



## Cambridgeshire Bird Club

E-Bulletin 42 January 2017



White-fronted Geese on the Ouse Washes: photo by Ian Dawson

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

### HEADLINES

**RING-NECKED DUCK\*** the long-stay female remained until at least the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**LONG-TAILED DUCK\*** from Deeping High Bank (in Lincolnshire) one strayed into Cambridgeshire on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

**GREAT NORTHERN DIVER\*** Grafham the three immatures from December remained all month.

**CATTLE EGRET\*** Nene Washes (Eldernell) the long-stay individual present until at least the 28<sup>th</sup>. Seen far less often than in 2016, maybe because there are fewer sheep around.

**SPOONBILL** Burwell Fen 7 flew over on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

**ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD\*** Wryde Croft Thorney area from the 10<sup>th</sup> until at least the 14<sup>th</sup>.

**GLAUCOUS GULL** Ferry Meadows CP on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Grafham Water 2 immatures on the 8<sup>th</sup>, one on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Dogsthorpe Tip an immature on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Cambridge Research Park an immature from the 14<sup>th</sup>

until the end of the month seen at several places in the general area, 2 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, plus a possible new adult on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Littleport May Farm a 2 c.y. on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**ICELAND GULL** Grafham Water on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Milton/Cottenham Long Drove and at Fen Drayton Lakes roost a 3 c.y. from the 19<sup>th</sup>, Dogsthorpe Tip an adult on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

### 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 few days were very cold with night frosts, followed by a short period of milder weather with rain, before returning to cold, high pressure weather, with frosts and low daytime temperatures but dry. The month ended with a couple of days of slightly warmer weather but many water bodies remained partially iced over.

### Wildfowl

**Mute Swan** Trumpington Clay Farm: 8 (3 immatures) on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Padney: 55 in a field of winter wheat on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm: 10-20 all month.

**Bewick's Swan** Grafham Water: 6 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 8 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, then 2 on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Guyhirn: 200 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Burwell Fen: 2 on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes: 393 on the 17<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm: present all month maximum 327 on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Whooper Swan** Ouse Washes: 200+ on the 1<sup>st</sup>, c3,500 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Burwell Fen: from the 5<sup>th</sup> counts of 23-30 throughout the month, Nene Washes: 982 on the 17<sup>th</sup>, Ferry Meadows CP: 7 on the 17<sup>th</sup>, Padney: 13 in a field with Mutes on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen: 35 on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 45+ on the 30<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm: present all month maximum 1,034 on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

**'Tundra' Bean Goose** Ouse Washes: 2 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Nene Washes/Prior's Fen: 3 from the 14<sup>th</sup> until at least the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Cambridge Research Park: 2 on the 29<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>. Possibly involving the same individuals.

**Pink-footed Goose** Ouse Washes: on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes: 4 on the 17<sup>th</sup>, March: a single on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Impington 45 flying over on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

**White-fronted Goose** Guyhirn: on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ouse Washes: from 8 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> up to a maximum of 48 on the 11<sup>th</sup> with 20+ remaining until the 22<sup>nd</sup> at least, Swaffham Prior Fen/BurwellFen/Upware/Wicken Fen: a group of 13-14 from the 2<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>, Paxton Pits: 18 flying

over on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 18 -19 from the 5<sup>th</sup> until at least the 28<sup>th</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge: 4 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, March: 2 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Cambridge Research Park: 3 on the 29<sup>th</sup>, Earith-Bluntisham 46 on the 28<sup>th</sup> and at Little Fen/Berry Fen on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Greylag Goose** Wicken Fen: c120 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 140 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Whittlesford GP: 137 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Burwell Fen: maximum 213 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Trumpington Clay Farm: 27 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge: 154 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Cambridge Research Park: 80 on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Canada Goose** Burwell Fen: 12 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Barnacle Goose** Ouse Washes: 2 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Brent Goose** Burwell Fen/Wicken Fen: on the 8<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>, Ferry Meadows CP: on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Egyptian Goose** Fen Drayton Lakes: 4 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Prior's Fen: 2 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Ouse Fen: 5 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Littleport May Farm: 2 all month.

**Shelduck** Burwell Fen 5 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 2 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Nene Washes 7 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Cam Washes on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Mandarin** Crown Lakes Farcet 12 on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Wigeon** Burwell Fen c100 on the 5<sup>th</sup>, c300 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and c600 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 12,017 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Milton CP 8 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Cam Washes 540 on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen (on the Mere) c200 on the 20<sup>th</sup>, (on Baker's Fen) c350 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge c200 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 50-60 all month.

**Gadwall** Burwell Fen 179 on the 5<sup>th</sup>, c150 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, c90 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, c50 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Littleport May Farm maximum 23 on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 102 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Milton CP 81 on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Teal** Fowlmere NR 25 on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen c100 all month, Nene Washes 2,333 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen (on Baker's Fen) maximum 225 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge c80 on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Mallard** Fowlmere NR 21 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen 28 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 89 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Burwell Fen 39 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge c150 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 300+ all month.



Mallard at Cambourne: photo by James Hanlon

**Pintail** Ouse Washes 12 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 15+ on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Paxton Pits 3 on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 101 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Grafham Water on the 21<sup>st</sup>,

**Shoveler** Ouse Washes 25 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, Burwell Fen 26-36 all month, Nene Washes 171 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Milton CP 6 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen (Mere) 50 on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge 38 on the 24<sup>th</sup>,

**Red-crested Pochard** Grafham Water a pair on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>,

**Pochard** Whittlesford GP 21 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Milton CP 3 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 27 on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Tufted Duck** Whittlesford GP 41 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Milton CP 40 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 20+ all month.

**Scaup** Fen Drayton Lakes 2 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 3 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 2 on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Ouse Washes on the 3<sup>rd</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>, Paxton Pits a male from the 18<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Common Scoter** Grafham Water all month.

**Goldeneye** Ouse Washes 2 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 12 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 30 on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Smew** Needingworth GP 7 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4 on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6 on 7<sup>th</sup>, 6 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 6+ on the 9<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 5 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 4 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 5 redheads on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Ferry Meadows CP a redhead on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Goosander** Grafham Water 3 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 5 on the 29<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes a female on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 3 on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 2 on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, Paxton Pits 3 on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 4 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Maxey GP a redhead on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Gamebirds**

**Red-legged Partridge** Littleport May Farm 50-60 all month.

**Grey Partridge** Fowlmere 4 close to the NR most days, Littleport May Farm present all month maximum 93 on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Pheasant** Littleport May Farm 50-60 all month.

### **Cormorants**

**Cormorant** Whittlesford GP 3 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Wicken Fen roost 39 on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 15 on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge 8 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 8 all month.

### **Egrets and herons**

**Bittern** *reported from:* Cambridge Research Park, Fen Drayton Lakes, Fowlmere NR, Wicken Fen, Woodwalton Fen (3).

*Simon Wotton of the RSPB has just released his summary of Bittern breeding in the UK in 2016 which shows an increasing number of booming males in 'The fens'.*

*Numbers since 2004 per annum are 2, 4, 2, 6, 12, 12, 14, 15, 15, 16, 22, 25 and in 2016: 28.*

**Little Egret** *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Cambridge (3), Fordham, Fowlmere NR (2), Littleport May Farm (6).

**Great White Egret** Paxton Pits the long-stay bird present until at least the 15<sup>th</sup>, Sutton Gault on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm on several dates.

### **Grebes**

**Little Grebe** *reported from:* Kingfishers Bridge (on river Cam), Littleport May Farm (15+), Milton CP (6), Paxton Pits, Trumpington Clay Farm (5) and Whittlesford GP.

**Great Crested Grebe** Littleport May Farm 2 all month.

**Red-necked Grebe\*** Grafham Water the long stay bird was present until at least the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **Raptors**

**Red Kite** Fowlmere NR on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Grafham Water 2 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Brampton on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Brampton tip 9 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 2 on the 19<sup>th</sup> and one on the 30<sup>th</sup>, Paxton Pits on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Marsh Harrier** *reported from:* Burwell Fen (4), Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Nene Washes (9), Kingfishers Bridge, Ouse Fen (8+), Ouse Washes (2), Wicken Fen (8 - maximum 7 at the roost) and Woodwalton Fen (4 into roost) and Littleport May Farm 6 all month.

**Hen Harrier** Woodwalton Fen a male on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, Dimmock's Cote on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Cambridge (between Histon and the old NIAB site) on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen a ringtail on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen roost maximum two males and two ringtail/females, Cam Washes 2 males and a ringtail on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Eldernell on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Sparrowhawk** *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Great Shelford, Littleport May Farm (4), Ouse Fen, Paxton Pits (2 displaying) and Wicken Fen.

**Buzzard** *reported from:* Babraham, Brinkley, Burwell Fen, Fordham, Great Shelford, Little Eversden, Littleport May Farm (6+), March Farmers (2), Nene Washes (13), Newton (2), Ouse Fen (2), Ouse Washes, Paxton Pits (2), Swaffham Prior Fen (the pale individual still there), Wicken Fen *The pale individual around the area of Swaffham Prior Fen/Burwell Fen looked very like a Rough-legged Buzzard, so much so that I turned my car around and when within about 20 yards and with a clear close-up view in binoculars I saw that it had bare legs, no feathering - a smooth-legged Buzzard. ED*

## **Rails and crane**

**Water Rail** *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Fowlmere NR, Littleport May Farm (6+), Paxton Pits, Wicken Fen (2) and Woodwalton Fen (3).





Water Rail at Wicken Fen: photo by Roger Cresswell

**Moorhen** Burwell Fen 12 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 60+ all month.

**Coot** Trumpington Clay Farm 16 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Whittlesford GP 24 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Common Crane** Ouse Washes 19 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 22 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 3 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 11 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 13 (at Eldernell) on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Burwell Fen 7 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, March 8 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Stonea 3 flying over on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **Waders**

**Golden Plover** Fowlmere 40 in field opposite the NR on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Great Shelford c450 flew over heading west on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Ouse Washes 500 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Paxton Pits 70 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 3,000+ on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 6,200 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 82 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 54 on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 81 on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Lapwing** Burwell Fen c100 on the 5<sup>th</sup>, c800 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 5,000+ on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 9,000 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 139 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 184 on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Black-tailed Godwit** Ouse Washes 200 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 750 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 650 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 1,200 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 120+ on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Fowlmere NR on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 100+ on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Eldernell 190 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 400 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** Ouse Washes on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Ruff** Eldernell 89 on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Dunlin** Nene Washes 70 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Chain Corner 30+ on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Paxton Pits on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Green Sandpiper** *reported from:* Cam Washes, Dimmock's Cote, Fen Drayton Lakes, Grafham Water (2), Holme Fen, Littleport May Farm, Milton, Needingworth GP, Ouse Fen, Paxton Pits (2), Sutton Gault and Witchford.

**Redshank** Ouse Washes 6 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, Grafham Water 7 on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Jack Snipe** Paxton Pits on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Woodcock** Wicken Fen on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Paxton Pits on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 2 on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, one on the 25<sup>th</sup>, Brampton tip on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Snipe** *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Cam Washes (23+), Fowlmere NR (3), Littleport May Farm (50-60 all month), Ouse Fen (3), Paxton Pits (3), Trumpington Clay Farm (2) and Wicken Fen (2).

## **Gulls**

**Kittiwake** Ferry Meadows CP an adult on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Black-headed Gull** Wicken Fen 145 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and c500 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Trumpington Clay Farm maximum 42 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Fowlmere NR 42 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 1,000 into roost on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 200+ all month.

**Little Gull** Ferry Meadows CP on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Mediterranean Gull** Fen Drayton Lakes an adult on the 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen an adult on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Yaxley on the 15<sup>th</sup>,

**Common Gull** Fowlmere NR on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 150 into roost on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Trumpington Clay Farm 2 all month, Littleport May Farm 24 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 8 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 12 on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 15 on the 28<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen 2 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** Wicken Fen 4 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Fowlmere NR 28 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 240 into roost on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Grafham Water 600 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen 5 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Littleport May Farm 5-6 all month maximum 21 on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Herring Gull** Wicken Fen 12 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Fowlmere NR 5 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 1,000 into roost on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Grafham Water 3,500 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Dogsthorpe Tip c2,000 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Littleport May Farm 12+ all month.

**Yellow-legged Gull** *reported from:* Cambridge Research Park (2), Fen Drayton Lakes (2) and Grafham Water (3).

**Caspian Gull** *reported from:* Cambridge Research Park (2), Dogsthorpe Tip, Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Grafham Water and Paxton Pits.

**Great Black-backed Gull** Fen Drayton Lakes 104 into roost on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Grafham Water 755 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 235 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Dogsthorpe Tip 450 on the 21<sup>st</sup>.





Iceland Gull (top) Glaucous Gull (below). Photos by Jonathan Heath and Brendan Doe respectively

***Doves, owls and Kingfisher***

**Stock Dove** Burwell Fen on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Littleport May Farm 30+ all month.

**Woodpigeon** Littleport May Farm 1,000+ all month.

**Collared Dove** Littleport May Farm 50-60 all month.

**Barn Owl** *reported from:* Fowlmere NR, Littleport May Farm (6), Nene Washes, Sutton Gault (2), Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen.

**Little Owl** *reported from:* Littleport May Farm (4).

**Tawny Owl** *reported from:* Littleport May Farm (2) and Woodwalton Fen.

**Long-eared Owl** Ferry Meadows CP one calling on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Short-eared Owl** *reported from:* Burwell Fen/Wicken Fen (10), Eldernell (4), Fen Drayton Lakes, Holme Fen (3), Great Eversden (7 to roost), Littleport May Farm (2), Nene Washes (10), Ouse Washes, Paxton Pits (3+),

*The greatly photographed individuals at Burwell Fen even made their way into The Times on January 17<sup>th</sup> with a third of a page of one in flight. Unfortunately one or two photographers have ignored the code of conduct and caused disturbance at this site. Please stick to the paths at all sites.*

**Kingfisher** *reported from:* Chippenham Fen, Fowlmere NR (2), Kingfishers Bridge, Littleport May Farm, Paxton Pits, Woodwalton Fen (2) and Wicken Fen.

## ***Falcons***

**Kestrel** Wicken Fen 6 on the 30<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 8+ all month.

**Merlin** Fowlmere NR hunting over the reserve on several dates, Nene Washes on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, Woodwalton Fen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, Grafham Water on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, a female on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm a male on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, Eldernell on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Paxton Pits on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Wicken Fen on the 20<sup>th</sup>, a male on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Peregrine** Fowlmere NR hunting over the reserve on several dates, St. Ives on the Free Church on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Paxton Pits 1-2 on several dates, Fen Drayton Lakes on the 6<sup>th</sup>, Ouse Washes on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 2 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Eldernell 2 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, New Shardelows Farm 2 on the 26<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm on several dates.

## ***Shrikes and corvids***

**Great Grey Shrike\*** Wicken Fen the long-stay bird was seen until the end of the month.

**Magpie** Littleport May Farm 20 all month.

**Jackdaw** Wicken Fen c50 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Babraham 100+ flew out of a field, Great Shelford 150+ in a spiralling flock on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 200+ all month.

**Rook** Wicken Fen c50 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Littleport May Farm 200+ all month.

**Carrion Crow** Wicken Fen 23 on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge 43 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 200+ all month.

**Raven** Paxton Pits 4 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Crests, tits and larks***

**Goldcrest** Littleport May Farm 15 on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Blue Tit** Wicken Fen a bird retrapped this month had originally been ringed in 2009 showing remarkable longevity for a small bird whose normal average lifespan is short, probably no more than about eighteen months.

**Marsh Tit** *reported from:* Chippenham Fen and Woodwalton Fen.

**Bearded Tit** Woodwalton Fen 2 on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen 5 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ouse Fen 2 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>,

**Skylark** Littleport May Farm 40+ all month.

### ***Warblers***

**Cetti's Warbler** *reported from:* Fowlmere NR (3), Littleport May Farm, Ouse Fen (3), Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen.

**Chiffchaff** Fowlmere NR on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, Overcote Lane 10 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes 5 on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Needingworth GP 6 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Ely SW 3 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Paxton Pits on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Wicken Fen singles ringed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2 on the 30<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 2-3 all month.

**'Siberian' Chiffchaff\*** Paxton Pits on the 1<sup>st</sup>, Fen Drayton Lakes on the 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>, Cambridge Research Park on 7<sup>th</sup>, Ely SW on the 21<sup>st</sup>,

**Blackcap** Cherry Hinton on the 16<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 2 on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Waxwing, nuthatch, starling and thrushes***

**Waxwing** a national influx this winter reflected in these records: Melbourn on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Swavesey 2 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11 on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Cambridge Science Park a flyover on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 12 on the 31<sup>st</sup>, Cherry Hinton

on the 4<sup>th</sup>, then 10 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 11 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 26 on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 8 on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 18 on the 30<sup>th</sup>, Peterborough 4 along Thorpe Road on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 9 along Shrewsbury Avenue on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, Cambridge (Castle Street) on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Brownhill Stauch a flyover on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Cambridge (Lovell Road) 5+ on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Soham 2 just south of the town on the 16<sup>th</sup>, Paxton on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Stow-cum-Quy 13 at the recreation ground on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Cambridge University Botanic Garden 6 on the 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>.



Waxwing at Cherry Hinton : photo by Neil Bramwell

**Nuthatch** Littleport May Farm 2 on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Starling** Littleport May Farm c500 all month.

**Fieldfare** Melbourn 300+ on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Kingfishers Bridge 50+ on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Redwing** reported in small numbers.

### ***Starts and chats***

**Stonechat** Ouse Washes 8 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Wicken Fen a pair on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> a single on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 2 females on the 29<sup>th</sup>, Nene Washes 5 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Paxton Pits a pair on several dates,

Cambourne on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Cam Washes (Waterbeach) on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Burwell Fen on 22<sup>nd</sup>, Holme Fen 2 on the 29<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 5-6 all month.

### ***Sparrows, wagtails and pipits***

**Tree Sparrow** Ouse Washes 15 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 51 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Foxton one on a feeder (millet) on the 9<sup>th</sup>, Aldreth one on a feeder on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey Wagtail** *reported from:* Littleport May Farm (2) and Paxton Pits.

**Pied Wagtail** Littleport May Farm roost of up to 700 all month.

**Meadow Pipit** Grafham Water 20+ on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Wicken Fen c25 on the 20<sup>th</sup> Littleport May Farm 100+ all month.

**Water Pipit** Ouse Washes on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Chain Corner on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ouse Fen 2 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Sutton Gault 10 on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

### ***Finches and buntings***

**Brambling** Hare Park Six Mile Bottom 2 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 6 on the 16<sup>th</sup>,

**Greenfinch** Cambridge University Botanic Garden a roost of 120 on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 50+ all month.

**Goldfinch** Ramsey 28 to roost in a private garden on the 27<sup>th</sup>, Littleport May Farm 80+ all month.

**Siskin** Ferry Meadows CP c60 on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Linnet** Paxton Pits 300+ on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Melbourn see photo below.





Steve Cooper took this photo of 'part of a flock of Linnets' which he estimated to be 1200 birds feeding in a cover crop in Melbourn.

**Lesser Redpoll** *reported from:* Chippenham Fen (4), Grafham Water (5), Wicken Fen (4) and Woodwalton Fen (c20).

**Mealy Redpoll** Woodwalton Fen on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Yellowhammer** Paxton Pits 100 on the 21<sup>st</sup>,

**Corn Bunting** Woodwalton Fen c45 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, c24 on the 8<sup>th</sup>, Ouse Fen 40+ on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Littleport May Farm 78 on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 61 on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 82 on the 25<sup>th</sup>, Sutton Gault 30+ on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Reed Bunting** Ouse Fen 200 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Littleport May Farm 200+ all month.

***Just for fun:*** keeping a tally of the number of species during 2017, including the unlisted common species the total by my calculation at the end of January is 137.

## ***Exotica***

**Ross's Goose** The Wicken/Upware bird still being reported.

**Red-fan Parrot** The Grafham Water bird was eventually captured and returned to the owner.

## ***Contributors:***

Colin Addington, Richard Allison, Malcolm Ausden, Louise Bacon, Geoff Barlow, Peter Beesley, Peter Bircham, Sean Blackmore, Richard Bradbury, Chris Brown, Alan Bull, Ellie Burke, Josh Coe, Ade Cooper, Steve Cooper, Vic Cozens, Carol Davies, Martin Davis, Ian Dawson, Anthony Deans, Brendan Doe, Steve Dudley, Kevin Du Rose, Ian Ellis, Mike Everett, Ben Fraser, Don Gardener, Simon Gillings, Richard Gregory, Ben Greig, Richard Grimmett, James Hanlon, Ron Harold, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Jon Heath, Michael Holdsworth, David Hollin, Tom Howson, Charlie Kitchin, Marcus Kohler, Nick Langley, Vince Lea, Martin Leader, David Lee, Diana Leech, John Le Gassick, Ian Gordon, Stephen Lowe, Andrew Maddocks, Owen and Monica Marks, Bruce Martin, Donal McCarthy, Duncan McNiven, Matt Mellor, Steve Mumford, Martin O'Leary, Dave Palmer, Richard Palmer, Gill Parish, Richard Patient, Mark Peck, Duncan Poyser, Doug Radford, Gary Rawlings, Simon Stirrup, Jonathan Taylor, Paul Taylor, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne and the Wicken Fen Group, Gary Thornton, Bob Titman, Calum Urquhart, Hugh Venables, Luke Wake, Mark Ward, Robin Ward, Matt Webb, Mike Weedon, Jamie Wells, John Wells, Kevin Wilson, Mat Wilson, David Withrington, Patrick Woods and Hugh Wright.

## ***Sand Martin Survey 2017***

The last paper bulletin of the bird club included a short article announcing the intention to conduct a survey of Sand Martins in 2017. Further details can now be given.

The basic methodology will be for club members to record results during the course of their normal bird watching. Two forms are set out below reflecting the targets for the survey. One deals with general sightings of Sand Martins throughout the County and examines the numbers of birds and behaviour. The second looks at nesting colonies and is perhaps more challenging. One of the interesting features of these martins is that they can establish colonies remarkably quickly but appear to desert them equally quickly. Why? The survey may be able to throw some light on this behaviour. It does, though, lead to some problems as regards collecting information. If you find a colony it would be very helpful if you could survey it regularly throughout the breeding season, capturing the key information set out in the forms below. A few sites are well known but the club's annual report over the years mentions numerous instances of temporary colonies.

The forms can be found on the Club's website

Sand Martin Survey 2017 Sightings

Sand Martin Survey 2017 Nesting Colonies

Robert Brown

## ***Rare Breeding Birds***

Following last year's conference, the club is keen to encourage increased recording of rare breeders. Targeted surveys at the right season can give important levels of evidence if the appropriate details are given with the record. Examples at this time of year include drumming Lesser-spotted Woodpeckers - and responses from second birds (females can also drum); calling Long-eared Owls and, let's get really optimistic and look for displaying Goshawks, following Conor's theme from the February meeting. While this is not currently a breeding species, Ravens are (at least 3 pairs now!) and these may also be seen displaying at remote locations so it really is worth looking at places where birders rarely go - isolated woods! The west of the county gives the best chance of Lesser-spots and Ravens while Gos may conceivably colonise the east first, if the Brecks ever produce a surplus stock. Long-eared Owls can turn up anywhere with a few conifers or scrub patches close to rough grassland with hunting opportunities. They avoid Tawny Owls so broad leaved woods tend not to hold them, but Brampton Wood is a possibility. Any displays or territorial activity now needs to be followed up as the breeding season progresses.

Next month early waders will be worth looking for - Stone Curlews, Avocets and Little Ringed Plover.

Vince Lea



## **WICKEN FEN (BIRD RINGING) GROUP**

### **Brief news for January 2017**

There were netting sessions at the Fen on 11 different days in January. The month's ringing total was 83; a further 208 different birds were retrapped, so the overall total for the month was 291. Individual species totals (the first figure new birds, the second retraps) were:

Kingfisher	1, 0	Fieldfare	1, 0
Goldcrest	2, 6	Redwing	3, 0
Blue Tit	8, 58	Robin	3, 19
Great Tit	9, 32	Dunnock	1, 10
Bearded Tit	4, 8	House Sparrow	16, 11
Cetti's Warbler	0, 4	Chaffinch	3, 1
Long-tailed Tit	11, 27	Goldfinch	3, 1
Chiffchaff	2, 0	Bullfinch	1, 0
Wren	6, 7	Tree Creeper	0, 1
Blackbird	5, 11	Reed Bunting	4, 10
Song Thrush	0, 2		

Old birds retrapped during the month were:

House Sparrow TH47889 at 7 years 11 months,

Blue Tit X077938 at 7 years 7 months,

Reed Bunting L504440 at 5 years 10 months ,

Great Tit L504802 at 5 years 7 months,

Robin Y113943 at 4 years 8 months,

Cettis Warbler Y855616 and Blackbird LC10851 both at 3 years 5 months

and Long-tailed Tit DDA491 at 3 years 3 months.

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## **Next indoor meetings:**

**Friday 10th February, St Johns Hall, Cambridge**

**Looking for the Goshawk - the Lost Raptor by Conor Jameson**

I wrote *Looking for the Goshawk* because I was seeking answers to questions, prompted by an unexpected encounter. I thought I knew this bird, but this incident with the Goshawk challenged me. My mind raced with questions.

Why was I so drawn to this animal?

Why has it been less celebrated by conservationists than other, no more nor less charismatic species?

Why do certain people love it, as I do, and others hate it?

How can such a large, dramatic species be so hard to find?

Why has its population growth apparently stalled for many years, with little or no comment made on this? Or could there be many more out there than we think?

How can the Goshawk inhabit city centres in some countries, when we have always told ourselves that it is a bird of remotest conifer forest in the British Isles and North America?

Above all, perhaps, why had no one written this book before?

I became fixated with these questions, and the idea that the Goshawk could and should be anywhere, at any time, in the environment around me. Why was I not seeing it? What does its presence or absence tell us about us?

I developed the sense that this is arguably the finest, best adapted, most versatile and rapacious bird we have; the apex, alpha predator of our landscapes... And we aren't even missing it. This was once the bird they measured a man or a forest's value by. Today, it has vanished from the cultural memory. I set out to try to change this.

This book is, in the end, a book about us. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to relay these stories, to address the above questions, and I hope I have done them - and above all this extraordinary bird whose life history is so wrapped up in our own - the justice they deserve.

Conor Mark Jameson has worked in conservation for 25 years, and is the author of *Silent Spring Revisited*, *Looking for the Goshawk*, and *Shrewdunnit: The Nature Files*. He now lives in north Cambs.

**Friday 10th March, St Johns Hall, Cambridge. Start time 7.45**

**Annual General Meeting followed by**

**Pineapple Peril for Palearctic migrants & African forest species by Ann Scott**

The story of an African reserve set up in memory of Bob Scott to help overcome some of the problems facing trans-Saharan migrant birds.

Bob Scott worked for the RSPB for many years and, after his retirement, was chairman of Cambridgeshire Bird Club from 1999 to 2004. For more information go to : [www.whyTSbirds.org](http://www.whyTSbirds.org)

The Agenda for the AGM is printed below together with the Minutes of the 2016 AGM. The Financial Statements can be found on the Club's website.

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**Friday 7th April, Cottenham Village College**



**Feathered Fiends? Reasons to love your neighbourhood gulls by Viola Ross-Smith**

Viola Ross-Smith is Science Communications Manager at BTO, responsible for spreading the good word about the BTO's research through print publications, social media and as many other channels as possible. Before taking on this role in 2015, Viola worked on gulls for 10 years, starting during her PhD and continuing in her previous job at the BTO, as an ecologist. She is still involved in seabird tracking and research, and sits on the Executive Committee of the Seabird Group.

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**Friday 12th May, Cottenham Village College<**

**Reclaiming South Georgia by Tony Martin**

Two centuries ago, rats and mice were inadvertently introduced to the UK overseas territory of South Georgia by sealers and whalers. Over time, these unwelcome guests ate their way through most of the island's wildlife, reducing the bird population by more than 90%. They threatened the extinction of an endemic bird and fundamentally changing the entire ecosystem of this globally important sub-Antarctic wildlife refuge. Tony Martin led a 6-year project to eradicate these invaders on behalf of the South Georgia Heritage Trust, using 3 helicopters, 300 tonnes of bait, £8m and a team of 40 people. This talk will explore what was involved in carrying out the world's largest rodent eradication project on a remote, glacier-encrusted island, the very encouraging results so far, and what lies ahead before South Georgia can finally be declared rodent free. Tony Martin is Professor of Animal Conservation at the University of Dundee, and currently under secondment to the South Georgia Heritage Trust as Director of the South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project. He was previously a researcher at the Sea Mammal Research Unit and then the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge for 30 years, working on cetaceans and other aquatic

vertebrates, especially in polar regions and the Amazon. At home in Cambridgeshire, Tony's garden has grown alarmingly, now hosting breeding avocets, harriers, kingfishers and sand martins.



A wonderfully evocative picture of a Mute Swan at Cambridge Research Park taken by James Hanlon which also illustrates a predominant climatic theme of this month -ice.

# CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB

The 2017 Annual General Meeting will be held at St. John's Church Hall, Hills Road, Cambridge at 7.45 pm on Friday 10 March 2017

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2016 AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Annual Report of Council for 2016
5. Financial Statements

*The Financial Statements are available in advance of the meeting on the Club website, or on application to [treasurer@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk)*

6. Election of President and Vice-Presidents

Council's nominations are:

President: Robin Cox.

Vice-Presidents: James Cadbury, Graham Easy, Colin Kirtland, Rita Lingard, Bruce Martin

7. Election of Council

Council's nominations are:

Chairman: Vince Lea; Secretary: Michael Holdsworth; Treasurer: Roger Swain; County Recorder: Louise Bacon; Annual Report Editor: Vince Lea; Bulletin Editors: Peter Bircham and Chris Brown; Meetings Secretary: Vicki Harley; Website Officer: Chris Quy; Membership Secretary: Clive Sinclair; Research Officer: Robert Brown; other Council members: Mike Foley, Rob Pople.

8. Election of Auditor

Council proposes the re-election of Kevin Harris as Auditor.

9. Bob Scott Prize

10. Photograph of the Year award

11. Any other business

*Members wishing to raise matters under AOB should notify [chairman@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk](mailto:chairman@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk) at least two days before the meeting.*

Michael Holdsworth

Secretary [secretary@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk)

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB

### **Minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting held at 7.55 pm on Friday 11 March 2016 at St. John's Church Hall, Hills Road, Cambridge**

The President, Robin Cox, was in the Chair. 42 members attended.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Peter Bircham, Peter Herkenrath, Chris Quy, Ali Cooper, Chris Percival, Christina Leadley and Rob Pople.
2. **The Minutes of the 2015 AGM** were approved and signed.
3. There were no **Matters Arising**.
4. The Chairman, Vince Lea, presented the **Annual Report of Council** in which he reviewed the past year's activities and thanked the Officers and Council of the Club, together with Committee members; the Bulletin and Annual Report contributors and writers; and other volunteers and helpers for their commitment of time, energy and skills to the Club during the last year. The full text of Vince's report will be made available on the Club's website.
5. The Treasurer, Roger Swain, presented the **Financial Statements**. The Club's finances were in a healthy position. On the new receipts and payments (cash) basis, the year had ended with a surplus of £3270 – sufficient to fund the 2014 Annual Report (which was actually paid for in early 2016). Total assets were £12,564 and the Special Projects Fund, untouched during 2015, remained at £2550. Roger reminded the meeting that as many as 60 subscriptions remained outstanding, and that many members continued to pay their subscriptions at the old rate.

Adoption of the Statements was proposed by Stuart Lingard, seconded by Louise Bacon and agreed *nem.con*

6. **President and Vice-Presidents**. Council's nominations below were proposed by Vicki Harley, seconded by Louise Bacon and elected *nem.con*.

*President:* Robin Cox.

*Vice-Presidents:* James Cadbury, John Clark, Graham Easy, Colin Kirtland, Rita Lingard, Bruce Martin

