August the holy grail would be the finding of an **Aquatic Warbler**, skulking in a damp ditch or field edge early one morning making your heart race and binoculars tremble; they are out there we just require finding !

Observations from last month

Member Extra!

Noc-Mig Highlights

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



Just two noc-mig records this month:

01/07/2025 | **Curlew** | Sheringham | Andy Clarke | Nocturnal flight calls over garden, 0532 (3 calls, loud and distinct amidst dawn chorus)

01/07/2025 | **Common Crossbill** | Sheringham | Andy Clarke | Nocturnal flight calls over garden, 0519 (nine calls picked up by Chirpity software, and identity confirmed with Raven software and comparison with Xeno Canto; number of birds involved unknown)

Member Highs, Lows and Ponderings

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



Nightjar | "2nd of BTO's Nightjar Survey. 10 males churring, at least 5 additional birds in flight, some Coo-icking and some wing clapping. All heard and seen between 9.25 and 10.10pm" | Jo King | Holt Country Park & Lowes | 23rd

Swift | "Screaming around the town just lovely to hear and watch ." | Anne Sims | Holt | 4th

Cuckoo | "Flying along the road by the Grove Farm shop. Initially thought to be a sparrow hawk but having overtaken it, realised it was a fully-fledged juvenile." | John Hurst | Roughton | 22nd

Collared Dove | "being eaten by Sparrowhawk!" | Stuart Jones | At Home | 3rd

Oystercatcher | "West in a flock of four, preceded by a flock of three plus a Cormorant(!), which all stayed together until lost to sight." | Dave Billham | East Runton (Coastwatch Station) | 28th

Knot | "in full breeding plumage in car park puddles" | Carolyn Hall | Weybourne Camp | 21st

Black-headed Gull | "Large numbers of various gulls wheeling just south of the bump....for an extended period...can't work out what they are doing....fly catching??" | Claire Brayne | Beeston Bump | 25th

Mediterranean Gull | "New for the garden - Adult summer plumage in gull feeding flock over garden - flying ants emerging." | David Griffiths | At Home | 9th

Lesser Black-backed Gull | "keeping an eye on a pair of porpoises" | Ollie Allison | 19th

Razorbill | "juvenile on sea,(no accompanying adult), swimming frantically east." | Phil Borley | Weybourne | 11th

Cormorant | "A large flock east, including three with all-white bellies." | Dave Billham | East Runton (Coastwatch Station) | 14th

Grey Heron | "Flying N over Church St - interestingly another (or the same one again?) seen at exactly the same spot flying in the same direction at 20.50" | Val Stubbs | Weybourne | 26th

Sparrowhawk | "Currently about 6 feet away on the climbing rose outside the bedroom window eating it's supper of young blackbird." | Stephanie Witham | North Walsham | 6th

Red Kite | "Parallel flying together along the beck, east, possibly juveniles but I didn't get binoculars on them" | Stella Baylis | Southrepps Common | 4th

Red Kite | "lying west low along Chapel Road from Common, midday. Also pair Buzzard & larger (possible Osprey) circling very high above them ." | Sue Parsons | Southrepps Common | 13th

Buzzard | "Food begging calls continually for last 3 weeks or so indicate breeding has taken place in the trees at or near Sheringham House" | Roger Emmens | Sheringham | 27th

Kestrel | "Has been visiting garden for several days sitting on the ridge of the house and then flying down in an attempt to take voles under bird feeder." | Ken Thornton | Gresham | 28th

Peregrine | "Flying round and round the church calling noisily. A lovely end to the concert we'd been to in the church. Or perhaps they didn't like Beethoven." | Stephanie Witham | Cromer | 12th

Blue Tit | "12x At least 8 of these are this year's youngsters" | Andy Clarke | Sheringham | 31st

Swallow | "22x Lined up on the wire last night all have flown off this morning only one pair used to use this wire so they must have made a arrangement to meet there" | Anne Sims | Gresham | 26th

House Martin | "25x nest colony on house in village, twelve occupied nests, nine nests containing young, (peering out of entrance holes), some about to fledge, some still showing yellow gapes" | Phil Borley | Swanton Novers | 11th

House Martin | "2x Investigating our house nest, this could possibly be the first time it has been used this year." | Doug & Jenny Cullern | Holt | 29th

Garden Warbler | "In oak tree I plantedglad he likes it !!!" | Anne Sims | Gresham | 31st

Wren | "Voraciously nabbing flying ants as they emerge then flying back and forth to the young. I've never seen this activity before." | John Hurst | Mundesley | 18th

Nuthatch | "Calling from Franklin Hill (first for a couple of years); then a young bird dazed itself flying into a window (presumably the same inexperienced bird)." | Andy Clarke | Sheringham | 31st

Blackbird | "Has a great ring tone !" | Anne Sims | Gresham | 9th

Blackbird | "Our resident Blackbird was joined by his latest offspring this afternoon." | Foug & Jenny Cullern | Holt | 12th

Blackbird | "A pair with at least 3 well grown young. The male collecting food suggests another brood somewhere?" | Nik Borrow | At Home | 31st

Robin | "Couldn't get onto the fatballs because there were too many Blue Tits!" | Val Stubbs | Weybourne | 5th

House Sparrow | "Garden rarity! Very rarely seen, maybe once a year and usually in the summer like this male" | Nik Borrow | At Home | 2nd

Bullfinch | "Still in my garden such a smart bird I can't get his photo ..." | Anne Sims | Gresham | 31st

Goldfinch | 2 adults on seed feeder and juv begging to be fed - the adults completely ignored it" | Val Stubbs | Weybourne | 1st

Grey Heron image courtesy of Doug Cullern



Welcome back to our returning members – look forward to seeing you soon!

* Peter Davies * *Peter's is the 600th membership since we started 10 years ago*

436 individual members
across 289 households

60,836
bird records logged

230 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, posts and social media presence in **Data, Records & Posts** from [page 25](#).

Club Achievement Awards

Star Badges

Following a recent Peer Review Panel we have some new achievers this month!

CONGRATULATIONS to Andy Clarke on his GOLD, Alan Stevens on his SILVER and Carolyn Hall on her BRONZE.

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Eco-Badges

CONGRATULATIONS to Andy Clarke who got there with his SUPER-GREEN COASTAL

We currently have 26 members who have achieved their **GREEN ECO-BADGES** [Coastal: 16 | Inland: 10] and 9 who have achieved **SUPER-GREEN** [Coastal: 8 | Inland:1].

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



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.

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

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.

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!

Contributions to the Newsletter

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

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Club Sponsor **Bird Ventures** offer a 5% discount on own-branded wild bird food to NENBC members all year. Have a look at the Bird Ventures website www.birdventures.co.uk 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














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

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, we sometimes require advance booking and if this is the case it will say so on our publicity

Get ready for our new season of NENBC activities!

Starting overleaf are some of the activities we have lined up between now and the end of the year. These will be on the website shortly and we will be populating that with our 2026 schedule soon. Hope you can join us!

Anyone got any **suggestions for locations for next year's walks** programme? Drop us a line and let us know where you think we should visit and why and what time of year is best. Thank you!

We are hoping to do a **Walks Week** in the autumn **but only if folk would be interested in taking part** as we had lower numbers last time. **Are you up for it?** Also, fancy leading one if we go ahead? You don't have to be a 'regular' walk leader - in fact we would prefer it if you weren't! - just someone enthusiastic who would be willing to take a group of up to 7 folk around a place you like, preferably but not essentially somewhere we don't usually cover in our standard walks programme. Please get in touch!

Indoor Events

Gresham Village Hall

We kick off our evening events in September with our popular and now annual event where we hear from several members on a range of topics. On to October and with a nod to our African migrants, our Anniversary Year theme, with an evening on House Martin Conservation. In November we take a look at bird migration in an increasingly human dominated planet and we finish the year in December with our Christmas Social with a buffet and quiz alongside our AGM.

30th October House Martin Conservation With Martin Tickler

Martin's background includes studies at Cirencester Agricultural College followed by two years on cattle and sheep stations in Western Australia. On his return to the UK, he joined the Game Conservancy (now the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust) as a trainee Game Consultant and spent his working career covering the Eastern Counties with regular visits to France and occasionally Denmark.

Always interested in natural history his passion for House Martins began over 40 years ago when a pair arrived to nest at his cottage in Suffolk. Last season the colony consisted of 34 pairs in a mixture of natural and artificial nests. He was closely involved with the BTO House Martin Survey and nest recording work and now contributes to House Martin Conservation UK and to the Suffolk Birds Group campaign to help these declining birds.

11th December Christmas Social and AGM

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

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

25th September Members' Talk Night With 4 mini talks from club members

1 Maureen Harper – African Fish Eagle: a personal encounter "The cry of the Fish Eagle is said to be the real call of Africa. At Naivasha, it is the alarm clock as well. I studied this top predator for over a decade as part of my husband's research on the lake ecosystem. Share my passion with this bird and with Kenya."

2 Val Walker - Florida Birding

3 Andy Clarke - In search of owls in the land of the midnight sun Andy will describe a short trip to Finland and northern Norway, looking for owls and woodpeckers in the forest, then waders and skuas on the tundra, as well as bumping into other club members in roadside cafes!

4 John Hurst - Ornithological Education (or not!)

"features the many experiences I encountered as a rural schools environmental and arts advisor during the 80s prior to embarking full time on my watercolour career."

27th November Bird migration in an increasingly human dominated planet With Prof Aldina Franco

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

Prof. Aldina Franco [School of Environmental Sciences, UEA] is an ecologist with a focus on movement ecology, biogeography and ecological responses to global change and a very popular speaker we have had the pleasure of welcoming previously.

Check the website for updates and further details

Outdoor Events

This autumn /winter we have a nice selection of activities, and if we can get our Walks Week sorted (any more volunteer walk leaders out there?) we will have 15 walks for you to join us on before year end! We also have our 11th annual Coordinated Seawatch in October and our newly introduced pop-up seawatches that will happen on a more frequent basis for anyone wanting to start their seawatching journey. Do come along!



Saturday 20th September The Runtons and Inleborough Walk

A 10th Anniversary Walk Celebrating our 1st decade!



We will be returning to the site of one of our walks from the early years of the club. A loop from Cromer via East Runtun, Inleborough and West Runtun exploring little known migrant hotspots and coastal birding with a café option at the end.

Sunday 5th October Overstrand and Trimingham Walk

This walk follows the cliffs between Trimingham and Overstrand and inland paths through sunken lanes, woodland and a disused railway track. The cliffs are spectacular with lots of cliff erosion and slumps providing a large area of undercliff habitat. Views from the top of the cliffs gives good perspectives for scanning the beach below and for sea watching. On the cliff top the habitat ranges small woodland patches, gardens and arable fields.

Saturday 8th November RSPB Titchwell Marsh Nature Reserve Walk

Titchwell can be an exciting reserve at any time of the year. In November we should be treated to returning waders and wildfowl and a seawatch may yield rafts of Common Scoter, maybe containing a Velvet Scoter, as well as passing Gannets and auk species. There are four viewing areas, including some hides to view the scrapes and reedbeds and we can also view from the banks.



Sunday 7th December Holkham Estate Walk

A 10th Anniversary Walk Celebrating our 1st decade!



We will be returning to the site of one of our walks from the early years of the club. Ideally wintering Shore Larks will have returned and often Snow Buntings are present too. A seawatch from the dunes is usually productive with maybe scoter flocks offshore along with Red-throated Divers, grebe species and perhaps Gannets passing with the gulls. Flocks of Wigeon, Teal with Brent, Pink-footed and maybe some White-fronted Geese possible on the inland fields which we can view from the drive or hides.

Felbrigg Park Monthly Walk

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

17th September
15th October
19th November
17th December

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

Saturday 11th October Coordinated Seawatch

For this annual event we will have teams at a series of sites with good sea views, each led by an experienced seawatcher, to record the number and species of all the birds we see flying along the coast throughout a 3-hour time frame. As well as passing on our love of seawatching, by sharing our sightings across sites and noting timings we can also calculate flight speed data.

Everyone welcome whatever your level of experience. We'll be there to guide you if you are new to seawatching and want to see what it is all about or if you are a seasoned veteran, please come along to help us out with observations and IDs!

Pop-Up Seawatches

We will be running a series of short-notice pop up events over the coming months when the weather forecasts look promising for good seawatching so keep an eye on the website and WhatsApp for notifications.

Everyone welcome whatever your level of experience. We'll be there to guide you if you are new to seawatching and want to see what it is all about or if you are a seasoned veteran, please come along to help us out with observations and IDs!

October Walks Week

Dates and locations to be set so check the website but we are planning a week of small group walks over 7 days, 7 locations.



By Dave Billham

Sun cream or anorak; after the hot weather came a grey spell, with a good chance of rain but also the possibility of strong sunshine later in the morning; which would it be? This was the question vexing the nine members who turned up for the July walk, their varied choice of clothing reflecting the possible weather they hoped or feared we would encounter.

July is traditionally a quiet month, where we normally record one of the lower species totals; young birds are generally out of the nest and quietly feeding alongside their parents, and the trees are in full leaf – less sound and reduced vision. Leaving home I had been surprised by the sight of a Mediterranean Gull flying over the house, so I was doubly surprised as I got out of my car at Felbrigg, to see Trevor Williams pointing upwards and shouting “Med Gull”. Sure enough, there were three **Mediterranean Gull** overhead, an occasional visitor to Felbrigg, last seen on a club walk in September 2024. A good start indeed. Other species noted from the car park were **Feral Pigeon**, **Woodpigeon**, **Jackdaw**, **Blue Tit**, **Greenfinch**, **Goldfinch**, **Stock Dove**, **Carriion Crow**, and a flock of thirty-plus **Swallow** overhead. Also overhead was a single **Herring Gull**, amazingly the first noted on a walk since April!

During his briefing Trevor had mentioned how Mistle Thrush were becoming rarer and therefore harder to find at Felbrigg; as we started to walk towards the lake what should we see in a tree but four **Mistle Thrush** (this species being last noted on the February walk). Another thrush, in

this case a **Blackbird**, was next on the list, followed by a single **Magpie** feeding on the ground. When we reached the slope above the water meadows we spied a **Kestrel** hunting, and heard the alarm calls of a **Wren** from some nearby scrub. A **Jay** sitting in an oak was seen next, followed by the sight of no less than nine Mistle Thrush streaming over our heads; that’s what happens when you say a species is becoming rarer! The calls of a **Pheasant** were heard from across the fields, and one keen-eyed member spotted a lone distant **Swift** high over the trees. For July, the list was growing nicely.

A brief pit-stop under an oak was required to avoid the rain, and on reaching the bridge over the beck, we paused to listen for calls from the reedbed, or any sign of movement. **Reed Warbler** were heard calling, and occasionally seen flitting from reed to reed, their movement betrayed by the motion of the reeds. A single **Reed Bunting** was also found. A **Moorhen** walking in the shallows of a pool and a calling **Chiffchaff** were the other species noted. Between here and the lake we watched a flock of **Long-tailed Tits** being very busy in a dead oak, heard the calls of a **Blackcap**, and got a brief view of a **Bullfinch** as it flew off into the woods. A **Dunnock** gave better and longer views, as did a pair of **Mallard** as they flew over us.

Reaching the path bordering the lake, the only new species visible on the water was a single **Mute Swan**, as we had already found Moorhen and Mallard earlier, these being the only other species in view. A lone **Common Buzzard** circling

far in the distance was picked up and pointed out, and Carol took great delight in telling myself and Trevor that the back of the group had heard **Green Woodpecker**, and we would have too if only we had not been talking - normally the boot is on the other foot! I was also told about a pair of **Rook** that had flown over unobserved by myself. Leaving the lakeside we moved into the woods, past the 'feeding log', where we found a **Treecreeper**, and also heard a **Song Thrush**, the first time this species has been recorded on a walk this year - and we thought Mistle Thrush were elusive!



Moving into more open surroundings we saw a **Red Kite** floating past, quartering the ground for prey, and a **Grey Heron** sculling along the valley. A distant flock of gulls in a field proved to be mainly **Black-headed Gulls**, though in with them were three Mediterranean Gulls; probably the same birds we had seen overhead earlier.



Even more distant was a **Little Owl** in its usual tree; a brown speck against a brown tree! An excellent find, but where was Val and her scope when we needed her? This is another species that we had not seen on a walk this year. A single **Meadow Pipit** was also spotted near the beck, and the rear of the group heard a **Robin** singing (not sure how we at the front missed it, as this time we were not talking)!

As the last few minutes of our allotted time ticked away, our return journey to the car park took us past the tree in which the Kestrels were breeding, but despite Carol having seen a chick sat in the hole on her way in, the hole was now empty. A movement in a scrape of soil on the opposite side of the path to the tree turned out to be a Kestrel chick dust-bathing, whilst both adults were visible hunting over the

meadows. The result of its first attempt at flight perhaps; we will never know for sure but Carol's Ken was also out and about in Felbrigg Park that morning and some 15 minutes later he was able to report the Kestrel was back in the tree.



The walk over the fields to the house added overflying **Cormorant** and singing **Skylark** to the list, but despite scanning the house and its surrounds we could not find a hoped-for Pied Wagtail. However, we were still left with a list of 42 species found, a great total for the two hours on one of the quieter months. As some headed for the café I returned to my car, and as I did so a **Pied Wagtail** flew from the track leading to the car park; with everyone still present I added it to the list for a total of **43 species**.



There is no Felbrigg walk in August, unless someone forgets and turns up(!), but hopefully we will see you in September; see the calendar on the club website for full details.



“For our second NENBC 10th Anniversary walk – where the monthly weekend walk retraces some of our early years’ bird walks. On this occasion it was the turn of Cley. The height of summer may not have seemed the optimal time for a visit to this popular coastal location but in the end it proved highly successful. Participants gathered at the visitors centre, were briefed by Janice and then unusually we divided into two groups – Janice taking half to the central hides whilst I followed the more traditional route with the other half - along the Skirts path to East Bank, down to Arnold’s Marsh and the sea, along the shingle passed Sea Pool to Iron Road, then back via Swan Lake, the Attenborough Walk and Snipes Marsh to the centre. Not a bad way to celebrate our tenth year. Some good birds and, as always, some very pleasant company as in total 11 club members joined the two leaders to enjoy the Cley area.” *Trevor Williams*

On Cley Reserve - By Janice Darch

Five members joined me to explore the main reserve **seeing 33 species** during our 3 allotted hours. Immediately we were watching Marsh Harriers patrolling over the reserve and it wasn’t long before we spotted 3 of 4 hirundine species - House Martin, Swallow and Swift. Once we reached the hides we added the fourth, Sand Martin which was drinking over Simmons Scrape. Water levels were rapidly falling due to hot weather and strong winds but there was still a good mix of shallow water and mud. A party of young and adult Spoonbills were present together with Little Egrets, Redshank, adult and young Shelduck, Lapwings, Black-headed and a sole Lesser Black-backed Gull. A male Ruff, just shedding its ruff was nice, Little Ringed Plover, Pied Wagtail, Oystercatcher and Avocet also showed. Reed Buntings were seen on the boardwalk and the The Catchwater Drain had Mute Swans. It was very windy and so no warblers showed in the reedbeds but we listened to a Sedge Warbler but it wasn’t going to show. On East Bank we continued to add to our total birds seen. Don’s Pond had Little Grebe, Moorhen and Coot while a group of breeding plumage Black-tailed Godwit were on The Serpentine together with a distant flock of Greylay Geese. Arnold’s Marsh added Cormorants, Curlew, a sole Sandwich Tern, Grey Heron, Ringed Plover and a party of breeding plumage Cattle Egrets. Scanning the sea yielded Common Terns fishing.

Around Cley Reserve - By Val Stubbs

Four of us opted for the physically more challenging four-mile perimeter route, with Trevor leading. Before we had left the car park, we had a wonderful aerial display from a large group of Sand Martins, with a handful of Swallows landing on the roof of the small thatched building. As we headed towards the road we could hear House Sparrows chirping in the hedges, a couple of Goldfinches flew out of a small Hawthorn and a Wood Pigeon flew over our heads. Having negotiated the road crossing, we turned right. As we looked over the reedbeds, a very dark coloured Marsh Harrier appeared, maybe a female or one of this year's fledged juveniles. Behind it, a small flock of Starlings flew along. A Lapwing rose up from Pat's Pool, and a Little Egret – the first of many – drifted across the sky. By the pond-dipping platform, a Reed Warbler clung to the reeds blowing in the wind.

We turned to look at a Feral Pigeon flying over the woodland south of the road. In the trees a Blackcap was singing – heralding its readiness to have a second brood. In the undergrowth, a Cetti's Warbler gave a half-hearted version of its usual explosive song. We stopped to look at a dragonfly which was basking on the path and incredibly difficult to spot for some of us. Once we had focused in on it, we could see dark blue eyes and a golden hue on its wings. Trevor decided it was probably an unusual Common Darter, rather than anything rarer – but it was a creature of beauty in any case. Several butterflies were fluttering about, including Red Admiral, Large White, and an unfortunate Meadow Brown that was destined to make a meal for a spider.

As we approached the car park at the south end of the East Bank, we were joined by Brian, whose late arrival was due to the traffic disruption caused by Sheringham's Potty Festival. We turned down the East Bank and spotted a young Moorhen in the dyke. Among the trees a Goldcrest was singing, though not everyone's ears could pick it up. Brian informed us that there were two **Great White Egrets** on Snipe's Marsh, and when we peered over the reeds there they were. Just along the East Bank in Don's Pool, Val noticed two immature Coots, while Trevor pointed out a Little Grebe.

To the east of the track, several gaggles of Greylag Geese could be seen on the pastureland. In the water, Black-tailed Godwits abounded and a single Redshank loitered at the water's edge, and there were several Black-headed Gulls. A juvenile Pied Wagtail took off and flew away with its dipping flight.

As we looked out over Arnold's Marsh, a group of 10 Cattle Egrets hunched at the edge of the scrape, and in front of them stood an Oystercatcher and a Shelduck. In the distance was a Little Ringed Plover and we all had a good chance to look at it through Trevor's telescope. Overhead a Skylark was singing its eternal song. A surprise was a Knot, resplendent in its summer plumage. Three Swifts were spotted flying towards the visitor centre. In the trees in North Foreland Woods, Trevor picked out a juvenile Spoonbill – fantastic to have these stunning birds breeding here now. Two Buzzards were soaring out over the fields. An eclipse male Mallard flew across in front of us. A single Common Tern was pointed out to us by Andrew, one of the Cley Marshes guides.

At the Brackish Marsh, we were treated to yet another wader, in the form of a Dunlin. Continuing along the East Bank we noticed some interesting plants including Chicory and Tufted Vetch, along with a variety of butterflies – Gatekeeper, Small Skipper, Common Blue – and a small group of Linnets flitted through.

We turned right along the shingle ridge where we disturbed a couple of Meadow Pipits. At the back of Sea Pool we saw 22 Curlews feeding among the Shrubby Sea-blite. Were these early arrivals failed breeders or have they been able to breed really early this year? A Herring Gull flew over the water. As we crunched along the shingle we were treated to fishing displays by



torpedo-like Sandwich Terns and dainty Little Terns. On a sandbank at the eastern end of sea pool there was a massive gathering of Sand Martins – perhaps 200 or more? A group of Cormorants were basking in the sun on an area of mud. Trevor B spied a Six Spot Burnet Moth on a low plant in the shingle, and many Ladybirds were scattered among the stones. A Ringed Plover was standing on the brow of the shingle and in a fenced off area, **a single egg** protected by a cage was visible.

A right turn took us south along the Iron Road and past Swan Lake. This proved a good location for a number of new species, including a lone **Brent Goose**, an Avocet, both Lesser and Great Black-backed Gulls, a Common Gull and a number of Mediterranean Gulls among the Black-headed Gulls, as well as a summer plumage white-necked Ruff. While we were taking all this in, a Hobby shot past – seen only by the keener-sighted members of the group. Brian left us at the end of the Iron Road to catch a bus back to Sheringham.

Another right turn took the remainder of the group west along the Attenborough Walk where we added to our butterfly tally with a Peacock butterfly. A Blackbird was spotted/heard by Susan. On the pasture land a mutual Swan was resting. Final butterfly of the morning was a Small Tortoiseshell. Ahead of us, a Sedge Warbler popped up out of the reeds and then disappeared again just as quickly. A Wren shrilled from the undergrowth and the soft call of a stock Dove drifted across to us.

We took a quick detour to Snipe's Marsh in the hope of picking up a Green Sandpiper which had been reported earlier, but there was no sign of it. However, a third Great White Egret had joined the other two and we had the pleasure of spotting a Little Grebe with two chicks. We checked out the ducks in the hope of picking out a Gadwall, but they all proved to be Mallards.

We made our way back along the road past Brambles festooned with Old Man's Beard, rejoining the Attenborough Walk. A singing Chiffchaff brought the **total number of bird species to 57**. *Group pic from Val and wildlife pics from Trevor*



Life Changing: Cley and Salthouse Marshes

A new book by David North



How well do you know Cley and Salthouse Marshes? Perhaps you know the reserve in August when curlew sandpipers, little stints and black-tailed godwits feed on scrape pools and departing terns are harassed by the occasional skua as they pass along the coast. Or perhaps you visit in September and October when geese arrive: first noisy lines of pinkfeet etching Cley's sky followed later by dark slicks of brent geese feeding on the marshes. Or do you love it best in mid-winter when snow buntings dance over the shingle and wigeon add their voices to the calls of redshanks and curlews on the grazing marshes? Or is spring your favourite time, when first sand martins and swallows dance over the reeds, marsh harriers show off with spectacular sky dances and food passes, sedge and reed warblers once again fill the reedbed with their songs and avocets congregate and begin their nest scrapes? Or do you know Cley Marshes in mid-summer when young spoonbills harass their parents for food and when, on hot summer days, groups of cattle egrets, little egrets and occasional great whites make Cley feel more like the Mediterranean than North Norfolk.

David North knows the reserve in all its many moods and seasons. He worked for 16 years with Norfolk Wildlife Trust and for the last six years has volunteered at this, perhaps the best known of all Norfolk's wonderful reserves. His new book – **Life Changing: Cley and Salthouse Marshes** – follows the changes to season, landscape and wildlife across the year on this ever-changing coastal marshland.

The book, price £15.95 is available from NWT visitor centres and on line at mascotmedia.co.uk

Foreword by
Patrick Barkham

A journey through
Cley's changing seasons,
illustrated by 26 artists
inspired by the wildlife
and landscape of this
much-loved Norfolk
nature reserve.

Profits from the
sale of this book
support Norfolk
Wildlife Trust.

Cover art: Robert
Gillmor MBE, based
on his linocut showing
one of the black
Aberdeen Angus
cattle that graze the
marshes in spring
and summer.

Written, designed and
published in Norfolk.
Printed in the United
Kingdom using paper
from responsible sources.



UK price: £15.95

Life Changing – CLEY & SALTHOUSE MARSHES

David North

Life Changing

CLEY & SALTHOUSE MARSHES

David North

There will be an art exhibition at NWT Cley Marshes from September 13th to September 21st showcasing the work of artists who have contributed to the book including NENBC members Mark Boyd and John Hurst plus supporter James McCallum as well as other leading wildlife artists who have been inspired by the wildlife and landscape of this special reserve which celebrates its centenary in 2026.

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

Book Review

David North (2025) | *Life Changing: Cley and Salthouse Marshes* | Foreword by Patrick Barkham



By Steven Sonsino

You love this place. All the different habitats you wander across the NENBC area and particularly across Cley and Salthouse. You enjoy seeing the beaches, the reedbeds and the marshes across different seasons. You can feel the living landscape breathing, right there with you. It's this relationship between life changing in the landscape and its life changing impact on us as observers and custodians that is the heart of David North's beautiful new book, *Life Changing*.

The book takes a circular course through a year on the marshes, from September to September, and it's illustrated throughout by David's wonderfully evocative descriptions, direct from his Cley notebook. His writing is lyrical and hypnotic with different rhythms and pacing, but never overblown.

'I can't explain how or why, but snow buntings always bring me joy,' he says in November. 'They hold a special magic, a touch of wildness in their wings.'

David is steeped in the Norfolk landscape. His career with the Wildlife Trusts, the RSPB and the National Trust shines through in the depth of his knowledge and understanding as he paints pictures in our minds with his prose.

There's far more to *Life Changing* still. As a counterpoint to the imagery created in the writing are fabulous paintings and illustrations from 26 outstanding artists, including ones you'd expect, such as Robert Busby, Steve Cale and Richard Richardson. Robert Gillmor's linocut of the Aberdeen Angus graces the cover and there's more of his work inside.

But there are also artists new to me. There is a Max Angus linocut of Snow Buntings in Salthouse. There's a watercolour by John Hurst of a Salthouse summer evening. The mixture and range of the work is outstanding and I look forward to seeing much of this work when the book launches in the autumn. David has managed to arrange an exhibition of the work when he officially launches the book in September.

Life Changing is a rewarding and at times strangely moving evocation of this place we all know and love. The book is easy to dip into and snatch a few moments with, when you fancy a breather. And it will make an amazing Christmas gift for family and friends. It will help them understand why we live here and how this place is changing our lives.

Calling All Writers (and Would-Be Writers)

An First for NENBC



By Steven Sonsino

Join us for an inspiring conversation about writing, birds, and this remarkable region we call home.

We're delighted to say that things are taking flight following on from our last newsletter piece about the joy (and surprising ease) of writing about nature. We now have the beginnings of something really special: a gathering of NENBC writers – some seasoned, some just starting out – to share, support, and inspire each other.

We're especially thrilled that **Moss Taylor** has offered to share his wealth of experience. Moss, as many of you know, is one of Norfolk's most respected nature writers, and his books have become essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the birds and landscapes of this county. We're honoured that he'll join us to kickstart this new circle.

Also joining us is **David North**, whose moving and beautifully crafted book *Life Changing* you can read about elsewhere in this newsletter. David brings a rare gift for blending evocative writing with powerful imagery – and while he's modest about it, we're hopeful we can twist his arm to share his process and perspective.

Jacqueline Moore and I will also be there. We've written and published several books ourselves – including *The Bluffer's Guide to Birdwatching* – and while we're taking a lighter tone than Moss or David, we're happy to share everything we know about the nuts and bolts of writing and publishing. From Word docs to print-on-demand, we can show you how to take your stories from scribbles to something you can hold in your hand. If that's of interest. Many people just want to write for the sheer joy of capturing the nature around us.

Whether you've been birding Norfolk for decades or just want to explore your own connection to this landscape, we believe you have something worth writing. In fact, many of the best nature books aren't written by professional authors – they're written by *keen observers*. If you know a patch of the Norfolk

Coast Path like the back of your hand, if you've followed a single species for years, or if you just want to write about what the natural world means to you, you've already got the raw material.

This will be the first time that NENBC writers – published or unpublished – have come together to reflect, respond to each other's work, and support new voices. We hope it will be the beginning of something long-lasting, open, and full of creative energy.

If you're interested in joining this informal group – even just to listen in at first – do get in touch. You can email me at steven@stevensonsino.com or WhatsApp me on **07809 146741**. Once we've got a sense of numbers, we'll set up a session (likely this summer, with cake) to get things started.

Let's put our experiences on the page. Let's celebrate the region we know and love. And let's hear from each other – in our own voices.






Cromer Peregrine Project

A Summary of the 2025 Season ...





By Bev Coleman





Three eggs laid

-  The first was laid on 19th March at 10.17am (two days later than first egg last year).
-  The second was three days later. In the early hours of the morning (03.13am) on 22nd March.
-  The third and final egg was laid at around 18:30pm on 24th March.

All three eggs hatched successfully





-  Hatching of all three chicks occurred within 48 hours and across three days.
-  Hatched over the period 24th to 26th April.

Ringling was also successful




-  On the afternoon of May 19th, the three chicks were ringed watched by a very excited crowd of onlookers.
-  They were 23-25 days old.
-  They were ringed with a BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) silver ring and a bright orange Darvic identification ring. The Darvic rings have three letters this year: VFP, VDP and VBP.
 - i. VFP was presumed male as it weighed 688 gms.
 - ii. VBP was presumed female as it weighed 741 gms.
 - iii. The gender of VDP was ambiguous, weighing 706 gms.
-  Ringing is an important science to help us understand the behaviour of not just the Cromer Peregrines but the whole UK population. Very recently it has been confirmed that a female, born in 2020 in Cromer, has now nested successfully in Grimsby




Drama in fledging

-  First juvenile to fledge was VDP on the morning of the 4th June. It landed near a Herring Gull nest on the roof of Upstairs Downstairs, near the church. Mid-afternoon it flew to the top of the Big C charity shop building - straight into another Herring Gull's nest, with three chicks present. The next day it was still there and thus needed rescuing by the fire service. Fantastic support from the crews who made it clear it was a job they were happy to help with, good for training. Had they received a 999 call they would have prioritised it. Thanks also to the police who diverted traffic around town whilst the road was briefly closed. VDP returned to the church around 9pm on Friday 6th June.
-  VFP fledged on the morning of the 5th June, flying first to the roof of the Red Lion, then moving to the Hotel de Paris (where it was mobbed by Herring Gulls) then he made his way back to the nave roof and later that day back to the roof of the church tower.
-  VBP (thought to be female which means they usually fledge a bit later) was first spotted flying well on the 7th June although she may have taken a flight earlier that was not witnessed.
-  For completeness, the herring gull chicks were unharmed, continued to be fed and would have fledged at this point.

Community impact

-  To-date, this year we have had around 12,000 visitors to the Watchpoint which, as usual, is located outside Cromer Museum.
-  Since the webcams first started streaming, in 2020, we have now had in excess of one million hits.
-  Many thanks to the Cliftonville Hotel and Viking Optics for their sponsorship and the Museum staff for allowing us to store our equipment there.

Postscript

-  On August 9th, the body of VBP, one of this year's juveniles, was been found in Overstrand. CPP have recovered the carcass and will feedback any information gleaned at a later date..



By Jonathan Anderson

Hello, my parents and I had a wonderful 10-day holiday in North Wales (including travel from and to Cromer. I travelled by Rail due to luggage on back seat space) Having also watched Iolo Williams' Welsh river walks (especially Rheidol and Conwy, Dyfi as well) We were staying 5 miles out of Llanrwst (on the River Conwy) in a bungalow overlooking Mount Snowdon. As well as birding, we enjoyed 2 steam train rides.

On Saturday afternoon we went for a walk round a nearby lake which was lovely. Loads of Birdsong in woods (mostly common species).

Sunday after lunch we did a lovely riverside walk in Betws-y-Coed and added **Song thrush**, **Grey Wagtail** and more common species to our list.

On Monday we drove to Devil's Bridge and took the steam train.

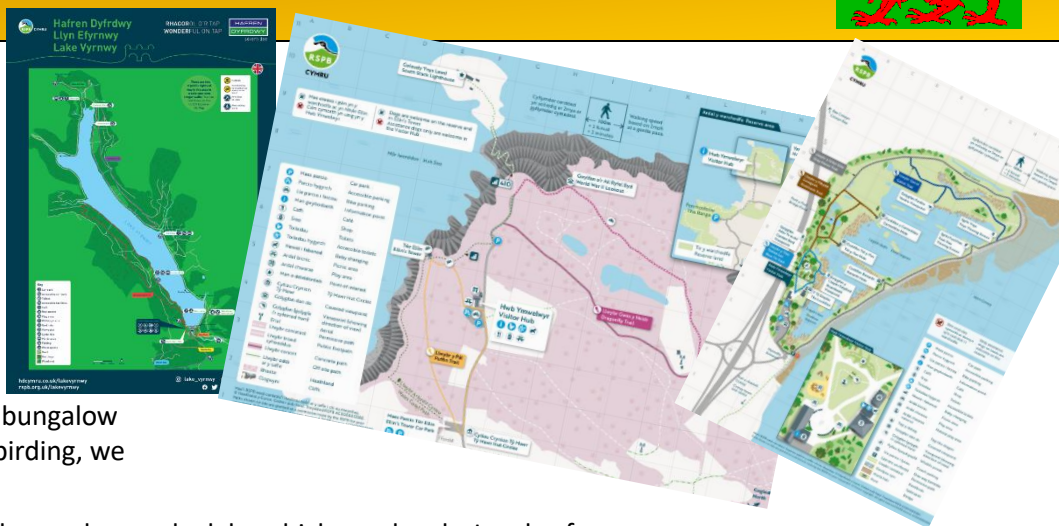
On Tuesday, we explored Rspb Lake Vyrnwy which is in a beautiful location. At the Carpark there is a hide with feeders which produced **Greenfinch**, **Goldfinch**, **Siskin**, **Blue Tit**, **Great Tit**, **Coal Tit**, **Robin**, **Nuthatch** and other species. As the Café was closed, we decided to walk to a waterfall and added **Tree Pipit** to our list. Also, **Great Crested Grebe** was present.

On the Wednesday we drove to Holyhead and Rspb South Stack lighthouse which produced **Kittiwake**, **Guillemot**, **Razorbill**, **Chough**, **Puffin**, **Gannet** and **Stonechat**. We then called in to Rhosneigr for a lakeside walk which produced **Great White Egret**, **Greylag Goose** and **Grey Heron**.

On Thursday we drove to Barmouth and took a ferry over the River Mawddach and caught a steam train to Fairbourne (Fairbourne Railway) and had a ride back halfway then walked back to Barmouth via Barmouth Bridge (which is also a Wooden Railway bridge with Footpath/cycle path alongside. The only new species was **Oystercatcher** on Sandbanks.

On Friday was RSPB Conwy which was very productive mainly of wildfowl, and a few waders were present. Part of the reserve is alongside the River Conwy which is tidal, so a few **Curlews** were present alongside **Whimbrel** which was a surprise. Then we drove up Great Orme and were disappointed due to not working Carparking machine, unhelpful staff and other issues. We did do a little walk in the drizzle. In the evening, Mum and i went for a walk along the River Conwy and saw **Dipper**, **Grey Wagtail**, **Red Breasted Merganser** and **Sparrowhawk** which was a nice addition to our list of **70 species**.

On Saturday we did a local walk-through forest, and then the last Sunday of our holiday it was a local walk the other side of the River Conwy.

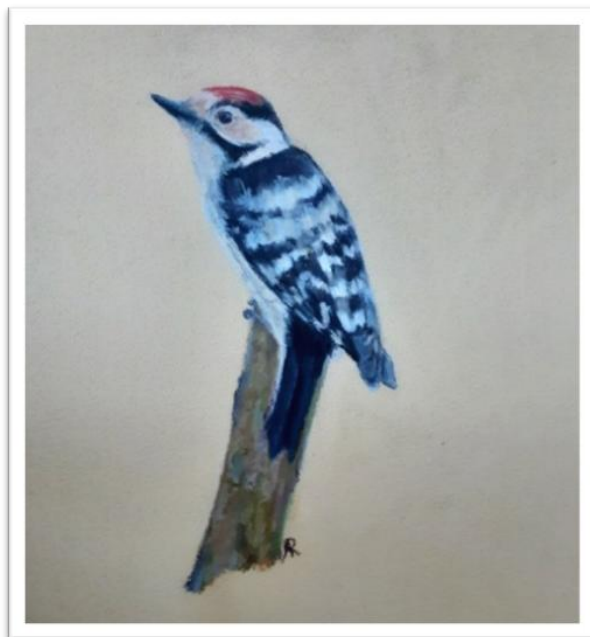


Fantastic holiday bird list
Jonathan!



In our NENBC 10th Anniversary Commemorative Book we have a section entitled “NENBC Gains & Losses” which includes info on 5 species with declining fortunes in our club area. One of these was the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

“Formally Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were scarce breeders in the NENBC area, but since the formation of the club the only records were of a female at Felbrigg Park on several dates in February 2015, with a further couple of reports in spring 2016. Prior to this, they were described in the 19th century as being scarce and extremely localised in Norfolk with Blickling Park being recorded as one of their favourite haunts. The earliest known record for the NENBC area was one obtained at Barningham in January 1847. Up to 1987, the species still bred at several wooded locations along the Cromer to Holt Ridge, but following the great storm that year, and the subsequent removal of many dead elms, a widespread decline occurred throughout the county, including North Norfolk. In spite of this, in the year 2000, Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were recorded during the breeding season, many of which were drumming, at 9 locations in the NENBC area: Beeston Regis, Cawston, Felbrigg Park, Gunton Park, Little Barningham, Little Thornage, Mannington Hall, Sheringham Park and Weybourne. By 2004 the only records were of single pairs at Blickling Park, where they probably bred, and Sheringham Park. It does now appear that they have been lost from the club area.” *Artwork: Anne Richards*



According to the Norfolk Wildlife Trust “There are now believed to be fewer than 1,000 pairs breeding annually in the UK, compared to 130,000 pairs of Great Spotted Woodpeckers.” There isn’t a huge amount of definitive data about on the reasons for declines in our area but this week on the [Rare Bird Alert - Articles](#) website was a summary of the results of long-term Swedish study with some pointers to UK conservation:

Unlogged Deciduous Forest Vital for Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Persistence

from Rare Bird Alerts | August 2025

Thirty-five years of Swedish data show how habitat quantity and quality determine where this elusive woodpecker survives – with lessons for conservation elsewhere in Europe.

Long-term study across Sweden: The Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor* is a deciduous woodland specialist that has suffered declines in much of its European range. A new Swedish study, revisiting survey sites from the 1980s, has revealed that both the amount and condition of deciduous forest are crucial to the species’ occurrence and long-term persistence. Researchers surveyed over 240 sites, each 200 ha in size, during spring in two periods – 1985–1988 and 2019–2021. Sites varied in forest type, age, and management, allowing the team to examine how habitat changes influenced woodpecker presence. The analysis showed that unlogged deciduous forest, particularly ‘nemoral’ types rich in oak, ash, elm, hornbeam, and similar species, was more than twice as valuable as logged forest in predicting woodpecker presence. Logged woods, even if broadleaved, offered significantly lower habitat quality. Wet deciduous forest also had a positive effect on occurrence.

Habitat thresholds and persistence: The study confirmed earlier findings that a breeding pair requires roughly 40 ha of mature deciduous woodland within a 200 ha landscape. Sites meeting or exceeding this threshold were far more likely to hold woodpeckers across both survey periods. Where the species persisted, there was generally more deciduous woodland and a greater proportion of formally protected forest. By contrast, sites that lost woodpeckers over time had less habitat and lower levels of protection. Population trends in Sweden since the 1970s showed declines coinciding with periods of high hardwood logging, and increases during periods of lower extraction. This pattern suggests that logging pressure can have a rapid impact on the availability of suitable feeding and breeding habitat.

Management implications: The reduced habitat value of logged forest is likely due to the removal of large, old trees and their dead branches – key for supporting wood-boring insect larvae that form the species’ main food source before breeding. The timing of this food supply is critical, as it underpins breeding success and adult survival in late winter and early spring. Retention of mature deciduous stands, longer management cycles, and protection of unlogged woodland emerged as clear priorities for sustaining populations. Even in landscapes where total woodland cover is relatively high, the quality and structure of the canopy are decisive. Although the Swedish protected area network is relatively small and fragmented, the higher proportion of protected woodland in persistent sites suggests that formal protection can help maintain habitat quality over the long term.

Relevance to Britain: While this research is rooted in Swedish landscapes, its conclusions resonate with conservation needs in other parts of Europe. In Britain, Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers are now scarce and localised, mainly in southern England. The habitat thresholds identified here – both in quantity and quality – underline the importance of retaining mature, unlogged deciduous woodland wherever the species still occurs, and of connecting these core areas within the wider countryside.

Also, those of you who are on @Bsky.social may have come across the Lesser Spot Network.

This week they have published their latest results gathered by their volunteers in what has actually been a very good breeding year for them. This is an interesting thread from their social media site:

Lesser Spot Network @lesserspotnet.bsky.social

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker conservation project supporting birdwatching volunteers to find & record Lesser Spots, their nests & breeding outcomes.

www.woodpecker-network.org.uk



Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers *Dryobates minor*

How citizen science is contributing to our understanding of this enigmatic species

Ken Smith & Linda Smith
Independent Researchers, Woodpecker Network

www.woodpecker-network.org.uk
@LesserSpotNet.bsky.social

This work is self funded by Woodpecker Network volunteers

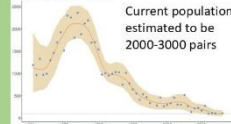
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker have been in serious decline in both numbers and range. Woodpecker-network.org.uk was set up by Ken and Linda Smith in 2015 to:

- Encourage volunteer studies of woodpeckers in UK, especially Lesser Spots
- Collect data on LSW breeding success on a wide scale.
- Submit data to BTO nest record scheme & UK Rare Breeding Bird Panel

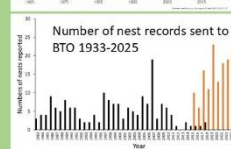
Breeding distribution 2011



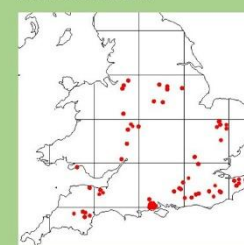
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker population abundance



Current population estimated to be 2000-3000 pairs



The locations of 169 LSW nests found and monitored by Woodpecker Network volunteers in 2015-2025

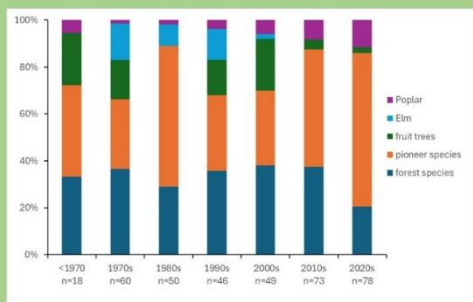


Pleased to be presenting the latest results gathered by Woodpecker-Network volunteers on Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers and what we can do to conserve them better

Since 1968 the LSW population has declined severely and their breeding distribution has contracted with birds lost from East Anglia, NE, central and SW England and Wales. Population estimated at 2000-3000 pairs. Breeding success is low compared with the rest of Europe

Trends in types of LSW nest tree from 1970-2025

All LSW nests are in dead trees or in dead branches of live trees. An interesting change to pioneer species

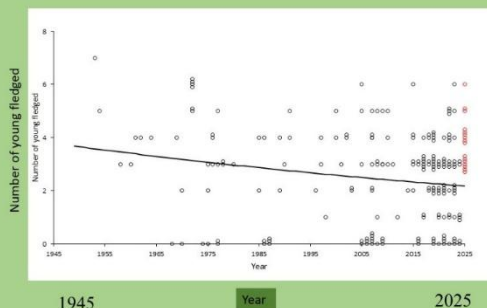


Pioneer species includes Birch, Alder, Willow, Rowan
Forest species includes Ash, Beech, Hornbeam, Oak

Smith & Smith, British Wildlife 2024

Nationally there is a long-term decline in numbers of young fledged per nest ($P=0.007$) ...but 2025 was the best year yet!

With above average numbers of young fledged per nest

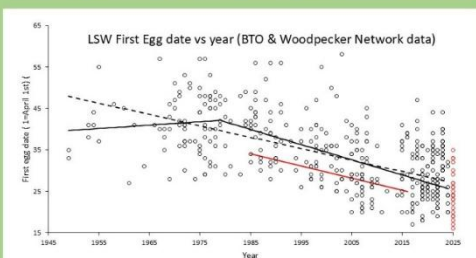


Why was 2025 so good? Normally LSW lay 5 eggs, they have good nest survival but only fledge an average of 2.4 young per nest, probably due to lack of food. This level of brood reduction is worse than for Great Spotted Woodpeckers (GSW))

LSW excavate a nesting cavity each year, always in dead trees or in dead branches of live trees. The tree species has changed over the years now pioneers like Birch, Alder, Willow and Rowan are favoured

Nationally there is a long-term decline in numbers of young fledged per nest ($P=0.007$) from about 4 to about 2 ...but 2025 was the best year since our project started! The number of chicks fledged was the highest since we started the project in 2015

LSW nesting is getting earlier. Throughout its range LSW is a late nesting woodpecker. Late nesting is probably adaptive to help the survival of small chicks. But in any year the earlier nesting birds are more successful. They can switch diet once the caterpillars are finished to feeding aphids and other species to the chicks. But often lack of food leads to chick starvation.



But 2025 was one of the warmest springs ever.

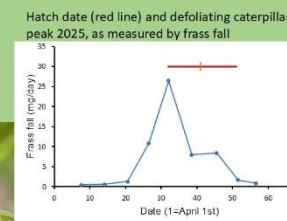
The red line is Great Spotted Woodpecker – at least one week earlier

1945 Year 2025
Smith & Smith, Bird Study 2020



2025 was one of the warmest springs ever. As a result, all LSW nests hatched after the peak of caterpillars on 30th April and had to switch to aphids, crane fly and other prey.

An abundance of aphids in 2025 let LSW escape from phenological mismatch with the caterpillars



Examples of different foods brought to nestlings – we need a good aphid year every year!

LSW nesting is getting earlier. Throughout its range LSW is a late nesting woodpecker. This is probably adaptive to help the survival of small chicks. But in any year the earlier nesting birds are more successful. They can switch nestling diet to aphids once the caterpillars are gone.

2025 was one of the warmest springs ever. As a result, all LSW nests hatched after the peak of caterpillars on 30th April and had to switch to an aphid diet. An abundance of aphids in 2025 let LSW escape from phenological mismatch with the caterpillars

Thanks to all these Woodpecker Network volunteers for monitoring nests in 2025 and many more who helped in this and previous years

Acknowledgements - Thanks to all these Woodpecker Network volunteers for searching for and monitoring nests in 2025 and to many more who helped in this and previous years collecting this amazing data on our beautiful woodpecker

So although [Red Listed as a UK Bird of Conservation Concern](#) and the story isn't really good, there is good work going on and it is not all doom and gloom. There is more info about the 2025 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker breeding season plus loads of other interesting articles on everything woodpecker on [Woodpecker Network - News](#).

Not sure about how to spot the difference between Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers and Great Spotted Woodpecker? Here are some resources to help:

[BTO Bird ID - Great & Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers](#) – a video clip to aid with ID

[Great Spotted Woodpecker Vs Lesser Spotted Woodpecker: Key Differences Explained - Binocular Base](#) – a run-down on the key differences which include:

- Great Spotted Woodpeckers are significantly larger at 22 – 23 cm compared to Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers at 14 – 15 cm
- Great Spotted Woodpeckers have a distinctive red patch on the lower belly and under tail, while Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers lack this feature
- Males of both species have red markings, but in different locations – Great Spotted Woodpeckers have it on the back of the head, while Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers have it on the crown
- Great Spotted Woodpeckers have a more varied diet including seeds and nuts, while Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers primarily feed on insects
- Their drumming patterns differ – Great Spotted Woodpeckers produce louder, slower drumming compared to the faster, quieter drumming of Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers

Check This Out!

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



- [Breeding Ospreys return to East Anglia after 250-year absence - BirdGuides \[10-Jul\]](#)
- ['National treasure' bird book worth £127k to stay in UK - BirdGuides \[11-Jul\]](#)
- [RSPB reports worst year for Hen Harrier persecution - BirdGuides \[18-Jul\]](#)
- [UK ban on lead ammunition hailed as major win for wildlife - BirdGuides \[19-Jul\]](#)
- [British and German conservationists team up to protect coastal breeders - BirdGuides \[25-Jul\]](#)
- [Off-lead dogs damage Little Tern colony - BirdGuides \[31-Jul\]](#)
- [Minsmere Sandwich Tern colony hits 50-year high - BirdGuides \[08-Aug\]](#)
- [Nightjar Migration Distances Could Increase by Over 40% @RareBirdAlertUK \[08-Aug\]](#)
- [Millions of 'Ghost' Pheasants Go Unregistered as Shooting Estates Flout Rules @RareBirdAlertUK \[07-Aug\]](#)
- [A Simple Bird Walk Can Reduce Stress – But Playback Sounds Don't Help @RareBirdAlertUK \[31-Jul\]](#)
- [St Albans Cathedral peregrine falcon chicks leave the nest - BBC News \[22-Jul\]](#)



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.](#)

“Sharp ‘tsooo’ or ‘tsee’ and melancholy variation; short, sharp, hard ‘spitting’ note. Song resembles Great Tit in emphatic, two-note rhythm, but simpler, sharper, less strident ‘see-too see-too’.”

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

“Call is various fine, clear notes with melancholy ring eg: tüüh’, ‘tüh tüh-e’. Song, often delivered from top of tallest tree in territory, like Great Tit’s though ‘played at too fast a speed’, a high-voiced, very fast scraping series with call-like tone, ‘sitchu-sitchu-sitchu-sitchu ...’.”

from Collins BIRD GUIDE 3rd Edition by Mullarney, Svensson, Zetterström

“Many calls sound like a high-pitched Great Tit. Makes a thin ‘see, see, see’ call and has a loud song that is a repetitive double note ‘pea-chew, pea-chew’, but there is variety in these songs,”

from RSPB Handbook of British Birds 4th Edition by Peter Holden and Tim Cleeves

Wordsearch

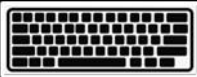


This month, we have the 23 species or races recorded on the NENBC website in August 2024 for which we have less than three records for each – you never know what might crop up on your walks at this time of year so keep your eyes peeled! For the purposes of this puzzle, ignore any hyphens, apostrophes, brackets and spaces. [Solution is at the end of this newsletter.](#)

Avocet
Common Crossbill
Dotterel
Eider
Firecrest
Garden Warbler
Guillemot
Lesser Redpoll
Little Gull
Pomarine Skua
Red-necked Grebe
Snipe
Cuckoo
Egyptian Goose
Great Northern Diver
Great Skua
Green Sandpiper
Greenshank
Grey Partridge
Redstart
Water Rail
Whinchat
Yellow-legged Gull

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





No new rare bird record have been ‘Accepted’ by the Norfolk Records Committee [NRC] for our area since our last newsletter update. You can view their current '**NRC work in progress**' file on their website [16th Dec 24]. The British Birds Rarities Committee also have a '**BBRC work in progress**' file available on their website [11th Mar 24].

NENBC Website



A huge thanks to the 125 of you who have uploaded records to our website so far this year date. It is very much appreciated by us and the bodies we send the data on to for inclusion in the county reports. Not started adding records yet? Plenty of time to get going this! If you need any assistance, just drop us a line on nenbc@aol.co.uk or through the messaging element of the website.


Prolific Posters January-July 2025
By Val Stubbs

Phil B is way out in front in the first seven months of the year, with more than twice as many points as the next highest score!! Meanwhile, the Weybourne contingent of Val S and Tony P have taken second and third spot. We now have 11 members who have scored over 10,000 points so far this year. In total, 126 Club members have posted at least one bird this year. If you haven't already, why not join them?

This version of the prolific posters table is based purely on birds recorded. Points are allocated according to the likelihood of seeing a species. So the **common** birds, such as Wood Pigeon, Blue Tit and even Goldcrest and Curlew, will earn you 10 points. '**Mildly**' interesting birds, like Marsh Tit, Cuckoo and Grey Wagtail gain 20 points. **Interesting species** – the likes of Dartford Warbler, Firecrest and Ring Ouzel – will garner you 30 points, while **very interesting** birds such as Glossy Ibis, Lapland Bunting or Richard's Pipit add 40 points to your score. And if you are lucky or persistent enough to spot a real **rarity** such as Lesser White-fronted Goose, Dusky Warbler, Pallas's Leaf Warbler or Brännich's Guillemot you are awarded 50 points.


Rank	Birder	Points
1	Phil Borley	136,370
2	Valerie Stubbs	51,800
3	Tony Pope	51,730
4	Philip Cartlidge	47,150
5	Mark Clements	44,180
6	Doug & Jenny Cullern	21,620
7	Trevor Williams	14,610
8	Paul Laurie	12,370
9	Peter Geary	12,030
10	David Griffiths	11,750
11	Stephanie Witham	10,540
12	John Hurst	9,040
13	Colin Blaxill	8,460
14	Ann Gladwin	8,170
15	Stuart Jones	8,130
16	Dawn & Tim Wright	8,040
17	Russell Page	7,700
18	Stella Baylis	7,500
19	Alan Stevens	7,360
20	Michael Harcup	6,710
21	Peter & Sue Morrison	6,670
22	Julia & David Ivison	6,590
23	Di & Richard Farrow	6,560
24	Roger Unite	6,320
25	Bob Farndon	6,250
26	David Barrass	5,730
27	Thomas Wright	5,690
28	Moss Taylor	5,650
28	Andrew Kershaw	5,640
30	Philip Hall	5,560

Social Media




Jo King
@jokingnorfolk.bsky.social

It's been a challenge to get a photo of one of our local #LittleOwls as they rarely come out in daylight. Just about enough light at 9.26pm last night to get a photo, so I'm very happy 🥳
#NorthNorfolk #NorfolkBirding




17 July 2025 at 10:07 🌐 Everybody can reply




harryswildlife.bsky.social
@harryswildlife.bsky.social

The very much unexpected highlight of this year's trip to Norfolk was this leucistic "white-winged" Wren at Weybourne yesterday morning, showing well intermittently as it skulked around the bushes nearby. Never seen one like it! A stunning little gem of a bird. [@nenbc.bsky.social](#)




15 August 2025 at 17:29 🌐 Everybody can reply




Ken T
@velociraptor500.bsky.social

Pop-up NENBC Seawatch at Cromer this morning from 6:00 till 9:00 and the birds came in two: 2 Avocets, 2 Grey Herons, 2 Sandwich Terns, 2 Common Terns, well you get the idea. Highlight were the 10 Whimbrels that flew through and the bonus it did not start raining till 8:30!




19 July 2025 at 18:56 🌐 Everybody can reply



Jo King
@jokingnorfolk.bsky.social

Another lovely day #NorfolkBirding with an unexpected #TurtleDove



23 July 2025 at 19:35 🌐 Everybody can reply



A bit of a deviation from our usual offering this month. There is lots in the news about the use of AI of late (which I generally try to ignore - head in the sand after watching too many Terminator movies!) but when I was struggling for time finding a poem this month I wondered On my Word document I typed in that new box that has appeared at the top that I just can't get rid of "write a funny poem about seaside gulls". Well here you go. Normal service resumed next month!

The Seaside Seagull Shenanigans

Along the shore where pebbles gleam
And children sculpt their sandy dream,
Where sunscreen scents the salty air,
And towels flutter everywhere,
Who struts with swagger, bold and bright?
The seaside seagulls—what a sight!
They gather round your picnic spread
With sneaky eyes and wings outspread,
Their strut a mix of pirate pride
And circus clown who cannot hide
The single-minded, comic quest—
To steal your chips (and all the rest).
Oh, watch them line up on the rail,
Their beaks as sharp as any nail,
They squabble, squawk, and sometimes fight
For one lone fry—oh what a sight!
They waddle, hop, and swoop with glee,
Masters of calamity.
A sandwich wrapper flaps away—
Now that's their cue to seize the day!
A brave one flutters to the sand,
A master thief with sleight of hand.
With raucous caw and beady glance,
It grabs a bun and starts to dance.
The sunbathers all wave and shout,
But seagulls? Unimpressed, no doubt.
One dive-bombs gramps, steals half his roll,
While grandma wags and scolds the whole.
The rest, aloft, in circles spin,
Plotting how to swoop again.

They're always fishing, never shy,
For dropped ice cream or apple pie.
The ice cream melts, the cone is bare —
A seagull grins, "Finders share!"
And off it goes, triumphant, loud,
A flying snack-thief, proud and proud.
Yet as the tides begin to wane
And golden sunlight warms the lane,
The seagulls settle, wings at rest,
In wind-blown feathers, looking blessed.
Their chaos done, their bellies round,
They nap upon the sandy ground.
So next you're on the pebbled beach
And lunch is barely in your reach,
Beware the gull with sticky feet
And appetite for things you eat.
For though they're cheeky, bold, and brash,
They bring the seaside lots of splash!
Yes, seagulls squawk and swipe our fries,
And sometimes drop a rude surprise —
Yet beaches wouldn't be as fun
Without the laughter, chase, and run.
For every chip they steal away,
They give us stories for the day!
So here's to gulls — though slightly mad —
They're seaside's comic, feathered cad.
Next time your lunch is swiftly nicked,
Just laugh, and snap a candid pic!
For in their wild and wily way,
Seagulls make the perfect day.

Photo courtesy of Richard Farrow



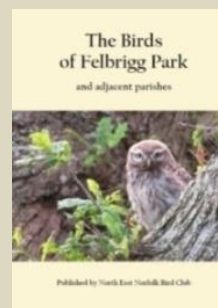
The bird voice variously described was that of a [Coal Tit](#). Click on the bird name to take you through to the xeno-canto website where, if you click on any of the play arrows on the left of the page, you will be able to hear the song. Don't forget to have your sound turned on and the volume up! Here's a link to the [BTO Bird Facts Coal Tit](#) page, a [Garden Birds ID: Coal Tit & Marsh Tit](#) and a handy [Bird Song Basics: Coal Tit & Great Tit](#) [video](#) both also from the BTO *Photos from the top left downwards Richard Farrow (2), Moss Taylor and top right Mark Clements*



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

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

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