

OGSTON MONTHLY BIRD REPORT - JANUARY

Species recorded – January = 95

January began mild, but early during the second week became much colder with snow from 13th onwards and there were many days when the temperature did not rise above zero. However the reservoir remained mainly ice free throughout apart from a little around the edges and the cold weather brought some exciting and unusual records. Following rain overnight on 26th/27th conditions became much milder again. The highlight was a Red-necked Grebe from 24th, which remained into February, the first for fifteen years at Ogston. Wildfowl of interest included a couple of records of Pintail and there were good numbers of some species, especially Gadwall which were present in record numbers and Shoveler which were present in greater numbers than normal for this time of year. An adult Red Kite flew through on 28th and there were a few sightings of Peregrine. At least two Water Rails were present all month, though they were often elusive. A Golden Plover flew over on 18th, and good numbers of Snipe were often visible especially during the icy conditions, but the most interesting wader records of the month concerned up to three Woodcocks showing well after being forced to feed during the day by the severe weather. The Gull roost continued to be erratic though did produce some interesting sightings including two different Glaucous Gulls, (another flew through during the daytime on 27th). Other gulls of interest included several Caspian and Yellow-legged Gulls and at least two different adult Mediterranean Gulls. During snowy conditions on 21st two large flocks of Skylarks were flying around the reservoir and appeared to be trying to land on the water. An unseasonal male Blackcap visited the feeding station by the hides on 22nd and there were a couple of records of Waxwings. Up to two Dippers were present on the River Amber again and small numbers of Brambling seem to be wintering within the recording area.

Pink-footed Goose Two skeins totalling c320 birds flew NW at 11:30 hrs on 3rd. The following day one was present with the Greylag flock and this was joined by two others on 24th, with all three remaining to the end of the month.

Greylag Goose Maximum count of 57 on 5th.

Mandarin A drake which flew down the reservoir and appeared to continue down the River Amber was the only record this month.

Wigeon Present quite regularly with a maximum count of 13 on 22nd.

Gadwall Present quite regularly and the record count for Ogston was broken on three consecutive days as refugees from smaller local sites that had frozen over moved in. The previous record count of ten on 7th Nov 1992 was broken on 18th when at least 11 were present, then again on 19th when 15 were present and finally was broken again on 20th when 22 were present. After this numbers gradually fell, especially so after the return of milder conditions towards the end of the month.

Pintail A pair were present on 7th, and a drake was present briefly during the morning on 30th.

Shoveler Two drakes on 12th. Seven (four drakes) were present on 15th, four (two drakes) on 18th, one female on 19th, two females on 20th, four on 24th/25th and three on 26th/27th.

Pochard Maximum count of 27 on 18th.

Goldeneye Present daily throughout the month with a maximum of ten on 15th.

Goosander One on 5th, one on 19th and three on 23rd.

Ruddy Duck The pair remaining from 2012 were present throughout the month.

Red-necked Grebe An adult in winter plumage arrived on 24th and was still present at the end of the month. The sixth record for Ogston and the first since February 1998.

Red Kite An adult flew S along the western side of the reservoir then turned and left SE between 12:33 – 12:39 hrs on 28th.

Peregrine One on 12th, one on 27th and one on 30th/31st.

Water Rail Up to two birds present all month but often elusive.

Golden Plover One over on 18th.

Snipe Seen most days, birds being especially obvious during the colder conditions, though the maximum count was of 22 on 13th, which were flushed during a work party.

Woodcock Two were seen emerging from Carr Wood at dusk on 1st and 4th. One flew out of Milltown Inlet at dusk on 5th. During cold and snowy conditions one was showing well feeding under bushes by the Dragonfly Pond on 20th and 21st and a second bird was showing well by “The Oak Tree” on the latter date. On 22nd three were showing well, two behind the Dragonfly Pond and one by “The Oak Tree”. The following day one was seen early morning behind the Dragonfly Pond but there were no further sightings after this as the weather became slightly milder.

Mediterranean Gull A single adult was present in the roost on 1st and one from 6th-9th. Two adults on 15th and one on 25th. Another adult was present in the roost on 27th and 29th-31st.

Yellow-legged Gull One 1stW on 1st, two 2ndW on 5th, one 2ndW on 6th, one 3rdW on 15th. One 1stW on 20th and two 2ndW on 23rd. All records were from the roost.

Caspian Gull An adult on 1st, one near adult on 6th, one 1stW on 9th and 19th, one adult on 23rd, one 1stW present early morning until 09:50 hrs on 24th. All were either in the roost or seen leaving the roost the following morning.

Glaucous Gull One juvenile in the roost on 4th and present until 08:17 hrs on 5th when flew it N. Another (different) juvenile arrived to roost very late on the evening of 20th. On 27th a juvenile flew through at 11:40 hrs with a group of other large gulls heading SW.

Little Owl One heard near Carr Wood on 4th and one heard opposite the West Bank on 9th.

Kingfisher Up to two were present quite regularly during the mild conditions at the beginning of the month but soon after the colder weather arrived they largely seem to have departed with the only sighting after the 11th being of one on 23rd.

Green Woodpecker One on 27th and 28th.

Skylark On 21st during snowy conditions a flock of c90 circled low over the north end of the reservoir and appeared to be trying to land on the water before they headed off N, and later another c40 were doing the same by the West Bank before landing on the bank between the Public and Members hides. As milder

weather returned birds began passing over regularly, mainly heading between NW and NE with a maximum of c25 on 27th.

Blackcap A male visited the feeding station by the hides on 22nd.

Waxwing On 1st nine were present by the river Amber, feeding on Rose-hips. On 8th 6 (probably part of the same flock) were present nearby but just outside the recording area at the Bottom of Bumpmill Lane Higham, also feeding on Rose-hips. On 14th 14 flew NW over the West Bank car park.

Dipper One on the River Amber downstream of the reservoir on 3rd and 8th and two there on 13th.

Tree Sparrow Regularly present on the feeders in gardens behind the dam.

Brambling A male with c50 Chaffinches in the Fishermen's car park on 10th and presumably the same there on 15th when a female was also coming to feeders by the hide. One was visiting feeders by the hide on 22nd. Up to four were visiting feeders at Bottom Farm quite regularly during the month.

Siskin Reasonable numbers present with maximum counts of c50 in Alders Wood on 5th, c80 Milltown Inlet on 16th/17th and 50+ in Alders by the River Amber on 19th.