

CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB

Bulletin No. 390



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

RECENT REPORTS JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2007

These are unchecked reports rather than confirmed records; comments are made by Bruce Martin (Wildfowl, Divers to Herons), Vincent Lea (Gamebirds, Raptors, Rails), Jonathan Taylor (Waders), John Harding (Gulls and Terns), Jon Pavey (Pigeons to Woodpeckers), Jono Leadley (Larks to Thrushes), Mike Foley (Warblers to Tits), and David Heath (Wood Nuthatch to Buntings) and Vicki Harley (Hybrids and Exotica). If you have valid reasons to dispute comments (e.g. further records) please forward these to the county recorder (address on back page).

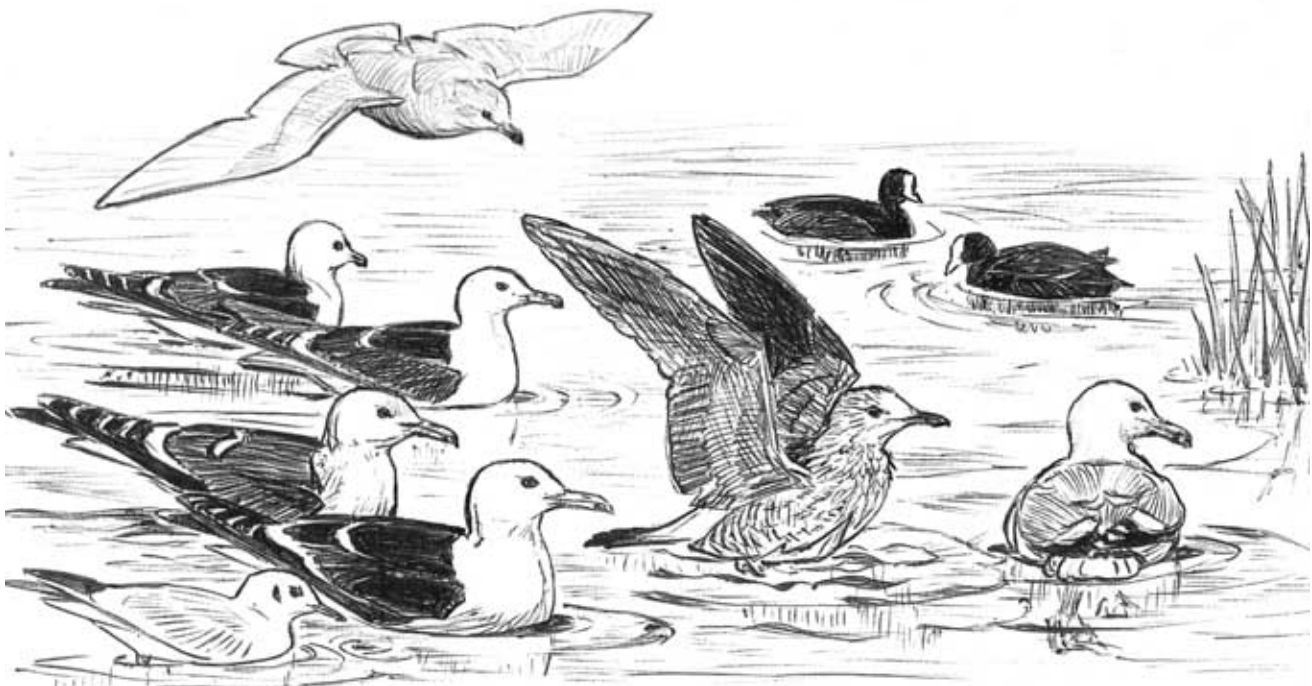
Roger Clarke – Memorial Appeal

Please read about – and donate to – the Club's project to commemorate former Club Chairman Roger Clarke on p8.

Field Events

In May, we are organizing a Warbler Workshop at Fowlmere RSPB reserve for those wishing to improve their identification skills. In June there will be a guided walk at Woodwalton Fen. See p8.

*An Iceland Gull joins a gathering of gulls bathing on a gravel pit
by Graham Easy*



Numbers in brackets indicate January and February maximums.

WILDFOWL

Mute Swan At Fen Drayton GP (65; 26), the Nene Washes (50; 71), Ouse Fen (55; 310), the Ouse Washes (98; 152) and Paxton Pits (85; 84). Smaller figures were noted at other 17 sites. An interesting discovery made by one observer at Needingworth GP was of a cob swan resting beside a dead fox.

The swan had a bite low on the neck and was blood stained, whilst the fox had feathers in its mouth and blood dripping from its nose. It would seem that the swan had killed the fox after being attacked, probably with a peck to the head. The fox was male and in very good condition.

Tundra Swan At the Nene Washes (703; 533) and the Ouse Washes (760; 871). Up to 25 birds were roosting at Kingfishers bridge in the second half of January.

Whooper Swan At the Nene Washes (262; 136) and the Ouse Washes (1417; 1144). Fifteen birds were at Prickwillow on Jan 11th and 12 at Grafham Water on Jan 22nd.

Pink-footed Goose A flock of 140 were to the north of the A1101 Littleport to Welney road on Jan 17th and 131+ near Four Balls Farm on Jan 19th, no doubt the same flock. A single bird was at Kingfishers Bridge on Jan 30th.

Greater White-fronted Goose A bird was present with Greylags at the Ouse Washes near Earith on Feb 18th.

Greylag Goose At Kingfishers Bridge (101; 127). The only other three-figure count was Roswell Pits Ely with 138 on Feb 11th.

Canada Goose At Grafham Water (212; 217), Kingfishers Bridge (455; 336), Ouse Fen (90; 0), the Ouse Washes (570; 124) and Paxton Pits (8; 101). One hundred at Ouse Fen on Dec 24th was the only other three-figure count.

Barnacle Goose Single figures were noted at 7 sites and a flock of 104 birds were at Paxton Pits on Feb 4th.

Egyptian Goose Five birds were seen at the Ouse Washes on Jan 14th and 3 at Barleycroft GP on Feb 19th. Also noted at 5 sites.

Common Shelduck At the Nene Washes (80; 73), the Ouse Washes (3; 73) and Paxton Pits (13; 16). Double figures were noted at the Cam Washes Upware (12), Grafham Water (12) and Kingfishers Bridge (14).

Mandarin Up to 8 were present at Burghley Park Stamford during January and 6 at Grafham Water on Feb 4th. Singles were seen at Kings Dyke NR and Paxton Pits.

Eurasian Wigeon At Fen Drayton GP (1713; 2960), Grafham Water (25; 192), Kingfishers Bridge (643; 600), Needingworth GP (1431; 1555), the Nene Washes (5612; 7210), the Ouse Washes (10511; 13613), Paxton Pits (1084; 929), Shropshire's Reservoir (205; 174) and Wicken Fen (575; 511). Also reported from 7 other sites.

American Wigeon The male at Barleycroft GP continued to be seen to at least Feb 11th.

Gadwall At Buckden GP 110+ on Feb 17th, Fen Drayton GP (285; 184), the Nene Washes (31; 147), the Ouse Washes (18; 166), Paxton Pits (212; 202) and Wicken Fen (49; 105). Double figures were recorded at 12 other sites.

Eurasian Teal At Fen Drayton GP (80; 196), Grafham Water (229; 139), Kingfishers Bridge (264; 112), the Nene Washes (160; 1080), Ouse Fen (219; 40), the Ouse Washes (336; 1387), Paxton Pits (255; 141) and Wicken Fen (126; 259). Double figures were recorded at 6 other sites.

Mallard At Fen Drayton GP (95; 129), Grafham Water (206; 245), Kingfishers Bridge (66; 204), the Nene Washes (259; 351), Ouse Fen (150; 140), the Ouse Washes (1232; 1146), Paxton Pits (397; 148) and Wicken Fen (96; 113). Double figures were noted at 10 other sites.

Northern Pintail At Fen Drayton GP (169; 554), the Nene Washes (680; 1931) and the Ouse Washes (151; 1051).

Garganey A female was present at Paxton Pits from Jan 7th to 10th.

Northern Shoveler At Fen Drayton GP (82; 63), Grafham Water (74; 124), Kingfishers Bridge (44; 58), the Nene Washes (192; 432), Ouse Fen (12; 20), the Ouse Washes (32; 176), Paxton Pits (32; 51) and Wicken Fen (44; 148). Also noted at 8 other sites.

Red-crested Pochard Five birds were at Ferry Meadows on Jan 4th and 3 males at Paxton Pits on Jan 29th. A single bird was at Orton BP on Feb 7th and 3 birds at Grafham Water on Feb 19th.

Common Pochard At Fen Drayton GP (121; 84), Ouse Fen (50; 70), the Ouse Washes (1218; 2289) and Paxton Pits (124; 164). Double figures were noted at 4 other sites.

Tufted Duck At Fen Drayton GP (251; 269), Grafham Water (132; 133), the Ouse Washes (871; 1525) and Paxton Pits (405; 502). Double figures were seen at 15 other sites.

Greater Scaup Two birds were at Kingfishers Bridge on Jan 1st and a female at Needingworth GP on Jan 17th.

Common Scoter A female was present at the Ouse Washes on Jan 21st.

Goldeneye At Buckden GP (22; 60), Fen Drayton GP (64; 90), Grafham Water (27; 57), Paxton Pits (123; 138). Also noted at 7 other sites.

Smew Seven birds seen at Fen Drayton GP in early January had moved on by the 15th. Nine birds were seen at Needingworth GP and Paxton Pits during the period. Two males were at Landbeach GP on Jan 19th, 2 at Ouse Fen on Jan 28th to Feb 11th, and one bird at Marsh Lane GP on Jan 8th.

Goosander Eighteen birds were at Burghley Park Stamford on Jan 4th with 4 still present on Feb 26th. Sixteen at Grafham Water on Feb 7th was the maximum at this site and 12 birds were at Paxton Pits during January and February. Single figures were seen at 6 other sites including the female with the broken wing at the Ouse Washes on Jan 13th.

Ruddy Duck Noted at 3 sites.

GAMEBIRDS

Red-legged Partridge Five sites reported low double-figure coveys, with smaller groups reported from a further 4 sites

Grey Partridge More widely reported than Red-legged at 13 localities, but population size generally smaller with only two double-figure counts

Common Pheasant Nine records came from 5 localities, mostly double figure counts. 21 in a garden at Farcet Fen shows what can be achieved with generous feeding!

DIVERS TO HERONS

Little Grebe Double figures noted at Mepal GP (26) and Paxton Pits (14). Single figures at 15 sites.

Great Crested Grebe Counts at Block Fen GP (19; 12), Fen Drayton GP (13; 14), Grafham Water (431; 332), Ouse Washes (5; 34) and Paxton Pits (15; 31). Single figures were noted at 10 other sites.

Red-necked Grebe The long-staying bird at Fen Drayton GP remained to Jan 10th. A bird was seen on the Ouse Washes on Jan 8th and 14th. A bird that was seen at Buckden GP from Jan 15th until the period end may have been present from 2006.

So how many birds were in the County at this time?

Black-necked Grebe A bird was present at Paxton Pits from Jan 23rd till the period end. Another was at the Ouse Washes on Feb 18th.

Great Cormorant At Grafham Water (60; 114). Dusk roost counts at Paxton Pits were (207; 304) and double figures were reported from 6 sites and single figures at 9 sites. At the Ouse Washes there were 64 occupied nests and at Paxton Pits 107 nests were occupied.

European Shag A bird was seen on the River Nene at the town bridge Peterborough on Jan 10th.

Great Bittern Two birds were seen going to roost at Ely BF on Jan 25th. Single birds were seen at Fen Drayton GP, Kingfishers Bridge, Lord de Ramsey Reservoir Ramsey, Paxton Pits, Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen during the period.

Little Egret Single figures were reported from 15 sites with maximums of 4 at Newborough Fen and the Ouse Washes. Three were at Fen Drayton GP, Paxton Pits, Waterbeach Fen and Wicken Fen.

Grey Heron Double figures noted at Fen Drayton GP (10), Grafham Water (13), the Nene Washes (15), the Ouse Washes (35) and Paxton Pits (11). Nests at the Cam Washes (4) and Paxton Pits (10).

RAPTORS

Red Kite A typical increase compared to recent months, with reports from 9 sites including 3 at Old Weston on Jan 30th, and 5 sightings of 2 birds, 2 of which came from a woodland site in the south-west of the county in February, separated by 9 days.

Eurasian Marsh Harrier Regularly recorded at Kingfishers Bridge, with a maximum of 6 on Feb 3rd, with 8 other wetland localities reporting the species, mostly several times suggesting widespread winter residents.

Hen Harrier With only 5 localities reporting this species, and only Wicken Fen hosting 2 birds, this species has had a poor winter. Other regular

reports from Kingfishers Bridge and Woodwalton Fen.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk Forty-four widespread records, 3+ around Elm and 3 ringed at Wicken being the highest counts. Displaying pair seen at Paxton Pits on Feb 24th.

Common Buzzard Fifty-one records, very widespread, mainly singles but 3 Eversden Wood and 4 at Grafham.

Common Kestrel Widespread, with 44 reports, but rather low counts from the wetland sites; 9 at Nene Washes, 5–6 Ouse Washes, 5 at Farcet Fen, and 3s at Kingfishers Bridge and Woodwalton Fen. Pair attacking a Sparrowhawk at Coe Fen in January presumably defending territory.

Merlin Records from 12 localities; all singles save 2 at Ouse Fen on Jan 6th. Coton (Feb 15th) only record away from fenland.

Peregrine Falcon Thirty-eight records, 3 at Kingfishers Bridge (Jan 23rd), 2 at Nene Washes (Jan 12th and 24th), otherwise singles mainly at fenland sites; 1 at Girton seen twice in February. Prey items attempted or taken include Golden Plover, Black-headed Gull and Lapwing.

RAILS

Water Rail Twenty-nine records came from 16 sites, highest numbers at Kingfishers Bridge (max 17), Wicken Fen (10+) and Ely beet factory with 7.

Common Moorhen Widely reported in low double figures, main site Ouse Washes (149, 132). 89 at Lammass land in Cambridge notable. .

Common Coot Forty records. Webs counts from Ouse Washes (649; 1173), Paxton Pits (819; 526), Nene Washes (450; 562), Fen Drayton (468; 355), Grafham Water (394; 280), Landbeach (124; 66) give cumulative totals of just under 3000 in both months.

WADERS

Eurasian Oystercatcher First of year at Paxton Pits on Feb 5th, recorded from a further 7 sites during the month with an exceptional 41 at Foul Anchor (roosting on bank of R. Nene).

Ringed Plover First of year at Paxton Pits on Feb 13th, with peak count of 11 on 25th. Also single at Ouse Fen on 18th.

European Golden Plover Highest counts from Nene Washes (1500; 8500), Ouse Fen/Needingworth GP (5500; 2500), Stretham (Gravel Farm) (5100; 0), Fen Drayton GP (1640; 0), Paxton Pits (4000; 500), Swaffham Prior Fen (3000 3145), Trumpington (3000; 0), Comberton (Westfield Farm), Kingfishers Bridge (900; 1800), Toft (600; 238).

Grey Plover Grafham Water on Jan 23rd and 2 on Feb 8th, Wicken Fen on Feb 15th and Kingfishers Bridge on Feb 20th.

Northern Lapwing Generally low numbers – highest counts Nene Washes (3020; 4720), Swaffham Prior Fen (4000; 2210), Ouse Washes (1166; 2290), Paxton Pits (1500; 1200), further groups of up to 1000 from 9 sites.

Dunlin Highest counts from Barleycroft GP/Needingworth GP (180; 260), Fen Drayton (100; 1), Paxton Pits (48; 12).

Ruff Highest count from Needingworth GP (60; 50) Ouse Washes (1; 68), Fen Drayton GP (36; 4), Paxton Pits (19; 12), Nene Washes (0; 33), Fen Drayton GP (18; 5), Mare Fen up to 18 in Feb, and 1–5 from a further 4 sites.

Jack Snipe Paxton Pits (3; 5), Kings Dyke NR up to 4 in January and 1–2 Ouse Washes, Wicken Fen, Orton and Maxey Pits and Kingfishers Bridge.

Common Snipe The lagoons at Grafham Water were again found to hold good numbers with max counts of 70 and 35. Other sites – Ouse Washes 42 on Feb 5th, Paxton Pits (25; 11), Kingfishers Bridge (2; 11), Ouse Fen (6; 11), Wicken Fen (8; 8)

Eurasian Woodcock Hardwick Wood held at least 6 in February, elsewhere up to 3 at Wicken Fen and Wilburton, 1–2 at Paxton Pits and Fulbourn Fen and singles from a further 4 sites.

Black-tailed Godwit Highest counts from Nene Washes (650, 1500), Ouse Washes (100, 1500), Fen Drayton (380, 520), Needingworth (350, 520), Paxton Pits (124, 180), Grafham Water 180 over on Feb 18th.

Eurasian Curlew Once again Foul Anchor comes up with an exceptional county count of 59 on Feb 25th, elsewhere in February 2 at Grafham Water on 18th, and singles at Paxton Pits, Ouse Fen and Wicken Fen.

Spotted Redshank Single at Needingworth on Feb 15th.

Common Redshank Highest counts from Barleycroft GP (210, 170), Ouse Washes (3, 150), Nene Washes (42, 103), Berry Fen 115, Foul Anchor 27, Paxton Pits (14, 15), Grafham Water (13, 8), and 1–10 from a further 5 sites.

Green Sandpiper Exceptional January count of 10 at Flag Fen on 26th, 1–4 at Paxton Pits and 1–2 from a further 6 sites.

Common Sandpiper Wintering birds present at Grafham Water to at least Feb 23rd and at Foul Anchor on Feb 25th.

Ruddy Turnstone A run of records from Ouse Washes on Jan 8th, 2 on 22nd–23rd and 1 on Feb 19th.

SKUAS TO TERNS

Mediterranean Gull Ones and twos throughout January at several sites. Fewer records in February with just 2 birds at Ferry Meadows on 3rd and 1 at Grafham on 23rd.

Little Gull Single birds at Grafham on Jan 19th and Maxey GP on Feb 10th.

Black-headed Gull Highest counts: over 5000 at Fen Drayton on Jan 1st, and 1285 at Shropshires Reservoir on Jan 5th, falling to 950 there on Jan 29th. Numbers elsewhere below 500, although numbers at Ditton Meadows and Milton over 400 on occasions.

Common Gull Two-and-a-half thousand birds were at Grafham on Feb 1st. Counts at Paxton reached 340 on Jan 27th and 440 on Feb 4th, and at Shropshires reservoir 173 on Jan 5th.

Lesser Black-backed Gull Over 1200 roosted on the Ouse Washes on Jan 7th, and over 800 were at Grafham on Feb 1st. Counts at Shropshires: 42 on Jan 5th and 58 on Feb 1st.

Herring Gull Single-figure numbers reported generally, but over 2300 at Grafham on Feb 1st, and 180 at Milton on Jan 7th.

Yellow-legged Gull Thirty-four records received over the period from 10 different sites. Normally at least 2 birds present on each occasion. Highest counts: 12 Milton Tip Feb 8th, 7 Grafham Jan 13th, 6 Long Drove Jan 2nd and Ouse Washes Jan 7th. Other sites to record birds during this period: Fen Drayton, Shropshires, Dogsthorpe, Fletton, Milton Butts Lane and Paxton Pits.

Caspian Gull Twenty-four records from 8 different sites, normally in ones and twos, but 3 at Fen Drayton Jan 5th and 4 at Milton Tip Feb 8th. Other sites Long Drove, Fen Drayton, Ouse Washes, Kingfishers Bridge, Shropshires and Grafham.

Iceland Gull Singles recorded at Grafham on Jan 6th, 12th and 15th, (referring to at least two separate birds). Also singles at Ouse Washes on Jan 7th, Tanholt GP on Jan 13th and Milton Tip on Jan 24th.

Kumlein's Gull An adult recorded at Grafham in the evening roost on Feb 18th.

Glaucous Gull A second-winter at Willow Hall Lane Eye, Thorney on Jan 21st and an adult roosting on the lake at Kingfishers Bridge on Jan 22nd.

Great Black-backed Gull Kingfishers Bridge had the bulk of numbers, with up to 650 in January, falling in February to between 50 and 81. Elsewhere three-figure numbers at Milton, Paxton Pits and Grafham. A bird seen at Paxton Pits on Feb 25th had been ringed in Norway.

Kittiwake One at Paxton Pits on Jan 14th.

NEAR PASSERINES

Feral Pigeon Over 210 recorded in Wisbech town centre in both January and February. Only 2 other records!

Stock Pigeon Recorded from 15 sites. Highest count of 92 birds at Comberton on Jan 20th.

Common Wood Pigeon Seven records of over 500 birds. Maximum count of 1200 birds recorded feeding on oilseed rape at Connington Hall Farm on Jan 30th.

Eurasian Collared Dove Recorded from 8 locations. Maximum of 30 at the Ouse Washes visitor centre on Jan 13th.

Rose-ringed Parakeet One probable at Fowlmere on Jan 4th.

Barn Owl Fifty records from 24 sites. Generally singles except 2 or 3 birds on 12 occasions. Locally ringed bird killed by vehicle at Ramsey.

Little Owl Twenty-two records (usually 1 or 2 birds) with wide geographic distribution. Six of the 14 February records were of calling birds

Tawny Owl Singles recorded from 9 sites; 3 birds recorded at Kingfishers Bridge and Wicken Fen.

Long-eared Owl Single birds recorded at 4 sites, all in January, widely distributed across the county.

Short-eared Owl Two records of 11 birds on the Nene Washes in January and 9 other records of 1–4 birds.

Common Kingfisher Generally singles recorded (18 records). Paxton Pits continued to have the highest number (4) on Nov 5th.

Green Woodpecker Widely recorded (24 locations) with maximum of 4+ at Elm on Feb 28th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker First drumming recorded on Jan 14th at Paxton Pits. Generally 1–3 birds recorded regularly throughout the period.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Six records, singles except for 2 birds passing through a garden in Great Shelford.

PASSERINES

Skylark Reported from 7 sites in January and 13 sites in February. The largest flocks were 47 at Westfield Farm, Comberton, on Jan 14th and 54 at Swaffham Fen on Feb 11th.

Meadow Pipit Reported from 12 sites in January and 10 sites in February. Notable counts included 50 at Little Eversden on Jan 15th, 49 at the Ouse Washes on Jan 8th and 40 there on Jan 22nd and at Wicken Fen on Jan 29th. In February, 110 were in a set-aside field adjacent to Cow Lane Sewage Works, Godmanchester, on 6th and 84 on the Ouse Washes on 5th.

Water Pipit Singles reported from 4 sites during January, with 2 at Kingfishers Bridge on the 30th. Reported from 3 sites in February, with 5 seen at the Ouse Washes on 5th and 3 there on 19th. Two were seen at Kingfishers Bridge on a couple of dates.

Grey Wagtail Reported from 12 sites during the period. The only notable count was of 3 at Paxton Pits on Jan 7th.

Pied Wagtail Reported from only 12 sites during the period. Notable counts include 260 at Kingfishers Bridge (roost) on Feb 24th, 100 at Ely Beet Factory on Jan 20th (roost) and 54 at Grafham Water on Jan 13th.

Bohemian Waxwing At Orwell, 5 were seen feeding on berries on Feb 11th. The flock increased to 7 on Feb 17th and then 8 on 22nd. They proved very popular during their stay, attracting many local birders. In addition, a single was present near Chippenham on Feb 6th and 7th, with another individual was seen at Woodwalton Fen on Feb 12th and 18th.

Wren Reported from 9 sites during the period, with the only notable roost count from Kingfishers Bridge, where 13 were noted on Feb 1st.

Duncock Reported from 9 sites during the period.

Robin Reported from 9 sites, with notable counts of 18 recorded at Fox's Bridge Farm, Toft, on Jan 13th.

Stonechat Present at many sites throughout the period, with reports from 15 sites in January and 14 sites in February. Notable counts in January include 5 at Paxton Pits on 14th, the Ouse Washes on the 22nd, with 4 at Ouse Fen on 31st and Kingfishers Bridge on 14th. In February, higher numbers noted, with 10 at the Ouse Washes on 5th and at the Nene

Washes on the 19th. Five were still at Paxton Pits on 4th, with 4 at Wicken Fen on 28th.

Blackbird Records received from 8 sites during the period. The only notable count was of 24 from Fox's Bridge Farm, Toft, on Feb 7th.

Fieldfare Reported from 16 sites during the period. Notable counts include a massive 1360 in 4 flocks on Grunty Fen on Jan 24th, 500 at Thriplow on Feb 13th, 450 feeding on windfall apples at Elm on Jan 27th, 435 on stubble at Wentworth on Jan 21st and 250 at Toft on Feb 14th.

Song Thrush Reported from 13 sites during the period. Singing birds noted throughout presumably due to unusually mild weather. The only notable count was of 12 at Fox's Bridge Farm, Toft, on Feb 7th.

Redwing Reported from 14 sites during the period. 400 in a field next to Hardwick Wood, Toft, on Feb 18th, was the largest count, with 70 at Madingley Road Park and Ride, Cambridge on Feb 16th including a number of singing birds.

Mistle Thrush Reported from 10 sites during the period. Birds recorded singing throughout the period, but no notable counts received.

Cetti's Warbler Present at Kingfishers Bridge and Wicken Fen (January and February), and at Woodwalton Fen (February only). The maximum was 5+ at Wicken Fen on Feb 28th.

Blackcap Present at 2 sites during January only, at 5 sites in February only; and at 3 other sites in both January and February. Up to 3 birds were found at Milton CP (Cambridge) and Over. Overall, a slight increase in sites over 2006 for this period.

Common Chiffchaff From 1–3 birds at 12 sites, with reports of singing birds from mid-January onwards.

Goldcrest At 11 sites, with monthly maxima of 6 (January) and 4 (February) for Wicken Fen, these being more than double those for Paxton Pits.

Firecrest One was seen at Kingfishers Bridge on Jan 8th.

Bearded Tit In January only, 1–2+ were present at Kingfishers Bridge at various dates. Ely BF held 5+ on Feb 1st but not subsequently.

Long-tailed Tit Reported from 12 sites, numbers ranged up to 14 at Waterbeach Fen, on Jan 20th.

Marsh Tit Reported from Abbots Ripton, Alconbury, Cobb's Wood (Wimpole) – 7 birds, Eversden Wood, Hardwick Wood, Hayley Wood, Knapwell, Overhall Grove, Paxton Pits, Wimpole Hall and Woodwalton Fen.

Coal Tit Single birds were seen at 7 sites with a maximum of 2 birds at 3 other sites.

Blue Tit 1–21 individuals were reported from 13 sites and in addition at Wicken Fen, 184 different birds were handled by the ringing team there during the period.

Great Tit 1–9 individuals were reported from 13 sites and in addition at Wicken Fen, 129 different individuals were handled by the ringing team during January and February.

Wood Nuthatch An increase in records with 4 birds at Little Less Wood, Abbots Ripton and 3 at Cobb's Wood, Wimpole. Other reports from 3 sites were of single birds.

Eurasian Treecreeper Recorded from 10 sites mostly involved 1–2 birds but 3 were reported at Wicken Fen, Cobb's Wood, Wimpole and Kingfishers Bridge.

Eurasian Jay Reported from 12 sites during the period with a maximum count of 6+ at Elm on Jan 31st and 4 from Paxton Pits on Feb 25th.

Black-billed Magpie A report of 65 birds coming to roost at Roswell Pits on Feb 11th was the peak count supported by 12+ at Elm and 12 at Huntingdon.

Eurasian Jackdaw A mixed flock of 5500 Jackdaw/Rook roosted at Paxton pits on Jan 20th, but the peak count of 'Jackdaw only' was 1270 coming to roost at Priory Park, St. Neots on Jan 25th.

Rook Records received from 10 sites with 237 birds at Over on Jan 8th being the peak count.

Carrión Crow A report of 250+ birds roosting at Burwell Fen on Jan 23rd was the peak count with a further 200+ also roosting at Cow Lane GP's on 6th February.

Common Raven The solitary bird flew over Great Paxton hill on Jan 27th.

Common Starling Reported from 16 sites with 2000 feeding birds at the Nene Washes on Feb 23rd being the peak count. A further 1500+ birds feeding on apples were recorded at Elm until they were all flushed by a Sparrowhawk.

House Sparrow Records received from 8 sites being mostly gardens. The peak count was 70+ at Woodhurst with a further 65+ reported from Elm.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow An impressive flock of 150 birds at Witcham on Jan 24th was the peak count. Other records included a maximum 40+ at the Ouse Washes and 37+ from Farcet Fen.

Chaffinch The peak count was from Fowlmere RSPB with 150 birds roosting throughout the period. A further 120 birds were seen on hay waste at Ouse Fen on Jan 31st.

Brambling Recorded from 7 sites of mostly 1–2 birds but 30+ birds were still in residence at Beechwoods NR throughout the period.

European Greenfinch Reports received from 11 sites with a monthly ringing total of 90 recorded from Wicken Fen during February. 65+ birds from Farcet Fen on Jan 5th was the largest flock reported.

European Goldfinch Recorded from 18 sites with the maximum being the WEBS count of 65 from the Ouse Washes on Feb 19th. Fifty-five birds were reported from Swaffham Fen with a further 40 being the peak count at Paxton Pits.

Eurasian Siskin Still scarce this year with only 4

reports during the period. A count of just 4 birds at Ferry Meadows CP was the peak accompanied by single birds at the Ouse Washes, Kingfishers Bridge and Milton CP.

Common Linnet Reported from 14 sites with a 100+ birds at Grange Farm, Knapwell on Feb 7th being the peak count. A further 80 birds were recorded from the Ouse Washes on Feb 11th.

Lesser Redpoll Records received from 6 sites with 9 birds reported from the Ouse Washes on Feb 7th being the peak count. A further 6 birds were seen at Milton CP on Feb 24th.

Common Bullfinch Milton CP is the place to see Bullfinches during the winter with the venue again hosting the peak count. This time 14 birds were reported on Jan 27th. A record of 2 possible Northern Bullfinches was also received from Toft.

Yellowhammer Reported from 19 sites with the maximum being 50+ at Knapwell and Honey Hill during February.

Reed Bunting A large increase in reports during the period with records from 16 sites. The peak count was 55 at Wicken Fen on Feb 28th with a further 35 being noted at Kingfishers Bridge.

Corn Bunting Reported from 10 sites with an impressive 92 birds at Reach on Feb 11th being easily the largest count. Other records of note included flocks of 39 birds at Swaffham Fen and 30+ at Chippenham.

HYBRIDS

Canada x Greylag One at Kingfishers Bridge and 2 at Ouse Fen throughout the period.

Canada x Barnacle One or two birds of this combination were noted at Bury Fen and Cambourne.

Pochard x Tufted Duck A drake presumed to be this hybrid was noted at Buckden GP on several dates.

EXOTICA

Black Swan Sightings of 1–2 on River Cam, Cambridge, Grafham Water, Nene Washes and Paxton Pits.

Canada Goose A small race individual was seen at Roswell Pits on Feb 11th.

Oxyura sp. A dark-headed individual at Paxton Pits from Feb 19th was probably an Andean race Ruddy Duck, or Lake Duck/Argentine Bluebill.

Helmeted Guineafowl Nine in Little Less Wood, Abbots Ripton on 24th Jan.

Indian Peafowl Two in Hermitage Wood, Alconbury on 24th Jan.

Contributors: Louise Bacon, Ian Barton, Rowena Baxter, Robin Cox, Steve Dudley, David Griffiths, Stephen Hartley, Kevin Harris, Mark Hawkes, Fred Heath, Stephen Howell, Julian Hughes, Bob Humphrey, Vince Lea, Owen & Monica Marks, Bruce & Gwen Martin, Mark Missin, Robert Pople, Duncan Poyser, Michael Price, Tony Roberts, Kathleen Rosewarne, Bob & Ann Scott, Clive Sinclair, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne, Alan & Brenda Wadsworth, David White., Birdline East Anglia, Cambridgeshire Bird Club website.

Apologies to anyone whose name has been omitted. Any records received after the deadline date may not appear in the Bulletin though the observers may be acknowledged. They will be entered on the Clubs database for the Annual Report.

American Golden Plovers in Cambridgeshire – A summary of their status

Mark Hawkes

In October 2001, the first American Golden Plover for the county was found at Swaffham Prior Fen; amazingly the second was found at the same location on the following day. Below is a list of the currently accepted county records:

2001: Swaffham Prior Fen, presumed adult from Oct 5th to 8th, with another presumed adult from Oct 6th to 18th.

2002: Smithey Fen, presumed adult on Oct 28th, relocated at Holme Fen (Haddenham) from Oct 31st to Nov 3rd.

2003: Kneesworth, adult on Sept 28th.

2004: Melbourn, adult on Oct 22nd.

All of the above have been accepted by BBRC. In December 2005 (*Brit. Bird* 98: 629), BBRC announced that American Golden Plover would no longer be considered by them, along with a number of other species.

During the autumn of 2006, a total of seven more birds were reported in the county:

1. Farcet Fen, juvenile on Oct 5th.
2. Welland Washes, adult briefly on Oct 8th (from Lincolnshire).
3. Fen Drayton GP, juvenile on Oct 9th.
4. March (Reed Fen), not aged, briefly on Oct 16th.
5. Paxton Pits, juvenile, Oct 27th–31st.
6. Maxey GP, juvenile, Oct 30th–31st.
7. Pymore, juvenile, Nov 18th–20th.

These records represent a major influx in to the county. The Farcet Fen record was the first county record of a juvenile and was quickly followed by others.

It is impossible to determine how many birds were actually involved, and it may be that there were actually seven different individuals involved. However, it is also possible that the Farcet Fen bird relocated to Fen Drayton GP (with over 1000 European Golden Plovers), and these birds later relocated further down the Ouse Valley to Paxton Pits (where over 1000 European Golden Plovers were also present). The brief adult at Welland Washes was present in near-by Lincolnshire from Oct 6th to 9th, and this may have been the bird seen at Reed Fen briefly. The Maxey GP bird was present at the same time as the juvenile at Paxton Pits (and had been seen briefly near-by in Lincolnshire on Oct 28th). While the Pymore individual was probably a different individual.

From 2001 to 2006, individuals have been recorded in September (1), October (10) and November (1), and all have been found amongst European Golden Plovers.

To put these sightings in to some context, only three were reported in Norfolk during 2006 – a juvenile at Snettisham on Oct 3rd, an adult at Hilgay Fen on Oct 15–17th (found by the finder of the Pymore bird!) and a juvenile at Waxham on Nov 4–8th. None were reported in Bedfordshire, Essex or Suffolk (in fact, Suffolk has never recorded an American Golden Plover!). This influx may have been due to a steady westerly airflow during the autumn, but nationally no other species of American wader was noted with such a marked influx. Only smaller numbers were seen in other counties; may be suggesting that there was some relocating of the Cambridgeshire individuals. Increased observer awareness must surely have played a key in this influx, and European Golden Plover flocks have been receiving more attention locally during the last decade (which has also resulted in the finding of Pacific Golden Plovers in 1996 and 2004). Hopefully this continued interest will result in more sightings of both these very rare visitors to the county. A challenge for those with a keen eye would be to locate a returning bird next spring, as they make their way north with their European cousins, or may be the next surprise might be a Sociable Plover.

Remember to submit sightings of European Golden Plovers to the BTO for their Winter Plover survey. Details at <http://www.bto.org/survey/special/w-plover.htm>

Roger Clarke – Memorial Appeal

The Club was privileged to have Roger Clarke as one of its members and especially as Chairman. He was one of the country's most distinguished ornithologists as has been reflected in the many tributes and obituaries which have been published since his death. It is felt that his memory and his association with the Club should be commemorated in some permanent way and, since Wicken Fen was one of his favourite places where much of his work on Hen Harriers was done, it is proposed that an inscribed seat there would be an appropriate memorial. If the members were really generous in their subscriptions to this project it is possible that we could contribute to the cost of a hide which is to be built on Baker's Fen. This could be dedicated to Roger but it would, of course, be much more expensive than a seat.

I hope all our members will subscribe generously to this project in memory of Roger, which will also have tangible benefit to those who visit Wicken. Donations should be made to Kevin Harris and addressed to: The Treasurer, CBC, 2 Millers Lane, Toft, Cambridge CB23 2RX

Cheques should be made payable to Cambridgeshire Bird Club. They can also be given to him at a meeting.

Robin Cox

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

INDOOR MEETING

Friday May 11th Milton Country Park Visitor's Centre

40-Year Odyssey: a Unique Birding Experience with the People of Southern India by Joe Homan

Throughout his 40 years in India, working to improve the lives of children, Joe never forgot about birds. This talk gives us an insight into another way of life, helping others, whilst building up a knowledge and love for the nature of that country. Now, in his retirement home on the edge of a wonderful lake, Joe has the opportunity to share those birds with friends and many of the boys who visit or work with him. Instrumental in setting up the first South India Bird Fair, Joe has, as last, put this part of the Indian Continent on the birdwatching scene and opened the eyes of many to the wildlife and beauty of the region.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Saturday 5 May – Warbler Workshop

Cambridgeshire Bird Club, in conjunction with the RSPB, is organising a warbler workshop at the RSPB Fowlmere nature reserve. The aim is to learn how to identify our various warblers. This field-based workshop is especially suited for beginners but more advanced birdwatchers who want to refresh their knowledge of warblers or simply want to enjoy the morning chorus are welcome to join. Members and non-members of the Club are welcome. There is no charge.

Meet on Saturday 5 May at 6am in the car park at the Fowlmere reserve (directions can be found at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/f/fowlmere/index.asp>). The workshop is expected to last approximately 4 hours.

Please register with Peter Herkenrath by telephone 01223 862121 or e-mail peterherkenrath@yahoo.co.uk

Friday 8th June – Woodwalton Fen National Nature Reserve

We return to Woodwalton Fen following a winter visit in early 2006 and Chris Gerrard's talk in November 2006. This walk will include a trip around the reserve and Darlow's Farm, one of the project's acquisitions in the Great Fen Project area. Alan Bowley, the Site Manager, and Chris

Gerrard, Great Fen Project manager, will update you on what's around and how the project is progressing.

Meet at 7pm at the entrance to Woodwalton Fen (Grid reference: TL235849).

All welcome.

Contact Jono Leadley for further information (see back page for phone and email).

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

We welcome the following new members – Sarah Brown of Ryton on Dunsmore, Fiona Burns of Cambridge, Suzanne Harwood of Ely, Emily Holloway of Exning, Hristou Iordan of Cambridge, Alistair McGowan of Cambridge and Ken Sheard of Girton.

Bruce Martin (see back page for phone and email).

EXCHANGE BIRD REPORTS

The Bird Club exchanges Annual Reports with the following Counties/societies: - Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Leicestershire & Rutland, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Suffolk.

If any one is interested in borrowing any of these Reports please contact me to arrange collection or I can take them to Bird club meetings.

Bruce Martin (see back page for phone and email).

FROM THE BULLETIN EDITOR

If you would like to contribute to the bulletin with an article, short note, request for help or information, or drawing, please contact me. You can send me a complete item or contact me with an initial idea. If you would like to receive your bulletin by email or be subscribed to CBC-ANNOUNCE, just send me an email.

If you have already made such a request but are still receiving your bulletin in hard copy, please let me know and I will check the e-subscribers list.

Vicki Harley (see back page for phone and email).

FROM THE TREASURER

Subscriptions were due on 1st January 2007, ***please pay promptly.***

Many of you pay by Bankers Standing Order and your bank should have paid your subscription on the first working day in January 2007. If you pay by cash or cheque, please see me at an indoor meeting or post your subscription to me at 2 Millers Road, Toft, Cambridge, CB23 2RX.

Subscriptions :- Full membership	£14.	Senior/concessionary	£10.00
Student	£ 6.00		

If you are a tax payer and have not yet completed a 'Gift Aid Form' to enable the club to reclaim 28p in the £ from the Inland Revenue on your subscription, please contact me either on 01223 262659 or email ksharris2@aol.com. Last year we were able to reclaim over £900 – and remember it does not cost you anything – all the money the Club gains comes from the Inland Revenue.

If you no longer pay tax and have signed either on old covenant or a more recent gift aid form please let me know as the Club will no longer be entitled to reclaim tax on your subscription.

Kevin Harris (Treasurer)

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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.cambridgeshirebirdclub.org.uk

Birdline number

Remember that your Cambs bird sightings can be phoned in free of charge to Birdline East Anglia on 0800 083 0803.

Please email records to: Mark Hawkes by May 7th

Please send records by post to: Louise Bacon by May 7th

Next Bulletin due out June 2007, covering March–April 2007

GOOD BIRDING!