

CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB

Bulletin No. 419



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

Welcome to the November / December 2011 Edition

Enclosed with this edition of the Bulletin, you will find the agenda for Club's AGM to be held on 9th March, minutes of the 2011 meeting, and the Treasurer's report. I hope that you will find the meeting of interest and come along. It will be followed by a talk by Mike Jennings about the Arabian Bird Atlas. This is the final bulletin with me involved in an editorial position – I leave the future production of the Bulletin in the capable hands of Vince Lea. Many thanks to this past year's contributors of bird drawings: Graham Easy, Ben Green, and Rob Law.

From the Bulletin Editor

Wintering Smew by Graham Easy



RECENT BIRD REPORTS NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2011

These are unchecked reports rather than confirmed records, sourced from sightings received by our County Recorder or reported on the 'What's About?' page on the CBC website.

An unusually mild period, with no snow and barely a ground frost. The lack of rain also meant water levels remained low on both the main Washes systems.

The weather conditions meant that wintering wild Swans failed to arrive in any numbers, with the peak of **Bewick's Swans** being 70 at Friday Bridge on the last day of the year. A family party at Grafham Water in December included a male that was colour-ringed, and is now over 21 years old (and is the first-ever UK sighting of this bird away from Slimbridge, Gloucs). Likewise the **Whooper Swans'** peak count was 90 on Nene Washes on Dec 27th, and **Mute Swans** were reported in three figures only from Fen Drayton Lakes. Four **Tundra Bean Geese** flew over Ouse Washes on Dec 19th, and there was only one report of **Pink-footed Goose**, a single at Newton on the tidal section of the River Nene. There was a small influx of **White-fronted Geese**, with 10 over St. Neots on Nov 9th, 20 at Cam Washes from Dec 2nd to 10th and a long-stayer at Ferry Meadows into the New Year. Eight **Brent Geese** flew over Grafham Water on Nov 9th, and **Egyptian Geese** were seen at just two sites, involving up to 6 birds. **Common Shelducks** were seen in single figures at four sites. **Mandarin Ducks**, all single drakes, were seen at Fowlmere, Hinchingsbrooke CP and Grafham Water. **Eurasian Wigeon** counts included 1226 at Fen Drayton Lakes in November and 766 at the same site in December. **Gadwall** peaked at 400 in December at the same site (a good count for a declining species, one which is now considered by the Rare Breeding Bird Panel as being worthy of monitoring). **Mallard**, another declining species, peaked at 716 in November and 606 in December at Grafham Water, where there was also a peak count of 26 **Northern Pintails** on Nov 12th. **Eurasian Teal** were seen in three-figure numbers at several sites, and **Northern Shoveler** reached 107 at Fen Drayton Lakes in November. **Red-crested Pochard** peaked at seven at Grafham Water on Nov 13th, and others were seen at Orton BP, Fen Drayton Lakes and Holme Fen. **Common Pochards** only managed to reach 97 at Fen Drayton Lakes, but good counts of **Tufted Ducks** came from Grafham Water in both months (1645 and 1129), and there were two records of **Greater Scaup** from here, a drake on Dec 4th and another from Dec 29th onwards. Wildfowl highlight though came in the form of three juvenile **Velvet Scoters** at Grafham Water from Nov 7th to 27th. Previously a rather tricky species to see in the county, these birds follow hotly on from several sightings from this same location in

recent years. By contrast, there hasn't been an Eider in the County now since 1996...

Common Goldeneye peaked at 102 in November, again at Grafham Water, where **Goosander** numbered 13 during December; other records of this latter species came from Fen Drayton Lakes and Ferry Meadows (up to three at both). **Smew**, a sure sign of winter, appeared at Fowlmere NR on Nov 9th (a Reserve first) followed by records from Ouse Fen (up to seven), Fen Drayton Lakes (up to four), Barleycraft GP (up to three) Grafham Water (up to two) and Ferry Meadows (single). **Ruddy Ducks** peaked at four from one location and just one at another site. It is notable how many of these peak wildfowl counts came (not surprisingly) from WeBS-count totals – which goes to show the worth of this long-standing survey (especially for the common wildfowl which might otherwise be neglected).

Gamebirds were poorly reported, 23 **Grey Partridges** at Melbourn being the most noteworthy record.

The largest count of **Great Cormorants** received was 206 at Grafham Water on Nov 26th, and the juvenile **European Shag** from September remained there through to the end of the year. **Great Bitterns** were seen at three sites, with a peak of five at Fen Drayton Lakes in December. The largest count of **Little Egrets** was also a new site record, when 19 were counted at Grafham Water on Nov 26th; the only other double figure count came from Fen Drayton Lakes (10 birds), with records from nine other locations.

An adult **Great Northern Diver** was at Grafham Water from Dec 23rd into the New Year. All the main grebe action came from Grafham Water, where there were still 60 **Little Grebes** on Nov 6th, but this had decreased to 23 by Dec 18th. This site held three-figure counts of **Great Crested Grebe** in both months (206,148). Scarce grebes involved a **Red-necked Grebe** here on Nov 7th, and both **Slavonian Grebe** (from October) and **Black-necked Grebe** on Nov 1st.

Red Kites were only reported as singletons, but **Marsh Harriers** were reported from a number of sites, many holding more than one bird, with up to six at Wicken Fen in December. It's been a good winter so far for **Hen Harriers**, especially as birds were being found at less traditional locations, with a peak of eight from Wicken Fen on Dec 27th. This followed a reported good breeding season in Scandinavia. This was interesting enough, but bought into even sharper focus upon the discovery of a juvenile harrier at Ouse Fen (first seen in October) of which the identification was open to question and debate. The bird was initially thought

to be a candidate for an American race of Hen Harrier, the 'Northern Harrier', but better views with close-up photography soon scuppered this possibility, but allowed observers to note a number of features suggestive of Pallid Harrier and Hen Harrier. The bird is still present at the time of writing - the most likely explanation is a hybrid; these two species have been interbreeding with success in Finland for a few years now. Following two county records of Pallid Harrier, this certainly makes ringtail Harrier identification in the county even more of a challenge than it ever has been! To add to the excitement, a juvenile **Rough-legged Buzzard** also remained faithful to this site throughout, with perhaps a different bird over Fen Drayton Lakes on Nov 6th. **Merlins** were seen at numerous well scattered sites, but usually just single birds, and **Peregrines** peaked at three at Kingfishers Bridge on Dec 18th, whilst **Common Buzzards**, **Eurasian Sparrowhawks** and **Common Kestrels** were seen in average numbers (although seven of the latter were recorded at Ouse Fen on Dec 30th).

Water Rails were seen or heard at eight sites. **Common Moorhens** peaked at 42 at Fen Drayton Lakes in November and **Common Coots** at 2593 at Grafham Water in the same month. Eight **Common Cranes** remained around Nene Washes throughout, but a new county record was set when 19 flew over Ouse Washes on Nov 23rd. This was followed by a report of 17 at Wicken Fen on Dec 10th – perhaps these sightings involved the same group.

A single **Grey Plover** passed through Grafham Water on Nov 26th, a single **Knot** was at Newton on Nov 16th, and a single **Spotted Redshank** was at Fen Drayton Lakes on Nov 6th. A **Little Stint** at Fen Drayton Lakes from Nov 20th to Dec 11th was a notable mid-winter record, whilst **Dunlin** could only reach a maximum of 12 at Ouse Fen on Nov 20th. The peak count of 28 **Ruff** came from Ouse Washes on Dec 30th, with others only recorded from two sites. **Jack Snipe** were seen at two sites, with three being the maximum count and 68 **Common Snipe** were counted at Ouse Fen on Nov 20th. The peak count of **Eurasian Woodcock** came from a bag-count, when seven were shot near Soham in December. **Black-tailed Godwits** were strangely scarce, with only three reports, and a peak of 14 on Dec 6th at Fen Drayton Lakes. A **Common Greenshank** was still present at Grafham Water from November until Dec 18th at least, whilst **Green Sandpipers** were seen in groups of 1-3 at many sites, and seven were at Grafham Water on Nov 26th.

Winter is a good time to watch gulls, and there are certainly plenty to check through for something more interesting (although it's not everyone's idea of fun!). **Mediterranean Gulls** were seen at Grafham Water and Fowlmere in November, and Ferry Meadows and Fen Drayton Lakes in December. A notable 1400 **Black-headed Gulls** were following a plough at Foxton on Nov 27th.

Yellow-legged Gulls were recorded at six sites (peak of 12 at Fen Drayton Lakes on Dec 30th), and **Caspian Gulls** at four sites (peak of four at Milton Tip on Dec 1st). An adult **Iceland Gull** was located in the Fen Drayton Lakes roost on Dec 3rd, and 10th to 12th and 15th to 16th; a juvenile was also seen at Milton Tip on Dec 24th, while a good count of 270 **Great Black-backed Gulls** was made at Milton Tip on Dec 27th. The only **Black-legged Kittiwake** was one through Ferry Meadows CP on Dec 17th.

A notable count of 90 **Stock Doves** was made at Cambridge Research Park on Dec 10th, and 140 **Collared Doves** were in Melbourn the next day. All reports of **Barn Owl** were of 1-3 birds, except for four at Wicken Fen on Nov 4th. Five Tawny **Owls** were recorded at Woodwalton Fen on Dec 3rd, where the only **Long-eared Owl** was recorded on the same date. **Short-eared Owls**, however, proved to be the bird of the period. A notable influx this autumn meant some good gatherings were located locally, including peak counts of 20 on Nene Washes on Dec 27th; 15 at Barton on Dec 26th; up to 13 at Burwell Fen in November and 10 in December; nine at Great Eversden on Dec 22nd; six at Alconbury on Nov 13th; four at Cambourne on Dec 30th; four at Wicken Fen on Dec 27th; three at Fen Drayton Lakes in both months; two at Ouse Fen in December and singles at Babraham, Grafham Water, Little Wilbraham Fen, Woodwalton Fen and Fowlmere. Influxes of this species are not usual, but the widespread location of so many groups perhaps is.

Common Kingfishers were seen in ones and twos at 10 sites. Again, just a single **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** was reported during the period, at Grafham Water on Nov 5th. An effort during February to April to locate drumming birds should hopefully reveal a few more individuals. Please send in any records.

A single **Common Raven** report came from Swaffham Prior Fen on Nov 25th – still a description species in the County, so documentation of all records is kindly requested by the County Recorder. Three **Firecrests** were located during the period, one ringed at Wicken Fen on Nov 23rd, one in the observers' Little Shelford garden from Nov 27th into January, and finally at Fowlmere NR on Dec 10th. **Bearded Tits** were recorded at Fen Drayton Lakes with two on Nov 13th, up to 8 at Kingfishers Bridge in both months, two at Little Wilbraham Fen on Dec 2nd and Wicken Fen in both months.

Skylarks were recorded in varying size flocks, with 100 at Elm being the largest gathering. **Cetti's Warblers** continue to be reported from favoured locations, and **Blackcaps** and **Chiffchaffs** were recorded in typical early-winter numbers (with three of the former in a Girton garden). Sightings of **Bohemian Waxwings** were much thinner on the ground this winter; a small flock were reported at Wicken Fen on Nov 11th,

with three there on Dec 24th. The only other report was of 12 from Hilton on Dec 7th.

The biggest gathering of **Common Starlings** was 6000 roosting at Fen Drayton Lakes on Nov 12th. The largest count of **Fieldfares** came from Farcet Fen on Dec 6th with 630 birds and nearby at Crown Lakes CP; 260 **Redwings** were seen on Nov 30th. **Stonechats** were seen at five sites, but the peak count was just four birds at Wicken Fen on Nov 21st, whilst nearby a late **Northern Wheatear** was at Tubney Fen on Nov 7th.

A couple of good counts of **House Sparrow** included 90 in Elm and 45 in Melbourn. **Eurasian Tree Sparrows** were most regular at traditional site, with 72 at Farcet Fen on Dec 28th being the second highest ever site count. 42 were to be found in Melbourn on Nov 30th, and others were seen at Cambourne (2), and singles at Ickleton and Wicken Fen.

A very late **Yellow Wagtail** was found at Grafham Water on Nov 26th, where the only count of three **Grey Wagtails** was made on Nov 25th and 200 **Pied Wagtails** were roosting at Milton Tesco's in late-December. A **Rock Pipit** was at Cambridge Research Park on Nov 20th.

Just two reports of **Brambling** were submitted, no doubt a reflection of the mild weather, and 100 Chaffinches at Melbourn on Dec 11th was the largest flock reported. **Eurasian Siskins** too were rather thinly spread, although 110 were recorded heading south over Fowlmere NR on Nov 9th, and 30 were at Grafham Water 3 days later. Likewise with **Lesser Redpolls**, with 28 in Trumpington on Dec 26th being the most notable count, followed by 26 at Grafham Water on Nov 5th; this latter flock contained a smart **Mealy Redpoll** too. A nice count of **Common Linnet** from Melbourn totalled 320 on Dec 18th. **Common Crossbills** were recorded at Brampton Wood on Nov 9th and two over Ferry Meadows on Dec 1st, whilst 23 **Common Bullfinches** were found around Crown Lakes CP on Nov 30th.

The only big count of **Yellowhammers** was 123 at Barton on Nov 13th; of **Reed Buntings** it was 190 at Melbourn on Dec 18th; and of **Corn Buntings** there were counts of 145 at Farcet Fen on Dec 6th

and 132 at Melbourn on Dec 18th. The first-winter male **Snow Bunting** remained at Ouse Fen throughout, sometimes mobile but very tolerant to visiting observers.

The regular escaped **Ross's Goose** and **Great Horned Owl** remained in their usual areas. Slightly more interesting were hybrid ducks, which included a **Gadwall** x **Eurasian Wigeon** at Grafham Water on Nov 6th; a presumed **Ferruginous Duck** x **Common Pochard** at Grafham Water on Nov 12th; and a presumed **Greater Scaup** x **Tufted Duck** at Grafham Water on Dec 29th.

The Recent Reports were compiled and written by Mark Hawkes, assisted by Doug Radford.

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From the Chairman

Peter Herkenrath

The New Year began for me with a Woodpigeon – the first bird I saw on Jan 1st. I was delighted as Woodpigeons are among my favourite birds. I know that few bird watchers will share this passion, but take a close look when you next see a Woodpigeon and enjoy the beauty of the bird. There have probably been more exciting birds around in Cambridgeshire and you will find a selection of those reported further in this Bulletin. Currently, a mysterious ringtail harrier – perhaps a rare hybrid between Hen and Pallid Harrier – frequents RSPB Ouse Fen and Fen Drayton and it is encouraging to see that, through the thorough recording of the bird's features, Cambs birders can enhance the understanding of harrier plumage and perhaps even harrier taxonomy. This is just one of many examples where bird watchers contribute to science; other areas including the taxonomy of large gulls and *Phylloscopus* warblers.

I had a great day out in mid-January at Ouse Fen. Although only getting a distant glimpse of the harrier in question, we saw the wintering Rough-legged Buzzard very well, nearly stumbled upon a Snow Bunting, and saw Merlin, Hen Harrier and a Short-eared Owl as well as a large flock of Mute Swans. The RSPB are to be congratulated for doing an excellent job in developing new reserves in the Ouse Valley, and I am glad that the cooperation between the RSPB and our Club is such a good one.

The year 2012 will see a number of exciting developments in the Club. By the end of the year, we hope to hold in our hands a copy of the new atlas of the birds of the county. It will be the result of a large team of Club members and other bird watchers, who over five years have collected data on bird distribution, and of many who have contributed data to the Club's and the BTO's atlas databases, produced maps, or wrote species accounts. We will have a number of events for our members in 2012; besides the usual monthly indoor and outdoor meetings, also an owl pellet workshop with the Cambridgeshire Mammal Group, the now annual birdsong workshop at the Fowlmere RSPB reserve, and other events – please watch the announcements in the Bulletin and on our website.

The year 2012 also sees some changes in positions of the Club. Vince Lea will become editor of our Bulletin, taking over the position from Mike Foley who has been the new County Recorder for several months. John Harding will take over the editorship of the Cambridgeshire Bird Report, succeeding John Clark. As John Harding has been Secretary, we are now looking for someone taking over that position from him. We are also looking for volunteers to help with the raffle and at the door at our indoor meetings. If you are interested or have any suggestions, please contact me.

Council says goodbye to Ken Hook who has served on Council for six years. Thanks to Ken and Maggie for supporting the Club in many ways. As ever, I am grateful for everyone who contributes to the operations of the Club, with whatever small contribution. The Club could not exist without you.

CBC Photo of the Year 2011

Please vote for the Club's Photo of the Year 2011. For details see <http://www.cambridgebirdclub.org.uk/POTY2011.html>. The vote will close on Feb 18th.

ANSWERS TO THE CHRISTMAS QUIZ!

Perry Green

I hope that you enjoyed the quiz, even if you were unable to answer all the questions. The peculiarities and anomalies of some scientific names can be extremely confusing. One might logically expect that a literal translation would correspond directly to the vernacular name, but in many cases, notably with the gulls, the opposite is true. Furthermore, problems with translation can arise, even for a classical student, as some names e.g. puffinus, are not found in ancient Greek or Latin but are purely the inventions of scientists. They even did this with proper names: Carolus Linnaeus, who devised the classification system, may sound like a Roman senator but was actually a Swede, Carl von Linne. A further complication arises when both Latin and Greek are used in a name, often with the generic name merely repeated in the specific, as with the Grey Phalarope.

1. Black-headed Gull. *Larus* = gull, *ridibundus* = laughing.
2. Mediterranean Gull. *L. melanocephalus* = black head.
3. Laughing Gull. *L. atricilla* = black tail.
4. Manx Shearwater. *P. puffinus*: "puffin" originally referred to the cured carcass of a juvenile shearwater.
5. Wren. *T. troglodytes* = cave dweller, probably referring to the shape of the nest.
6. Hawfinch. *C. coccothraustes*, from the Greek "kokkos", a kernel.
7. Goldeneye. *Bucephala* = bull-headed, *clangula* = resounding, (referring to the display of the male).
8. Sardinian Warbler. *Sylvia* = a woodland dweller, *melanocephalus* = black head.
9. Marmora's Warbler. *S. sarda* = Sardinian.
10. Cormorant. *Phalacro* = bald top, *corax* = raven, *carbo* = black (as in charcoal).
11. Common Sandpiper. *Actitis* = coast dweller, *hypo* = beneath, *leukos* = white.
12. Aquatic Warbler. *Acro* = top, point, *cephalus* = head, *palus* = marsh, *colare* = to inhabit.
13. Chiffchaff. *Phyllos* = leaf, *scopus* = watcher, *collybita* = a money changer (likening the call to the metallic ring of coins).
14. Little Grebe. *Podiceps*, a contraction of *podicipes* = rump or anus foot, (referring to the legs being to the rear of the body), *ruficollis* = red-necked.

15. Lapwing. *V. vanellus*, a diminutive of *vannus* = a winnowing fan, used to separate chaff from grain, (referring to the flight action and also possibly the shape of the wing).
16. Waxwing. *Bombycilla* = silk tail (referring to the yellow tip), *garrulus* = chattering.
17. Bittern. *Bos*, *taurus* = a bull (referring to the booming call), *stellaris* = starry.
18. Great Grey Shrike. *Lanius* = a butcher, *excubitor* = a sentinel or guard (literally one who is out of bed).
19. Leach's Petrel. *Oceanos* = ocean, *dromos* = running, *leukos* = white, *orrhos* = rump.
20. Grey Phalarope. *Phalaris* = Greek for coot, (referring to the bald head), *pus* = foot, (a reference to the lobed feet), *fulicarius* = like a coot, from the Latin *fulica* = coot.

Purists may point out that some names have recently changed, e.g. some of the smaller gulls are no longer "larus", and that Marmora's Warbler has now been split. However I preferred to use the previous nomenclature as this is still the more familiar to most of us.

My girlfriend, the delectable and enchanting young Anna Gram trusts that her posers did not arouse too much mental stimulation. Her answers to the 'Find the birds (all are on the British list)' quiz are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Reed Bunting | 12. Nightingale |
| 2. Little Crake | 13. Whitethroat |
| 3. Grey Partridge | 14. Bearded Tit |
| 4. Capercaillie | 15. Sand Martin |
| 5. Lapland Bunting | 16. Great Tit |
| 6. Red-rumped Swallow | 17. Common Tern |
| 7. Rose-coloured Starling | 18. Mealy Redpoll |
| 8. White-rumped Sandpiper | 19. Grey Wagtail (Oops! an unintentional error; the clue should have read "Large twig, Ay.") |
| 9. Snowy Egret | 20. Short-eared Owl |
| 10. Lanceolated Warbler | |
| 11. Marsh Harrier | |

From the Research Committee – Louise Bacon

CBC Raptor Watch 31 March 2012

In March 2010 the Club organised a raptor watch day with considerable success, when more than 50 observers recorded hundreds of raptors from vantage points. We have therefore decided to organise another raptor watch this year. Club members and non-members are encouraged to visit vantage points across the county on Saturday 31st March and watch raptors for a period of at least two hours from 10am. As previously, we will offer the chance to join in at a few predefined vantage points or you can pick a vantage point of your own. We would like to have coordinators for several vantage points who can show interested people raptors on the day. Please contact Louise Bacon (see contact details on the last page) if you can be the coordinator for a vantage point of your choosing, or if you would like to participate at a spot of your own. We will then publish the list of vantage points and provide each coordinator with a spreadsheet for the records.

From the Membership Secretary – Bruce Martin

We welcome the following new members – David Collins of Fordham, Malcolm Housden of Melbourn, Nick Laughton of Burwell, and John Wells of Ramsey.

From the County Recorder – Mike Foley (see details on back page)

There is still time to send in any records of Cambs sightings in 2011 for the database, **the deadline is 31st March**. It is best to use the CBC bird list which can be found at <http://www.cambridgebirdclub.org.uk> and then download the 'Records Spreadsheet'. Any sightings that require definitive descriptions that have not yet been submitted are warmly welcomed.

FORTHCOMING CBC EVENTS – Vicki Harley

Friday 10th February, St Johns Hall, Cambridge, 7.30pm for 8.00pm **'Birds: a Hidden World' by Peter Holden**

A closer look at the behaviour of some of our common, and not so common, wild birds and other wildlife – some of the secrets that most books won't tell you, and some that can only be told after the watershed! This talk is based on Peter's new book with the same title. Illustrated with his own photos, this is a wide ranging talk on British birds and some other wildlife from the point of view of how little we know about them and some of the amazing discoveries we are making about their lives – which are much more complex than we first thought.

The 2012 CBC Annual General Meeting

Friday 9th March, St Johns Hall, Cambridge, 7.30pm for 8.00pm

followed by 'The Arabian Bird Atlas' by Mike Jennings

An overview of Arabian birds, looking at the issues that fashion bird-distribution in Arabia and the atlas project which brought it all together. The atlas project started in 1984 with the objective of defining the breeding distribution and ecological requirements of birds in Arabia. Mike Jennings is Project Co-ordinator of the Arabian Atlas and a member of Cambridgeshire Bird Club.

Friday 13th April, Cottenham Village College, 7.30pm for 8.00pm

Dragonflies: the Ancient Aerial Predators *by Henry Curry*

In a broad-ranging talk Henry will discuss the life history, sight, flight capabilities, mating, evolution & fossil history, and identification of dragonflies. He will also talk about the Dragonfly Project and the British Dragonfly Society.

Events of the Cambridge Conservation Forum

Club members are entitled to participate in events of the Cambridge Conservation Forum as the Cambridgeshire Bird Club is a member of the Forum. Forthcoming events include the following:

- CCF Spring Ceilidh, Saturday February 11th, 7pm, Cambridge University Social Club, Mill Lane, CB2 1RX. Please bring a dish of food to share so we can eat a buffet dinner together before the dancing! A cash bar will be open throughout the evening. Last year's band "The Ceilidh Allstars" will be back to play the tunes and call the dances. Tickets are £10 each – please contact Holly (social@cambridgeconservationforum.org.uk) to reserve your place.
- The CCF Summer Symposium will take place on Thursday June 21st at the Judge Business School, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, on the theme of Technology-enabled Conservation. See <http://www.cambridgeconservationforum.org.uk/> or contact Peter Herkenrath (see contact details on the last page) for further information.

Wednesday 11th April, 7.30 pm, at Anglia Ruskin University

Owl pellet workshop – Cambridgeshire Bird Club / Cambridgeshire Mammal Group Meeting

This workshop provides an opportunity to dissect pellets and identify their contents, with the help of experienced 'pelleters'. All necessary equipment and identification guides will be provided. If you are able to bring pellets yourself, please do so, but we hope to have sufficient pellets available for those who are interested but do not have access to a source of pellets. **BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL.** To book and for further details, contact Vicki Harley (contact details on back page). Also view: http://www.mammal.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=328&Itemid=362

Saturday 19th May (6.30am)

Bird song workshop at Fowlmere NR

As in previous years, the Club is organising a bird song workshop at Fowlmere Nature Reserve in collaboration with the RSPB. The aim is to help interested bird watchers to learn how to identify various songbirds by sound. Members and non-members of the Club and the RSPB are welcome. There is no formal charge, but a donation in the reserve collecting box would be appreciated. Meet at 6.30am on Saturday 19th May 2012 in the car park at Fowlmere NR (directions can be found, with more information on the reserve, at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/f/fowlmere/index.asp>). Please bring binoculars, a pen and paper. The workshop will take place regardless of the weather and is expected to last approximately 4 hours. As numbers will be limited, it is essential to register with Peter Herkenrath (see contact details on the last page).

RSPB CAMBRIDGE LOCAL GROUP – FIELD TRIPS / INDOOR MEETINGS

Indoor meetings – all at St John's Community (Church) Hall, Hills Road, Cambridge, 7.15 pm for a 7.30 pm start.

- Wednesday February 15th: Urban Birder, by David Lindo
- Wednesday March 21st: Language of Birds by Ron Kilsby

Field trips

- Saturday February 11th: Cley Marshes, meet at car park at 10.00 am
- Saturday March 10th: Abberton Water and Tollesbury, 8.00am from Cambridge.
- Thursday 12th -Sunday 15th April: Weekend in Teesdale (3 nights/4 days)

For more details and bookings, please see <http://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/cambridge/events> or call Andrew Camps, 01638 741018.

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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.cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

Birdline number: Remember that your Cambridgeshire bird sightings can be phoned in Birdline East Anglia on 07941333970.

Please email records to: Mike Foley by March 7th 2012, and send records by post to Mike Foley by March 5th.

Next Bulletin due out early April 2012, covering January / February 2012.

GOOD BIRDING!