

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2003 – 85 Species – 31 Days Covered**

The first week brought freezing temperatures and some snow with a cold easterly airflow. The second and third weeks were much milder with the winds turning to the southwest. The final week continued mild with westerly winds until northerly gales brought a cold blast with snow showers reminding us that winter was not over.

Grey Herons started appearing through the month with a maximum of ten on 27th. Several were back in the Heronry by the end of the month. Mute Swans continued their presence until 11th with a maximum of two. Two skeins of Pink-footed Geese were observed moving west with two hundred on 6th and sixty-two on 29th. Fourteen Greylag Geese late on 25th was a good record.

Shelduck appeared on four days with a maximum of three on 3rd. Wigeon were recorded throughout the month with one hundred and seventy nine on 13th. Teal numbers stayed constant at about forty. Two male Pintail were discovered on 16th whilst searching for Smew. Goosander sightings were regular throughout with a maximum of seven on 29th and one Goldeneye was found in Woolley Bay on 14th. The birds of the month however were two redhead Smew that came in late on 15th, but unfortunately had left by the next morning.

Two Common Buzzard were found near Prues Farm during our bird walk on 4th and three sightings of Merlin on 3rd, 11th and 12th gave further pleasure to Ogston regulars. Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were also seen on most days.

Twelve Grey Partridge were seen flying across the road at the top of South Hill late on 15th. Water Rail became a regular during the month and could be seen increasingly during the day from the west bank hide giving many members a great deal of pleasure. Snipe were also seen regularly from the hide with a maximum of twelve on 28th. Ogston listers were rewarded with views of Woodcock leaving Carr Wood at dusk with three on 10th and 11th.

Gull rosters were also rewarded during the early cold spell with a 1st winter Glaucous Gull on five days and a 2nd winter Iceland Gull on three. One adult Mediterranean Gull on 11th made up the threesome. Caspian Gull and Yellow-legged Gull were also noted on five days.

Stock Doves were well represented this month with a flock of ninety-four in a field at the top of South Hill on 31st. Little Owl was always available in its regular haunts and Tawny Owl was often heard at dusk. Green Woodpecker was more difficult and was only recorded on two days on 1st and 27th.

Brambling was only recorded once on 3rd near Prues Farm amongst a finch flock but Siskin and Lesser Redpoll were regulars with flocks of thirty to forty around Carr Wood and along the West Bank. The commoner tits and finches frequented the feeding stations, the Hall Drive feeders being particularly productive.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT FEBRUARY 2003 – 91 Species – 28 Days Covered**

The month started with cold northwesterly winds and heavy snow showers, but gradually turned drier. By the end of the second week the winds had turned lighter and a period of cold dry days set in with overnight frosts. An easterly airflow then brought even colder air with some misty mornings. However the weather continued dry and settled and it wasn't until the last day of the month that milder air brought some rain.

Grey Heron were back on their nests during warmer days and numbers peaked at forty-five by the end of the month. Three Whooper Swans appeared in front of the members hide on 18th giving excellent views. On 15th five hundred Pink-footed Geese flew thru' northwest and on 26th two Shelduck flew in mid-morning. Gadwall were present on seven days with a maximum of two pairs in south bay on 22nd and two Shoveler paired up and were together from 17th. Two male Goldeneye were noted on 7th and another on 23rd but were gone by the following day. Goosander were observed most days with a maximum of eleven on 27th and a single female Ruddy Duck was seen on 9th & 12th.

Common Buzzard was hard to find, the only record being one that was heard mewing from the vicinity of Ogston Hall on 27th. Merlin was noted on two consecutive days 4th & 5th, both seen flying down the reservoir and then turning towards Carr Wood. The Merlin on 5th appeared to be attacked by another falcon but the speed of this made a positive ID difficult. A Peregrine Falcon was noted on two days, 3rd & 15th both being short visits. Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were recorded most days as usual with a pair of Sparrowhawk seen displaying near the east bank on 7th.

Two Grey Partridge were seen and heard at dusk on 1st at the top of south hill and Pheasant were recorded on several days with a maximum of six on 5th. The Water Rail was present all month giving superb views both on the Kingfisher and Dragonfly Pond. It started to emerge into the field at the side of the old recording hide, and could even be seen when the hide was being dismantled. A single Golden Plover accompanied several Lapwing on 22nd and Snipe could be found around the hide and scrape area throughout the period. Woodcock were seen on two days with three on 5th and an early Curlew flew thru' on 27th. To end the month on a positive note a Redshank appeared on the hide scrape on 28th and stayed all day.

Gull roosters saw a decline in the roost throughout, but an adult Mediterranean Gull with a full black hood was seen on 5th & 6th and a 1st winter Glaucous Gull finished the month off nicely. In addition an adult Caspian Gull was found on 7th and an adult Yellow-legged Gull on 28th. Kingfisher was elusive and was only noted on four days with two on 25th, including sightings on the Lower Amber and at the south end of the reservoir. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker made a rare appearance near the new feeding station by the Fishermen's Car park on 24th and a Dipper was a real find on the Lower Amber on 19th. Despite further searches both birds remained untickable by most listers. Finally Ravens were seen on five occasions including pairs both on 16th & 20th, most were seen to leave to the northwest.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2003 – 98 Species – 31 Days Covered**

The first twelve days of the month were changeable with some heavy showers but generally mild with the wind mainly from the southwest. The remainder of the month was dominated by high pressure giving mild settled conditions after early frosts. Beautiful clear blue skies and warm sunshine facilitated the early arrival of several summer migrants with the wind coming from the east.

Little Grebe peaked at seven on 26th and Great Crested Grebe increased towards the end of the month with sixteen on 30th. Grey Herons were on their nests in the heronry and disturbance by a Common Buzzard allowed several counts, the maximum being fifty-seven on 13th. Two Mute Swans were observed on 15th and four Greylag Geese were noted on 14th with a single on 30th.

Wildfowl numbers decreased rapidly during the month, progressively departing for their breeding grounds. Singles of Shelduck were noted on 2nd, 7th and 15th with two on 11th. Wigeon numbers dropped to single figures apart for two larger groups of fifty-three on 19th and forty-five on 30th arriving late afternoon on passage. Teal were still recorded to the end of the month but were also down to single figures. Shoveler put in several appearances with singles from 9th to 13th and two pairs from 19th to 24th. Despite large numbers over winter the last Pochard departed on 19th and Tufted Duck declined to thirteen on 31st. Goosander sightings were also down but singles were still about until 29th. A single female Ruddy Duck was seen on 10th, 17th, 24th & 26th.

Common Buzzard sightings were regular throughout the month with a pair displaying on 30th. Merlin continued to be observed with singles on 10th, 15th & 26th and Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were seen as usual. Water Rail was still being observed from the Rail Hide until 6th and was later seen on the West Bank and also the North Bank on 21st.

Single Oystercatcher were noted on 25th, 26th and 29th and seven Dunlin were seen flying thru' past the hide north on 6th. The first Little Ringed Plover of the year was found on Plover Island on 20th and increased to four by 31st. Three pairs of Lapwing were also on the Island & scrape areas and were seen displaying on many occasions. Snipe were also recorded on both sides of the hide. Curlew were heard flying thru' on seven days and Woodcock was observed flying from Carr Wood at dusk on 15th. A single Redshank was found from the 15th to 20th and two were present from 24th to 27th, landing on the spit.

Gull Roosters were rewarded with some good records this month with a 1st Winter Mediterranean Gull on 17th, 2nd Winter Iceland Gull on 6th and 12th and an adult on 16th. A 1st Winter Glaucous was present on 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th with a 2nd winter on 15th & 16th. A 2nd Winter Yellow-Legged Gull completed this late show on 16th.

Little and Tawny Owl were recorded as usual and a single Kingfisher was found most days on the Lower Amber as was Green Woodpecker. However the elusive Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was found only twice, once in Knowles Wood, Ogston Woodlands on 6th and heard drumming and calling along the Lower Amber in Alder trees on 26th.

The first Sand Martins arrived on 20th with Swallows following on 25th. Dipper was another excellent record on the Lower Amber on 12th and 30th. A male Stonechat appeared on the west bank on 22nd and stayed until 25th. The first Chiffchaff was noted on 10th and by 29th there were forty-three singing individuals around the Ogston recording area. Blackcap was another early arrival, seen and then heard on 25th.

A rarity for Ogston, a MARSH TIT was discovered on 15th at the feeding station by the fisherman's Carpark. It was seen on three further occasions up to 20th. Raven sightings have dramatically

increased this month with five records on 9th, 17th, 20th, 22nd & 29th fuelling speculation that they may be breeding locally. A single Tree Sparrow put in an appearance on 8th and a Brambling was noted near the feeders on 10th and 31st. A flock of Siskin and Lesser Redpoll were found in Woodcock Plantation throughout the month and four Crossbills was a real find near Highoredish during our Breeding Bird Survey on 22nd.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2003 – 115 Species – 30 Days Covered**

April was predominantly dry and sunny with fairly light winds. Towards the end of the month it became more unsettled with heavy showers.

Little Grebe was present most days with a maximum of six on 16th. Great Crested Grebes were seen every day with the maximum of seventeen being recorded on 3rd. Grey Heron numbers peaked at forty-two on 2nd and a single Mute Swan was present on the last four days of the month. Greylag Geese were recorded on nine days with the maximum of ten recorded on 27th, an unusual occurrence for Ogston. Shelduck were noted on several dates with a pair being present on 28th & 29th.

Duck numbers remained steady throughout the month with Teal recorded every day with a maximum of thirty-three on 11th. Shoveler was recorded on seven days with a maximum of five on the 17th and a couple of Pochard were noted on 24th. A pair of Gadwall took up residence for much of the month and on 23rd eight Wigeon flew in late afternoon and landed near the members hide on the West Bank.

Raptors of note this month were a Peregrine Falcon, which was seen on four dates with two being seen on 22nd and on the same date a Goshawk was also noted.

Waders had a good month with two Oystercatchers being present for most of the second half of the month. The Water Bailiff on 2nd flushed a single Jack Snipe from the bank and a count of twelve Common Snipe was made on 6th. A Woodcock was seen on 16th and two Whimbrel were noted on 24th and again on 29th. Curlew was noted on thirteen days with the maximum of three on 6th. Little Ringed Plover were seen most days with a maximum of ten on 18th. A Ringed Plover was seen on two days towards the end of the month. Common Redshank was noted for most of the month with the maximum of six being seen on the 14th & 15th. Common Sandpiper was seen on seven days but it was its North American counterpart's arrival on 30th that caused a bit of a stir. A summer plumaged SPOTTED SANDPIPER was found by Mick Blount on the new scrape to the left of the members hide, the bird which will probably become bird of the year for Ogston was appreciated by many as it fed amongst rocks near the dam wall.

A Sandwich Tern put in an appearance on 21st and four Common terns were noted on the same day. Arctic Terns were noted on several dates with the maximum of four being seen on 28th.

A Cuckoo was heard on several dates the earliest being 20th and a Green Woodpecker was also seen or heard most days. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was also noted on several dates.

Sand Martin and Swallow numbers continued to increase as the month went by and the first House Martin was noted on 9th with much greater numbers present at the month end. A Tree Pipit was seen bathing in the scrape to the left of the hide on 17th and a WATER PIPIT was also present in front of the hide on the 7th & 8th. Yellow Wagtails were present on ten dates with the maximum of four on 21st. Meadow Pipits were also noted on several dates with maximums of six on 10th and 21st. A White Wagtail was present on three dates 9th, 10th and 20th.

The last Redwing to be seen was on 20th and likewise the last Fieldfare on 7th. Small flocks of both species were seen passing over early in the month. The first Willow Warbler of the year was found on 2nd, the maximum being sixteen on 23rd. Chiffchaff peaked at thirty-seven on 19th, the first Whitethroat arrived on 15th, the first Lesser Whitethroat was on 22nd, Blackcap arrived on 3rd and the first date for Garden Warbler was 23rd. A Sedge Warbler was heard on 23rd and a Grasshopper Warbler was heard and seen on Crow Lane on 30th. A Reed Warbler was noted on

the hide lane on 21st and was present for about a week. A Pied Flycatcher was noted on several dates towards the end of the month.

Other sightings of note were Raven on four days and four Grey Partridge seen on the 23rd. An exceptional month with the site record for species recorded in a single day at Ogston being broken with seven-eight on the 21st and the monthly total of one hundred and fifteen species was also a site record.

Bryan Hartley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2003 – 113 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe was present most days with a maximum of four on 6th and Great Crested Grebes were seen every day with a maximum of twenty-three recorded on 5th. A Little Egret put in an appearance on the west bank on the morning of 5th, staying for a couple of hours. Grey Heron numbers peaked at twenty-five on 31st and Mute Swan was present all month with a maximum of three from 14th to 27th. Greylag Geese were recorded on six days with the maximum of two recorded on 17th and Shelduck were noted on several dates with four being present on 20th & 21st. An Egyptian Goose was short stayed on the morning of 3rd showing in front of the members hide.

A pair of Gadwall was present for most of the month with the female disappearing on occasions. Teal numbers continued to decline and the last single was recorded on 3rd. Mallard increased towards the end of the month and reached seventy-four by 31st. A single Pochard was noted on 24th and Tufted Duck remained constant throughout with a maximum of thirty-two on 1st. Two Goosander were seen on 5th and a single Shoveler was recorded on 26th. A maximum of ten Ruddy Duck arrived on 4th and several were seen for the rest of the month.

The first Osprey was recorded on 3rd with two further birds on 7th and 10th all being short stayed visitors. Hobby returned on 4th and was seen on several other dates through the month. Peregrine Falcon was recorded on two dates 2nd & 31st the latter being our Breeding Bird Survey day. A maximum of two Sparrowhawk were noted on 4th, 7th & 31st and four Kestrel were counted on 31st. Grey Partridge were encouragingly more evident this month with four sightings with a maximum two on 8th & 31st.

Waders continued to enjoy the scrapes and two Oystercatchers nested on the island. Unfortunately this was to be predated mid-month, as did several other nests including Lapwing and Little Ringed Plover. Five Ringed Plover were evident on 12th & 13th and a transitional Sanderling appeared on the west bank on 17th. A maximum of eighteen Dunlin were recorded on 18th and a single Snipe was noted on 10th. Whimbrel occurred on two dates with a max of two on 12th and a single Curlew was noted on 3rd. Two Redshank were present on 6th but sightings diminished as the water levels rose due to heavy rain and pumping operations. Common Sandpiper was seen on seven days with a max of two on 4th, 7th & 8th but it was its North American counterpart that continued to steal the show. The SPOTTED SANDPIPER was appreciated by many on 1st as it fed amongst rocks near the dam wall this being its final day.

Common Tern was recorded on most days with a max of twelve on 31st. Two Arctic Tern passed through on 1st and a Little Tern was an excellent find on 4th. A Turtle Dove on the evening of 15th was a good record being seen to fly along the dam wall and into trees by Ogston Hall. Cuckoo was present all month with a max of two counted on seven dates. A single Little Owl was noted on eight days and a Tawny Owl was heard on the evening of 10th.

Kingfisher is still difficult with the only records being along the Lower Amber. Great Spotted Woodpecker was noted most days and Green Woodpecker was recorded on four occasions with a single Lesser Spotted Woodpecker on 10th. Hirundine numbers peaked mid-month and then began to decline towards the end, as did the sightings of Swift. A Tree Pipit was found at Highoredish on 24th and remained towards the end. Yellow Wagtail continued a good year with another six single sightings and a Wheatear showed on the island on 8th & 9th. Grasshopper Warbler continued to be heard on Crow Lane and was noted on 1st, 8th & 31st. Sedge Warblers reached a max of four and Reed Warbler was noted on 8th & 30th. Lesser Whitethroat's max was also four and twenty-five Whitethroat were counted on 31st. Surprisingly twenty Garden Warbler were counted on 31st along with twenty-four Blackcap. A Wood Warbler was heard on 15th and

Goldcrest were recorded throughout the month. Thirty-three Chiffchaff were counted on 31st but Willow Warbler numbers were disappointing at ten.

The first Spotted Flycatcher arrived on 5th with a max of four on 26th seeming to indicate a potentially good year for this species and the pair of Pied Flycatcher also continued to do well. Raven was again evident this month and one was in a dogfight with a Buzzard above Carr Wood on 22nd. Reed Bunting was present all month with a max of five on 5th and the count on 31st produced twenty-one Yellowhammer indicating this species is still doing well at Ogston.

Richard Wesley



## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2003 – 95 Species – 30 Days Covered**

Little Grebe were observed most days with a maximum of six on 27th and Great Crested Grebes were seen every day with a maximum of twenty-six recorded on 20th. At least five broods of young were recorded during the month with the largest five. A Little Egret put in an appearance again on the west bank on the morning of 21st, staying for a few of hours. Grey Heron numbers peaked at twenty-eight on 17th with several juvenile birds evident. Mute Swan was present most of month with a maximum of four on 26th and Greylag Geese were recorded on three days with the maximum of six recorded on 7th & 8th.

Shelduck were noted on three days with two being present on 21st and Gadwall were seen on nine days with three on 2nd. Teal reappeared on 26th with four until the end of the month and Mallard were constant all month with a maximum of seventy-nine on 9th. A welcome visitor on 4th was a male Garganey, which unfortunately only stayed the one-day. Two Pochard visited on 5th and Tufted Duck remained constant throughout with a maximum of thirty-three on 20th. Ruddy Duck were seen throughout with a maximum of eight on 18th.

Hobby was seen on four dates with one on 4th & 20th and two on 25th & 26th. Peregrine Falcon was recorded on three dates 4th, 18th & 26th and Common Buzzard was regular with a maximum of two on 12th & 13th. Both Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were recorded as normal and a single Grey Partridge was noted on 5th.

Waders continued to enjoy the scrapes with Oystercatchers on five dates including two on 12th & 20th. Ringed Plover were recorded on 24th & 27th and Dunlin were found on 4th & 8th. Curlew was noted on 11th, 18th & 28th and a single Redshank was present on 5th, 9th 21st & 29th. Reverse migration started early with a single summer plumaged Greenshank and a Green Sandpiper both on the hide scrapes on 27th. Common Sandpiper were seen daily from 18th with a maximum of three on 26th to 29th. Common Tern was recorded on most days with a maximum of seven on 16th with one pair displaying and showing interest in the scrape area near the island.

Kingfisher returned in earnest from 7th and was seen daily with a maximum of two on 11th & 24th. Great Spotted Woodpecker was noted most days and Green Woodpecker was recorded on six occasions Hirundine numbers remained constant with good numbers of Swift on several days including three hundred on 6th. Single Meadow Pipits were noted on four days and a Yellow Wagtail was found on 21st.

Sedge Warblers peaked at three on four days and Lesser Whitethroat's maximum was two on 9th. Whitethroat produced a count of ten on three dates with seven Garden Warbler being the maximum on 5th. Blackcaps were still singing all month with ten counted on 18th, as were Chiffchaff with thirteen on 11th. Willow Warbler numbers were disappointing with eight heard singing on 1st.

Spotted Flycatcher continued to have a good year and four were recorded on 18th & 25th. . Reed Bunting was present all month with a three on five dates and the Breeding Bird Survey count of eighteen Yellowhammer on 21st indicated this species is still doing well at Ogston.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT JULY 2003 – 96 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe were observed most days with a maximum of nine on 1st and Great Crested Grebes were seen every day with a maximum of forty recorded on 8th including six to seven broods of young. Cormorant numbers have started to increase with a maximum of forty-five on 8th and Grey Heron numbers reduced with a maximum of twenty on 3rd, 8th, 9th & 10th. Mute Swans continued their present this month with a maximum of six on 29th and Greylag Geese were recorded on one day with five on 17th.

An early pair of Wigeon were noted on 18th and a Gadwall was seen on 31st. Teal were present most days with a maximum of seven on 18th and Mallard were constant all month with a maximum of sixty on 8th & 9th. Pochard have started to return and were seen most days with six on 29th and Tufted Duck continued to increase gradually with a good count of eighty-nine on 16th. Ruddy Duck were seen throughout increasing to a maximum of fourteen on 31st.

A single Osprey was recorded on 1st but like all sightings this year was short stayed. A single Hobby was seen on 16th with Peregrine Falcon being noted on three dates 6th, 18th & 31st. Common Buzzard was regular with one on several days and both Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were recorded as normal.

Waders continued to enjoy the scrapes with one Oystercatcher on 3rd and a single Ringed Plover on 16th. Lapwing numbers increased to sixty-four on 28th and Dunlin became more regular towards the end of the month with a maximum of three on 26th. One Snipe was found on 5th and one Curlew was noted on 6th, 7th & 8th. The highlight of the month was several appearances of summer plumaged Black-tailed Godwit. Two were short stayed on 12th being seen off by Lapwing and again late morning on 19th. Thirteen flew past the dam wall early evening the same day and six settled on the west bank on 25th giving excellent views in front of the hide from mid morning until late afternoon. Redshank was present on five days with a maximum of three on 3rd and a single Greenshank was noted on 13th, 16th, 21st & 29th. Green Sandpiper arrived on 29th and stayed until the end of the month with Common Sandpiper being seen all month with a maximum of seven on 21st, 27th & 31st. Common Tern were recorded daily with a maximum of thirteen on 20th including a pair of juveniles seen most days.

Kingfisher became regular during the period with a maximum of three on 1st. Great Spotted Woodpecker was noted most days and Green Woodpecker was recorded on three days 8th, 26th & 28th. A single Meadow Pipit was noted on 13th and Grey Wagtails were sparse with only six sightings throughout.

A Grasshopper Warbler heard reeling from Crow Lane was a pleasant diversion on 10th with warbler song generally declining through the month. Spotted Flycatcher continued to be recorded regularly with seven counted on 11th including two young. Raven was seen on several dates with three on 16th whilst another highlight for the month were five Crossbill, which were heard calling as they flew south towards the treatment plant from Crow Lane.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2003 – 95 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe numbers reached record levels this month with twenty-one being counted both on 10th & 27th including three broods. Similarly with Great Crested Grebes a equal record maximum of fifty-nine was recorded on 17th including six to seven broods of young. Cormorant numbers have continued to increase with a maximum of fifty-eight on 30th with Grey Heron numbers remaining relatively constant with a maximum of thirty-three on 16th. Surprisingly the four Mute Swans were also present all month and Canada Geese reached a maximum of three hundred and eighty on 21st.

Three early Wigeon were noted on 6th with one on 27th. The lower water levels and increase in mud attracted more Teal and they were up to twenty-one on 20th. Mallard were constant all month with a maximum of one hundred and eighty on 22nd and one immature Shoveler appeared on the scrapes on 26th. Pochard continued to be seen in small numbers with three on 6th and Tufted Duck were constant with a maximum of fifty-five on 3rd. Ruddy Duck peaked at sixteen in Chapel Bay on 9th & 10th and Goosander were noted on three occasions with a maximum of three on 1st.

A Goshawk sighting on 20th was the first for some time but Peregrine Falcon was again noted on three dates 3rd, 6th & 14th. Hobby sightings increased to eight this month with two separate records on 29th. Common Buzzard was regular with up to three juveniles calling regularly near Carr Wood for several days mid month. Both Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were recorded as normal with breeding confirmed for both species.

Wader movement continued slowly the highlights being two juvenile Ruff on 10th and further fly thru's of Black-tailed Godwit, three southwest on 4th and two south on 23rd. The last single Little Ringed Plover was seen on 18th with Ringed Plover appearing on the same date with a maximum of four counted on 24th. A juvenile Dunlin was seen regularly with a maximum of two on 26th and Snipe were back in residence with the best count of seven on 16th, 17th & 19th. Four Curlew flew through on 27th and one settled on the west bank shortly on the evening of 28th. Redshank was present on three days with a maximum of two on 5th & 10th and Greenshank peaked towards the end of the month with four found on 25th. A single Green Sandpiper was present on eight days and two were seen on 12th. Common Sandpiper were seen all month but decreased from six on 1st to a single bird on 31st. The last single Common Tern was recorded on 25th decreasing from six observed on 1st.

Kingfisher gave good views all month both by the scrapes and at milltown inlet with four being the best count on 21st. Great Spotted Woodpecker was noted most days and Green Woodpecker was recorded on three days 1st, 11th & 12th. A single Skylark was noted on 18th and Yellow Wagtail were on the move with singles on 7th, 15th & 16th. House Martins have also started to gather with a notable count of one thousand on 23rd and a Wheatear was found near the sailing club on 14th. Warbler sightings continued to decline with only Chiffchaff in good numbers. Spotted Flycatchers were much in evidence with the best count of ten on 20th and finally an excellent record was a female Pied Flycatcher found near Brackenfield church on 13th & 14th.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2003 – 105 Species – 30 Days Covered**

Little Grebe numbers remained constant this month with a maximum of twenty-two both on 2nd & 15th. The highest Great Crested Grebe count was fifty-one on 15th which included several young. Cormorant numbers increased to a maximum of sixty-one on 16th and Grey Heron numbers decreased throughout from fourteen on 3rd to four on 30th. A single Mute Swan was present until 22nd and Canada Geese peaked at three hundred and fifty-nine on 9th. A single Greylag Goose was present on 17th and 23rd and a Bar-headed Goose was amongst the Canada's on 10th. On 28th a skein of one hundred and sixty-four Pink-footed Geese were observed moving through the recording area.

Four Wigeon were counted from 15th with up to seven on 23rd & 24th. The lower water levels and increase in mud continued to attract Teal and a maximum of twenty-two were counted on 25th. Mallard were present in good numbers all month with the best count of two hundred and eighty-one on 22nd. One juvenile Pintail was found on 29th and two Shoveler were noted both on 9th & 26th. Pochard continued to be seen all month in small numbers with a maximum of twelve on 22nd. Tufted Duck decreased from fifty-six on 2nd to two on 29th and Ruddy Duck were noted all month with the highest count of ten on 10th.

A ringed-tail Hen Harrier was an excellent record, observed from 'The Fabric' crossing the recording area on 28th and a Peregrine was another good find on 6th. Three separate Hobby's sightings on 8th was unusual with individuals again on 9th, 13th & 17th and Common Buzzard was regular again with two on 3rd & 13th. Osprey was observed on three days 7th, 11th & 24th catching fish on each occasion and normally departing over Carr Wood to the west. Both Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were recorded as normal and two Grey Partridge were a good find on 17th.

Following an influx nationally, Ogston was to be treated to yet another American wader this year, a Pectoral Sandpiper. This was found on the west bank on the afternoon of 17th and stayed several hours probably departing late evening. Two Golden Plover made a rare appearance on 16th and a single was noted on the west bank on 22nd. Wader movement continued slowly though the month with a single juvenile Ruff from 27th through until 30th and a single Ringed Plover appeared on three days 28th to 30th. A Dunlin was found on 26th and Snipe were regular all month with the best count of six on 6th & 17th. The second highlight of the month was good views of a Jack Snipe on the kingfisher pond between 24th to 30th with two seen on 29th. One Curlew flew south on 11th and a Redshank was present on 17th. A maximum of two Common Sandpipers were seen until 10th and Greenshank peaked at five on 20th with the last record a single on 27th. Two Common Tern was recorded on both 26th & 28th these being the last for the month.

Kingfisher continued to give good views all month by the scrapes, at milltown inlet and near Carr Pond with five being the best record on 11th & 14th. Great Spotted Woodpecker was noted most days and Green Woodpecker was recorded on eight days. Seven Skylark was counted over on 11th and Yellow Wagtail were on the move with sightings on 2nd, 3rd, 9th & 25th. Hirundines were also departing with good numbers most days with a notable count of three hundred House Martin on 6th and four hundred Swallow on 15th. Whinchat was seen on 6th & 12th and Wheatear was found on three days 2nd, 18th & 22nd. The first two Redwing of the autumn were noted on 29th but warbler sightings continued to decline with only Chiffchaff in good numbers and the last Spotted Flycatcher was recorded on 17th with a Raven on 7th. Finch flocks were on the increase and finally five Lesser Redpoll were counted on 29th.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2003 – 93 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe numbers declined from a maximum of thirteen on 6th to one on 31st whilst the highest Great Crested Grebe count was twenty-nine on 27th & 29th as they increased to month end. Cormorant numbers were constant with a maximum of sixty-one on 29th and Grey Heron continued to decrease to single figures to from a maximum of twelve on 3rd. Three Whooper Swan flew through on 25th and skein of one hundred Pink-footed Geese were observed from Highoredish early morning on 3rd. Canada Geese declined from one hundred and three on 1st to fifty-four on 31st.

Three Shelduck appeared on 15th and then one became resident on 17th staying until month end and two Gadwall visited for one day on 14th. Wigeon were apparent all month peaking at thirty on 19th and the continuing low water levels attracted increasing numbers of Teal up to a maximum of eighty-three on 27th. Mallard were present in good numbers all month with the best count of two hundred and sixty-four on 29th and nine Pintail came for a short stay on 18th.. Pochard continued to be seen all month increasing to twenty on 30th and Tufted Duck were regular with ten on 28th. A welcome visitor was a male Common Scoter on 13th and Goosander were noted on three days with the highest count of three on 24th. Ruddy Duck declined all month with the last single male being noted on 23rd.

The highlight of the month was a Red Kite over the dam wall heading southwest on 29th only the second record for Ogston. A Merlin was another good find late on 10th along with a Peregrine on 12th. Common Buzzard was regular again with a maximum of two on 24th & 27th. Sparrowhawk was seen most days with three recorded on 27th and similarly Kestrel with three counted on 1st.

A Water Rail was a welcome sight on 23rd and showed well on the kingfisher pond until month end. A single Ringed Plover was short stayed on 1st but was joined by a juvenile Grey Plover the same day and remained until 9th. A single juvenile Ruff also stayed from 1st to 7th and Dunlin was evident on twelve days peaking at six on 8th. A Green Sandpiper was an unexpected wader on 24th & 25th taking advantage of the muddy conditions in the kingfisher pond, now very low due to the shortage of rain. A single Jack Snipe also made the most of the mud and was seen on seven days throughout the month. Snipe were regular all month with the best count of ten on 28th & 29th the majority being sited in Woolley Bay. Lapwing slowly increased until a flock of approximately two hundred became resident by the end of the month

Kingfisher continued to give good views daily, sat on the rope by the moat regularly catching small fish. A Black-headed Gull proceeded to copy this and completed several circuits of the island in pursuit of its prey. A 1st winter Little Gull put in an appearance on 23rd staying for most of the day to the delight of several birders. Great Spotted Woodpecker was noted most days and Green Woodpecker was recorded on two days 23rd & 29th. Twenty Skylark was counted over on 10th and thirty-one Meadow Pipit was the best count on 14th. The last House Martin was seen on 8th and the final hirundines were three Swallow on 12th. A single Stonechat was found on the west bank on 22nd and a late Chiffchaff and Blackcap were found in the same elderberry bush on 28th. Flocks of winter thrushes increased throughout the period with the best being one hundred and twenty-two Redwing on 22nd and forty-six Fieldfare on 15th. Raven sightings continued this month with three singles on 19th, 29th & 30th whilst Brambling were returning with fourteen counted over at Highoredish on 28th. Reed Bunting were still hard to find with only four single records all month.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2003 – 86 Species – 30 Days Covered**

Little Grebe numbers were mainly in single figures but a maximum of eleven was recorded on 20th whilst Great Crested Grebe remained fairly constant with a maximum of twenty-nine on 4th. Cormorant numbers were also steady with a maximum of fifty-four on 26th and Grey Heron continued to decrease with a maximum of four on 12th & 16th. Four juvenile Mute Swan paid a short visit on the morning of 2nd and a skein of one hundred and sixty Pink-footed Geese flew through south-east early morning on 1st. Canada Geese were mainly seen in small numbers all month with a count of one hundred and eighteen on 20th being the highest.

One Shelduck became resident and was seen all month whilst Wigeon numbers increased slowly to twenty-five by month end. An adult female Mandarin Duck provided a pleasant diversion on 29th showing well on the hide scrapes. Teal remained evident all month with a peak of ninety-five on 3rd and Mallard continued in good numbers with the best count of one hundred and forty-five also on 3rd. Pochard were seen all month with a maximum of forty-six on 10th and Tufted Duck were noted most days with the best count being eight on four days. Goldeneye were visitors on three days with two on 6th and singles on 10th & 21st. Goosander were increasingly noted with records on five days the highest count of three on 2nd & 25th and a group a ten Ruddy Duck appeared for one day on 28th.

A quiet month for raptors with Common Buzzard as usual, regularly seen in the fields adjacent to the west bank with a maximum of two on 16th & 27th. Sparrowhawk was found most days with two the maximum and similarly Kestrel with five counted on 27th.

The Water Rail remained all month showing well on the kingfisher pond until the water level increased by the end of the month. A single Ringed Plover was noted on 12th and Golden Plover started appearing with the flock of Lapwing from 8th with an excellent count of sixty recorded on 30th. Dunlin was evident on twelve days peaking at five on 8th. Two Jack Snipe on 1st was a good start to the month with one on the kingfisher pond and the other on the back scrape. However the rising water level on the pond meant there were only two further sightings of singles on 3rd & 4th. Snipe were regular all month with the best count of twenty-five on 20th and Lapwing continued to increase with the best count of approximately five hundred by 19th. A Woodcock was noted late on 26th and a Black-tailed Godwit visited the west bank for two days on 7th & 8th. The gull roost was intermittent depending on weather but the first Yellow-legged Gull of the winter was found on 20th.

Kingfisher continued either around the island, near carr pond or from milltown inlet with three recorded on 24th. Great Spotted Woodpecker was noted most days with Green Woodpecker recorded on three days 15th, 26th & 28th. Some passage continued with three Skylark counted over on 1st and twenty-six Meadow Pipit was the best count on 14th. Another unexpected visitor this month, the first for over twenty years was a Black Redstart. This appeared on 22nd and stayed until 26th frequenting the area around the scrapes, showing well either on the island on the posts or on Tonys' cairn. A late Blackcap was seen again on 19th & 26th near the treatment works and Raven sightings continued this month with two on 5th and singles on 12th & 20th. Brambling were noted early month with the best three on 4th and a good flock of Goldfinch graced the west bank for most of the month. Lesser Redpoll numbers increased with sightings on nine days the best

being forty on 9th, but Reed Bunting were still hard to find with only a single record on 12th.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT DECEMBER 2003 – 88 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe numbers were in single figures with a maximum of five recorded on 3rd & 17th whilst Great Crested Grebe remained fairly constant with a maximum of twenty-six on 2nd. Cormorant declined slightly with a maximum of forty-five on 3rd & 28th and Grey Heron remained low with a maximum of four on 31st. Three Mute Swan visited on 15th with two adults and a juvenile whilst four Bewick's Swan were recorded late on 7th and nine Whooper Swan were seen flying southwest at 1145 hrs on Christmas Day. In total six skeins of Pink-footed Geese flew through this month with two skeins totalling one hundred and twenty through west on 2nd, one skein of two hundred west on 3rd, one skein of thirty-five through south at 1040 hrs on 5th and finally two skeins totalling four hundred and thirty-six through northwest during the morning of 31st. Canada Geese were more in evidence this month with numbers normally in the hundreds but a maximum of two hundred and twenty was recorded on 6th.

The Shelduck that had become resident for over a month was last seen on 4th whilst the female Mandarin Duck showed again for a day on 3rd. Wigeon numbers remained constant with a count of twenty-three on 21st and similarly with Teal the maximum being sixty-two on 15th & 28th. Mallard were in evidence all month with the best count of one hundred and twenty on 31st and Pochard were also daily with a maximum of forty-three on 5th. A Shoveler appeared for one day on 14th and Tufted Duck were only seen in small numbers with the best count being twelve on 6th and 11th. Goldeneye were visitors on four days with singles on 2nd, 3rd, 7th & 8th. Goosander were observed most days the highest count being nine on 7th and Ruddy Duck were found on two days with four on 20th & three on 30th.

Common Buzzard was seen feeding regularly in the fields adjacent to the west bank with a maximum of two on eight days. Sparrowhawk was also found most days with two the maximum and Kestrel similarly with three counted on 5th & 13th. Two Peregrine Falcon sightings were a bonus this month with singles on 22nd & 25th. The Water Rail showed on eight days either on the kingfisher or dragonfly pond but was more difficult due to the increase in water level. Golden Plover were regular with the flock of Lapwing through the month with an excellent count of one hundred and ten recorded on 6th. Lapwing were also recorded in good numbers, five hundred counted on five days but counts diminished towards month end. Dunlin was found on two days, two on 10th & one on 11th with the only Jack Snipe sighting on 10th. Snipe decreased from a maximum of eleven on 11th down to singles by the month end. A single Woodcock was noted late on 18th leaving carr wood and a Redshank was found in Woolley Bay on 31st.

The gull roost was into full swing this month with a 2nd winter Mediterranean Gull on 29th and an adult on 30th showing well between the hides. The first Caspian Gull was recorded on 18th with a 3rd winter on 19th and 23rd and an adult again on 29th. Yellow-legged Gulls were also found on 1st & 22nd supported by the normal cast of commoner gulls. The freezing late afternoon of New Year's Eve produced the largest gull roost so far this winter with between nine to ten thousand gulls in total.

Little Owl was to be seen in the normal locations throughout the month with a maximum of two and a single Tawny Owl was heard on 7th. Kingfisher showed on ten days around the scrapes and a Skylark was recorded on 3rd. All three woodpeckers showed this month with Great Spotted daily, Green on five days and Lesser Spotted recorded on 20th, 28th & 29th near the hide lane feeders. Bramblings were noted on five days with the best count of nine on 10th and small flocks of Siskin and Lesser Redpoll were to be found around the reservoir. Yellowhammers were flocking in good numbers and thirty-seven was thought to be an excellent count on 17th but a total of one hundred and twenty on 31st in the same stubble field near Handley must have been an amazing sight.



Richard Wesley