

CARSINGTON MONTHLY BIRD REPORT - JULY

Highlights: Little Egret, Common Scoter, Osprey, Turnstone and Crossbill.

The sun and warm temperatures brought out many fresh broods of water birds, taking this year's total brood counts to: 7 Great Crested Grebe, 18 Mallard, 24 Tufted Duck, 2 Moorhen and 9 Coot. Maximum bird counts, excluding young, were logged on the WeBS count of 24th unless dated: 4 Little Grebe, 51 Great Crested Grebe, 22 Cormorant on 28th including a colour ringed bird, 2 Little Egret on 28-29th, 9 Heron from 17th, 31 Mute Swan on 23rd, 9 Greylag Geese on 5th, 348 Canada Geese, 20 Barnacle Geese on 5th, 2 Shelduck, 4 Teal on 17th, 140 Mallard, 2 Shoveler on 18th, 5 Pochard 17th, 111 Tufted Duck, 16 Common Scoter on 13th, 1 Goosander on 28th and 379 Coot. There were 2 notable, probable escapees this month: a Cackling Goose from 20th and 2 Ruddy Shelduck on 23rd.

Raptor records were few this month but they did include an Osprey catching a fish on 28th and 2 Peregrine on 23rd. Wader counts and records included: 6 Oystercatcher on 23rd, 2 Little Ringed Plover on 30th, 3 Ringed Plover on 24th, 69 Lapwing on 17th and 20th, a Dunlin on 28th, 2 Black-tailed Godwit on 24th, 1 Whimbrel on 24th and 26th, 2 Redshank on 24th, 4 Common Sandpiper on 27-31st and 2 Turnstone on 24th.

The Black-headed Gull colony expanded onto Millfields Island to breed this year and 38 young were counted on 25th. Other Gulls included: 9 Common Gull on 24th, 32 Lesser Black-backed Gull on 28th, a dead Herring Gull on 21st and 2 Yellow-legged Gull 23-26th. The only Terns were Common Tern, with singles on several days and 4 flew east on 23rd.

A Kingfisher was seen almost daily from 17th but never at the same location. Swifts were noted entering the Visitor Centre eaves but there were no further signs of any breeding. Swallow was at last noted on nest in the stone barn on 18th but there was no sign on 25th. The House Martin colony at the Visitor Centre, which usually has about 20 nests, has finally had just 1 brood out of a nest within the courtyard. There were 3 Grey Wagtail on 20th and 2 on 30th but no signs of breeding. Redstart have bred well on site this year, with a male and 3 juveniles in the field behind the Wildlife Centre on 5th, a pair feeding young in a box in Wildlife Centre Creek also on 5th, at least 2 birds in Warrington Knob on 9th where 2 pairs probably bred and a family of 4 was seen in the Shiningford area on 16th. Sedge Warblers have been notable on Stones Island with 1 displaying along the causeway and a pair feeding young, both on 17th and on other days. Reed Warblers were also active with 1 singing on Stones Island on 3rd, a pair taking food into Hopton Reedbed and another family feeding in the reeds on 17th and 1 singing near Paul Stanley Hide also on 17th. An adult and 2 juvenile Lesser Whitethroat were feeding together on Stones Island on 23rd. A pair of Spotted Flycatcher was regularly seen carrying food in Wildlife Centre Creek from 5th to 14th. There was a count of 6 Willow Tit on 30th, a flock of 80 Jackdaw over Sheepwash on 23rd, 32 House Sparrow around the Visitor Centre courtyard on 26th, a flock of 40 Goldfinch on Stones Island on 26th, 7 Linnets on 30th and 6 Reed Bunting on 5th. A notable fly-over on 20th was a Crossbill. This occurred when many had been coming over the east coast and, by the end of the month, Two-barred Crossbills were also being seen, so check out any you see or hear. 93 Species were recorded this July compared with 96 in 2012, 105 in 2011, 91 in 2010 and 95 in 2009.