

Ogston monthly report – April 2014

Species recorded – April = 115

Running Total = 138

April was a mainly dry month, warm at times, though particularly during the second half cool winds from north and easterly directions pegged back temperatures and probably slowed down the arrival of some species. Water levels dropped nicely during the first half of the month, but from 16th onwards water was pumped into the reservoir gradually covering the exposed mud. A pair of Mute Swans remained throughout suggesting they might attempt to breed again this year and there were a few records of Shelducks. Ducks were not present in large numbers, but did include one of the highlights of the month, a Red-breasted Merganser on 30th. Two Grey Partridge were seen again on South Hill. Two Red Kites were seen together on the last day of the month and a Marsh Harrier passed through on 22nd, a Goshawk was seen on 1st and there was a good run of Osprey records. The first Hobby arrived on 27th and there were a few sightings of Peregrines. The Oystercatchers managed to hatch young again on the raft in Chapel Bay as they did last year. While water levels were low good numbers of Little Ringed and occasional Ringed Plovers were present, the first Dunlins of the year appeared and quite a few Snipe remained. Both Godwits put in an appearance and there were also a few records of Whimbrel, Common Sandpiper and Redshank. There were two records of Little Gulls and a few Common Gulls continued to pass through, though on a much smaller scale than last month. A few Yellow-legged Gulls were recorded, a 2ndW Iceland Gull roosted on 1st and quite large numbers (for this time of year) of large gulls were roosting some nights. Three Sandwich Terns passed through on 4th, a few Common Terns arrived and there was a good passage of Arctic Terns during the last 10 days of the month. There were records of Little Owl and Green Woodpecker, both scarce since the harsh winter of 2011/2012. Hirundines were present in quite large numbers during wet and windy conditions. Most of the expected warblers arrived in reasonable numbers, while a few winter thrushes lingered during the first week. Reasonable numbers of Yellow Wagtails along with a few White Wagtails passed through. A Tree Pipit dropped in briefly on 12th before continuing on its journey. Bramblings lingered until mid-month, some of which were heard singing and Linnets were still forming flocks late in the month.

Mute Swan A pair present on and off all month and occasional other birds visited briefly.

Shelduck Two were present early morning on 7th then flew off S and another arrived later that day. Two on 10th and three were present early morning on 23rd.

Mandarin Seen daily throughout the month with a maximum count of ten on 10th.

Wigeon Eight on 7th and two on 9th were the only records.

Gadwall A pair present from 3rd – 12th four on 13th, then two on and off until 22nd.

Teal The maximum count was of 19 on 10th, though numbers dropped rapidly soon after this.

Mallard At least six broods have been seen so far.

Shoveler One drake on 10th, a drake on 14th, pair 17th, three on 18th/19th (two drakes), four on 20th (three drakes), pair on 22nd, drake on 26th, three (two drakes) on 28th.

Tufted Duck The maximum count was of 54 on 5th.

Aythya hybrid The regular Tufted X Pochard hybrid was present on 9th.

Goldeneye One – five present were daily up until 16th.

Red-breasted Merganser On 30th a female was present from at least 10:00 – 10:10 hrs then flew W.

Goosander Two flew through on 18th.

Grey Partridge Two at South Hill on 22nd.

Grey Heron At least 19 pairs nesting.

Red Kite Two were seen together over the E of the reservoir at 15:45 hrs on 30th, one of which drifted W.

Marsh Harrier A female flew E at 09:20 hrs on 21st.

Goshawk A male circling west of the reservoir 12:10 – 15 hrs on 1st.

Osprey At least five and possibly six individuals passed through during the month. On 4th one that was already carrying a fish from 11:30 – 11:35 hrs when it flew E. Presumably the same bird returned at 13:55 hrs and spent some time in a tree on the East Bank, later catching another fish and leaving E at 15:50 hrs. Shortly afterwards it was seen in a field at Tibshelf, where it began eating the fish. The following day seen it was seen again briefly at 07:15 hrs and again at around 09:30 hrs when it caught a fish and flew off W. It was then present again 15:30 – 15:40 hrs when it drifted off N. This bird had been colour ringed in Angus Scotland in June 2007. One flew through 09:09 – 14 hrs on 10th. One (fitted with a transmitter) was present briefly at 09:00 hrs then flew NW on 11th. One was present from 15:00 until at least 15:25 hrs on 13th. On 17th one arrived at 12:25 hrs immediately caught a fish, took it to Lodge Plantation (S side of reservoir) and began to eat it. One, possibly the same bird, was present, visiting the reservoir several times during the day on 18th.

Hobby The first sighting was of one on 27th.

Peregrine Singles on 4th, 7th, 11th and 27th.

Oystercatcher The pair nesting on the raft hatched at least two chicks around 27th. Occasional other birds visited with a maximum total of five present on 5th.

Little Ringed Plover Up to six present taking up territory, while water levels were low but most had moved on by the end of the month.

Ringed Plover One on 12th, 14th and one on 21st.

Lapwing Two pairs appear to be breeding on farmland adjacent to the reservoir. One pair had been attempting to breed on the West Bank but was flooded out as the water rose.

Dunlin One during the evening of 12th, three on 14th, two on 15th, one on 16th, two on 22nd and one on 30th.

Snipe Quite good numbers present, particularly when water levels dropped with counts of 40+ on 3rd, 32 on 18th and 20+ on 23rd.

Black-tailed Godwit One was present from 07:10 – 10:10 hrs on 5th when it flew N.

Bar-tailed Godwit A summer plumaged bird flew through heading N at 07:35 hrs on 21st.

Whimbrel One was present on the West Bank for about 20 minutes during the evening on 17th, one flew N on 20th, one flew NE at 08:55 hrs on 21st, two flew E at 11:10hrs and one over at 19:00 hrs on 28th.

Curlew Seen quite regularly during the month with a maximum of seven on 5th.

Common Sandpiper Singles recorded on 13th, 14th, 15th, 18th, 23rd, 24th and 29th.

Redshank One on 6th, one on 16th and one briefly on 30th.

Little Gull An adult present from 08:28 to 08:50 hrs then flew N on 22nd. A first summer arrived with six Arctic Terns at around 15:30 hrs on 27th but continued N alone.

Common Gull A few were still moving through including 21 which flew NE on 8th, 18 which flew NE on 17th, seven through on 20th and four through on 27th.

Yellow-legged Gull Two were present on 4th (1stS and 3rdS), the 1stS present again on 5th, 6th and 9th.

Iceland Gull A 2ndW was in the roost on 1st.

Great Black-backed Gull A few immature birds seen during the daytime and c150 large gulls roosting on 21st were mainly this species.

Sandwich Tern Three flew through and left NE at 11:25 hrs on 4th.

Common Tern One flew N at 09:45 hrs on 22nd, 1 present 9:45 – 55 hrs and then flew N on 25th, one on 26th, three on 27th- 29th and four on 30th.

Arctic Tern Quite a good passage of birds during the last ten days of the month, most flying straight through, but some lingered for a while. Totals for each day were of 30 on 20th, three on 21st, seven on 22nd, 1 on 24th, 20 on 25th, five on 26th and 11 on 27th.

Cuckoo One heard on 4th and one heard on 24th.

Little Owl One heard calling during the daytime near Brackenfield Church on 1st.

Kingfisher A few sightings mainly from the River Amber.

Green Woodpecker One heard on 10th.

Raven A few sightings of one-three birds.

Sand Martin Maximum count of 100+ on 14th.

Swallow Maximum count of c500 on 22nd.

House Martin Maximum count of c60 on 22nd.

Chiffchaff A total of 30 heard singing during a full circuit of the reservoir on 13th.

Willow Warbler At least 11 singing between the Fishermen's car park and Alders Wood hide on 15th.

Blackcap A total of 19 heard singing during a full circuit of the reservoir on 13th.

Garden W, arbler The first arrival was on 24th, widespread and in reasonable numbers by the end of the month.

Lesser Whitethroat Two singing on 18th were the first to arrive, after which one – two were present quite frequently, but usually mobile, with none settling into territory so far.

Whitethroat Two singing on 17th were the first to arrive, ten singing on the West Bank of the reservoir on 25th.

Sedge Warbler One singing on 24th was the first to arrive, up to four singing by the end of the month.

Nuthatch Seven heard singing during a full circuit of the reservoir on 13th.

Redwing A few still around at the beginning of the month, 15 on 5th were the last to be recorded.

Wheatear At least one male was present from 22nd – 24th and a female on 30th.

Yellow Wagtail First arrival was of one on 12th, then one flew N on 17th, three on 19th, two on 20th, at least 20 present on 21st, five on 22nd, one on 23rd, at least five plus one "Channel Wagtail" type briefly early morning on 26th, at least one on 27th and one on 29th.

White Wagtail One on 10th, 11th, two on 15th, one on 16th, 17th, 18th, 21st and 27th.

Tree Pipit One flew in at 10:05 hrs and dropped into a field by the West Bank car park until 11:05 hrs when it flew NE on 12th.

Brambling Up to five visiting the feeders by the hide and a flock of c30 dropped in by the West Bank car park and the hides on 7th. Several birds were heard singing during the month at various sites around the area. Last recorded on 16th.

Linnnet The maximum count was of c150 in fields NW of the reservoir on 20th.

Lesser Redpoll The maximum count was of 14 on 12th.