

Cambridgeshire Bird Club



E-Bulletin 25 July 2015

(The records in this bulletin are unchecked and may be revised at a later date)



Pectoral Sandpiper at Fowlmere NR : photo by James Hanlon.

HEADLINES

MONTAGU'S HARRIER* Wimpole and later Orwell on 4th.

BLACK KITE* Stretham a probable over on 25th.

AMERICAN/PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER Paxton Pits a bird exhibiting characteristics of this species pair was seen briefly on 27th.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER* Fowlmere NR on 20th.

Other records

All records below refer to the month at the head of the E-bulletin and where no numbers are given the record relates to single birds.

Where there is an asterisk after the name of the species this indicates that it is necessary to send a description to the County Recorder before the record will be accepted.

Wildfowl

Greylag Goose Trumpington Clay Farm 25 on 8th, and 37 on 22nd, Fowlmere NR 67 on 22nd and 200+ on 28th, Whittlesford GP 34 on 22nd.

Canada Goose Trumpington Clay Farm 28 on 8th and 19 on 22nd, Fowlmere NR 7 on 28th.

Egyptian Goose Paxton Pits 3 pairs on 7th, 4 on 21st and 6 on 30th, Fen Drayton Lakes 5+ on 23rd.

Shelduck Wicken Fen 7 on 15th and 20th.

Mandarin Grafham Water on 13th and 31st, on both occasions it was reported to be being harried by gulls.

Wigeon Ouse Washes on 11th, Paxton Pits on 17th and 2 on 30th.

Mallard Whittlesford GP 39 on 22nd.

Teal Paxton Pits 3 on 17th.

Garganey Ouse Fen an eclipse male on 25th, Burwell Fen 3 on 26th, 5 on 30th and 31st.



Female Garganey at Paxton Pits : photo by Jamie Wells

While the drakes (in non-eclipse plumage) are easily identified the females are more tricky. Size, but above all shape and posture play an important part. Pale supercilium and the dark line across the cheeks are diagnostic for this species.

Shoveler Block Fen GP on 30th.

Red-crested Pochard Paxton Pits a drake on 1st – 5th, a female on 19th and 3 on 30th, Grafham Water a pair on 19th.

Pochard Paxton Pits 6 on 16th and 10 on 17th, Wicken Fen an adult (with young) during the month.

Tufted Duck Trumpington Clay Farm 2 broods of 4 and 6 on 8th and 12 adults and young on 28th, Fowlmere NR female with 2 young on 28th, Burwell Fen a female with 8 young on 30th.

Gamebirds

Grey Partridge Orwell on 1st, south of Burwell Lode 5 on 18th.

Quail Orwell the bird from June seen up to 11th, Ouse Fen on 10th, Earith on 10th, Knapwell on 10th, Longstanton on 28th.



Quail at Orwell : photo by James Hanlon

Egrets and herons

Bittern Burwell Fen on 27th, Wicken Fen several sightings all month.

Little Egret *reported from:* Burwell Fen (11), Fen Drayton Lakes (3), Grafham Water (12), Ouse Fen (20), Paxton Pits (11), Wicken Fen (8).

Great White Egret Ouse Fen on 10th, 23rd, 28th and 2 on 25th, Burwell Fen on 18th.

Grebes

Little Grebe Trumpington Clay Farm (maximum 3).

Great Crested Grebe Paxton Pits breeding confirmed, Whittlesford GP 2 juveniles on 19th, Sixteen Foot Drain 6 (a pair with a brood).

Black-necked Grebe Paxton Pits a juvenile on 19th – into August.

Raptors

Red Kite Paxton Pits 3 on 11th and a single on 18th and 3+ on 19th, Monks Wood 2 on 12th, Offord Cluny on 13th.

Marsh Harrier *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Chippenham Fen, Fowlmere NR (a bird with a green wing tag was seen on 25th and 3 juveniles on 28th), Ouse Fen.

Buzzard *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Chippenham Fen, Great Shelford (2), Mepal (3), Paxton Pits (7),

Osprey Grafham Water on 19th.

Rails and crane

Water Rail *reported from:* Wicken Fen (2).

Coot Trumpington Clay Farm 19 on 8th, Paxton Pits 422 on 10th, Block Fen GP 200 all month.

Waders

Avocet Paxton Pits 2 on 19th, Wicken Fen 2 on 7th.

Oystercatcher Fidwell Fen on 16th, Burwell Fen on 17th – 18th, Grafham Water on 19th, Paxton Pits 2 on 30th.

Golden Plover Wicken Fen 14 on 6th – first of the autumn, Paxton Pits on 16th another on 27th with a possible American/Pacific Golden Plover.

Lapwing Block Fen GP 150 on 2nd and 250 on 14th, Burwell Fen 100+ on 14th and on 23rd, Paxton Pits 339 on 16th, and 400 + on 27th, south of Burwell Lode 200+ on 18th, Fowlmere NR 18 on 22nd.

Little Ringed Plover *reported from:* Burwell Fen (5), Fen Drayton Lakes, Fidwell Fen, Paxton Pits (4).

Ringed Plover Paxton Pits on 7th and 19th and 3 on 30th, Burwell Fen on 14th – 18th, then 3 on 27th.

Whimbrel Burwell Fen 3 on 12th – first of the autumn, Paxton Pits 4 flyovers on 14th, Burwell Fen 2 flyovers on 16th, Grafham Water 3 on 19th, Grafham Water 3 over on 26th.

Curlew Burwell Fen 2 on 26th, Paxton Pits on 27th, Grafham Water a flyover on 28th.

Black-tailed Godwit Paxton Pits 6 on 1st, 5 on 5th, 13 on 16th, 21 on 17th and 12 on 19th, Wicken Fen 29 on 6th, Burwell Fen on 1-17 from 13th – 27th, Grafham Water 2 on 19th.

Turnstone Paxton Pits on 25th – first of the autumn and on 26th, Grafham Water 2 on 26th.

Knot Paxton Pits on 26th – first of the autumn.

Ruff Ouse Washes 2 on 11th, Burwell Fen 10 on 12th, 3 -5 on 13th – 27th, Fidwell Fen 8 on 16th, south of Burwell Lode 2 on 18th, Paxton Pits on 26th – 28th.

Sanderling Grafham Water on 19th – the first of the autumn, (last year first on 22nd), Paxton Pits 2 on 28th and 3 on 30th.

Dunlin *reported from:* Burwell Fen (5), Fowlmere NR, Grafham Water (4), Paxton Pits (11).

Common Sandpiper Block Fen GP 2-3 all month, Paxton Pits 1-3 all month from 7th, Burwell Fen 1-3 all month from 11th, Grafham Water 2 on 19th, 18 on 21st and 2 on 26th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 23rd and 25th, Ouse Fen on 25th.

Green Sandpiper Block Fen GP 2-4 all month, Paxton Pits maximum 6 on 1st, Grafham Water 8 on 1st and 9 on 19th, Burwell Fen 3 -10 all month from 11th, Fidwell Fen on 16th, Ouse Fen 5 on 25th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 25th.



Green Sandpiper at Wicken Fen: photo by Roger Cresswell

Greenshank Paxton Pits on 5th – 7th, then on 25th, Ouse Washes on 11th, Burwell Fen 1-5 all month from 11th, Fen Drayton Lakes 15th, Grafham Water on 19th, Ouse Fen on 25th.

Wood Sandpiper Fen Drayton Lakes on 25th – first of the autumn. Paxton Pits on 26th.

Redshank *reported from*: Burwell Fen, Fidwell Fen, Paxton Pits (3) and Wicken Fen (bred).

Woodcock Wicken Fen 2 on 13th.

Snipe Burwell Fen 2 on 14th and 23rd.

Terns and gulls

Black Tern Grafham Water on 26th.

Sandwich Tern Cambridge a flyover on 5th, St. Neots 2 flyovers on 16th.

Common Tern *reported from*: Block Fen GP, Burwell Fen (bred), Fowlmere NR, Trumpington Clay Farm (bred)

Arctic Tern Grafham Water on 26th.

Black-headed Gull Trumpington Clay Farm maximum 78 on 8th including young, south of Burwell Lode 150+ on 18th.

Little Gull Grafham Water on several dates having over-summered – an extraordinary record.

Mediterranean Gull Ouse Fen an adult on 10th, NW Cambridge an adult with BH Gulls on 28th.

Common Gull Fowlmere NR a 3 c.y. on 20th pictured below, Paxton Pits an adult on 21st.



3c.y. Common Gull at Fowlmere NR : photo by Steve Cooper.

Yellow-legged Gull Paxton Pits maximum 17 on 28th (when there was also a large count at Grafham Water), Burwell Fen a 3 c.y. on 12th, Fidwell Fen on 16th, Grafham Water 3+ on 19th, and a large count of 50+ on 28th (the county record is 150 at the same site in September 2012), Boxworth on 25th.

Caspian Gull Paxton Pits on 20th.

Doves, cuckoo, owls kingfisher and woodpeckers

Turtle Dove *reported from:* Block Fen GP, Fowlmere NR (5 territories), Fulbourn, Great Wilbraham Common, Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes.

Cuckoo Paxton Pits on 1st. Late birds (adults): Fen Drayton Lakes a rufous form bird on 23rd and Wicken Fen a male calling on 25th. *This at a time when some of the BTO satellite tagged birds had crossed the Sahara!*

Barn Owl *reported from* Bottisham Lode (2), Burwell Fen, Colne, Histon, Oakington, Waterbeach (2) and Wicken Fen (2).

Little Owl *reported from:* Colne.

Tawny Owl *reported from:* Chippenham Fen and Colne.

Swift Block Fen GP 22 on 22nd.

Kingfisher *reported from* Block Fen GP (3), Burwell Fen, Clayhithe, Fowlmere NR (2), Chippenham Fen, Sixteen Foot Drain and Witcham Gravel.

Falcons

Hobby *reported from:* Block Fen GP, Burwell Fen (3), Duxford, Fen Drayton Lakes, Grafham Water, Ouse Washes, Paxton Pits (3), Six Mile Bottom, and Wicken Fen.

Peregrine Cambridge (Barton Road) 2 on 4th, Cambridge Science Park on 11th, Burwell Fen a juvenile on 13th.

Corvids

Jackdaw Block Fen GP 150 on 22nd.

Jackdaw/Rook Chippenham Fen c2000 emerging from roost at dawn on 30th.

Rook Block Fen GP 300 on 22nd, Manea c550 on 27th.

Tits

Marsh Tit Monks Wood 2+ on 12th.

Bearded Tit *reported from:* Ouse Fen, Wicken Fen.

Hirundines, long-tailed tit and warblers

Sand Martin Wicken Fen c250 to roost on 29th.

Long-tailed Tit Newmarket 27 on 12th - presumably a family and friends!

Cetti's Warbler *reported from* St. Neots Pocket Park, Wicken Fen (3+).

Grasshopper Warbler *reported from* Chippenham Fen, St Neots Pocket Park, Wicken Fen (3).

Nuthatch, treecreeper, wren, starling and thrushes

Nuthatch Monks Wood 2+ on 12th.

Starling Block Fen GP 450 in a feeding flock on 30th.

Mistle Thrush Mepal 15 on 12th.

Spotted Flycatcher *reported from:* Fowlmere NR, Grafham Water, Marholm, Monks Wood (bred), Six Mile Bottom, Stukeley Park, Thorney and Wimpole Park.

Starts and chats

Black Redstart Fowlmere a female on 24th.

Whinchat Burwell Fen on 30th - the first of the autumn.

Sparrows, wagtails and pipits

Grey Wagtail *reported from:* Bait's Bite Lock, Waterbeach.

Finches and buntings

Brambling Orwell a male on 3rd - an extraordinary record the previous earliest autumn date is October 3rd!

Siskin movement through the county reflecting a national influx: Great Shelford a male on 2nd, Over several flyovers on 11th, Foxton 10 on 11th, Hemingford Grey on 12th, Woodwalton Fen 12 on 12th, Grafham Water 2 on 13th and 2 on 21st.

Crossbill Cambridge flyover on 11th.



Corn Bunting and Yellowhammer at Orwell : photo by Matthew Mellor

Exotica

Black Swan Paxton Pits on several dates.

Cape Shelduck Fowlmere NR on 24th.



Cape Shelduck at Fowlmere NR : photo by Doug Radford
(in case you wondered what it looked like)!

Contributors:

Richard Allison, Alex Andrews, Louise Bacon, Peter Bircham, Sam Boden, Richard Broughton, Ade Cooper, Steve Cooper, Martin Davis, Norman De-ath, Mark Eaton, Mike Everett, Richard Gregory, David Griffiths, Richard Grimmett, James Hanlon, Andy Hannaford, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Jon Heath, Philip Hobson, Michael Holdsworth, Andy Jackson, Vince Lea, Diana Leech, Jeremy Lindsell, Peter Loudon, Owen and Monica Marks, Matt Mellor, Barry O'Dowd, Dave Palmer, Helen Palmer, Richard Palmer, Richard Patient, Rob Partridge, Rob Pople, Paul Pulham, Doug Radford, Graeme Reed, Chris Thorne and the Wicken Fen Group, Calum Urquhart, Hugh Venables, Mark Ward, Iain Webb, Jamie Wells, Kevin Wilson, Barbara York and Christoph Zockler.

Field Meeting (this Friday)

This Friday the 14th. A field trip to Woodwalton Fen. Meet 7pm at the parking on Great Raveley Drain, at the end of Chapel Drove, Ramsey Heights, for a guided walk with Louise Bacon and Vince Lea.

WICKEN FEN (BIRD RINGING) GROUP

Brief news for July 2015

There was mist-netting activity at the Fen on 9 different days in July. There was just a single (large) nestbox visit. The month's ringing total was 272 – a further 86 birds were retraps; making a total of 358. Individual species totals were (ringed, followed by retraps):

Stock Dove	1, 0	Blackcap	40, 6
Barn Owl	0, 3	Chiffchaff	30, 9
Kingfisher	1, 0	Willow Warbler	2, 3
Great spotted Woodpecker	1, 0	Bearded Tit	14, 1
Wren	22, 3	Blue Tit	11, 5
Dunnock	12, 3	Great Tit	8, 1
Robin	14, 4	Magpie	1, 0
Blackbird	5, 5	Treecreeper	1, 0
Cetti's Warbler	5, 7	Chaffinch	2, 2
Sedge Warbler	16, 6	Greenfinch	1, 0
Reed Warbler	61, 25	Bullfinch	14, 2
Lesser Whitethroat	3, 0	Reed Bunting	5, 1
Garden Warbler	2, 0		

Next indoor meetings:



Friday 11th September, Cottenham Village College

Ornithology to Ethno-ornithology – a life journey by Andy Gosler

Why are we ornithologists? Because we are fascinated by birds, yes, but why are humans so captivated by the ecology, evolution and behaviour of another vertebrate group that a UK Government Chief Scientist should complain that a disproportionate amount was spent on bird research to the detriment of other taxa? Whatever the answer to this, the fact that humans everywhere are enthralled by birds should point the way to how we might engage, re-engage or differently-engage people in all countries with nature, and so focus resources most effectively for its conservation. Ethno-ornithology is the study of human relationships and associations with birds, be they benign or harmful for the birds themselves. This talk expands on these issues and describes how the speaker's own lifelong engagement with birds led to an interest in the very issue of human interest in birds itself.

Friday 9th October, Cottenham Village College

'The Lady of the Reeds' – the rediscovery of pioneering bird photographer Emma Turner by James Parry

James is a writer and editor of books on art, history and wildlife and is researching the life and work of Emma Turner, the pioneering bird photographer. Turner developed her craft in the Norfolk Broads, where in 1911 she helped rediscover the bittern as a British breeding bird and took the earliest known images of species such as water rail and bearded tit at the nest. She became one of Britain's leading women ornithologists and was a vice-president of the Cambridge Bird Club. After decades of obscurity following her death in 1940, the recent discovery of some of her diaries and an archive containing original Turner images and correspondence has shed new light on her remarkable achievements.

Next Bulletin on September 10th, articles or notices for inclusion to reach me by the 5th at the latest please.