

Cambridgeshire Bird Club



E-Bulletin 25 September 2015

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



Grey Phalarope at Burwell Fen : photo by Neil Bramwell

HEADLINES

GANNET Fen Drayton Lakes a juvenile flyover on 26th.

PURPLE HERON* Grafham Water a flyover on 28th.

GREY PHALAROPE* Burwell Fen on 17th – 18th. *50 records up to 2013.*

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER* Paxton Pits on 26th. *Only 12 records up to 2013.*

HAWFINCH Monks Wood a flyover on 23rd. *With only 4 records in 2013 this is a rare bird in Cambs.*

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.

Weather: the first ten days or so were dominated by an area of high pressure in the Atlantic bringing northerly winds which doubtless encouraged migrants to leave. Mid-month wet and windy weather arrived, typical of the autumn equinox with mostly south-westerly or westerly winds. The rest of the month was a mixture of sunshine and showers until at the end an anticyclone brought fine sunny weather but with cooler nights.

Wildfowl

Mute Swan Trumpington Clay Farm 11 on 17th.

Pink-footed Goose Chatteris c100 flyovers on 30th.

White-fronted Goose Ouse Washes RSPB on 16th – 17th.

Greylag Goose Fowlmere NR 276 on 28th, Wicken Fen Mere 18 on 30th.

Canada Goose Trumpington Clay Farm (maximum 60 on 17th).

Barnacle Goose Paxton Pits on 14th and 17th.

Egyptian Goose Paxton Pits 1-7 all month, Trumpington Clay Farm 2 on 17th and 28th.

Shelduck Wicken Fen 2 on 2nd.

Wigeon Burwell Fen 3 on 2nd, 40 on 29th, Wicken Fen Mere a pair on 30th.

Gadwall Burwell Fen c200 on 2nd, c150 on 29th, Wicken Fen Mere 3 on 3rd and 33 on 30th.

Teal Burwell Fen c 100 on 2nd, c150 on 29th, Fowlmere NR 17 on 28th.

Mallard Trumpington Clay Farm 61 on 17th, 47 on 24th and down to 2 on 28th – *where did they go?*

Pintail Paxton Pits on 11th, 4 on 26th.

Garganey Burwell Fen 2 on 5th – 6th, 'several' on 17th – the latest date so far.

Shoveler Waterbeach Adams Crossing flooded field c 20 on 25th, Burwell Fen 100+ on 29th, Wicken Fen Mere 3 on 30th.

Red-crested Pochard Paxton Pits 1-3 all month.

Tufted Duck Wicken Fen Mere a single on 3rd and 3 on 30th, Trumpington Clay Farm 1-3 all month.

Gamebirds

Grey Partridge Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 16 on 11th, Buckden 13 on 13th, Trumpington Clay Farm 8 on 17th.

Cormorants

Cormorant Wicken Fen Mere 3 on 30th.

Shag Grafham Water a juvenile on 1st – 2nd, Paxton Pits an adult on 10th.

Egrets and herons

Bittern Fen Drayton Lakes on 22nd, Wicken Fen on 27th.

Little Egret *reported from:* Burwell Fen (maximum 8 on 3rd), Fen Drayton Lakes (maximum 4 on 1st), Kingfishers Bridge (maximum 9 on 5th), Paxton Pits (maximum 7 on 17th), Waterbeach Adams Crossing flooded field.

Great White Egret Wicken Fen on several dates all month, Ouse Washes RSPB on 14th, Kingfishers Bridge on 17th and 25th, Nene Washes on 27th, Fen Drayton lakes on 29th.

Grebes

Little Grebe Burwell Fen 7 on 3rd, Cambourne 20 on 17th, Trumpington Clay Farm 5-7 all month maximum 9 on 17th, Wicken Fen Mere 2 on 30th.

Raptors

Red Kite Paxton Pits on 7th, 14th, 2 on 18th and 26th, Great Fen Rhymes Reedbed 5 on 13th, Toft on 13th, Kentford on 16th, Fowlmere on 28th.

Marsh Harrier *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Fleam Dyke, Grafham Water, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens (2), Kingfishers Bridge, Paxton Pits, Waterbeach Long Drove.

Buzzard *reported from:* Bar Hill (2), Cambridge Birdwood Road (6), Cambourne, Chippenham Fen (2), Great Shelford, Fen Drayton Lakes (3), Haddenham/Aldreth Fens, Newton (South Cambs) (3), Nine Wells, Paxton Pits (6), Trumpington Clay Farm (2), Wicken Fen and Wyton (3).

Osprey Grafham Water on 2nd, Wicken Fen on 12th, Maxey Pits on 20th, Fowlmere NR a 'possible' on 22nd, Maxey GP on 29th.

Rails and crane

Water Rail *reported from:* Chippenham Fen, Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen.

Coot Trumpington Clay Farm 30+ all month maximum 37 on 1st, Wicken Fen Mere 30 on 2nd, 52 on 30th.

Common Crane Ouse Washes RSPB 3 on 14th, 8 on 24th, Burwell Fen 6 on 22nd – 23rd – 3 moved to Wicken Fen on 23rd later, Upware 2 on 23rd, Bar Hill 3 flyovers on 26th, Nene Washes 6 on 27th.



Common Crane on the Ouse Washes: photo by Garth Peacock

Waders

Avocet Paxton Pits on 23rd.

Golden Plover Burwell Fen 100+ flyovers on 5th, 5 on 25th, 150 on 29th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fen 25 on 10th, Ouse Washes RSPB on 13th, Trumpington 200 on 27th up to 500 on 29th.

Lapwing Burwell Fen c250 on 2nd, 500+ on 3rd, c200 on 29th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 350 on 11th, Fowlmere NR c100 on 22nd, Paxton Pits 300 on 24th,

Little Ringed Plover Fen Drayton Lakes 3 on 1st, 6th, 9th, Paxton Pits on 5th and 4 on 14th, Kingfishers Bridge on 12th, Burwell Fen 2 on 30th.

Ringed Plover Burwell Fen see table, Paxton Pits on several dates maximum 2 on 17th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 6th, Trumpington Clay Farm on 24th, near Upware on a flooded field 8 on 25th.

Black tailed Godwit Burwell Fen (see table).

Turnstone Paxton Pits on 7th – 30th, Burwell Fen on 12th.

Ruff Burwell Fen see table, Kingfishers Bridge 15 on 5th, Fen Drayton Lakes 2 on 6th, Paxton Pits singles on several dates, maximum 2 on 30th, Ouse Washes RSPB 45 on 13th, 2 on 14th, Waterbeach North Fen 26 on 10th, 4 on 25th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fen c20-35 around the 20th, near Upware on flooded field 2 on 25th.

Dunlin *reported from:* Burwell Fen see table, Paxton Pits (maximum 6 - 7 on 23rd).

Little Stint Paxton Pits a juvenile on 9th – 11th, Burwell Fen on 29th – 30th.

Curlew Sandpiper Burwell Fen on 30th.

Common Sandpiper *reported from:* Fen Drayton Lakes (maximum 6 on 1st), Kingfishers Bridge (maximum one on 12th and Paxton Pits (maximum 6 on 24th).

Green Sandpiper *reported from:* Fen Drayton Lakes, Fidwell Fen (7), Great Fen Rhymes Reedbed (3), Kingfishers Bridge (6), Paxton Pits (2), Ouse Washes RSPB (maximum 2), Waterbeach North Fen.

Spotted Redshank Fen Drayton Lakes on 6th and 9th.

Greenshank Burwell Fen (see table), Paxton Pits singles on several days up to 14th, Great Fen on 13th, Ouse Washes RSPB on 13th – 14th, Lazy Otter on 17th.

Wood Sandpiper Burwell Fen (see below), Lazy Otter on 17th.

Redshank Paxton Pits on 5th, Burwell Fen on 8th and 25th.

Snipe Burwell Fen see table, Kingfisher Bridge 9 on 12th, Paxton Pits 7 on 14th, 2 on 29th, Ouse Washes RSPB 10 on 14th.

Burwell Fen Wader Counts (from Brendan Doe, Mike Everett, Andy Hannaford, Dave Palmer, Richard Palmer and Graeme Reed) in descending order: Ringed Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Ruff, Dunlin, Common Sandpiper, Green sandpiper, Greenshank, Wood

Sandpiper and Snipe. X indicates present but not counted.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
RP					9							2		7															
BtG						14												x							4				
Ru		7	34		10+	8+						8+					10	x							4				20
Dun					4	1						1						5							7				1
CS																													1
GS		2			5+	4+		2				4					3	x											1
Gsk		1				2		1				2		8															
WS		2	7		6	6		6				3					2	1							1				1
SNP					10+	30+						18+						x							20+				

Terns and gulls

Black Tern Grafham Water on 1st, Ferry Meadows CP 2 on 2nd – 3rd.

Sandwich Tern Grafham Water on 27th.

Black-headed Gull Trumpington Clay Farm 10-12 most of the month then 37 on 28th, Burwell Fen c100 on 29th.

Little Gull Burwell Fen on 12th.

Common Gull Burwell Fen on 29th.

Lesser Black-backed Gull Burwell Fen 29 loafing on 29th, Swaffham Bulbeck 65 on ploughed fields on 30th.

Herring Gull Trumpington Clay Farm 2 on 17th.

Yellow-legged Gull Paxton Pits (maximum c40 on 24th), Burwell Fen on 12th, near Upware on a flooded field on 25th.

Caspian Gull Paxton Pits a single bird on several dates.

Doves, owls and kingfisher

Turtle Dove Cambourne on 17th, Maxey Pits 2 juveniles on 19th – *maybe the latest date*.

Tawny Owl *reported from:* Ely, Great Shelford, Wicken Fen.

Short-eared Owl Fen Drayton Lakes on 6th, Pidley-Woodhurst 2 on 17th.

Swift *late dates:* Fen Drayton Lakes on 1st, Burwell Fen 2 on 3rd, 3 on 5th, Paxton Pits 3-4 on 5th, 6 on 7th, *latest:* Huntingdon on 11th.

Kingfisher *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Cambridge Research Park (3), Chippenham Fen, Kings Dyke GP, Lazy Otter, Paxton Pits (3) and Wicken Fen (2).

Falcons and parrots

Kestrel Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 5 on 11th.

Merlin Farcet Fen on 4th, Castor on 5th.

Hobby Houghton on 2nd, Burwell Fen 2 on 2nd, one on 12th, 14th, Ferry Meadows CP on 3rd, Castor 2 on 5th, Kingfishers Bridge 2 on 5th, Paxton Pits on 5th, 12th, 2 on 27th, Wyton on 6th, Huntingdon on 9th, Ouse Fen 2 on 9th, Oakington on 10th, Toft on 10th, Great Fen 2 on 13th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 22nd, Kingfishers Bridge on 25th, Wicken Fen on 25th, *latest:* Grafham Water on 27th.

Peregrine *reported from:* Ouse Fen, Paxton Pits and Wyton.

Corvids

Magpie Wicken Fen 8 together by the Mere, Great Shelford a flock of 13 passed through the editor's garden on 3rd.

Jackdaw/Rook Chippenham-Snailwell c500 feeding in recently turned fields and grassland.

Raven Fen Drayton village 3 flyovers on 7th, Abbotsley 2 on 13th, Spaldwick 2 flyovers on 25th.

Crests, tits and larks

Firecrest Woodston on 11th.

Coal Tit Monks Wood Richard Broughton reports a total of 68 caught and ringed in the past month. Wicken Fen one caught and ringed on 22nd – *a rare bird at this site, this was an example of a fairly widespread dispersal with several observers reporting individuals in gardens where they were very unusual particularly in places in fenland.*

Marsh Tit Monks Wood Richard Broughton reports a total of 60 caught and ringed in the past month, Paxton Pits on 19th.

Bearded Tit *reported from:* Fen Drayton Lakes (8), Kingfishers Bridge, Ouse Fen (4+) and Wicken Fen.



Bearded Tits at Ouse Fen: photo by Neil Bramwell

Hirundines and warblers

Sand Martin Burwell Fen 50+ on 3rd, Cambourne on 17th.

Swallow March 50+ on 4th, Paxton Pits c40 on 17th.

Swallow/House Martin Granta Park 200-250 in a mixed flock gathering on 11th.

House Martin Haddenham the last young fledged and were gone the same day on 27th.

Cetti's Warbler *reported from Paxton Pits (2) and Wicken Fen.*

Willow Warbler *late dates:* Wicken Fen on 10th.

Blackcap Wicken Fen 51 caught and ringed on 3rd, reports from several sites up to (and after) the end of the month.

Garden Warbler *late dates:* Chippenham Fen one caught and ringed on 8th.

Lesser Whitethroat *late dates:* Wicken Fen on 6th, Paxton Pits on 19th – *there is a later record in October.*

Whitethroat *late dates:* Paxton Pits on 19th, Burwell Fen on 27th.

Sedge Warbler *late dates:* Wicken Fen on 15th.

Reed Warbler *late dates:* still present at the end of the month and recorded in October.

Indication of autumn passage by Reed Warblers through the county this year as shown by ringing:

Wicken Fen on August 19th to Icklesham Sussex on September 2nd,

Marston Lincolnshire on August 12th to Wicken Fen on August 29th,

Kingfishers Bridge on August 20th to Litlington Sussex on August 28th.

Thrushes and Spotted flycatcher

Redwing Six Mile Bottom 2 flyovers on 28th – the first of the winter.

Spotted Flycatcher Caxton 3+ on 1st, Girton on 1st, Wicken Fen on 3rd, Fen Drayton Lakes on 9th and 22nd, Caldecote (Cambs) on 13th, Paxton Pits 2 on 19th one on 20th – *the latest so far reported.*

Starts and chats

Redstart Witcham 1-2, Cambridge BAS site a male, Ferry Meadows CP all on 1st, Granta Park on 2nd, Ferry Meadows CP on 4th and a female on 18th, Castor a male on 5th, Over on 6th, Castor Hanglands on 13th, Witcham on 13th, Waterbeach Fen on 20th.

Whinchat Ouse Fen on 6th, Toft on 10th, Orwell-Whaddon 2 on 13th, Croydon-Clopton 2 on 13th – 14th, Ouse Washes on 13th, Eldernell 2 on 13th, Great Fen on 13th, Cambourne CP 3 on 17th, Burwell Fen on 17th and 19th, Paxton Pits on 19th, Maxey Pits on 19th, Burwell on 19th, Great Fen Rhymes Reedbed 2 on 24th.



Whinchat at Burwell Fen : photo by Neil Bramwell

Stonechat Paxton Pits on 20th and a pair on 26th, Fowlmere NR on 22nd, Great Fen Rhymes Reedbed 2 on 24th, Toft on 25th, Burwell Fen on 29th.

Wheatear Ouse Fen on 4th, Burwell Fen on 18th and 25th, Paxton Pits on 19th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fen on 20th, Ferry Meadows CP on 22nd, Nene Washes on 27th.

Pied Flycatcher *a pronounced passage 1st – 3rd* : Cambridge Huntingdon Road, Peterborough Broadway Cemetery 2, Caxton, Girton - all on 1st, Granta Park, Paxton Pits and Roswell Pits, on 2nd, Holme Fen on 3rd.

Sparrows, wagtails and pipits

Yellow Wagtail *counts of 20+ and late dates:* Ouse Fen 20+ on 9th, Toft 14 on 14th, Paxton Pits 3 on 17th, 20 on 27th, Nene Washes 7 on 27th - *the latest date so far.*

Grey Wagtail Paxton Pits 2 on 14th, single on 18th, Toft on 30th.

Pied Wagtail Paxton Pits 67 on 17th.

Meadow Pipit Paxton Pits 12 flyovers on 14th, first signs of migration, Haddenham/Aldreth Fen area 50-75 around 20th.

Finches and buntings

Brambling Wicken Fen on 26th.

Goldfinch Houghton 30+ on 2nd, Burwell Fen c300 on 2nd – 3rd, Monks Wood 150+ on 23rd.

Siskin *an exceptional influx of which these records are the tip of the iceberg so to speak: Fen Drayton Village 5 over on 2nd, Wicken Fen 2 ringed on 3rd, Holme Fen 7 over on 3rd, Paxton Pits 2 x 5 and a 6 flyovers on 5th, Burwell Fen 8 over on 6th, Fen Drayton Lakes 'a few' on 6th, Houghton Meadows 25 'around' on 6th, Barton 16 on 8th, during the week 7th-11th Chatteris 50, Thorney Toll 130, Ouse Washes Welches Dam 35+ on 11th, Houghton Mill 20+ on 12th, Paxton Pits 11 over on 14th, after which most observers simply reported Siskins and gave no numbers. An indication of the scale of this influx is that in neighbouring Norfolk (Thetford) a bird ringer caught and ringed 369 on 16th!*

Lesser Redpoll Paxton Pits c10 flyovers on 19th, - also mentioned by a number of observers without giving numbers.

Crossbill Monks Wood 2 flyovers on 11th.

Paul Mason gave this overview of Haddenham birds:

2015 breeding season report for Haddenham parish: 3 pairs Common Buzzards bred, 1 pair Hobbies bred only 1 young, 2 pairs Kingfishers. (one pair at least twice). 4 pairs Sparrowhawks (estimate), 5 pairs Kestrels (one with 3 young. 1 pair Marsh Harriers attempted. Also 3 pairs Little Grebe minimum. 2 pairs Tufted Duck. 1 pair Gadwall. At least 1 pair Turtle Doves but may be 3 possible.

Hard to find Song Thrush or Mistle Thrush this year. Swallows well down. House Martins 9 probable maybe more as some started late. Swifts not an actual count but probably 8+.

Exotica

Black Swan at and around Paxton Pits during the month and also one at Ouse Fen – not the same.

Ross's Goose the now familiar bird in the Wicken/Upware area still associating with Greylags.

Cape Shelduck the bird seen at Fowlmere NR seems to be wandering around wetland sites in South Cambs and the same or another appeared at Paxton Pits on 29th.

Contributors:

Colin Addington, Richard Allison, Dave Anderson, Louise Bacon, Geoff Barlow, Ian Barton, Peter Bircham, Mark Brandon, Richard Broughton, Mike Burdekin, Ian Burfield, Howard Butler, Michael Cadney, Cliff Carson, Ali Cooper, Martin Davis, Ian Dickerson, Brendan Doe, Steve Dudley, Mike Everett, Mike Foley, Ben Fraser, Andrew Gardiner, Don Gardener, Dennis Hall, James Hanlon, Andy Hannaford, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Jon Heath, Michael Holdsworth, David Hopkins, Sarah Howlett, Charlie Kitchin, Vince Lea, John Le Gassick, Bruce Martin, Paul Mason, Andy Merryweather, Tim Morley, Dave Palmer, Richard Palmer, Richard Patient, Mark Peck, Duncan Poyser, Norman Ratcliffe, Graeme Reed, Jonathan Taylor, Bob Titman, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne and the Wicken Fen Group, Andrew Tongue, Calum Urquhart, Hugh Venables, Mark Ward, Iain Webb, Matt Webb, Mike Weedon, Jamie Wells, Kevin Wilson, Kevan Wolstencroft, Hugh Wright, John Wright and Christoph Zöckler

WICKEN FEN (BIRD RINGING) GROUP

Brief news for September 2015

There was ringing activity at the Fen on 17 different days in September. The month's ringing total was 549, a further 59 birds were retrapped, so the overall total of birds handled in the month was 608. The first figure below is the ringing total; the second is the retraps. Individual species totals were:

Sparrowhawk	1, 0	Chiffchaff	34, 0
Sand Martin	2, 0	Goldcrest	23, 0
Swallow	129, 1	Spotted Flycatcher	1, 0
Meadow Pipit	35, 0	Long-tailed Tit	9, 9
Wren	10, 3	Blue Tit	31, 7
Duncock	11, 0	Great Tit	19, 16
Robin	16, 9	Coal Tit	1, 0
Blackbird	5, 2	Tree Creeper	3, 0
Song Thrush	4, 0	Chaffinch	8, 1
Cetti's Warbler	1, 0	Greenfinch	12, 0
Sedge Warbler	1, 0	Goldfinch	16, 3
Reed Warbler	12, 0	Siskin	2, 0
Lesser Whitethroat	1, 0	Bullfinch	4, 3
Whitethroat	2, 0	Reed Bunting	15, 0
Blackcap	141, 5		

The only old birds retrapped in the month were:

Great Tit L504802 at 4 years 3 months and

Chaffinch Y114691 at 3 years 10 months.

Next indoor meeting:

Friday 13th November, St Johns Hall, Cambridge

Cuckoo – cheating by nature by Nick Davies

Nick Davies says his academic career has been an excuse to do lots of bird watching. He is Professor of Behavioural Ecology at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of the Royal Society. His cuckoo research has been featured as two BBC Radio 4 broadcasts and as a BBC Natural World Film, produced by Mike Birkhead and narrated by David Attenborough. His most recent book 'Cuckoo - Cheating by Nature' was published this spring by Bloomsbury. His talk will show how cuckoos across the world have evolved remarkable tricks to deceive and manipulate their hosts, and how field experiments are now uncovering a continuing evolutionary arms race as hosts evolve new defences and cuckoo, in turn, evolve novel trickery.

Reminders:

Garden Bird Survey: The second winter survey is now up and running. You can download the recording form from the Bird Club website.

At the end of the final week of the summer survey, (after Saturday 3rd October 2015), please return your results to:

Email address: gardenbirds@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

or by post to:

15 School Lane,
Toft,
Cambridge,
CB23 2RE

Cranes: please try and help Norman Sills with his project looking at the population of cranes to try to identify individuals. Take some field notes – the bustle is a good place to start – and compare with the sketches on the Bird Club website – or in the September bulletin.
