

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2004 – 92 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe were noted most days with a maximum of four on 18th whereas the best count for Great Crested Grebe was twenty-eight on 25th. Cormorant were seen daily with the maximum being fifty-eight on 1st but Grey Heron were infrequent and the best was four on 4th. A pair of Mute Swans appeared for a short while on 14th whilst seven Whooper Swan were seen to fly through northwest on 3rd. One skein of one hundred and twenty Pink-footed Geese was recorded at 1100 hours on 18th whilst Canada Geese were recorded daily with a maximum of one hundred and ninety eight on 15th.

The only record for Shelduck was one on 8th and a drake Mandarin was found whilst scanning through the gull roost on 21st. Wigeon were recorded throughout with the best count of forty-four on 14th whilst a pair of Gadwall appeared in chapel bay on 29th staying until month end. Teal numbers declined from seventy on 1st to seventeen on 31st due to the rapid increase in water levels but Mallard were regular with one hundred and forty the highest count on 23rd. Two Shoveler were found on New Year's Day whilst Pochard numbers declined disappointingly from forty on 1st. Tufted Duck were about most days but numbers were always small, seventeen on 2nd was the best record. Goosander sightings were regular throughout with a maximum of four on 1st, 15th & 21st but a pair of Ruddy Duck on 7th and a female on 8th were the only records.

Two Common Buzzard were regular sightings feeding in the fields below yew tree farm and a single adult was seen to go to roost in carr wood on several nights. A Merlin passed over southwest late afternoon on 17th and a male Peregrine Falcon was noted both on 4th & 11th. Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were also seen on most days.

Golden Plover were still being noted with the large flock of Lapwings at beginning of the month with six on 1st, three on 6th and four on 8th. Both declined as the size of the west bank diminished with six hundred Lapwings on 8th being the best record. A single Dunlin on 2nd was the only record but a Redshank was a regular throughout, being recorded on twelve days. Snipe were difficult to find but started appearing nearer the scrapes as the water level increased, with three on 28th surprisingly the best record and two Woodcock were seen leaving carr wood at dusk on 1st.

Gull roosters were rewarded with five sightings of 1st winter Glaucous Gull on 7th, 8th, 9th, 20th & 30th with two separate birds on 9th. An adult Iceland Gull stayed only five minutes on 13th before departing southwest and an adult Mediterranean Gull completed the threesome on 25th. Caspian Gulls were recorded as an adult & 3rd winter on 2nd and an adult on 7th, 8th & 15th. The highlight however was a Ring-billed Gull found in the roost on 2nd giving a great start to the year, the first record since December 1995.

Little Owl was nearly always available in its regular haunt and two Tawny Owl were heard at dusk on 1st. Kingfisher was noted on five days whilst Green Woodpecker was more difficult and was only heard on four. Great Spotted Woodpecker was seen regularly with the best count eleven on 15th whilst Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was heard calling near Lower Church Farm on 17th & 18th. A single Skylark was a good record on 1st but two Waxwing observed on the old hide lane on 14th was really an unexpected bonus.

Raven were recorded on two dates with two on 3rd and one on 18th while a single Tree Sparrow by the feeders on 1st was an unusual sighting these days. Two Brambling were seen to fly across Ogston New Road on 1st and singles were later found in a member's garden at Brackenfield on 29th & 30th. A good flock of forty Siskin were observed in Alders Wood on 27th and small numbers could also be found on the church farm feeders. Lesser Redpoll were more difficult to

find and the best record was a group of twenty-two on 7th. A flock of Yellowhammer often showed well in the stubble field adjacent to ashover new road at Handley and the highest count was seventy on 4th, often accompanied by other finches and a single female Reed Bunting.

Richard Wesley

## OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT FEBRUARY 2004 – 87 Species – 29 Days Covered

Little Grebe numbers were stable with a maximum of four on 1st, 18th & 24th as were Great Crested Grebe with thirty-five a good count on 19th. Cormorants were seen daily with the maximum being down slightly to forty-seven on 24th & 26th but Grey Heron counts improved dramatically as they returned to the heronry from 4th with thirty-five on 15th. A Little Egret appeared on the west bank near carr pond on 25th and roosted in the heronry at dusk. Following this sighting a pattern developed and the egret came into roost about 1700 hrs each night until month end. A pair of Mute Swans visited on 14th and three adults were noted on 22nd & 23rd. Two skeins of one hundred and fifty Pink-footed Geese were recorded at 1030 hours northwest on both 11th & 15th whilst a single Greylag Goose was observed with Canada's on 22nd. Canada Geese were recorded daily with a maximum of two hundred and thirteen on 9th.

Shelduck were recorded on four days with five on 7th, three on 8th, one on 10th & one on 13th. Wigeon numbers decreased from thirty-seven on 1st and were last seen on 17th whilst a pair of Gadwall were noted on 1st & 2nd and a female on 28th. Teal numbers fluctuated with seventy-seven being the best count on 5th but numbers seemed to decline to month end, as did Mallard with one hundred and nine being the best on 1st. A female Pintail appeared on 3rd, which stayed until 8th and a pair of Shoveler visited on 19th. Pochard numbers were fairly low the best being eighteen on 26th and Tufted Duck were similar with a maximum of eleven on 18th. A male Goldeneye accompanied the Shelduck on 7th and a female was recorded on 15th & 17th whilst Goosander sightings were irregular with four being the best on 2nd.

Sightings of Common Buzzard were regular with most records over carr wood or in clattercotes wood with a maximum of four on 16th. A Peregrine Falcon was noted both on 7th & 15th the former flying in from the east at 1630 hrs and passing over the gull roost. Sparrowhawk were recorded most days with the best count three on 4th, similarly Kestrel were also seen regularly with three on 11th & 18th.

Nineteen Golden Plover recorded from crow lane was an excellent record and Lapwings continued in good numbers being mostly confined to the island and the small spit with two hundred and thirty four on 1st being the best count. Two winter plumaged Ruff were a pleasant diversion on 1st and gave good views from the members hide late afternoon. A single Redshank continued to be seen on the west bank until 6th and was recorded again on 27th & 28th. Snipe showed well most days in front of the hide on the last remaining muddy edges with six on four days and a Woodcock was seen leaving carr wood at dusk on 1st.

Gull roosters found the going hard this month with few records of white wings. A single 1st winter Glaucous Gull helped relieve the monotony on 4th, 8th, 28th & 29th but an adult summer plumaged Mediterranean Gull on 28th was the highlight of the month. A Yellow-legged Gull was found on 21st but generally a disappointing month.

Little Owl was nearly always available in its regular haunt just below lower church farm with two being recorded regularly in the oak tree towards month end. There were three records of Tawny Owl two from the brackenfield green area with one disturbed late evening on 3rd and the other heard on 12th. Only two sightings of Kingfisher with one on 2nd & 18th whilst Green Woodpecker was recorded on four occasions mostly between carr pond and the church. Great Spotted Woodpecker were seen regularly and heard drumming, with the best count six on 16th whilst a single Skylark was heard singing both on 23rd & 25th indicating spring cannot be far away.

Song Thrush were also in good song and a count of twenty-three on 16th was unusual whilst more normal was the early song of the Mistle Thrush. Groups of Redwing and Fieldfare were often

found feeding in fields near brackenfield church and Rooks were returning to the rookeries at the end of the month. Small parties of Long-tailed tits were regular often accompanied by several Goldcrest as they moved slowly feeding on willows. A Raven was recorded over the reservoir on 20th & 29th whilst a single Brambling was noted by the south end feeding station on 1st and 20th. Small numbers of Siskin were enjoyed on the church farm feeders but Lesser Redpoll were hard to find. Finally Reed Bunting was seen more regularly near the hide feeders.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2004 – 98 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe numbers were stable with a maximum of five on 31st as were Great Crested Grebe with thirty-six the best count on 4th. Cormorant numbers also remained constant with the maximum of thirty-six on 2nd whereas Grey Heron counts fluctuated with the best records during disturbance by Common Buzzard or the odd Raven; this resulted in a surprising sixty over the heronry on 6th. A Little Egret continued its appearances coming in to roost at dusk in the heronry on ten nights the last being on 29th. A pair of Mute Swans visited on 1st, 14th & 21st with three arriving on 25th and a pair remaining until month end. Greylag Goose were observed on eleven days with three the maximum on 26th whilst Canada Geese numbers declined during the month from hundred and thirty on 1st to sixteen on 31st.

A quiet month for wildfowl as numbers decreased with many birds leaving for their breeding grounds. A single Shelduck was recorded on 2nd and Wigeon were hard to find with a passage flock of twenty-one on 28th the last record. Gadwall were present on four days with four on 13th whilst Teal and Mallard numbers declined to single figures by month end. Similarly Pochard with the last record of five on 21st and Tufted Duck were down to five by 31st. A pair of Goldeneye visited on 24th whilst Goosander were present on four days the best being three on 6th and two female Ruddy Duck were short stayed on 5th & 6th.

Sightings of Common Buzzard were regular, most records close to carr wood with a maximum of four on 18th, 24th & 27th. The highlight of the month was a Rough-legged Buzzard only the second for Ogston, which came in from the south on 18th and was immediately mobbed in turn by four Common Buzzard. Consequently it soon departed north over Ogston Hall leaving after only ten minutes. Another excellent record was a Red Kite on 31st only the third sighting for Ogston. It was seen from the old chapel late afternoon on 31st moving northeast towards Clay Cross being mobbed by Carrion Crows. A Peregrine Falcon was noted on 13th whilst Sparrowhawk were recorded most days with the best count three on 17th, similarly Kestrel were also seen regularly with three on 31st. Another unusual sighting was a Red-legged Partridge seen at the top of South Hill on 17th

The first Oystercatcher was recorded on the island on 17th with two further sightings on 18th & 26th whilst the first Little Ringed Plover appeared on 16th & 17th with two on the spit on 30th. An Avocet caused some excitement on 27th unfortunately only staying for several minutes. It circled in front of the hide looking for a landing site but soon departed east over the dam wall. Four Dunlin were present on 13th with a single on 19th and Curlew were recorded on five days from 4th with five on 13th. A single Redshank was present on four days and Snipe continued to show well most days in front of the hide on the last remaining muddy edges with ten on 24th & 27th.

The gull roost declined throughout the month but not before several good sightings were recorded. An adult Mediterranean Gull was noted on 15th and a Caspian Gull was noted on 11th, 12th & 13th. The highlight however was a possible Kumlien's Gull found by a visiting birder recorded on 13th. This record will await verification by the British Birds Rarities Committee. An immature Kittiwake flew through north mid-afternoon on 18th and finally a 1st winter Glaucous Gull was an unexpected record on the morning of 30th.

Little Owl was in its regular haunt just below lower church farm with a pair being recorded regularly in the oak tree and Tawny Owl was heard calling from carr wood on 2nd. Kingfisher was recorded throughout the month mostly on the lower amber with a maximum of two 6th & 31st. Green Woodpecker was also recorded regularly along the lower amber with two on four dates. Great Spotted Woodpecker were seen most days and was heard drumming, with the best count ten on 27th and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was noted on 2nd, 11th, 16th & 27th with records on

lower amber and at brackenfield church.

The first Swallow arrived early on 16th, with Sand Martin and House Martin following on 17th. A White Wagtail appeared on the island on 22nd with another on 24th and three Chiffchaffs were heard from 17th building to twenty-two singing at month end. A Firecrest was seen on the west bank on 11th and a Tree Sparrow was recorded in a member's garden at brackenfield on 21st. A female Brambling was noted near the hide feeders on 17th and finally small groups of Lesser Redpoll were seen on four days, mainly as flyovers.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2004 – 105 Species – 30 Days Covered**

Little Grebe was present most days with a maximum of six on 29th and Great Crested Grebes were seen every day with the maximum of thirty on 3rd declining to eleven on 30th. Grey Heron numbers fluctuated with the best count of twenty on 12th whilst Mute Swan were unusually present all month with a maximum of six on 24th. Greylag Geese were recorded on ten days with the maximum of five on 14th whilst Canada Geese numbers fell to eight by 30th. Shelduck were noted on three days with three on 16th.

Gadwall was recorded on eight days with a maximum of two whilst Teal declined from a maximum of ten on 7th to a pair by month end. One male Shoveler was present on 19th and a female Pochard was recorded on the last four days of the month. Tufted Duck were regularly seen all month with the best count twenty-six on 23rd. Two Goosander was a late record on 6th whilst Ruddy Duck appeared from 12th with two still present on 30th.

Sparrowhawk was the most regular raptor with four on two dates whilst Kestrel peaked at three on three days. Common Buzzard were also seen regularly with four noted on 3rd but were more difficult to see by month end. Osprey treated us to two short visits with one fly through on 5th and further sightings on 21st. Hobby returned early with three single records on 18th and a pair of males was observed hawking for food south of Ogston Hall on 30th. Red-legged Partridge was another welcome record on 9th and 12th being seen at the top of South Hill and along Crow Lane.

The high water levels meant waders were in short supply but a pair of Oystercatcher were often seen on the island towards month end and Little Ringed Plover were also noted with two being the maximum on four days. Several pairs of Lapwing were evident throughout the month but a single Dunlin on 17th was a novelty. Snipe numbers declined and the last single record was on 20th. The highlight of the month however was one hundred and seventy Black-tailed Godwit, which eventually landed on the island at 2000 hrs on 20th. These vociferous migrants were thought to be of the 'islandica' sub species and were probably heading north for Iceland. Whimbrel were noted as fly thru's with two on 18th and five on 26th. One Curlew was also noted through on 26th and Common Sandpiper was recorded from 11th with a maximum of two on three days. Common Terns were noted from 15th along with an Arctic Tern and Black Tern on 18th. However from 27th Arctic Tern began to steal the show and with a large influx into the midlands and exceptional numbers were counted. Ogston produced nineteen on 27th, thirteen on 28th, fifteen on 29th and ten on 30th.

The first two Cuckoo was seen and heard on 24th and another was heard near top farm on 30th. Little Owl was well recorded all month with six on 16th but a single Kingfisher was the only record on 20th. Two early Swift on 18th was a good record as hirundine numbers increased throughout the month. Cold north-easterlies and overcast weather kept them low over the water as they passed through in large numbers during the last week. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was heard on three days with Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker being recorded more commonly. Yellow Wagtail was present from 26th and a White Wagtail was noted on 14th, both frequenting the island.

A male Redstart gave good views on the west bank from 25th to month end and a Grasshopper Warbler was heard reeling on 19th.. The first Willow Warbler of the year was found on 5th, reaching a maximum of fourteen by 27th and Chiffchaff peaked at twenty-eight on 1st. The first Whitethroat arrived on 20th with the first Lesser Whitethroat soon following on 25th. Blackcap arrived on 7th with the first date for Garden Warbler on 23rd and Sedge Warbler on 22nd.

Other sightings of note was a Raven recorded over carr wood on 3rd and a Tree Sparrow seen on feeders on 9th. Several late Brambling were recorded along hide lane until 17th and six Lesser Redpoll near Brackenfield Green on 17th was also a good record. Yellowhammer were all back in their normal haunts and finally Reed Bunting were well represented along the west bank after a poor year last year.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2004 – 102 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe were observed most days with a maximum of seven on 7th and Great Crested Grebes were seen every day with the maximum of twenty-three on 22nd with the first brood of four young noted in milltown inlet on 3rd. Grey Heron numbers fluctuated with the best count of nineteen on 22nd whilst Mute Swan were present most of the month with a maximum of seven on 21st. Early optimism of the swans producing young was dashed when a substantial nest on the west bank was abandoned as water levels fell mid-month. One Pink-footed Goose visited on 15th and Greylag Geese were recorded on eleven days with a maximum of four on 6th whilst Canada Geese numbers increased with forty-six counted on 26th.

A male Mandarin was a welcome visitor from 7th and was seen regularly until 16th giving good views in front of the members hide. Two Gadwall visited on 23rd whilst a lone male Teal was present from 20th to month end. Mallard produced their first three broods with eight young on 6th, nine on 18th and seven on 22nd. Shoveler was present on four dates with a pair on 29th & 30th. A single female Pochard was recorded on 2nd & 3rd whilst Tufted Duck were regularly seen all month with the best count fourteen on 8th. Ruddy Duck appeared all month with a maximum of four on three dates.

Raptor sightings became infrequent towards month end as nesting took priority. However Sparrowhawk, Kestrel and Buzzard were all still recorded. There were three sightings of Osprey either afternoon or early evening on 3rd, 6th & 14th with one catching a fish and leaving west towards carr wood. Hobby sightings were regular early month with a pair displaying near brackenfield church on 7th with four other records on 1st, 8th, 10th & 17th in the same area. Red-legged Partridge was noted again this month with two seen in the same vicinity on crow lane on 9th.

The lower water levels in the second half of the month meant better conditions for waders and Oystercatcher became a regular sight towards month end with six on 31st. Little Ringed Plover were also more readily seen with a maximum of four on four days and the first pair of Ringed Plover put in an appearance on 21st & 22nd. Seven Golden Plover flew through north on 5th and several pairs of Lapwing were evident throughout the month often displaying and looking broody. A single Dunlin was present on five dates and a Ruff paid a short visit on 16th. A single Snipe was noted on 3rd along with a single Whimbrel, which stayed on the island for several hours until it left north early evening. Attracted by the increasing mud levels, a Redshank appeared on 26th and single Common Sandpiper were also recorded on 3rd, 9th, 26th & 27th. Common Terns were noted from 15th and a pair took up residence from 26th whilst the last of the Arctic Tern was seen on 1st.

Cuckoo was seen and heard on eight days with a maximum of three on 22nd whilst Skylark was heard regularly until mid-month. Little Owl became more difficult to see with records on nine dates and Tawny Owl was observed both in clattercotes and alders wood during the month. A single Kingfisher was the only record on 30th whilst Hirundine and Swift numbers were good throughout particularly during overcast and wet weather. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was heard on 2nd from carr wood, Green Woodpecker was heard on four days and great Spotted Woodpecker seen most days with nine counted on 22nd. Single Yellow Wagtail were noted on 1st, 7th, 21st & 22nd either on the island or on the pasture at the side of hide lane and the first Grey Wagtail young was found on 13th behind the dam wall.

A male Redstart gave good views on the west bank on 1st & 2nd and another was relocated on Ogston Hall drive on 22nd. The first Wheatear of the year were recorded from Crow Lane on 9th whilst the first Spotted Flycatcher arrived at brackenfield church from 5th, with a maximum of six

counted on 22nd. All warblers were seen in good numbers particularly Garden Warbler with twenty-two counted on 22nd. Lesser Whitethroat peaked at five whilst Sedge Warbler were more difficult with three the best count. A Wood Warbler was found in clattercotes wood on 5th probably just a passage bird but still very welcome. Other sightings of note was a Raven recorded over carr wood on 14th, 19th & 23rd and two Siskin observed near the treatment works on 7th. Good numbers of Yellowhammer were in their normal haunts and finally Reed Bunting were still well represented along the west bank.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2004 – 97 Species – 30 Days Covered**

Little Grebe were observed most days with a maximum of four on 30th and Great Crested Grebes were seen every day with the maximum of fifty on 30th. Cormorant were present daily with a maximum of forty-eight on 8th . Grey Heron numbers fluctuated with the best count of thirty-one on 25th whilst Mute Swan were present on ten days with a maximum of six on 24th. Single Greylag Geese were recorded on 1st & 2nd whilst Canada Geese numbers increased to one hundred and fifty by month end.

A female Mandarin was found on the scrapes on the evening of 9th and a single Gadwall was recorded on 19th. Teal was present on eleven days with the best count seven on 17th & 18th whilst Mallard numbers continued to grow with one hundred recorded on 30th. Tufted Duck were regularly seen all month with a maximum of twenty-one on 9th & 10th. A single Goosander was an unexpected record on 4th whilst Ruddy Duck appeared on seven days with four recorded on 23rd. Water Rail was another unexpected bonus on 20th being noted again on the Kingfisher Pond on 21st, 22nd and 24th.

Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were recorded most days with maximums of two and four respectively. Common Buzzard was seen on five days, the best count being three on 4th. Two sightings of Osprey this month on 4th and 21st both appearing just before lunchtime, with neither staying long enough to catch a fish. Hobby was seen again from mid-month showing on 18th, 28th & 30th and usually noted to the south end of the reservoir. An unusual record on 23rd was a Quail heard in the meadows behind Bottom Farm. This will be the first since 1995, which oddly enough was recorded in the same location.

The lower water levels continued to attract waders and twelve species were recorded this month. Oystercatcher was present most days, with three the maximum on 3rd whilst Little Ringed Plover were readily seen with a maximum of fifteen on 25th. Ringed Plover was regular from mid-month with two on 24th. Lapwings have successfully bred again this year with three broods of four, three and two noted around the scrapes and tundra. A single Dunlin was present on five days from 22nd to 26th and a Snipe was seen on the scrapes from mid-month. A Whimbrel flew through calling on 12th and Curlew were noted on four dates with two on 22nd. Attracted by the increasing mud an immature Spotted Redshank visited the west bank on 22nd making this the first record since 1996 whilst Redshank were present for five days with two on 29th. The first Green Sandpiper of the year was noted on 23rd and 24th with two on 25th and Common Sandpiper were recorded daily from 20th with a maximum of two. A juvenile Black-headed Gull became a regular on the west bank from 16th and a Yellow-legged Gull was discovered on 17th being seen daily to month end. Common Terns were noted daily with the best count of seven on 24th but a Little Tern was a pleasant surprise on 18th showing well from late morning. Surprisingly this bird stayed for a further two days giving many birders a good year tick.

Cuckoo was recorded on thirteen days whilst Skylark was only heard on two days mid-month. Little Owl continued to be difficult to see with records on eight days whilst Tawny Owl was observed both in Clattercotes and Alders wood again during the month. Kingfisher returning from breeding became more regular from 4th and two were seen on three days. Good numbers of Swift throughout particularly during overcast and wet weather. A single Green Woodpecker was heard on 25th and Great Spotted Woodpecker became easier as the first young appeared on 17th.

The resident warblers were all well recorded this month with fledged young appearing, including an excellent record of five young Lesser Whitethroat on 24th. Additionally a Reed Warbler, which was heard singing on the Kingfisher Pond on 9th, 16th & 19th. Spotted Flycatcher was regularly noted around Brackenfield Church with some records from Alders Wood, a maximum of four being

counted on 25th. Finally Willow Tit records picked up this month with several sightings including three on 25th & 29th.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT JULY 2004 – 103 Species – 31 Days Covered**

An exceptional month, with a good variety of species and the best July since 1987 when one hundred and five species were recorded. Little Grebe became more difficult to see as the water level fell but a count of five was the best record on 30th. Great Crested Grebes were seen daily with the maximum of fifty-four on 18th as were Cormorant with a maximum of seventy on 16th. Grey Heron numbers increased with a maximum of twenty-one on 20th & 24th whilst Mute Swan were present throughout the month with four the best count on two days. Four Greylag Geese were recorded on 17th with three on 21st & 22nd and Canada Geese numbers were stable with one hundred and twelve the best count on 24th.

Teal was present most days but the maximum was only four on 31st whilst Mallard numbers continued to grow with one hundred and thirty-one recorded on 31st. Three female Shoveler were feeding on the west bank on 17th whilst Tufted Duck were regularly seen all month with a maximum of seventeen on 16th. A male Scaup caused some excitement on the evening of 16th but had left by the morning. However two Common Scoter, which arrived on 27th, were still around by month end and were remarkably joined by a female on 31st. Three female Goosander were noted on 12th with a single again on 19th whilst a single Ruddy Duck was recorded on 2nd and 21st.

An exceptional month for raptors with seven species recorded. The highlight was a Honey Buzzard, which was watched in good light for several minutes as it moved north along the reservoir on 10th, the first record since September 2000. An Osprey stayed for eleven days from 3rd giving excellent views whilst fishing on the reservoir and perching in lodge plantation, being last seen again on 16th. A single Common Buzzard was noted on seven days and Hobby was seen on six days with two counted on 11th. A young Peregrine was present on 21st and 25th and three were recorded near Handley including two adults and a juvenile on 18th. Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were recorded most days with a maximum of three for both species. Water Rail was chased from the kingfisher pond by a Moorhen on 2nd and was not to be seen again in July.

The lower water levels and mud continued to attract waders and fourteen species were recorded this month. Little Ringed Plover were in abundance with a maximum of twenty on 17th with two broods now having been successfully reared. Ringed Plover was also regular from the start of the month and two were recorded on 4th. Lapwings have started to increase in numbers post breeding and two hundred were noted on 20th. Dunlin were present in good numbers all month with a peak of twenty on 8th and a Snipe was seen on the scrapes on eight days. Four Sanderling were welcome visitors feeding on the west bank on 14th whilst Black-tailed Godwit were frequent with ten on 11th, four on 23rd and singles on 12th and 31st. Whimbrel were also seen on passage with three on 11th, two on 7th and singles on 19th and 21st whilst single Curlew were noted on four dates. Redshank was also a regular most days with a maximum of two on six days and the first Greenshank of the year arrived on the evening of 20th. A single Green Sandpiper was found on 24th and three were counted in woolley bay by 31st whilst Common Sandpiper was recorded daily with a maximum of twelve on 5th. A 3rd summer Yellow-legged Gull was present all month, Common Terns were noted daily with the best count of twelve on three days and six Arctic Terns on the 15th was an unexpected record.

Little Owl continued to be difficult to see with records on ten days, but several juveniles began to show by month end with two opposite church farm, and one at boar farm on 28th. A Tawny Owl was recorded around the brackenfield church area on 29th and 30th and Cuckoo was recorded on 9th, 10th & 11th around the scrapes and hide. Kingfisher was seen almost daily with the best sightings at milltown inlet and by month end was being seen around the members hide. Green

Woodpecker became more active and two were heard on the lower amber on 28th & 30th whilst Great Spotted Woodpecker was seen daily with a maximum of four.

A male Yellow Wagtail visited the west bank briefly on 30th and similarly a female Whinchat was glimpsed for only a few minutes near the scrapes on 20th. A female Wheatear was on the west bank on 27th but was active and proved very elusive. More fledged young were appearing, including a family group of Sedge Warbler around the members hide on 18th and finally Spotted Flycatcher was found regularly around Brackenfield Church with a juvenile noted on 4th.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2004 – 103 Species – 31 Days Covered**

Despite probably the wettest August on record a good variety of species recorded again this month. Viewing became more difficult towards the end of the month as water levels rose dramatically and vegetation increased.

Little Grebe records decreased again with only five sightings, the best count being three on 1st. Great Crested Grebes similarly decreased from forty on 14th to single figures by month end. Cormorant numbers peaked at sixty on 4th with Grey Heron decreasing from twenty-one on 2nd to eleven on 31st. Two Mute Swan were present all month and a single Greylag Geese accompanied the Canada Geese on seven days. Canada Geese reached a maximum of three hundred and ninety by 17th but as the water levels increased numbers declined to approximately one hundred.

An early Wigeon returned on 29th with a Gadwall recorded in front of the dam wall on 18th. Teal were present from mid-month with a maximum of thirteen on 23rd whilst two Pochard were unexpected visitors on 11th. Mallard numbers peaked at one hundred and ninety-five on 21st and Tufted Duck, which were also seen all month reached a maximum of twenty-nine on 26th. A hybrid drake Scaup x Tufted Duck caused some confusion on 14th and 15th whilst Common Scoter visited on six days, two males on 1st and two females on 13th & 14th, decreasing to one from 15th to 17th. A female Goldeneye in Woolley Bay was a very early record on 12th and Goosander were returning with ten sightings including five redheads on 18th. Four Ruddy Duck including a male were noted on 4th with a single female observed on four other dates.

Another good month for raptors with six species recorded. Osprey was seen on passage on 20th, 21st and 30th whilst Peregrine Falcon was noted on four days. The Highoredish watchpoint produced some excellent sightings on 22nd, with six Common Buzzard, five Sparrowhawk, eight Kestrels, a Peregrine, a Hobby and a pair of Ravens, which were seen tumbling over Ravensnest Tor. Hobbies were noted on eleven days with three counted on 19th and a pair gave good views hawking for hirundines near lodge plantation on 27th.

Despite higher water levels and less mud, thirteen wader species were recorded this month. A further brood of three Little Ringed Plover were observed from 4th making this a record year with three broods successfully reared. A single Golden Plover was in front of the hide on 6th while Lapwing numbers fluctuated with the best count one hundred and sixty on 4th. Dunlin were present on eight days with two adults on 3rd and a juvenile on seven days whilst a Ruff paid a short visit on the evening of 1st. Snipe were only recorded on two days but Common Sandpiper were present most days with a maximum of six on 4th. Black-tailed Godwit were recorded on three days with two on 2nd, seven on 30th and a single on 31st whilst a Bar-tailed Godwit in front of the members hide on 10th was a new record for the year. It continued to be good year for Whimbrel sightings with three on 10th and a single on the west bank on 18th. A single Redshank was present on 15th & 23rd and Greenshank was noted on five dates with two on 22nd & 25th. The absence of mud from mid-month meant they were short staying. Two Green Sandpiper were on the scrapes on 1st and further singles were noted on 2nd & 4th. A third summer Yellow-legged Gull was again present all month whilst a passage of twenty-three Common Terns on 10th was noteworthy. Surprisingly the 13th produced some of the best birds of the month, starting with a juvenile Black Tern from mid-morning and finishing with a Sandwich Tern late evening.

Kingfisher was noted almost daily with the best sightings in front of the members hide. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker seen flying from Bottom Farm towards the Sailing Club on 10th, was an excellent record whilst Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker were recorded regularly. Passage of Swallow and House Martin started at a pace towards the end of the month and the last Swift was

noted on 24th. A single Yellow Wagtail was on the west bank on 14th with a further four on passage on 21st. A female Redstart was seen by Brackenfield Church on 16th and a female Whinchat showed well to the right of the hide on 15th. Wheatears were on the west bank from 13th with two on 21st. Spotted Flycatchers were found regularly around Brackenfield Church with four juveniles recorded on 20th and finally a good flock of about thirty Goldfinches were ranging along the west bank from mid-month feeding on the plentiful supply of thistle heads.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2004 – 94 Species – 30 Days Covered**

A very disappointing month with high water levels ensuring a shortage of mud and consequently a lack of waders. Also no return passage of Osprey this month for the first time since 1999, maybe October will produce a late record.

Little Grebe were recorded on twelve days, the best count being three on 11th & 20th whilst Great Crested Grebes were found daily with a maximum of nineteen on 7th. Cormorant numbers remained constant with the highest count being forty-one on 28th and Grey Heron decreased to single figures from eleven on 4th to two on 30th. Two Mute Swan were present until 4th with singles on five other dates whilst a single Greylag Geese accompanied the Canada Geese on 1st & 27th. Canada Geese numbers fluctuated all month peaking at one hundred and seventy-eight on 13th and declining to sixty-three by month end. The first passage of sixty Pink-footed Geese was noted southeast on 24th with another fifty recorded on 28th.

Two male Pochard in Woolley Bay on 25th and two Shelduck with an adult and juvenile on 27th were two short stayers. Three Wigeon were present for most of the month but numbers increased to forty-six by 30th and Teal were present all month with a maximum of twenty-five on five days. Mallard numbers peaked at one hundred and twenty-two on 7th whilst Tufted Duck decreased from twelve on 3rd to two on 30th. Shoveler visited on two dates with five on 2nd and four on 6th and a female Pintail was noted on the first two days of the month. Redhead Goosander were seen on two dates with one on 2nd and two on 25th whilst female Ruddy Duck were present on three dates with one on 13th, two on 14th & one on 25th. A male Wood Duck was an unusual sighting found in Woolley Bay on 12th and again on 14th. This is the first recorded sighting of this North American species, which is classed as an escape. It falls into category E of the BOURC list and is not included on the British list as yet.

Raptors provided great entertainment this month with excellent views of Hobby and Buzzard over the eastern side of the reservoir. Hobby sightings were daily until 23rd with a maximum of four on 4th including two juvenile records. They were often seen hunting hirundines and one evening produced stunning views directly in front of the hide. Buzzard were also regular with six seen in the air together on 24th probably a site record. The sight of two Buzzards tussling with two Ravens over lodge plantation on 20th was a special moment, and this was all watched again from the members hide. This was a good month for Raven with four sightings the best being three on 21st. A Peregrine Falcon was noted on 4th whilst Kestrel and Sparrowhawk were also seen daily. The first two Grey Partridge of the year were recorded in fields above Smithy Cottage on 10th and were seen again on the road close by on 14th.

A single Oystercatcher was noted on 10th and the last brood of Little Ringed Plover was seen on 11th. A single Ringed Plover was in front of the hide on 7th whilst Lapwing numbers fluctuated with the best count one hundred and fifty on 30th. A single Dunlin was present on the scrape on 5th and Snipe numbers increased to twelve on 26th. A Curlew heard on passage on 9th, brought the total wader species recorded to seven a most disappointing September. An adult Yellow-legged Gull was again present all month whilst a passage of three to four hundred Lesser Black-backed Gulls most evenings was notable as they moved through southwest to Carsington. A single Common Tern was noted on 15th whilst an Arctic Tern turned up on 14th. A juvenile Black Tern provided some relief, and was seen most of the day on 13th & early morning on 14th.

The last single Swift was recorded on 21st whilst hirundine passage continued at a pace with around a thousand House Martins observed on both 20th & 21st. Four Skylarks were noted over on 24th and Meadow Pipit movement started during the last week with several noted each day. The first Redwing was recorded over Highoredish on 27th along with a single Siskin. Final dates for

warblers were as follows; Whitethroat on 3rd, Garden Warbler on 10th, Blackcap on 27th, Willow Warbler on 2nd whilst Chiffchaff were heard singing throughout the month. Spotted Flycatchers were still to be found around Brackenfield Church until 25th while Goldcrest numbers increased from mid-month with a maximum of twenty recorded on 24th. Finally an escaped Grey Cuckoo was an unexpected record, seen gitting on the road at South Hill on 7th.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2004 – 94 Species – 30 Days Covered**

A very disappointing month with high water levels ensuring a shortage of mud and consequently a lack of waders. Also no return passage of Osprey this month for the first time since 1999, maybe October will produce a late record.

Little Grebe were recorded on twelve days, the best count being three on 11th & 20th whilst Great Crested Grebes were found daily with a maximum of nineteen on 7th. Cormorant numbers remained constant with the highest count being forty-one on 28th and Grey Heron decreased to single figures from eleven on 4th to two on 30th. Two Mute Swan were present until 4th with singles on five other dates whilst a single Greylag Geese accompanied the Canada Geese on 1st & 27th. Canada Geese numbers fluctuated all month peaking at one hundred and seventy-eight on 13th and declining to sixty-three by month end. The first passage of sixty Pink-footed Geese was noted southeast on 24th with another fifty recorded on 28th.

Two male Pochard in Woolley Bay on 25th and two Shelduck with an adult and juvenile on 27th were two short stayers. Three Wigeon were present for most of the month but numbers increased to forty-six by 30th and Teal were present all month with a maximum of twenty-five on five days. Mallard numbers peaked at one hundred and twenty-two on 7th whilst Tufted Duck decreased from twelve on 3rd to two on 30th. Shoveler visited on two dates with five on 2nd and four on 6th and a female Pintail was noted on the first two days of the month. Redhead Goosander were seen on two dates with one on 2nd and two on 25th whilst female Ruddy Duck were present on three dates with one on 13th, two on 14th & one on 25th. A male Wood Duck was an unusual sighting found in Woolley Bay on 12th and again on 14th. This is the first recorded sighting of this North American species, which is classed as an escape. It falls into category E of the BOURC list and is not included on the British list as yet.

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A single Oystercatcher was noted on 10th and the last brood of Little Ringed Plover was seen on 11th. A single Ringed Plover was in front of the hide on 7th whilst Lapwing numbers fluctuated with the best count one hundred and fifty on 30th. A single Dunlin was present on the scrape on 5th and Snipe numbers increased to twelve on 26th. A Curlew heard on passage on 9th, brought the total wader species recorded to seven a most disappointing September. An adult Yellow-legged Gull was again present all month whilst a passage of three to four hundred Lesser Black-backed Gulls most evenings was notable as they moved through southwest to Carsington. A single Common Tern was noted on 15th whilst an Arctic Tern turned up on 14th. A juvenile Black Tern provided some relief, and was seen most of the day on 13th & early morning on 14th.

The last single Swift was recorded on 21st whilst hirundine passage continued at a pace with around a thousand House Martins observed on both 20th & 21st. Four Skylarks were noted over on 24th and Meadow Pipit movement started during the last week with several noted each day. The first Redwing was recorded over Highoredish on 27th along with a single Siskin. Final dates for

warblers were as follows; Whitethroat on 3rd, Garden Warbler on 10th, Blackcap on 27th, Willow Warbler on 2nd whilst Chiffchaff were heard singing throughout the month. Spotted Flycatchers were still to be found around Brackenfield Church until 25th while Goldcrest numbers increased from mid-month with a maximum of twenty recorded on 24th. Finally an escaped Grey Cuckoo was an unexpected record, seen sitting on the road at South Hill on 7th.

Richard Wesley

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2004 - 88 species – 30 days covered**

Little grebe numbers were quite low, maximum 4 on 19th and 25th. Great crested grebe noted on most days with 16 on the 4th, the highest. Cormorant numbers fairly constant, maximum 38 on the 12th. Grey heron becoming difficult to find, 2 being maximum on 9th, 12th and 15th. Canada geese peaked at 160 on the 10th. Mallard are fairly constant with a maximum of 79 recorded on the 15th. Best figures for Teal were 33 on the 14th. Wigeon 19 on the 5th. Tufted duck and pochard were seen regularly.

Highlight of the month has to be the 16 Common Scoter in front of the dam wall on 8th November, these birds were just short of becoming a site record. The best being 19 on the 31st of May 1984 and 17 on the 20th April 1978.

Chiffchaff on the 3rd, Blackcap and Raven on the 5th. 16 Brambling on the 9th. Water Rail on the 12th and 18th and Jack Snipe sighting on 13th, 16th, 17th and 18th are among the unusual records, together with a winter plumaged Knot found resting on the island on the 16th and 45 Snipe in one group must have been quite a sight.

Sparrow hawk and Kestrel sightings were again very regular, but only a few for Buzzard.; Great Spotted and; Green Woodpecker were seen frequently, with two sightings of Lesser Spotted on 14th and 19th.

Willow Tits were recorded almost on a daily basis, which is very pleasing given that numbers have declined nationally.

Gull numbers increased; steadily during the month and the 25th saw the first Iceland and Glaucous gulls, both first winter birds in the roost. The Iceland gull was seen again on the 26th, 27th and 30th. On the 27th a third winter Caspian gull was noted and again on the 28th and 30th. A second winter Iceland and second winter Caspian was seen on the 28th.

Finally a Red Breasted Merganser on the 28th and 30th brought the month to a close.

## **OGSTON MONTHLY REPORT DECEMBER 2004 - 82 Species - 31 Days Covered**

Little Grebe numbers were stable, although low, maximum of three on 10th and 29th, Great Crested Grebe numbers were constant, with a maximum of fourteen on both 3rd and 20th. Cormorant were seen on almost a daily basis, with a best count of forty-five on 6th. Grey Heron figures were down from last month, recorded on five days only, a total of eleven birds. With three the maximum on the 17th and 21st. Two Mute Swans visited on 3rd. Two Pink Footed Geese have joined the resident Canada Geese, and were still-present at month end. Canada Geese numbers peaked at two hundred and ten on 20th.

Wigeon numbers again showed a decline from last month, best count of twelve on 10th. Teal numbers reached twenty seven-on 9th, but declined to the end of the month. Mallard peaked at seventy five on 6th, Pochard..at twenty six on the 6th, and Tufted Duck at seventeen again on 6th. There were irregular visits from Goldeneye and Ruddy Duck, Goosander were more regular, with a maximum of four on 11th. A Shoveler was present on. at least eleven days. Bird of the month for wildfowl was a Red Breasted Merganser with visits on 1st and 4th.

Sparrowhawk and Kestrel sightings were numerous, but Buzzard seemed to be fairly scarce, so the two which were seen near Brackenfield Church on 30th and the single on 31st were very welcome. Lapwing numbers remained fairly constant throughout the month, with a maximum of one hundred and fifty on 4th. A single Golden Plover, and single Jack Snipe, together with a maximum of thirty six Snipe, and single Woodcock from Carr Wood on the 3rd, were the only waders of note.

Little Owl was again seen fairly regularly, usually at Lower Church Farm, and Tawny Owl was heard on one occasion. There were eight sightings of Kingfisher. Great Spotted Woodpecker was recorded almost daily, with maximum of four on the third, but only one sighting of Green Woodpecker.

Records of "White Winged Gulls" in the roost continued to be excellent; unfortunately, the bird of the month, an adult Ring-Billed Gull was seen by only one lucky observer. The information went out on the pager system, but the bird had flown off before anyone could get to Ogston. The same 1st Winter Iceland Gull has been seen on more than a dozen occasions, so a visit by an adult bird on the 11th and 16th made a welcome change. Numerous Caspian Gulls were seen through out the month, ranging from 1st winter to adult. Gull roosters on the 11th had an unexpected bonus, when a Water Rail made an appearance close in on the west bank.

Good numbers of Redwing during the month, with a maximum of one hundred and thirty five on the 18th, Fieldfare was very infrequent, only four records, with a maximum fifty-seven on the 31st. Siskin were noted on three occasions with fourteen maximum on the 17th, thirteen Lesser Redpoll on the 6th was a good record as was twelve Bullfinch on the same date. Two Raven on the 31st were the only record for the month. Eight Tree Sparrow on Handley Lane on the 17th and five on the 31st were both excellent records.

Keith Turton