

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES JANUARY 2011

The year started with the reserve still in the grip of ice, indeed the ponds on the DWT part of the area were not completely free of ice until 16th January and those on Peter Fidler were still iced over ten days later. A couple of unsavoury incidents occurred during the month, the first involving some mindless yob who thought it was entertaining to throw lumps of ice at swans sitting on the ice and the second involving a couple of beaters from the local shoot who thought it perfectly OK to walk across the reserve and when challenged became abusive and threatening. Such is the world we live in. Birdwise the month was far more productive than the bleak December and a number of good birds for the area were seen. Highlight of the month and potentially the bird of the year was a Coues' Arctic Redpoll, that's one for the county rarity committee to ponder over. Other notable records were a very impressive set of Pink-footed Geese flocks, Merlin, Peregrine, Woodcock, Curlew (first January record), Barn Owl, Raven (two), Brambling, Common Redpoll (8th record) and Roe Deer. A number of expected species were missing during January including Water Rail, Snipe and Kingfisher but we still recorded 80 species during the month, an average total.

Cormorants were missing until the 9th after which birds were seen on 15 dates with a maximum count of eight on the 16th. Herons were seen on 26 dates but the highest count was only four on five dates whilst Mute Swans were seen daily with a peak of six on the 31st. One of the highlights of the month was an impressive movement of Pink-footed Goose and skeins were seen on 13 dates with daily records from the 26th. The records were 130 SE on 2nd, 120 NW on 10th, 180 E on 13th, 100 W on 17th, c1000 in c15 skeins W on 18th, 280 W on 21st, 100 W on 24th, 50 W on 26th, 60 W on 27th, 120 W on 28th, 185 W on 29th, 270 on 30th and 160 W on 31st. A Grey Lag Goose was seen on the 1st and 2nd with five on the 3rd and two on the 26th whilst Canada Geese peaked at 84 on the 17th.

Wigeon started the year off on 63 but by the 30th the count has risen to 163, Gadwall were recorded in double-figures on all bar one date with a peak of 33 on the 2nd whilst Teal reached 118 on the 17th and Mallard peaked at 81 on the 15th. One to three Pochard were logged on 25 dates with daily records from the 15th and Tufted Duck peaked at 15 on the 20th and 27th. The only Goosander of the month was seen on the 7th.

Sparrowhawks were recorded on at least 21 dates during the month (25 bird / days) and a male was displaying on 31st. Common Buzzards were logged on at least 20 dates (26 bird / days) and Kestrels were recorded on at least 18 dates (19 bird / days). A female Merlin flew south then back north on 12th and a Peregrine was seen on the 9th. At least some Red-legged Partridges survived the guns with double-figure counts on four dates with a maximum count of 25 on the 18th whilst Grey Partridge peaked at seven on the 12th. Good numbers of Moorhens frequented the sewage works peaking at 41 on the 4th with 38 on the 12th and following just a single Coot during the first 13 days of the month numbers slowly rose, reaching 21 on the 29th.

Golden Plovers were scarce with sightings on just five dates with a maximum count of 45 on the 16th but Lapwings were present in reasonable numbers with four three-figure counts the highest of which was 117 on the 20th. A Woodcock was flushed on the 22nd whilst a Curlew that flew north on the 5th was the first January record for this site. Black-headed Gulls were often present in three-figures but the highest counts were of birds flying south in the late afternoon with 1185 on the 5th and 700 on the 25th. Common Gulls were logged on 20 dates but double-figure counts are scarce so 12 on the 13th were notable.

Stock Doves peaked at 41 on 11th and 400 Wood Pigeons were seen on the 9th, 21st and 29th. A Barn Owl was heard calling on the 18th and another reported on the 30th but the only Little Owl of the month was one at Deepdale Farm viewable from the viewing mound on the 2nd. One or

two Green Woodpeckers were seen on 19 dates and single Great-spotted Woodpeckers were seen on five dates with two on the 31st.

A flock of 17 Skylarks flew over on the 28th and a few Meadow Pipits were around during the month with seven on the 12th and 24th. One or two Grey Wagtails were logged on at least 12 dates whilst the maximum count of Pied Wagtails was 42 on the 12th. Following on from last years bumper flock of Waxwings small numbers continued to appear with 20 on the 9th, five on the 13th and two reported on the 23rd. 11 Robins were between the entrance gate and the mound on the 27th when 28 Blackbirds were counted. Five three-figure flocks of Fieldfare were recorded with a maximum count of 175 on the 12th but the highest count of Redwing was only 40 on the 28th whilst the highest count of Mistle Thrush was six on 15th.

A flock of 26 Long-tailed Tits flew through on the 16th whilst the highest count for Willow Tit was nine on the 21st with seven on the 2nd when first song was heard. Seven were also counted on the 18th and 12 Great Tits were around the feeding station on the 11th. One or two Coal Tits were seen on 12 dates and one or two Jays were seen on at least eight dates whilst there was a count of 20 Magpies on the 10th. 49 Jackdaws flew west to roost on 31st and two Ravens flew west on 21st.

150 Starlings were counted on the 14th and Tree Sparrows were regularly seen at Mill Farm feeding station with a maximum count of eight on the 12th and 23rd. A Brambling was present very briefly behind the mound before it flew off north on the 19th and good numbers of Goldfinch were around all month with a peak count of 100 on the 10th. Siskins were logged on 17 dates with a maximum count of 30 on the 29th and 30th. Linnets are generally quite scarce during the winter months so a flock of 100 on the 5th and 8th was notable and 60 were still in the area on the 8th. Like Siskins Lesser Redpolls were frequently seen with the first notable count of 30 on the 13th and double-figure counts were made daily during the last week peaking at 50 on the 30th. Diligent searching through the flock produced two Common (Mealy) Redpolls on the 11th and one on the 16th. Another was seen on the 24th and then birds were seen daily from the 28th peaking at six on 28th and 30th. Three still present on the 31st. It was whilst searching through this flock that a Coues' Arctic Redpoll flew in on the on the 28th, but unfortunately it didn't hang around too long and many hours searching for it subsequently drew a blank. This former national rarity was first recorded in the invasion during the 1995 / 1996 winter when 16 were accepted and the only other record was in 2007. It will be the first record for the area if accepted by the county records committee. Carr Vale is well known as an excellent site for Bullfinch and double-figures were logged on 13 dates with maximum counts of 18 on the 14th and 16 on the 10th. A flock of 65 Yellowhammers was counted on the 27th with 28 still on the 29th whilst 46 Reed Buntings were counted into roost on the 9th with 35 on the 17th. Up to 22 could be seen at one time on the bird table.

A Hare was seen on the 9th with two on the 20th below Sutton Scarsdale Hall and a Fox was seen on the 19th. On the 24th a pair of Foxes was seen mating attracting the attention of two more dog Foxes.....at ten o'clock in the morning! A female Roe Deer was seen on the 8th with three on the 10th and 25th and two on the 27th.

Mark Beevers.

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES FEBRUARY 2011

Following on from the end of January up to four Common Redpoll were seen between the 1st and 4th of the month. 14 Red-legged Partridges, 20 Siskins, 30 Lesser Redpolls and 15 Yellowhammers were seen on the 1st with up to 20 Siskins on many more date during the month whilst a Tawny Owl was logged on the 3rd along with 30 Lesser Redpolls. A Little Egret arrived mid-morning on the 5th, becoming the first winter record for this species and later in the morning a female Goosander flew south. A Waxwing was heard on the 6th when 11 Bullfinches were counted then on the 7th a pair of Pintail, 30 Golden Plover and 38 Redwings were present. Seven Buzzards were in the air together on the 8th when four Snipe was the highest count since November and the first Kingfisher of the year was seen with singles on two further dates during the month. A flock of 80 Stock Doves on the 9th was the largest of the winter when a flock of 15 Waxwings was also reported along with 40 Goldfinches, then on the 10th the Wood Pigeon flock was estimated at 1000 and 120 Fieldfare was the only three-figure count of the month.

Three Shelduck came in from the north and u-turned on the 11th on which date a female Merlin was along the access road whilst the following day a lovely adult male Merlin dashed across the reserve. A male Shelduck was present on the 12th when Wigeon peaked at 155 for the month and the same day a Dunlin left north-west, a Curlew u-turned back north, Tree Sparrows peaked at five for the month and two Common Redpolls were seen. The first sign of spring came on the 13th with the arrival of a pair of Oystercatchers, which remained for the rest of month and ten Waxwings were also seen on this date along with a flock of 40 Lesser Redpolls. A pair of Shelduck was present for four days from the 14th when ten Pochard was a good count for the site whilst 92 Herring Gulls and 27 Great Black-backed Gulls south the same day represented the highest count of the winter, my how times have changed! A flock of 70 Waxwings was reported on the 15th and the female Merlin was seen again on the 16th when at least 26 Waxwings were still present. Good numbers of Lapwings were present all month reaching a high of 450 on the 18th when the flock of Lesser Redpoll again numbered 40. An extra Oystercatcher was seen on the 19th then on the 20th three Dunlin and two Common Redpoll were present with 20 Reed Buntings attending the bird table on the mound.

A Dunlin was seen on the 22nd, two Ringed Plovers were on Sutton Scarsdale Flash on the 23rd when a pair of Shelduck appeared again for a protracted but irregular stay in the area. Two Goosander flew south on the 24th when a total of 15 Buzzards was counted, a third Oystercatcher was present, two Curlew were seen as was the first Redshank of the year. The same day one of the breeding pair of Little Owls returned and a distant Raven was seen. Five Grey Lag Geese on the 25th was the highest count of the month, the same day a roosting Tawny Owl was located and the Yellowhammer flock numbered 30. 12 Buzzards were in the air again on the 26th when the Golden Plover flock peaked at 250, two Redshank were present and a further 15 Waxwings were recorded. Two Ringed Plovers were on Sutton Scarsdale Flash and a Dunlin was on Meadow Flash on the 28th. However bird of the day on the 28th was a Rock Pipit, equalling the earliest ever record for this species and pushing the flock of 32 Waxwings that was also seen into second place.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES MARCH 2011

A skein of 300 Pink-footed Geese that flew north on the 1st proved to be the last of the winter and the same day a pair of Shelduck put in the first of twelve appearances, a Peregrine was also seen and there was another sighting of a Common Redpoll. Two Ringed Plover were on Sutton Scarsdale Flash on the 2nd when 40 Lesser Redpolls were on the Peter Fidler Reserve. Two Ringed Plover were present on the flashes on the 3rd when the only Grey Wagtail of the month arrived for a three day stay and two Roe Deer were reported. A male Shoveler, a Dunlin and a Curlew were present on the 4th when two Lesser Redpoll flocks totalled a very respectable 80 and hidden amongst these were three Common Redpoll. The following day 450 Golden Plover and a Stot were seen. Three Great-crested Grebes on the 6th were the first of the year whilst the same day three Shelduck were present and a Curlew flew north. 130 Wigeon, nine Buzzards and 80 Herring Gulls on the 7th were the highest counts of the month for those species and the same day a third Oystercatcher arrived for a two day stay. A splendid flock of 22 Whooper Swans flew north on the 8th, a male Shoveler was also present on that date with a pair on the 9th when a female Merlin was seen and two Ringed Plover flew north. Also on the 8th a Curlew left to the north and 23 Siskins that flew south was the highest count of the month.

A second pair of Oystercatchers was present on the 11th along with 500 Golden Plover (also on the 12th), the only Kingfisher of the month, 60 Fieldfare, 80 Linnets, 30 Lesser Redpoll, two Common Redpoll and 70 Yellowhammers. A Little Ringed Plover on the 12th appears to be the first of the year for the county and the following day the first Chiffchaffs (two) of the year were seen. The first Brimstone and Small Tortoiseshell were seen on the 15th. 110 Wigeon on the 17th was the last three-figure count of the winter when a third Oystercatcher was also seen, Lapwings peaked at 400 (also 18th) and two Roe Deer were seen again. A Red Kite was a magnificent sight for a lucky observer on the 18th when two Little Ringed Plovers were also seen and Chiffchaffs had increased to six. The first Sand Martins of the year were three on the 19th when 45 Goldfinches were still in a flock.

A Peregrine was seen on the 20th, an extra Oystercatcher was present on the 21st (and 24th) along with two Little Ringed Plovers and 75 Fieldfare. A Little Ringed Plover was present on the 22nd after which birds were then present daily. A Curlew flew north on the 23rd when there was a count of four Redshank and three Sand Martins after which the latter were recorded daily. Also on the 23rd a Common Lizard was seen, something that is very rarely, if ever, recorded at Carr Vale. The warmth also encouraged four species of Butterfly to fly with the first records of Peacock and Comma of the year plus six Small Tortoiseshells and another Brimstone. A male Wheatear on the 24th was the first of the year and the same day saw the first sighting of the Red-eared Slider (Terrapin). A male Shoveler and four each of Little Ringed Plover and Redshank were present on the 26th when 40 Sand Martins were present. The same day the earliest ever House Martin was seen and it was then seen most days until the end of the month and another male Wheatear was found. The first Little Grebe of the year was seen on the 27th on which date six Goosanders flew south, a lucky teenager photographed another Red Kite and the first Water Rail since November was heard calling from the sewage works. Also on the 27th 48 Meadow Pipits flew north, both female Stonechat and female Wheatear were in front of the observation mound in the afternoon, 38 Fieldfare flew south-west, Chiffchaffs further increased to ten and a party of six Jays was an unusually high number for spring. 26 Sand Martins and 65 Meadow Pipits flew north, 49 Fieldfare flew north-west and a Roe Deer was seen on the 28th when a very early Large White was also seen. Four Little Ringed Plovers were present on the 29th and 110 Golden Plover were still in fields just west of Meadow Flash on the same date. Also on that date at least 38 Sand Martins were logged, the first male Blackcap and Willow Warbler of the year appeared and the warmth induced no less than seven Grass Snakes and another Common Lizard to appear. A Weasel was also seen on the 29th. Four Goosander flew north on the 30th on which date the first Swallows (four) of the

year were seen. A lone male Shelduck was seen on the 31st but bird of the day was an adult Kittiwake that was seen flying north. Also on the 31st two male Blackcaps were present. Mark Beavers

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES APRIL 2011

April was an excellent month for the reserve with a record total of 108 species for the month. This is the seventh time that we have broken a century in April but record for any month is still 110 in September. As you would expect with such a high monthly species total the year list also marched on reaching 128, the highest ever end of April count. Needless to say we recorded a number of scarce species for the reserve the rarest being the fourth record of Wood Warbler whilst Common Tern and Common Redstart were both seen earlier than ever before. Other rarities included Barnacle Goose (12th record), Red Kite (14th record), Osprey (two), Whimbrel, Greenshank and two flocks of Arctic Terns including the largest ever. All in all a good month. However it was soured by a spate of wanton damage and vandalism the most serious of which was the destroying by fire of one of the most popular benches by the main reserve pond, an event which was reported in the Derbyshire Times. Once again can I ask that if anyone witnesses antisocial behaviour or acts of damage on our reserve (including the Peter Fidler Reserve) can you please report it to the Police on 03451233333. Even if the Police are unable to attend to a specific incident the fact that the incident has occurred will be logged and if a pattern of events start they may be able to address the problem.

39 Wigeon were still present on the 1st and a male Pochard, 40 Sand Martins and a male Wheatear were seen on the 2nd. A pair of Shelduck was present on 3rd (and 4th) and the same day a five hour vigil produced a hoped for Osprey flying north. Also on the 3rd 200 Golden Plover were present and 53 Fieldfares flew north-west. The first Yellow Wagtail of the year was seen on the 4th when a male Wheatear was again seen. A single Shelduck remained on the 5th when a male Pochard was also seen then on the 6th the first Common Tern of the year arrived for a three day stay becoming the earliest ever record for Carr Vale. The same day a male Common Redstart also went into the record books as the earliest ever arrival for the reserve. Wigeon had declined to five by the 7th when Little Ringed Plovers peaked at six and Sand Martins built up to a creditable 235 during the morning. Also on the 7th a total of 78 Meadow Pipits flew north and a White Wagtail was also caught up in the movement, it remaining until the following day. A male Wheatear was also present on the 7th and 8th and the last Fieldfare and Siskin (both singles) of the winter were also logged on the 7th as was a Stoat and three Brimstones. Four Oystercatchers were present on the 8th and an intensive search of the valley netted a fantastic count of nine Grass Snakes. Also on the 8th the regular party of three Roe Deer put in an appearance (with one or two on six other dates during the month). Ten Grey Lag Geese and a pair of Shoveler were present on the 9th on which date a Water Rail was discovered, the latter remaining until the 13th whilst also on the 9th the first (two) Sedge Warblers of the year were found along with a Reed Warbler, which equalled the earliest ever arrival date for that species. A Comma was also seen on the 9th. The last five Wigeon of the winter were seen on the 10th when two Common Terns turned up (and stayed until the 11th) whilst two male Wheatears on the 10th were the start of an unprecedented run of daily records to the month end and seven Grass Snakes were counted in the area.

An immature male Peregrine was seen on the 11th when the first Common Sandpiper and Common Whitethroat of the year were seen. 40 Sand Martins were seen on the 12th on which date the only Lesser Redpoll of the month flew south. An Osprey attempted to fish on Meadow Flash on the 13th when a female Great-spotted Woodpecker was an unusual spring record and a reeling Grasshopper Warbler was the first of the year. The male Peregrine appeared again on the 14th along with another Common Sandpiper whilst Wheatears peaked at four on this date and a Weasel was seen. A Tawny Owl was seen on the 15th when another White Wagtail was also found as was a Reed Warbler after which there were daily records of the latter. A breeding season recce was carried out on the 15th which produced some good totals of singing birds including 19 Blackcaps, 17 Chiffchaffs and 24 Willow Warblers. Three pairs of Grey Partridges were found on

the 16th when the last Golden Plover of the winter was logged as was a Common Sandpiper, a female Common Redstart, and four Wheatears whilst there were also reports of a Water Vole, a Comma and a Common Blue in the area. Nine Yellow Wagtails and a different White Wagtail were present on the 17th and there was still a flock of 17 Yellowhammers to be seen. A Barnacle Goose was seen on the 18th when four Oystercatchers and two Curlews were also present along with a very brief Greenshank. A Green Sandpiper was an unusual spring visitor on the 19th and the same day the first Cuckoo of the year was seen. Singing birds on the 19th included 22 Blackcaps, a record count for the area. Two Common Terns were present from the 20th after which one to three were seen on most dates whilst also on the 20th 37 Sand Martins flew north.

Six Yellow Wagtails were around Middle Flash on the 22nd when the first Lesser Whitethroat and Garden Warblers (two) of the year were singing. A Common Gull flew east on the 23rd but the bird of the day was a singing Wood Warbler, just the fourth record for the area. Also on the 23rd 12 Large Red Damselfly exuviae were discovered on the Peter Fidler Reserve. A Red Kite drifted north-east on the 24th, another White Wagtail was seen on the 25th and a Ringed Plover on the 26th was the only one of the month. A Shelduck was seen on the 27th, a Common Gull was seen on the 28th whilst the 29th saw a male Shoveler, a party of seven Arctic Terns that flew north-east and the first Swift of the year. The first Hobby and Whimbrel of the year were seen on the 30th and another party of eight Arctic Terns (the largest ever at Carr Vale) flew north-east. Also on the 30th a Lesser Whitethroat was found.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES MAY 2011

May was another excellent month for the reserve with a total of 98 species recorded for the month, the equal second highest May total, the highest being 101 last year. Three species were added to the year list, which rose to 131, the second highest end of May count. We recorded a number of scarce species for the reserve including Little Egret, Barnacle Goose (seven), the latest ever spring Wigeon, Red Kite, two Marsh Harriers, Osprey, Peregrines, Hobbies, Black-tailed Godwit (five, first May record), Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Greenshank, White Wagtail, Wheatear and Dingy Skipper (2nd record). Once again we suffered from a spate of vandalism and theft the most serious of which was the theft of the hinge mounts from the shutters on the observation mound rendering them inoperable. Can I ask again that if anyone witnesses antisocial behaviour or acts of theft or damage on the reserve (including the Peter Fidler Reserve) can you please report it to the Police on 03451233333 or the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust office on 01773881188. Now on to the birds.

Six Grey Lag Geese and two pairs of Teal were seen on the 1st (the latter remained until the 2nd) when a male Peregrine was also seen. Also on the 1st a Ringed Plover arrived for a five day stay, four Garden Warblers were singing as was a Coal Tit and a Weasel was seen. There was a count of ten Common Buzzards on the 2nd when the Peregrine was seen again but birds of the day were a Bar-tailed Godwit, which then stayed until the 5th and a brief Greenshank. A Herring Gull and four Common Terns were also present on the 2nd as was a Cuckoo, 72 Sand Martins and 45 Swallows. Insects on that date included eight Large Red Damsels, six Azure Damsels, two Four-spotted Chasers, the only Brimstone of the month, a Red Admiral and a Grass Snake was also reported. Seven Yellow Wagtails were counted on the 3rd which was the last date for the long-staying Wheatears. Four Oystercatchers and a Common Sandpiper were present on the 4th (with both still on the 5th) along with a White Wagtail. A hybrid goose on the 5th (and 6th) appeared to show characteristics of Pink-footed Goose and Ross's Goose and a Whimbrel was also seen on the 5th. The first Hobby of the month was seen on the 6th after which there were sightings on 13 dates and also on the 6th Dingy Skippers were found in two areas. A distant Little Egret flew south on the 7th and later that day a female Marsh Harrier was seen from the observation mound and three Roe Deer were also present (with one or two on five other dates). Seven Grey Lag Geese were present on the 8th when seven Barnacle Geese flew north-east having earlier flown north-east over Ogston Reservoir and another Red Admiral was seen. A pair of Shelduck came in briefly on the 9th on which date a Cuckoo was reported and 40 Sand Martins were present on the 10th. 12 singing Sedge Warblers were counted on the 11th with nine Reed Warblers in the Peter Fidler reed-beds, 13 singing Common Whitethroats and 14 male Reed Buntings. Insects on the 11th included four Large Red-eyed Damsels, five Blue-tailed Damsels, six Common Blue Damsels and a 32 emerging Four-spotted Chasers. A Ringed Plover was seen on the 12th, a pair of Teal appeared on the 13th (and were still present on the 14th) and a female Marsh Harrier dropped in for 25 minutes on the 14th. Five Little Ringed Plovers were on the flashes on the 15th when a Curlew was present for a short while and the same day a male Grey Wagtail was an unusual record for the time of year. Also on that date an Osprey caught a fish during the late afternoon and what is likely to be the same bird was seen again for 45 minutes before it departed west. A party of five Black-tailed Godwits that had earlier been at Pleasley Pit spent an hour and forty minutes on the Middle Flash on the 16th and the same day there was a count of 80 Swifts. An additional Oystercatcher and five Little Ringed Plovers were present on the 17th (the Oystercatcher remaining to the 18th) as was a Grass Snake and six Yellow Wagtails were present on the 18th. A Red Kite circled the flashes before flying east on the 20th on which date a Peregrine flew south.

An extra pair of Common Terns was present on the 21st, a Cuckoo was seen on the 22nd and a third Oystercatcher was present on the 24th on which date there was a count of 45 Black-headed Gulls and the Cuckoo was seen again. The only Dunlin of the month was seen on the 26th whilst on the 27th a Hedgehog was believe it or not an unusual record for the area. A male Wigeon was present on the 28th when a Grasshopper Warbler had recommenced singing whilst on the 29th an

extra Oystercatcher joined the resident pair on the 29th and another Cuckoo was seen. A Redshank on the 30th was the first for three weeks and a Tree Sparrow was seen on the 31st.
Mark Beevers

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES JUNE 2011

Needless to say we carried on with our daily recording on the reserve throughout the month but our efforts were rewarded with a fairly average month in terms of species recorded, 89 and just one new bird for the month year was logged. That the new bird was a Great Egret, a first for the reserve and probably the 13th for the county more than compensated for the moderate monthly total. Other notable records during the month included a late Marsh Harrier, a Water Rail to raise hopes of breeding and some unseasonal Siskins.

Hobbies were an almost constant feature during the month with records on 27 dates, totalling 32 bird / days. The attraction seemed to be recently fledged Sand Martins from a nearby colony that the adults brought down to the reserve after fledging and recently fledged Swallows from Mill Farm. Despite not breeding on the reserve again Redshanks were seen on 11 dates.

A first Summer Herring Gull on 1st June was unusual and an additional pair of Common Terns was present on 2nd June (with an additional single bird on seven dates) when two Tree Sparrows were still at the breeding site. One of the Red-eared Terrapins was visible for three days from 2nd June and the American Bullfrog was seen for the first time this year on 3rd June. Two male Pochard were present on 3rd June, six Grey Lag Geese and 15 Mute Swans were seen on 4th June but more interesting was a record of two Tree Bees on the same date. This is the first time that this recent colonist to the UK has been recorded at Carr Vale. A male Shoveler was seen on 5th June, the same day a female Marsh Harrier was seen leaving the area in a northerly direction and a Cuckoo was also seen. A Grasshopper Warbler was reeling on 6th June and a Water Rail was heard calling on 8th June. An adult and two juvenile Redshanks from elsewhere (probably Arkwright) arrived from the west on 9th June but they only stayed for that day but the following day a thorough search of likely spots produced a count of nine Grass Snakes whilst a second pair of Common Terns was also present.

A Tawny Owl was seen on 11th June when a family party of five Willow Tits was also recorded. An adult GREAT EGRET in full breeding dress arrived on 12th June and performed well for all comers but the female Roe Deer also present was far more secretive. The Great Egret was last seen on 14th June when a Red Admiral was seen with the latter species recorded again on 16th June. The female Roe Deer was also seen on 15th and 16th June. An additional Oystercatcher and 40 Sand Martins were present on 18th June and an unseasonal Coal Tit was found on 19th June (with subsequent records on three more dates towards the end of the month).

A recently fledged Tawny Owl, still with some down on the 21st indicated local breeding and not necessarily from the Mill Farm nest site. A Meadow Pipit, which flew north-west on the 23rd was an unusual mid-summer record but then another flew south on the 25th. 11 Sand Martins flew south and three Siskins flew north on 26th June, the latter are rare here in summer and six Siskins were present on the 29th. A juvenile male Peregrine was seen on the 30th when the first Common Sandpiper and Grey Wagtail of the autumn were also recorded along with 40 Sand Martins, a singing Lesser Whitethroat and four more Siskins, which flew south.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES JULY 2011

Another month of daily coverage, which during the certain months can take some real motivation, was at least rewarded with some interesting birds including our fourth record of Quail and our sixth of Pied Flycatcher. Other notables included another multiple arrival of Little Egrets, Osprey, Peregrine, breeding Water Rails, Greenshank and a late Grasshopper Warbler. The monthly total was 94, just short of a record (which is 96) and the year list progressed to 134, three behind the best ever year. The open fishing season started, which saw an immediate increase in litter around the fishing pegs but then that happens every year so why does it still surprise me? Please if you are going to bring foodstuff and drinks to the reserve or feed the ducks take the empties back home with you. It's not too much to ask and it will make the reserve look a lot tidier than it does normally in summer. Anyway on to the wildlife recorded during July.

Hobbies continued to feature regularly in the daily log with records on 15 dates (16 bird / days) and Buzzards too were recorded regularly (13 dates, 38 bird / days). Tree Sparrows too were also regularly recorded if you wished to put the time in at the nest-boxes at Mill Farm. Four Curlew dropped into a recently mown field on the 1st when the Common Sandpiper from the end of June also was still present. A male Shoveler was present on the 2nd when Water Rails were proved breeding with an unfledged juvenile being recorded from the South Marsh. Four Common Terns on the 2nd was the highest count for the month and 64 Sand Martins were logged flying south the same day. Five Pochard were seen on the 4th on which date a juvenile male Peregrine, a Snipe and a Green Sandpiper were also seen plus 11 singing Yellowhammers were counted. Bird of the day though was a female or juvenile Pied Flycatcher at Mill Farm, the first July record of this rare visitor to Carr Vale. Three Siskins were seen on the 5th then on the 7th four Teal and a juvenile Shoveler were seen with the latter remaining until the 13th. Bird of the day on the 7th was a singing Quail that remained audible until the 11th. An out of character late afternoon visit on the 8th produced a worn adult Osprey flying south whilst a Greenshank was a typically brief visitor in the morning. This nicely illustrates that even at a very quiet time of the day and year the reserve can still turn up surprises so it pays to keep plugging away. Another Greenshank and four Common Sandpipers were seen on the 9th when five more unseasonal Siskins flew south. Certainly the first ten days produced a number of good records for the reserve, would the run continue?

Two Shoveler were present on the 12th when there was a good count of 12 Yellow Wagtails. A Shoveler was seen on the 16th, a Common Sandpiper was present on the 17th and a Shoveler was seen on the 18th (and again on the 20th) whilst also on the 18th Common Sandpipers increased to two, which were still present on the 19th. A single Common Sandpiper was present from the 20th until the month end with records on ten dates; they can be very elusive at Carr Vale. Three Little Egrets were present on the 24th and a Little Egret remained on the 25th on which date there was a juvenile Teal and a Peregrine (un-aged or sexed). A juvenile male Peregrine was present on the 26th when the last Oystercatcher of the month was noted and a second summer Common Gull flew north. Also on the 26th the last Grasshopper Warbler of the year was heard reeling on the Peter Fidler Reserve whilst on the 27th a Redshank was heard calling but could not be located. An adult female Peregrine was seen on the 28th when a Greenshank circled the flashes then flew off north and 75 Swallows was the highest count of the year so far. Three Teal, a juvenile Pochard, the last Little Ringed Plover of the month and a Snipe were seen on the 29th and a second brood of Water Rails was found on the 30th when the Snipe was seen again. Finally a Teal was noted again on the 31st on which date three Common Terns flew north.

Mark Beavers

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES AUGUST 2011

Just 91 species were logged during August, the worst August total since 1997 yet despite this we added five species to the year list, which moved on to 139, just one off the highest end of August total. Litter continued to be a problem but for once the muddy margins of the flashes looked perfect for passage waders. Unfortunately just seven species of wader thought so, which no doubt contributed to our low monthly total.

It was a fantastic month for raptors with Sparrowhawks logged on 19 dates during the month, Common Buzzards logged on 24 dates, Kestrels recorded on 25 dates, Hobbies seen on 23 dates and Peregrines (three different birds) seen on eight dates. Water Rails were not to be out done as they were logged on 18 dates with an adult, a fledged juvenile and a chick all regularly noted whilst Little Owls were recorded on 15 dates during the month, Kingfishers on 21 dates, Green Woodpeckers on 11 dates, Great-spotted Woodpeckers on ten dates and Yellow Wagtails on 28 dates.

A Great-crested Grebe was present on the 1st (remaining to the 4th) on which date a juvenile Little Egret graced the flashes and there was a good count of 13 Grey Lag Geese. Two Little Egrets arrived mid-morning on the 2nd and that day the Canada Geese peaked at 158, a very low count for August. Also on the 2nd two Shoveler, a Snipe and a Lesser Whitethroat were seen. A Comma, an Essex Skipper and a Brown Argus were also seen on the 2nd, the latter representing the first record for the site but its provenance may be tainted given that a released Swallowtail was also present on that date. Also amongst the insects present on the 2nd there was two male Banded Demoiselles, a species that is barely annual at Carr Vale and three Emperors. The Lesser Whitethroat remained the following day when three Tree Sparrows were seen and then 141 Mallard on the 4th was the highest count of the month. Grey Herons peaked at nine on the 5th when the Common Sandpiper that had been present from July was last seen and an Essex Skipper was seen. Two Grey Lag Geese were present on the 6th when a Greenshank flew through and two Green Sandpipers were present. A Great-crested Grebe was seen on the 8th (until 14th), a Lesser Whitethroat and a Brimstone were seen on the 9th and two Shoveler were seen on the 10th, one of which remained until the 15th.

Two Grey Lag Geese were seen on the 11th (and were still present the following day) along with a Green Sandpiper, 23 Collared Doves were counted on the 12th and five Grass Snakes including four recent hatchlings were seen on the 13th. A Common Sandpiper was seen on the 14th, a juvenile Little Egret was present on the 15th when 57 Goldfinches were counted and another Comma was seen. Shoveler increased to three on the 16th, a Common Sandpiper was also seen and a Caspian Gull was found hidden amongst 35 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, which represented the highest count for the month. Also on that date 20 Sand Martins was the highest count for the month, a Grey Wagtail was the first of nine records during the month and then an early Goldcrest was present from the 18th (until 21st). A juvenile Whinchat was present early on the 19th and a Tree Pipit flew south on the 20th on which date two pairs of Grey Partridge were found with nine and eight young.

The 21st was a good day as first a Tree Pipit flew south and then a Cetti's Warbler was found in the reeds below the observation mound. As observers were looking for that an influx of Back-headed Gulls included a juvenile Mediterranean Gull, which stayed until flushed by a Peregrine, whilst 11 Teal on the flashes was the first double-figure count of the autumn and there was 12 Common Buzzards in the air at once. A Stoat was also reported on the 21st. A Greenshank circled the flashes on the 22nd but then left north, another Tree Pipit flew south and two Weasels were chasing each other in front of the mound. Red-legged Partridges peaked at four on the 23rd and a Green Sandpiper was also seen that day. Two Little Egrets came in from the north on the 24th but only

stayed twenty minutes and then they flew off south-east. The same day 40 Gadwall were counted, 14 Common Buzzards, four Kestrels and four Hobbies were also seen and a Little Ringed Plover arrived for a weeks stay. Four Sparrowhawks and four Hobbies were seen on the 25th, a Snipe was seen and a Tree Pipit flew south on the 26th whilst on the 27th Lapwings peaked at a lowly 52, another Green Sandpiper was present and the Black-headed Gull count reached 205. Teal reached a high of 22 on the 28th and in the evening 250 House Martins were wheeling over the sewage works. Nine Grey Herons and four Hobbies were counted on the 29th when a Lesser Black-backed Gull of the intermedium race was found. Two juvenile Pochard were present on the 30th when a Tawny Owl was heard, a party of three Jays was seen and there was a flock of 80 Linnets. A Dunlin dropped in very briefly on the 31st when the Cetti's Warbler was still present in the reed-bed and a Migrant Hawker was seen.

Mark Beevers

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES SEPTEMBER 2011

No report.

CARR VALE BIRD NOTE OCTOBER 2011

No report.

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES NOVEMBER 2011

No report.

CARR VALE BIRD NOTES DECEMBER 2011

No report.