

Cambridgeshire Bird Club



E-Bulletin 20 February 2015

(The records in this bulletin are unchecked and may be revised at a later date)



Common Cranes and Whooper Swans at Manea. Photo by Brendan Doe

HEADLINES

GREAT WHITE EGRET Ouse Fen and surrounding area all month.

GLOSSY IBIS* Fen Drayton Lakes from 7th for the remainder of the month, presumed the same at Ouse Fen on 7th - 8th.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD* Holme Fen and surrounding area all month.

GLAUCOUS GULL Witcham Gravel a 1st winter on several dates, a 2nd-winter on 20th - 21st, Milton Tip area a 1st-winter until the 21st and a 2nd-winter until at least the 15th, plus a 3rd-winter on 6th, Ouse Fen a 2nd-winter on 7th - 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes a 2nd-winter on 13th - 14th.

As last month this series of sightings involves a minimum of three birds but maybe more. Given their ability to move around the county and the quite narrow range of locations the former is surely more likely. The last reported date was on the 21st, thereafter no more records. Last year's latest date was February 23rd.

ICELAND GULL Grafham Water one on 17th and 20th.

WOODLARK* Paxton Pits a 'probable' on 20th.

Other records

All records below refer to the month at the head of the E-bulletin and where no numbers are given the record relates to single birds.

Where there is an asterisk after the name of the species this indicates that it is necessary to send a description to the County Recorder before the record will be accepted.

Some species are 'reported from' to give some indication of distribution and to reduce duplication of records. For the same reason some entries (particularly wildfowl) have maxima given when a number of counts have been received.

Wildfowl

Mute Swan Burwell Fen 56 on 11th, Ouse Fen 120 on 2nd, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 50 on 9th, Ouse Washes/Earith to Jolly Bankers 70 on 21st.

Bewick's Swan Somersham-Chatteris c50 on 7th, Ouse Washes c100 on 7th and 417 on 14th, Grafham Water 2 on 7th and 15th, Nene Washes 466 on 9th, Ouse Washes/Earith to Jolly Bankers 3 on 21st, Sutton Gault c50 on 28th.

Whooper Swan Ouse Washes/Earith 'several hundred' on 1st, Somersham-Chatteris 330 on 7th, Burwell Fen 14 - 27 from 8th, Nene Washes 830 on 9th, Sutton Gault c500 on 14th and 28th, Ouse Washes/Earith to Jolly Bankers 230 on 21st, Pymoor-Welney c 400 on 23rd.

Bean Goose Fen Drayton Lakes one from the 8th- 9th, Kingfishers Bridge 7 briefly on 24th.

Pink-footed Goose Berry Fen 2 on 7th, presumed the same Ouse Fen on 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes 3 on 31st.

Greylag Goose Ouse Washes/Earith 300 on 2nd, Berry Fen 229 on 4th, Fen Drayton Lakes 60 on 8th and 400 on 31st, Paxton Pits c150 on 9th, Burwell Fen 312 on 11th, Houghton 50+ on 15th, Fowlmere NR 117 on 28th.

Canada Goose Cam Washes/Upware 22 on 13th, Houghton 30+ on 15th.

Brent Goose Offord Cluny a dark-bellied (subspecies *bernicla* from Russia/Siberia) on 12th.

Egyptian Goose Fen Drayton Lakes a pair on several dates, Ouse Fen on 2nd and 2 on 8th, Paxton Pits maximum 4 on 8th, Nene Washes 2 on 14th.

Shelduck Paxton Pits a pair on 4th and 20th with a single on other dates, Nene Washes 23 on 9th, Wicken Fen 9 on 11th, Ouse Washes/Earith 12 on 12th and 21st, Cam Washes/Upware one on 13th, Sutton Gault 3 on 14th, Needingworth Lakes 2 on 23rd, Fowlmere NR a pair on 27th – *a rare bird south of Cambridge*.

Mandarin Wimpole Hall 4 on 28th.

Wigeon Ouse Fen c350 on 2nd, Ouse Washes/Earith 2,000 on 2nd, Paxton Pits c1,800 on 7th, Burwell Fen maximum 1,500 on 8th, Nene Washes 14,130 on 9th, Wicken maximum 242 on 13th, Cam Washes/Upware 180 on 13th Houghton 18 on 15th, Trumpington/Clay Farm 4 on 16th.

Gadwall Ouse Fen 35 on 2nd, Milton GP 124 on 6th, Nene Washes 211 on 9th, Woodwalton Fen 22 on 11th, Wicken Fen maximum 108 on 27th.

Teal Ouse Fen 152 on 2nd, Ouse Washes/Earith 300 on 2nd and c800 on 12th, Woodwalton Fen 26 on 11th, Cam Washes/Upware 28 on 13th Wicken Fen maximum 260 on 27th.

Mallard Ouse Fen 54 on 2nd, Milton GP 35 on 6th, Woodwalton Fen 30 on 11th, Wicken Fen 50 on 13th.

Pintail Ouse Washes/Earith 60 on 2nd, Nene Washes 375 on 9th, Wicken Fen maximum 6 on 13th, Burwell Fen 6 on 17th, Ouse Washes/ Earith to Jolly Bankers 30 on 21st, Paxton Pits maximum 4 on 24th.

Shoveler Milton GP 6 on 6th, Burwell Fen 500 on 8th, Cam Washes/Upware 38 on 13th, Wicken Fen maximum 100+ on 13th.

Red-crested Pochard Paxton Pits one on 8th, a pair on 21st, Berry Fen a male on 20th, Fen Drayton Lakes a pair on 31st.



Red-crested Pochard at Paxton Pits. Photo by Neil Bramwell.

Pochard Ouse Fen 43 on 2nd, Milton GP 5 on 6th, Cherry Hinton Hall 2 on 11th, Trumpington/Clay Farm 3 on 16th, Sutton Gault c200 on 14th, Burwell Fen 5 on 17th, Whittlesford GP 18 on 20th.

Tufted Duck Ouse Fen 48 on 2nd, Milton GP 56 on 6th, Cherry Hinton Hall 30 on 11th, Wicken Fen maximum 17 on 13th, Sutton Gault c300 on 14th, Trumpington/Clay Farm 13 on 16th, Whittlesford GP 24 on 20th.

Scaup Ouse Washes RSPB one on 7th, Grafham Water a female on 7th and a male on 15th, Paxton Pits one on 8th.

Goldeneye Grafham Water 90+ on 7th, Fen Drayton Lakes 15+ on 12th, Paxton Pits maximum 45 on 27th.

Smew Ouse Fen/Needingworth Lakes present all month maximum 21 on 8th but still 14 on 28th, Fen Drayton Lakes a 'redhead' on 1st and 8th then 4 on 17th and 2 on 25th, Paxton Pits one on 6th.

Goosander Paxton Pits maximum 8 on 17th, Cambridge/Nuttings Road a flyover on 6th, Grafham Water maximum 25 on 15th.

Ruddy Duck Ouse Washes RSPB one on 7th and 10th, Fen Drayton Lakes 2 females on 16th.

Gamebirds

Grey Partridge Ouse Washes 2 on 21st.

Divers, and cormorants

Great Northern Diver* Paxton Pits from 7th- 23rd.

Cormorant *reported from:* Cam Washes/Upware, Milton GP (4), Ouse Fen (6), Whittlesford GP (3) and Wicken Fen (8).

Egrets and herons

Bittern *reported from:* Fen Drayton Lakes, Ouse Fen (3), Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen,

Little Egret *reported from:* Burwell Fen (3), Cambridge/Coe Fen, Cam Washes/Upware, Cherry Hinton Hall (3), Ely BF, Fen Drayton Lakes (3), Fowlmere NR, Houghton (2), Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes, Trumpington/Clay Farm and Wicken Fen (3).

Grey Heron Ouse Fen 5 on 2nd.



Grey Heron at Grafham Water. Photo by Mark Hawkes.

Grebes

Little Grebe *reported from:* Ouse Fen (4), Trumpington/Clay Farm (5) and Wicken Fen.

Great Crested Grebe *reported from:* Ouse Fen (2), Paxton Pits (where nest building was observed on 25th), Trumpington/Clay Farm, Wicken Fen.

Black-necked Grebe Fen Drayton Lakes one on 1st – 9th, Hampton Lakes one on 9th.

Raptors

Red Kite Ouse Fen on 2nd, Nene Washes 2 on 9th, Holme Fen 2 on 11th, Duxford one on 14th, Swaffham Prior Fen on 17th, Witcham Gravel one on 20th.

Marsh Harrier *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Ely BF (3), Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Holme Fen, Ouse Fen (4), Ouse Washes (3), Sutton Gault, Wicken Fen (6) and Woodwalton Fen (6).

Hen Harrier Burwell Fen on several dates, Wicken Fen roost maximum 10 (3 males and 7 ringtails), Holme Fen one on 11th, Woodwalton Fen one on 11th, Sutton Gault one on 28th.

Sparrowhawk *reported from:* Ely BF, Houghton, Wicken Fen, Wimpole Hall and Woodwalton Fen.

Buzzard *reported from:* Bottisham, Cottenham (6), Exning (2), Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Great Shelford, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens (3), Holme Fen (2), Houghton (2), Ouse Fen (2), Paxton Pits (6). Waterbeach (2), Wicken Fen and Wimpole Hall (5).

Rails and crane

Water Rail Wicken Fen 6 on 9th and 8 on 27th, Woodwalton Fen 10 on 11th, Sutton Gault on 14th and 27th, Houghton 2 on 15th, Fowlmere NR 2 on 28th.

Moorhen Trumpington/Clay Farm 10 on 16th.

Coot Ouse Fen 150 on 2nd, Milton GP 54 on 6th, Cam Washes/Upware 32 on 13th, Wicken Fen 23 on 13th.

Common Crane Ouse Washes maximum 8 seen most of the month usually near Manea, Nene Washes 12 on 9th, 2 on 14th and 23rd, Wicken Fen 2 flyovers on 9th, March 6 flyovers on 10th.

Waders

Avocet Isleham Washes 11 on 23rd, Kingfishers Bridge 2 on 24th.

Oystercatcher Paxton Pits maximum 3 on several dates from 14th, Ouse Washes/ Earith to Jolly Bankers 2 on 21st, Fen Drayton Lakes 2 on 22nd, Needingworth Lakes 2 on 23rd.

Golden Plover Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 'a few' on 9th, Ouse Washes/Earith 59 on 12th, Paxton Pits c20 on 14th, Ouse Washes/Chain Corner c300 on 18th, Wicken Fen c150 on 27th.

Lapwing Ouse Fen c200 on 2nd, Paxton Pits 270 on 9th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 4,000+ on 9th and 3,000 – 4000 on 19th, Holme Fen 300 on 11th, Wicken Fen 1,115 on 11th, Little Shelford-Newton c600 on 27th, Wicken Fen c800 on 27th.

Curlew Paxton Pits one on 9th, Wicken Fen one on 13th, Witcham Gravel one on 20th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 31st.

Black tailed Godwit Ouse Fen 23 flyovers on 2nd, Ouse Washes/Earith c1,400 on 2nd, 3,000 on 4th and 173 on 22nd, Holme Fen 13 on 4th, Ouse Washes RSPB 9 on 7th, Sutton Gault c40 on 14th, Ouse Washes/Chain Corner c150 on 18th, Earith to Jolly Bankers one on 21st.

Ruff Nene Washes 59 on 9th, Ouse Washes/Earith maximum 68 on 12th, Berry Fen maximum 25 on 22nd, Earith to Jolly Bankers 4 on 21st.

Dunlin Ouse Fen one on 2nd, Ouse Washes maximum 140 on 2nd, Paxton Pits maximum 4 on 9th and 24th.

Green Sandpiper *reported from:* Paxton Pits (3), Sutton Gault and Wicken Fen.

Redshank Ouse Fen on 2nd, Ouse Washes/Earith 40 on 2nd, 55 on 12th and 17 on 22nd, Nene Washes 67 on 9th, Ouse Washes/Earith to Jolly Bankers c10 on 21st.

Jack Snipe Ouse Washes one on 21st.

Woodcock Colne GP on 7th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 8th, Godmanchester GP 3 on 9th, Woodwalton Fen on 11th, Eynesbury on 12th, Milton Tip 2 flyovers at dusk on 18th, Grafham Water on 23rd, Chippenham Fen on 24th.

Snipe Ouse Fen on several dates, Nene Washes 68 on 9th, Paxton Pits singles on several dates maximum 8 on 26th, Wicken Fen 17 on 9th, Burwell Fen on 17th, Ouse Washes 4 on 21st, Needingworth Lakes 40+ on 28th.

Gulls

Mediterranean Gull Grafham Water an adult on 7th and a 1st-winter on 23rd, Eaton Socon a 1st-winter bird joined Black-headed Gulls coming to breed in a private garden.

Black-headed Gull Swaffham Bulbeck c 1,500 on freshly ploughed land on 13th.

Yellow-legged Gull Ouse Washes RSPB on 7th, Grafham Water maximum 6 on 15th, Milton Tip maximum 2 on 13th.

Caspian Gull Milton Tip area maximum 3 on 6th and 13th, Grafham Water one on 7th and 2 on 15th, Ouse Fen on 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 17th.

Doves, owls and kingfisher

Stock Dove Nene Washes 300 on 9th.

Barn Owl *reported from:* Burwell Fen (4), Fen Drayton Lakes, Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes, St Ives, Sutton Gault, Wicken Fen (6) and Woodhurst.

Little Owl *reported from:* Nene Washes/March Farmers, Swaffham Prior Fen and Wicken Fen.

Tawny Owl *reported from:* Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen (4).

Short-eared Owl *reported from:* Burwell Fen (4), Fowlmere (Village), Holme Fen, Nene Washes (8), Ouse Washes, and Wicken Fen (2).

Kingfisher *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Cherry Hinton Hall, Nene Washes (3), Ouse Fen, Ouse Washes/Earith, Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen.

Falcons and parrots

Merlin Holme Fen one on 11th, Witcham Gravel one on 20th, Wicken Fen one on 15th, 22nd and 27th.

Peregrine *reported from:* Cambridge, Huntingdon, Nene Washes, Ouse Washes/Earith and Paxton Pits.

Ring-necked Parakeet* Little Downham 5 on 7th.

Shrikes and corvids

Great Grey Shrike* Ashley one on 11th – 17th, Swaffham Prior-Upware one 16th - 19th



Great Grey Shrike at Swaffham Prior Fen. Photo by Toby Austin.

Jackdaw/ Rook Cam Washes/Upware c600 in a mixed feeding flock on 13th.

Raven St Neots 1-4 from 24th – 26th, Kirtling one on 27th, Lode a possible on 28th.

Tits

Coal Tit *reported from:* Chippenham Fen (7 different birds on 24th).

Bearded Tit *reported from:* Ouse Fen (2).

Warblers

Cetti's Warbler *reported from:* Needingworth Lakes (2) Wicken Fen (5).

Chiffchaff Paxton Pits possible 'Siberian' Chiffchaff* (subspecies *tristis*) on 7th, Needingworth SF 4 on 9th and 2 on 12th and 28th, Godmanchester SF 7 on 9th and another 'Siberian' Chiffchaff, Ely SF 8+ together with a possible 'Siberian' on 15th, Fowlmere NR one on 28th.

Blackcap Folksworth on 5th, Soham a female on 7th, Paxton Pits one on 11th, Colne 2 on 12th, Stretham a male on 16th.

Nuthatch, starling and thrushes

Nuthatch *reported from:* Chippenham Fen (a female ringed on 24th).

Starling Ouse Fen c10,000 on 2nd, Wicken Fen a roost gathering on several dates estimated at 8,000 maximum, Godmanchester GP c3,000 on 9th.



Starling at Willingham. Photo by Colin Brown

Fieldfare Ouse Washes/Earith 100+ on 4th, Woodwalton Fen 150 on 11th, Paxton Pits c100 on 15th, Houghton 300 on 15th, Haslingfield c50 on 19th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 150 on 19th.

Redwing Wicken Fen c40 on 10th, Paxton Pits c30 on 14th, Wimpole Hall 500+ on 28th.

Mistle Thrush *reported from:* Paxton Pits and Whittlesford.

Stonechat

Stonechat *reported from:* Burwell Fen (3), Holme Fen, Ouse Fen (2), Ouse Washes RSPB (4), Wicken Fen (2)



Stonechat at Wicken Fen. Photo by Gary Thornton.

Sparrows, wagtails and pipits

Tree Sparrow Landbeach 40 on 7th and 83 on 10th, Woodhurst 30 on 22nd, Needingworth Lakes one on 22nd, Soham 2 on 26th.

Grey Wagtail *reported from:* Cherry Hinton Hall, Grafham Water, Houghton (3), Needingworth STW, Stirtloe STW (6).

Pied Wagtail Ely BF c80 on 7th, Stirtloe SF 120 on 7th, Paxton Pits 128 on 20th.

Meadow Pipit Paxton Pits 37 on 9th.

Water Pipit Ouse Washes roost c20 on 1st, 28+ on 14th and 41 on 28th, Burwell Fen one on 21st.

Finches and buntings

Brambling Wicken Fen one on 11th.

Linnet Fen Drayton Lakes 'several hundred' on 9th,

Bullfinch Fen Drayton Lakes 10 on 17th.

Reed Bunting Fen Drayton Lakes 100+ on 9th.

Corn Bunting Wicken Fen 10 on 3rd, Woodwalton Fen 50 on 11th, Sutton Gault c45 on 14th, Manea 23 on 20th.

Exotica

Ruddy Shelduck Ouse Fen one in the area on 8th.

Contributors:

Colin Addington, Ian Anderson, Rob Ayers, David Bale, Louise Bacon, Peter Bircham, Jez Bird, Chris Boness, Richard Bradbury, Chris Brown, Ellie Burke, Richard Caney, Steve Cooper, Saimon Clark, Gerry Davies, Martin Davis, Brendan Doe, Steve Dudley, Mark Eaton, Ian Ellis, Mike Everett, Simon Gillings, James Hanlon, Andy Hannaford, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Fred Heath, Jonathan Heath, David Hopkins, Adrian Hoyes, Richard Jackson, Andy Jennings, Richard Jones, Colin Kirtland, James Knightbridge, John Le Gassick, Ade Long, Stephen Lowe, Bruce Martin, Owen and Monica Marks, Paul Mason, Steve May, Duncan McNiven, Matt Mellor, David Milne, Donal McCarthy, Dick Newell, Dave Palmer, Richard Palmer, Neal Parkin, Richard Patient, Mark Peck, Grant Powter, Duncan Poyser, Gary Rawlings, Norman Sills, Chris Shurlock, Jonathan Taylor, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne and the Wicken Fen Group, Calum Urquart, Hugh Venables, David Walsh, Mark Ward, Iain Webb, David Wege, Jamie Wells, Steve West, Matt Wilson, David Withrington, Julian Young, and Christoph Zockler.

Cambridgeshire Bird Club Summer Garden Bird Survey 2015

To everybody that reads the e-bulletin; I believe that many of you will already know in the winter of 2014 a survey of the garden birds of Cambridgeshire was set up. Many people said that they enjoyed this and so the decision has been made to continue the work with a summer survey. It is hoped that this will be equally enjoyable.

If you took part in the winter survey, thank you so much and I hope that you will feel able to take part in the summer survey. The method used is the same as during the winter.

If you have not taken part before, welcome to the Cambridgeshire Bird Club Summer Garden Bird Survey, the details can be found on the club website (See below).

We ask that you note the bird species feeding or foraging in your garden from:

8th March 2015 – 3rd October 2015

Please then, each week, mark off the species on the list available from the Cambridgeshire Bird Club website:

www.cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

At the end of October, send it in to:

gardenbirds@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

Next winter you will be able to discover which species of birds make most use of gardens in the county during the summer months, find out whether new species are coming into gardens and whether the old regular species are making less use of the facilities.

Find more details at the Cambridgeshire Bird Club website:

www.cambridgebirdclub.org.uk Rebecca Buisson.

WICKEN FEN (BIRD RINGING) GROUP
Brief news for February 2015

There were netting sessions at the Fen on 16 different days in February. The month's ringing total was 268; a further 346 different birds were retrapped, so the overall total for the month was 614. Individual species totals (the first figure new birds, the second retraps) were:

Sparrowhawk	1, 0	Redwing	6, 0
Kestrel	1, 0	Robin	11, 20
Kingfisher	1, 0	Dunnock	1, 12
Great spotted Woodpecker	1, 3	House Sparrow	5, 7
Goldcrest	1, 5	Pied Wagtail	10, 0
Blue Tit	49, 127	Chaffinch	18, 8
Great Tit	19, 76	Greenfinch	32, 2
Long-tailed Tit	3, 22	Goldfinch	33, 5
Tree Creeper	1, 2	Linnet	2, 0
Wren	1, 4	Lesser Redpoll	2, 4
Starling	1, 0	Bullfinch	3, 1
Blackbird	13, 11	Reed Bunting	53, 34
Song Thrush	0, 3		

Old birds retrapped during the month were

Chaffinch V834220 at 6 years 8 months,

Blackbird XB92719 at 6 years 7 months,

Great Tit TH47238 at 5 years 9 months,

Robin X077999 at 5 years 6 months,

Blue Tit L504190 at 4 years 2 months and

Dunnock L504834 at 3 years 8 months.

Next indoor meetings:

Friday 13th March, St Johns Hall, Cambridge

Annual General Meeting followed by
Guyana – South America's hidden gem by Chris Collins

Bordered by Venezuela and Brazil, this small South American country is rarely visited by birdwatchers, despite having many special birds to see. Chris has have been lucky enough to spend several months there and in his lecture we will visit many of the habitats which make Guyana such a unique destination. In the tropical forests there are hundreds of species including antbirds, toucans, macaws as well as the majestic Harpy Eagle, whilst out on the savannahs, it is possible to find Giant Anteaters and the highly endangered Sun Parakeet.

Chris Collins is a freelance ornithologist and for the last 10 years he has been working on a wide range of bird and wildlife related projects around the world. Most of his work involves guiding groups of birders and wildlife enthusiasts to destinations as diverse as the Russian Far East, Antarctica, South America and Pacific Ocean. He has spent the equivalent of over three years working on expedition ships and has seen almost 90% of the world's seabirds and a total of well over 5,000 bird species. In addition to tour guiding, he regularly give lectures to groups in the UK and overseas and also work on consultancy projects offering advice to governments and agencies on growing a location as a birding destination. Many of you will recall his previous visit to CBC when he talked about birds of the Russian Far East.

For more information on Guyana see <http://www.neotropicalbirdclub.org/neobird/neobird2-collins.pdf>

Friday 10th April, Cottenham Village College

Ancient Egypt – wildlife art detective by Jackie Garner

Egyptian art has some of the most beautifully restrained (and some of the most outrageously flamboyant) images known to man. This presentation looks at the portrayal of wildlife in ancient Egypt and investigates the tools, pigments and methods employed by Egyptian artists.

Wildlife artist, Jackie Garner has been painting wildlife and the natural world for over 30 years. She originally at the Medway College of Design, before becoming the part-time education officer at Gloucestershire's Nature in Art. She says that "That role allowed me to indulge my love of wildlife art, and I was inspired - and taught - by some of the great British wildlife artists - Robert Gillmor, Peter Partington, Bruce Pearson, Greg Poole... Before I knew it my metamorphosis from a "naturalist interested in art" to an 'artist interested in nature' was complete.

Cambridgeshire Bird Report for 2014

For those people who send in records annually please can you send them to the Recorder as soon as possible by March 21st at the latest, so that the Club's database can be completed in preparation for the compilation of the Report's Systematic List.

Also if you wish to submit an article for publication please contact the E-bulletin Editor in the next month. The Club welcomes articles for publication but reserves the right to edit them and, given the limit on the space available, may defer publication for the following year.



Blackbird by Thomas Bewick