



# Isle of Wight Ornithological Group Newsletter



Number 89

July 2021

## Recent Reports - The Island News Roundup

Compiled by Jon Sparshott

*The reports of national or local rarities, included below, have not all been reviewed by the BBRC or the Joint Local Rarities Committee. Observers of the species in these categories are encouraged to submit description details as necessary, and to submit all their records to the Bird Recorder, ideally by the end of January 2022. In addition, please submit July 2021 to October 2021 records, for inclusion in the next newsletter, to the bird recorder by November 7<sup>th</sup> 2021.*

### Overview March – June 2021

Although spring seemingly arrived early, it quickly faltered for a time before re-igniting again; overall making for perhaps a less than conventional period of migration, highlighted by early return migrants significantly ahead of their arrival dates, such as **Tree Pipit**, **Common Swift/Swift sp.**, **Hobby**, and **Common Tern**. Scarce and rare highlights included **Penduline Tit**, **Black Stork**, **Night Heron**, **Black Kite**, **Montagu's Harrier**, **Red-rumped Swallow**, **Purple Heron**, and **Golden Oriole**. A timely national influx of **Rosy Starling** produced a few local reports. There were early indications of breeding success for both **Bittern** and **Marsh Harrier**. One of the reintroduced **White-Tailed Eagle** juveniles crossed the English Channel to France, the first to do so in modern times.

### Ducks, Geese, Swans:

**Russian White-fronted Goose**, three at Brading Marsh on March 26<sup>th</sup>. Selected main counts of **Dark-bellied Brent Goose** were 271 at Thorness Bay on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 40 at SCP on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Newtown NNR on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 80 at SCP on April 28<sup>th</sup>, and lastly six at Fort Victoria on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Two to three **Egyptian Goose** at Bembridge Harbour/Brading Marsh on March 6<sup>th</sup> and April 29<sup>th</sup>. Passage of waterfowl included 11 **Shoveler**

at SCP on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and an additional 13 on March 30<sup>th</sup>. A collective total of over 2000 **Common Scoter** from the south coast and scarcer **Velvet Scoter** comprised three at Ventnor on March 21<sup>st</sup>, two counts at SCP of six on April 24<sup>th</sup> and five on April 28<sup>th</sup>, and lastly two at Fort Victoria on May 10<sup>th</sup>. **Eider**, 13 at Egypt Point on March 26<sup>th</sup> and two at SCP on April 27<sup>th</sup>. **Garganey** at Brading Marsh on March 31<sup>st</sup> followed by singles there on April 11<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup> (New Bridge). A lone **Red-crested Pochard** at Bembridge Ponds on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

### Seabirds and Herons (and their relatives):

**Great White Egret**, two regularly at Brading Marsh and one at Dodnor March 15<sup>th</sup>. **Spoonbill**, two at Western Yar on March 15<sup>th</sup> - April 5<sup>th</sup>. A **Bittern** was heard frequently 'booming' at Brading Marsh March 7<sup>th</sup> onwards. Single **Common Crane** at Sandown on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. **Night Heron**, firstly two at Brading Marsh on April 6<sup>th</sup>, which were probably first seen flying over Lake on April 4<sup>th</sup>; then singles reported at Laundry Lane April 7<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>. Up to two **Cattle Egret** at Fating Marsh on April 19<sup>th</sup> and a young **Purple Heron** at Brading Marsh was a regular feature there from May 1<sup>st</sup> onwards. A single **Black Stork** at Ventnor Downs on May 2<sup>nd</sup> was presumably the same bird seen later the same day as it fortuitously dropped in at Brading Marsh.

**Mediterranean gull** counts comprised 300 at Thorness Bay on April 10<sup>th</sup> and 180 at Brading on April 9<sup>th</sup>. An **Iceland Gull** at Borthwood on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. **Little Gull** passage comprised day counts of 21 at SCP on March 24<sup>th</sup> and two at Fort Victoria on April 26<sup>th</sup>. **Arctic Skua** passage produced at least 70 birds east, while **Great Skua** passage produced 28 east. Meanwhile **Pomarine Skua** passage was tiny, comprising two at Ventnor on April 22<sup>nd</sup> followed by two and three at SCP on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. **Red-throated Diver** easterly movements totalled *ca* 90 birds at SCP/Ventnor. **Great Northern Diver**, singles at Thorness Bay on March 30<sup>th</sup> and SCP on May 13<sup>th</sup>. **Black-throated Diver** singles at SCP on March 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>, two on April 13<sup>th</sup>, singles on April 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>. Single and last **Slavonian Grebe** at Fort Victoria on March 30<sup>th</sup>. **Sandwich Tern** passage at SCP began on March 29<sup>th</sup> followed by a peak day count of 340 on May 21<sup>st</sup>. **Commic Tern** counts included *ca* 2000 at SCP on April 28<sup>th</sup>. A single **Arctic Tern** at Rocken End on April 21<sup>st</sup>. **Little Tern**, counts of three at SCP on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 15 at Fort Victoria on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Only one report of **Black Tern** featured two at Fort Victoria on April 26<sup>th</sup>. **Manx Shearwater** counts included 296 (peak) at SCP on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. **Red-breasted Merganser**, five at Newtown NNR on March 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Gamebirds, Raptors, and Owls:**

**White-tailed Eagle** juveniles continue to explore; one individual, G463, made a 47 km (29 mile) crossing between Dungeness and Boulogne-sur-Mer on April 6<sup>th</sup>, achieving the accolade of being the first to leave the UK. Other selected interesting journeys of exploration included one venturing to Wales and another one seen regularly at Longleat Safari Park. **Osprey**, firstly appeared at Cranmore on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, followed with singles at Bembridge Ponds on March 29<sup>th</sup>, a satellite tracked male 4k(13) for its second successive year at SCP on April 14<sup>th</sup>, and one at Brading Marsh on April 25<sup>th</sup>. **Marsh Harrier**, seven at Brading Marsh on March 1<sup>st</sup>, plus migrant singles at Bembridge (seen to cross the Solent northwards) on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, singles at Luccombe Down on April 8<sup>th</sup> and Ventnor on April 27<sup>th</sup>. **Red Kite**, numerous sightings island wide, mostly singles and a high count of three at Bembridge Embankment on March 21<sup>st</sup>. A single **Black Kite** at Wheelers Bay on April 20<sup>th</sup>. **Common Buzzard**, two separate high counts of 21 each at Apse Heath and Pagham, both on March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Honey Buzzard** sightings were limited to singles at Mottistone on May 18<sup>th</sup> and Osborne Bay (observed from the mainland) on June 7<sup>th</sup>. An obliging ringtail **Montagu's Harrier** was photographed at Whale Chine on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Singles of ringtail **Hen Harrier** at Brighstone Forest on March 14<sup>th</sup> and Wellow on March 25<sup>th</sup>. **Merlin** singles at Chale on April 7<sup>th</sup> and SCP on April 24<sup>th</sup>. **Hobby**, first at Brading Marsh on March 29<sup>th</sup> represented an early arrival date, followed by a peak day count of 12 at the same location on May 9<sup>th</sup>; elsewhere, singles at Afton Down and SCP on April 15<sup>th</sup>, Ventnor on April 27<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>, and two at Bonchurch Down on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. A vocal **Tawny Owl** at Whitwell, March 16<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, once again evokes the conundrum regarding their local status. **Short-eared Owl**, singles at Bembridge Down on March 25<sup>th</sup> and Culver Down on April 16<sup>th</sup>; unusually and notably, one remained in the area well into June.

#### **Waders:**

Singles of **Avocet** at Newtown NNR on March 21<sup>st</sup> and SCP on April 25<sup>th</sup>. **Purple Sandpiper** (long stayer) at East Cowes Esplanade was last noted on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Three **Greenshank** at Western Yar on March 15<sup>th</sup>. **Snipe**, 32 at Western Yar on March 4<sup>th</sup>. A final **Jack Snipe** at Thorness on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The wintering **Spotted Redshank** remained at the Western Yar until at least April 13<sup>th</sup>. The first two **Little Ringed Plover** at Laundry Lane on March 25<sup>th</sup>, followed with singles at St. Helens Bridge and Atherfield on April 17<sup>th</sup>. **Common Sandpiper**, singles save two at Laundry Lane on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Bar-tailed Godwit** passage included high counts of 600 at SCP on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 870 at Ventnor on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 332 at SCP on April 28<sup>th</sup>. **Whimbrel** peak movement was 43 at SCP on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Low numbers of **Green Sandpiper** comprised singles at Rofford Marsh on March 30<sup>th</sup>, Thorness Bay on April 21<sup>st</sup>, Brading Marsh on April 26<sup>th</sup>, and two at Bembridge Ponds on June 25<sup>th</sup>. **Dotterel**, a single at St. Catherine's Down on April 24<sup>th</sup>, not often encountered in the spring period, represented an interesting find.

#### **Near passerines and passerines:**

First **Cuckoo** at Knighton on April 12<sup>th</sup>; a satellite tagged bird 'PJ' at Havenstreet on April 21<sup>st</sup>, pausing there before reaching Suffolk. **Turtle Dove**, first at a private garden on April 26<sup>th</sup>, two at a West Wight location on May 14<sup>th</sup>, and one at

Brading Marsh on May 16<sup>th</sup>. First **Nightjar** at Parkhurst Forest on May 16<sup>th</sup>. **Rosy Starling**, part of influx, started with two over Ventnor on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, then singles at Newport on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sandown on June 6<sup>th</sup>, Culver and Foreland Fields on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Penduline Tit**, a great find and obvious highlight, with two at Brading Marsh (New Bridge) on April 6<sup>th</sup>. **Hoopoe** report, singles at Niton on April 27<sup>th</sup> and Brading Marsh on June 4<sup>th</sup>. **Golden Oriole** singles at Ventnor on April 27<sup>th</sup> and Luccombe Bowl on April 30<sup>th</sup>. An interesting swift sp, thought to be **Common** (but possibly something rarer), at SCP on March 19<sup>th</sup>; followed by the first **Common Swift** at Niton on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Singles of **Whinchat** at Headon Warren on April 19<sup>th</sup>, Ventnor Downs on April 27<sup>th</sup>; followed by a fall on May 7<sup>th</sup> (ca 20 birds reported island wide). First **Spotted Flycatcher** at St. Lawrence on April 28<sup>th</sup> followed by singles and three at SCP on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Pied Flycatcher** singles at Priory Woods on April 4<sup>th</sup>, Afton Marsh and Niton on April 5<sup>th</sup>, and Newtown on April 19<sup>th</sup>. **Tree Pipit** passage totalled *ca* 15 birds, mostly singles, with an unusual early individual at St. Boniface Down on March 14<sup>th</sup>. First **Barn Swallow** at WHD on March 17<sup>th</sup>. A **Red-rumped Swallow** at Quay Lane, Brading, on May 7<sup>th</sup>, was a good spot. **House Martin**, first two at Brading Marsh on March 28<sup>th</sup>. First singing **Nightingale** at Newtown NNR on April 17<sup>th</sup>. The final sightings of **Fieldfare** comprised counts of 20 and five at Whitefield woods on March 28<sup>th</sup> and April 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Redwing**, final reports were four at Shanklin on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 100 at Cranmore on March 9<sup>th</sup>, and 40 at Quarr Abbey on March 16<sup>th</sup>. **Ring Ouzel** passage comprised singles at Upper Ventnor on April 1<sup>st</sup>, Bonchurch Down on April 14<sup>th</sup>, Mottistone on April 20<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, and Whitefield on April 21<sup>st</sup>. A final **Black Redstart** at Ventnor Downs on May 12<sup>th</sup>. **Common Redstart** arrived at Freshwater on April 13<sup>th</sup>; aside from odd singles, three at WHD on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Both **Garden Warbler** and **Lesser Whitethroat** arrived at Brading Marsh on April 11<sup>th</sup>, whilst the first **Willow Warbler** was also at Brading Marsh on March 29<sup>th</sup> followed by a peak count 105 at SCP on April 13<sup>th</sup>. **Wood Warbler** sightings began with two at Blackgang on April 26<sup>th</sup>, followed by singles at SCP on May 7<sup>th</sup>, St. Lawrence on May 9<sup>th</sup>, and lastly Bembridge on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. First **Reed Warbler** at Rofford Marsh on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and **Sedge Warbler** at Brading Marsh on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Grasshopper Warbler** singles at Laundry Lane and SCP on April 18<sup>th</sup>. **Whitethroat** arrived at Brading on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. **Wheatear**, early single at WHD on February 10<sup>th</sup> (previous period) followed by a peak count of 20 at WHD on April 20<sup>th</sup>. **Meadow Pipit** passage: counts of 206 at Culver Down and 37 at SCP on March 16<sup>th</sup>. A single **Water Pipit** at Laundry Lane on March 26<sup>th</sup>. **Yellow Wagtail** at Pagham on April 2<sup>nd</sup> then nine at SCP on April 28<sup>th</sup>. **White Wagtail** at Niton on March 25<sup>th</sup>, two at Laundry Lane on April 7<sup>th</sup>, and a single at Apse Heath on May 8<sup>th</sup>. A single **Brambling** (ringed) at Niton on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Count of six **Siskin** at Bouldnor Forest on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Up to 15 **Crossbill** still at Bouldnor Forest on March 1<sup>st</sup>, followed by four at Shanklin on June 9<sup>th</sup>, single at Wootton on June 30<sup>th</sup>, three nw at Rookley on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Singles of **Hawfinch** were at Bouldnor Forest on March 1<sup>st</sup> and a private garden on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

## Lesser Spotted Woodpecker in West Wight in Spring 2021

by Robin Attrill and Maureen Millar

On late December 1989 RPA was fortunate to find a male Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (LSW) in the northern part of Parkhurst Forest. It proved to be the first ever island individual that was twitchable (with sometimes considerable patience), remaining until April 1980. It was not seen thereafter and the subsequent three decades has seen a dearth of local reports, with many of those unsubstantiated.

In early May 2021 RPA was reviewing recent Isle of Wight sightings in BirdTrack and was very surprised to see a report of LSW from Freshwater on April 18<sup>th</sup> 2021. The observer, MM, was contacted, initially to check that it was not a miscode for another species, something which unfortunately happens rather frequently in this and other bird databases. It was immediately apparent that this was not the case and steps were initiated to compile a JLRC submission for the sighting, this being an 'asterisk' local rarity on the Island. Having established the location of the sighting RPA headed to the site early on May 12<sup>th</sup>, more in hope than expectation but if you don't try you don't get!

### Cuckoo Tracking Project

The Cuckoo is currently Red Listed as a Bird of Conservation Concern in the UK, due to its population decline.

Since 2011 the BTO has been satellite-tracking Cuckoos to find out why they are declining. We've learned lots of vital information which could help us to understand our Cuckoos, such as how the different routes taken are linked to declines, and some of the pressures they face whilst on migration — but there is still more to discover. We now need to look more closely at how dependent they are on, and how much their migration is linked, to the drought-busting rains of the weather frontal system known as the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) as they move out of the Congo rainforest and begin to head back to the UK via West Africa.

The current oldest of the surviving Cuckoos is PJ, who was fitted with a satellite tag in King's Forest on the Norfolk/Suffolk border in 2016. He has been migrating to and from the Congo rainforest each spring and autumn since then, clocking up over 50,000 miles and sending almost daily updates on his whereabouts to scientists at the BTO, information that will help identify the cause of their decline here in the UK. During the early morning of 9 July signals from his tag showed he was in the southwest of France on the southern edge of the Parc naturel des Landes de Gascogne, 600 miles from his Suffolk breeding site.

Only three of the ten birds are still in the UK at the time of writing in mid-July, including Clive named after the late and great Clive Minton.

Two of this year's birds ringed have proved to be the trail blazers. Scottish Cuckoo Ellis has just crossed the Sahara desert and is in northern Nigeria close to the border with Niger. Attenborough was tagged in Norfolk and true to his namesake was soon off on his travels, leaving England at the end of June. He is currently in Northern Spain.

You can follow the Cuckoos progress as they make their way south through Europe, across the Mediterranean and the Sahara on their way to the Congo basin at [www.bto.org/cuckoos](http://www.bto.org/cuckoos)

On reaching the locality, the 'hanger' wood on the north side of Tennyson Down, RPA spent about 90 minutes searching for the bird. The late spring meant that leaf growth was not well advanced, particularly on the Ash trees, rendering visibility surprisingly good and, just at the point of giving up, the male LSW suddenly came into view, feeding actively on twigs high in the Ash canopy. It remained there for about 5 minutes then descended to feed in the twiggy branches of a fallen tree. It was almost immediately disturbed by a passing Jay and was lost to sight.

The bird gave no indication of breeding or territorial behaviour and was, most likely, a dispersant from the mainland, most likely the New Forest where the species remains relatively numerous, that arrived at some time during the previous autumn/winter. The wood in question is relatively infrequently visited by birders, although a footpath runs along the northern edge.

Separate reports on the two sightings were simultaneously circulated to, and accepted by, JLRC.

Quite why this species is so very scarce here is somewhat surprising. Like certain other resident birds widespread in the New Forest (Tawny Owl, Nuthatch) it has always struggled to get established on the Island despite plenty of apparently suitable habitat. Presumably the number of dispersing birds is very small and, whilst temporary short-term colonisations may occur (as happened with Nuthatch at Quarr-Binstead in the recent past), these are rarely sustained for long. Similarly, when a population dies out, as has happened with Marsh Tit, recolonization is very difficult.

The Freshwater bird may well still be in the area so the area may be worth a look in autumn, winter and, particularly early spring when territorial birds are vocal and drumming. Good luck to those who seek it out!

*Footnote: I would very much like to thank Maureen, who was not permanently resident on the island at the time, for placing the original sighting on record that enabled me to follow it up. Maureen is now island based and has recently become an IWOG member....please make her welcome! Robin.*

## **Breeding Bird Survey (BBS)/ Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Update**

The BBS has now ended for 2021. Many thanks to all who took part and I hope you enjoyed being able to be out surveying again. Thank you also to everyone who has entered their results already and a reminder that we need the results in ideally by the end of August. I hope to give a brief preliminary summary of the 2021 results in the next newsletter.

The 2020/21 WeBS reporting year ended at the end of June. Please can you ensure you get your results entered online by the end of August and grateful thanks to those who have already submitted their counts. As with the BBS, I hope to have further details of the 2020/21 results in the next newsletter.

## **Bird Track Update**

For those of you who use the Apple Bird Track app, an update to the iOS version was released on the 8th June, bringing with it improved location selection, more intuitive site creation, on screen guidance, ability to rank your places by proximity to your current location and some general bug fixes. To ensure you have the latest version installed on your iOS device, search for BirdTrack via the App store and Update will show. If Open is shown then you have the latest version installed. We plan to bring these new updates to Android devices in the coming months.

## **BTO Equipment Donation Scheme (EDS)**

The BTO Equipment Donation Scheme (EDS) supports young people across the UK by supplying them with equipment to make the most of their birdwatching experiences, and enabling them to further develop the scheme. Do you have a pair of binoculars you no longer use, or a bird guide that is gathering dust? Donating them to EDS means we can pass them on to a young person, school, or university group who cannot afford to buy their own. This way, we can all pass on the passion for birdwatching to the next generation. If you can help, you can find more details how to donate your item(s) at <https://www.bto.org/develop-your-skills/birding-basics/bto-equipment-donation-scheme> .

Contact details: **Jim Baldwin (BTO Regional Representative)** Tel. (01983)721137 (home), 07528 586683 (mobile), email: wightbto@hotmail.com

## **Forthcoming Field Meetings**

All members and friends welcome.

### **Brading Marsh RSPB Walk**

**1<sup>st</sup> August 2021 @ 08.30**

Meet @ the St. Helens end of Laundry Lane and park near the old cattle sheds.

Grid Ref: SZ620882

**Leader: Derek Hale**

### **Ventnor Downs for early returning migrants**

**5<sup>th</sup> September 2021 @ 08.00**

Meet @ National Trust car park (end of road)

Grid Ref: SZ574787

**Leader: Derek Hale**

### **West High Down**

**26<sup>th</sup> September 2021 @ 08.00**

Meet at High Down quarry car park

Grid Ref: SZ325856

**Leader: Dave Hunnybun**

### **Culver Down for migrants**

**10<sup>th</sup> October 2021 @ 07.00**

Meet at car park (just past public house)

Grid Ref: SZ636856

**Leader: Derek Hale**

Those members wishing to start later, meet at car park at 08.30

### **Newtown NNR for winter birds**

**14<sup>th</sup> November 2021 @ 09.00**

Meet at main car park opposite old Town Hall

Grid Ref: SZ423905

**Leader: Derek Hale**

### **Western Yar**

**12<sup>th</sup> December 2021 @ 09.00**

Meet at Yarmouth Station

Grid Ref: SZ357893

**Leader: Kevin Lover**

## **New Members**

We Welcome:

Paul Ballantyne – London

Steve Critchlow – Thorley

Tracey Jolliffe – Binstead

Maureen Millar – Freshwater

Wayne Petty – St. Helens

## July 2021 Bird Recorder update

I will be giving a comprehensive update at the AGM this autumn so the following is just a short summary of a few matters, ahead of that.

**Records.** The distribution of 2020 records to the section writers of the bird report took place in early spring as planned. All 2020 records that came in after that have been compiled and are being incorporated, as required, at the draft report stage. Please submit your 2021 records, ideally electronically into BirdTrack, Going Birding or eBird. Please contact me if you need advice on these, or any other ways of submitting your sightings.

**IWOG BBS.** See separate article in this newsletter.

**Rarities.** Just a reminder that for both local (JLRC reviewed) and national (BBRC reviewed) rarities the onus is on the **finder** to submit the record for review. In terms of the former, any local rarities that you have found that are asterisked in the listing at the rear of recent bird reports will need to be documented, ideally by photography but otherwise by completing a template which is available from myself. If you need any guidance or help with the process for either JLRC or BBRC species please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very many thanks

Robin Attrill, 17 Waterhouse Moor, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6BA

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## Annual General Meeting

The IWOG AGM will be held at the Arreton Community Hall on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 19.15 for a 19.30 start. All members are welcome.

## Statement of Accounts 2020

Enclosed are the audited accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

## IWOG Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) – Change of Organiser/Coordinator

After many years in the role, indeed since its inception, James Gloyn has asked to pass on the responsibility, and this being taken on by myself as part of the wider recorder role.

I would personally, on behalf of IWOG, like to thank James for the tremendous effort he has put into this survey over the years. We all owe him a huge debt of gratitude as the BBS provides us with the most comprehensive data set that we have on trends in Island breeding bird population numbers over recent decades. It is very important that this information continues to be collected in future

So, in terms of practicalities going forward....

- Please can those of you who have surveyed your 1km squares this year please send me your returns, electronically or paper copy, by October 14<sup>th</sup> 2021.
- If you would like to take on a square or two for 2022 please contact me. You can select any square (or squares) of your choice that is/are not currently covered.

If you would like more information as to what is entailed with participating in the survey please contact me.

Please note that **James will continue to coordinate the IWOG summer and winter garden surveys**, and Jim Baldwin will continue to coordinate the BTO surveys performed on the island which form part of national schemes.

Very many thanks

Robin Attrill, 17 Waterhouse Moor, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6BA

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## Going Birding Website

Statistics for 2020 demonstrates its continued popularity with 65,425 visits (14% up from 2019) by 6,819 users with a total of 223,614 page views (13% up). There were 162 registered users who submitted 9,199 records (46% up).





# IWOG GARDEN BIRD SURVEY

## Winter 2020/2021

### *2<sup>nd</sup> Yellow-browed Warbler record*

### *Mandarin and Cormorant added to the Winter list*

### *Late Summer record of Green Sandpiper*

A total of 46 completed forms were returned recording a total of 58 species. From these a league table has been produced. Initially bird species were ordered according to the number of gardens they were reported in. In the case of tied positions a further ordering was done according to the total number of months recorded. Equally placed species are put in Voous order.

League position	Species	No. of gardens	League position	Species	No. of gardens
1	Robin	46	30	Green Woodpecker	15
2	Blue Tit	46	31	Redwing	14
3	Woodpigeon	45	32	Pheasant	12
4	Duncock	45	33	Goldcrest	12
5	Blackbird	44	34	Grey Wagtail	9
6	Wren	44	35	Bullfinch	7
7	Great Tit	42	36	Feral Pigeon	6
8	Magpie	42	37	Mallard	6
9	Jackdaw	40	38	Grey Heron	6
10	Goldfinch	38	39	Firecrest	5
11	House Sparrow	38	40	Yellowhammer	5
12	Collared Dove	37	41	Fieldfare	5
13	Long-tailed Tit	37	42	Moorhen	4
14	Starling	35	43	Siskin	4
15	Carrion Crow	33	44	Stock Dove	3
16	Chaffinch	32	45	Mistle Thrush	3
17	Greenfinch	31	46	Treecreeper	2
18	Rook	27	47	Brambling	2
19	Blackcap	27	48	Canada Goose	1
20	Coal Tit	26	49	Barn Owl	1
21	Herring Gull	25	50=	Buzzard	1
22	Jay	25	50=	Red-legged Partridge	1
23	Great Spotted Woodpecker	25	50=	Kestrel	1
24	Sparrowhawk	25	50=	Mandarin	1
25	Chiffchaff	23	50=	Cormorant	1
26	Black-headed Gull	22	50=	Little Egret	1
27	Song Thrush	19	50=	Great Black-backed Gull	1
28	Pied Wagtail	16	50=	Yellow-browed Warbler	1

A Yellow-browed Warbler visited the Sandown garden of Mark Buckley on 23<sup>rd</sup> November. The other newsletter's headlines are thanks to Hamish Fletcher whose garden pond/lake has been visited by both Cormorant in February and March and Mandarin Duck on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November, both new species to the winter list. On his last summer's form, unfortunately arriving too late for that publication, he included a record of a visit by a Green Sandpiper in August - a new species for the summer.

### **Early nesting**

Hamish Fletcher noted an abundance of early nesters with eggs present in the nests of Collared Dove, Robin, Blackbird, Mallard, Moorhen and Canada Goose.

## Selected winter visitors

Comparison with last eight winters. Figures give the number of gardens visited.

	2012/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Fieldfare	13	9	7	9	5	11	3	7	5
Redwing	12	12	12	14	12	22	10	15	14
Firecrest	7	1	6	6	6	10	3	5	5
Brambling	10	0	0	1	2	7	1	0	2
Siskin	5	3	7	7	2	1	2	1	4
Black Redstart	3	2	3	6	2	1	0	2	0

A monthly breakdown showing the number of gardens visited by month.

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Fieldfare	1	3	2	1		
Redwing	2	8	6	4	4	2
Blackcap	8	8	8	16	17	17
Chiffchaff	13	4	3	1	3	9
Firecrest	4	2	2	1	1	2
Brambling			1	1		
Siskin		1		1	2	1

Fieldfare numbers were very low this winter with most birds visiting in early winter.

Redwing showed the same November/December peak although low numbers were reported.

Firecrest again were recorded in all winter months with main arrival in October.

Blackcap numbers showed a marked increase in the early months of 2021.

Visits from Brambling were reported by Tom Snudden in November and by Roger and Jenny Burgess with a female on Dec 9<sup>th</sup>.

## Observers comments

Sue Fielden reported an unusual predation record when a Sparrowhawk killed a Magpie in her garden.

Condolences to Douglas Potts who reported losing two goldfish to a visiting Heron.

## Mammal records

The following list shows the number of gardens visited by the four mammal species recorded on the GBS winter forms.

Red Squirrel	Fox	Badger	Hedgehog	Dormouse
17	16	15	1	0

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James Gloyn