

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2005

Daily coverage continued throughout January producing 78 species for the month, the highest January total since 1996 and the second highest ever. Notable species included Whooper Swan (16, 25th record), Pink-footed Goose, Grey Lag Goose, Shelduck, Common Buzzard, Peregrine, Iceland Gull (13th record), Waxwing (four, 7th record), Chiffchaff (two) and Raven (15th and 16th records). The water level remained fairly constant throughout the month ranging between 21-24" and on a couple of occasions the flashes were partially frozen. The drainage pipe at the south-eastern corner of the Reserve Pond was cleared and a channel dug out so that water can be drained out of this pool. Hopefully when work in this area is completed we will be able to control the water level in the pool so that we can create muddy margins for the autumn.

An unseasonal Little Grebe was seen on the 4th, 7th and 29th and a Great-crested Grebe had returned by the 16th, it being joined by a second from the 24th with one or two then present daily to the end of the month. Cormorants were seen daily apart from on the 30th. Generally less than five were logged and the only double-figure count was 11 on the 16th. Herons were recorded daily with a peak count of eight on the 10th, 12th and 28th and the wing-tagged bird was still present on the 26th. Four Mute Swans were noted on six dates with one to three on four other dates. A herd of 16 Whooper Swans flew north at 0955 hours on the 14th accompanied by a Black Swan, the same flock being seen a short time before flying over Pleasley Pit Tip. Pink-footed Geese moved west / north-west in good numbers during the month with five skeins totalling 480 birds on the 5th, 250 on the 16th, five skeins totalling 525 on the 22nd and an impressive eight or nine skeins totalling 1775 on the 29th. On the last date a walker also reported a further 500-1000 later in the day after the observer had left the site. Additionally two were with the Canada Geese on the 30th-31st. Two Grey Lag Geese were present on five dates between the 19th and 27th with three on the 30th-31st and one of the white geese was present on the 23rd. Canada Geese were present daily with the flock size ranging between 48 and 78 (on the 16th).

A Shelduck, probably the same bird, was seen on the 14th, 17th and 22nd and Wigeon were present in high numbers throughout the month peaking at 189 on the 29th. Gadwall were also present in good numbers with double-figures on all but one date peaking at 57 on the 19th. Teal were present daily with three-figure counts on 25 dates including an impressive 174 on the 12th, the second highest count for the site. Mallard numbers however remained fairly low with a high of just 86 on the 1st. Up to eight Pochard were seen daily whilst Tufted Ducks were noted daily peaking at 11 on the 31st. A male Ruddy Duck was seen on the 1st, 3rd and 24th with a female present on the 27th and 28th.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 20 dates (23 bird days); Common Buzzards were very scarce with just one over the area on the 13th and three south of the recording area from the mound on the 14th. (Compare this with last January when birds were seen on 28 dates, a total of 55 bird / days). Kestrels were recorded on seven dates (eight bird days) and a male Peregrine was seen on the 6th, 12th, 14th and 21st. The now resident Harris Hawk was noted on 16 dates and during the month it was seen to prey on a male Pheasant and a number of Moorhens. The highest count for Grey Partridge was nine on the 23rd and a single Water Rail was recorded on the 10th, 14th and 27th. Coot peaked at 48 on the 14th but Moorhen numbers were well down, no doubt as a result of the Harris Hawk preying on them. Golden Plover were present on six dates between the 13th and 24th with a peak count of 100 on the 22nd and Lapwings peaked at 120 on the 12th and 13th. One or two Snipe were seen on nine dates with six logged on the 26th.

270 Black-headed Gulls flew south at dusk on the 19th and one or two Common Gulls were seen on seven dates with four on the 24th. 460 Herring Gulls flew north on the 22nd along with 80 Great Black-backed Gulls but one of the highlights of the month was the first winter Iceland Gull

that flew north on the 27th, just four hours before I set off on my foreign travels. This is the first Iceland Gull at Carr Vale since 2002. 220 Wood Pigeons were counted on the 27th, a single Kingfisher was seen on ten dates and a Green Woodpecker was noted on seven dates between the 9th and 22nd.

The only count of Skylarks was 11 on the 21st, one or two Grey Wagtails were recorded on 17 dates with three on the 13th and 18 Pied Wagtails were recorded on the 3rd. A single observer saw four Waxwings fly west on the 4th and although this is the seventh record for the site this species remains on most observers want list at Carr Vale as just three people have seen this species at Carr Vale. 100 Fieldfares were present on the 4th and 6th with 205 counted on the 22nd whilst Redwings peaked at 60 on the 3rd.

A single Chiffchaff was recorded on eight dates until the 16th with two birds present on the 10th, 19th and 21st and one on the 29th. Goldcrests were seen on 20 dates with a peak count of five on the 11th. 15 Long-tailed Tits were logged on the 24th, a Willow Tit was singing on the 22nd and a Coal Tit was seen on the 9th, 12th, 22nd and 29th. 18 Magpies and 50 Jackdaws were counted on the 4th, a Raven flew south-west on the 5th and two Ravens flew south-west on the 27th, these being the first January records of this species. 30 Goldfinches were present on the 24th on which date 15 Linnets flew north, the latter being a notable record as Linnets are very unusual at Carr Vale during the winter. No Siskins were seen during the month and single Lesser Redpolls on the 3rd and 7th were the only records during the month. Bullfinches on the other hand were present in good numbers with 12 on the 4th, 14 on the 8th and 16 on the 25th and 42 Reed Buntings were counted into roost on the 3rd.

The only mammal records for the month were of occasional Hare and Grey Squirrel sightings.

Mark Beevers.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT FEBRUARY 2005

Even though myself and Richard Box were abroad for a good part of the month daily coverage still continued throughout February producing 79 species for the month, the highest ever February total. Once again I am grateful to Ian Swain and Kevin Navin for their sterling efforts. The yearlist rose to 85, the highest ever end of February total and notable species included Pink-footed Goose, Grey Lag Goose, Shelduck, Common Buzzard, Ringed Plover, Mediterranean Gull (9th record), Barn Owl (8th record), Waxwing (up to 200, 8th record) and Chiffchaff. The water level remained fairly constant throughout the month ranging between 21-24" but following snow at the start of the fourth week rose to 27" with the flashes being frozen on several dates during the month.

A Little Grebe was seen on the 10th and Great-crested Grebes were present daily to the 23rd and again from the 25th with a peak count of four on many dates. Cormorants were seen daily but only in single-figures with a peak count of seven between the 1st and 3rd and again on the 10th and 14th. Herons were recorded on all bar the 24th and the highest count was eight on the 10th. The family of three Mute Swans was noted on 12 dates with five birds present on the 17th and one or two on two other dates. The two Pink-footed Geese from 30th January remained with the Canada Geese until the 10th and Grey Lag Geese were recorded on 22 dates, usually one to three but with four on the 10th, these being joined by a white hybrid goose on four dates from the 25th. Canada Geese were present daily with the flock size ranging between 42 and 67 and a hybrid Canada / Barnacle Goose was with them on the 26th.

Omitted from last month's bulletin were noteworthy records of Shelduck with single females noted on 14th and 17th January and an unsexed bird on 22nd January, presumed the same. Two were seen on 6th February with a single bird the following day and a pair on the 22nd, representing an unusual run of winter records. Wigeon remained in high numbers throughout the month peaking at 205 on the 21st, though generally the flock hovered around the 190-195 mark. Gadwall were still around in good numbers with double-figures on 23 dates peaking at 31 on the 1st and 9th, though towards the end of the month numbers had started to decline. Teal peaked at 93 on the 26th with 14 counts in excess of 50 during the month but Mallard numbers remained fairly low with a high of just 40 on the 8th, whilst a pair of Shoveler on the 8th was an unusual winter record. Pochard were seen daily but only in single-figures with a peak count of nine on the 1st and Tufted Ducks were noted daily peaking at 15 on the 18th although the only other double-figure count was 11 on the 13th. Finally amongst the wildfowl one or two Ruddy Ducks were present on 12 dates between the 4th and 21st.

Sparrowhawks were logged on six dates, two Common Buzzards were seen the 23rd, Kestrels were recorded on seven dates and for the first month since July 2003 Peregrine failed to put in an appearance. Single Water Rails were logged on seven dates between the 7th and 27th and Coot peaked at 50 on the 24th. The first two Ringed Plovers of the year were logged on the 20th. Golden Plover numbers started to build up from the 8th with records on a further ten dates to the month end. The first notable count was 190 on the 15th, followed by 250 on the 21st, 350 on the 24th and 500 on the 23rd with 260 on the 26th; all were southern birds. Lapwings too increased in number after 213 on the 6th with three-figure counts on 18 dates during the rest of the month including 350 on the 10th, 500 on the 15th, 428 on the 17th and 380 on the 28th. A Dunlin was seen on the 8th, single Snipe were seen on seven dates and a Redshank was noted on 17 dates with two on the 26th.

A cracking adult summer plumaged Mediterranean Gull was seen on the 26th and 27th and 500 Black-headed Gulls, including an albino, were seen on the 27th. One or two Common Gulls were seen on seven dates and 100 Herring Gulls were on fields to the west of the reserve also on the 27th. A Little Owl was noted on the 4th and a Barn Owl was reported on the 8th.

A single Kingfisher was seen on eight dates and a Green Woodpecker was recorded on the 13th. 17 Meadow Pipits on the 23rd was the only count of note and one or two Grey Wagtails were recorded on 14 dates with 22 Pied Wagtails on the 8th. The highlight of the month for many was the appearance of Waxwings in the area. 52 were behind the mound on the 26th before they flew back to Carr Vale nursing home at the bottom of Castle Lane, where they had been found 20 minutes earlier and where the flock increased to 95 before flying off to Welbeck Road. The following day the flock was back at the nursing home and had increased to a very impressive 200, these remaining until the 28th, with 100 of them visiting the recording area again on the last date. 500 Fieldfares were present on the 26th, eight Song Thrushes were noted on the 17th and the highest count of Redwings was 90 on the 24th with 59 present on the 17th.

A Chiffchaff was seen on the 10th and one or two Goldcrests were seen on ten dates but only until the 18th after which not one could be found. 14 Long-tailed Tits were logged on the 17th and single Coal Tits were seen on the 2nd and 4th. 30 Goldfinches were present on the 4th, the only Lesser Redpoll of the month as seen on the 10th and six Bullfinches were present on the 13th. Finally eight Reed Buntings were noted at the feeding station on the 14th with smaller numbers seen on most dates during the month (no roost counts were carried out during the month).

A Water Vole was seen on the 1st along with two Foxes and a Weasel was seen on the 17th with up to three Hares noted on four dates. The long-staying Harris Hawk was seen on many dates until the 26th after which it seems to have moved further south with occasional reports from Palterton and Glapwell.

Mark Beevers.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2005

The daily visits continued producing 90 species for the month, the second highest March total and the yearlist progressed to 99, the equal highest end of March total set way back in 1997. At last we hit a bit of a purple patch and although no new birds for the site were recorded we did log a second, two thirds and a fifth. The undoubted highlight of the month was a Bittern (2nd record), which although often elusive, did show well to a steady stream of visitors. The first record was in October 1994. Other notable species were Pink-footed Goose, Egyptian Goose (5th record), Shelduck, Common Buzzard, Peregrine, Knot (3rd record, last in 1999), Black-tailed Godwit (18th record but first in spring), Mediterranean Gull (9th record from last month), Glaucous Gull (12th record, last in 2000), Kittiwake (13th record), Swallow (earliest ever), Scandinavian Rock Pipit (3rd record) and Waxwing (up to 125 from last month, 8th record and 12, 9th record). It was a very dry month and consequently the water level remained fairly constant throughout the month ranging at around 21". Work carried out last month on the Southern Marsh allowed the water level in this area to drop about 8" and the outlet pipe in the Middle Flash was also lowered to reveal fresh muddy margins for the spring.

Little Grebes were very scarce with just two single birds on the 9th and 15th and by the end of the month three pairs of Great-crested Grebes were present, two of which were incubating eggs. Cormorants were seen on all bar the 28th (an oversight most likely) but only in single-figures with a peak count of six on the 2nd. Bird of the month was the Bittern, which was first seen on the 23rd. Although looked for on the 24th and 25th it wasn't seen again until the 26th when it performed very well on and off all day. It was seen again on the 28th, 29th and 31st and about 70-100 observers are thought to have caught up with the bird. Herons were logged on all bar the 5th (another oversight) with a peak count of six on the 21st whilst the wing-tagged bird was still present on the 26th, although recently this bird has become very erratic in its appearances. The small family of Mute Swans could usually be found if Vale Angling pond was checked and an additional party of seven was seen on the 20th. C60 Pink-footed Geese flew north-west on the 2nd and three went the same way the following day whilst one to three Grey Lag Geese were recorded on 11 dates with five on the 7th. These were again joined by a white hybrid goose on seven dates between the 1st and 28th. Canada Geese were present daily in double-figures but the highest count was only 48 on the 12th. An Egyptian Goose was reportedly present on the Vale Angling pond all day on the 24th but none of the regular observers knew about it until it was too late.

A male Shelduck arrived on the 10th and the following day he was joined by a female, both remaining until the 14th. Wigeon remained in high numbers until mid-month peaking at 205 on the 5th and 8th after which there was a gentle decline until the last three-figure count of 116 on the 24th and by the end of the month numbers had dwindled still further to 53. Gadwall were still around but in lower numbers than recently with double-figure counts on 14 dates the highest being 23 on the 26th. Teal numbers reduced from the highs of earlier in the year so that counts generally ranged between 20 and 42 although 50 were noted on the 2nd and 45 were seen on the 31st. No counts of Mallard were made but a pair of Shoveler was present between the 23rd and 28th. Pochard were seen daily until the 11th with a peak count of eight on the 1st after which the only other record concerned three on the 15th whilst Tufted Ducks were noted daily peaking at 24 on the 25th with double-figure counts on a further 18 dates. Ruddy Ducks were a daily feature from the 8th peaking at 15 on the 24th and 25th although up to nine males and seven females were noted during that period with double-figure counts on two other dates.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 13 dates, four Common Buzzards were seen the 9th with two on the 18th and one on the 8th, although only two were over the recording area the others being to the south or west. Kestrels were recorded on 17 dates and a Peregrine was over the reserve on the 13th and perched on pylons to the west on the 21st. A Red-legged Partridge was seen on the

24th and five Grey Partridges were present on the 12th. Single Water Rails were logged on 15 dates with two noted on the 8th and 9th and Coot peaked at 61 also on the 9th.

The first Little Ringed Plover of the year flew south on the 1st followed by one north on the 21st and two north on the 24th. Then two were seen on the 26th with four between the 27th and 29th and one on the 31st. Two Ringed Plovers were seen on the 10th with single birds noted on the 18th, 20th, 23rd, 27th and 31st. Golden Plovers were noted on 17 dates but the only notable count was 150 on the 6th, although double-figure counts were made on 11 other dates. Lapwings remained in good numbers during the first ten days of the month when three-figure counts were made daily, the highest being 275 on the 9th after which numbers declined to generally less than 50. A Knot, present between the 16th and 18th, showed very well and was only the third site record, the last being in 1999. A Dunlin left north on the 24th and although Snipe were recorded on 18 dates, the only counts in excess of three were ten on the 20th and seven on the 28th. Two Black-tailed Godwits on the 28th were the first to be recorded in spring at the site and single Curlews were seen on the 1st, 19th, 22nd and 25th. Redshank were noted daily and numbers gradually increased to a peak of five on the 20th-21st and 29th.

In an excellent month for gulls the superb adult summer plumaged Mediterranean Gull from February was seen on the 2nd and 5th, an adult Glaucous Gull was present briefly early on the 16th, the first since 2000 and an adult Kittiwake was seen briefly early on the 7th. Amongst the more common species Black-headed Gulls peaked at 300 on the 6th, one or two Common Gulls were seen on seven dates and eight flew north on the 9th and 35 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were noted on the 13th. Herring Gulls were noted in three-figures on eight dates with a high of 150 on the 14th and 18th and Great-Black-backed Gulls were present in higher numbers than is usual with a peak of 110 on the 18th with 30-65 on eight other dates between the 9th and 24th.

A single Kingfisher was seen on seven dates and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was an unusual spring record on the 18th as it flew north. The first Sand Martins of the year were seven on the 21st, a later than average arrival date and indeed the latest arrival date since 1999. Conversely though the two Swallows on the 26th were the earliest ever at Carr Vale and the three on the 28th would have been the earliest ever; there has been just one other March record at Carr Vale. Just 67 Meadow Pipits flew north during the month with a peak of 25 on the 21st and 26 were grounded on the 27th. One of the highlights of the month was the very brief appearance of a Scandinavian Rock Pipit on the 20th but it only showed for two observers although the Spinoletta Pipit that flew north half an hour later was probably the same bird. A single Grey Wagtail was seen on nine dates with two on the 3rd and 14 Pied Wagtails were counted on the 29th. Another of the highlights during the month was the continued presence of Waxwings in the area. 60 were at Carr Vale nursing home on the 1st increasing to 125 on the 2nd with 50 on the 3rd and 60 still present on the 4th. Another 12 were reported by a visiting birder on the 29th in the vicinity of Vale Angling fishing pond.

An all area count on the 10th produced 17 singing Wrens, 13 singing Dunnocks, 33 (25 singing males) Robins, 28 Blackbirds, five singing Song Thrushes and 14 male Chaffinches. 70 Fieldfares on the 23rd was the highest count of the month and the highest count of Redwings was 80 on the 8th.

A Chiffchaff seen on the 9th was likely to be a wintering bird with the first singing bird noted on the 17th. Five were singing by the 23rd and ten were in good voice on the 30th. A Willow Warbler singing on the 31st was slightly earlier than the average arrival date and after an absence of three weeks Goldcrests reappeared with up to four present on 12 dates between the 8th and 22nd. Two Long-tailed Tit nests had been located by the 27th and three Willow Tits were singing on the 10th with single Coal Tits recorded on the 3rd, 7th, 10th and 28th. 41 Jackdaws on the 25th was a good

count for the reserve but Lesser Redpolls remained very scarce with single birds noted on four dates between the 20th and 26th. Last but not least amongst the birds there was a large falcon sp. complete with Jesse's and bells on the 20th but it didn't hang around long enough for its identity to be clinched.

A Water Vole was seen on the 25th, up to four Hares were recorded on nine dates, a Stoat was seen on the 18th with a Weasel the following day and the first butterflies of the year were Small Tortoiseshells on the 23rd and 25th

Mark Beevers.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2005

Our daily visits continued netting us exactly 100 species for the month, the third time we have achieved this total in April and the yearlist continued to progress nicely reaching 117 by the end of the month, our best end of April figure since 1997. Unfortunately the rash of rarities enjoyed last month didn't continue although the Bittern remained to the 1st (2nd record). Other notable species were Barnacle Goose (5th record), Shelduck, Marsh Harrier (18th–20th record), Peregrine, Oystercatcher, Greenshank (two birds), Cuckoo, several White Wagtails, Wheatear (three) and Grasshopper Warbler. It was in the main a dry month with the only appreciable rain on the 19th, which caused the water in Meadow Flash to rise to two feet. Maintenance work on the reserve during the month included the planting of four stands of Phragmites in the Southern Reedbed.

A Little Grebe was seen on seven dates with two on the 11th and three pairs of Great-crested Grebes were present throughout the month with an additional bird on five dates. By the end of the month the two breeding pairs both had young. One to five Cormorants were logged on 24 dates but the highest count was 11 on the 7th, which included a party of seven flying west and three that came in from the south. The Bittern remained until the 1st becoming only the second April record for Derbyshire and Herons were seen on all bar one date with a peak count of four on the 4th. The wing tagged bird, that had been absent for most of the month was seen on the 30th. The pair of Mute Swans had built a nest by the end of the month and the immature from last years brood remained on Vale Angling pond all month. A second pair was present on the 11th. One to three Grey Lag Geese were seen on 16 dates and a party of eight was reported flying south on the 2nd, whilst the white goose was seen on five dates. Canada Geese peaked at 26 on the 16th and 28th and by the end of the month four pairs had nests. Two Barnacle Geese flew north-west on the 12th.

A male Shelduck was present daily between the 10th and 13th with another bird noted on the 16th. Six Shelducks (one male and five females) arrived from the north on the 25th and two flew south on the 26th. 49 Wigeon were still present on the 1st but these had declined to 31 by the 4th and all bar one male departed overnight on that date leaving this last male which remained until the 16th, although there was an internet report of five for that date. Gadwall continued to be recorded in good numbers with double-figure counts on 24 dates the highest of which was 22 on the 21st. Teal too remained in good numbers with a peak count of 43 on the 3rd, double-figure counts on 23 dates (daily until the 20th) and 11 pairs present on the 24th with three still on the last day of the month. A male Shoveler was present on the 4th and a pair took up residence from the 11th. A male Pochard on the 28th and 29th was unusual and a record count of 27 Tufted Ducks was made on the 3rd, with double-figures noted daily during the month and nine counts higher than 20. Ruddy Ducks were also present daily with double-figure counts on 25 dates peaking at 17 on the 21st.

A female Marsh Harrier delighted a single observer on the 29th as it circled the reserve before departing south and Sparrowhawks were logged on 22 dates (36 bird days) with a flock of seven noted on the 16th, most of which drifted off south. Common Buzzards were recorded on 12 dates (20 bird days) but all bar one bird were seen from the mound south or west of the recording area. Kestrels were logged on 26 dates (40 bird days) with a peak count of four on the 11th and a male Peregrine flew north on the 5th. A single Red-legged Partridge was seen on the 4th and 26th with a pair on the 28th, which bodes well for the breeding season and three pairs of Grey Partridge were seen on the 23rd. Two Water Rails were calling on the 5th with a single bird logged on ten more dates until the 30th whilst Coot peaked at 32 also on the 5th.

Two Oystercatchers were seen on the 12th with one the following day and one left to the south on the 15th. Then on the 21st a pair arrived, these remaining into May. Little-ringed Plovers were

seen daily from the 2nd with counts generally of six or less though higher numbers were eight on the 3rd, nine on the 8th and ten on the 9th. Three Ringed Plovers were present on the 3rd and 9th with two on eight dates and single birds on a further two dates and the last Golden Plover of the winter was seen on the 2nd, a rather early departure date for this species. Lapwing numbers were very low with a peak count of 32 on the 2nd and a Dunlin was seen on the 26th. One or two Snipe were logged for nine dates between the 2nd and 13th with three on the 12th and the last for the winter was a single bird on the 20th, also an early last date. Single Curlews were seen on the 7th, 11th, 12th, 16th and 19th, Redshank were seen daily with a peak count of eight on the 9th and single Greenshanks were seen on the 25th and 30th. The first Common Sandpiper of the year was seen on the 18th with single birds then noted on the 21st-22nd, 24th and 27th-29th with three on the 30th. Three Great Black-backed Gulls on the 15th were a little late for the site but no other gull records of note were made. A single Common Tern was seen on the 17th, 19th, 22nd and 26th with two on the 25th.

A Cuckoo on the 24th was a good bird for the area as nowadays this species is very unreliable at Carr Vale. Following the first Swifts (five) of the year on the 24th birds were recorded daily during the month with 30 present on the 30th. A Kingfisher was seen on 14 dates and a Green Woodpecker was noted on the 17th and daily between the 28th and 30th. Sand Martins were noted on 24 dates with double-figures on eight dates including 30 on the 14th and 26th and 50 on the 25th. Swallows were present in low numbers between the 2nd and 4th and then daily from the 6th but the highest count was only 50 on the 14th and 28th. The first House Martin was seen on the 5th and another was noted on the 14th with daily records from the 17th peaking at 40 on the 28th. 135 Meadow Pipits that flew north in 80 minutes on the 11th rescued a very disappointing spring for this species but only another 27 were logged moving north during the month. A male Yellow Wagtail on the 2nd equalled the earliest ever arrival date and this bird was then seen daily until the 5th with records thereafter on all but two dates and a peak count of five on the 19th. A Grey Wagtail, seen on the 17th and 29th was quite unusual as this species normally barely makes it into April. C70 Pied Wagtails were present on the 14th with 40 on the 10th and it was a good month for White Wagtails with single birds noted on eight dates between the 7th and 29th.

Full area counts of singing / breeding birds were carried out on the 4th and 28th which produced the following totals: Wren 25 / 15, Dunnock 15 / 5, Robin 26 / 10, Blackbird 8 / 20, Song Thrush 3 / 5, Blackcap 7 / 12, Chiffchaff 19 / 12, Willow Warbler 17 / 32, Chaffinch 7 / 7 and Greenfinch 5 / 0.

Single male Wheatears were present on the 2nd, 5th and 29th, nine Song Thrushes were counted on the 25th whilst 11 Fieldfares and a single Redwing on the 2nd were the last of the winter, the date for Fieldfare being particularly early. Two Grasshopper Warblers were reeling on the 23rd with one or two daily to the end of the month although it is just possible that three birds were involved. The first Sedge Warbler of the year was heard on the 22nd but only one or two birds were on territory by the month end and the first Reed Warbler was recorded on the 21st with up to three daily to the end of the month. The only Lesser Whitethroat of the month was noted on the rather late date of the 29th and Common Whitethroats were also later than usual with the first not being seen until the 25th, though four were present on the 28th. An early Garden Warbler was singing on the 22nd with another present on the 28th and three in by the 30th whilst the first two Blackcaps of the year were seen on the 1st with ten singing on the 14th. Three Willow Tits were present on the 3rd and three singing Treecreepers were found on the 4th.

Single Jays were seen on the 2nd, 5th (north) and 19th with two on the 9th (north) and 24 Jackdaws were around the sheep on the 12th. A total of 18 Lesser Redpolls flew north over six dates between the 2nd and 14th with a flock of 11 north on the 11th whilst the last of the winter was a single bird on the 27th. Four Bullfinches were present on the 3rd and 23rd and three Reed

Buntings were singing on the 28th.

Amongst the mammals a Water Vole was noted on the 2nd, one or two Hares were seen on nine dates, a Weasel was seen on the 7th and a Stoat was seen on the 2nd. Small Tortoiseshells were regular from the 2nd, a Brimstone was seen on the 3rd with other singles on the 23rd and 29th. The first Orangetip of the year was seen on the 17th and the first Speckled Wood was seen on the 27th.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2005

Our daily visits continued but our efforts were not rewarded and May was a very disappointing month despite starting off so promisingly. Our hard work netted us just 91 species and we only added six species to the year list, which now stands at a very average 123 though this is still the highest end of May total since 2001. The month was noticeable not for the number of site rarities but the number of expected species that failed to appear. These included Hobby, Turtle Dove, Whinchat and Redstart, all of which are to be expected in May. We did have a few rarities, most of which seemed to appear on May 1st when Common Scoter (3rd or 4th record), Bar-tailed Godwit (two, 5th record), Whimbrel (17th record) and White Wagtail were all present. Other notable species included Shelduck, Marsh Harrier (two birds 20th–22nd record), Peregrine, Oystercatcher, Cuckoo, several White Wagtails, Blue-headed Wagtail (3rd record), Grasshopper Warbler and Tree Sparrow. It was in the main a dry month with very little rain, which meant that the flashes remained in good nick all month with a depth of 18" in Meadow Flash for most of the month.

Single Little Grebes were seen on nine dates with two on the 4th and three on the 23rd and three pairs of Great-crested Grebes were present on many dates throughout the month with the two breeding pairs each having two young. Cormorants as usual became very scarce with single birds on four dates and two on the 22nd. Herons were seen on all dates with a peak count of four on the 28th and 30th. The wing tagged bird that returned on the 30th April was seen intermittently all month. The breeding pair of Mute Swans was present all month and they were joined by up to four other wanderers on 19 dates although the single immature accounted for all but seven of the additional sightings. Four Grey Lag Geese were seen on the 3rd with one to three on eight dates with the last two being seen on the 30th. The first brood of Canada Geese (five) appeared on the 3rd with further broods of four and three hatching out later in the month whilst adults peaked at 33 on the 13th. Three other pairs had nests though by the end of the month two of these had failed.

Continuing our good run of Shelduck records a male was present on the 2nd-3rd with five on the 4th. Then a pair arrived from the south on the 14th and a pair flew west on the 27th. Gadwall continued to be recorded in good numbers with double-figure counts on 22 dates and numbers gradually increased towards the end of the month. The peak count was 27 on the 23rd of which 21 were males and four more counts were in excess of 20 during the last ten days of the month. Two pairs of Teal were present on the 1st after which a pair remained until the 10th. A female Mallard had 12 young on the 2nd and four further broods had been located by the end of the month whilst on the 28th 21 loafing males and seven females were logged. The pair of Shoveler that clearly attempted to breed failed around the 7th but remained in the area until the 14th after which there were no more sightings. Tufted Ducks were present in double-figures on all but one date with nine counts of 20 or more the highest of which was 23 on the 20th. One of the highlights of the month was a female Common Scoter that appeared at 1300 hours on the 1st and which remained long enough for a number of people to catch up with it later in the day. Ruddy Ducks were also present daily with double-figure counts on 10 dates with seven pairs noted on the 10th.

A female Marsh Harrier was watched from the mound as it flew north along Sutton Scarsdale Ridge on the 2nd. On the 15th a male Marsh Harrier was also watched from the mound as it flew east to the south of the area, eventually being seen by other observers at Pleasley Pit. Single Sparrowhawks were logged on 11 dates and Common Buzzards were recorded on five dates (seven bird days) but only one was actually over the reserve the others being seen from the observation mound to the south and west of the area. Kestrels were logged on 25 dates (38 bird days) but with no more than two birds a day noted. A sub-adult male Peregrine was seen on four dates between the 14th and 20th, twice hunting over the reserve. Three pairs of Grey Partridge

were located on the 23rd and a Water Rail was heard on the 9th and 24th whilst Coot had five nests by the 27th.

Two Oystercatchers were seen daily throughout the month and they were joined, albeit briefly, by intruders to their territory on the 7th and 26th. Little-ringed Plovers were seen daily with a peak count of eight on the 19th whilst seven were seen on the 21st and 31st. Single Ringed Plovers were present seven dates with two on the 18th-19th, 21st and 23rd and towards the end of the month Lapwing numbers started to rise with 35 present on the 31st. Single Dunlin were noted on both the 22nd and 23rd representing a very poor month for this species. The highlights of the month amongst the waders were two Bar-tailed Godwits and a Whimbrel, present all day on the 1st, with one of the Godwits remaining until the 2nd. Redshank were seen daily with a peak count of six on the 13th and Common Sandpipers were seen daily until the 9th and again between the 15th and 19th with two present on the 5th and 7th.

Black-headed Gulls were seen on 16 dates but the highest count was just six on the 22nd; more unusual was a first summer Common Gull that was seen on the 6th as May records are few and far between for Carr Vale. 50 Lesser Black-backed Gulls flew north on the 6th and single Herring Gulls were seen on the 3rd and 12th with a first summer Great Black-backed Gull on the 13th. Two Common Terns were seen on the 3rd and one flew north the following day, then five were seen on the 27th (three south-east followed by two north) and one was present on the 29th.

Single Cuckoos were seen on four dates between the 12th and 30th and two flew north on the 14th. A Tawny Owl was found on the 15th and breeding was confirmed at Mill Farm on the 19th when a pair with three young was located. 300 Swifts on the 23rd was a good spring count and 100 were still around the following day, a Kingfisher was seen on 13 dates and a Green Woodpecker was noted on the 2nd-3rd and 11th. Sand Martins were noted on 23 dates but double-figure counts were made on only three dates with a peak count of 25 on the 4th. Some notable Swallow counts were made with 120 on the 4th, 150+ on the 8th and 220 on the 16th but House Martin numbers were very poor with a maximum of 50 on the 23rd. Yellow Wagtails were seen daily with a peak of six on the 16th and a fine male Blue-headed Wagtail was present during the evening of the 8th. Grey Wagtails are rarely seen in May so single birds on the 2nd, 10th, 19th and two on the 31st were well received and a White Wagtail was present on the 1st.

Seven Song Thrushes were counted on the 14th and the 30th, the latter count consisting of singing males. A Grasshopper Warbler was heard on 12 dates and was still reeling on the 30th, a minimum of six Sedge Warbler territories was located during the month and a record 20 singing Reed Warblers were found on the 29th-30th. One or two Lesser Whitethroats sang throughout the month, ten singing Common Whitethroats were found on the 29th-30th and one or two Garden Warblers also sang throughout the month with six Blackcaps were singing on the 12th.

Single Jays were seen on the 18th and 20th, a Tree Sparrow was seen on the 13th and 14 Linnets were counted on the 14th. Five Yellowhammer territories were found during the month and between the 29th and 30th a minimum of nine singing Reed Buntings were plotted. A Bar-headed Goose flew around the flashes on the 1st, a female Eastern Rosella was behind the observation mound on the 9th and on the 15th a male Eclectus Parrot (also an Australian species) was present in the same area.

Two Water Voles were noted on the 1st, up to four Hares were seen on 24 dates and a Fox was reported during the last week of the month. Single Weasels were logged for the 1st, 4th and 25th and a Stoat was seen on the 20th. Single Commas were seen on the 1st-2nd and 20th but in a very poor month for insects no other species of note were seen. Two very early Large Red Damsels were seen on the 2nd, with two pairs noted on the 20th on which date the first two Blue-tailed Damsels were seen.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2005

84 species were logged during our daily visits in June, which is about average but very few birds of note were seen during what is always a quiet month at Carr Vale. The highlights were Grey Lag Geese, Shelduck, Buzzard, Hobby, Peregrine, three Black-tailed Godwits, Green Sandpiper, Cuckoo and Grasshopper Warbler. The year list moved on to 125, the third highest end of June figure and the highest since 2001. It was in the main a dry month with very little rain, which meant that the flashes remained in good condition all month with a depth of 15"-18" in Meadow Flash for most of the month, although heavy downpours did cause a slight rise in the water levels mid-month.

A single Little Grebe was seen on eight dates between the 5th and 20th and the two pairs of Great-crested Grebes were present with their four young until the 27th when one of the young flew off to the west. An additional adult was present on nine dates during the month. A first summer Cormorant was present on four dates between the 14th and 19th and Herons were seen daily with numbers gradually increasing during the month to peak at ten on the 24th. The wing tagged bird was still present on the 29th. The breeding pair of Mute Swans hatched four young on the 1st and they were present throughout the month being joined by an additional pair on 18 dates and two pairs on six dates. Three Grey Lag Geese flew north on the 2nd with four leaving to the south the following day and five were seen on the 7th. The final total of Canada Geese broods was four (15 young) which is a record number of broods for the site, though not of young and the peak count of adults was 45 on the 3rd.

A pair of Shelduck on the 20th was very unusual as they represented only the third June record for Carr Vale. Gadwall were recorded in good numbers with double-figure counts on 23 dates and a high of 38 adults on the 20th. By the end of the month seven broods had been found. Three Teal were present on the 20th with two on the 22nd and single birds on the 25th, 29th and 30th. Four more broods of Mallard appeared during the month taking the total for the year to a lowly nine and the highest count was 33 on the 22nd. A pair of Shoveler was present on the 8th and on the 2nd there was a record count of 31 Tufted Ducks with double-figure counts on a further 17 dates. Ruddy Ducks were also present daily with a peak count of ten on the 26th and 27th. A female had a brood of two on the 6th and there was a second brood (of four) by the 19th.

Single Sparrowhawks were logged on 12 dates and Common Buzzards were recorded on nine dates (12 bird days) but all were seen from the observation mound to the south and west of the area. Kestrels were logged on 26 dates (34 bird days) with three seen on the 20th. The first (and so far only) Hobby of the year was watched on the 24th as it flew north over the reserve and a Peregrine was again present on the pylons to the west of the reserve on the 8th. 11 pairs of Coots had seven broods with two active nests by the end of the month. One of the pairs with young had a second nest and the other two nests failed during the month due to a rise in water level.

The pair of Oystercatchers hatched three young on the 9th and all were healthy at the end of the month. Little-ringed Plovers were seen daily with a peak count of ten on the 13th with eight on the 20th and 21st and single Ringed Plovers were recorded on the 6th and 13th. Lapwing numbers continued to slowly increase during the month reaching 260 by the 29th but the best waders of the month were three Black-tailed Godwits that spent just over five hours on the reserve on the 25th, thus becoming our earliest autumn arrivals. Redshank were seen daily until the 21st with a peak count of six on the 6th and 13th but none bred this year and no fledged juveniles from elsewhere were recorded. The first Green Sandpiper of the year was seen on the 19th and a late Common Sandpiper was seen on the 8th with the first returning autumn bird present on the 29th-30th. Black-headed Gulls were seen on just eight dates with a peak count of 12 on the 26th and Common Terns became more frequent with two on the 15th, three on the 19th and single birds on the 20th-21st, 24th and 29th.

A Cuckoo was seen on the 28th and a Tawny Owl was found on the 12th. 120 Swifts were also counted on the 12th and after a three-week absence Kingfishers started to appear with single birds on five dates from the 15th and two on the 27th. A Green Woodpecker was noted on the 3rd and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 26th. One or two Sand Martins were noted on six dates from the 11th although 13 were seen on the 28th including a flock of 12 that flew south-east. One or two Yellow Wagtails were seen on 12 dates including two juveniles on the 11th and single Grey Wagtails were seen on the 20th, 22nd and 26th. A Grasshopper Warbler was heard on the 7th when nine Reed Warblers were seen and a Garden Warbler was singing on the 2nd, 17th and 23rd-25th.

Continuing with our run of escapes the presumed returning Harris Hawk was seen on the 12th and this bird probably accounted for the claim of a Red Kite the previous evening

Up to four Hares were seen on 11 dates and breeding was proved when at least two leverets were seen during the month. Foxes too were proved to breed as two cubs were reported from the Peter Fidler Reserve. Single adults were also on the reserve on the 15th and 21st. A Grass Snake was seen on the 24th and two dead Moles were found during the month. It was a very poor month for butterflies with nothing of note recorded. A Banded Demoiselle was seen on the 19th, four Emperors were seen on the 20th with 15 Four-spotted Chasers and a male Black-tailed Skimmer also noted on that date. The following day a male Broad-bodied Chaser was seen and five Black-tailed Skimmers were seen on the 23rd.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT JULY 2005

85 species were logged during our daily visits in the month, which is about average but it was a very quiet month and few birds of note were seen. The only exception was an adult Pectoral Sandpiper (second record). The only other notable species were Grey Lag Geese, Buzzard, Hobby, Water Rail, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Grasshopper Warbler and Crossbill (5th record). The year list moved on to 127, the third highest end of July figure and the highest since 2001. It was mainly a dry month with very little rain, so the flashes remained in good condition all month with a depth of 15" in Meadow Flash for most of the month, although heavy rain towards the end of the month saw the levels rise about three inches.

Little Grebes were seen on 17 dates with an adult and three small young noted in one area on the 8th and an adult and a large youngster present in another area on the 11th. Up to four adult and three juvenile Great-crested Grebes remained all month. Single different Cormorants were seen on the 13th and 14th with three present on the 27th and one or two on five other dates from the 25th to the end of the month. 12 Herons were seen on the 1st with ten the following day but otherwise only single counts were made during the rest of the month and the wing tagged bird was still present on the 29th. The breeding pair of Mute Swans and their four young were present throughout the month and they were joined by a second pair on 19 dates and a third pair on three dates. Seven Grey Lag Geese, daily from the 25th to the end of the month, was a record count for the month and the usual autumn build up of Canada Geese commenced on the 21st with a month record count of 240 present on the 31st.

Gadwall were recorded in good numbers with double-figure counts daily and 18 counts in excess of 30 the highest of which was 39 on the 4th (including juveniles). Single Teal were present on the 1st, 5th and 31st, which was a poor showing. Mallard also started to increase in numbers from mid-month with the first three-figure count (of 115) made on the 22nd after which 100+ were noted on seven dates peaking at 144 on the 30th, just one short of the highest ever July count. A female Shoveler was present on the 1st and on the 29th a single bird was present with three on the 30th-31st. Ten Tufted Ducks on the 1st was the only double-figure count of the month and breeding was proved on the 14th when a female with five young was seen followed by a second brood of seven on the 22nd. Ruddy Ducks were present daily with a peak count of 19 (seven males) on the 12th. Double-figure counts were made on a further 17 dates although from the 19th numbers were in single figures on all but two dates. A pair with a brood of two was reported from the river on the 8th but these were only seen by a local walker and not seen by any of the regulars.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 14 dates but the only record of more than one bird came on the 14th when three were seen. Common Buzzards were very scarce with records on just four dates (seven bird days) all seen from the observation mound to the south and west of the area with three on the 24th. Kestrels were logged on 25 dates (46 bird days) with four seen on the 8th and 9th. A Hobby was seen daily between the 23rd and 25th. At least four pairs of Pheasant were proved to breed with broods of two, four and eight plus a nest containing 16 eggs being discovered during the month but as yet no Partridge broods have been located. Water Rails were proved to have bred on the 22nd when an adult and full grown juvenile were found. These were then seen daily until the 24th with one or the other present daily until the 27th and the juvenile on the 30th, by which time the water level had risen due to a days rain. A total of 13 pairs of Coots nested this year at Carr Vale, a site record, and at last two pairs hatched young on Meadow Flash after several attempts. On the Peter Fidler Reserve one pair was on its second brood and a second pair had small young. The good breeding season resulted in some high site counts including 57 (13 young) on the 8th and 78 (20 young) on the 12th, the latter being a record count for the site. The family party (of five) Oystercatchers was present daily until last seen on the 29th, although after fledging they did range quite widely, often preferring to feed in the sewage works and on one occasion being seen on the football pitch, surely a first for the local residents! Little-ringed Plovers were seen daily with a peak count of seven on the 1st and 4th and a Ringed Plover was

seen on the 12th and 13th. Lapwings were present in good (for the modern era) numbers with ten counts in excess of 300 peaking at 500 on the 24th and 29th. Highlight of the month was an adult Pectoral Sandpiper, which was found just after 0730 and remained until at least 2100 hours allowing most of the site regulars, plus a few visitors to catch up with this the second record for the site. An adult and juvenile Dunlin were present on the 28th with the latter remaining into August. The first Snipe of the autumn was seen on the 16th followed by one to three on nine dates between the 18th and 27th with four present on the 29th and two Green Sandpipers were seen on the 2nd. A Common Sandpiper was seen on the 1st with two on the 20th and one on the 29th. Black-headed Gulls were seen daily and numbers gradually increased during the month reaching 120 on the 29th. An adult Common Gull, seen on the 10th, was followed by one or two adults on five dates between the 24th and 31st and an immature Great Black-backed Gull was noted on the 25th. Common Terns became regular with one or two noted on eight days up until the 20th plus four that flew south on the 5th. Then birds were logged daily until the month end with two juveniles and up to four adults present daily.

100 Swifts were counted on the 25th, one or two Kingfishers were logged on 19 dates and a Green Woodpecker was noted on eight dates from the 22nd. One to five Sand Martins were noted on 18 dates and 17 flew south on the 24th. One or two Yellow Wagtails were seen on nine dates and single Grey Wagtails were seen five dates although a family party of five was seen on the 8th. The last Grasshopper Warbler of the year was heard on the 9th and a Garden Warbler was noted on the 13th. A Coal Tit on the 9th was unusual, a count of 60 House Sparrows on the 22nd was notable and a flock of 20 Linnets was seen on the 23rd. Far more notable was a flock of 12 Crossbills that flew west calling on the 9th, a record count for the site and only the fifth ever record.

Water Voles were proved to breed on the 7th when an adult was seen leading four young across the river, up to five Hares were seen on 15 dates and single Foxes were seen on the 4th, 20th and 23rd. Another dead Mole was found on the 8th and five dead Common Shrews (all predated) were found along a short stretch of path by the sewage works on the 14th. In a better month for insects Commas were recorded on six dates including counts of six on the 17th and four on the 12th and three Red Admirals were seen between the 8th and 14th. The first Southern Hawker of the year was seen on the 8th and the first (four) Brown Hawkets were seen on the 12th. Emperors peaked at eight (six males) on the 17th on which date five Black-tailed Skimmers and ten Four-spotted Chasers were counted. A male Broad-bodied Chaser was seen on the 12th.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2005

92 species were logged during our daily visits in the month, which is about average and one or two birds of note were seen, three of which were new for the year, taking the yearlist to 130. This is the third highest end of August figure and is about average with three other years reaching this figure in the last ten years. Highlights included two Little Egrets (4th and 5th records), Shelduck, Wigeon, Hobby, Peregrine, Water Rail, Oystercatcher, Ruff (22nd record), Whimbrel (18th record), Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Mediterranean Gull (10th record), two Yellow-legged Gulls and Tree Sparrow. It was mainly a dry month and although rain fell on at least six dates it had little impact on the flashes, which remained in good condition throughout the month with a depth of 15" in Meadow Flash for most of the month. Work parties came down twice during the month, on the second occasion, in addition to carrying out essential maintenance work they sited the new tern raft. Also during the month a substantial cash donation was received from the Bolsover Alternative Committee, a group dedicated to raising money for local good causes, that is based in the Blue Bell Public House, Bolsover. Many thanks to those involved in the adjudication process. So on to then birds.

Little Grebes were seen on all but one date with one to three seen most days, four on four dates and five on the 16th whilst Great-crested Grebes were also seen daily all month with four between the 1st and 3rd. One to four Cormorants were seen on 23 dates but 13 on the 8th included a flock of 12 that arrived from the south. One of the highlights of the month was the appearance of two juvenile Little Egrets. The first spent 20 minutes on the reserve on the 10th before flying off north-west and the second was present early on the 30th before it flew to fields and then disappeared, presumably also flying north-west. Four out of the five records so far of this species have been in August with three coming between the 10th and 16th. Although Herons were seen daily numbers were a little disappointing with a peak count of eight on the 2nd whilst the wing tagged bird was still present at the end of the month. The pair of Mute Swans and their four young were present throughout the month and the seven Grey Lag Geese from July remained until the 1st with a single bird noted on nine dates between the 5th and 14th and again on the 20th and 24th. Canada Geese numbers generally remained in three-figures but counts didn't reach the record highs of last year, peaking at 410 on the 14th.

A Shelduck as seen on the 2nd and the first Wigeon of the autumn arrived on the 4th, remaining until the 15th. Gadwall were recorded in good numbers with 14 counts over 50 and a record count of 81 on the 18th. Teal were present on all but two dates, which was probably an oversight rather than an absence, with double-figures recorded daily from the 16th, peaking at 31 on the 31st. Mallard were also mainly recorded in three-figures with five counts of 200 or more the highest of which was 237 on the 15th. One to three Shoveler were present daily between the 2nd and 19th with four on the 18th-19th, followed by one on the 25th-26th and then one on the 29th, two on the 30th and six on the 31st. A new brood of six (the third of the year) Tufted Duck was found on the 1st and new broods of Ruddy Duck were found on the 5th (seven) and 16th (three) with a peak count of nine adults of the latter on the 10th.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 21 dates (29 bird / days) and two pairs were proved to breed in the area. Common Buzzards became more of a feature with records on 14 dates (28 bird / days) of which 11 were from within the recording area. Notable counts from the mound were four on the 8th and six on the 21st. Kestrels were logged on 22 dates (28 bird days) but no more than two a day were recorded. Hobby sightings at last improved with one on the 5th followed by six records between the 16th and 29th including two together on the 18th and 25th. A juvenile male Peregrine was seen on five dates between the 7th and 19th, often hunting over the reserve. Eight Common Partridges were recorded on the 25th, single Water Rails were noted on 17 dates during the month, with an adult often showing very well on the west bank of the Reserve Pond and two birds present on the 10th (one heard whilst one in view). A count of 66 Coot on the 21st and 25th would normally be considered a good count for the reserve but these were eclipsed on the 24th when a record 89 was counted. An Oystercatcher was seen on the 12th and two juvenile

Little Ringed Plovers were present until the 2nd with an adult Ringed Plover seen daily between the 7th and 12th. Lapwings were present in good (for the modern era) numbers for the first half of the month after which they all but disappeared. Counts of 300 were made on four dates during the first week with 400 present on the 3rd. Two Ruff dropped in at 1040 on the 21st and one to three Snipe were logged on 16 dates plus seven on the 15th. Two Whimbrel were in the fields to the west of the reserve on the 11th, a Greenshank paid a brief visit on the 18th, a Green Sandpiper was seen on the 12th and single Common Sandpipers were present on the 5th-6th and 21st. A juvenile Mediterranean Gull was present on the 29th and became the earliest autumn record whilst Black-headed Gulls peaked at 300 on the 21st. A juvenile Common Gull was seen on the 20th and 22nd with an adult noted on the 28th, 450 Lesser Great Black-backed Gulls flew south at dusk on the 3rd and adult Yellow-legged Gulls were seen on the 15th and 23rd. It was a good month for Common Terns with four on the 1st followed by singles on four dates between the 2nd and 5th. Then a poorly marked adult and a fresh juvenile were present daily between the 13th and 20th, although the adult was occasionally reported as an Arctic Tern and it was missing on the 18th.

One or two Kingfishers were logged on 25 dates, a Green Woodpecker was noted on 12 dates and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 21st and 28th. One to six Sand Martins were noted on 16 dates whilst 100 House Martins were counted on the 28th. Yellow Wagtails were very scarce with single birds noted on just five dates whilst single Grey Wagtails were recorded on six dates. The only warblers of note were two Lesser Whitethroats seen on the 27th whilst c20 Chiffchaffs on the 31st were indicative of an influx. A Coal Tit on the 16th was the only one of the month whilst 100 Rooks together with 50 Jackdaws were the highest counts of the year for these species. Three Tree Sparrows were seen on the 7th, 55 Goldfinches were seen on the 28th and Bullfinches were proved breeding the following day when fledged young were noted

Hares were seen on six dates but only in single figures, which was no doubt a reflection on the increased shooting on the surrounding farmland as the crops were cut and a Fox was seen on the 15th, 20th and 23rd. Weasels were proved to breed in the recording area when a family party was seen at Mill Farm, a Stoat was seen on the 17th and another dead Mole was found on the 22nd. A most unwelcome first record for the site was a Red-eared Terrapin that was photographed on the 21st.

Amongst the insects single Commas were logged on the 2nd and 16th and good numbers of Speckled Woods were present all month. Southern and Brown Hawkers were joined from about the third week by Migrant Hawkers and the last Black-tailed Skimmers of the year were seen on the 18th.

MARK BEEVERS

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2005

104 species were logged during our daily visits in September, the fourth successive year that we have cleared 100 for the month and indeed the count is the second highest monthly species total for the site, the highest being 105 as long ago as April 1996. However that statistic pales into insignificance because on 14th September we as a group achieved our 2000th consecutive daily visit to the area. The marking of this truly remarkable achievement saw us on the mound as usual with nothing really to show for it! The event however did receive media coverage with a piece in the Derbyshire Times and interviews with three of the stalwarts on Radio Sheffield. (Further media interest developed in October with a reporter from Look North scheduled to visit the site on the 27th).

Seven species were added to the yearlist taking that to 137, the second highest end of September count. A number of good birds were logged during the month including the year's 3rd Little Egret (6th record), Pink-footed Geese (earliest ever), Pintail, Osprey (16th record), Hobby, Peregrine, Water Rail, Ruff (23rd record), Spotted Redshank (4th record), Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper (11th record), Turtle Dove, Barn Owl (8th record), Tree Pipit, Whinchat, Spotted Flycatcher and Tree Sparrow. The first week was mainly dry but rain overnight on the 9th pushed the water levels up in Meadow Flash to 18" although the flashes remained in good condition throughout the month. Unfortunately during the first part of the month the site experienced problems with people shooting the wildfowl, though this seems to have subsided. Nevertheless if anyone finds people shooting on the site or immediately around it I would be grateful if they would let me now as we have a good relationship with local landowners, who have been co-operative in stopping organised shoots from encroaching too close to the reserve.

Little Grebes were a daily feature with up to four seen daily and five on the 15th as were Great-crested Grebes with two daily to the 21st and a single bird to the month end. Cormorants too were seen daily from the 2nd but only in small numbers, with a peak count of six on the 17th. Evidence of birds moving through included singles on the 2nd and 12th (both south), 8th (west) and two on the 14th (north) and 17th (east). The third juvenile Little Egret of the year was seen on the 3rd but again it only stayed for a short while before departing north-west. Herons were seen daily with a peak count of seven on the 21st whilst the wing tagged bird was still present at the end of the month. The Mute Swans and their four young were present throughout the month and towards the end of the month numbers increased so that by the 24th 15 were present, these remaining until the 30th. The 30 Pink-footed Geese that flew east on the 12th were the earliest ever autumn record for the site and would have become the earliest ever for the county but for the fact that a skein flew east over Ogston the previous day. Another 250 flew east on the 17th whilst five Grey Lag Geese left north-east on the 14th. Canada Geese numbers generally were somewhat lower than recent autumns, perhaps a reflection of the unwelcome shooting activity around the reserve and unusually after the 5th there was just three counts in excess of 100 although at the start of the month the peak count was 417 on the 2nd.

Wigeon were seen daily from the 2nd with double-figures from the 14th peaking at 36 on the 30th, which is a record count for September. However it was Gadwall that grabbed the headlines with the site record being broken (smashed!) five times during the month and reaching 106 on the 29th. There were four other counts in excess of 100 and ten more over 80 and Carr Vale is surely one of the top sites for this species in the county. Teal were present in double-figures daily but counts were unremarkable with a peak of 65 on the 14th. Mallard too seemed to be disturbed by the shooting with three-figure counts logged daily during the first half of the month with a high of 185 on the 6th but with just five three-figure counts thereafter with a peak of 134 on the 29th. Single Pintail were seen on the 3rd and 14th, the former equalling the earliest ever site record. Shoveler were present daily apart from on the 15th, which was probably an oversight, with four to

six present on 11 dates and seven on the 20th. However numbers increased further on the 29th-30th when ten were present, a record count of adults for the site. Two male Pochard on the 7th were followed by three on the 13th-14th and four on the 18th and Tufted Ducks were logged daily in single figures with a peak of eight on the 13th. Finally amongst the wildfowl Ruddy Ducks were also seen daily with a peak count of seven on the 4th although from the 11th just three birds remained to the month end.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 25 dates (42 bird / days) with notable counts of five on the 1st, three on the 12th-13th and four on the 18th. Common Buzzards continued from where they left off last month with records on 19 dates (40 bird / days) of which 21 were from within the recording area. Notable counts from the mound were seven on the 2nd (six south of us) and six in the same area on the 17th. An Osprey was seen by a non-birder on the afternoon of the 12th. Thankfully it was seen to catch a fish in Meadow Flash which it then took to a ploughed field nearby, which rather assisted in its identification. Kestrels were logged on 20 dates (29 bird days) with four noted on the 2nd. Hobby sightings consisted of singles on the 3rd, 7th, 9th and 14th with two together on the 11th, all of which were over the reserve area and a juvenile male Peregrine was seen over the reserve on the 9th. An adult male Peregrine took up residence on a pylon by Deepdale Farm (just to the south of the recording area) from the 12th being seen thereafter on ten dates to the month end, occasionally over the reserve.

11 Red-legged Partridges were seen on the 30th with eight on the 13th, seven on the 20th and four on the 28th. 11 Common Partridges were also recorded on the 28th along with 17 Pheasants. Water Rails were noted on 23 dates during the month, with single birds seen on ten dates and two on five dates, the rest being heard only records. It is thought that at least three birds were present in the area during the month. Coot peaked at a lowly 41 on the 18th and there was no notable count of Moorhens. The first Golden Plovers of the autumn were 19 that flew east on the 10th. These were followed by records on ten dates but the only other double-figure counts were 36 south on the 26th and 15 on 29th. Lapwing numbers were poor with a peak count of 81 on the 27th from just ten log entries. Dunlin have been rather scarce this year so single birds on the 3rd, 10th-11th and 16th-18th were welcome, as was a Ruff that flew south on the 19th. Snipe were logged on 28 dates with reasonable counts of 11 on the 27th and 15 on the 30th. The best wader of the month was a juvenile Spotted Redshank that put in a brief appearance on the same date as the Ruff and almost as rare (at least in September) were two Redshanks that circled the reserve briefly on the 3rd. More expected were single Greenshank on the 2nd (flying south), 3rd, and 13th (left north). Heavy rain on the 10th caused a Wood Sandpiper to drop in albeit that as soon as it was found it departed with a Dunlin and the same foul weather prompted the arrival of four Common Sandpipers. These remained until the following morning before declining to two on the 12th and one on the 17th until that was last seen on the 20th.

400 Black-headed Gulls were logged for the 1st and single Common Gulls were seen on the 1st, 3rd and 9th with two present on the 17th. There was a good count of Lesser Black-backed Gulls on the 17th when 450 flew north along with a Herring Gull with another Herring Gull noted the following day. Common Terns made a rare September appearance with an adult and juvenile on the 1st and two adults on the 3rd, probably only the third and fourth September records. A juvenile Turtle Dove gave us the run around on the 6th before perching up and allowing us to clinch the identification thus becoming the first autumn record for this species since 2000. Little Owls were reported to be regularly perching on Lamp-posts adjacent to the Dumbles, part of our recording area that is hardly ever visited and a Barn Owl was reported from the same area on the 21st and 23rd, both these species are inexplicably rare at Carr Vale nowadays. Single Tawny Owls were noted on the 5th and 26th.

The last three Swifts of the year were seen on the extremely early date on 1st September. One or two Kingfishers were logged on 25 dates, a Green Woodpecker was noted on 16 dates with two recorded on the 22nd whilst single Great-spotted Woodpeckers were seen on 12 dates. Skylark passage was, as ever, difficult to differentiate from local movements but it is thought that at least 53 flew south between the 17th and 30th with a further 37 west and ten south-east with the highest count being 18 south on the 28th with 18 west the following day. Additionally 18 were on a newly sown field on the 17th. (Or was it the same flock of 18 just flying around-who knows?). A total of 55 Sand Martins flew south over 11 dates with peak counts of 21 on the 2nd and 14 on the 3rd, whilst the last bird was noted on the 28th, which is the latest departure date since 1999. Swallows however were noted moving south on 22 dates with a total of 725 being logged. The largest number was 145 on the 13th with 80 on the 14th and 68 on the 22nd whilst 100 were grounded on the 4th. 200 House Martins were noted on the 7th but no discernible passage was identified during the month.

A Tree Pipit was down on the 12th and at least one, more likely two flew south the same day. The first south flying Meadow Pipits of the autumn was seen on the 5th after which southerly passage was logged on 19 dates. A total of 1295 birds were recorded including notable counts of 121 in three hours on the 17th, 225 in three hours on the 26th and 590 in three hours on the 28th. 13 Yellow Wagtails flew south over seven dates with six logged on the 1st whilst the last of the year was seen on the 18th, which is six days earlier than average. Additionally a flock of eight was amongst the cattle on the 11th. Grey Wagtails were recorded on 26 dates, usually in ones or twos but larger counts included four on the 19th and 27th and eight on 20th. At least 19 birds were logged flying south-west including six on the 20th. 94 Pied Wagtails were recorded flying south over 12 dates from the 3rd, with the bulk (63) moving through during the last week when 25 on the 29th was a notable count. Evidence of Dunnock migration was noted on the 28th when three flew south with two south on the 30th. The only Whinchat of the year as present after heavy rain on the 10th (and 11th) and for the first year since 2000 no Redwings were recorded during the month. Five Song Thrushes flew south on the 26th and 20 Mistle Thrushes were present on the 1st with 17 still around on the 14th.

One or two Sedge Warblers were seen on seven dates until the last on the 22nd, which equals the second ever latest departure date (set in 1996), the latest being 28th September 1977 and Reed Warblers were still about at the end of the first week. A Lesser Whitethroat was seen on the 18th and 20th, again the latest departure date since 2000 but the last date for Common Whitethroat was the 7th, five days earlier than average. Chiffchaffs remained in small numbers to the month end with the last Willow Warbler noted on the 3rd, again an early last date. The only Spotted Flycatcher of the year was seen on the 3rd and one or two Coal Tits were seen on 11 dates with a party of five noted on the 20th. Following one on the 6th, Jays were present in good numbers with records for 16 dates, a total of 41 bird days. Many of these were hedgehopping south and the peak count was seven on 26th (six south). 110 Rooks were present on the 2nd with smaller numbers of Jackdaws whilst a Tree Sparrow was seen on the 6th with a party of five present on the 12th.

A total of 35 Chaffinches were logged flying south over ten dates from the 13th but no count made double-figures. Goldfinches were present in good numbers with eight counts of 50 or more and a peak count of 70 on the 13th and 17th. A total of 60 were logged flying south over six dates from the 22nd with a high of 19 on the 26th. The first Siskins of the autumn (two) flew north-west on the 4th and southerly passage, totalling 129, was recorded on 13 dates with the highest daily count being 30 (18 south) on the 29th. Linnets too were noted flying south in small numbers with 59 logged over nine dates with a peak count of 15 on the 22nd whilst adjacent to the Peter Fidler Reserve a flock numbered 40 on the 20th and 60 on the 22nd. The first Lesser Redpoll of the autumn flew south on the 12th and by the end of the month a total of 32 had been seen over

seven dates including 14 south on the 29th; at least seven were also feeding in the area on the 28th. Even Reed Buntings were seen flying south with 24 noted over six dates including eight on the 27th.

Single Hares were seen on just two dates and a Stoat was seen on the 5th. The most notable butterfly species was a Clouded Yellow on the 6th, the only record of the year. Two Commas were seen on the 20th and several Red Admirals were seen later in the month. The last Southern Hawkers of the year were two on the 6th, Migrant Hawkers were still on the wing in the 3rd week, the last being seen on the 22nd and 65 Common Darters were counted on the 2nd with ten still about on the 22nd.

MARK BEEVERS

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2005

Despite reaching our goal of 2000 visits last month our daily visits continued but we were rewarded with a very average 86 species, a tally that included Bittern (3rd record, 2nd this year), Pink-footed Goose (two very good counts), Goldeneye (10th record), Osprey (17th record and latest ever), Peregrine, Little Owl, Rock Pipit, Spinoleta Pipit sp. (probably Water Pipit), Stonechat (14th record), Redwing (a record count), Brambling and Corn Bunting (first since 2002). The reaching of 2000 consecutive visits last month saw a bit of media interest with a piece on Radio Sheffield early in the month and then a longer piece on both East Midlands Today and Look North. Once again with one of the regular observers away for part of the month it fell to Ian Swain and Kevin Navin to keep the home fires burning for which they are duly thanked. The weather was pretty benign for the first three weeks of the month but heavy rain on the 24th saw the water level in Meadow Flash rise to four feet, the first decent flood of the winter, resulting in the formation once again of the Southern Flash.

Little Grebes were a daily feature with three until the 12th then one to three daily until the month end with four on the 23rd. Great-crested Grebes were also recorded on a daily basis with a single bird until the 27th when two were present rising to three from the 28th to the end of the month. Daily records of Cormorant produced up to six birds regularly with higher counts of eight on the 16th and 26th and nine on the 27th, three of which flew south. Ian Swain was very fortunate on the day of the filming as he stayed later than he normally does only to be rewarded with a Bittern that walked out of the reeds briefly on the reserve pond whilst he was diligently checking for Water Rails. Herons were seen daily with a peak count of seven on 2nd, 20th and 21st whilst the wing tagged bird was still present at the end of the month. This autumn has produced notable numbers of Mute Swans and this continued during October with double-figures daily (never less than 15 on all bar four dates during the month) and rising to 21 on the 22nd, the highest count since 1995. 1000 Pink-footed Geese east on the 2nd was a notable count for so early in the autumn but this was eclipsed on the 13th when c2000 flew east. These were followed by another 685 on the 20th. A hybrid Canada / Grey Lag Goose flew north on the 23rd and Canada Geese, although present daily, were only logged in low numbers with a peak count of 115 on the 27th.

Wigeon were seen daily in double-figures from the 2nd until the 19th when 140 were recorded, the highest ever October count with three-figure counts on seven further dates after then. Gadwall continued to amaze us as the flock increased yet further breaking the site record on four more occasions until finally reaching 144 on the 22nd just one off the all time high for the county. An effort to beat that record the following day fell short by four but nevertheless such numbers may mean that Carr Vale is considered nationally important for this species (1% of the country's population, based on the 2002 WEBs count figures). Teal were present in double-figures daily but a count of 126 on the 25th was the highest ever for October and no doubt came about as a result of the heavy overnight rain. Mallard were slightly more numerous than the previous month with three-figure counts logged on 16 dates the highest of which was 159 on the 26th, again no doubt as a result of the earlier heavy rain. The Shoveler record increased further on the 1st when 15 birds were present, another site record, although they declined to 14 the following day and 13 by the 3rd. Nevertheless good numbers remained throughout the month with 14 on the 10th and ten on the 27th. A Pochard was present on the 8th and then from the 14th birds were present daily apart from the 20th with a maximum count of five on the 19th, 28th-30th. Tufted Ducks were logged daily in single figures with a peak of seven on the 24th but the most unusual duck of the month was a female Goldeneye, the first since 2003 that was seen on the 16th. Two or three Ruddy Ducks were present until the 19th after which just a single female remained until the month end.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 14 dates (18 bird / days) with notable counts of three on the 28th but Common Buzzard sightings reduced somewhat. They were still recorded on 11 dates (13 bird / days) of which ten were from within the recording area, although the only count of more than one was three on the 29th to the south of the area. A real surprise on the 27th was an Osprey that flew south over the reserve on the 27th. Not only was it the latest ever for the reserve but it was also the latest for Derbyshire since 1995 and was it enjoyed by the three observers on the mound! Kestrels were logged on 14 dates (19 bird days) with three on the 20th and the Peregrine was seen again between the 9th and 11th and again on the 20th.

Eight Red-legged Partridges were seen on the 1st with two on the 20th and 22nd whilst Common Partridges peaked at 17 on the 9th with ten on the 13th. Water Rails were noted on 17 dates during the month, with three different birds seen on the 4th and at least two recorded on five dates. Golden Plovers were recorded on ten dates with double-figures on seven of these including a high of 73 on the 20th with 61 on the 22nd. Lapwing numbers recovered a little with three-figure counts on seven dates the highest of which being 200 on the 31st but the only other wader recorded during the month was Snipe. Good numbers of this species were recorded with double-figure counts on 12 dates including a notable 27 on the 4th whilst 19 were still present on the 22nd.

Up to 200 Black-headed Gulls were present during the month and Common Gulls became more obvious with records for 11 dates including three on the 5th and 20th. Only small numbers of Lesser Great Black-backed Gulls were noted during the month but 21 Herring Gulls flew south on the 31st. The first Wood Pigeons of the autumn flew south on the 20th and by the end of the month 2238 had been logged flying south-west over five dates. Notable counts were 890 on the 26th when 400 were also feeding and 1060 the following day when 300 were feeding on the Rape. A Little Owl was on the reserve on the 6th and 7th and a Tawny Owl was seen on the 15th.

Kingfishers continued to be seen regularly with single birds noted on 16 dates, as did Green Woodpeckers with two on the 3rd and one on a further 14 dates. Great-spotted Woodpeckers were also regular during the first half of the month with ten records between the 1st and 18th after which one was seen on the 31st. Another 51 Skylarks flew south during the first week of the month with 38 on the 4th, taking the autumn total of birds flying south to 104. Swallows were present until the 10th but just 17 more flew south taking the autumn total to 742 whilst the last House Martins of the year were three on the 9th. Meadow Pipits continued to move south albeit in much reduced numbers but nevertheless another 131 flew south over 13 dates with a high of 51 on the 9th. The autumn total of 1426 is the highest since 2001. A Rock Pipit was seen on the 4th and a Spinoletta Pipit sp. (thought to be a Water Pipit) flew south on the 29th. Frustratingly it didn't call or land. Two Grey Wagtails also flew south-west on the same date after being chased of by a resident bird and one or two birds were noted on 18 dates. Another 18 Pied Wagtails flew south over six dates during the first week taking the autumn total to 112.

A female Stonechat was seen on the 14th and 15th and what is presumed to have been the same bird was seen again on the 20th. The first Fieldfare of the autumn was seen on the 13th and 14 flew south on the 15th. Later in the month larger numbers were noted flying south-west including 130 on the 23rd, 770 on the 25th, 340 on the 26th and 125 on the 28th. The first Redwing of the autumn was seen on the 4th with single figures on three more dates until the 14th when 79 flew south-west. Then some notable south-westerly movements were recorded with 500 on the 15th, 400 on the 18th, 650 on the 19th, 180 on the 26th and 170 on the 27th. However the heaviest movement was on the 20th when 1955 were logged, by far the highest total ever recorded at Carr Vale. A total of 1515 Fieldfare and 4100 Redwing were recorded flying south-west during the month making this autumn one of the best ever for these two species.

A male Blackcap was seen on the 2nd and up to three Chiffchaffs were noted until the 13th with a Coal Tit daily between the 2nd and 5th, on the 9th and on the 30th. Jays were noted on 11 dates with a total of 18 birds / days taking the autumn total to 59 with four noted on the 11th after which there were just two more single birds. Starlings were logged flying west on three dates with 470 on the 28th, 255 on the 29th and 225 on the 31st.

Another 27 Chaffinches were logged flying south over five dates with 17 on the 29th, a date when quite a few finches flew south. At least one Brambling was present on the 4th with singles daily between the 19th and 22nd. Then one flew south on the 27th and c22 were noted on the 29th including 21 that flew south. 30 Goldfinches were present on the 13th and birds were logged flying south on four dates, a total of 34 birds including 23 on the 20th. A total of 61 Siskins was noted flying south over nine dates with a high of 12 on the 8th and 20th although the largest counts were of feeding birds with 20 on the 3rd and 21 on the 27th. A total of 190 Siskins have now been recorded flying south so far this autumn. 17 Linnets south on the 20th was the only count in double-figures of that species whilst three Bullfinches flew south on the 29th. It's been a good autumn for Lesser Redpoll and this continued with 74 logged flying south over 15 dates although the species was logged on a total of 24 dates and the largest count concerned 32 flying north on the 17th. Corn Buntings have not been seen at Carr Vale since 2002 so one that was reported on the 13th was a welcome record for the year.

The only mammal of note was a Stoat was seen on the 3rd but a few insects were still about late in the month. A Migrant Hawker, ten Common Darters and a Red Admiral enjoyed the warm sunshine on the 27th whilst a single Common Darter was seen on the 29th when two Red Admirals flew south.

MARK BEEVERS

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2005

No Report.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT DECEMBER 2005

No Report.