

OGSTON MONTHLY BIRD REPORT – OCTOBER 2013

Species recorded – October = 102 Running total for 2013 =157

The month began fairly dry and relatively warm and since the pumping of water into the reservoir had ceased around the end of last month water levels continued to drop quite rapidly for a while. This created excellent conditions for Snipe and certain ducks, particularly Teal and Mallard, but from the 11th onwards there was a distinct change to more wet and windy conditions which soon began to refill the reservoir. Several days with strong north-easterly winds from 11th produced an excellent run of scarce and rare birds, including the highlight of the month, a juvenile Bonxie on 12th, only the second ever for Ogston, the only other being as long ago as 12th/13th April 1974. Other highlights of an excellent month included three herds of Whooper Swans on 13th & 14th, a flock of six Tundra Bean Geese on 13th, a few skeins of Pink-footed Geese, and a Barnacle Goose paired with a Canada Goose and their two hybrid young were often present with the Canada Goose flock. Ducks of interest included a few Gadwall, Shoveler, Wigeon, the first Goldeneyes and Goosanders of the autumn and best of all a Red-breasted Merganser on 13th. There were a couple of sightings of Peregrines and two records of Merlin passing through. Good numbers of Snipe were present though they mainly remained hidden in the vegetation. A Jack Snipe was seen on 28th. On 11th the second Arctic Skua of the year flew through without stopping, as the previous bird had done last month, and an adult Mediterranean Gull arrived later the same afternoon. Gulls began to generally increase in numbers with reasonable numbers roosting, including several Yellow-legged Gulls, some of which were often present during the day as well as the more or less regular 4th winter bird. A late Arctic Tern stayed for just over an hour during the late morning/early afternoon on 12th. The few lingering summer visitors gradually gave way to newly arriving winter visitors which began to arrive in ever increasing numbers as the month progressed. A few counts of visible migration were undertaken with some good counts of Meadow Pipits of note and there were several records of Rock Pipits passing over the reservoir. Among good numbers of finches Bramblings were particularly noticeable as they appear to be arriving in good numbers this year. The first Lesser Redpolls for several months were seen, reasonable numbers of Siskins were scattered around the area and there were several records of Crossbills, unfortunately all fly-overs. Finally a Snow Bunting flying SW over Highoredish on 26th completed a very interesting month.

Whooper Swan On 13th eight were present up until 08:52 hrs when they flew S and were seen over Doe Hill CP shortly afterwards. On 14th 15 arrived from the S at 09:55 hrs and left to the E at 09:58 hrs and 18 arrived from the SE at 10:19 hrs and left NE at 10:22 hrs and were later seen over Carr Vale.

Bean Goose (Tundra) On 13th six arrived from the NE with Canada Geese and circled the N end of the reservoir for several minutes before heading back NE and appearing to be dropping into fields to the north of the reservoir but could not be relocated.

Pink-footed Goose Five were present on 19th up until 09:48 hrs when they flew NW into thick fog and not surprisingly they returned for a short while before again heading off NW into the fog. Two skeins with c90 in each flew SE on 26th.

Canada Goose Maximum count of c230 on 26th.

Barnacle Goose A family party consisting of one Barnacle Goose, one Canada Goose and two hybrid Barnacle X Canada Geese young were present with the Canada Goose flock intermittently from 7th onwards.

Mandarin Regularly present throughout the month, mainly in small numbers, though particularly large numbers were present early in the month loafing on the bank in front of Alders Wood, with 21 on 2nd, 24 on 3rd and 16 on 5th being the highest counts.

Gadwall Eight on 4th, two on 6th, one on 9th and four on 15th.

Teal Good numbers present particularly early in the month when up to 100 were present, numbers dropping off somewhat as the water levels rose.

Mallard Maximum count of 336 on 5th.

Shoveler Two fem/imm on 6th, one of which remained until 13th.

Pochard Small numbers were present intermittently with a maximum of 12 on 31st.

Goldeneye A drake was present on 14th, then four imm on 16th after which recorded daily with a maximum of ten on 18th.

Red-breasted Merganser On 13th an immature drake flew in at 13:20 hrs and remained until flushed by boats at 13:48 hrs and flew off SSE.

Goosander Three redheads flew through on 17th.

Merlin One flew SW over Highoredish on 5th and one flew low SE over the reservoir on 26th.

Peregrine One on 9th and one on 13th.

Golden Plover One flew SE on 6th.

Lapwing Maximum count of 220 on 3rd.

Dunlin One present on 12th.

Jack Snipe On 28th one was photographed in front of the Members Hide during the afternoon.

Snipe Good numbers present though mostly elusive in the thickly vegetated banks. The highest counts being of 28 on 19th and 32 on 26th.

Common Sandpiper One on 4th.

Green Sandpiper One present on 18th.

Arctic Skua A juvenile flew through S at 15:35 hrs on 11th, the second record this year.

Great Skua On 12th a juvenile was present from present from 13:50 – 14:38 hrs when it flew into Chapel Bay and was not relocated. During its stay it made several attempts to catch Mallards and Coots but was not successful. Only the second record for Ogston, the previous being on 12th & 13th April 1974.

Common Gull At least 30 present during the afternoon of 11th and 45+ in the roost on 12th.

Yellow-legged Gull Apart from the regular 4thW bird which was present on and off throughout the month, first winter birds were present on 10th – 13th, adults present on 3rd, 6th, 16th and 17th, four adults in the roost on 28th and an adult and a 2ndW in the roost on 29th.

Arctic Tern A late juvenile was present for over an hour on 12th.

Stock Dove Over 100 were feeding in fields by the West Bank on 16th.

Kingfisher Very scarce compared to usual at this time of year with just a few sightings.

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

Swallow Eight flew S on 2nd, seven flew S on 4th, 17 flew S on 5th and eight flew S on 6th.

House Martin Two flew S on 5th and one flew S on 6th.

Blackcap At least two present on 3rd, one on 4th/5th and one on 12th.

Chiffchaff Several present daily up until 13th then one at Highoredish on 26th.

Fieldfare The first arrivals were 20 which flew through on 10th, after which recorded quite regularly though in much smaller numbers than Redwings.

Redwing Three on 3rd were the first of the autumn after which recorded daily in increasing numbers. On 5th 42 passed over Highoredish, 619 flew W on 10th, c200 flew W on 13th and at least 1000 were in and around the Highoredish area on 20th.

Tree Sparrow One over Highoredish on 5th.

Meadow Pipit Small numbers passed though most days with an impressive count of 728 which flew SW over Highoredish on 5th.

Rock Pipit One flew SW at 11:30 hrs on 3rd. One flew S at 11:15 hrs on 7th. Two flew N at 10:03 hrs on 13th. One flew N at 16:00 hrs on 19th. One flew NW at 11:45 hrs on 22nd.

Chaffinch On 5th 39 flew W over Highoredish, 150+ were feeding in fields by the West Bank on 16th.

Linnet On 5th 41 passed over Highoredish and up to 90 were present in fields alongside the West Bank on 16th.

Lesser Redpoll The first for several months arrived on 5th, after which recorded fairly regularly with a maximum of up to 20 at Highoredish on 20th.

Brambling After the first seven passed over on 5th, regularly recorded in good numbers throughout the site during the rest of the month, especially at Highoredish where up to 70 were feeding in Rowans with Redwings with many others passing over.

Crossbill A reasonable showing with 21 over Highoredish on 5th, several heard but not seen on 6th, two over Highoredish on 9th, on five over Highoredish on 20th and at least one over, heard but not seen on 26th.

Snow Bunting One flew SW over Highoredish on 26th.