

CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB

Bulletin No. 438



Opinions expressed in this bulletin are not necessarily those of the Club.

Welcome to the January / February 2015 Edition

RECENT BIRD REPORTS

January – February Headlines

The records in this bulletin are unchecked and may be revised at a later date. An asterisk after the name of the species indicates that it is necessary to send a description to the County Recorder before the record will be accepted. Some species are 'reported from' to give an indication of distribution. Some entries (particularly wildfowl) have maxima given when a number of counts have been received. Where no numbers are given the record relates to single birds.

GREAT WHITE EGRET **Jan:** Barleycraft GP/Ouse Fen one from 17th – 27th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen and surrounding area all month.

GLOSSY IBIS* **Jan:** Fen Drayton Lakes on several dates. **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes from 7th for the remainder of the month, and presumably the same at Ouse Fen on 7th – 8th.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD* **Jan:** Holme Fen area (Trundle Mere) one present all month. **Feb:** Holme Fen and surrounding area all month.

ICELAND GULL **Jan:** Ferry Meadows CP flyover 2nd winter on 1st, Grafham Water a 2nd winter on 25th. **Feb:** Grafham Water one on 17th and 20th.

GLAUCOUS GULL **Jan:** Dogsthorpe Tip a 1st-winter on 1st – 2nd, Milton Tip a 2nd-winter from 3rd plus a 1st-winter from 10th – 24th, CEGB Reservoir 1st-winter on 3rd – 4th (presumed same as the Dogsthorpe bird), Ouse Washes a 2nd-winter bird on 10th and 14th and a 1st-winter on 18th, Ferry Meadows CP a 1st-winter on 11th, Grafham Water a 2nd-winter on 18th, Witchford a 1st-winter flyover on 27th. *As last year, it remains difficult to be certain how many individuals were involved. Possibly in the Milton to Ouse Washes area a 2nd-winter and a 1st-winter; in the north of the county a single 1st-winter (which may or may not be the bird later recorded at Milton and on the Ouse Washes), making a minimum of 2 birds and a maximum of 4!*

Feb: Witcham Gravel a 1st winter on several dates, a 2nd-winter on 20th – 21st, Milton Tip area a 1st-winter until the 21st and a 2nd-winter until at least the 15th, plus a 3rd-winter on 6th, Ouse Fen a 2nd-winter on 7th – 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes a 2nd-winter on 13th – 14th.

These sightings involve probably three birds, given their ability to move around the county and the quite narrow range of locations. The last reported date was the 21st, compared to last year's latest on February 23rd.

HOODED CROW* **Jan:** Holme Fen one on 24th.

WOODLARK* **Feb:** Paxton Pits a 'probable' on 20th.

Other records

Wildfowl

Mute Swan **Jan:** Burwell Fen 24 on 24th, Ouse Washes 272 on 19th. **Feb:** Burwell Fen 56 on 11th, Ouse Fen 142 on 2nd, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 50 on 9th.

Bewick's Swan **Jan:** Manea 120 on 2nd and 170 on 3rd, Nene Washes maximum 629 on 27th, Witcham Gravel 12 on 22nd. **Feb:** Somersham/Chatteris c50 on 7th, Ouse Washes c100 on 7th and 417 on 14th, Grafham Water 2 on 7th and 15th, Nene Washes 466 on 9th.

Whooper Swan **Jan:** Ouse Washes 2426 on 19th, Nene Washes maximum 1200 on 19th, Witcham Gravel 220 on 22nd, Holme Fen 13 on 23rd, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens mixed flock of 220 swans on 28th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes 100 on 15th, Somersham/Chatteris 330 on 7th, Burwell Fen up to 27 from 8th, Nene Washes 830 on 9th, Sutton Gault c500 on 14th and 28th, Ouse Washes/Earith to Jolly Bankers 230 on 21st and Pymoor to Welney c400 on 23rd.

Bean Goose* **Jan:** Nene Washes 2 of the subspecies 'tundra' on 1st, Manea 7 in flight on 2nd. **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes one from the 8th – 9th, Kingfishers Bridge 7 briefly on 24th.

Pink-footed Goose **Jan:** Nene Washes 6 on 1st, Ouse Fen 1st and 25th, Paxton Pits 2nd – 3rd, Berry Fen 18th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes 28 on 9th, Berry Fen 2 on 7th, Fen Drayton Lakes 3 on 31st.

Greylag Goose **Jan:** Burwell Fen 148 on 24th, Ouse Fen 442 on 28th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes/Earith 300 on 2nd, Berry Fen 229 on 4th, Fen Drayton Lakes 400 on 31st, Paxton Pits c150 on 9th, Burwell Fen 312 on 11th, Fowlmere NR 117 on 28th.

Canada Goose **Jan:** Fen Drayton Lakes 200 on 2nd, Hinxton 128 on 15th. **Feb:** Kingfishers Bridge 157 on 6th, Houghton 30+ on 15th.

Brent Goose **Feb:** Offord Cluny a dark-bellied (subspecies *bernicla* from Russia/Siberia) on 12th.

Egyptian Goose **Jan:** Fen Drayton Lakes 39 on 1st, Ouse Fen on 1st. **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes 2 on several dates, Ouse Fen 28 on 2nd, Paxton Pits maximum 4 on 8th, Nene Washes 2 on 14th.

Shelduck **Jan:** Paxton Pits 1 – 2 from 1st, Ouse Washes/Earith to Jolly Bankers 3rd, Burwell Fen 20th, Cam Washes 2 on 30th. **Feb:** Paxton Pits a pair on 4th and 20th with a single on other dates, Nene Washes 23 on 9th, Wicken Fen 9 on 11th, Ouse Washes/Earith 12 on 12th and 21st, Sutton Gault 3 on 14th, Newton/Wisbech 26 on 27th, Fowlmere NR a pair on 27th (*a rare bird south of Cambridge*).

Mandarin **Jan:** Wimpole Hall 12 on 10th. **Feb:** Linton 6 on 8th, Wimpole Hall 17 on 11th.

Wigeon **Jan:** Kingfishers Bridge 250 on 13th, Nene Washes 6000 on 19th, Ouse Washes 15623 on 19th, Burwell Fen c300 on 20th, Needingworth GP 900 on 20th, Paxton Pits 1396 on 22nd, Cam Washes 220 on 30th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen c350 on 2nd, Paxton Pits c1800 on 7th, Burwell Fen max 1500 on 8th, Ouse Washes 15014 on 9th, Nene Washes 14130 on 9th, Wicken max 242 on 13th.

Gadwall **Jan:** Kingfishers Bridge 108 on 13th, Nene Washes 98 on 19th, Needingworth GP 130 on 20th, Wicken Fen maximum 97 on 30th. **Feb:** Milton GP 124 on 6th, Nene Washes 211 on 9th, Ouse Washes 324 on 9th, Berry Fen 304 on 25th, Wicken Fen maximum 108 on 27th.

Teal **Jan:** Kingfishers Bridge 220 on 13th, Burwell Fen 400 on 3rd, Nene Washes 1430 on 19th, Ouse Washes 1165 on 19th, Needingworth GP 250 on 20th, Paxton Pits 691 on 22nd, Cam Washes 56 on 30th. **Feb:** Waterbeach GP 300 on 4th, Ouse Fen 152 on 2nd, Nene Washes 2219 on 9th, Ouse Washes 3047 on 9th, Fen Drayton Lakes 678 on 10th, Wicken Fen maximum 260 on 27th.

Mallard **Jan:** Ouse Washes 1346 on 19th, Nene Washes 281 on 19th, Woodwalton Fen 200 on 28th. **Feb:** Nene Washes 926 on 9th, Ouse Washes 909 on 9th, Ouse Fen 54 on 2nd.

Pintail **Jan:** Fen Drayton Lakes 9 drakes on 11th, Paxton Pits 4 drakes on 18th, Nene Washes 828 on 19th, Cam Washes 3 on 30th. **Feb:** Nene Washes 417 on 9th, Ouse Washes 496 on 9th, Wicken Fen maximum 6 on 13th, Burwell Fen 6 on 17th, Paxton Pits maximum 4 on 24th.

Shoveler **Jan:** Kingfishers Bridge 108 on 13th, Burwell Fen c100 on 20th, Wicken Fen maximum 52 on 30th, Cam Washes 28 on 30th. **Feb:** Burwell Fen 500 on 8th, Ouse Washes 198 on 9th, Fen Drayton Lakes 268 on 10th, Cam Washes/Upware 38 on 13th, Wicken Fen maximum 100+ on 13th.

Red-crested Pochard **Jan:** Paxton Pits a pair from 22nd. **Feb:** Paxton Pits 8th and a pair on 21st, Berry Fen a male on 20th, Fen Drayton Lakes a pair on 31st.

Pochard **Jan:** Ouse Washes 776 on 19th, Waterbeach GP 40 on 17th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen 43 on 2nd, Milton CP 5 on 6th, Ouse Washes 1570 on 9th, Cherry Hinton Hall 2 on 11th, Trumpington/Clay Farm 3 on 16th, Sutton Gault c200 on 14th, Burwell Fen 5 on 17th, Whittlesford GP 18 on 20th.

Tufted Duck **Jan:** Ouse Washes 1414 on 19th, St Ives sailing pit c150 on 20th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes 2545 on 9th, Fen Drayton Lakes 270 on 10th, Sutton Gault c300 on 14th.

Scaup Jan: Grafham Water one on 18th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes RSPB on 7th, Grafham Water a female on 7th and a male on 15th, Paxton Pits one on 8th.

Goldeneye Jan: Fen Drayton Lakes 16 on 2nd, Paxton Pits 15 on 11th, Ferry Meadows CP on 27th. **Feb:** Grafham Water 90+ on 7th, Fen Drayton Lakes 15+ on 12th, Paxton Pits max 45 on 27th.

Smew Jan: Fen Drayton Lakes 1 – 3 on several dates, Paxton Pits male on 1st, 2 on 24th and one on 30th, Needingworth GP a male with 5 redheads on 1st, 4 on 17th, 8 on 18th, 10 on 20th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen/Needingworth Lakes present all month maximum 21 on 8th and still 14 on 28th, Fen Drayton Lakes a 'redhead' on 1st and 8th then 4 on 17th and 2 on 25th, Paxton Pits one on 6th.

Red-breasted Merganser Feb: Grafham Water 1 on 15th.

Goosander Jan: Ferry Meadows CP 3 on 1st and one on 27th, Paxton Pits 2 on 2nd and 4 on 23rd, Grafham Water max 18 on 11th, Maxey GP 19 on 17th, Fen Drayton Lakes a pair on 25th. **Feb:** Paxton Pits max 8 on 17th, Cambridge/Nuttings Road a flyover on 6th, Grafham Water max 25 on 15th.

Ruddy Duck Feb: Ouse Washes RSPB one on 7th and 10th, Fen Drayton Lakes 2 females on 16th.

Gamebirds

Red-legged Partridge Jan: Swaffham Bulbeck a covey of 36 on 24th.

Grey Partridge Jan: Knapwell (Grange Farm) 23 on 20th, Pampisford 6 on 20th, Wicken Fen 6 on 20th. **Feb:** Gt Shelford 22 on 4th, Comberton 6 on 11th, Tidal Nene (Wisbech/Foul Anchor) 4 on 27th.

Divers, cormorant, egrets and herons

Great Northern Diver* Jan: Needingworth GP on 21st. **Feb:** Paxton Pits from 7th – 23rd.

Cormorant Jan: Ferry Meadows 28 on 6th; Waterbeach GP 12 on 17th, Wicken Fen 9 on 20th. **Feb:** reported from Nene Washes (34), Ouse Washes (56), Ouse Fen (6), and Whittlesford GP (3).

Bittern Jan: reported from Ely BF, Fen Drayton Lakes, Fowlmere NR, Nene Washes/Eldernell, Ouse Fen (2) and Wicken Fen (2). **Feb:** reported from Fen Drayton Lakes, Ouse Fen (3), Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen.

Little Egret Jan: reported from 12 sites including Burwell Fen (2), Nene Washes (8), Trumpington/Clay Farm (2), Wicken Fen (2). **Feb:** reported from Burwell Fen (3), Cambridge/Coe Fen, Cam Washes/Upware, Cherry Hinton Hall (3), Ely BF, Fen Drayton Lakes (3), Fowlmere NR, Houghton (2), Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes, Trumpington/Clay Farm and Wicken Fen (3).

Grey Heron Jan: Ferry Meadows 8 on 7th, Burwell Fen 7 on 20th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen 5 on 2nd, Ouse Washes 13 on 9th, Berry Fen 14 on 14th.

Grebes

Little Grebe Jan: reported from Ouse Washes/Chain Corner 24 on 22nd, Paxton Pits, Trumpington/Clay Farm (3), Bottisham Lock 10 on 30th. **Feb:** Somersham GP 13 on 8th, Ouse Washes 18 on 18th.

Great Crested Grebe Jan: Drysides BP 18 on 7th, Bottisham Lock 30th. **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes 26 on 10th, Ferry Meadows 13 on 23rd, and reported from Ouse Fen (2), Paxton Pits (where nest building was observed on 25th), Trumpington/Clay Farm, and Wicken Fen.

Black-necked Grebe Jan: Paxton Pits one on 1st, Fen Drayton Lakes a single on 2nd and on 30th. **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes one on 1st – 9th, Hampton Lakes one on 9th.

Raptors

Red Kite Jan: Wennington Wood 9 on the 10th, Monks Wood 6+ on 14th, Foxton on 15th, Holme village 3 on 27th. **Feb:** Stilton 12 on 1st, Ouse Fen on 2nd, Nene Washes 2 on 9th, Holme Fen 2 on 11th, Eaton Socon 11 on 14th, Duxford 14th, Swaffham Prior Fen 17th, Witcham Gravel 20th.

Marsh Harrier Jan: reported from Burwell Fen (3), Fen Drayton Lakes (3), Holme Fen (2), Little Wilbraham Fen (4), Nene Washes (12), Woodwalton Fen (8), Ouse Fen (4+), Ouse Washes (2) and Wicken Fen (10+). **Feb:** reported from most of the above areas plus Ely BF (3) and Sutton Gault.

Hen Harrier Jan: reported from Burwell Fen (2), Holme Fen (2), Nene Washes/Eldernell, Ouse Fen (2), Ouse Washes, and Wicken Fen roost of 9 on 28th. **Feb:** Burwell Fen on several dates, Wicken Fen roost max 10 (3 males and 7 ringtails), Holme Fen 11th, Woodwalton Fen 11th, Sutton Gault 28th.

Sparrowhawk Jan: reported from Great Shelford, Holme Fen, Teversham Fen, Paxton Pits, Wicken Fen (2) and Wisbech (3). **Feb:** reported from Ashley, Cambridge, Ely BF, Houghton, Wicken Fen, Wimpole Hall and Woodwalton Fen.

Buzzard Jan: reported from Bottisham (3), Eldernell (3), Grafham Water (6), Holme Fen (2), Little Paxton (2), Paxton Pits (4), Wicken Fen (7) and 10 other sites. **Feb:** reported from 13 sites including Cottenham (6), Paxton Pits (6) and Wimpole Hall (6).

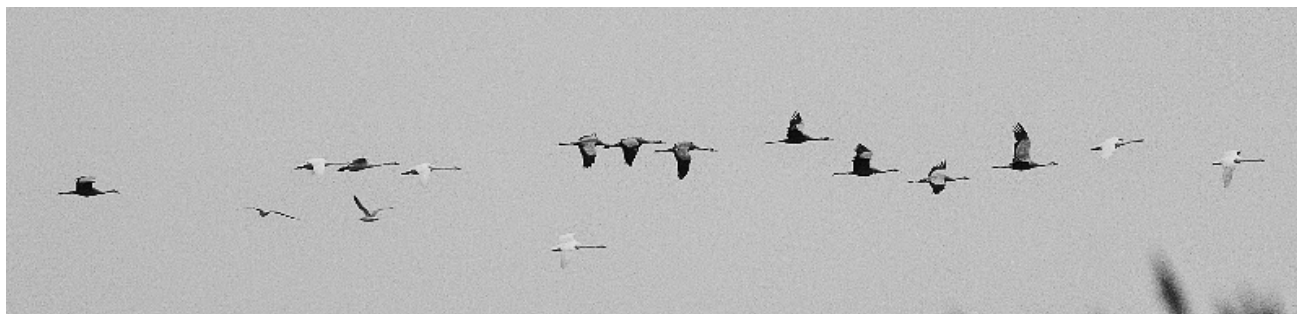
Rails and crane

Water Rail Jan: reported from Chettisham, Little Wilbraham Fen (4), Ouse Fen, Paxton Pits, Waterbeach GP (2) and Wicken Fen. **Feb:** Wicken Fen 12 on 15th, Woodwalton Fen 10 on 11th, Sutton Gault on 14th and 27th, Houghton 2 on 15th, Fowlmere NR 2 on 28th.

Moorhen Jan: Ouse Washes 113 on 19th, Cam Washes 35 on 22nd, Burwell Fen 15 on 20th, Trumpington/Clay Farm 11 on 30th. **Feb:** Hinxton 32 on 12th, Farcet 26 on 11th.

Coot Jan: Waterbeach GP 84 on 17th, Ouse Washes 2184 on 19th, Wicken Fen 56 on 20th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen 150 on 2nd, Milton CP 54 on 6th, Fen Drayton Lakes 712 on 10th.

Common Crane Jan: Nene Washes/Eldernell reported all month maximum 13 on 19th, Little Thetford 8 flying over on 26th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes max 8 for most of the month usually near Manea, Nene Washes 12 on 9th, 2 on 14th and 23rd, Wicken Fen 2 flyovers on 9th, March 6 flyovers on 10th.



Common Cranes and Whooper Swans at Manea. Photo by Brendan Doe

Waders

Avocet Feb: Isleham Washes 11 on 23rd, Kingfishers Bridge 2 on 24th.

Oystercatcher Jan: Paxton Pits one taken by a Peregrine on 25th, one on 30th – 31st. **Feb:** Paxton Pits max 3 on several dates from 14th, Ouse Washes Earith to Jolly Bankers 2 on 21st, Needingworth Lakes 2 on 23rd, Fen Drayton Lakes 6 on 28th, Tidal Nene (Newton) 41 on 27th.

Golden Plover Jan: Holme Fen 500+ on 1st, Nene Washes (Eldernell) 3000 on 8th, Hinxton 1000 on 15th, Ouse Fen 200 on 1st, Burwell Fen c400 on 7th, Trumpington c70 on 28th. **Feb:** Haslingfield c350 on 11th, Nene Washes (Eldernell) c600 on 12th, Ouse Washes c300 on 18th, Wicken Fen c150 on 27th.

Grey Plover Feb: Burwell Fen 2 on 12th.

Lapwing Jan: Ouse Fen 1000 on 1st, Nene Washes (Eldernell) 1000 on 8th and 10th. **Feb:** Paxton Pits 270 on 9th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 4000+ on 9th and 3000 – 4000 on 19th, Holme Fen 300 on 11th, Wicken Fen 1115 on 11th and c800 on 27th, Little Shelford/Newton c600 on 27th.

Curlew Feb: Paxton Pits 9th, Wicken Fen 13th, Witcham Gravel 20th, Fen Drayton Lakes 31st, Wisbech/Newton (tidal Nene) 38 on 27th.

Black-tailed Godwit Jan: Ouse Washes maximum c50 on 1st, Paxton Pits 5 on 27th, Fen Drayton Lakes 62+ on 17th, Barleycraft GP max 320 on 17th, Nene Washes 1225 on 19th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen 23 flyovers on 2nd, Ouse Washes 3441 on 9th, Holme Fen 13 on 4th, Sutton Gault c40 on 14th.

Ruff Jan: Fen Drayton Lakes maximum 5 on 17th, Nene Washes (March Farmers) 27 on 19th, Ouse Washes 16 on 19th. **Feb:** Nene Washes 59 on 9th, Ouse Washes/Earith maximum 68 on 12th, Berry Fen maximum 25 on 22nd.

Dunlin Jan: reported from Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes, and Paxton Pits (4). **Feb:** Ouse Washes maximum 150 on 4th, Nene Washes (March Farmers) 72 on 9th, Paxton Pits max 4 on 9th and 24th.

Green Sandpiper **Jan:** reported from Barleycraft GP, Cottenham, Cam Washes, Paxton Pits (2).
Feb: reported from Paxton Pits (3), Sutton Gault and Wicken Fen.

Redshank **Jan:** Nene Washes 37 on 19th, Ouse Washes 44 on 19th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen 2nd, Ouse Washes/Earith 55 on 12th, Nene Washes 67 on 9th, Wisbech/Newton (tidal Nene) 32 on 27th.

Jack Snipe **Jan:** Kneesworth 3 on 4th, Kings Dyke NR 2 on 7th, singles at Ouse Fen 1st, Paxton Pits 2nd, Barleycraft GP 18th. **Feb:** Kings Dyke NR 6 on 24th, Ouse Washes 21st.

Woodcock **Jan:** Ferry Meadows 1st, Wicken Fen 4th, Paxton Pits 6 on 4th, Waterbeach GP 17th, Wicken Fen 2 on 25th, and Wisbech town centre on 28th. **Feb:** Colne GP 7th, Fen Drayton Lakes 8th, Godmanchester GP 3 on 9th, March 11th, Woodwalton Fen 11th, Eynesbury 12th, Longstowe 17th, Milton Tip 2 flyovers at dusk on 18th, Grafham Water 23rd, Chippenham Fen 24th.

Snipe **Jan:** reported from Ouse Washes (88), Lt Shelford (45), Burwell Fen (30+), Ouse Fen (17).
Feb: Ouse Fen 20 on 15th, Nene Washes 68 on 9th, Ouse Washes 56 on 9th, Wicken Fen 17 on 9th, Kingfishers Bridge c20 on 22nd, Needingworth Lakes 40+ on 28th.

Gulls

Black-headed Gull **Jan:** Waterbeach GP 1500 on 17th. **Feb:** Swaffham Bulbeck c1500 on freshly ploughed land on 13th.

Mediterranean Gull **Jan:** Pondersbridge/Farcet Fen a 1st-winter on 11th and 23rd, Grafham Water a 2nd-winter on 24th, an adult on 25th, a 1st-winter on 27th, Fen Drayton Lakes a 1st-winter on 25th, Farcet Fen a 1st-winter on 27th. **Feb:** Grafham Water an adult on 7th and a 1st-winter on 23rd, Eaton Socon a 1st-winter bird joined Black-headed Gulls coming to breed in a private garden.

Herring Gull **Jan:** Grafham roost of 3000 on 18th, Cottenham Long Drove 800 on 3rd.

Yellow-legged Gull **Jan:** Milton Tip 6 on 3rd and 8+ on 7th, Burwell Fen on 5th, Grafham Water 4 – 5 on several dates maximum 12 on 27th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes RSPB on 7th, Grafham Water max 6 on 15th, Milton Tip max 2 on 13th.

Caspian Gull **Jan:** Milton Tip maximum 5 on 2nd (one was a 2nd-winter bird ringed in Poland), 5 on 3rd and 4 on 7th, Grafham Water 2 – 3 on several dates, Fen Drayton Lakes a 2nd-winter on 25th.

Feb: Milton Tip area maximum 3 on 6th and 13th, Grafham Water one on 7th and 2 on 15th, Ouse Fen on 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 17th.

Great Black-backed Gull **Jan:** Tanholt GP 300 on 2nd. **Feb:** Waterbeach GP 85 on 4th.

Doves, owls and kingfisher

Stock Dove **Jan:** Yaxley 250+ on 27th. **Feb:** Nene Washes 300 on 9th.

Woodpigeon **Jan:** Whittlesford/Shelford c800 feeding in a field of oilseed rape on 30th.

Barn Owl **Jan:** reported from Berry Fen, Burwell Fen (4) and a dark-breasted bird on 15th, Fen Drayton Lakes, Hemingford Grey, Holme Fen (2 – 3), Fulbourn, Ouse Washes (3), Over, and Wicken Fen (5). **Feb:** reported from Burwell Fen (4), Fen Drayton Lakes, Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes, St Ives, Sutton Gault, Wicken Fen (6) and Woodhurst.

Little Owl **Jan:** reported from Needingworth GP, Hinxton and Wimpole Hall. **Feb:** reported from Nene Washes/March Farmers, Ferry Meadows, Swaffham Prior Fen and Wicken Fen.

Tawny Owl **Jan:** Ouse Washes on 3rd, Wicken Fen on 13th, Needingworth GP on 20th, Little Paxton on 24th, Cambridge (2 sites). **Feb:** Linton, Wisbech, Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen (4).

Short-eared Owl **Jan:** Nene Washes/Eldernell maximum 8 on 18th, Holme Fen 2 – 4 on several dates, Ouse Washes on 14th and 2 on 18th, and a maximum of 7 on the Wicken/Burwell Fen complex. **Feb:** reported from Burwell Fen (4), Fowlmere village, Holme Fen, Nene Washes (8), Ouse Washes, and Wicken Fen (2).

Kingfisher **Jan:** reported from Fulbourn Fen, Needingworth GP, Hinxton (2), Ely (2), Paxton Pits (2) Trumpington/Clay Farm, and Wicken Fen. **Feb:** reported from Burwell Fen, Cherry Hinton Hall, Nene Washes (3), Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes/Earith, Paxton Pits and Waterbeach (2) and Wicken Fen.

Falcons and parrots

Kestrel Jan: Holme Fen 5 on 7th and 23rd, Ouse Washes 8 on 19th, Great Fen 8 on 27th. **Feb:** Burwell Fen 7 on 8th, Tidal Nene (Wisbech/Foul Anchor) 4+ on 28th.

Merlin Jan: reported from Burwell Fen (2), Cottenham, Fen Drayton Lakes, Holme Fen, Nene Washes/Eldernell, Ouse Fen, Cambs near Royston, and Wicken Fen (1 – 2). **Feb:** singles at Holme Fen on 11th, Lt Shelford 17th, Witcham Gravel 20th, Wisbech 20th, and Wicken Fen 15th 22nd and 27th.

Peregrine Jan: reported from Berry Fen, Cambridge, Earith, Holme Fen (2), Kingfishers Bridge (2), Little Wilbraham Fen / Teversham Fen (2), Milton Tip, Ouse Fen, and Paxton Pits (see Oystercatcher). **Feb:** reported from Cambridge, Huntingdon, Morborne Hill (2), Nene Washes, Ouse Washes/Earith and Paxton Pits.

Ring-necked Parakeet* Jan: Chippenham 6th. **Feb:** Little Downham 5 on 7th, Ouse Washes 25th and 2 on 26th.

Woodpeckers, shrikes and corvids

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Jan: reported from 2 sites. **Feb:** reported from 3 sites including one of the January sites.

Great Grey Shrike* Jan: Winwick one on 14th. **Feb:** Ashley one from 11th – 17th, Swaffham Prior Fen one 16th – 19th.

Jackdaw/ Rook Jan: Wicken Fen 500+ on 30th. **Feb:** Cam Washes c600 in a mixed flock on 13th.

Carrion Crow Jan: Kingfishers Bridge 102 on 27th. **Feb:** Fodder Fen Common 250+ on 6th, Holme Fen c250 on 12th.

Raven Jan: Peterborough on 5th and 2 on 24th, Farcet Fen 2 on 11th, Little Gidding 2 on 18th, Holme Fen 4 on 18th. **Feb:** St Neots 1 – 4 from 24th – 26th, Kirtling one on 27th, Lode a possible on 28th.

Tits and larks and warblers

Coal Tit Feb: Chippenham Fen 7 different birds on 24th.

Marsh Tit Jan: reported from Holme Fen, Madingley Wood and 10 other sites.

Bearded Tit Jan: reported from Burwell Fen, Dogsthorpe Tip, Ouse Fen (6+) and Wicken Fen. **Feb:** reported from Ouse Fen (2), Fen Drayton Lakes 4 on 8th, Wicken/Bakers Fen 4 on 20th.

Skylark Jan: Ouse Fen c100 on 27th. **Feb:** Knapwell (Grange Farm) 78 on 18th.

Cetti's Warbler Jan: reported from Wicken Fen, Ouse Fen and Woodwalton Fen. **Feb:** Wicken Fen (9), Needingworth Lakes (2), Kingfishers Bridge, Fen Drayton Lakes and Nene Washes.

Long-tailed Tit Jan: groups of 10 to 18 seen at 13 sites. **Feb:** Knapwell (Grange Farm) 24 on 18th.

Chiffchaff Jan: Paxton Pits on 18th – 22nd, Berry Fen 2 on 18th. **Feb:** Paxton Pits possible 'Siberian' Chiffchaff* (subspecies *tristis*) on 7th, Needingworth SF 4 on 9th and 2 on 12th and 28th, Godmanchester SF 7 and another 'Siberian' on 9th, Ely SF 8+ together with a possible 'Siberian' on 15th, Fowlmere NR one on 28th.

Blackcap Jan: Cottenham 2 on 4th, Waterbeach 2 on 5th, Little Paxton 18th, Girton 21st. **Feb:** Folksworth 5th, Soham 7th, Paxton Pits 11th, Colne 2 on 12th, Stretham 16th, and Cambridge 3 sites.

Nuthatch, starling, thrushes and chats

Nuthatch Jan: reported from Chippenham Fen, Ferry Meadows CP, Holme Fen, Madingley Wood and Bedford Purlieus (3). **Feb:** Wimpole Hall 4 on 8th, Chippenham Fen a female ringed on 24th.

Starling Jan: Paxton Pits 5000 on 2nd, Kingfishers Bridge 6000 on 27th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen c10000 on 2nd, Wicken Fen a roost estimated at 8000 maximum, Godmanchester GP c3000 on 9th.

Fieldfare Jan: Sawtry c500 on 3rd, Fowlmere 250 on 6th, Paxton Pits 151 on 26th, Sawston by-pass c150 on 27th. **Feb:** Ouse Washes/Earith 100+ on 4th, Burwell fen c500 on 10th, Woodwalton Fen 150 on 11th, Houghton 300 on 15th, Caldecote 520+ on 19th, Glatton c2000 on 22nd.

Song Thrush Jan: Knapwell (Grange Farm) 25 on 20th.

Redwing Jan: Croydon 120 on 25th, Burghley Park c300 on 30th. **Feb:** Wimpole Hall 500+ on 28th.

Mistle Thrush Jan: Paxton Pits 3 on 26th, Bretton 7 on 29th. **Feb:** Barleycraft GP 6 on 9th.

Stonechat **Jan:** reported from Burwell Fen (3), Holme Fen (4+), Nene Washes/Eldernell (2), Ouse Fen (2), Ouse Washes/Earith (2), Paxton Pits (4), Wicken Fen. **Feb:** reported from Burwell Fen (3), Ouse Fen (2), Ouse Washes RSPB (4), Great Fen/Yaxley Lode (12 on 8th), and Wicken Fen (2).

Sparrows, wagtails and pipits

Tree Sparrow **Jan:** Farcet Fen maximum of 32 on 19th. **Feb:** Landbeach 40 on 7th and 83 on 10th, Woodhurst 30 on 22nd, Needingworth Lakes one on 22nd, Soham 2 on 26th.

Grey Wagtail **Jan:** reported from Berry Fen, Cambridge, Ouse Fen, Ely and Paxton Pits (2). **Feb:** Cherry Hinton Hall, Grafham Water, Houghton (3), Ouse Fen (4), Needingworth SF, Stirtloe SF (6).

Pied Wagtail **Jan:** Milton (Tesco) 200 on 2nd, Priory Farm Burwell 20+ on 5th. **Feb:** Ely BF c80 on 7th, Stirtloe SF 120 on 7th, Paxton Pits 128 on 20th.

Meadow Pipit **Jan:** Ouse Washes 128 on 19th, Burwell Fen c30 on 20th. **Feb:** Barleycraft GP 50 on 22nd, Paxton Pits 37 on 9th.

Rock Pipit **Jan:** Ouse Washes one on 19th.

Water Pipit **Jan:** Ouse Washes roost maximum 14 on 3rd. **Feb:** Ouse Washes roost c20 on 1st, 28+ on 14th and 41 on 28th, Wicken Fen one on 21st.

Finches and buntings

Brambling **Jan:** Beechwoods LNR 20+ on 10th, 30+ on 11th and 22 still on 18th, Farcet Fen on 20th.

Feb: Beechwoods LNR max 10, Wicken Fen one on 11th.

Bullfinch **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes 12 on 8th, Castor Hanglands 12 on 24th.

Linnet **Jan:** Great Fen (Frog Hall Farm) 400 on 19th, Fen Drayton Lakes c150 on 9th. **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes 235 on 10th, Wisbech/Newton 220 on 27th.

Lesser Redpoll **Jan:** Ferry Meadows CP c25 on 22nd, Brampton Wood one on 25th.

Goldfinch **Jan:** Great Fen 350 on 9th. **Feb:** Holme Fen 150 on 7th and 20th.

Yellowhammer **Jan:** Knapwell (Grange Farm) 197 on 20th, Melbourn 140 on 1st, Paxton Pits 130 on 16th. **Feb:** Comberton 61 on 23rd.

Reed Bunting **Jan:** Melbourn 240 on 1st, Paxton Pits 150 on 9th, Burwell Fen c50 on 20th. **Feb:** Fen Drayton Lakes 100+ on 9th, Nene Washes (Eldernell) 70 on 9th.

Corn Bunting **Jan:** Melbourn 80 on 1st, Ouse Washes roost c100 on 3rd, Paxton Pits maximum 21 on 4th, Nene Washes/Turves 30 on 19th. **Feb:** Wicken Fen 10 on 3rd, Woodwalton Fen 50 on 11th, Sutton Gault c45 on 14th, Manea 23 on 20th.

Exotica

Black Swan Ouse Fen, one on 1st Jan and several dates to 8th Feb.

Ruddy Shelduck **Jan:** Fen Drayton Lakes from 1st, Ouse Fen on 25th. **Feb:** Ouse Fen one on 8th.

Japanese Quail **Jan:** Coveney/Wardy Hill 4 at dusk on 8th.

Contributors: Colin Addington, Richard Allison, Ian Anderson, David Avis, Rob Ayers, David Bale, Stuart Ball, Louise Bacon, Rowena Baxter, Andy Bayes, Guy Belcher, Peter Bircham, Jez Bird, Chris Boness, Richard Bradbury, Chris Brown, Ian Burfield, Ellie Burke, Malcolm Busby, James Cadbury, Richard Caney, Saimon Clark, Ade Cooper, Steve Cooper, Andy Cotton, Vic Couzens, Gillian Cox, Robin Cox, Roger Cresswell, Gerry Davies, Carole Davis, Martin Davis, Brendan Doe, Steve Dudley, Mark Eaton, Ian Ellis, Mike Everett, Mike Foley, Don Gardener, Simon Gillings, Ian Gordon, David Green, Lee Gregory, Dennis Hall, James Hall, James Hanlon, Andy Hannaford, Ron Harold, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Fred Heath, Jonathan Heath, Michael Holdsworth, Pete Holt, Ken and Maggie Hook, David Hopkins, Neil Howard, Sarah Howlett, Adrian Hoyes, Bob Humphrey, Richard Jackson, Sue Jarrett, Andy Jennings, Richard Johnson, Chris Jones, Richard Jones, Colin Kirtland, James Knightbridge, John Le Gassick, Vincent Lea, Christina Leadlay, Peter Leonard, Ade Long, Stephen Lowe, Andrew Maddocks, Tony Mallyon, Bob Mansfield, Bruce Martin, Owen and Monica Marks, Paul Mason, Steve May, Donal McCarthy, Duncan McNiven, Matt Mellor, Andy Merryweather, David Milne, Mark Missin, Dick Newell, Martin O'Leary, Daniel Osborne, Dave Palmer, Richard Palmer, Chris Park, Neal Parkin, John Parslow, Richard Patient, Garth Peacock, Mark Peck, Rob Pople, Grant Powter, Duncan Poyser, Doug Radford, Gary Rawlings, Gareth Rees, Chris Rider, Duncan Ritchie, Tony Roberts, Ann Scott, Chris Shurlock, Norman Sills, Clive Sinclair, Bob Smith, Jeff Stenning, Brian Stone, Isaac Swift, Andy Symes, Jonathan Taylor, Kevin Taylor, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne and the Wicken Fen Group, Bob Titman, Andrew Tongue, Calum Urquart, Hugh Venables, David Walsh, Mark Ward, Iain

Webb, Matt Webb, Mike Weedon, David Wege, Jamie Wells, Steve West, Kevin Wilson, Matt Wilson, David Withrington, Kevan Wolstencroft, Julian Young, Barbara York, and Christoph Zöckler.

Rare Breeding Birds

The Cambridgeshire Bird Club contributes data to the Rare Breeding Bird Panel, a national body that collates data on species with breeding populations below about 2000 pairs. Information about their work can be found on the website <http://www.rbbp.org.uk/> which also has helpful tips of the week and more detailed pdfs available to download on methods for monitoring particular species. The RBBP includes rare non-native species within its remit, on the grounds that a careful watch on these species can be of as much conservation importance as the monitoring of native species.

For Cambridgeshire, the table below gives the species which occur, or may potentially occur, in the current period - some may recently have gone extinct, others may just be colonising, some may not be breeding but are nearby or are found summering, but the majority are regularly present on an annual basis, sometimes in quite good numbers if their geographic range is focussed on East Anglia or southern England. Note that the table is divided into sections concerning rarity of the species and completeness of coverage.

	Coverage:	Complete/near complete	High confidence	Moderate confidence	Low confidence
Rarity status	Pop size 2008-12 (UK best estimate)	RBBP reports accurate or close to accurate	RBBP totals a good estimate; a small but unknown number of pairs will be overlooked	RBBP reports less accurate but represents a significant proportion of the population	RBBP estimates very poor; an unknown and potentially large percentage of the population is not recorded
Very Rare	<30 pairs	Whooper Swan Spoonbill Montagu's Harrier Common Crane Golden Oriole Savis Warbler	Ruff	Spotted Crake	
Rare	31-300 pairs	Bittern Black-necked Grebe Black-tailed Godwit	Pintail Garganey Black Redstart		Wigeon
Scarce	301-1000 pairs	Stone Curlew	Pochard Quail Little Egret Marsh Harrier Goshawk Mediterranean Gull Bearded Tit	Little Ringed Plover Firecrest	
Less scarce	>1000 pairs	Corn Crane Avocet	Shoveler Cetti's Warbler	Hobby Peregrine Water Rail Lesser-spotted Woodpecker Willow Tit	Long-eared Owl Short-eared Owl Hawfinch
Non-native	Black Swan, Snow Goose, Bar-headed Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Muscovy Duck, Wood Duck, Red-crested Pochard, Ruddy Duck, Helmeted Guineafowl, Harris's Hawk, Eagle Owl				

I would like to improve the rate of reporting and the quality of recording of breeding status for these species, particularly those in the moderate and low confidence categories. For some, such as Spotted Crake and Water Rail, the opportunities to prove breeding are extremely limited but nonetheless, counts of calling birds can give better indications of numbers even if no sign of nests and chicks are ever found. For birds out in the countryside, not typically breeding on reserves, more can surely be achieved by club members - Hobby, Quail and Black Redstart, for example. If you come across these species then be particularly observant of their behaviour and habitat, and alert to the possibility of breeding.

The risks with this category of bird, of course, are the threats that come with information; too many people wanting to see a rare bird can potentially lead to disturbance that negatively impacts the breeding attempt. The wrong people finding out about a particular species can lead to the loss of eggs or chicks to those intent on causing harm. I think a county Rare Breeding Bird action group would be the ideal way to improve our work on this aspect of our annual activities; individuals could be screened by the RSPB Investigations Unit, which has files on known egg-collectors, rogue falconers and the like, and then the committee could act as a source of trusted advisors, watchers and checkers. Club members (or others) may come across a rare species in a breeding situation, but have no wish or time to make the repeated visits required to confirm breeding, or to monitor progress. Announcing this situation on Cambirds would not be appropriate! But a RBB group would, I envisage, be ready to marshal the sort of efforts required. Last year, an excellent example was provided by the breeding Black-necked Grebes which chose a public site with no potential for protection. The County Recorder was contacted, and local discreet observers went about watching the progress of the nest; when the chick had hatched and the threat of egg-collecting was over, a call to Garth Peacock resulted in the fantastic photographs that record the success of this event, but the site was still kept secret to avoid the disturbance that a crowd of observers would cause - it was on a very small, open waterbody and not at all suitable for a crowd of viewers. It is also possible that the birds could return this year, so revealing the site after hatching in one year does not protect them for the next.

We have made contact with our neighbouring counties and the national RBBP, so that we have access to the sort of knowledge that could help as the spectrum of species changes - we are going through a rapid period of change in this area, with colonisation by various herons and similar waterbirds, and spread of nearby species such as Stone Curlew and Firecrest for example. Other species are becoming rarer or even extinct, such as Lesser-spotted Woodpecker and Willow Tit, so extra work is required to find the last few individuals. The expertise required is not necessarily on hand within the club, but sharing knowledge locally can really help. At our inaugural meeting, for example, we learned of the amazing behaviour of breeding Montagu's Harriers; the parents may roost 20km from the nest site once the chicks are well developed, and seeing a male bird through the summer somewhere almost certainly means a nest is underway; this had strong recollections for us, with the summering male at Wicken Fen in 2013. As they can nest in crops, it is possible that a pair bred and no-one saw the female out in the surrounding farmland. Alert to this possibility, we would now undertake more detailed searches of a much wider area if such an event were to occur again. Evidence for this breeding behaviour comes from satellite-tagged birds in the Netherlands, where the species is thriving, compared to our situation where most breeding attempts fail. The most likely cause of failure is deliberate human interference, so the more clued up we can be, the more able we will be to protect them.

If you would like to be on the Cambridgeshire Rare Breeding Bird action group, please contact Louise Bacon, County Recorder.

Vince Lea

A Plea from the Treasurer

The Club is very grateful to members who pay their annual subscription by Standing Order (SO). However, of those that do so, some 130 are still paying at the old (pre-2014) rate. Some of these may be being paid at the former full rate (£14) rather than the new senior/concession rate (£12) to which you are now entitled. If this is the case & you still want to pay at the old full rate would you please notify me by email on swainrog@aol.com so that I can annotate your membership record. You then need take no action with your bank.

On the other hand, if you have simply overlooked amending your SO, could you please take the following actions:

1. Amend your SO with effect from 1 January 2016 directly with your bank. (You'll understand that I don't want to process a great volume of individual letters to members' banks). For those of you with online banking this should be very straightforward to do.

2. Pay any arrears due for 2014 & 2015 via your bank, ensuring that your name is quoted as a reference so that I can identify the payment. The Club's bank account details are: NatWest Bank; Account 08205116; Sort code 60-04-23. Again, this should be very straight forward for those of you with online banking, even if it requires a separate transaction from amending your SO.

If it does prove difficult, a cheque payable to Cambridgeshire Bird Club can be sent to me at my home address: 4, Bakers Field, Dry Drayton, Cambridge CB23 8EG.

The membership rates are:	2015	Pre-2014
Full	£ 17	£ 14
Senior/Concessionary	£ 12	£ 10
Student	£ 8	£ 6

Roger Swain

Birding in Cambridge and London

After several decades of living in London, we moved to Cambridge just over a year ago. There were many factors to consider when deciding where to move to but as birding and other natural history are a very important part of our lives, we knew it had to be somewhere we could continue to pursue these interests.

It's a common misconception among people who don't live in London that there must be little in the way of birding interest there. Nothing could be further from the truth. London has a very active birding scene, and a wide variety of habitats including woodland, rivers, reservoirs, parks and heath and, importantly, miles of green corridors formed by private gardens. Everywhere is accessible by public transport, so having a car isn't necessary. There are a number of excellent birding and natural history groups, and we were active members of three of these.

As far as species go, London can provide a surprising variety of birds both common and more scarce, and sometimes at unexpectedly central locations. To give just one example, since its opening in 2000, our nearest significant site was the London Wetland Centre. The location was already well known to birders as Barn Elms Reservoirs, a bleak, exposed place with no facilities but which could turn up scarcer species of grebes and ducks in winter. In its new existence it has lost a lot of its former solitude but has gained a tearoom, and the diversity of wildlife, not just birds, has increased enormously. Just a few of the more unexpected species we've seen in the course of regular visits over the years are Spotted Crake, Woodcock, Wood Sandpiper, Goosander and Short-eared Owl. Little Ringed Plover, Lapwing and Redshank are regular breeders. On one memorable occasion a pair of Avocet bred, although sadly the chicks were all taken within a few days by crows or herons. Whinchat, Wheatear and Yellow Wagtail are regular on passage. Wintering Bitterns arrived two years after the reserve opened and have been a regular annual attraction ever since –

we once saw four at once when the lakes were frozen. Within the London area there are many other excellent birding sites turning up all sorts of rarities as well as reliable regular species. We even shared in the good Waxwing years, with a flock outside Warren Street tube station and another which stayed for weeks to feed on one tree in a shopping street in Ealing.

So we left behind a variety of opportunities to indulge our love of birds and natural history, but relocating to the southern edge of Cambridge has changed this aspect of our life considerably. Like many London birders, we were already very familiar with most of the major sites in East Anglia so have been able to enjoy closer access to these. One novelty has been to explore some familiar places in greater depth, such as discovering Burwell Fen lurking behind Wicken Fen; visiting the north side of the Nene Washes; turning east instead of west from the car park at Eldernell to discover March Farmers, which gave us the best variety of charismatic species in one day that we've had for a very long time. We've also given a considerable amount of time to seeking out and exploring an array of sites we'd never even heard of a year ago – Kingfishers Bridge, the wonderful Ouse Fen, Cherry Hinton Chalk Pits to name just three. Some of these we were led to by reading sightings reports, and for others we joined organised walks. We have an interest in all wildlife, including butterflies, have been lucky enough to find a couple of the scarcer species locally.

A year on, the novelty of being able to access the countryside within a few minutes of home hasn't worn off – to pop in for a walk round our nearest RSPB reserve, Fowlmere, or to stay out in the countryside until dusk without a long journey home are still new and exciting. And what about the difference in the birds we've seen? We almost miss seeing and hearing Ring-necked Parakeets. In London, small flocks used to fly low over our garden twice a day as they travelled to and from a night-time mass roost a couple of miles away. It's not so much fun when a group descend on your bird feeders, though, and although they may be a slightly exotic rarity here at the moment, be careful what you wish for! We've noticed very few Jays here, presumably because of the relative shortage of woodland. We've seen fewer Peregrines than in London – maybe because there are fewer Feral Pigeons! But in exchange we've found it much easier to see a whole lot of species rarely, if ever, seen in central London – for example Nightingale, Turtle Dove, Grey Partridge, Skylark, Jackdaw, Rook and wintering swans.

The biggest challenge we are facing now is in our own garden. We have a small garden, similar in size to the one we had in London, but in a brand new development where all the gardens are very raw with no mature vegetation. At our previous home, we had all the usual garden birds in good numbers (with the notable exception of House Sparrows which had been common but disappeared completely from our road in the 1990s), plus a few more surprising visitors including a Grey Wagtail that came to our pond daily for several weeks one winter, the occasional Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff and a Redstart on migration, and regular wintering Blackcaps. In our new garden, Pied Wagtail is the only bird species we've had so far. We're optimistic, and have very recently introduced a pond and will be doing more planting although we fear it will be a while before it's worth registering our garden for BTO Garden Birdwatch. On the positive side, the Wildlife Trust is developing a new country park adjacent to the housing and there we have already seen winter thrushes, Red-legged Partridge, Skylark, Meadow Pipit, Green Woodpecker and Brown Hare.

A year on from our move, we've found the experience of living in the Cambridge area extremely positive, not just in terms of wildlife but because we've found it a good place to live for all sorts of reasons. We do have to use our car a bit more, though!

Jill and Jeremy Aldred

CBC Winter Garden Bird Survey 2014-15 – preliminary report

I would like to say a big thank you to everybody who has sent in their results for the garden bird survey. If you have not done so yet I am looking forward to hearing from you. Please send in your

results by the 30th April to gardenbirds@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk. If you are having problems sending the forms to me please do not hesitate to get in touch. I have been asked to give a few preliminary results from the forms I have received so far. Firstly, there have been some species observed that are not on the list on the survey form. These include: Mallard, Treecreeper, Red-legged Partridge and Red Kite. The greatest number of species observed in one garden was 36.

Several people added notes about behaviour that they observed or feeding strategies used during the period of the survey. Some observers did not feed the birds all the time but concentrated on feeding during the coldest months of the year. There is not enough data in this survey to analyse the full effects of this on bird occurrence. The presence of diseases such as Trichomonosis, which particularly affects Greenfinches, was noted in one area and a request was sent out to neighbours to stop feeding to reduce the spread of the disease. One other observer noted the reduction in Greenfinches with just one presence noted after a period of absence. Ivy berries were noted as food for both Mistle Thrush and Blackcap, by two observers.

In one garden a female Sparrowhawk landed in the garden pond. On another day a female Sparrowhawk tried the pond only to find it iced over; it landed on a post, apparently to recover from the shock. There are photos to illustrate this in the e-bulletin (January 2015, number 19). Another report was of a Sparrowhawk almost scalping an observer. The Sparrowhawk was chasing a sparrow that flew over the observer's head followed by the Sparrowhawk; the sparrow escaped! A Feral Pigeon was not so lucky, as a Sparrowhawk brought it down and sat in the garden to pluck it. Several people have noted that Goldfinches feed on nyger seed in the garden. One observer used nyger seed for a few weeks, then did not put any out for about three weeks and then started again. The Goldfinches were absent for the same three weeks and returned apparently in response to the nyger seed. It was noted that once the Goldfinches had been encouraged in to the garden with the nyger seed they then did go on to feed on other seeds and to forage on old flower heads.

I am hoping to be able to place the final report for the survey in the Cambridgeshire Annual Bird Report for 2014. I hope that everybody that took part in the winter survey enjoyed it as much as I have enjoyed setting it up. Due to the encouraging feedback that I have received, I have gone on to set up the Cambridgeshire Bird Club summer garden bird survey. It is set to run directly on from the winter survey. I do hope that you will take part in this and continue to survey the birds in your garden through the year. This survey will highlight which species of birds are using the gardens across the county through the summer months. Please see the details on the website at Cambridgeshire Bird Club Summer Garden Bird Survey 2015.

Rebecca Buisson

Forthcoming meetings

Friday 10th April, Cottenham Village College 7.30 for 8pm

Please note that the talks advertised for April and October have been switched around.

Ancient Egypt – wildlife art detective by Jackie Garner

Egyptian art has some of the most beautifully restrained (and some of the most outrageously flamboyant) images known to man. This presentation looks at the portrayal of wildlife in ancient Egypt and investigates the tools, pigments and methods employed by Egyptian artists.

Wildlife artist, Jackie Garner has been painting wildlife and the natural world for over 30 years. She originally studied at the Medway College of Design, before becoming the part-time education officer at Gloucestershire's Nature in Art. She says "That role allowed me to indulge my love of wildlife art, and I was inspired - and taught - by some of the great British wildlife artists - Robert Gillmor, Peter Partington, Bruce Pearson, Greg Poole... before I knew it my metamorphosis from a 'naturalist interested in art to an artist interested in nature' was complete.

Friday 8th May, Cottenham Village College 7.30 for 8pm

Extraordinary General Meeting: the purpose of this short meeting will be to adopt the club's accounts for 2014/5. This was not possible at the recent AGM because though publicised on the website, the accounts were not available for inspection at the meeting. To be followed by:

Shrinking Habitats, Declining Butterflies and Climate Change by Nick Greatorex-Davies

Nick will seek to highlight the plight of many of our butterflies and the factors responsible for their decline in Britain. He will cover some of the conservation work that is being done in Britain to try and halt these declines and also the range expansion of a number of species that is taking place, apparently in response to climate change. He will also highlight some of the global environmental problems, not least of which is the world's ever increasing human population.

Nick Greatorex-Davies worked as a professional entomologist, specialising mainly in Lepidoptera, at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Monks Wood, from 1974 until January 2009. For 12 years he was co-ordinator of the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, at Monks Wood. From 2003 to 2009 he led butterfly and moth tours to Bulgaria. He is a member of Butterfly Conservation and currently serves on the committee of its European Interest Group which seeks to help in survey and conservation work on butterflies through partners in countries throughout Europe.

Friday 12th June, Field Visit: Greys Farm, Therfield, near Royston, 7.30pm.

Edward Darling is a passionate and practical farmer-cum-conservationist, and will show us the many measures he has put in place on his farm to improve bird numbers, particularly of red-listed species such as Grey Partridge, Lapwing, Yellow Wagtail and Corn Bunting. Booking is not essential but helps ensure we don't start the tour without you. Contact Vince Lea. To find Greys, take the A505 to the Western end of the Royston bypass, and then take the Therfield and Royston turn off the dual carriageway at the roundabout. This road turns left, and then very soon on the right there is a turn to Therfield - you will see a carpark for the heath ahead of you, but continue up the hill - Greys is near the rise of the hill on the left, on a marked turning in the trees (TL337395).



Great Grey Shrike at Swaffham Prior Fen. Photo by Toby Austin.

Membership Secretary & New Members

Clive Sinclair is the new Membership Secretary following the retirement of Bruce Martin from this role; Clive's contact details are in the box below. We welcome the following new members – Howard Birley of Eaton Ford, Andy Hannaford of Soham, Adrian Hoyes of Cambridge, Martin Leader of Cambridge, Taeko Mugford of Chatteris, James Page (the warden) of Kingfishers Bridge Wicken, and Rosemary Setchfield of Great Cambourne.

Club Contacts

Chair: Vince Lea Tel: 01223 263962 chairman@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

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cbcbulletin@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk or write to CB at 200 Chesterton Road, Cambridge, CB4 1NE.

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Website: Chris Quay webmaster@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

Other Council Members: Ali Cooper, Mike Foley

The **Cambridgeshire Bird Club** exists to promote the conservation of birds and their habitats in the county, identify areas of conservation value, and advance the education of the public in the study of birds. www.cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

The editors would welcome contributions to the E-Bulletin and print edition, on topics such as identification problems, behaviour, summaries of club talks, and book reviews. Contact us at cbcbulletin@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk, and use this address to let us know if you would like to receive your bulletin in e-mail format rather than paper.

Bird Records, sightings and news

If you have seen a scarce or local bird, please submit the news to the '[What's about](#)' page on the Club website via [Pete and Paul](#) who maintain an up-to-date selection of recent highlights. You can also report interesting sightings on the [Cambirds](#) email group (not run by the Club, but we access the records). Any major rarities can be phoned in to Birdline East Anglia on 07941 333970.

Full lists of your records should continue to be submitted monthly to **Louise Bacon** the County Recorder, preferably using the [spreadsheet](#) available on the Records section of the website, **by the 5th of the following month.**

GOOD BIRDING!