

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2004

January highlights were Pink-footed Geese, Red-crested Pochard, Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Water Rail, Mediterranean Gull, Iceland Gull, Glaucous Gull, Rock Pipit, Waxwing and Brambling with reservoir record counts of Shelduck and Goldeneye and a county record count of Coot.

Pink-footed Geese were observed flying over the reservoir during the month, 50 approximately flew east at 11:25hrs on 14th whilst 150 approximately flew west at 09:00hrs on 26th. Up to seven Red-crested Pochard were present all month, three Scaup including two drakes were present in Millfields bay on 10th and 11th with single drakes on 14th and 24th. The female Long-tailed Duck remained all month, again proving illusive, but usually seen from Paul Stanley hide.

The main wildfowl counts were 46 Little Grebe on 11th, 34 Great Crested Grebe on 11th, two were noted displaying on 10th, 22 Cormorant on 11th. The resident Barnacle Geese remained at 31 all month plus a hybrid Canada/Barnacle. Reservoir record counts of 15 Shelduck on 4th, the previous highest count was 14 on two dates, 26th April 1996 and 25th, 26th April 1993. 364 Wigeon on 11th, 45 Gadwall on 19th, 779 Teal on 11th, two Pintail on 11th and 16th, 60 Pochard on 18th, 249 Tufted Duck on 11th, 39 Goldeneye on 11th also a reservoir record count, the previous being 33 on 14th November 1996. 20 Goosander on 26th with smaller counts on several other dates, the majority of sightings of this species occurred in Millfields bay, 119 Ruddy Duck on 11th. Another county and reservoir record count of 1805 Coot

Eight Buzzard was noted on 27th seen drifting west between 13:00hrs and 13:30hrs, possibly part of a larger movement, one individual being very pale quite distinctive from the usual dingy local birds. Two Merlin on 23rd with a single on 16th, single Peregrine on 14th and 15th with two on 16th, Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were also recorded.

Waders recorded were two Oystercatchers on 9th, 11th with one on 20th, 14 Golden Plover on 24th with eight on 25th, two Dunlin on 1st, 3rd and 11th with one on 16th. Snipe were regularly recorded with 14 on 20th being the highest counted, nine Redshank on 11th with one to four regularly present.

Gulls recorded were an adult winter Mediterranean Gull on 4th, 82 Herring Gulls on 2nd, four Yellow-legged Gulls on 17th with singles on several other dates, an adult winter Iceland Gull on spit end at 15:35hrs on 24th, a 1st winter Glaucous Gull at 10:40hrs on 9th, 20 Great Black-backed Gulls on 2nd. Black-headed and Common Gulls were also recorded.

Other sightings were a Water Rail seen from the Wildlife centre on several dates. Single Kingfisher regularly noted, a Green Woodpecker on 1st and 20th, 22 Meadow Pipit on 14th with smaller counts on other dates, a Rock Pipit on Stones Island/Water Sports area on 9th, 11th, 15th, 25th and 29th, a Waxwing seen briefly near Paul Stanley hide on 10th. Fieldfare was scarce with eight on 19th being the highest number counted, only one record of Redwing a single on 11th. Single Raven were recorded on several dates with two on 16th, The feeders at Paul Stanley hide produced sightings of Willow, Coal, Blue and Great Tits, a Great Spotted Woodpeckers were regularly present. One to two Brambling were also noted in this area. 20 Siskin on 16th with smaller counts on other dates, 10 Lesser Redpoll on 24th with seven on 14th, one to two were recorded on other dates.

Another excellent month for wildfowl with reservoir counts of Shelduck, and Goldeneye, with a county record count of Coot. 87 species were recorded in January, compared with 87 species in January 2003 75 in January 2002, 73 in 2001 and 80 in January 2000.

For the latest updates see www.carsingtonbirdclub.co.uk or the notice board in the entrance to the Visitor Centre or in the Goldeneye shop in the courtyard Carsington Water.
Eddie Walker recorder

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT FEBRUARY 2004

February highlights were Pink-footed Geese, Red-crested Pochard, Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Smew, Water Rail, Mediterranean Gull, Iceland Gull, Glaucous Gull, Kittiwake, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Rock Pipit, Brambling and Crossbill.

Skins of Pink-footed Geese were reported flying over Carsington, 92 west at 12:30hrs on 15th and 182 north west at 15:42hrs on 17th, a single was present amongst the Canada flock from the 12th. Seven Red-crested Pochard were recorded on 19th, single Scaup on 5th and 10th, the long staying Long-tailed Duck was last reported on 8th a record stay of 83 days, another Long-tailed Duck was reported on 21st, more details on this sighting would be appreciated. A redhead Smew was present on 14th, unfortunately it wasn't relocated again.

Wildfowl counts were 12 Great crested Grebes on 22nd, 22 Cormorant on 19th, with five showing characteristics of the continental race on 22nd, up to 31 Barnacle Geese all month, single Shelduck on 7th, 160 Wigeon on 19th with 150 counted on 27th. 12 Gadwall on 1st with nine on 3rd, with smaller counts on several other dates. 41 Teal on 8th, three Pintail on 17th, 13 Tufted on 19th, 30 Goldeneye on 1st with 22 on 5th, with smaller counts most other dates. Goosander were regularly present with 24 on 16th being the largest number counted, 93 Ruddy Duck on 8th with regular counts of 50 plus recorded.

Up to three Buzzard were regularly noted, a single Merlin on 10th, single Peregrine on 5th, 6th and 26th, on 17th one was seen with a freshly killed Lapwing being pursued by a Kestrel. Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were also noted.

Waders recorded were Oystercatcher regularly present all month increasing to six by the month's end, an early Ringed Plover on 8th, 32 Golden Plover briefly on Horseshoe Island on 11th, 200 plus Lapwing on 11th, six Dunlin on 7th with singles on several other dates. 26 Snipe on 3rd, 31 on 5th with several other counts of ten plus throughout the month. The first Curlew of the year were three noted on 7th, five on 13th, one to four were present on several other dates to the month's end. 11 Redshank on 5th with smaller numbers most other dates.

Single adult winter plumage Mediterranean Gull on 15th and 19th, three Yellow-legged Gulls on 17th, an adult Iceland Gull on 15th, a third winter Glaucous Gull on 1st with an adult winter on 9th, an adult Kittiwake roosted on 9th.

Other sightings were a record reservoir flock of nine Stock Dove on 15th, single Little Owl on 19th, three Tawny Owls (two calling) on 10th, single Kingfisher regularly present all month. A pair of Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were present at the Paul Stanley hide feeders on 4th and 5th with a single seen in Sheepwash car park on 16th. Great Spotted Woodpeckers were regularly seen at Paul Stanley hide feeders. The first Skylark of the year was noted on 18th, the long staying Rock Pipit was present on Stones Island on 1st and 8th also four Meadow Pipit were noted. Single Grey Wagtails were regularly seen all month, six Dunnock (three singing) on 11th, 22 Redwing on 19th with smaller counts on several other dates, six Mistle Thrush on 2nd.

A Marsh Tit at Paul Stanley hide feeders on 17th and 19th also present regularly on these feeders were two Willow Tits. Three Raven on 5th with singles on several other dates, four Brambling on 11th with singles on 7th and 23rd, 20 Siskin on 1st. The first Linnets of the year were four on Stones Island on 5th with singles present on 5th and 6th, four Lesser Redpoll on 23rd with singles reported on several other dates, A Crossbill flew over the Wildlife Centre on 20th. Several pairs of Bullfinch were noted, Reed Buntings returned with singles on Stones Island from the 5th.

95 species were recorded during what is usually a quiet month, compared with 92 in February 2002 and 78 in February 2002.

For the latest sighting see www.carsingtonbirdclub.co.uk or the notice board outside the Goldeneye shop in the Visitor centre courtyard, or in the entrance when closed.

Eddie Walker recorder

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2004

March highlights were Common Scoter, Mediterranean Gull, Iceland Gull, Kittiwake, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Stonechat, Marsh Tit and Brambling.

The first summer visitors arrived with sightings of Wheatear and Chiffchaff on 17th, Little Ringed Plover and Sand Martins on 18th with the first Swallow on 20th.

A pair of Common Scoter was present on the reservoir on 18th and 29th, an adult summer plumage Mediterranean Gull on 19th, 20th and 23rd, a 2nd winter Iceland Gull roosted on 21st. Seven adult Kittiwake were present on 13th with one remaining the following day, three on 19th with an adult roosting on 23rd. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was recorded near Paul Stanley hide feeders on 2nd and 29th, a single Stonechat on 2nd and 17th, a Marsh Tit was seen between Sheepwash and Paul Stanley hide on 26th.

Wildfowl counts were 23 Cormorant on 17th, up to four Pink-footed Geese most dates accompanying the Canada's, a single Greylag Goose on several dates, 25 to 30 Barnacle Geese all month. Three Shelduck on 28th, 139 Wigeon on 28th, two Gadwall throughout the month, four Teal were regularly present all month, 11 Shoveler on 30th with smaller counts on other dates. One to three Pochard on several dates, 60 Tufted on 30th, 21 Goldeneye on 28th with smaller counts most other dates. Ten Goosander on 2nd with up to four regularly present, usually in Millfields bay, 79 Ruddy Duck on 8th. Single Herons were also present.

Raptors recorded were five Buzzard on 22nd with singles regularly seen, a Peregrine on 17th and 23rd, single Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were also regularly seen.

Waders present were eight Oystercatchers all month, the first Little Ringed Plover arrived on 18th (the earliest Carsington record) singles were also present on 23rd, 24th and 29th until 31st. 40 Lapwing on 13th, single Dunlin on 26th the months only record. 11 Snipe on 8th with 13 on 15th, with smaller counts on several other dates. Curlew regularly roosted on Horseshoe Island with 21 on 17th being the highest number counted, up to nine Redshank were regularly noted.

Other sightings were a Water Rail regularly seen beside the wildlife centre, a Kingfisher was seen on several dates. Great Spotted Woodpeckers were regularly present at Paul Stanley hide feeders. The first Sand Martins were observed on 18th with 28 in flocks of 11 and 17 all flying south, a single Swallow was seen on 20th, 35 Meadow Pipits on Stones Island on 26th, 16 were also counted on 9th and 24th. Grey Wagtails were seen on several dates, usually near the dam, three Wheatear on 17th was the first of the year, also an early date. 65 Fieldfare on 26th with 27 on 23rd, probably returning flocks as this species was particularly scarce during February, 110 Redwing on 18th. Two Chiffchaff were singing on 17th with four on 18th, five on 21st and 11 on 25th. Willow Tits were present on the Paul Stanley hide feeders, also recorded in the same area was several sightings of Goldcrest, Great and Coal Tits, Treecreepers were also seen in the same area.

Ravens were regularly seen during the month, three Brambling at the Sheepwash car park feeders on 7th and 9th. One to three Lesser Redpoll were recorded on several dates.

Apart for the early arrivals, the month was relatively quiet with 92 species recorded compared with 101 species in March 2003 and 96 in 2002.

For the latest sightings see www.carsingtonbirdclub.co.uk or the notice board outside the Goldeneye shop in the visitor centre, or in the entrance when closed.

Eddie Walker recorder

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2004

April highlights were Common Scoter, Osprey, Black and Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Kittiwake, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Grasshopper Warbler, Great Grey Shrike and Brambling.

Wildfowl counts were six Cormorant on 9th, five Pink-footed Geese all month, up to 25 Barnacle Geese all month. Five Shelduck on 5th with one on 7th, 12th, two on 9th, four on 19th and 27th and three on 24th. 35 Wigeon on 3rd with smaller counts on other dates until 23rd. One to five Gadwall were regularly noted. Teal were scarce with a drake on 5th and a pair on 8th and 27th. Shoveler were recorded regularly throughout the month with six on 1st being the largest number counted. Three Pochard on 12th with singles on several other dates. 48 Tufted on 12th. A single drake Common Scoter was present on 16th. Goldeneye declined during the month with ten on 6th being the maximum noted.

Buzzards were regularly recorded with five seen on 4th and 8th, the first Osprey of the year was observed flying west on 24th. Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were regularly seen.

Waders present were eight Oystercatcher all month, up to four Little Ringed Plover all month, two Ringed Plover on 5th, 8th and 17th with a single on 29th. One to two Dunlin regularly present. One to four Snipe on several dates until 25th. A large passage of summer plumage Black-tailed Godwit occurred on 20th when 138 were counted at dusk on Stones Island, smaller numbers of these birds were seen circling the reservoir earlier, 12 were observed the previous evening. This is the largest single flock recorded at Carsington, the previous record was 135 flying south east on 22nd April 2001.

A winter plumage Bar-tailed Godwit was present on Stones Island from 25th until 30th, also on the 20th a Whimbrel roosted, the first of the spring passage, four were noted on 21st, six in two groups of three on 22nd, one on 25th and eight on 27th. Small numbers of Curlew were noted on several dates. Up to nine Redshank all month. The first Common Sandpiper of the year was recorded on 10th with up to three were present from 17th. A Turnstone flew north on 26th.

Gulls counted were 141 Black-headed on 6th, 165 Common on 6th, a Yellow-legged roosted on 5th and 6th, three Great Black-back on 6th. An adult Kittiwake roosted on 7th. Two Common Terns on 29th and 30th, four Arctic Terns on 17th, 19 on 27th, four on 28th, one on 29th and five on 30th, a Black Tern was reported on 30th.

Other species recorded were ten Swift on 26th with 100 plus on 27th, 500 plus on 29th and 400 plus on 30th. Single Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers on 5th 7th and 19th. Sand Martins arrived in force from 5th when 55 were counted with 600 plus on 16th, also on 16th 400 plus Swallows were present. House Martins numbers increased from 18th when 85 were seen, 300 plus were estimated on 29th.

The first Yellow Wagtail was recorded on 15th with three on 17th and ten plus on 20th, one to five were regularly seen until 30th. Single White Wagtail on 3rd with one to three noted on several other dates. Redstarts were noted from 17th with three on 20th, single Wheatear on 2nd with two on 5th, one on 18th and four on 19th. A Grasshopper Warbler was heard singing on 20th and on several other dates until 28th, a Sedge Warbler on 23rd, 26th and 30th, three Lesser Whitethroat on 26th and 27th. Single Whitethroat on 20th with three on 23rd and widespread from 27th, single Garden Warbler on 23rd and 25th, three on 26th. 12 Blackcap on 20th with smaller counts most other dates, 15 Chiffchaff on 8th with similar counts on other dates. 42 Willow Warbler were counted singing on 20th.

A Great Grey shrike was present near the wildlife centre on 3rd and 4th giving excellent views and fortunately occurred over a weekend, enabling birders to see this rare winter visitor to Derbyshire.

The second Carsington record the previous one was a single bird near Stich farm on 31st December 1992.

Two Brambling on the feeders at Sheepwash car park on 2nd until 6th. Seven Siskin on 1st with singles on several dates until 22nd, ten Lesser Redpoll on 6th with smaller counts on other dates. A single Yellowhammer was recorded flying over the wildlife centre on 7th, unfortunately a rare bird at Carsington nowadays.

112 species were recorded compared with 120 in April 2003, 107 in 2002, 103 in 2001 and 101 in April 2000.

For the latest sightings see www.carsingtonbirdclub.co.uk or the notice board outside the Goldeneye shop in the visitor centre, or in the entrance when closed.

Eddie Walker recorder

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2004

May highlights were Black-necked Grebe, Osprey, Sanderling, Ruff, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Wood Sandpiper, Turnstone, Great Skua, Wood Warbler and Pied Flycatcher. A possible Red-footed Falcon was seen briefly flying down the reservoir on 19th, unfortunately no further sightings were reported.

Four Black-necked Grebes were present on 9th, unfortunately only staying the one-day. A Great Skua was present on the reservoir from 08:40hrs until 09: 50hrs on 5th, the first spring record.

The wildfowl counts were 27 Great Crested Grebe on 4th, with young noted on 31st, 20 Cormorant on 1st with smaller counts throughout the month, five Pink-footed Geese all month, an additional bird was seen flying over Sheepwash on 14th. Two Greylag Geese on 14th, 66 Canada's with 93 young were counted on 20th. Barnacle Geese were present all month with young noted on 17th, (an established breeding species at Carsington since 2002) Six Shelduck on 15th. Gadwall were regularly present until 14th with six on 5th being the maximum, a single Shoveler on 19th, two drake Pochard on 27th, 15 Tufted on 24th. Two female Goldeneye lingered on until 3rd, four Ruddy Duck were also noted.

Buzzards were seen most dates, with four on 21st, an Osprey on 6th, a Merlin on 4th, single Hobby on 17th and 19th. A large female Peregrine was present on several dates between 3rd and 20th. A possible Peregrine x Saker was observed on 22nd. Kestrel and Sparrowhawk were also regularly seen.

16 species of waders were recorded, eight Oystercatcher all month, two to four Little Ringed Plover all month. Single Ringed Plover on 2nd with six present on 19th, two on 20th and 21st, the first Lapwing young was noted on 9th, single Sanderling were present on 3rd, 11th, 12th, 18th, and 23rd, two were noted on 19th. Small numbers of Dunlin were regularly recorded with 11 on 9th being the maximum, a single Ruff on 16th and 17th, a Snipe on 14th, a Black-tailed Godwit was present from 4th until 12th with a different bird on 15th. Two Bar-tailed Godwit on 1st with singles on 3rd and 5th. Two Whimbrel on 1st, four on 3rd, two on 4th, singles on 9th and 21st, five Curlew on 22nd with smaller counts on several other dates. Eight Redshank all month, a Wood Sandpiper was seen briefly on 17th, up to two Common Sandpiper were noted all month, a Turnstone on 14th

12 Black-headed Gulls on 1st and 24th, three Common Gulls on 19th with singles on 1st and 24th, two Herring Gulls on 8th with one on 20th, a 1st summer Yellow-legged Gull on 9th, 10th and 11th. Unusual summer records of Great Black-back Gulls with 30 on 8th, 10 on 11th and one to eight on several other dates until 20th. Single Common Tern were present on several dates with two seen on 2nd, unfortunately none stayed to breed. 32 Arctic Terns were noted on 1st with 17 on 4th and four on 7th.

Other species recorded were several sightings of Red-Legged Partridge, a Cuckoo on 18th (now a very scarce bird at Carsington) approximately 400 Swift on 3rd, a Green Woodpecker on 6th, a Skylark on 6th (again a scarce bird) two to three Yellow Wagtails on several dates until 7th. Single White Wagtails on 5th, 6th and 7th, at least one pair of Redstarts successfully bred. A Wheatear on 3rd, several Sedge Warbles were noted at various sites around the reservoir. One to three Lesser Whitethroats were recorded during the month, a singing Wood Warbler on 1st, the first Spotted Flycatcher on 5th with four present from 15th. Unaccompanied Pied Flycatchers were present at various locations around the reservoir from 1st. A pair of Raven bred locally producing two young, these were often seen flying over the reservoir, calling profusely.

A poor month with high water levels providing few feeding areas for passing waders, also this year's tern passage was disappointing.

113 species were recorded compared with 110 species in May 2003, 112 in 2002, 106 in 2001 and 92 in 2000.

For the latest updates see www.carsingtonbirdclub.co.uk or the notice board outside the Goldeneye shop in the courtyard at the visitor centre Carsington Water

Eddie Walker recorder

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2004

June highlights were Red-crested Pochard, Long-tailed Duck, Common Scoter, Red Kite, Osprey, Peregrine, Black-tailed Godwit, Reed Warbler and Pied Flycatcher.

Two Red-crested Pochard were noted on 11th increasing to five including four drakes by 20th, two to four were regularly present until 29th. An unseasonable female Long-tailed Duck was reported on 15th and was still present at the month's end, initially giving excellent views close to Millfields Island and later in Shiningford Creek. Four drake Common Scoter were on the reservoir on 24th.

Wildfowl counts were eight pairs of Little Grebe on 20th, 34 Great Crested Grebe including four broods on 20th, 13 Cormorant on 20th with ten on 28th. Two pairs of Mute Swan with four cygnets each on 20th, ten Greylag Geese on 6th with one to two regularly noted until 24th, 950 Canada's on 26th including lots of young. Barnacle Geese bred successfully again with four broods present on 20th, two Shelduck on 6th, four Wigeon on 19th, single Gadwall on 1st, three Teal on 20th. One pair of Shoveler on 4th with two drakes on 25th and one female on 29th, two drake Pochard on 1st with a single female regularly recorded during the month. 93 Tufted Duck on 20th with young noted from 27th. Coot numbers started to increase with 63 counted on 26th.

A Red Kite was reported flying west at 11:30hrs on 3rd and a second on 29th also flying west. Buzzards were regularly noted during the month, the most being 11 on 7th, An Osprey was reported flying over the reservoir at lunchtime on 27th. Single Hobby on 3rd and 10th, a Peregrine on 1st. Kestrels were also regularly seen, hovering alongside the verges beside the dam.

With high water levels, few waders were recorded during the month, 14 Oystercatchers on 20th with smaller numbers present most dates, two Little Ringed Plover on 1st with a single on 20th. Nine Black-tailed Godwit on 1st, single Curlew on several dates with five on 17th, up to two Common Sandpiper were regularly present.

Other species recorded were 100 plus Lesser Black-backed Gulls roosting on 29th, three Great Black-backed Gulls on 25th, two to four Common Terns were noted during the month, unfortunately none bred this year. Three Arctic Terns on 25th was unusual. A Tawny Owl was seen on 14th, 60 Swift were present on 12th with 50 on 24th, single Kingfishers were regularly seen from 22nd, 200 Swallows and House Martins on 24th, 50 Sand Martins on 26th. A Reed Warbler was regularly heard singing from 9th until the month's end a scarce bird at Carsington. Three Spotted Flycatchers on 6th. Last month's male Pied Flycatcher continued to sing and display, unfortunately to no avail. Nuthatch were seen feeding young on 6th, this species has now become well established at Carsington. Five Raven on 20th with singles on several other dates.

In what is usually a quiet month 93 species were recorded compared with 84 species in June 2003, 95 in June 2002, 75 in 2001 and 74 in 2000.

For the latest updates see www.carsingtonbirdclub.co.uk or the notice board outside the new Water Rail shop in the courtyard at the Visitor Centre Carsington Water.

Eddie Walker recorder

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT JULY 2004

July highlights: Long-tailed Duck, Common Scoter, Red Kite, Osprey, Black-tailed Godwit and Yellowhammer.

Little Grebes reared at least four broods, with a maximum of only 2 young per brood. A surprise for some observers was a Black Swan [escapee] off Millfields on 10+11/7. 2 Greylag Geese were with the Canada Geese from 1/7 to 18/7, and 20 Greylag were reported on 25/7. A Shelduck showed at Sheepwash on 6+7/7, and a female Mandarin was near the Wildlife Centre on 4/7. Red Crested Pochard peaked at 10 on 9/7, these ducks usually fly in early to mid morning and leave the site during the evening well before dusk. Tufted Duck numbers increased through the month to over 400 and at least 17 broods were noted. The moulting female Long-tailed Duck remained all month, usually taking refuge in the undergrowth on Horeshoe Island. There were three short visits made by Common Scoter, a pair on 9+10/7, a female on 17/7 and a f/juv on 26/7. Ruddy Duck broods of 4+3 were noted.

An Osprey was seen flying past Sheepwash towards the Visitor Centre during the afternoon of 13/7. Following the June records of a Red Kite, another was seen on 4/7, any further information will be helpful. Kestrel, Sparrowhawk and Buzzard were all recorded through the month, and a Peregrine flew over the Wildlife Centre on 13/7.

Water levels remained high and visiting/migrating wader levels remained low. Of the breeding waders 4 pairs of Oystercatchers successfully reared 2+2+1+1 young, Lapwings reared 15 young in total, but the Little Ringed Plover pairs may well have failed. Up to 2 Dunlin were on Horseshoe Island on several dates and 7 flew straight through southwards on 25/7. A single Black-tailed Godwit was on Stones Island on 9/7, followed by 3 at the Wildlife Centre on 19/7, and 109 were seen flying north west on 21/7. Common Sandpiper were present most days with a maximum of 5 on 24/7.

A pair of Little Owls were seen with 1 young. A Kingfisher was recorded at various locations around the site. There were single records of Meadow Pipit, Yellow Wagtail, Marsh Tit, Lesser Redpoll and Yellowhammer, now rarely seen on this site. The Reed Warbler, present since 9/6, sang until 5/7. Breeding Redstarts were seen feeding juveniles and 4 pairs of Spotted flycatchers are on site.

101 species were recorded compared with 95 in July 2003, 100 in 2002, 90 in 2001 and 94 in 2000.

Roger Carrington – Recorder.

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2004

August Highlights: Long-tailed Duck stays another month, wader visits far too brief, and the Bonxie enigma continues.

Great crested grebe count of 54 maintains a good level but a maximum of only 27 Little Grebe suggests some may still be nurturing young out of sight. With 28 adult Mute Swans, breeding success seems to be limited. Up to 12 feral Barnacle Geese were noted and 2 Greylag Geese present on 20/8, with 1 on 26/8.

A single male Shelduck made a brief stay on 9/8, the first Wigeon was at the WLC on 12/8 and numbers reached 6 by the end of the month. Gadwall were around the WLC all month, with a maximum of 10 on 6/8 and, following eclipse, most of these ducks are now showing in full plumage. Teal increased from 2 on 1/8 to 14 by 26/8, and a single Shoveler was seen at various locations between 11-25/8. Pochard numbers peaked at 9, and the feral Red Crested Pochards were up to 5 on 30/8. A Tufted Duck count on 1/8 totalled 461 and 19 broods have been recorded. The Long-tailed Duck remained around WLC and Stones Island all month, a female/juv Common Scoter was present during the rain storm on 10/8, and 2 males plus a female on 26/8, the 2 males still present the following day. Ruddy Duck numbers totalled 27 on 1/8 and a pair with young at Paul Staley hide on 11/8 proved at least 3 broods for the water.

A Red Kite was seen over nearby Hognaston on 1/8 [PHJ], and a female Goshawk was seen chasing wood pigeon at Hall Wood by the same observer on 13/8. Sparrow Hawk young could be heard calling for food from a wooded area near Sheepwash during the month, and another raptor success was the first record of breeding Common Buzzard for the site. Sadly one juv was found dead on the road but indications suggest two other young are safely flying. Hirundines were seen to be chased by a Hobby on 2/8, and a juv Peregrine was recorded on many dates, mainly between the WLC and Sheepwash.

The high water levels throughout the month have covered most mud margins so most wader sightings have been brief or fly-throughs. No Oystercatchers have been recorded since the breeding pairs left site in July. Ringed Plovers were noted in singles and usually in flight from 10/8, with 2 on 26/8. Lapwing flocks have been present all month with 75 at WLC on 2/8 and 63 at Sheepwash on the same day. A juv Little Stint was on Horseshoe Island for the evening of 27/8 [RC], and a single dunlin at the same location most days, with 2 on 15/8. 2 Ruff were found at WLC on 5/8 [PHJ], 1 still there the following day. Up to 5 snipe were on Horseshoe Island between 4 and 15/8, a single Black Tailed Godwit on 8/8 [NH], and a Spotted Redshank on 1/8 [PHJ]. Whimbrel movement was 1 plus 7 southwest on the 2/8 and 10 south on 8/8. Common Sandpipers peaked at 5, Curlew only 2, Redshank just 3, 2 Greenshank on the 9/8 only, 2 Green Sandpipers on 11/8 and 1 on 17/8, and a Wood Sandpiper was heard calling over Stones Island on 19/8 [JB,RC].

To continue the Bonxie enigma, a juv Great Skua was found during the rainstormy morning of 10/8 [NLo,NH], later joined by an adult [RMRJ]. These birds flew high north at 1435 as the storm clouds cleared. These are the ninth record of Bonxie at Carsington, involving 11 birds in total, and national reports over the past few years suggest no other English inland water has this level of records.

The roost of Lesser Black-backed Gulls was up to 3000 by the end of the month, joined by up to 6 Yellow-legged Gulls and a juv Common Gull on 26/8. There were 2 Sandwich Terns on 2/8 [RC] and a single on 13/8 [JB,AS]. Common Terns included 3 on 3/8, 13 and a 2 on 9/8 and 3 on 10/8. A good movement of Black Terns seen were 2 on 2/8, flock of 13 on 9/8 [NLo], 3 more later that day, and 1 on 23/4.

A lone Swift was noted on 27/8, Kingfisher has been seen most days in all areas of the water, a Tree Pipit on 15/4 [JB], single Yellow wagtails from 15/8, and Wheatear on 17,21 and 22/8. So far the latest dates for Sedge Warbler is 12/8, Lesser Whitethroat 26/8, Spotted Flycatcher 26/8, Whitethroat ?

110 species were recorded compared with 110 in Aug 2003, 122 in 2002, 86 in 2001, 97 in 2000. Many thanks for the records and please remember to record late dates for the migrants and first dates for wintering birds.

Roger Carrington – Recorder.

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2004

September Highlights: The long staying Long-tailed Duck gains its flight feathers and departs. Osprey, Peregrine, Ruff, Turnstone, Little Gull and Black Tern make brief visits. Some warblers stay nearly to the end of the month, a wren feeds young on the 28/09 but no wintering thrushes yet.

Little Grebe numbers reached 48 on 12/09, and 39 cormorant were still present close to roosting time on 30/09. A Greylag Goose and 29 Barnacle Geese were noted on 12/09 and 32 Barnacles present on 20/09. 2 Shelduck and 11 Pintail dropped in at teatime on 30/09, in addition to the 2 Pintail already on site. Early in the month Wigeon movement was noted, with a maximum count of 460 on site on 04/09. Tufted Duck numbers were up to 500 later in the month, 61 Pochard noted in front of Sheepwash on 26/09 and Coot numbers reached 1450 on 23/09. Red-crested Pochard were noted throughout the month, with 7 on 04/09 and 15/09. The female Long-tailed Duck completed her moult and was seen flying strongly on 03/09. She was first recorded on 15/06 and the last report was on 19/09. A single drake Common Scoter was noted diving in mid-water on 28/09 and was still present on 30/09.

An Osprey showed at midday on 11/04 to observers in Paul Stanley Hide and, for the second consecutive month, a juvenile Peregrine has been hunting around the site.

During the early autumn passage waders have stayed far too briefly and in small numbers only, with; 2 Ringed Plover on 07/09 and singles on other dates, 4 Dunlin on 09/09 and singles on a few other dates, 1 Ruff on 16/09 and 28/09 and a juvenile on 30/09, 1 Greenshank on 28/09 and 2 Turnstone flew through southwards on 02/09.

A juvenile Little Gull joined the gull roost briefly on 07/09. By the end of the month this gull roost had grown to in excess of 4000 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, 500 Black-headed Gulls, a few Herring Gulls and up to 5 Yellow-legged Gulls. 4 Black Terns were noted on 13/09.

No Swifts have been recorded this month, and latest dates for others are; Sand Martin on 19/09, Swallow on 23/09, House martin still present on 30/09, and a late Yellow Wagtail on 28/09. An adult wren was seen feeding 2 begging young out of the nest on Stones Island on 28/09.

Late warbler sightings were: 2 Sedge Warblers on 05/09 and 1 at the WLC on 19/09, 2 Lesser Whitethroat on 23/09, 2 Willow Warbler also on 23/09, 1 Whitethroat on 16/09, and Chiffchaff are still present. Spotted Flycatcher were reported several times during the month with 3 near the WLC on 23/09 being the latest. But where are the wintering thrushes, they are in Derbyshire but not yet seen at Carsington.

96 species have been recorded this month compared with 104 in September 2003, 118 in 2002, 87 in 2001 and 97 in 2000.

Roger Carrington – Recorder.

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2004

October Highlights: Manx Shearwater seeks refuge with STWA Rangers. Whooper Swans, Red-breasted Merganser and Common Scoter each show for a day. Gull roost numbers continue to increase, and a Rock Pipit spends 6 days touring the site.

A Manx Shearwater was found by STWA Rangers at their base near the Visitor Centre on 5/10. The bird was in poor state and Ranger Ben Young voluntarily took it into his own care, fed it back into flying condition and successfully released it on the Welsh Coast later in October.

Cormorant numbers increased through the month to 46 on 23/10. 12 Whooper Swans were found at lunchtime near Lane End hide on 18/10, by dusk they had drifted along to Flat Island, presumably to roost, but there were no records of their presence the following morning.

A few wildfowl counts totalled 380 Wigeon on 5/10, 26 Gadwall on 17/10, 143 Teal on 29/10 and 167 Pochard on 15/10. A Pink-footed Goose [unknown origin] was with Canada Geese at the Visitor Centre on 18/10 and the regular Red-crested Pochard were present most days, with 7 on 10/10. An eclipse drake Red-breasted Merganser was near the dam wall on 15/10, a Shelduck on 28/10, female Common Scoter on 9/10 and 4 Goosanders reported on 23/10.

Raptor sightings included a Hobby on 5/10, several sightings of the juv Peregrine early in the month and an adult on 31/10 over Hall Wood. Buzzards are regularly seen with 3 together on 18/10 over Hall Wood, and Sparrow Hawk were reported at Paul Stanley Hide and the WLC on a few dates.

Only six species of wader were recorded compared with twelve in the same period last year. Dunlin were present most days with a maximum of 6 on 15/10, 3 Redshank [one with a BTO ring] on 18/10 and 1 or 2 most days, a juv Ruff 1-2/10, a juv Ringed Plover 2-4/10, up to 8 Snipe at the WLC, and 3 Golden Plover were a good sight at the WLC on 29/10.

The well established gull roost increased in size through the month with an estimated 6000 Lesser Black-backed, 2000 Black-headed, 50 Common, 4 Herring and 4 Yellow-legged Gulls on 23/10. An immature Mediterranean Gull visited the roost briefly on 14/10 and it was also seen in the roost on 16/10.

Little Owl was seen on several occasions between the WLC and Shiningford, and daytime sightings of Tawny Owl reported on 15/10 at Shiningford and 17/10 below the dam wall. Kingfisher was seen on many days at various locations including Paul Stanley Hide, Sheepwash, WLC, dam wall and Millfields. 6 Skylarks were seen flying low and calling over Shiningford Creek. Latest dates reported for Swallow was 1 on 5/10 and House Martin 1 on 6/10. A Rock Pipit was found on 10/10 and, by the 16/10 it had been seen in several locations, ranging from Sheepwash to the dam wall.

A few Redwing flocks were recorded, with 86 birds over Stones Island on 10/10, but only 1 flock of 50 Fieldfare were noted. Late warbler records included a Garden Warbler attempting singing on 17/10, and a Chiffchaff singing on 21/10. The feeding station at Paul Stanley Hide has been attracting a good display of birds during the month including Nuthatch, up to two Treecreeper together, Great Spotted Woodpecker, coal tit, several willow tit and Goldcrest.

95 species have been recorded this month compared with 94 in 2003, 103 in 2002, 91 in 2001 and 87 in 2000.

Roger Carrington – Recorder.

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2004

November Highlights: Gull roost pulls in goodies with Ring-billed Gull, Iceland Gull, Caspian Gull, Mediterranean Gull and Kittiwake. Hen Harrier and Merlin make flying visits, Great Grey Shrike attracts observers and Barn Owls return.

A total count of 666 Pink-footed Geese flying S.E. during one hour on the 1st started the month off well. The local Barnacle Geese flock numbered up to 43 including a hybrid on the 8th, and, 5 Whooper Swans on the 5th were followed by 2 more on 21/22nd. Wintering duck numbers reduced slightly with maximum counts of 87 Pochard on the 30th and 162 Tufted Duck on the 10th. Goldeneye were present all month with a max of 11 on the 7th, Goosander 7 on 1st, and 3 female Common Scoter on 21st.

Raptor sightings included a female Hen Harrier [Ringtail] on 19th hunting the grass areas below Hall Wood and being mobbed by two Carrion Crows, and, a Merlin seen on 6th and 7th around Shiningford Creek area.

Just six species of wader were recorded including a Knot on the 9th, a max count of 400 Lapwing on 14th and 2 Dunlin on 22nd. Redshank were present all month with a max of 3 on 3rd, and Snipe numbers reached 26 on 8th, currently Snipe can usually be viewed closely through the left hand window of Paul Stanley Hide.

Gull roost watchers were rewarded for their endeavours in the cold, dull, damp, dusk encroaching observations of 8000 or so gulls with: an adult Ring-billed Gull on the 10th and several evenings following [this is the third record for the site], an adult Iceland Gull from the 6th to 27th, a third winter Caspian Gull on the 7th, up to 6 Yellow-legged Gulls nightly, a Kittiwake on the 19th, and an adult Mediterranean Gull on 26th and 30th.

A passage of 250 Wood Pigeon was reported from Paul Stanley Hide on 6th and 6 Stock Doves on 14th. A Barn Owl on the 17th and 2 on the 24th is encouraging after the loss of the breeding pair last year, and 4 pairs of Little Owl calling at dusk were noted on the 28th. Four [3+1] Skylarks were reported flying over calling on the 19th and a dunnock singing on the 23rd. Wintering thrushes built up early in the month with a max of 345 Redwing on the 2nd and 188 Fieldfare on the 6th, all roosting in Shiningford area.

Following the second site record for Great Grey Shrike earlier this year in April, November has provided the third. On the 13th one was reported just off site at nearby Carsington Pastures until the 17th, then an on site record of one at Millfields on the 22nd, and then one in the Shiningford area on 29th and still present on 2nd Dec. Probability is that they are the same bird but any information on this and who the original observers were will be most welcome.

A large flock of 44 Lesser Redpoll was reported at Millfields on the 11th, and smaller numbers were elsewhere with 12 on Stones Island on 24th. An unseasonal Linnet was calling and flying around Stones Island on 24th, 15 Bullfinches were counted around the site on the 19th, and a flock of 8 Yellowhammers on the 1st is a rare event for this site at any time of year.

94 species recorded this month compared with 92 in 2003, 95 in 2002, 84 in 2001 and 70 in 2000.
Roger Carrington - Recorder

CARSINGTON MONTHLY REPORT DECEMBER 2004

December Highlights: Ring-billed Gull and Great Grey Shrike remain, but elusive, Black-necked Grebe and Scaup appear on the same day, a pair of Green Woodpeckers and a Chiffchaff are good records and a Glaucous Gull is added to this season's gull roost tally.

Little Grebe totals at 58 and Great crested Grebe numbers at 41 both on 15th. A Black-necked Grebe was found at Sheepwash on the 22nd, 2 reported the following day and also 1 on 24th and 2 reported on 28th. This bird [or 2] proved elusive for most observers, any other sightings not recorded in the hide diary will be appreciated, note this record may require a DOS submission. A single Whooper Swan was at the Wildlife Centre [WLC] during the afternoon of 19th. Six Greylag geese were noted at the WLC on the 1st and the local feral Barnacle Geese were around most of the month, with 35 on the 8th.

Wintering wildfowl numbers included 164 Wigeon on 9th, 400+ Teal on 19th, 95 Pochard on 12th, 21 Goldeneye on 15th, 10 Gadwall on 21st and 5 Goosander on 16th. Others included a single Shelduck at the WLC on the 20th, 2 Red-crested Pochard on 9th and other dates, 3 female Scaup on 22/23rd and 2 female Common Scoter on 1st.

The only notable raptor was a Peregrine flying over the Visitor Centre car park, otherwise Common Buzzard, Kestrel and Sparrow Hawk were regularly seen.

An Oyster Catcher around the WLC on 11/12th and a Woodcock in Tail Bay [below dam wall] on the 17th boosted wader species for this period. Several records of Golden Plover included 85 at the WLC on 15th and Lapwing maximum of 770 on 9th. A few Redshank were on site all month with 4 on 9th, and Snipe numbers have dwindled from last month to 4 at Paul Stanley hide on 1st and 3 at WLC on 4th.

The Gull roost included an adult Mediterranean Gull on 1st, 25th and 28th, an adult Ring-billed Gull on 1st 18th and 25th presumed to be the same bird as reported in November, a first winter Glaucous Gull on the 28th, and 40+ Great Black-backed Gulls on 25th. Throughout this month the gull roost has been difficult to observe mainly due to calm periods when the gulls tend to spread out over the whole water. Consequently only a small portion of the roost can be identified from one location before daylight fails.

Reports of Kingfisher are still regular and from many parts of the shore but Paul Stanley and Sheepwash hides or the inlet between Millfields Car Park and Dam Wall should give the best chance of catching up with this favourite of birds. A pair of Green Woodpeckers were seen in the Lane End area by birders searching for the Shrike. The Great Grey Shrike started the month off showing well around Shiningford, by mid-month there were no recorded appearances then, towards the end of the month, it was showing well again, usually near the brick tower. Evidently residents at Shiningford have seen the bird taking small rodents and a 'larder' has been seen on a barbed-wire fence. A wintering Chiffchaff was near the WLC on the 13th, a rare record for the site. Siskins seem to be very few this winter, only one has been recorded on several dates this month. 89 species reported compared with 97 in Dec 2003, 89 in 2002, 86 in 2001 and 74 in 2000.