

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY 2008

Continuing on from last year we maintained our daily visits, which produced a record January count of 85 species, the previous highest count being 81 as long ago as 1996, so an excellent start to the year. Highlight of the month was the Bittern that was found just before Christmas (4th record). Other notable species included Pink-footed Geese, Pintail, Peregrine, Oystercatcher, Caspian Gull, Yellow-legged Gull, Iceland Gull (two), Glaucous Gull (at least two), Barn Owl, Little Owl and Brambling. Maintenance work was carried out on the flashes on the 8th when we had a JCB in to remove some juncus that was starting to encircle the middle flash and to renovate the dyke that flows into the southern reed-bed. It was generally mild to the third week after which frosty conditions took over but heavy rain mid month saw the water levels in Meadow Flash rise to over five feet. Don't forget you can input your own sightings directly onto the DWT website (www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk).

A Great-crested Grebe was present daily between the 1st and 13th and again from the 26th and Cormorants were recorded on 29 dates with a maximum of nine on the 29th. The Bittern found at the end of last year was seen daily between the 2nd and 6th and again on the 10th and 11th and Herons peaked at nine on the 20th, 21st, 23rd and 26th. Mute Swans were seen daily with a maximum count of ten on the 12th. Pink-footed Geese were noted on a few dates with all records relating to birds moving north-west. These were 240 on the 6th, 150 on the 11th, 150 on the 17th, 120 on the 22nd, 130 on the 23rd, 150 on the 27th and 75 on the 29th. There was a report of 500 on an unspecified date mid month and additionally one was with the Canada Geese daily from the 28th. Two Grey Lag Goose were seen on the 25th and Canada Geese peaked at 190 on the 23rd although thankfully by the end of the month the flock had reduced to double-figures.

Good numbers of Wigeon remained throughout the month with a maximum count of 175 on the 9th. Gadwall were present daily with double-figure counts on 22 dates and a maximum of 27 on the 4th. Teal numbers were slightly lower than usual but nevertheless peaked at 88 on the 29th and there was a count of 91 Mallard on the 17th. A pair of Pintail came in from the north on the 26th and landed briefly on the reserve pond before departing south and a pair of Shoveler was seen on the 21st. Up to six Pochard were recorded on all but the 1st, Tufted Ducks peaked at 19 on the 23rd and Goosanders were recorded on 14 dates with a peak count of five on the 29th.

Sparrowhawks were seen on 13 dates with two birds noted on the 12th and 26th but Common Buzzards were very scarce with just one on the 2nd. Kestrels were a regular feature with records 21 dates including three on the 29th. Single Peregrines were seen on the 5th, 12th, 19th and 25th. Two Grey Partridges were seen on the 22nd, Water Rails were logged on eight dates and the maximum count of Coot was 63 on the 3rd. The first returning Oystercatcher was present from the 22nd, Golden Plovers were only seen on four dates with a maximum count of 250 on the 29th and Lapwings peaked at 155 on the 2nd. Single Redshanks were recorded on the 2nd and 26th.

As usual Gulls were recorded in good numbers with Black-headed Gulls reaching 1000+ on 26th when three Common Gulls were also seen. 400 Herring Gulls were present on the 3rd and 5th and peaked at 800 on 26th. Also on the 26th a 3rd winter Caspian Gull was seen by a visitor from Gainsborough. Two Iceland Gulls (2nd winter and a 1st / 2nd winter, probably 1st w) were on the flashes on the 25th with the 2nd winter present again on 26th. 1st winter Glaucous Gulls were noted on the 5th, 6th, 12th, 25th and 27th. At least two different birds involved based on plumage details and Great Black-backed Gulls peaked at 150 on 5th.

A Little Owl was seen on the 2nd, a Barn Owl was found roosting on the 10th just 30 yards away from a roosting Tawny Owl and one was seen on the 26th, presumably the same bird. Two Tawny Owls were seen on the 2nd with single birds on four more dates until 11th. Kingfishers were

logged on eight dates, Green Woodpeckers were recorded on seven dates and Great-spotted Woodpeckers were logged on three dates.

Two Grey Wagtails were seen on the 3rd and 24th with single birds on seven dates, Fieldfares were scarce but 50 flew north on the 16th and Redwings were only recorded in very small numbers (less than ten). There was a good count of ten Willow Tits on the 1st with daily sightings of smaller numbers at several of the feeding stations and the first song was heard on the 28th. 30 Magpies roosted on the 26th and a Brambling flew south on the 1st, which is unusual for the time of the year. Siskins were around in very good numbers with a site record of 100 on the 25th whilst 50 were present on the 22nd and 23rd. Lesser Redpolls were also present in good numbers with 30 on the 26th and 29 on the 6th and Bullfinches peaked at 12 on the 2nd. The feeding stations continued to attract good numbers of Reed Bunting with double-figures regular and a peak of 24 on the 22nd.

Mammals included a Hare on the 1st with two on the 15th, a Fox on the 3rd and a Stoat on the 18th

Mark Beevers.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT FEBRUARY 2008

It goes without saying that continuous daily visits were maintained throughout the month during which we recorded an average 82 species. However the year list rose to 91, a new end of February record for the reserve. Highlight of the month was the sighting of two Bitterns simultaneously (5th record and first multiple sighting for the reserve). Other notable records included Pintail, Red Kite (7th record), Peregrine (multiple sightings), Woodcock (two sightings), Black-tailed Godwit (earliest ever record) and Raven (two). It was generally a mild month but there was a cold spell at the end of the third week which resulted in the pools being mainly frozen.

A Great-crested Grebe was present daily until the 7th after which two birds were present until the 16th when the ponds froze over. They returned on the 22nd and were then seen daily until the month end. Cormorants were seen daily between the 1st and 17th and again from the 22nd with a maximum count of 11 on the 24th whilst ten were seen on the 12th and 23rd. After a gap of a month a Bittern was seen on the 15th and again on the 20th but amazingly two were seen simultaneously on the 19th, the first time for quite some years that there has been a multiple occurrence in the county. Herons were logged daily with a high of ten on the 6th and 23rd.-MAB whilst Mute Swans were also logged daily with a maximum count of six on 8th. A Pink-footed Goose was with the Canada Geese between 6th and 13th and a Grey Lag Goose was present on the 8th and 12th with two on the 14th. Canada Geese numbers dropped further peaking at 81 on the 2nd.-MAB.

The Wigeon flock remained in three-figures throughout the month peaking at 175 on the 20th and Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on 15 dates with a maximum count of 22 on the 13th. Teal peaked at 96 on the 17th but numbers had dropped below 50 by the month end whilst the highest count of Mallard was 70 on the 18th. A male Pintail was present very briefly on the 4th and a pair of Shoveler was seen on the 2nd and 19th. Up to five Pochard were seen daily apart from between the 17th and 21st whilst Tufted Ducks peaked at 19 on the 28th. Two male Goosanders were seen on the 2nd and one was seen the following day.

A Red Kite, which was seen on the 3rd, was probably the same bird seen over Grassmoor on the same date and Sparrowhawks were logged on 11 dates. Common Buzzards were very scarce with two on 6th and single birds on the 2nd and 11th. One or two Kestrels were recorded on 21 dates and single Peregrines were seen on the 2nd, 13th, 17th with a pair together on the 22nd. A pair of Red-legged Partridges was seen just south of the recording area at Sutton Scarsdale Flash on 6th and the only record of Grey Partridge concerned a pair on the 26th.

A Water Rail was heard on the 3rd and 4th and Coot peaked at 44 on the 17th. An Oystercatcher was seen on eight dates between the 1st and 22nd after which a second bird was present daily with a third bird noted on the 26th. Golden Plover were recorded on ten dates with a maximum count of 350 (flying south) on the 12th. Lapwings were recorded in three-figures on ten dates with a peak count 330 on the 13th. One or two Snipe were logged on nine dates between the 11th and 28th but more unusual was a Woodcock on the 9th and 21st. A Black-tailed Godwit that flew north-west on the 12th was a rare Derbyshire winter record (just the 4th February record since 1997 and there is also just one January record, all from the Trent Valley). Single Redshanks were seen on the 16th-7th and between the 27th and 29th.

The highest count of Black-headed Gulls was 225+ on 6th and one or two Common Gulls were seen on three dates between the 13th and 25th, otherwise gulls were particularly poor this month despite the excitement further north along the valley. Wood Pigeons were around in large numbers with a peak count of 2000 viewable from the observation mound on 13th and 15 Stock Doves on the 17th was the highest count of the winter. Two Kingfishers were seen on the 27th

with further single birds on eight other dates, a Green Woodpecker was noted on four dates between the 12th and 27th whilst a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 10th.

One or two Grey Wagtails were seen on six dates and 42 Pied Wagtails were counted on the 3rd. 22 Fieldfares flew east on the 24th, which was just one of three records for the month whilst Redwings were only recorded on one date. Willow Tits continued to be recorded at the feeding tables with up to five seen on many dates and Coal Tits were seen on seven dates with three on the 10th. Single Jays were seen on the 16th, 19th and 21st and on the 4th 30 Magpies were counted into roost. Two Ravens also flew south on the 13th.

Siskins were recorded on five dates with all records being in single figures apart from count of 25 on 24th and a similar situation prevailed with Lesser Redpoll with single birds on four dates plus ten on the 15th. Bullfinches were another species that frequently attended the feeding stations with up to six regular plus seven on the 10th and 16th. 24 Yellowhammers counted into roost on the 16th represented the highest count of the winter and one was singing the following day. Up to 30 Reed Buntings were at the feeding stations during the month but a more accurate assessment of the numbers present was gleaned from counting the roosts where 34 came into one roost on 19th and 15 flew into a second roost on 20th. Taking the two roosts together the winter population is estimated at a respectable 50.

A few mammals were noted during the month including a Water Vole on the 14th, a Fox on the 16th and a Weasel in front of the mound on the 11th and 13th. A brave (or foolish) Common Frog was seen on the 5th but perhaps the most important mammal record concerned the numbers of Hares that were seen from the observation mound. Although not within the recording area up to ten were seen regularly in the large field below Sutton Scarsdale Hall, a good number nowadays.

Mark Beevers.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2008

The daily visits were maintained throughout the month during which we recorded an average 89 species. Ten new species for the year were logged taking the year list to 101, the third year in a row that we have exceeded 100 species before the end of March and this year we broke 100 species mark on the 24th, which is earlier than ever before. 101 species is also a new end of March record for the reserve. Highlight of the month was the fourth record of Nuthatch and other notable records included Whooper Swan (three records including a flock of 33), Shelduck, Peregrine (two sightings), Iceland Gull, Barn Owl (two records), Swallow, Stonechat (three records), Blackcap and Brambling. It was generally a mild month although there were several periods of windy weather and there was very heavy rain on the 16th, which resulted in a 5'6" flood-the highest of the winter although the waters quickly receded.

A pair of Great-crested Grebes was present daily being joined by a third bird on ten dates at the end of the month. Cormorants were seen daily with a peak count of nine on the 1st when Herons, which were also logged daily, also peaked at nine. Mute Swans were also logged daily with a maximum count of four on nine dates. An adult Whooper Swan was found on the 10th and remained until 0710 the following morning when it departed south-east. A flock of 33 Whooper Swans flew north-west over the Sutton Scarsdale Ridge on the 17th and they were followed half an hour later by a single bird and at the end of the month another adult spent 20 minutes on the reserve before it departed north-east. Grey Lag Geese were recorded on five dates with a peak count of six on the 30th with five on the 15th and 19th whilst Canada Geese numbers remained in double-figures all month with a high of 82 on the 22nd.

A female Shelduck was seen on the 9th. The Wigeon flock remained in three-figures until the 27th with a maximum count of 169 on the 5th but by the end of the month it had declined to 21. Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on all bar one date with a maximum count of 27 on the 11th and Teal peaked at 53 on the 17th. A male Shoveler was seen on the 10th and 12th whilst a pair was present on the 31st. A female Pochard was seen daily between the 2nd and 4th whilst Tufted Ducks peaked at 18 on the 6th and 17th. Two Goosanders flew north on the 15th.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 11 dates with three together on the 8th and Common Buzzards were seen more frequently than of late with records on 14 dates. As usual most were seen from the observation mound to the south of the area with a peak count of seven in the air at once on the 17th and 19th. One to three Kestrels were recorded on 23 dates and larger numbers included four on the 19th and five on the 18th. Single male Peregrines were seen on the 16th and 28th, a pair of Red-legged Partridges was seen on the 11th and a pair of Grey Partridges was recorded on the 18th with another the following day.

A Water Rail was recorded on the 5th and 9th and 41 Coot were counted on the 25th. Oystercatchers were seen daily with a pair on 22 dates, three on eight dates and four on the 24th. The first Little-ringed Plover was seen on the 21st, although two were just south of the recording area at Sutton Scarsdale Flash the day before, and single birds were then logged on four dates with two on the 31st. A Ringed Plover dropped in briefly on the 18th before departing north-west and Golden Plovers were recorded on 11 dates with a maximum count of 350 (flying south from Sutton Scarsdale towards Hardwick) on the 17th. The highest count of Lapwings was 106 on 17th and Snipe were logged on 26 dates but the only double-figure count was 12 on the 26th. Single Curlews were seen on five dates from the 4th and two were logged flying north on the 15th and 18th and Redshank numbers increased slowly during the month peaking at seven on the 15th and 21st.

The highest count of Black-headed Gulls was 123 on the 3rd and one or two Common Gulls were seen on five dates between the 4th and 22nd. An Iceland Gull flew north on the 17th and 23 Great Black-backed Gulls dropped in the 29th. Single Barn Owls were reported on the 10th and 31st at opposite ends of the recording area, Kingfishers were seen on eight dates, a Green Woodpecker was noted on three dates with two on the 31st and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 14th.

16 Sand Martins that flew north on the 15th were the first of the year and other early ones were two on the 17th. Birds were then seen daily from the 27th and the first Swallow of the year was seen on the 29th. Meadow Pipit passage was fairly light with a total of 143 logged flying north over nine dates with a peak count of 55 on the 19th. Additionally there was a grounded flock of 60 on the 16th. A Grey Wagtail was seen on 13 dates and 40 Pied Wagtails were present on the 22nd and 28th. It was a good month for Stonechats with a male on the 9th and females on the 15th and 17th. Fieldfares were recorded on seven dates but the highest count was only 70 on the 27th whilst Redwings were recorded on nine dates with a high of 60 on the 8th. The first Blackcap of the year was typically a singing male on the 31st whilst the first Chiffchaff of the year was found on the 15th, these rising to nine singing males by the 29th (and 31st).

Willow Tits continued to be recorded at the feeding tables with up to five seen on many dates and one or two Coal Tits were seen on 12 dates. Bird of the month was a Nuthatch seen by one observer on the 24th, this being just the 4th record for Carr Vale. Single Jays were seen on four dates, a Brambling flew south-east on the 15th and three Siskins were seen on the 19th. Lesser Redpolls were only seen on three dates (all between the 13th and 16th) with a peak count of 22 on the 15th whilst Bullfinches continued to attend the feeding stations with up to six regularly present. Reed Buntings were also regular attendees at the feeding stations during the month and 30 left the mound bird table to roost in the Southern Marsh on the 27th.

Hares continued to be seen regularly from the observation mound in the large field below Sutton Scarsdale Hall and reached an exceptional 23 on the 29th. A Weasel was seen on the 13th and 29th and a Roe Deer was seen on the 24th, a typical spring record. The first Butterfly of the year was a Small Tortoiseshell on the 30th with three the following day when a Peacock was also seen.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2008

April was a poor month with just 97 species recorded, the first time since 2003 that we have failed to reach 100 species for the month. My being away for the latter half of the month didn't help but once again Ian and Kevin kept up the daily visits and we remain on target for our 3000th consecutive daily visit on 10th June. 17 new birds for the year took the yearlist to 118, which is about average but highlights were non-existent with the best birds being Green Sandpiper, White Wagtail, Grasshopper Warbler and Brambling, yes it really was that poor a month.

Two Little Grebes were seen on the 11th with a single bird noted on the 13th whilst up to four Great-crested Grebes were present daily. Cormorants were seen on all bar one date until the 26th with a peak count of seven on the 10th and up to three Herons were seen on 25 dates during the month. Mute Swans were logged daily with a maximum count of five on the 13th and 30th. Two Pink-footed Geese were present on the 16th and 17th and Grey Lag Geese were recorded on 27 dates with notable counts of nine on the 3rd and eight on the 27th whilst Canada Geese numbers remained in double-figures all month with a high of 69 on the 5th.

Two Shelduck were seen on the 1st with a male on the 5th and another pair on the 27th. 21 Wigeon were still present on the 1st but they had declined to six by the 4th, this group remaining until the 8th after which all departed. Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on all bar two dates with a maximum count of 21 on the 1st and 4th and Teal were recorded in double-figures until the 24th with a peak count of 35 on the 6th. A Mallard nest with 15 eggs was found on the 13th and a pair of Shoveler was seen on the 3rd and 14th. Tufted Ducks were recorded in double-figures throughout the month with a peak of 23 on the 8th and 28th.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 12 dates with and Common Buzzards were seen on 12 dates. As usual most were seen from the observation mound to the south of the area with a peak count of eight in the air at once on the 10th including four over the reserve. One to three Kestrels were recorded on 27 dates and four were logged on the 12th whilst a Peregrine was seen on the 8th and 10th. A pair of Grey Partridges was recorded on the 6th and 10th.

Five Oystercatchers were seen on the 1st and birds were then seen daily until the 26th. Up to four Little-ringed Plovers were seen daily but six were counted on the 19th and 300 Golden Plovers were seen on the 5th with 34 the following day, which proved to be the last of the winter. A Dunlin flew west on the 1st, another was seen on the 16th and two were present on the 21st and 22nd. Snipe were logged on 24 dates but the highest count was only eight on the 5th. Single Curlews were seen on the 3rd (east) and 21st but Redshanks were daily visitors until the 26th with a peak count of nine on the 2nd. A Green Sandpiper that was seen on the 14th, 16th, 19th and 21st was an unusual spring visitor unlike the Common Sandpiper which was present on the 25th, although this bird was a later arrival than usual. A first winter Common Gull on the 11th was the only one of the month whilst the only other notable gull record for the month concerned a count of 116 Great Black-backed Gulls flying north on the 3rd. Two Common Terns on the 17th were the first of the year and quite early and one or two were seen daily between the 23rd and 28th apart from on the 27th when three were present.

A Cuckoo was present on the 30th, one or two Little Owls were seen on 26 days during the month and the first (six) Swifts of the year were recorded on the 26th. Kingfishers were seen on six dates, a Green Woodpecker was noted on six dates with two on the 11th and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on three dates. Sand Martins were recorded on all bar two dates with notable counts of 33 on the 3rd, 66 on the 5th and 35 on the 21st. The highest count of Swallows was 35 on the 18th and after the first House Martin of the year on the 9th they peaked at 65 on the 30th. The first Yellow Wagtail of the year was seen on the 11th with daily records then until the 13th. Thereafter recorded on nine dates with a peak count of eight on the 21st (with five the following day). 34 Pied Wagtails were counted on the 6th but the only White Wagtail of the year so far was seen on the 13th.

A breeding bird survey (counting singing males) on the 13th produced 27 Wrens, 11 Dunnocks and 33 Robins. A male Wheatear was present between the 12th and 16th, another was seen on the

24th and two were present on the 26th. 19 male Blackbirds were also located on the 13th whilst Fieldfares were recorded on six dates with 130 on the 2nd, 100 on the 5th and 6th and the last ten of the winter on the 24th.

The first Grasshopper Warbler of the year was reeling on the 21st with another on the 23rd. then two on the 24th and three on three out of the last four days of the month. A male Sedge Warbler was seen on the 23rd, increasing to three by the end of the month and after a very early Reed Warbler on the 12th, birds were logged daily from the 25th reaching six by the 30th. The first Lesser Whitethroats (two) of the year were seen on the 22nd with two more present on the 29th and 30th and the first Common Whitethroat of the year was seen on the 21st with three in by the 30th. A Garden Warbler was seen on the 26th and six male Blackcaps were located on the 13th when 19 singing Chiffchaffs and 11 singing Willow Warblers were also located. A Goldcrest was still singing on the 26th and four pairs of Long-tailed Tits were found during survey work on the 13th. Four Willow Tit territories were also found during early April.

Single Jays were seen on five dates plus four on the 11th, ten singing male Chaffinches were found on the 13th and a female Brambling was on the gate feeding station on the 9th, the first time that this species has visited a feeding table. The only Siskin of the month was seen on the 22nd whilst Lesser Redpolls were seen on three dates (all between the 10th and 14th) with a peak count of 26 on the 14th. Eight Bullfinches were seen on the 15th, 24th and 25th with up to six on many other dates and small numbers of Reed Buntings continued to use the feeding stations.

A Comma was seen on the 1st with another on the 10th when both Small Tortoiseshell and Peacock were noted. The first Green-veined White of the year was seen on the 22nd when two Brimstones were seen. The first Orangetip of the year was recorded on the 23rd and another Brimstone was seen on the 29th. Hares continued to be seen regularly from the observation mound in the large field below Sutton Scarsdale Hall and 20 were counted on the 1st with 14 on the 10th. As the crops became taller however sightings became fewer later in the month. Other mammals included a Water Vole on the 6th, a Fox on the 24th and a Weasel on the 5th, 8th, 10th and 18th whilst a Stoat was logged on the on the 6th. Finally a male Roe Deer was seen on the 3rd, 6th and 8th.

Mark Beevers.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2008

After the very poor April May was a distinct improvement with 98 species recorded, the highest ever May total, beating 96 recorded in both 1999 and 2000. The year list climbed to a respectable 125, equalling the total set last year and the second equal highest end of May figure (the highest end of May total is 128). As a result there were a few more notable species including Marsh Harrier (26th record), Osprey (21st record), Hobby, Peregrine, Water Rail, tundrae Ringed Plover, Ruff, Green Sandpiper, Kittiwake (19th record), Black Tern (4th record, first since 2000), Whinchat, Redwing (latest ever record), Wheatear, Grasshopper Warbler and Roe Deer.

Single Little Grebes were seen five dates between the 7th and 30th whilst up to four Great-crested Grebes were present daily. Cormorants as usual became very scarce with single birds on the 11th and 12th, three north on the 17th and two north on the 30th. Herons were seen on 29 dates during the month but the highest count was only three on several dates, which is normal at this time of year. Mute Swans were logged daily with a peak count of 11 on the 18th whilst ten were present between the 16th and 19th. Four Grey Lag Geese were present on the 6th and 14th with one or two on 11 other dates during the first half of the month. Canada Geese numbers remained in double-figures all month with a high of 69 on the 21st.

Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on all but two dates with a maximum count of 18 on the 25th and 31st and a pair of Teal was present until the 15th after which the female remained until the month end. Just four broods of Mallard were located during the month whilst single Shoveler were seen on the 10th and 30th, with two on the 14th. Tufted Ducks were recorded in double-figures throughout the month with a peak of 24 on the 16th.

A female Marsh Harrier flew south-east over the mound on the 11th and there is another report of a Marsh Harrier seen mid-month, which has to be followed up yet with the observer.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 14 dates (15 bird / days) and Common Buzzards were seen on 13 dates (24 bird / days) with five on the 18th and four on the 26th. An Osprey arrived from the south but was harried by Crows and returned that way on the 20th (this species has been seen every year since 1998 at Carr Vale). Kestrels were recorded on 29 dates (49 bird / days) and four were logged on the 3rd and 7th whilst the only Hobby of the month was seen on the 4th and a Peregrine was seen on the 6th and 10th. A Red-legged Partridge was seen on the 4th and three Grey Partridges were recorded on the 20th and 29th. A pair of Water Rails was seen on the 24th. Oystercatchers were seen on all but the 1st with generally one to three present whilst higher counts included four on the 11th and six on the 8th. Little-ringed Plovers were seen daily with a peak count of six on the 8th, 18th and 20th-21st but the only Ringed Plover records were one on the 22nd and three on the 30th, two of the latter being birds of the arctic tundrae race. Single Dunlin were recorded on the 5th, 13th, 16th, 20th, 22nd, 28th and 31st but the best wader of the month was a female Ruff that was seen on the 14th. The last Snipe of the winter was seen the 5th and a Curlew flew north on the 13th. One or two Redshanks were logged on 14 dates but there was no breeding attempt again this year. A Green Sandpiper dropped in late on the 7th and single Common Sandpipers were logged on 11 dates between the 5th and 26th with two on the 4th, 7th and 14th.

An adult Kittiwake called in briefly on the 24th before it continued on its way north and Common Terns were recorded daily from the 2nd with two pairs taking up residence from the 4th.

Additional single birds joined them on the 7th, 10th and 29th but on the 9th an additional group of six dropped in briefly giving a rare double-figure count for the reserve. Bird of the month was a Black Tern which arrived at 1153 and departed north at 1202 on the 21st. This represents only the fourth record for the reserve and was the first since 2000.

17 singing Wood Pigeons were located during survey work on the 9th and 200 non-breeders were feeding on Rape on the 15th. A Cuckoo was present on seven dates between the 5th and 15th and one or two Little Owls were seen on 23 days during the month with three seen on the 3rd whilst a Tawny Owl was seen on the 9th. Swifts peaked at 80 on the 29th, Kingfishers were seen on ten dates and Green Woodpecker was noted on 12 dates. Sand Martins were in very short supply with

one to five on eight dates until the 15th after which none were seen. Swallows were present in very low numbers but a notable record concerned a bird that had been ringed in Madrid, which was caught by the ringers in the sewage works on the 25th. House Martin numbers also seemed low and the highest count of the month was just 53 on the 28th. Yellow Wagtails were logged on 27 dates during the month with a high of seven on the 4th and an un-seasonal Grey Wagtail was seen on the 12th.

On the 9th singing bird totals included 37 Wrens, 11 Dunnocks, 17 Robins and 28 Blackbirds. The same day a cracking male Whinchat was seen and three Wheatears were reported on the 3rd. Four singing Song Thrushes were found on the 9th and a flock of 11 Mistle Thrushes was present on the 23rd. Another contender for the bird of the month was a Redwing, which was initially found on the 12th and subsequently seen on the 19th and 20th, the latter date being the latest spring date for the county (although there are two summer records).

It's been a good spring for Grasshopper Warblers with one or two on nine dates during the first half of the month plus at least four and probably five singing on the 5th. Later in the month one was reeling on four out of five dates from the 27th. Six Sedge Warblers were seen on the 2nd with five singing males located on the 9th and 29th whilst 13 singing Reed Warblers were counted on the 9th. Lesser Whitethroats were very scarce with three singing males on the 2nd and single birds on three other dates until the 14th whilst eight singing Common Whitethroats were seen on the 9th with seven still singing on the 20th. Garden Warblers were heard singing most days with a peak count of three on three dates prior to the 9th whilst 17 singing Blackcaps were located on the 9th when 13 singing Chiffchaffs and 30 singing Willow Warblers were also located. A Goldcrest was also still singing on the 9th. Fledged Long-tailed Tits were first seen on the 23rd but more notable was the first breeding record of Coal Tit when a pair with five recently fledged young was seen on the 29th. Two active Willow Tit nests were also found during the month with fledged young noted from the 31st and a maximum count of five on the 22nd.

Single Jays on the 2nd, 9th and 10th were unusual and 20 singing male Chaffinches is probably a record count for the area. Six Bullfinches were seen on the 7th and 9th with nine singing Reed Buntings and four male Yellowhammers noted on the latter date.

Three Large Red Damsels and a Blue-tailed Damsel were seen on the 21st, single Brimstones were seen on the 5th, 12th and 22nd with two on the 8th and single Common Blues were logged on the 6th and 11th. Water Voles were seen on the 5th and 14th, eight Hares were seen on the 2nd with five on the 1st and one or two on 14 other dates and single Foxes were seen on five dates with two on the 21st. Roe Deer sightings continued with a female on the 3rd and 4th, a pair on the 8th and 9th and a male on the 17th. It's possible that three animals were in the area and this year is certainly the best ever for this species. On the downside the resident Red-eared Terrapin reappeared on the 24th and was seen again on the 26th and 29th.

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2008

Well we did it! June 10th was a red-letter day in the history of birding at Carr Vale when we notched up our 3000th consecutive days coverage, which meant that between us we hadn't missed a day since 2nd March 2000. Thanks to everyone who has put in the time to ensure that we completed this remarkable achievement. June was a fairly quiet month but wasn't without its surprises. Pride of place goes to the female Garganey which was present for one day it being the first at Carr Vale since 2000. Other notable species included Grey Lag Goose (always scarce in June), Hobby, Water Rail, Black-tailed Godwit, Common Gull, Grasshopper Warbler, Tree Sparrow, Siskin (unusual in summer), Common Crossbill (6th record), Banded Demoiselle and Roe Deer. The weather was fairly benign in complete contrast to the atrocious June we had last year. 85 species were recorded during the month, the lowest June count since 2005 but nevertheless the year list climbed to 128, the second highest end of June figure.

Single Little Grebes were seen on the 7th and 29th and up to four Great-crested Grebes were present daily. Cormorants were very scarce with three on the 1st and singles on the 8th, 29th and 30th whilst Herons were seen on 29 dates during the month with a peak count of six on the 11th. Mute Swans were logged daily with a peak count of 12 on the 12th and 13th and with double-figure counts on a further 14 dates. Eight Grey Lag Geese were present on the 5th, four flew south-west on the 8th and two were present on the 27th whilst Canada Geese numbers remained in double-figures all month with a high of 48 on the 3rd.

Gadwall were recorded in double-figures daily with a maximum count of 29 adults on the 12th, 13th and 26th. The female Teal from the end of May was last seen on the 4th after which a male was seen on the 8th, three males were reported on the 23rd and three were present on the 25th with a female on the 28th. A female Garganey was found on Meadow Flash on the 28th before it moved to the middle flash where it remained until at least mid-afternoon and Tufted Ducks were recorded in double-figures on 19 dates with a peak count of 22 on the 5th.

Sparrowhawks were logged on nine dates (ten bird / days) with a female ringed on the 18th and two on the 27th. Common Buzzards were seen on 14 dates (26 bird / days) with five on the 10th being the largest number recorded and Kestrels were recorded on 29 dates (65 bird / days) with five seen from the mound on the 4th. After a gap of 41 days the second Hobby of the year was seen on the 15th and from the 22nd birds became more frequent with singles on the 22nd, 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th and two on the 27th. A Peregrine was seen south of the recording area on the 1st and a Water Rail was heard on the 15th.

Oystercatchers were seen on 27 dates with a peak count of four on the 2nd and 5th and a female was ringed on the 18th. Little-ringed Plovers were seen daily apart from the 29th with a maximum count of four adults on the 16th. Lapwing numbers started to increase reaching 100 by the 14th and peaking at 130 on the 29th. The best wader of the month was a Black-tailed Godwit on the 29th and the same day a Curlew flew west. Three Redshank were seen on the 2nd and 9th with one or two on a further nine dates including two juveniles from elsewhere on the 29th. A 2nd summer Common Gull flew south on the 28th and the two pairs of Common Terns were seen daily with an extra pair on the 4th and 9th and an extra singleton on the 8th, 10th and 29th.

A Cuckoo was seen on the 1st, one or two Little Owls were seen on 29 dates and two Kingfishers were seen on the 8th with single birds on another 17 dates. A Green Woodpecker was seen on the 1st, 4th, 15th and 27th. Sand Martins remained very scarce with one or two on five dates plus four, which flew south on the 29th and the only count of House Martins was 38 on the 20th. Yellow Wagtails were logged on 23 dates during the month but no more than three were seen on

any date and the first Grey Wagtail of the autumn was seen on the 14th with singles on a further three dates plus a flock of three which flew north on the 29th.

A Grasshopper Warbler was seen on the 9th, five Sedge Warblers were seen on the 4th, a singing Lesser Whitethroat was present on the 29th and a Garden Warbler sang until the 13th. It looks like Goldcrest bred locally as two recently fledged juveniles were seen on the 1st whilst a male was still singing on the 24th and 28th, with a juvenile seen on the latter date also. A flock of 30 Long-tailed Tits was seen on the 1st and the pair of Coal Tits with five recently fledged young, which are thought to have bred within the recording area for the first time, were seen on the 2nd.

200 Rooks were seen on the 14th and 228 were counted flying over the area on the 28th. A Tree Sparrow flew south on the 2nd and a Siskin, which flew north on the 25th, was unusual but started a run of records which included one on the 28th, three south on the 29th and five north on the 30th. The most unusual passerine record for the month concerned two Common Crossbills, which flew north-west on the 27th, these being just the 6th record for the site. Five Bullfinches were still using the mound feeding station on the 2nd.

So far it has been a poor year for Drangonflies and Damselflies but by the 10th Large Red, Blue-tailed and Azure Damsels, Emporer, Four-spotted Chaser and Broad-bodied Chaser had all been logged the latter being a male on the 10th when ten Four-spotted Chasers were also logged. The only other species of note was a Banded Demoiselle, which was seen on the 27th. Very few Butterflies were noted the best of which was a Brimstone on the 4th. In a good month for mammals and Hares were seen on 19 dates with a high of six on the 14th, Foxes were seen on the 7th and daily between the 12th and 16th with a female and half-grown cub recorded on the 12th. A female Roe Deer was seen on the 7th, then at the month end a pair was seen on the 28th and 30th with the male present on the 29th. A Weasel was watched raiding an unidentified Tits nest on the 6th and the resident Red-eared Terrapin was seen again on the 4th, 5th, 26th and 27th.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT JULY 2008

The weather during July was not particularly summery but a hot sunny weekend at the end of the month produced the most notable event of the month, if not the year, and it didn't involve a bird! Small Red-eyed Damselfly were first discovered in the UK in 1999 and have gradually spread north-west through England reaching two sites the Trent Valley and one site in North-east Derbyshire in 2006 and a further site in the Trent Valley in 2007. On 26th July they were added to the Carr Vale list when six were found on the Peter Fidler Reserve and this addition takes the Carr Vale dragonfly list to 19 species. Other notable species included Wigeon (2nd July record), Hobby, Peregrine, Black-tailed Godwit (three records), Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Common Gull, Whinchat, up to three singing Grasshopper Warblers, Tree Sparrow and Siskin (unusual in summer). 14 species of Dragon and Damselfly were recorded whilst 16 species of Butterfly seen. Roe Deer continued to frequent the copse to the west of the reserve and three Grass Snakes were seen in one afternoon. 89 species were logged during the month but the year list rose by just one to 129.

Little Grebes have been scarce this year so it was pleasing to have a pair on the 8th and single birds on 11 other dates whilst up to four Great-crested Grebes were present daily. Cormorants were very scarce with one on five dates, two on the 20th and a good summer count of seven on the 13th whilst Heron numbers remained low with a peak count of five on the 13th. Mute Swans were logged daily with a peak count of seven on five dates between the 6th and 12th and Canada Geese numbers started to climb at the end of the month reaching 128 by the 30th.

A male Wigeon on the 11th was a notable summer record and Gadwall were recorded in double-figures daily with a maximum count of 51 adults and young on the 27th. A female Teal was seen on the 14th, five were present on the 24th with one on the 27th and two on the 29th. Mallard numbers typically started to rise towards the end of the month and had reached 94 by the 27th and a Shoveler was present on the 19th. Five Shoveler were present on the 26th and 29th with two on the 27th and four on three dates from the 28th. 12 Tufted Ducks on the 11th was the only double-figure count for the month.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 13 dates, Common Buzzards were seen on just six dates (seven bird / days) and Kestrels were recorded on 29 dates (44 bird / days) with five seen from the mound on the 23rd and 27th. Hobbies continued their good run of sightings from June with single birds on the 1st, 5th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 16th, 19th, 21st and 26th and two were seen together on the 10th. A juvenile Peregrine was seen on the 8th and 14th with it and an adult on the 10th with another adult on the 31st.

63 Coot with 19 young were counted on the 17th and two Oystercatchers were seen on the 1st, 4th and 5th with one on the 9th. Little-ringed Plovers were seen on ten dates between the 5th and 16th but the highest count was only three on the 11th. Lapwing numbers remained fairly consistent between 100 and 140 but 200 were present on the 27th. Two Dunlin were reported on the 16th and a single bird was seen on the 24th. The first (two) Snipe of the autumn were seen on the 26th after which there were daily records with a high of five on the 28th. Once again the best wader species of the month was Black-tailed Godwit with a flock of 16 flying south on the 6th, one on the flashes on the 29th and a group of eight, which flew off south-east on the 30th. A Redshank was seen on the 2nd, two juveniles were present on the 4th, an adult was seen on the 16th and a juvenile was seen on the 25th. Two Greenshanks dropped in during a heavy shower on the 5th but they soon departed and the same shower produced a Green Sandpiper with another heard on the 27th. Two Common Sandpipers were noted on the 2nd and 11th with single birds on three more dates during the first half of the month and daily from the 24th into August.. Once again the only gull of any note was an adult Common Gull which was seen on the 23rd whilst Common Terns were seen daily with six adults and three juveniles on the 2nd and 5th being the highest count. A Cuckoo was seen on the 11th, one or two Little Owls were seen on 27 dates and Tawny Owl young were heard calling on the 15th. 220 Swifts on the 16th was the highest count of the year and two Kingfishers were seen on the 10th, 23rd and 27th with single birds noted on 22 other

dates. Three Green Woodpeckers were seen on the 2nd and 10th with two on the 4th and 26th and singles on 18 more dates but the only records of Great-spotted Woodpecker concerned single birds on the 14th and 31st. On the 9th a five-hour watch produced a site record of 296 Sand Martins flying south but there was only one other count in double-figures (ten on the 19th). Single Yellow Wagtails were logged on 13 dates during the month and two Grey Wagtails were seen on the 13th with one on nine other dates.

A Whinchat on the 6th was a bit of a surprise as it represented the first July record since 2003 and a Grasshopper Warbler had recommenced singing by the 22nd. Birds were then heard singing on six more dates before the end of the month with two reeling on the 26th and 30th and three reeling on the 27th. A Lesser Whitethroat was present on the 27th and one or two Goldcrests were seen on three dates prior to the 9th. A flock of 40 Long-tailed Tits was reported on the 8th and five Tree Sparrows were present briefly on the 23rd. Goldfinch numbers started to increase during the month rising from 17 on the 6th to 40 by the 26th and the summer influx of Siskins continued with four on the 1st, three on the 2nd, one on the 26th and another on the 31st. The first three weeks continued to ensure that it was a poor year for Dragonflies and Damselflies with just the odd sighting of Four-spotted Chaser and two Brown Hawkets on the 14th. The first Common Darter of the year was seen on the 18th and a Broad-bodied Chaser was seen the following day. Warmer weather from the 19th brought about an improvement with three Brown Hawkets, two Emperors, six Four-spotted Chasers and seven Black-tailed Skimmers. However it was the weekend of the 26th which saw more intense dragonfly recording with the discovery of several Small Red-eyed Damselflies on the Peter Fidler Reserve pools. On four out of five dates between the 26th and 30th good counts of 13 species were made and the peak counts were seven Brown Hawkets, six Emperors and ten Four-spotted Chasers on the 26th, 14 Large Red-eyed Damselflies, c20 Emerald Damselflies, c60 Azure Damselflies, c60 Blue-tailed Damselflies, 15 Common Blue Damselflies, 50+ Black-tailed Skimmers, ten Four-spotted Chasers and 15 Common Darters on the 28th and six Small Red-eyed Damselflies on the 30th. Single Southern Hawkets were seen on the 26th and 28th and the first Migrant Hawket of the year was seen on the 30th.

Butterflies too were well recorded with 16 species logged during the month. Particularly notable was a count of 12 Marbled Whites on the 13th with one to three on five other dates between the 5th and 23rd. Ringlets were about in good numbers with records for 15 dates from the 2nd and a peak of ten also on the 13th when a Holly Blue was also seen. Commas were seen on nine dates with a count of four on the 21st, there was a count of 40 Gatekeepers on the 23rd, a Brimstone and ten Small Skippers were seen on the 27th and the first Red Admiral of the year was seen on the 28th. Other Wildlife included Hares on 14 dates, Foxes on seven dates, one or two Roe Deer on six dates and three different Grass Snakes on the Peter Fidler Reserve on the 27th. All in all an excellent month for natural history with something for everyone.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2008

It goes without saying that once again we managed daily coverage of the site during which we recorded 96 species and four new species for the year took the year list to 133, the third highest end of August count despite the very average monthly species tally. Weather-wise it was a very disappointing month with more autumnal than summer type weather. Nevertheless a few notable species were logged including a Little Egret (11th record), the 2nd Osprey of the year (and the 22nd ever) and a Grey Plover (8th record but the first since 2003). Other notable species included Shelduck, Wigeon, Hobby, Peregrine, Water Rail, Black-tailed Godwit (6th record this year), Greenshank, Yellow-legged Gull, Barn Owl, Tree Pipit, Wheatear, Grasshopper Warbler and Tree Sparrow. 15 species of Dragon and Damselfly were recorded including Large Red-eyed and Small Red-eyed Damselflies and Ruddy Darter whilst 10 species of Butterfly seen. Roe Deer continued to frequent the copse to the west of the reserve and Foxes were a regular site around the reserve pools.

Little Grebes were recorded on 15 dates, usually one or two birds but with three on the 30th and 31st whilst up to four Great-crested Grebes were present daily until the 13th with one remaining to the 24th. Single Cormorants were seen on three dates up to the 8th after which birds were seen daily with three or four most days and five on the 14th. A Little Egret was present very briefly on the 12th allowing just two observers to see the 11th site record whilst Heron numbers remained low with a peak count of eight on the 9th and 27th. Six Mute Swans were logged daily, Grey Lag Geese were present daily between the 3rd and 29th with a peak count of four on the 4th and Canada Geese numbers peaked at 540 on the 14th.

A juvenile Shelduck was present on 20 dates between the 3rd and 25th and Wigeon were present daily between the 19th and 25th with five between the 19th and 21st and again on the 23rd. Gadwall were recorded in double-figures daily with 15 counts of 50 or more, the highest being 70 on the 24th and after one or two Teal on six dates until the 8th numbers started to climb from the 9th reaching 22 on the 29th. Mallard numbers continued to rise and reached 173 by the 20th but shooting around the reserve edges from the Bank Holiday onwards reduced their numbers towards the month end. Shovelers were recorded on 12 dates until the 13th with four on the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th, then two were seen on the 21st and a male was present on the last two days of the month. Tufted Ducks were present daily but the highest count was only six on the 26th.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 14 dates (17 bird / days) and Common Buzzards were seen on 17 dates (25 bird / days) with a maximum count of three over the reserve on the 13th. An Osprey circled the flashes a couple of times then flew off south-east at 0900 on the 23rd and Kestrels were recorded on 25 dates (39 bird / days) with five seen from the mound on the 4th and four present on the 17th. Hobbies continued their good run of sightings with single birds on the 6th, 10th, 13th, 25th and 27th with two on the 16th and 17th. Single Peregrines were seen on six dates between the 1st and 12th on which date the bird was identified as a juvenile male.

A pair of Grey Partridge with four young was seen on the 15th and 20th and a female Pheasant with five young was located on the 17th whilst a juvenile Water Rail on the 5th may have been a locally bred bird as this species was recorded on the reserve in June and 84 Coot were counted on the 30th. The first Golden Plover of the autumn was heard calling on the 31st but the highlight of the month amongst the waders was a summer plumaged Grey Plover that flew south in atrocious weather on the 18th. The Lapwing flock remained in three-figures for most of the month with a peak count of 175 on the 5th but Snipe were very scarce with a single bird on four dates between the 1st and 6th plus two on the 15th. A Black-tailed Godwit was present early on the 5th and a Curlew flew south on the 9th. A Redshank was seen on the 13th and single Greenshank were seen on the 9th and 15th with two on the 20th, all of which were short-stayers. Single Common

Sandpipers were noted on the 1st and 2nd, 8th and 11th with another daily between the 17th and 22nd. Black-headed Gull numbers increased during the month with notable counts of 400 on the 8th and 25th and 500 on the 27th. Single Common Gulls were seen on the 8th, 12th, 17th and 30th whilst the highest count of Lesser Black-backed Gulls was 300 on the 8th. An adult Herring Gull was present on the 30th and an adult Yellow-legged Gull was seen on the 8th and 9th. An adult and juvenile Common Tern were seen until the 4th after which a juvenile was present on the 10th and 11th, three flew west on the 18th and one flew south-east on the 30th.

One or two Little Owls were seen on 22 dates, a Barn Owl was seen on the 14th, 21st and 22nd and two Tawny Owls were seen on the 3rd with another heard on the 28th. The highest count of Swifts was 70 on the 13th and the last of the year so far was seen on the 29th. One or two Kingfishers were seen 26 dates and three were seen on the 8th. Single Green Woodpeckers were seen on 14 dates and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 3rd, 5th, 17th and 18th. Sand Martins were seen on ten dates but the only notable count was 57 flying south in two hours on the 30th. Swallows peaked at 100 on the 24th and 60 House Martins were counted on the 31st. The first Tree Pipit of the autumn flew south on the 30th when four Meadow Pipits also flew south. Yellow Wagtails were logged on 11 dates during the month with a total of eight noted flying south over four dates including three on the 28th. Although Grey Wagtails were only seen on six dates records did include five on the 27th and four on the 29th.

A Wheatear was seen on the 10th and nine Mistle Thrushes were seen on the 17th with seven the 28th. A Grasshopper Warbler was last heard singing on the 3rd and other warblers included a Lesser Whitethroat on the 17th. The only Goldcrest of the month was seen on the 7th and the only Spotted Flycatcher of the year was present on the 20th and 21st. 20 Long-tailed Tits were seen on the 16th and 17th and single Jays were seen on the 6th and 20th. 215 Rooks were seen on the 15th and 40 Carrion Crows were counted on the 17th whilst a Tree Sparrow flew west on the 15th and four flew west on the 29th. Finch numbers increased and 80 Greenfinches were present on the 17th, the Goldfinch flock increased to 39 on the 28th and 20 Linnets were seen on the 29th.

The good run of Drangonflies and Damselflies continued, particularly around mid-month with some notable records. Pride of place again went to Small Red-eyed Damsels with seven males noted on the 7th and one to three on four other dates between the 1st and 22nd. Four Large Red-eyed Damsels were seen on the 15th and a Banded Demoiselle was reported on the 22nd. Five Emerald Damsels were seen on the 1st with four on the 15th and Southern Hawkers were seen on ten dates with a peak of five on the 28th. It's likely that at least eight males are holding territory in the area. There was an impressive count of 18 ovipositing female Brown Hawkers on the 7th whilst Migrant Hawkers were logged on the 15th, 28th and 31st. Four Emperors were seen on the 15th when two Four-spotted Chasers were also recorded. 60 Common Darters were counted on the 28th and two male Ruddy Darters which were seen by visitors on the 15th were an excellent sighting as this species has not been seen for several years.

The only notable Butterfly records concerned three Commas and two Ringlets on the 7th. Two Roe Deer were seen on four dates up until the 12th with another reported on the 27th. A Water Vole was reported on the 2nd and Hares were logged on 13 dates with five including a leveret on the 6th. Foxes continued to be seen, mainly around the Middle Flash with records on ten dates including two on three dates.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2008

Daily coverage continued throughout the month and 103 species were recorded, the eighth time since 1997 that the ton has been broken in September. The year list rose to 139 equalling the highest ever end of September count. It was a good month for notable species including the second records of Gannet and Honey Buzzard. Three more Honey Buzzards were seen reflecting the invasion from Scandinavia that was widely recorded elsewhere and other notable species included Pink-footed Geese, Barnacle Geese (10th record and a record count), Hobby, Peregrine, Water Rail, Ringed Plover (record count), Mediterranean Gull (15th record), Yellow-legged Gull, Caspian Gull, Barn Owl, Rock Pipit, Wheatear, Redwing, Spotted Flycatcher, Tree Sparrow and Brambling. A Ruddy Darter was recorded again and there were further records of Roe Deer and Grass Snake. Towards the end of the month we recommenced feeding at the mound feeder and at this point it is prudent to thank both Andrew Wheatcroft and the Derbyshire Ornithological Society for their generous donations which allow us to feed throughout the winter. Other people who leave food on the table are also thanked and we are grateful to the proprietor of Practical Pets, Main Street, Carr Vale for providing the food at a reduced cost. It's pleasing that a local company has become actively involved in our work on the reserve. And so on to the birds!

Little Grebes were recorded on 28 dates (and no doubt overlooked on the other two) with a maximum of five recorded on the 20th, 23rd and 24th. A Great-crested Grebe was also present on 28 dates whilst Cormorants were seen daily with double-figures on 11 dates from the 13th and a high of 18 on the 24th. A frustrating record concerned a pager report of a Gannet flying south alongside the M1 opposite Sutton Scarsdale (which is therefore opposite Carr Vale too) at 1410 on the 20th. The annoying thing about this record is that we are unlikely to find out who the observer is as I suspect it was from a passing car and that I had left the observation mound just 20 minutes earlier having spent six and a half hours there watching for migrating raptors. Herons were recorded daily in single figures apart from on the 30th when ten were logged and Mute Swans too were logged daily with a peak count of ten on the 19th. The first Pink-footed Geese of the autumn were 780 that flew south-east in seven skeins on the 24th and a single Grey Lag Goose was present on the 1st, 14th and 24th whilst as ever Canada Geese were present daily with a maximum count of 132 on the 12th. Ten Barnacle Geese were present for most of the day on the 14th setting a new record count for the site.

Wigeon were present daily from the 6th with double figures from the 12th and they reached a maximum of 34 on the 23rd. Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on 26 dates peaking at 54 on the 22nd and Teal were also seen daily with double-figure counts on all but one date and a peak of 74 on the 23rd. Mallard numbers were unremarkable with three-figure counts on 13 dates and a high of 156 on the 8th but it's thought that people shooting very close to the reserve caused duck numbers to be lower than usual in September. Shoveler were seen every day with double-figures recorded on seven dates including 15 on the 23rd, one or two Pochard were present between the 26th and 29th and Tufted Ducks were present on all but one date in single-figures.

The last time that there was a Honey Buzzard invasion Carr Vale inexplicably missed out, though not through lack of trying. This year as soon as pager reports indicated that an invasion was taking place I spent long hours on the mound and on the 14th two (adult male and a dark morph juvenile) flew south at 1530. The following day another observer joined me and was rewarded with a pale juvenile flying south at 1305 and a different observer was present on the 23rd when another dark morph juvenile appeared directly above the mound before it too continued on its way south at 1205-an excellent set of records. Sparrowhawks were logged on 23 dates (36 bird / days) with three seen on the 1st and four counted on the 15th. Common Buzzards were seen on 25 dates (75 bird / days) with a maximum count of ten on both the 14th and 24th (days of concerted raptor watching) Kestrels were recorded on 26 dates (37 bird / days) with four seen

from the mound on the 15th, three of which were clearly moving south. Unusually Hobbies were very scarce with single birds on the 3rd and 16th the only ones recorded but Peregrines were seen on 14 dates (19 bird days) with two on five dates.

18 Red-legged Partridges on the 25th were most likely released birds but 17 had survived until the 28th and eight Grey Partridge were seen on the 29th. A Water Rail was heard calling on seven dates from the 12th, a leucistic Moorhen chick was found on the 7th and Coot peaked at 84 on the 2nd. A Ringed Plover was present on the 11th and another was heard calling on the 20th with later the same day a flock of nine, which flew straight through south, this being a record total for Carr Vale. Ten Golden Plover flew south on the 4th after which birds were seen on eight dates including 40 on the 21st and 24 on the 28th. The Lapwing flock remained in three-figures for most of the month (at least 14 dates between the 3rd and 29th) with a peak count of 131 on the 27th. Single Dunlin were seen on the 7th, 14th and 20th with two recorded on the 28th and Snipe were seen in single figures on 17 dates apart from an exceptional count of 32, which included one flock of 27 (north) on the 28th. Finally amongst the waders a Curlew flew north on the 16th, a Green Sandpiper was seen on the 25th and the last Common Sandpiper of the year was seen on the 6th and 7th.

Gull numbers continued to increase and a first winter Mediterranean Gull was found on the 12th. Black-headed Gull numbers peaked at 500 on the 3rd and one to three Common Gulls were seen on seven dates from the 15th. The highest counts of Lesser Black-backed Gulls were 300 on the 20th and 450 on the 27th. Amongst this large flock up to three Herring Gulls were found on ten dates, an adult Yellow-legged Gull was seen on the 27th and 28th and three Caspian Gulls were seen, a juvenile / first winter on the 12th, an adult on the 20th and a first winter on the 22nd and 23rd. A first winter Great Black-backed Gull on the 24th was the first for the autumn.

One or two Little Owls were seen on 26 dates, a Barn Owl was reported on the 14th and a Tawny Owl was logged on the 27th and 28th. One or two Kingfishers were seen 27 dates, two Green Woodpeckers were seen on the 4th with single birds on the 13th and 16th whilst two Great-spotted Woodpeckers were seen on the 20th with singles on eight dates.

South-easterly Skylark passage was noted seven dates (a total of 106 birds) with 48 logged on the 17th and 34 logged on the 25th. 15 Sand Martins were seen on the 2nd and 4th and the last of the year was seen on the 16th. A total of 1037 Swallows was recorded flying south over 12 dates but with the bulk moving through between the 12th and 21st when 178 were recorded on the 12th, 232 flew south on the 15th, 200 flew south on the 18th and 136 went through on the 20th but House Martins peaked at a lowly 88 on the 14th. Meadow Pipits also flew south on 18 dates (a total of 622 birds) but the only notable count was 262 on the 20th whilst the first Rock Pipit of the autumn dropped in on the 28th. The last Yellow Wagtail of the year was seen on the 15th, one to three Grey Wagtails were seen on 15 dates plus five on the 20th, three of which flew south and Pied Wagtails peaked at 30 on the 24th.

A Wheatear was seen on the 3rd and the first Redwings of the autumn were four on the 25th with daily records (one to three) until the 29th. The last Reed Warbler of the year was seen on the 21st, a Lesser Whitethroat on the 13th, the last Whitethroat of the year was present on the 6th and 7th and a Blackcap was still present on the 19th. Nine Chiffchaffs were logged on the 13th with birds still present at the end of the month and the latest ever Willow Warbler was reported on the 28th. A Spotted Flycatcher was seen on the 6th and 7th and the highest count of Long-tailed Tits was 27 on the 20th. Jays were seen from the 12th with records on nine dates (14 bird days with a peak count of four on the 17th, three of which flew south) and there were high counts of 80 Jackdaws on the 30th and 200 Rooks on the 3rd.

A Tree Sparrow flew west on the 14th and one took up residence on the mound bird table from the 22nd until the 26th with two on the 27th and three on the 28th. 100 Greenfinches were present on the 1st and 100 Goldfinches on the 12th was a record count for the site. Siskins started to move south on the 4th when 11 were seen and by the end of the month movement had been noted on 14 dates with a total of 189 logged with the highest counts being 43 on the 10th (23 south), 34 on the 20th (19 south) and 25 south on the 8th. Linnet numbers increased during the latter part of the month peaking at 100 on the 27th -28th and Redpoll movement south commenced on the 13th when ten flew south. Southerly movement was recorded on a further eight dates and during the month a total of 78 birds were recorded with a peak count of 20 on the 20th.

Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral and Speckled Wood were all still about at the end of the month and all the resident dragon and damselflies were still present with the best of the bunch being a male Ruddy Darter on the 27th. Two Roe Deer were seen on the 6th and 13th with singles on three other dates, Foxes were seen on the 2nd, 11th and 22nd and three Hares were reported on the 14th. Single Grass Snakes were seen on the 1st and 16th and the Red-eared Terrapin was noted again on the 13th and 15th.

Finally with a hint of sadness we have to say goodbye to Steve Price (Senior Reserve Officer for Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) who is retiring at the end of October. Steve has been a tremendous friend and asset to Carr Vale Nature Reserve and his continued efforts on the reserve have left it in very good shape. We thank him for all that he has done for us and wish him a long and happy retirement.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2008

Daily coverage continued throughout the month although we had to rely on Ian Swain, Kev Navin, Phil Snaith and Arthur Gee to make sure the visits were maintained. 93 species were recorded, setting a new record for October and the year list increased to 141. Jack Snipe and Bar-tailed Godwit were new for the year and other notable species included Whooper Swan, Pink-footed Geese, Pintail, Goosander, Osprey, Peregrine, Water Rail, Green Sandpiper, Yellow-legged Gulls, Caspian Gull, Glaucous Gull, Rock Pipit, Tree Sparrow and Brambling.

Up to four Little Grebes were recorded daily with five present on the 19th whilst a single Great-crested Grebe was also present daily. Cormorants were seen daily with double-figures on 23 dates and a peak count of 19 on the 30th. Herons were also recorded daily but only in single figures with a high of nine on the 2nd, 3rd and 12th although no more than three were noted from the 23rd. Mute Swans too were logged daily with a peak count of nine on the 24th whilst three Whooper Swans were a pleasant if brief surprise for a casual visitor on the 15th. Pink-footed Geese were noted flying south-east on several dates with 350 on the 6th, 174 on the 11th, 150 on the 13th, 75 on the 16th and 335 on the 17th. Grey Lag Geese were present on five dates with four on the 3rd, six (flying east) on the 6th and two on the 21st and the Canada Goose flock peaked at 260 on the 3rd although numbers were much reduced during the latter half of the month.

Wigeon were present daily but only slowly increased reaching a high of 51 on the 31st. Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on 20 dates with a high of 41 on the 1st. Teal too were seen daily in double-figures peaking at 63 on the 7th and 101 Mallard on the 11th was the highest count of the month. Two Pintail on the 7th were the only ones so far for the autumn but Shoveler continued to be seen with a maximum count of 15 on the 4th. Seven Pochard were present on the 18th with a single bird both the day before and after and Tufted Ducks peaked at 20 on the 30th. Two Goosander on the 26th were the first of the autumn and they were followed by a pair north on the 29th and one north on the 30th.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 20 dates (22 bird / days), Common Buzzards were seen on 27 dates (51 bird / days) with a maximum count of five on the 2nd and Kestrels were recorded on 20 dates (27 bird / days). An Osprey was seen flying south over New Station Road on the 13th and single Peregrines were seen on eight dates between the 4th and 21st.

Four Red-legged Partridges were seen on the 18th and there was a count of 13 Grey Partridges on the 30th. A Water Rail was heard calling on the 1st, 22nd, 24th and 31st and Coot peaked at 63 on the 29th. Golden Plover were recorded on 13 dates with a peak count of 80 on the 18th whilst Lapwings peaked at 98 on the 5th. Two Dunlin were seen on the 3rd but the wader highlight was a Bar-tailed Godwit on the 2nd, just the sixth site record. A Jack Snipe was in the cut reeds viewable from the mound on the 11th and 12th and Snipe were recorded in single figures on 20 dates. Lastly a Green Sandpiper was seen on the 11th.

Black-headed Gull numbers peaked at 315 on the 29th and one or two Common Gulls were seen on eight dates with four on the 30th. 600 Lesser Black-backed Gull were counted on the 24th and one or two Yellow-legged Gulls were logged on 13 dates whilst a first winter Caspian Gull was on the flashes on the 24th. A first winter Glaucous Gull that flew south-east on the 31st was notable in that it was the first October record in Derbyshire since 1982 and only the 6th ever. Small numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls were also seen on six dates.

13 Stock Doves were seen on the 29th whilst south-westerly Wood Pigeon passage was noted as follows, 225 on the 19th, 140 on the 29th, 415 on the 30th and 200 on the 30th. One or two Little Owls were seen on 14 dates, one or two Kingfishers were seen 22 dates, a Green Woodpecker

were seen on 13 dates and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 3rd, 11th, 19th and 24th. 83 Skylarks flew generally south over eight dates until the 19th with a peak of 29 on the 6th (plus ten grounded) whilst a count of 46 on the 2nd included 16 south. Swallows left early and as a consequence birds were recorded in single figures on just five dates until the 10th although the last of the year were two on the 28th. The last House Martins of the year were two on the 2nd, which is a very early last date. 89 more Meadow Pipits flew south over 11 dates with a count of 21 on the 1st being the highest and two Rock Pipits dropped in on the 13th. One to three Grey Wagtails were seen on 12 dates plus five on the 18th and Pied Wagtails peaked at 30 on the 25th.

The first Fieldfares of the autumn were ten that flew west on the 16th after which notable westerly movements were 420 on the 18th, 100 on the 19th, 325 on the 30th and 725 on the 31st. After September's early Redwings the first decent count was 43 on the 3rd and notable westerly movements of this thrush included 905 on the 18th, 435 on the 19th, 115 on the 30th and 175 on the 31st. Eight Chiffchaffs were still present on the 2nd and the last of the summer was seen on the 24th. A count of 33 Long-tailed Tits was made on the 13th, four Coal Tits were seen together on the 2nd and four Willow Tits were recorded on the 30th.

It's not been a good autumn for Jays but one or two were seen on 11 dates during the month and 200 Rooks were counted on the 29th. 740 Starlings flew west on the 30th and 1395 flew west the following day. Last month's Tree Sparrow was last seen on the 1st and a Brambling was heard on the 30th. 20 Goldfinches were present on the 25th and 15 Siskins flew south on the 5th with a further 20 noted flying south over four dates during the month. Linnet numbers continued to rise and reached an impressive 300 by the 5th although they quickly moved on and Redpoll were recorded on 19 dates with counts of 15 south on the 2nd, 33 on the 8th and 16 on the 12th. Reed Buntings started to become regular on the bird table peaking at 13 on the 31st.

Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral and Speckled Wood were all recorded during the first ten days of the month whilst a late Comma was seen on the 21st. The last Southern Hawker was the 8th with a Brown Hawker on the 6th. Four Migrant Hawkers were seen on the 5th and the last two were noted on the 18th. As usual the last Dragonfly of the year was a Common Darter on the 29th. The only mammal recorded was a Hare on the 2nd.

Last month we said goodbye to Steve Price (Senior Reserve Officer for Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) who retired at the end of October. This month we welcome Sam Willis, his replacement. Sam is already on board with what goes on at Carr Vale as she has visited many times with the mid-week team. We look forward to continuing the good work that Steve did at Carr Vale with her.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2008

Daily coverage continued throughout the month although we had to rely on Ian Swain, Kev Navin, Phil Snaith and Arthur Gee from the 22nd to make sure the visits were maintained. 85 species were recorded and the year list increased to 143. Notable species included Whooper Swan, Pink-footed Geese, Shelduck, Pintail, Goldeneye (two), Goosander, Peregrine, Yellow-legged Gulls, Caspian Gull, Blackcap and Chiffchaff.

A Little Grebe was seen daily between the 4th and 6th and again on the 12th whilst the last Great-crested Grebe was recorded on the 3rd. Cormorants were seen daily with double-figures on nine dates and a peak count of 19 on the 31st. Herons were also recorded daily but only in single figures with a high of nine on the 19th. Mute Swans were logged on all bar one date with a peak count of seven on the 30th whilst two Whooper Swans were present on the 23rd. A Pink-footed Goose was present on 11 dates until the 13th and a flock of 200 flew south-east on the 16th whilst ten Grey Lag Geese were present on the 30th. Canada Geese numbers increased again during the month with a high of 158 on the 27th and a Dark-bellied Brent Goose on the 14th was a pleasant surprise.

A Shelduck arrived with the Brent Goose but unlike that species it remained until the 22nd. Wigeon were present daily and increased slowly reaching a high of 112 on the 30th. Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on nine dates but the highest count was only 15 on the 2nd whilst Teal peaked at 117 on the 10th, which was one of only two counts in excess of 100 during the month. 130 Mallard on the 4th was the highest count of the month and 11 Shoveler were present on the 1st with nine on the 3rd after which only one to four were recorded until the 17th with a late male on the 30th. One or two Pochard were present eight dates and Tufted Ducks were recorded in double-figures daily with a maximum of 25 on three dates. A juvenile Goldeneye was present daily between the 9th and 15th and another juvenile turned up on the 22nd. Three Goosander flew north on the 1st and two were present on the 18th and 21st.

Sparrowhawks were logged on 14 dates (17 bird / days), Common Buzzards were seen on 20 dates (25 bird / days) and Kestrels were recorded on 13 dates (15 bird / days). A Red-legged Partridge was seen on the 21st and 13 Grey Partridges were counted on the 7th and 11th. Water Rails were heard calling on six dates with two on three dates but the only one to be seen was on the 26th. Coot peaked at 61 on the 7th. Golden Plover were only recorded on five dates but these included 50 on the 30th and 40 on the 17th whilst Lapwings peaked at 147 on the 17th. Snipe were recorded in single figures on 14 dates with a high of just seven on the 14th and single Redshanks were present on the 12th and 22nd.

Black-headed Gulls were present in good numbers all month with a peak of 550 on the 6th whilst Common Gulls were seen on 14 dates including a rare double-figure count of ten on the 5th. 150 Herring Gulls were present on the 16th and an adult Caspian Gull hid amongst them whilst an adult Yellow-legged Gull was present on the 1st. 60 Great Black-backed Gulls were also counted on the 16th.

19 Stock Doves were seen on the 19th, one or two Little Owls were seen on 17 dates and a Tawny Owl was logged on five dates. Two Kingfishers were seen on the 22nd with one on 15 other dates, a Green Woodpecker were seen the 12th and 14th and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 1st. 18 Skylarks flew south on the 7th, two Grey Wagtails were seen on the 22nd with singles on 11 dates and 26 Pied Wagtails were counted on the 8th.

Fieldfares continued to move generally west and the best counts were 300 on the 1st, 220 on the 3rd, 270 on the 7th, 270 on the 8th, 229 on the 13th, 243 on the 14th and 200 on the 15th after

which they were present in much smaller numbers. A Song Thrush was singing on the 4th and Redwings too moved in a generally westerly direction, though in much smaller numbers than Fieldfare with a high of 95 on the 8th. A female Blackcap was present on the 8th and a male was seen on the 22nd whilst at least one Chiffchaff was by the mound on the 30th. 15 Long-tailed Tits were seen on the 30th and six Willow Tits were seen on the 22nd.

The only Jay of the month was seen on the 12th and 730 Starlings flew west on the 1st. After a good autumn passage Siskins became quite scarce with one to four nine dates whilst one to three Lesser Redpolls were recorded on eight dates. Up to 13 Reed Buntings were regular visitors to the mound feeding station.

Late insects included a pair of Common Darters on the 15th whilst the only mammals of note were Hares on seven dates and a Fox on the 4th.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE MONTHLY REPORT DECEMBER 2008

Daily coverage continued throughout the month although again it was down to Ian Swain, Kev Navin, Phil Snaith and Arthur Gee to continue with the coverage until the 25th after which it was a breeze to finish our 8th consecutive year of continuous coverage, a total of 3204 days. The year ended with a flourish with three new species for the year taking the year list to 146 and late information concerning a Bar-tailed Godwit in July last year took the year list for 2007 to 149. 83 species were recorded during the month including Bittern (6th record), Pink-footed Geese, White-fronted Geese (4th record), Goosander, Peregrine, Woodcock, Waxwing (five, 11th record), Tree Sparrow, Common (Mealy) Redpoll (7th record) and Roe Deer.

Cormorants were seen on 29 dates but there were only three double-figure counts the highest of which being 16 on the 11th. Herons were logged on all but one date but the highest count was only five on the 22nd whilst Mute Swans were logged daily with a peak of nine on the 14th. Two Pink-footed Geese were present on the 3rd and a flock of 84 was down on the 13th. These remained until the 16th after which the flock reduced to 35, remaining at this level until the 19th. Over the following three days the only count was eight on the 21st but 35 were then present on the 23rd increasing to 54 on the 24th and 61 on the 25th. Numbers then declined again with 42 on the 26th, 36 on the 27th and 34 on the 28th on which date two first winter White-fronted Geese were found amongst them. Shortly after this discovery the flock left north-west but not before record shots had been obtained. Although we have had Pink-feet down before the length of stay on this occasion is most unusual. Three Grey Lag Geese were present on the 23rd with one or two on 16 other dates and three Grey Geese that flew north on the 29th were thought to be Bean Geese. Canada Geese numbers remained in three-figures all month with a peak count of 183 on the 28th.

Wigeon were present daily and continued to increase slowly reaching a high of 143 on the 31st. Counts of Gadwall were 20 or less until Christmas after which numbers increased peaking at 57 on the 30th. There were some good counts of Teal with 21 counts in excess of 100 the highest of which being 169 on the 14th but Mallard numbers remained low with a high of just 74 on the 1st. Four Shovelers were present on the 17th with one on the 14th and two on the 15th and up to three Pochard were present 17 dates. Tufted Ducks were recorded in double-figures on 17 dates with a maximum of 20 on the 21st and five Goosander were logged on the 23rd.

Sparrowhawks were logged on eight dates (nine bird / days), Common Buzzards were seen on 29 dates (53 bird / days), Kestrels were recorded on 14 dates (16 bird / days) and a Peregrine was seen on the 9th. Five Red-legged Partridges were seen on the 10th and three Grey Partridges were logged on the 14th. Water Rails were recorded on ten dates from the 10th with two on the 24th, 26th and 27th. Coot peaked at 52 on the 3rd and 7th, Golden Plover were only recorded on four dates with a peak of 35 on the 2nd and Lapwings were recorded in double-figures on at least 11 dates with a high of 60 on the 26th. Snipe were recorded in single figures on 11 dates but no more than three were seen on any date and a Woodcock was reported on the 21st whilst a Redshank was seen daily between the 27th and 30th.

216 Black-headed Gulls on the 17th was the highest count of the month and single Common Gulls were seen on four dates. Large Gulls were scarce with maximum counts of 78 Herring Gulls on the 14th and 41 Great Black-backed Gulls on the 15th. 10 Stock Doves were seen on the 1st, a Woodpigeon was singing on the 25th and 1500 were present on the 28th. A Little Owl was seen 12 dates and a Tawny Owl was logged on the 9th. A Kingfisher were seen on the 1st and 2nd, Green Woodpeckers were logged on 5th, 24th and 28th and a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen on the 25th. Two Grey Wagtails were seen on the 29th with singles on four more dates and 32 Pied Wagtails were counted on the 28th.

One of the highlights of the month was a small flock of five Waxwings which flew over the mound towards Bolsover. Fieldfares continued to be seen in small numbers with a high of 103 on the 9th whilst the highest count of Redwings was 120 on the 16th. 13 Long-tailed Tits were seen on the 21st and up to five Willow Tits were seen on several dates, the mound feeding station being the best place to get close up views. One or two Coal Tits were seen on 20 dates with three on the 24th.

37 Magpies were together on the embankment on the 28th and two Ravens flew over on the 12th. The only Tree Sparrow of the month was recorded on the 14th. The highest count of Goldfinches was 20 on the 21st and Siskins were only recorded from the 25th with ten noted on the 30th. 30 Linnets on the 2nd was a good winter count and Lesser Redpolls were very scarce until the 20th when 20 were found on the 20th. 15 were seen on the 25th with 20 on the 27th, increasing to 30 on the 29th and 30th. Hidden amongst this flock was a Common (Mealy) Redpoll, which was found on the 29th. Bullfinches were recorded daily with up to seven logged on a number of dates and Reed Buntings were regular visitors to the mound feeding station with a high of 21 on the 30th.

A Fox was seen on the 11th, a Weasel was seen on the 17th and two Roe Deer were seen on the 25th and 26th.

Mark Beevers