

Bird records for the Etton/Maxey (Langdyke Reserve) 2019

Incorporation BBS (Breeding bird survey) and WeBS (Wetland Bird Survey) information.

The national breeding bird survey (BBS) monitors the population changes of the UK's **common** breeding birds, providing an important indicator of the health of the countryside. BBS trends are produced each year for over 100 species and the results are widely used to set priorities and inform conservation action.

From chances which have occurred over the twenty plus years of the survey, birds of conservation concern are coded as **Amber** or **Red** listed.

I have colour coded the birds in my survey in line with this BBS codes for England 2018. Trends for rarer breeding birds are excluded from BBS. I have therefore also colour coded the potential rarer breeders in **Blue** to indicate their priority also.

Species seen on the reserve and their status:

Mute Swan

Part of a herd of swans which regularly fed in an adjacent rape field occasional roosted on the reserve, 18 on the 7/1. The resident pair successfully nested and hatched four cygnets on the 11/5. These reduced to 3 after a few days, however following a period of atrocious weather when excessive rain fell no young were noted from the 14/6! The pair still remained in residence on the site through August, and they were still seen on site fairly regularly to the end of the year.

Whooper Swan

Two birds were present on the reserve on the 7/1 these birds had been feeding in the adjacent Rape field with a herd of Mute swans. Also 18 birds were seen flying east over the reserve on the 21/10.

Greylag Goose

Fairly regularly seen in small numbers, 2 on the 13/4, 1 on the 25/4, 1 on the 28/4, 1 on the 11/5, 4 over the reserve on the 14/5. There was an exceptional count of 240 birds on island meadow on the 1/8. However this was eclipsed by a record count of 342 again present on Island Meadow on the evening of 12/8.

Canada Goose

Occasionally seen, 2 were present 28/4 and 12 on the 1/8 amongst a large flock of Greylags.

Egyptian goose

A single immature bird was present on the 7/1.

(Common) Shelduck

The first returning bird was seen on the 23/1, then 1 or 2 birds were regularly around the site from mid. April. Exceptions were 9 present on 9/5 and 3 on the 30/5.

A pair successfully hatched a brood of nine young which had presumably been raised in a rabbit burrow. The young were lead down to the water on 29/5. On the

30/5, 3 additional adults were on site. The full brood were all still in tack on the 9/6 but following an extremely wet couple of days had reduced to 8 young by the 12/6 and with continual cold and wet conditions, and probable predation, by the 22/6 no young birds remained!

Mallard

With the higher water levels on the reserve this year more surface feeding ducks have been attracted to the reserve a record count of 114 was made on the 26/1. It has also been a very successful breeding season with various broods of young seen. These included; a female and 6 small young on the 25/4, females with broods of 4, 8, 7 and 10 young on the 11/5, a female and 11 small young 18/5, a pair with 6 young 20/5, 6 large almost fully fledged young 31/5, a female and 5 small young 2/6 and a pair with 4 young 7/6, a group of 8 well grown young on Island Meadow 9/6 and a female with 6+ well grown young on Central Meadow on the 9/6. I am aware that some of these sightings may refer to the same broods; however there are multiple broods of young around the site, some of which I won't have seen. There were 41 adult/fledged young on the reserve on the 17/6.

Gadwall

An early record was a pair on site on the 18/1. It has however been a good year for summering birds with 16 on 25/4, 14 on the 27/4, 7 males and 2 female 30/4, 7 males and 1 female 7/5, 15 on the 8/5, and 10/5, 11 males and 2 females on the 11/5, 11 birds on the 13/5, 8 males and 1 female on the 19/5, 10 birds on the 31/5, with 2 pairs plus a number of males still being present on the 9/6. There were still 7 males and 1 female present on the 14/6.

However no proof of breeding was established.

10 birds were present on 12/8 and 4 on the 15/9.

(Northern) Shoveler

With the higher water levels shovelers have become a common sight on the reserve with some exceptional counts. 5 males and 2 female on the 18/1 built up to 34 birds on the 26/1, then 54 on the 16/2. Numbers remained high until April with 34 on the 5/3, 54 on the 23/3 and 30 on the 1/4. There were 6 to 9 birds around during April with two displaying pairs plus a further pair present on the 29/4. However by the 3/5 there was only 2 males and a female seen, these were still on site on the 13/5. 4 males and a female were seen on the 19/5 building up to 7 males and a female on the 14/6. However no proof of breeding was established. A single male was seen on 21/8, 4 were present on the 25/11.

(Eurasian) Teal

Fewer teal have been recorded on site this year. This may however be due to the higher water level which has flooded the meadows giving much more cover for these diminutive ducks. There were 10 on the 18/1, 46 on the 26/1, 6 on the 5/3, 7 on the 23/3, 50+ on the 23/4, 30 on the 26/4, 20 on the 27/4, 21 on the 28/4, 24 on the 29/4. Very few birds over-summered the only records being 3 on the 13/5, a pair on the 7/6, and again on the 14/6 and 17/6 and two pair on the 22/6. There were 9 on the 23/6, 10 the 26/6 which may have included early returning bird? There were only single figure count noted through to the end of August. This is most probably being due to the invasion of Cressula which has greatly reduced the amount of open water

edge access for feeding. There were 2 on the 12/8, 32 on the 16/9, 24 on the 19/9, 10 on the 8/10, 3 on the 18/10, 22 on the 29/10, 29 on the 16/11, 40 on the 25/11, 15 on the 23/12 and 20 on the 27/12.

(Common) Pochard

A rare bird on the reserve, consequently single males on the 8/5, 22/5 and on the 2/6 were unusual records.

Tufted duck

Regularly seen on the reserve in small numbers, 2 males and a female 18/1, 4 on the 26/1, 7 on the 16/2, 10 on the 5/3, a pair on the 5/4, 13/4 and 26/4, 2 males and a female 29/4, a pair on the 8/5 and a single male on the 9/6, 2 pairs on the 17/6. However there was no evidence of any attempted breeding. 1 to 3 birds were then fairly regularly seen on the reserve through to the end of the year.

Red-legged Partridge

One or two pairs are regularly flushed from around the reserve, have been proved to breed in previous seasons.

Grey partridge

Following the first record for the reserve last year multiple sightings are now being made. 2 on the 13/5, 2 from the Southern bank 15/5, two were flushed from both the North Wood and South bank on the 29/5. A single bird was also flushed from South bank on the 31/5. Then a pair of bird was flushed from the southern bank on both the 12/6 and 14/6 and single birds on the 15/6 and 16/6. Probable breeder.

(Common) Pheasant

Birds are regularly heard and seen around the reserve, breed successfully with 3 young birds being flushed on the 12/8.

Little Grebe

Two or three pairs are breeding on the reserve. A pair was seen feeding a single young on the 6/5 and with 3 young on the 8/5. The same brood of 3 young plus a pair with a single young was seen on the 11/5. A pair with 2 young was noted on the 18/5. A single bird with one fully fledged young was seen on 7/6 and an adult and 2 young on the 12/6. There were 8 birds plus 2 small young on the 1/8 both young were still present on 12/8. 6 adults and 3 young from at least two different broods were seen on the 18/8 and 24/8. Birds remained on site through to the end of the year.

Great-crested grebe

A single bird was seen on the 5/3, then again on the 12/6 through to the 17/6.

(Northern) Gannet

A juvenile bird was seen flying N over the reserve on the morning of 23/11.

(Great) Cormorant

Birds occasionally use the site for loafing and feeding. Mainly single bird as on the following dates 18/1, 16/2, 3/3, 13/4, 11/5, 12/6. There were two on the 29/4 and 18/7 and 3 on the 14/12.

(Great) Bittern

Singles were seen on the reserve on the 12/5 when a bird flew from Central to Island Meadow and on the 19/5 when a bird was first observed flying into the ditch near the car park at 09.45 hrs and was subsequently seen again flying across and landing in the reed bed near the metal gate below the main hide at c 12.30 hrs.

Little Egret

With the higher water levels this year, when the level was dropped small fish were no doubt trapped in various areas giving more opportunity for feeding on the reserve, consequently many more little egrets are using the reserve. Typically now, four or more are not an unusual site. Higher numbers on the reserve were 11 on the 18/5, 8 on the 19/5, 9 on the 31/5, 23/6 and 27/6, 11 on the 23/5 and 2/6, 15 present on 1/6. But a record count of 23 birds was on the 24/6. With further lowering of the water level to facilitate management work together with the massive encroachment of cressula number quickly dropped off. Typical records then were 2 on the 27/8 and singles on the 7/9 and 10/9.

Great (white) Egret

A single adult summer plumage bird was feeding on the reserve 7/5. **This is the first record of a bird actually on the reserve.**

Grey heron

Birds are fairly regularly seen feeding on the reserve usual one or two birds. Typically 1 on the 26/4, 1 on 28/4, 2 on the 29/4, 1 on the 11/5, 1 on the 31/5, 2 on the 2/6 and 1 on 9/6 and 1 on the 14/6 and 2 on 17/6, 4 on the 27/6, 3 on 4/7 and 2 on 29/7, 3 on the 23/8, 2 on the 25/8, ----- 1 on 4/12, 1 on 24/12.

Purple Heron

An immature bird was present on the reserve 20/5 to 24/5. **This rare heron is a first record for the reserve.**

Osprey

1 observed from the reserve flying along the Maxey cut on the 11/9 and again on the 29/9 one fishing on the Etton (slurry) pit over flew the southern end of the reserve a further bird was note over the reserve on the 6/10. Note, 1-2 birds were in the vicinity of Maxey pits from 11/9 through to the 17/10.

Red Kite

Fairly regularly seen over the reserve, usually single birds. Typical sightings were, 1 on the 5/3, 2 on the 1/4, 1 on the 25/4, 1 on the 11/5, 13/5 and 29/5 ----- 1 on 25/11, 2 on the 23/12.

(Western) Marsh Harrier

A single adult male was quartering the reserve on the 25/4 and 27/4. An adult female was seen on the 28/4, an adult male on the 30/4 and a female again on 13/5

and an adult female and a younger bird were present 18/5. Single birds were reported on the 19/5 a female, 21/8 (gender not specified) and females were again seen on the 25/5, 4/6, 5/9 and 19/9.

Hen harrier

A single male bird was seen flying East over the reserve on the 30/4. **This is a first record for the reserve.**

(Common) Buzzard

Birds are mainly seen flying high over the reserve usually single birds, and occasionally perched up on the distant trees or Telegraph poles. Occasionally they are lower down over the reserve, if this is during the breeding season; they are invariably mobbed by the black headed gull as happened on the 12/6. A bird flew low through the reserve on the 14/6 and was attacked by a Redshank a Lapwing and a Black-headed gull, all breeding birds on the reserve. Another interesting record was of one with a young rabbit in its talons low over the hide on the 4/7.

(Eurasian) Sparrow Hawk

Birds are occasionally seen hunting over the reserve, 1 flew through the reserve at dusk on the 17/6. On the 21/8 a female was seen perched in the reed bed towards dusk presumably awaiting roosting starling, whilst a male flew over the hide. A single female was seen on the 21/10.

(Common) Kestrel

Birds are occasionally seen hunting around the reserve. Typical sightings were 2 on the 5/4, 1 on the 28/4, 1 on the 13/5, 1 on the 19/5 and 1 on the 12/6, ----- 1 on 25/11, 1 on 16/12.

(Eurasian) Hobby

Single birds were seen flying through the reserve on the 25/4, 22/5 and the 2/6. Two birds were hunting dragonflies over the reserve on the 29/6 and a single bird was present on the 7/7.

Water rail

A single bird was 'squealing' from the southern reed bed on the 26/4 and 23/5. Also on 24/5 a bird was seen in the reed viewed from the main hide. A male was singing and a female calling late on the evening of 13/6 and a single bird was heard on the 6/7. Probable breeder.

(Common) Moorhen

Three or four pairs are resident on the site and breed.

(Eurasian) Coot

Higher winter numbers than usual, presumably due to the higher water levels. 38 on the 18/1, 29 on the 26/1, 44 on the 16/2, 31 on the 5/3 and 30 on the 23/3. This had dropped to 11 on the 5/4 a breeding population 5 or 6 pairs remained on site. Nests were noted on the 13/4, 25/4 and 11/5. A pair with 1 young was seen on the 29/5. The second winter population stabilised at around 10 birds.

(Eurasian) Oystercatcher

2 on the 1/4, and the 28/4, then singles on the 5/4, 9/5, 13/5, 22/5, 23/5, 2 on the 25/5 then singles on the 29/5 and 14/6.

Little Ringed Plover

2 on the 26/4, 3 on the 27/4 and 1 on the 30/4, 1 on the 7/5, 3 on the 8/5 and 11/5, with 1 or 2 birds then seen regularly through to the 22/5, with 3 on the 23/5. A bird was heard calling on the 31/5 and 2 were seen on the 2/6 and 3/6, and 1 on the 17/6. 4 (2 Ad. and 2 Juv.) were present on the 6/7 although young birds had not been seen on the reserve, it is not inconceivable that the birds had bred on the reserve or locally possibly in the Works area. Single birds were also seen on 24/6 and 27/6.

(Common) Ringed Plover

Spring passage consisted of the following birds 2 on the 7/5, 3 on the 8/5, 4 on the 9/5, 1 on the 10/5 and 11/5 and 3 on the 13/5, 1 on the 14/5, 4 on the 19/5 and 3 on the 25/5.

Grey plover

3 on the 14/5 and 1 on the 15/5.

(Northern) Lapwing

A successful year with five breeding pairs on the reserve. The first young birds were noted at the end of May. At least 9 fledge young were seen on the 26/6. Due to the state of the scape area with encroachment of crassula there have been fewer birds using the site following the successful breeding, however flocks of 238 on the 25/8 and 150 on the 19/9 were exception.

Sanderling

An un-common passage wader locally, single birds were seen on the 21/4, 24/4 and on the 8/5.

(Ruddy) Turnstone

An un-common passage wader locally, a single bird on the 18/5 was the only record.

Dunlin

2 on the 17/4, 1 on the 21/4, 1 on the 25/4, 8 on the 8/5, 4 on the 9/5, 5 on the 10/5, 1 on the 11/5, 13/5, 14/5 and 15/5, 3 on the 18/5, 1 on the 22/5 and 23/5, 2 on the 25/5.

Wood sandpiper

A good passage this year of what is a locally un-common passage wader with 1 on the 25/4, 2 on the 5/5, 1 on the 7/5, 2 on the 8/5, 9/5, and 10/5, 1 on the 15/5, 1 on the 18/5, 19/5 and 20/5.

Common Sandpiper

1 on the 30/4, 1 on the 13/5 and 14/5, 5 waders flew over the reserve on the evening of 21/8 and were most probably this species!

Green Sandpiper

There were no over wintering birds and a fairly moderate spring passage this year with 1 on the 1/4, then on the 24/4 through to the 27/4, 1 on the 7/5. Then in June there were 3 on 23/6, 1 on 24/6 and 3 on 27/6. The only returning birds were singles on the 4/8, 2/9 and 15/9.

(Common) Redshank

The first birds was seen on the 2/3, then singles were seen on the 1/4, 5/4, 15/4 and 17/4. 4 birds were present on the 20/4 and display was observed, 6 birds were present on 21/4 and on 28/4 copulation was seen. Three to four pairs have been present throughout May and into June. A single young bird was seen on the on the 22/6 and 2 large young were on central meadow on the 23/6. Then a further sighting of 3 almost fully fledged young on island meadow on the 6/7.

(Common) Greenshank

A good spring passage with 2 on the 8/5, 1 on the 16/5, 7 on the 18/5, 4 on the 19/5 and 2 on the 20/5.

Black-tailed Godwit

A poor spring passage, the only record was 11 on the 5/5.

Bar-tailed Godwit

A rare passage wader locally, 5 birds were reported on the crassula on Island Meadow on the morning of 21/8.

(Eurasian) Curlew

A rare passage wader locally, the only record is 1 on the 19/5.

(Common) Snipe

During the first winter period, in January 3 on the 1/1, 3 on the 3/1, 5 on the 10/1, 5 on the 18/1, then in February 1 on the 16/2, and 5 on the 25/2, in March 2 on the 5/3, 6 on the 23/3, and 1 on the 25/3. There were still birds through April with 2 on the 1/4, 14 on the 5/4, 15 on the 13/4, 6 on the 18/4, 3 on the 22/4, 3 on the 23/4, 2 on the 25/4 and 1 on the 28/4. The last sighting was of 1 on the 8/5. There were 4 again on the 12/9. High counts were then 23 on the 29/10 and again on the 11/11, 13 on the 16/11 and 12 on the 16/12.

Jack snipe

During the first winter period, 2 on the 1/1, 4 on the 3/1, 2 on the 18/1, 2 on the 26/1 and 1 on the 5/3. Returning birds were noted with 1 on the 11/11 and 16/11.

Ruff

2 on the 20/4, 21/4, 22/4 and 25/4 then singles on the 26/4, 27/4, 28/4, 29/4 and 30/4.

Black-headed Gull

There was a build-up of birds around the reserve peaking at 400 on the 16/2. There were 25+ birds initially nested on the beached tern rafts plus a number of other nests around the site. All the nests on the rafts were predated on the evening of the 11/5 or morning of the 12/5, it was assumed by Jackdaw as all the eggs were neatly holed. On the morning of the 13/5 we cleaned and launched a 'tern raft' by the evening 9 pairs of Common terns were prospecting and birds were making nest scrapes over the next two day this build up to 12 nesting birds. However these were all evicted by the Black-headed gulls with a total of 16 nests being built, (there were no terns left by 16/5). Although a good number of young were hatched the first chick was noted on the 14/6 no birds were fully fledged, I believe that they were being predated by lesser black-backed gulls. Two birds did fledge from the initial nests built around the site, the first fledge young being seen on the 3/6. There were occasional large congregation on the reserve 300 on island meadow on 10/9 and 932 on the 19/9.

Common Gull

2 birds were present on the reserve on the 16/2 and a single on the 15/9.

Mediterranean Gull

An adult bird was present on the reserve on the 25/5.

Yellow-legged Gull

2 were reported on the reserve on the 9/5.

Lesser-black backed Gull

One to three birds are fairly regularly seen on the reserve. 1 on the 16/2, 1 on the 23/3, 3 on the 1/4, 1 on the 5/4, 2 on the 13/4 and 27/4, 1 on the 28/4, 2 on the 30/4, 2 on the 8/5, 2 adults and 1 2nd winter 13/5. An adult bird was present on the 15/9 and a 1st summer bird on 16/9, 1 on the 5/11.

Great-black backed Gull

A single record of a 2nd winter bird on the spit, on the 25/4.

Common tern

As we had no tern rafts out the first birds were noted in late April with 5 on the 27/4 and 2 on the 30/4, only a few birds were then occasionally seen around the site. On the morning of 13/5 we launched a tern raft and before we had left the site birds were sitting on it. That evening 9 pairs were taking up residence. However by the following evening Black-headed gull were starting to make nests on the raft. The tern numbers increased to 12 pairs, however by the evening of 16/5 all the terns had been evicted. Birds were still occasionally seen in small numbers around the site through into early August.

Feral pigeon

Occasionally use the site to drink and feed. One was seen on the 28/4 and 3 on the 31/5.

Stock dove

Small numbers regularly feed on the reserve, usually individuals or pairs. One on the 29/4 and 9/5, 2 on the 11/5, 5 on the 31/5 and 1 on the 2/6 and 7/6 are typical.

(Common) Woodpigeon

One of the most likely birds to be seen on a visit to the site, almost always seen on or over the reserve. They nest along the whole length of the north and east perimeter hedge.

(Eurasian) Collard dove

Now being seen more regularly on the reserve, mainly visiting the feeding station. Typical were 2 on the 10/9

(European) Turtle dove

No birds have attempted to nest on the site, however birds are nesting within a few 100 meters of our western boundary. The feeding station that we are providing, following consultation with the RSPB is working and Turtle doves are regularly using it, 2 birds were seen and photographed on the 2/6. A single bird flew west across the reserve in front of the main hide on the 16/6 and was assumed to have been feeding on the seed provided. Four fledged young were seen on the reserve on the 9/7. Then birds were regularly seen at the feeding station with 4 Ad. and 2 Juv. on the 15/7 these were all still present on the 7/8. Second brood were in progress as singing was noted on the 7/7 and was still in evidence on the 4/8. 4 Adults and 6 Juv. were seen at the feeding station on the 18/8 and 9 birds were still noted on the 25/8. Hopefully both pairs double brooded successfully. 10 birds which included 2 recently fledged young were present at the feeding station on the 10/9. This has proved that 8 young have been raised by the two local pairs. 6 birds were seen at the feeding station on the 11/9.

(Common) Cuckoo

Singing birds heard 1 on the 25/4, 28/4 and the 30/4, 1 on the 11/5 and 29/5, There were 4 birds on the reserve on the 25/5 and 2 on the 1/6. On the 13/6 two birds were observed fly over south meadow then east of the reserve whilst a third bird was seen perched up in a tree in the southern shelter belt. Probably breeding.

Barn owl

A single hunting bird flew in from the east at the north end of the reserve at 21.30hrs on the 9/6.

(Common) Swift

One or two birds are occasionally seen feeding over the reserve, exceptions were 3 over the reserve on the 8/5, a large passage of 90+ birds in groups of 10 to 20 birds was noted on the 9/5, there were 3 on the 11/5 and 8 seen over the reserve on the 3/6.

(Common) Kingfisher

The only records were 1 on the 13/5 and 2 on the 15/9 and 25/11.

(European) Green Woodpecker

One or two birds are fairly regularly seen and often heard around the reserve, throughout the year with 1 on the 26/1, 2 on the 16/2, 1 on the 29/5 and 4/12 and 2 on 23/12 being typical records.

(Common) Skylark

There were 5 birds seen on the reserve during the winter period on the 26/1. However by early April breeding birds were on site with 16+ singing males spread across the whole reserve by 5/4. The singing of skylarks is an almost guaranteed sound around the reserve throughout the spring and summer months. Breeding proved with young birds seen on the 16/6. A nest with eggs was recorded on 29/6.

(Common) Sand martin

A number of birds breed locally in the main works site and working pits. Birds are seen feeding over the reserve, typically, 10 on the 25/4, 5 on the 26/4, 7 on the 29/4, 32 on the 8/5, and 8 on the 12/6. An artificial sand martin bank is plan as an additional habitat on the reserve to ensure a continual presents after gravel extraction ends locally.

(Barn) Swallow

A number of birds are regularly seen feeding over the reserve. Typically 5 on the 11/5, 16 on the 8/5, 1 on the 13/5, 23 on the 31/5

(Common) House martin

Are rarely seen over the reserve however a few birds do breed locally. Five birds on the 8/5 and 2 on the 10/5 are the only records.

Meadow pipit

There were very few records during the first winter period, with 1 on the 26/1, then 1 on the 5/4 with a final record of 3 birds on the 18/4. No birds have summered on the reserve. A single bird was noted on 16/11, 25/11 and 2 on the 23/12.

Pied Wagtail

There have been fewer records this year probable due to the higher water levels. There was 1 on the 30/4, 3 on the 3/6, 1 on the 7/6, plus an adult male and 2 young birds feeding on the 12/6. A young bird was again present on the 16/6 and 3 birds were present on the 13/7. Proved breeding.

Yellow Wagtail

Birds are only seen irregularly on the reserve, with a single male on the 29/4, a pair on the 8/5, 2 males and a female on the 9/5, a pair on the 11/5 and a single bird on the 13/5 and 15/5. 3 birds were also seen on the reserve on the 10/9. Possible breeders.

Dunnock

At least two singing males along the eastern boundary hedge, assumed to be breeding due to permanent territories.

(European) Robin

Two possibly three singing males all with territories in the eastern hedge, assumed to be breeding due to permanent territories.

(Northern) Wheatear

Passage birds were a single male present on the 19/4, and a female on the 11/5 and a returning bird on the 12/8.

(Common) Stonechat

Two birds were in the southern reed bed on the 18/10. A single male was still present on the 19/10. **This is a first record for the reserve.**

Song thrush

Two singing males were present on the reserve, one in the southern shelter belt and one to the north in the boundary hedge, probable breeding.

Redwing

No first winter records. However a single bird was amongst a flock of fieldfares on the 16/12 and 21/12.

Mistle thrush

A pair of birds was on the reserve on the 18/1. However no singing birds were noted on the breeding bird survey. A single bird was also seen on 2/12.

(Common) Blackbird

Two singing males, both along the eastern boundary hedge, assumed breeding due to permanent territories.

Fieldfare

Reasonable numbers of these winter thrushes use the sight during the winter feeding on both the hawthorn hedges and the meadows. Roving flocks of 100+ are not uncommon, however more typical was 46 on 26/1. The last record of the first winter period was 5 on the 18/4. My first returning record on the reserve was a single bird on 29/10. Other records were 30 on the 11/11, 20 on the 16/11, 13 on 25/11 and 42 on the 16/12 there have been fewer birds than usual during this winter period.

Blackcap

Two singing males, both at the south of the reserve, presumed breeding due to permanent territories.

(Common) Whitethroat

Four possibly five singing males, all south of 'The concrete pad' along the eastern and southern boundary hedges. Breeding assumed due to permanent territories.

Lesser whitethroat

A single singing male in the eastern hedge just south of 'The concrete pad', a possible breeder.

Sedge warbler

Two singing males both in the south of the reserve. Fledge young seen on the 28/6. Proved breeding.

Reed warbler

Twelve+ singing males spread across the reserve in the various areas of reed beds. Breeding proved with fledge young being seen on the 8/7.

(Winter) Wren

Three singing males around the reserve, breeding assumed but not proved.

Great tit

Two singing males both in the southern half of the reserve, one in the vicinity of the nest box which they have occupied for the last two seasons. Breeding assumed but no young birds seen.

Blue tit

Two possibly three singing males along the eastern boundary hedge, assumed to be utilising the boxes that have been positioned along the hedge. Breeding assumed but not yet proved.

Long-tailed tit

One pair has been seen along the eastern boundary hedge 2 on the 6/2 and 16/2, possible breeder. Have successfully bred in the last two seasons. There was a parties 7 on the 21/9, 10+ on the 27/10 and 15 on the 16/11 which may have been the result of successful breeding on the reserve.

(Common) Magpie

Two pairs are regularly seen around the reserve, nest building was observed within the Eastern hedge and young birds were subsequently seen on the 2/6. Also 5 birds including fledged young were seen on the 9/7. Proved breeding.

(Eurasian) Jay

A single bird was seen on the 21/9.

(Western) Jackdaw

Numbers around the reserve this year have increased, with from 7 to 20 being a regular sight. Typically there were 10 on the 5/4, 8 on the 13/4, 20 on the 28/4, 15 on the 11/5 and 7 on the 13/5, 31/5 and 9/6. Either on the evening of the 11/5 or on the morning of the 12/5 the black-headed gull nests on the un-launched rafts were all predated. As all the eggs had been neatly holed, it was assumed that the large number of Jackdaws were the culprits.

A pair has again bred in the pole nest box which is situated to the north of the reserve.

Carrion crow

One or two pairs are regularly seen around the reserve. A pair has successfully bred in previous seasons and I assume that nesting has been attempted in the boundary hedges. However no evidence has yet been found.

Rook

Rarely seen on site 2 on the 29/5 is my only records.

(Common) Raven

A single bird flew west over the reserve, calling on the afternoon of the 18/1.

This was a first record for the reserve.

A pair of birds flew over the reserve on the 22/5 and again NE on the 23/5. A pair flew west over the northern end of the reserve at dusk on the 24/12.

(Common) Starling

Reasonable numbers use the reserve in winter for feeding, typically 175 on the 26/1. Small numbers are regularly seen on and flying over the reserve during the breeding season but although we have supplied suitable nest boxes none have taken them up to date. The reserve is however used as a roost site in the Autumn and Winter and numbers had already built up with an exceptionally early flock of c1500 birds at 20.35 hrs on the 7/6! On the evening of 12/8, a small flock of c200 went to roost in the western reed bed at 20.05 hrs. On the 21/8 a small flock of 250 birds went to roost early in the western reed bed at 19.20 hrs, additional birds congregated on the wire along the quarry access track building to c1000 these went to roost at 19.55 hrs on the pit along Woodgate lane. Murmuration of c 3000 went into roost in the western reed bed at 19.20 hrs. on the 7/9. Numbers continued to build up in excess of 10K by the end of the year. The Woodgate lane reed beds were the favourite site however the roost did move back to the reserve towards the end of the year.

(Common) Chaffinch

Two singing males, both situated towards the centre of the reserve within the eastern hedge. Breeding assumed due to the holding of permanent territory.

(Common) Linnet

A single singing male and a number of individual sightings all to the south of the reserve, possible breeding.

(European) Goldfinch

One or two pairs were seen around the reserve during the survey period, possible breeding. Small numbers are regularly seen around the reserve in winter usually feeding on the Alder tree cones. A reasonable count of 47 birds was noted on 16/11.

(European) Greenfinch

A single bird was seen in the southern boundary hedge on the 30/10.

(Common) Reed bunting

Ten+ singing males around the reserve, situated in most of the reed beds. Breeding assumed due to the holding of numerous permanent territories.

Yellowhammer

Two singing males on territories at the south of the reserve, the first heard 13/5 still singing on 12/6. The second singing male was confirmed on the 12/6 when both were in song. A singing bird was still noted on the 9/7. Assumed breeding due to permeant territory.

Red listed species using the reserve

Grey partridge

Two pairs present on the reserve, probable breeders.

Lapwing

Five breeding pairs with at least 9 fledged young.

Turtle Dove

Two pairs bred within a few 100 metres of the reserve. Birds have regularly visited the feeding station that we established on the reserve, with sightings proving that both pairs successfully double brooded.

Cuckoo

One to 4 birds were present on the reserve on a number of dates, probable breeders. However there was no evidence of successful breeding.

Skylark

Sixteen+ singing male were counted during the BBS (Breeding Bird Survey). Breeding was proved with young birds seen.

Yellow wagtail

Not a breeding species on the reserve, however we do attract birds on passage, they do breed locally in the cereal crops.

Starling

Although we have sited suitable nest boxes on the reserve, we have had no breeding attempts to date. However the reserve does attract good numbers of feeding birds in the winter. The reed beds also attract large congregations (Murmuration) of roosting birds during the Autumn/Winter period.

Song Thrush

Two singing males present on the reserve, assumed breeding due to prolonged territorial singing of bird to the north of the reserve.

Mistle Thrush

A pair was present in the winter but no singing birds were noted during the BBS.

Linnet

Singing male on site, probable breeder.

Yellowhammer

Two singing males noted on site, assumed breeder due to prolonged territorial singing.

Rarer breeding species using the reserve

Shoveler

Large numbers wintered on the reserve with a maximum count of 54 on a number of dates. There were still 6 to 9 birds present through April, then 2 displaying pairs plus a further pair on 29/5. Birds were still present during June with 9 males and a female being still present on 19/6. However despite this prolonged presence there was no evidence of breeding.

(Eurasian)Teal

6 to 9 birds were present throughout April, 3 birds were seen on 13/5, then pairs were noted on the 7/6, 14/6 and 17/6. Two pairs were seen on the 22/6, 9 birds were present on the 23/6 and 10 on the 26/6. However there was no evidence of breeding.

Little ringed plover

1 to 3 birds were seen on site on various dates throughout April, May and June. Then on the 6/7, 2 Adult and 2 fledged young were seen. Although no young had been seen on site prior to this, breeding may have taken place on or near the reserve.

Compiled by:
Bob Titman 2019