

Carsington Bird Club



OCTOBER 2017 BIRD NOTES

Highlights: Great White Egret, Brent Goose, Green-winged Teal, Scaup, Merlin, Little Stint, Kittiwake, Water Pipit, Yellow-browed Warbler, Crossbill and Hawfinch.

Water levels remained low but there were some excellent birds to be seen and some impressive counts, including the best for Gadwall and Teal in a decade, the most Pintail since 1992 and site record highs for Shoveler, Wood Pigeon and Hawfinch. Water bird counts this month are from the WeBS count on 14th unless stated: 31 Little Grebe, 29 Great Crested Grebe on 4th, 12 Cormorant on 17th and 26th, 10 Little Egret on 4th, a Great White Egret, at Sheepwash, on 16th, 3 Grey Heron, 47 Mute Swan on 4th, 130 Pink-footed Geese on 30th, 401 Greylag Geese on 31st, 1,050 Canada Geese, 29 Barnacle Geese on 17th, a Brent Goose on 8th, 3 Shelduck on 31st, single Mandarin on 15th and 20th, 385 Wigeon on 11th, 86 Gadwall, a drake Green-winged Teal from 1st to 24th at least, 522 Teal on 4th, 156 Mallard, 23 Pintail on 4th, 17 Shoveler on 4th, 3 Red-crested Pochard on 4th, 167 Pochard on 20th, 336 Tufted Duck, 2 Scaup on 6th, 2 Common Scoter on 18th to 20th, 4 Goldeneye on 21st and 31st, 4 Goosander on 24th, a Water Rail in the Hopton reed bed from 15th to the month end, 5 Moorhen and 1,141 Coot.

Raptor records were: 2 Sparrowhawk on 6th, 7 Buzzard the same day, 3 Kestrel on 16th and 17th, a Merlin which flew south down the east side on 17th and 4 reports of Peregrine.

Waders maximum counts were represented by: 16 Ringed Plover on 12th, a Golden Plover on 15th, 213 Lapwing on 14th, a Little Stint on 4th, 8 Dunlin on several dates, 4 Ruff from 27th to the month end, 10 Snipe on 19th, 2 Black-tailed Godwit on 27th, 1 Curlew on 18th and 20th, 5 Redshank on 30th, a Greenshank on 6th and a Common Sandpiper on 29th.

Very few Gull records this month: 40 Common Gull on 30th, 2 Herring Gull on 20th, 7 Yellow-legged Gull on 9th, 3 Great Black-backed Gull on 13th and 2 adult Kittiwake on 22nd.

A massive 11,400 Wood Pigeon flew south on 18th, 8 Skylark on 25th, 80 Meadow Pipit on 18th, a site rare Water Pipit was seen briefly on 17th and there were 4 reports of Rock Pipit between 1st and 20th. A Grey Wagtail roost formed, again, in the Hopton reed bed and 11 left there at dawn on 29th, 2 late Wheatear were last seen on the dam wall on 22nd, 80 Fieldfare flew over on 28th, as did 500 Redwing on 15th and 2 Blackcap were on Stones Island on 25th. A Yellow-browed Warbler was heard calling near the Ranger Base on 16th but unfortunately it could not be seen, this will be the 3rd record in successive years subject to acceptance by the DOS rarity committee. Lingering Chiffchaff included 3 on 6th and 1 still on 31st, 7 Raven flew over on 21st, 685 Starling moved southwest on 16th, 17 Tree Sparrow were counted on 12th and 13 Brambling on 15th. Other Finch counts included 40 Siskin on 15th, 50 Linnet on 5th, 13 Lesser Redpoll on 31st and 11 Crossbill on 29th. During the second half of the month it became clear that a huge irruption of Hawfinch was taking place across the south of the UK and Carsington did not miss out; 4 were seen flying southwest on 21st and then an incredible 26, including a group of 15, were recorded on 28th. Finally 25 Reed Bunting left their roost at the Hopton end on 15th.

108 species recorded this October compared with 108 in 2016, 96 in 2015, 98 in 2014 and 103 in 2013.

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