

Ogston monthly report – March 2014

Species recorded – March = 110

Running Total = 115

March continued mainly mild and often quite warm as well as being relatively dry which allowed water levels to fall slightly. Bird-wise it was an excellent month with many interesting records. Highlight of the month was an Avocet on 14th, the fifth record for Ogston. Several groups of Whooper Swans passed through, but a single Pink-footed Goose from 8th – 11th was the only record this month. An Egyptian Goose on 15th was only the fifteenth ever record for Ogston and Shelduck were recorded on three dates. A pair of Pintail present early morning on 2nd and a Scaup all day on 18th were the pick of the wildfowl. A Grey Partridge on 22nd was an encouraging sign as none were seen at all last year. At least two Red Kites passed through and a Goshawk was seen briefly on 19th. At least one Water Rail remained but was very elusive. Good numbers of Snipe were present and the first Green Sandpiper, Redshank, Ringed and Little Ringed Plovers of the year appeared. It was a good month for gulls with a single record of Little and two Iceland Gulls and the good run of Kittiwake records continued. An adult Mediterranean Gull was present on a couple of days mid-month and Yellow-legged Gulls appeared quite regularly in the roost. There was also an excellent passage of Common Gulls once again, which seems to be becoming a regular spring occurrence here judging by recent years. A Little Owl was heard on a couple of occasions near Brackenfield Church. Summer visitors arriving included, Sand Martins, early Swallow and House Martin, Chiffchaffs, Willow Warblers, Grasshopper Warbler and Wheatear. A Dipper was seen on the River Amber downstream of the reservoir, with others seen at Milltown just within the recording area. Quite a few wintering Redwings remained, with smaller numbers of Fieldfares though both became scarce by the end of the month. Meadow Pipits were moving through quite regularly and a Scandinavian Rock Pipit was present on 29th. Large numbers of Bramblings were present in stubble fields by the reservoir until they were eventually ploughed, though a few remained in the area visiting the various feeding stations around the site. The first Crossbills of the year passed through on 10th and an often elusive Hawfinch was present from 10th onwards, though it may well have been present in the area throughout the winter.

Mute Swan A pair present on and off all month.

Whooper Swan On 25th five adults were present until 09:50 hrs when flushed by a Mute Swan and flew WNW, before returning to the reservoir at 11:20 hrs and were present till dark. On 29th 27 flew NW at 08:45 hrs and a further nine arrived at 10:55 hrs remaining until mid-afternoon when flushed by boats.

Pink-footed Goose One was present from 8th- 11th.

Greylag Goose Maximum count of 37 including a leucistic bird on 13th.

Canada Goose Maximum count of 51 on 10th.

Egyptian Goose One which was mainly associating with Greylag Geese on 15th. The fifteenth record for Ogston.

Shelduck One 9th, one on 11th and one on 30th.

Mandarin Recorded quite regularly throughout the month with a maximum of six on 4th.

Wigeon Three on 19th were the only ones this month.

Gadwall Six on 1st, four on 2nd, two from 3rd – 7th, two on 10th, two on 13th, six on 14th, two on 15th, one on 21st, 24th- 26th and four on 30th.

Pintail Two (a pair) were present briefly early morning on 2nd.

Shoveler One drake on 13th, five (three drakes) on 14th, three drakes on 15th and two drakes on 28th.

Pochard One on 5th was the only record this month.

Tufted Duck Maximum count of 52 on 22nd.

Scaup A first-winter female present on 18th.

Aythya hybrid A drake Tufted Duck X Pochard on 22nd/23rd and again on 29th and 30th was presumed to be the regularly returning bird.

Goldeneye Present daily with a maximum count of 11 on 8th.

Goosander One on 8th, four on 15th, one on 17th, one flew N on 23rd and one flew NE on 26th.

Grey Partridge One at South Hill on 22nd, the first since 16th October 2012.

Great Crested Grebe Maximum count of 32 on 15th.

Red Kite One drifted slowly SW on 4th, and what was presumably the same bird was seen flying low NE over the reservoir on 5th. One flew S between 16:40 – 45 hrs on 24th.

Common Buzzard At least 12 up in the air at once on 10th.

Goshawk One seen briefly E of the reservoir at 15:00 hrs on 19th.

Peregrine One – two were seen quite regularly throughout the month.

Water Rail At least one was still present during the month but was very elusive, most frequently seen in a small reed fringed ditch on the West Bank.

Oystercatcher The pair present all month and appeared to be settling onto the tern raft in Chapel Bay again, where they nested last year.

Avocet One present on the North Bank on 14th, the fifth record for Ogston and equal earliest ever for Derbyshire.

Little Ringed Plover The first to arrive was one which was seen briefly on 23rd. Subsequently one on 24th, one on 28th, at least three on 30th.

Ringed Plover One flew through at 12:25 hrs on 12th. Singles present on 14th, 29th and 30th.

Snipe Good numbers present with a maximum of c60 on 11th.

Woodcock One was seen leaving Carr Wood at dusk on 1st, with four on 3rd and 7th also leaving Carr Wood after dark.

Curlew Three on 1st, eight roosting on 7th, six roosting on 9th, two on 13th, two flew NW and eight came in to roost on 15th, one through on 22nd, two on 24th and six roosting on 26th.

Green Sandpiper One present briefly early morning on 31st.

Redshank One on 18th, one on 27th and one on 29th.

Kittiwake An adult flew through at 17:40 hrs on 8th, and an adult flew through at 08:35 hrs on 19th. On 26th an adult was present for 15 minutes from 15:50 hrs then flew N.

Black-headed Gull c800 present during the day on 29th. The leucistic individual was present on 15th and in the roost on 15th and 16th.

Little Gull A 2ndW arrived at 15:55 hrs but flew off SE at 16:03 hrs on 8th.

Mediterranean Gull An adult present around midday on 15th and again mid-morning on 16th.

Common Gull Large numbers passed through the site particularly during the last week of the month, with at least 330 dropping in for a while as they passed through during the afternoon on 29th.

Yellow-legged Gull An adult in the roost on 3rd, a 2ndW in the roost on 8th, two 2ndW in the roost on 9th, one 2ndW in the roost on 16th, one adult on 24th and one sub-adult in the roost on 26th.

Iceland Gull A 2ndW in the roost on 3rd and a juvenile flew S at 13:00 hrs on 9th.

Great Black-backed Gull Still quite good numbers present in the evening roosts with c220 in the roost on 7th and c200 on 24th.

Stock Dove Numbers were much smaller this month, though up to 100 were still present before the favoured fields were ploughed.

Little Owl One heard calling during the daytime near Brackenfield Church on 10th and 16th.

Kingfisher A few sightings during the month, mainly from the River Amber, though occasional birds were seen at the reservoir.

Raven One – two seen quite regularly throughout the month.

Sand Martin The first were three that flew through on 20th, subsequently small numbers (up to ten) were seen most days, mainly passing through.

Swallow One flew N with a House Martin on 16th.

House Martin One flew N with a Swallow on 16th.

Chiffchaff The first this month were three on 9th after which they were recorded daily with good numbers present.

Willow Warbler Two singing on 31st were the first to arrive.

Grasshopper Warbler One heard singing briefly early morning on 29th, by the West Bank car park. The earliest ever at Ogston.

Starling Small numbers (up to c50) were still roosting in reeds by the hide and some evidence of birds moving through with c200 on and 450+ on 23rd heading NE.

Dipper One present on the River Amber downstream of the reservoir on 8th and two birds were seen at Milltown on 23rd.

Fieldfare A few still around the highest count being of at least 110 passed through heading E on 22nd.

Redwing Reasonable numbers still present with counts of c150 on 8th, c100 on 12th and c100 on 15th, though numbers smaller later in the month.

Wheatear A male (British race) on 20th landed briefly in trees by Carr Pond.

Meadow Pipit Small numbers were heading N on many dates with a maximum of c50 on 30th.

Rock Pipit One of the Scandinavian race present on 29th.

Rock/Water Pipit One that passed through on 11th was thought most likely to have been a Water Pipit on call but unfortunately was not seen.

Brambling Around 30 or so were still present at the beginning of the month in fields by the West Bank. Numbers increased rapidly with up to 120 present on 8th (c90 by the West Bank and c30 NW of the reservoir). Following ploughing of the fields later in the month numbers dwindled rapidly though a few were still visiting feeders. At least two were singing near the hides on 29th.

Crossbill A flock of 13 flew NE at 09:55 hrs on 10th.

Hawfinch One was found in Brackenfield Churchyard on 10th, then was seen again there on 15th, 16th, 24th, 29th, 30th and 31st. It was mainly very elusive and perhaps had been present for some time before its discovery. The tenth record for Ogston.