



THE HOBBY

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PROGRAMME MATTERS

Welcome to the October 2022 edition of The Hobby.

In this edition of The Hobby, along with Bird News from the Summer period, an update on some of the activities that where we are involved with managing records and publications. If you have anything that could be shared with our members then please let me know.

Our Zoom program of Indoor Meetings commenced on Tuesday 27th September and will continue through to March with five more Zoom meetings and two meetings planned for Maulden Village Hall. Our next meeting will be Tuesday 25th October when we will have a short Special General Meeting to discuss membership categories and fees for 2023 followed by a talk by Conor Jamieson on W H Hudson. Our February meeting which will be our AGM and Richard's popular Review of the Year will also be in Maulden.

We have put together a winter program of six outdoor meetings both locally and further afield, details are on our website with the next planned meeting being to explore the area of farmland and set aside at Poppy Hill, Langford. This site has regularly attracted large numbers of feeding finches, buntings and Stonechat with the chance also of raptors. The walk on Saturday 12th November 2022 is led by Greg Nunn, starting at 8:30am. A copy of the program is also attached with the email of this edition of The Hobby for members and is on our website.

With good numbers of thrush and finch movements now underway, we hope you enjoy your birding through the coming season and look out for Waxwings as rumour is that this could be a good winter for them following issues with berry crop further north and east.

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022 BIRD NEWS

July 2022

Pintail - a female was noted at MCP Wetlands NR throughout the month

Common Scoter - one at Blunham Lake on 29th

Quail - one heard near Wrest Park on 8th and 10th

Turtle Dove - two around MCP Wetlands NR area all month; other records from Waterloo Thorns, Tempsford, Knotting Green, Dunton and near Arlesey

Ringed Plover - singles noted at Black Cat GP on 1st and Broom Quarry on 8th

Whimbrel - one at Grovebury SP on 31st

Curlew - one at MCP Wetlands NR on 1st, one flew over Henlow on 6th, another at Broom East CWS on 10th. Also two nocturnal records over Meppershall on 7th and 22nd, and another over Biggleswade

Black-tailed Godwit - Two flew over Priory CP on 1st, singles at Grovebury SP on 2nd, 3rd, 7th and 19th, a flock of 16 at Broom East CWS on 5th, one there until 10th, four at MCP Wetlands NR on 19th

Common Sandpiper - singles reported from various locations throughout the month, a maximum of 5 were at Grovebury SP on 31st

Wood Sandpiper - one was at Broom East CWS from 23rd until the end of the month

Greenshank - one at Broom East CWS on 17th and 27th, one on nocturnal over Meppershall on 8th

Mediterranean Gull - singles at Grovebury SP on 15th and 20th, two juveniles at Broom Quarry on 16th

Caspian Gull - adult at Grovebury SP on four dates from 15th to 28th



Common Tern - a high count of 94 at Stewartby Lake on 25th

(photo Martin Green)

Great White Egret - just one reported; at Broom East CWS on 19th

Marsh Harrier - two different birds noted in the brick pits on 24th

White-tailed Eagle - bird G486, a 2nd-calendar-year female roosted overnight near Haynes Church End on 23rd as recorded from its satellite tracker. It was subsequently seen in the area on a couple of occasions the following morning before being reported the next day in Norfolk

Spotted Flycatcher - very few reports of breeding pairs this year. Birds with young were noted though in July at The Lodge RSPB, John O'Gaunt GC and two sites near Ampthill

Redstart - one early returning bird at Brogborough Hill on 12th

Stonechat - a pair bred again this year around Dunstable Downs

August 2022

Garganey - birds at Broom East CWS on 2nd and 15th, another at Blunham Lakes on 22nd

Pintail - female at MCP Wetlands NR all month

Red-crested Pochard - a female at Broom East CWS on 15th and 25th may have been the same as seen in Southill Park in July

Goosander - two at Broom East CWS on 1st

Turtle Dove - four at MCP Wetlands NR on 20th including one juvenile suggested breeding nearby

Ringed Plover - singles at Broom East CWS on 24th and 31st, also recorded on nocmig 25th and 26th

Whimbrel - recorded on nocmig over Biggleswade on both 24th and 25th and Meppershall, also on 25th



Black-tailed Godwit - singles at Broom East CWS on 1st and 4th, one over Henlow Grange on 15th, one at MCP Wetlands NR on 16th

(photo Mike Illet)

Ruff - one at Grovebury SP on 26th and 27th

Sanderling - two recorded on nocmig over Biggleswade on 28th

Dunlin - one at Broom East CWS on 31st

Greenshank - one at MCP Wetlands NR on 22nd, another at Black Cat GP on 29th

Wood Sandpiper - the bird from July remained at Broom East CWS until 17th

Common Sandpiper - a high count of eight at Black Cat GP on 25th

Little Gull - adult and juvenile at Broom East CWS on 17th

Caspian Gull - a regular adult roosted during the month, with a second adult noted on 4th

Yellow-legged Gull - a high count of 37 at Grovebury SP on 4th

Black Tern - one at Stewartby Lake on 20th, two there on 24th

Cormorant - some big counts from MCP Wetlands NR and Stewartby Lake in the month including at least 191 on 17th

Bittern - one at Elstow CIP on 15th, another recorded on nocmig over Biggleswade on 28th

Cattle Egret - one roosted at Grovebury SP on 26th

Marsh Harrier - a regular bird seen on a couple of occasions around the brick pits, one at Broom on 10th, another there on 15th

Wryneck - one photographed in a private garden in Harlington on 17th

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker - one at Priory CP on 14th

Ring-necked Parakeet - regular reports from Wardown Park and Old Bedford Road area in Luton, up to four birds. Five noted at Park Wood LNR on 19th

Spotted Flycatcher - a notable passage peaking at the end of the month with multiple sightings at Pegsdon and Brogborough Hill. Five at Whipsnade Common on 26th, also family groups recorded regularly from Amptill and Wrest Park.

Nightingale - one at Brogborough Hill on 14th, an unusual record as rarely recorded after the end of the song period from mid-April to early June

Pied Flycatcher - two at Ampthill Park on 13th, one at Houghton Regis on 14th, one at Brogborough Hill on 14th and 19th, another at Pegsdon from 16th to 18th, one at Whipsnade Common on 26th, one near Pottton on 28th

Redstart - reported at five sites but majority of records from Brogborough Hill and Pegsdon where there was a maximum of three on 23rd

Whinchat - reported at various sites, mainly in the last ten days of the month, with maxima of five at Brogborough Landfill Site on 28th and four at Pegsdon on 24th

Tree Pipit - three records all from nocmig recordings; over Biggleswade on 23rd and 24th and over Meppershall on 25th

Ortolan Bunting - one pick up on a nocmig recording over Biggleswade on 26th

September 2022

Egyptian Goose - the range expansion of this species in the county was evident with a count of 76 going over Black Cat GP on evening of 28th, with 84 reported as having been present in a stubble field nearby at end of August

Garganey - one at Black Cat GP on 9th, another at Blunham Lakes on 16th and 21st

Pintail - seven at Broom East CWS on 10th, three at Blunham Lakes on 23rd, and two at Radwell GP on the same day. One male, a presumed escape, returned to Woburn Park

Turtle Dove - one near Broom on 12th

Black-tailed Godwit - five at Black Cat GP on 5th

Turnstone - two flew out of Rookery South CLP on 4th

Ruff - one at Black Cat GP on 6th. one at Broom Quarry on 19th, then at Broom East CWS on 21st

Dunlin - singles at Dunstable STW on 16th, Grovebury SP on 20th and Broom Quarry on 24th

Greenshank - one at Black Cat GP on 4th, 5th, 7th and 16th, one at Broom East CWS on 24th



Black Tern - two juveniles at Stewartby Lake from 2nd to 7th, joined by a third bird on 6th and 7th

(photo Steve Blain)

Glossy Ibis - one recorded on multiple dates from 7th to 28th at Meadow Lane GP and Gadsey Brook SP, noted as roosting on occasion at Priory CP

Cattle Egret - birds at Black Cat GP and Grovebury, both on 9th

Great White Egret - single reported at Priory CP on 4th, 12th and 26th, also birds at Grovebury SP on 4th, Stewartby Lake on 6th, Black Cat GP on 26th and at Broom on 29th

Marsh Harrier - regularly seen in the brick pits, also one passed through Broom area on 19th

House Martin - some good counts including 180 at Priory CP on 27th

Woodlark - one around Sandy Heath from 25th to 29th

Dartford Warbler - one at MCP Wetlands NR on 20th

Pied Flycatcher - one in Woburn on 3rd, another at Cooper's Hill on 9th

Stonechat - a strong passage with some high numbers particularly in the last ten days of the month.

Counts included eight at Houghton Brook Pools on 25th, 19 at Brogborough Tip on 25th, six at Pegsdon on 25th, 12 at Wigmore CP area on 26th and at least eight at Sandy Heath on 27th

Tree Sparrow - one reported near Potton on 13th

Tree Pipit - birds at Brogborough Tip on 11th, Brogborough Hill on 13th, The Pinnacle Sandy on 17th and near Potton on 21st

We thank all contributors who have submitted their records directly to the Recorder, or via Bedsbirds Email Group as well as other sources. Our recorder, Peter Nash welcomes all records by email to recorder@bedsbirdclub.org.uk or preferably via the online system BirdTrack. Of course anything of real interest we would welcome a phone call or whatsapp so news can be shared with others in case they may want to see a specific bird

Compiled by Andy Grimsey

BIRD CLUB OUTDOOR MEETINGS

On Saturday 8th October a total of 22 people attended the visit to The Lodge Reserve in Sandy, when Peter Bradley gave us a behind the scenes look at the restoration of the new heath. The interesting trip visit was helped by warm autumn sunshine and we enjoyed good views of a pair of Stonechats as well as a bit of a raptor fest with Red kite, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel and Buzzard. Our thanks to Peter for a really interesting and informative visit.

Our September trip was to Frampton Marsh where Carolyn and Malcolm Hawkes guided 14 people round the reserve seeing a total of 61 species with excellent views of Curlew Sandpipers and Little Stint. Many thanks to Carolyn and Malcom for their time and expertise and well done for those who braved the foggy start to get up to Frampton, it was worth it!

Kathy Blackmore

PROPOSED UPDATE OF "WHERE TO WATCH BIRDS IN BERKSHIRE, BEDFORDSHIRE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HERTFORDSHIRE AND OXFORDSHIRE"

We have been approached about involvement in the planned new edition of this book, originally published in 1987.

Some other regions have already concluded a new edition and it retains the format of the original edition. With the development of the county, new wetlands, old wetlands now changed considerably and more locations overtaken by housing, this is well overdue.

One of our intentions for 2023 was to work on our Bird Club website and a major update of the Beds Birding Sites page, so any contributions to that will be welcome and potential options for passing forward into this book project when it better defined. As the timelines for these projects are brought together

there will be opportunity to support, maybe with a write up of your local patches and we would welcome volunteers as always.

Remember 1987, with pits full of gulls including Glaucous and Iceland Gulls almost throughout the winter and Maulden Woods with its breeding species list including Lady Amherst Pheasant, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Hawfinch, Willow Tit and Tree Pipit.



Marsh Tit – still hangs on as a breeding bird in Maulden Woods, unlike the similar Willow Tit but numbers have reduced. Elsewhere odd birds and pairs continue in various woodlands but are becoming more isolated and without interchange these are very vulnerable.
(photo Andy Grimsey)

We will need member input from those who know our sites best so an updated site guide can be accurate and comprehensive.



Does a visit to your patch take you through habitat with Grasshopper Warblers ?
What is the habitat like, wetland, grassy scrubland, new plantation ? Are birds there every year ? What is the best time and location to hear them ?
All good information that we would wish to share on our website Birding Sites page...
Why not write it up and share it with us for the website.
(photo by Richard Pople)

The website currently includes a full gazetteer of local known birding sites, a list that is also published within the annual Beds Birds Report to assist with consistency of the identity of local sites including a listing of grid references.

Andy Grimsey

RARITIES ACCEPTED FOR JANUARY TO JUNE 2022

Following a meeting of The Rarities Committee, the following records have been reviewed and accepted for the first half of 2022. Please ensure that any reports of rarities are shared with the team by contact to Matt Burgess on raritysecretary@bedsbirdsclub.org.uk so we can document and maintain all records.

Criteria for those species that require information to be shared with the Committee are outlined in the Bird Report and on the website at <http://bedsbirdclub.org.uk/records/>

Species	Location	First date	Finder	Other observers
Long-eared Owl	Milbrook	02/01/2022	Paul Wright	Yes
Ruddy Duck	Black Cat GPs	16/01/2022	Richard Bashford	Yes
Green-winged Teal	Meadow Lane GPs	07/02/2022	Nigel Willets	Yes
Water Pipit	Harrowden Water Meadows	16/02/2022	Darren Oakley-Martin	No
Dartford Warbler	The Lodge	08/03/2022	Steve Blain	Yes
White-tailed Eagle	through central Beds	29/03/2022	Satellite data	Yes
Kittiwake	Broom East CWS	04/04/2022		Yes
Stone-curlew	Biggleswade - nocmig	10/04/2022	Steve Blain	No
Stone-curlew	Eaton Bray - nocmig	14/04/2022	Mark Telfer	No
Richard's Pipit	Brogborough Landfill	17/04/2022	Neil Wright	Yes
White-tailed Eagle	through Beds	21/04/2022	Satellite data	
Stone-curlew	Biggleswade - nocmig	27/04/2022	Steve Blain	No
Stone-curlew	Stopsley - nocmig	03/05/2022	Matt Kirkland	No
Glossy Ibis	Broom East CWS	03/05/2022	Jonathan Nasir	Yes
White Stork	Broom East CWS	03/05/2022	Darrel Bryant	
Glossy Ibis	Broom East CWS	05/05/2022	Graham nunn	Yes
Cattle Egret	Grovebury	15/05/2022	Dave Bilcock	
Stone-curlew	Stopsley - nocmig	25/05/2022	Matt Kirkland	No
Glossy Ibis	Broom East CWS	29/05/2022	Andrew Chipchase	Yes
Cattle Egret	Henlow	from 2021		
White Stork	Everton/Tetworth	20/06/2022	Alastair Macdougall	No

SPOTTED FLYCATCHERS BREED AGAIN IN EVERS Holt

Sandy and I were utterly delighted when a pair of Spotted Flycatchers returned in 2022 to the same nest box that was used in 2019. Prior to 2019 the most recent breeding took place in our garden in 2006 (see 'The Hobby' 2019).

According to 'Birds of the World' (Lynx Publications) it has been proven by ringing, that females can live to at least five years and males to eight-nine years. It is therefore quite possible that the same pair that breed in 2019 returned to the same nest box in 2022. Why they did not return in 2020 and 21 remains a mystery.

The timeline in 2022 was as follows:

- 26 May. A pair returned to the same nest box used in 2019 but 26 days earlier than in 2019.
- 30 May. The female was already sitting tight on eggs and being feed by the male but occasionally leaving the nest to feed herself.
- 14 June. Female sitting on two hatched chicks.
- 24 June. Female still brooding two well grown chicks, which were being fed by both parents.
- 29 June. The two well grown young left the nest and were briefly seen in our garden with the adults before disappearing, never to be seen again.
- 20 July. I removed the nest from the nest box for examination. The nest was constructed of small twigs, lined with moss and held together with hair and spider webs. There was one unhatched egg, so out of a clutch of three eggs two young successfully fledged.

The whole process from arrival to departure took just under five weeks, quite remarkable!



I would like to thank John Lynch for his excellent photographs which accompany this article.

Peter Smith, Eversholt

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the Beds Bird Club since the last edition:

Sam Childs, Barton-le-Clay
Hayley and Jason Lucas, Shillington
Jack Sutcliffe, Lower Stondon

We hope you will enjoy many years of membership with us.

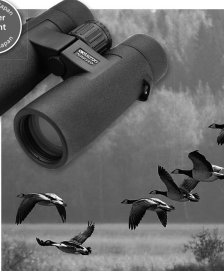
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