



Cambridgeshire Bird Club

E-Bulletin 45 April 2017

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



Black-tailed Godwits at Ouse Washes: photo by Jon Heath

HEADLINES

RING-NECKED DUCK* Paxton Pits: the long-stay bird present until at least the 18th.

GLOSSY IBIS* Ely: the long-staying bird present until the 5th.

CATTLE EGRET* Ouse Fen Wash: on the 16th, then 2 on the 24th, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 17th, Ouse Washes: on the 26th, one opposite Deeping Lakes on the 30th was just into the county.

PURPLE HERON* Ouse Washes: on 23rd.

SPOONBILL* Ouse Washes: on the 21st.

WHITE STORK* Warboys: on the 4th.

GLOSSY IBIS* Littleport May Farm: on the 7th.

STONE CURLEW at an undisclosed site on the 30th.

BLACK-WINGED STILT* Woodwalton Fen: 2 on the 23rd, Ouse Washes: a pair briefly on the 24th,
March Farmers: 5 on the 29th.

DOTTEREL Coveney Byall Fen: a pair on the 27th, Wendy on the 30th.

GLAUCOUS GULL Cottenham area: the 2 c.y. bird that has been around since the turn of the year
reported on the 2nd but not thereafter.

ICELAND GULL Dogsthorpe Tip: on the 21st - quite a late date, the latest ever being May 7th at Flag
Fen in 2009.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW* Ferry Meadows CP: on the 17th -18th.



Red-rumped Swallow (Ferry Meadows CP), Purple Heron (Ouse Washes), Cattle Egret (Ouse Washes)
Photos by Jonathan Taylor, Steve Cooper and Jonathan Heath respectively.
(A photograph helps in the verification of rarities).

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.*

Rare Breeding birds - reminder

In order to give some protection to the rare breeding birds in the county specific locations will not be given over the next two months for certain species. Please remember to report rare breeding birds to the Recorder who will advise you about the suitability of making the information public (e.g on Cambirds).

Weather: the first week was warm and dry culminating in a very warm day on the 9th when Cambridge at 25C was the warmest place in the country. Naturally there was an immediate return to more normal April temperatures in the week up to Easter but no rain. Thereafter it was more or less normal temperatures, with one or two colder days with winds variable in both direction and force. In the final week a touch of winter returned for a day or two but no real rainfall. One of the driest Aprils on record.

Wildfowl

Mute Swan Kingfishers Bridge: 22 on the 4th, 58 on the 8th, Ouse Fen Wash: 6 on the 12th, Burwell Fen: 25 on the 15th, Littleport May Farm: 10-20 all month.

Whooper Swan Nene Washes (March Farmers): on the 16th, and 5 on the 29th, Witcham Gravel: 2 on the 28th.

White-fronted Goose Ouse Washes: an immature on the 24th - 30th.

Greylag Goose Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): 43 on the 8th, 8 pairs on the 29th, Kingfishers Bridge: 50-60 on the 12th, 3 broods on the 17th, Burwell Fen: maximum 49 on the 15th, Fowlmere NR: 62 on the 20th, Trumpington Clay Farm: 15 on the 20th.

Canada Goose Burwell Fen: maximum 33 on the 2nd, Kingfishers Bridge: 101 on the 4th, 50 on the 12th, 34 on the 14th.

Barnacle Goose Burwell Fen: on the 2nd and 15th, Whittlesford GP: 2 pairs on the island (nesting) on the 20th.

Egyptian Goose Paxton Pits: 2 on the 2nd, a pair on the 8th, 3 on the 10th, a pair on the 23rd, Kingfishers Bridge: 2 on the 4th, 8th, and 12th, 5 on the 16th then 2 on the 17th, Burwell Fen: on the 5th, 3 on the 21st and 24th, Berry Fen 5 on the 24th, Fen Drayton Lakes: 2 adults with at least 2 young on the 24th, Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): 2 on the 29th, Littleport May Farm: 2 all month.

Shelduck Kingfishers Bridge: 8 on the 2nd, 4 on the 8th and 17th, Burwell Fen: 15 on the 3rd, 17 on the 5th, 9 on the 10th, 22 on the 15th, 13 on the 24th, Wicken Fen: 4 on the 5th, 2 on the 29th,

Isleham Wash: a pair on the 8th, **Paxton Pits:** on the 17th and 24th, **Littleport May Farm:** 2 on the 24th - 28th, **Witcham Gravel:** on the 28th.

Mandarin Ouse Washes: on the 1st, **Ferry Meadows CP:** on the 16th and 27th.

Wigeon Kingfishers Bridge: 4 on the 8th, **Nene Washes:** 100+ on the 8th, **Ouse Fen Wash:** 3 on the 12th, **Paxton Pits** a female on the 24th and 3 females on the 27th, **Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen):** on the 29th.

Gadwall Kingfishers Bridge: maximum 14 on the 8th and 14th, **Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen):** 6 on the 8th, 18 on the 29th **Burwell Fen:** maximum 14 on the 15th.

Teal Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): 88 on the 8th, 63 on the 29th, **Kingfishers Bridge:** maximum 36 on the 14th, **Burwell Fen:** maximum 14 on the 15th, **Nene Washes:** 50+ on the 8th, **Sutton Gault:** 150 on the 8th, **Fowlmere NR:** 5 on the 9th, a pair on the 14th, **Littleport May Farm:** 20+ all month.

Mallard Burwell Fen: maximum 18 on the 2nd, **Kingfishers Bridge:** maximum 25 on the 14th, **Trumpington Clay Farm** 12 on the 20th, **Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen):** 21 on the 29th, **Littleport May Farm:** 150+ all month.

Garganey reported from: Burwell Fen (3), Kingfishers Bridge (5), Nene Washes (5), Ouse Washes (13), Sutton Gault, Tubney Fen and Wicken Fen

Shoveler Burwell Fen: 78 on the 2nd and 43 on the 15th, **Kingfishers Bridge:** maximum 7 on the 8th, **Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen):** 14 on the 8th and 22 on the 29th.

Red-crested Pochard Paxton Pits: a pair on the 8th and 9th, 2 drakes on the 10th, a drake on the 24th, **Maxey GP:** on the 30th.

Pochard Kingfishers Bridge: maximum 9 on the 4th, **Burwell Fen:** 5 (2 males and 3 females) on the 15th, 2 drakes on the 21st, **Cam Washes:** on the 22nd, **Littleport May Farm:** a female all month.

Tufted Duck Burwell Fen: maximum 18 on the 2nd, **Kingfishers Bridge:** maximum 32 on the 8th, **Fowlmere NR:** 3 pairs on the 14th, **Trumpington Clay Farm:** 22 on the 20th, **Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen):** 5 on the 29th, **Littleport May Farm:** 10+ all month.



Tufted Duck at Fowlmere NR: photo by Brian Wallace

Scaup Ouse Washes: 15 on the 1st, 9 on the 2nd, 7 on the 5th, a pair on the 17th, Coveney Byall Fen: a pair on the 20th, Paxton Pits: on the 22nd.

Common Scoter Grafham Water: 3 on the 5th, a male on the 19th, one on the 30th.

Goldeneye Paxton Pits: 28 on the 1st, 2 on the 10th, one on the 15th, 2 females on the 17th, a female on the 22nd, Fen Drayton Lakes: 3 on the 4th, 19 on the 7th, one on the 29th and 30th, Grafham Water: a female on the 19th.

Gamebirds

Red-legged Partridge Littleport May Farm: 50-60 all month.

Grey Partridge Tick Fen Chatteris: 'several' on the 23rd, Cam Washes: 2 on the 23rd, Ouse Washes: on the 24th, Littleport May Farm: 20+ all month.

Pheasant Littleport May Farm: 50-60 all month.

Cormorants

Cormorant *reported from:* Burwell Fen (7), Fowlmere NR, Kingfishers Bridge (10), Littleport May Farm: (2), Trumpington Clay Farm and Wicken Fen.

Little Egret *reported from:* Burwell Fen (5), Kingfishers Bridge (3), Littleport May Farm (6), Nene Washes: (30), Ouse Fen Wash (3), Ouse Washes (81), Paxton Pits (2), Trumpington Clay Farm and Wicken Fen (3).

Great White Egret Ouse Washes: 2 on the 24th, Ferry Meadows CP: on the 30th.

Grey Heron Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): 8 on the 8th.

Grebes

Little Grebe *reported from:* Burwell Fen (11), Fowlmere NR, Kingfishers Bridge, Littleport May Farm 15+ all month, Trumpington Clay Farm (6) Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen) (5).

Great Crested Grebe *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Grafham Water, Kingfishers Bridge (2 pairs) Littleport May Farm (4) and Whittlesford GP.

Red-necked Grebe Grafham Water: the long-stay bird present until the 5th.

Black-necked Grebe Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 2nd - 7th.

Raptors

Red Kite *reported from:* Coton/Granchester roundabout, Cambridge (Coe Fen), Fowlmere NR, Grafham Water (3), Hemingford Grey (2), Littleport May Farm (3), Stilton (2), Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen (2).

Marsh Harrier *reported from:* Burwell Fen (5), Chippenham Fen, Fen Drayton Lakes, Fowlmere NR, Grafham Water, Kingfishers Bridge, Littleport May Farm (6), Nene Washes, Ouse Washes (3), Sutton Gault and Wicken Fen (8).

Hen Harrier Burwell Fen on the 2nd, Fowlmere NR a female on the 9th, a 2 c.y. male on the 17th, Wicken Fen: a male on the 13th.

Sparrowhawk *reported from:* Chippenham Fen, Cottenham, Fowlmere NR (2), Kingfishers Bridge, Littleport May Farm (4), Paxton Pits (2) and Wicken Fen.



Sparrowhawk at Willingham: photo Colin Brown.

Buzzard *reported from:* Barton, Brinkley, Burwell Fen (3), Cottenham (5), Fen Drayton Lakes (3), Fowlmere, Grafham Water, Great Wilbraham, Hemmingford Grey (3), Kingfishers Bridge (2), Littleport May Farm (6+), Paxton Pits (12), Sutton Gault, Tick Fen Chatteris (6), Wicken Fen (2) and Whittlesford.

Osprey Farcet Fen: on the 3rd, Grafham Water: on several dates from the 4th, Elton: a flyover on the 13th, Ouse Washes: a flyover on the 30th.

Rails and crane

Water Rail *reported from:* Fowlmere NR (2), Littleport May Farm (6+), Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen (2).

Moorhen Littleport May Farm: 40+ all month.

Coot Burwell Fen: 106 on the 2nd, 119 on the 15th, Kingfishers Bridge: maximum 27 on the 4th, Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): 38 on the 29th - 6 nests, Littleport May Farm: 20 all month.

Common Crane a group on 7 non-breeding birds have been roaming the county and were reported as follows: Wicken Fen on the 19th, Wimblington on the 28th, March Farmers on 30th, Ferry Meadows CP on the 30th.

Waders

Avocet Isleham Wash: 29 on the 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes: 2 on the 15th, Paxton Pits: on the 16th - 18th, Coveney Byall Fen: 2 on the 20th, one on the 28th, Littleport May Farm: 2 on the 22nd - 29th, Burwell Fen: 2 on the 23rd.

Oystercatcher *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Fen Drayton Lakes, Grafham Water (3), Kingfishers Bridge (4), Isleham Wash (pair), Littleport May Farm (4), Nene Washes (8), Ouse Fen Wash (2) and Paxton Pits (5).

Golden Plover Littleport May Farm: 9 on the 6th, Grafham Water: a flyover on the 8th, Maxey GP: 40+ on the 11th.

Grey Plover Paxton Pits: on the 9th, Grafham Water: on 14th - 16th, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 30th, Ferry Meadows CP: 5 on the 30th, Nene Washes: 4-7 on the 30th, Ouse Washes: 12 on the 30th.

Lapwing *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Fowlmere NR (2), Kingfishers Bridge (32), Littleport May Farm (20+), Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen) (6).

Little Ringed Plover *reported from:* Berry Fen (2), Coveney Byall Fen (8), Fen Drayton Lakes, Kingfishers Bridge (4), Littleport May Farm (2), Maxey GP (2), Ouse Fen Wash (2) and Paxton Pits (3).

Ringed Plover *reported from:* Berry Fen (12), Coveney Byall Fen, Paxton Pits (4).

Whimbrel Fen Drayton Lakes and Moonshine Gap on the 20th - first of the year, thereafter: Grafham Water: 3 flew over heading east on the 21st, Paxton Pits: 3 on the 21st, one on the 30th, Coveney Byall Fen: 5 flying over on the 21st, Fen Drayton Lakes: 2 on the 21st, one on the 22nd, 24th, and 29th, Kingfishers Bridge: 6 on the 22nd, Ouse Fen: a flyover on the 24th, Ouse Washes: on the 24th and the 28th.

Curlew Wicken Fen on the 1st, March Farmers: on the 30th.

Black tailed Godwit Ouse Washes: 1260 on the 1st, 220 on the 8th, c500 by the railway bridge at Pymoor on the 17th, 1,200-1,500 on the 21st, c1,000 on the 22nd, just 100 on the 24th when most had departed north, c300 on the 26th, Isleham Wash: 3 on the 8th, Burwell Fen: 2 on the 19th, Paxton

Pits: on the 21st, 4 on the 28th - 29th, Cam Washes: 3 on the 22nd, 5 on the 23rd, Fen Drayton Lakes: 80 on the 22nd, one on the 29th, Berry Fen: 170 on the 24th, Berry Fen: 40+ on the 28th,

Bar-tailed Godwit Paxton Pits: 3 on the 18th, one on the 22nd and 28th - 30th, Grafham Water: 2 on the 20th, one on the 30th, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 22nd, Kingfishers Bridge: on the 22nd, Ouse Washes: on the 24th, 28th and 30th, Nene Washes: 5-6 on the 30th.

Turnstone Grafham Water: on the 26th - first record of the year, then on the 30th, Barleycraft 2 on the 30th, Ouse Washes on the 30th,

Knot Ouse Washes: a flyover on the 30th - first of the year.

Ruff Burwell Fen: 2 on the 5th, one on the 13th, 8 on the 21st, 4 on the 23rd, 13 on the 24th, 4 on the 28th, Kingfishers Bridge: 4 on the 10th, 3 on the 12th, singles on 14th and 17th, Ouse Fen Wash: 2 on the 17th, Ouse Washes: 40 on the 21st, 50 on the 22nd, 45 on the 24th, Littleport May Farm: 2 on the 22nd, Cam Washes: on the 23rd, Coveney Byall Fen: 26 on the 28th.

Sanderling Paxton Pits: on the 25th - first of the year, Barleycraft GP: on the 30th, Grafham Water: on the 30th, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 30th.

Dunlin Cam Washes: on the 12th, Kingfishers Bridge: on the 14th, Grafham Water: a summer plumage bird on the 16th, 2 on the 14th, one on the 17th and 19th, Paxton Pits: on the 15th, 2 on the 22nd, 4 on the 25th and 28th, one on the 29th - 30th, Ouse Washes: 2 on the 22nd, 8 on the 24th, 2 on the 26th, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 24th, Coveney Byall Fen: 8 on the 28th, Berry Fen: 9 on the 30th, Wicken Fen: 3 on the 30th.

Common Sandpiper Paxton Pits: on the 17th - earliest record this year, one on the 21st, and another on the 30th, Ouse Fen: on the 24th, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 24th, Coveney Byall Fen: on the 28th, Ely: on the 29th, Grafham Water: on the 29th, Clayhithe: on the 30th.

Green Sandpiper *reported from:* Burwell Fen (4), Coveney Byall Fen, Fowlmere NR (2), Kingfishers Bridge, Littleport May Farm (2) and Paxton Pits.

Spotted Redshank Ouse Washes: on the 22nd - first this year, 2 on the 23rd, one on the 28th and 30th, Berry Fen: on the 28th, Coveney Byall Fen on the 28th, Cambridge: a flyover on the 29th.

Greenshank Paxton Pits: on the 16th - first of the spring - and on the 17th, 28th - 29th, 2 on the 30th, Burwell Fen: 2 on the 21st, 3 on the 23rd, one on the 28th, 5 on the 29th, Berry Fen: on the 21st and 24th, Cam Washes: 3 on the 22nd, 4 on the 23rd, Ouse Washes: 7 on the 24th, 12 on the 28th - 30th,

Wicken Fen: 3 on the 24th, Coveney Byall Fen: on the 28th, March Farmers: on the 25th, 3 on the 29th, Grafham Water: on the 29th, Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): on the 29th.

Wood Sandpiper Berry Fen, Fen Drayton Lakes, Ouse Washes (5) all on the 30th - the first of the year.

Redshank *reported from:* Burwell Fen (5), Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Fowlmere NR (unusual at this site), Grafham Water (3), Kingfishers Bridge (7), Isleham Wash (6), Littleport May Farm (6), Ouse Fen Wash (6) and Paxton Pits (13) Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen) (4).

Woodcock Littleport May Farm: 4 all month.

Snipe *reported from:* Fowlmere NR, Kingfishers Bridge, Littleport May Farm (20+), Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen.

Terns and gulls

Black Tern Paxton Pits: on the 18th - first of the spring, then 2 on the 23rd, 41 on the 30th, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 24th, 30 on the 30th, Grafham Water: on the 25th, 2 on the 30th.

Sandwich Tern a passage on the 9th: Grafham Water (3), Cambridge Research Park and Paxton Pits (3) - maybe the same as the Grafham birds.

Common Tern *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Cam Washes (5), Clayhithe (3), Ferry Meadows CP (41), Grafham Water (19), Kingfishers Bridge (3), Littleport May Farm (7), Milton CP, Paxton Pits (2) and Roswell Pits (1+).

Arctic Tern Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 15th (first of the summer), 11+ on the 17th, 22+ on the 24th, Ouse Washes a flyover on the 21st, Grafham Water: 80 (in three different groups) on the 24th, 25 on the 25th, 87+ on the 27th, one on the 29th, Ferry Meadows: on the 24th, 2 on the 26th, 9 on the 27th, one on the 28th, Ely Roswell Pits: on the 25th, Paxton Pits: 14 on the 25th, one on the 26th, 5 on the 28th - 29th, one on the 30th, Meadow Lane GP: 2 on the 26th.

Kittiwake Grafham Water: on the 15th.

Black-headed Gull Kingfishers Bridge: maximum 50 on the 2nd, Burwell Fen: maximum 143 on the 15th, Littleport May Farm: 200+ all month.

Little Gull Fen Drayton Lakes: a first summer on the 4th - 7th, Ouse Washes Four Balls Farm: on the 5th, Paxton Pits: on the 18th.

Mediterranean Gull Ferry Meadows CP: on the 30th, a pair at an undisclosed site on the 30th.

Common Gull Littleport May Farm: 5-6 all month.

Lesser Black-backed Gull Kingfishers Bridge: 4 on the 1st, one on the 2nd, 2 on the 12th and 14th, Fowlmere NR: 3 flew over on the 15th, Ouse Fen Wash: 2 (of the race *intermedius*) on the 12th, Trumpington Clay Farm: (2 *intermedius*) on the 20th, Littleport May Farm: 5-6 all month.

Herring Gull Kingfishers Bridge: on the 1st, Fowlmere NR: 5 flew over on the 15th, Littleport May Farm: 12+ all month.

Yellow-legged Gull *reported from:* Kingfishers Bridge and Paxton Pits (2).

Doves, Cuckoo, owls and Kingfisher

Stock Dove Kingfishers Bridge: on the 1st, Littleport May Farm: 30+ all month.

Woodpigeon Burwell Fen: 43 on the 2nd, Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): 32 on the 29th, Littleport May Farm: 200 all month.

Collared Dove Littleport May Farm: 50-60 all month.

Turtle Dove Fowlmere NR: on the 23rd - first of the summer, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 29th, Berry Fen: on the 30th.

Cuckoo Paxton Pits and Wilbraham Common on the 14th (first of the summer), thereafter also reported from: Burwell Fen (2), Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Littleport May Farm (3), March Farmers, Ouse Fen, Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen.

Barn Owl *reported from:* Burwell Fen (3), Ely, Fowlmere NR, Littleport May Farm (6), Nene Washes and Wicken Fen.

Little Owl *reported from:* Littleport May Farm (4) and Wicken Fen (2).

Tawny Owl *reported from:* Littleport May Farm (2).

Long-eared Owl Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 25th.

Short-eared Owl *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Cam Washes, Fowlmere NR, Littleport May Farm (2), Witcham Gravel and Wicken Fen.

Swift Paxton Pits: on the 21st, first of the year a little later than average, then Ferry Meadows CP: 2 on the 22nd, Paxton Pits: 3 on the 22nd and 24th, 4+ on the 25th, Ouse Fen: 4 on the 24th, March Farmers: 4 on the 29th, Fen Drayton Lakes: 2 on the 30th.

Kingfisher *reported from:* Fowlmere NR, Kingfishers Bridge, Littleport May Farm (6), Milton CP, Roswell Pits, Paxton Pits (3) and Wicken Fen.

Falcons and parrots

Kestrel Littleport May Farm: 8+ all month.

Merlin Aldreth Fen: 2 on the 8th.

Hobby Wicken Fen on the 21st - the first of the summer, then Ouse Washes: on the 24th, 3 on the 28th, Glinton: on the 24th, Littleport May Farm: on the 25th, Wicken Fen (several dates), Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 28th - 29th, March Farmers: 4 on the 29th, Paxton Pits: 5 on the 30th, Ferry Meadows CP: on the 30th.

Peregrine *reported from:* Fen Drayton Lakes, Fowlmere NR, Grafham Water, Littleport May Farm: (2), Nene Washes, Ouse Washes (2), Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen.

On the Ouse Washes one was seen to take an Islandic Black-tailed Godwit on the 28th.

Ring-necked Parakeet* Ouse Washes: on the 1st.

Shrikes and corvids

Great Grey Shrike* Burwell Fen: on the 3rd - this bird has been reported in the area for several months.

Magpie Littleport May Farm: 20+ all month.

Jackdaw Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): c50 on the 29th, Littleport May Farm: 200+ all month.

Rook Littleport May Farm: 200+ all month.

Carrion Crow Burwell Fen: 14 on the 2nd, Wicken Fen (Baker's Fen): 10 on the 29th, Littleport May Farm: 200+ all month.

Raven *reported from:* Castor Mill, Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Fowlmere (2), Hemingford Grey (4), Landbeach and Woodhurst.

Tits and larks

Blue Tit: Two recoveries reported from Wicken Fen: one ringed at Thetford on the 12th of September 2016 caught on the 24th of February 2017, a second caught at Wicken on February 19th had been ringed at Upper Langley in Essex in August 2015. Blue Tits are generally sedentary so these movements of 31km and 38 km respectively are unusual.

Bearded Tit *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Ouse Fen and Wicken Fen.

Skylark Littleport May Farm: 40+ all month.

Hirundines, long-tailed tit and warblers

Sand Martin *large counts:* Paxton Pits 39 on the 2nd, Fen Drayton Lakes 100+ on the 4th, Kingfishers Bridge: 250+ on the 10th, Paxton Pits 50 on the 10th.

Swallow reported ever more widely in the first ten days of the month. *Large counts:* Fowlmere NR: 30 on the 27th.



Swallow at Paxton Pits: photo by Phil Smith

House Martin *early dates:* Paxton Pits: 2 on the 8th, Wicken Fen: on the 9th, Ferry Meadows CP on the 12th thereafter reported more widely. *Large counts:* Cam Washes 30+ on the 23rd, Fowlmere NR: 20 on the 27th.

Cetti's Warbler *reported from:* Burwell Fen (2), Fen Drayton Lakes (9), Fowlmere NR (2), Kingfishers Bridge, Milton CP, Nene Washes (3), Paxton Pits, Roswell Pits (3), Sutton Gault and Wicken Fen (10).

Long-tailed Tit Littleport May Farm: 20+ all month.

Chiffchaff Fowlmere NR: 15+ on the 1st, Milton CP: 10 singing on the 4th, thereafter widely reported in good numbers.

Willow Warbler *early dates:* Wicken Fen: on the 1st, Milton CP: on the 4th.

Blackcap Fowlmere NR: 6 singing on the 1st, Milton CP: 11 singing on the 4th, general arrival followed these records.

Garden Warbler Burwell Fen: on the 3rd, (first of the summer, another early date, the record being March 28th at Morborne in 1999) and 10th, Ferry Meadows CP: on the 12th, Paxton Pits: on the 18th, Fen Drayton Lakes: 6+ on the 30th.

Lesser Whitethroat Marsh Lane GP: on the 6th (first of the summer), then Mepal: 3 on the 9th, Ferry Meadows CP: on the 12th, Fowlmere NR: on the 14th, thereafter widely reported.

Whitethroat Kingfishers Bridge: on the 4th, (first of the summer), Ferry Meadows CP: on the 6th, a general arrival thereafter.

Grasshopper Warbler Wicken Fen: on the 3rd (first of the summer), thereafter *reported from:* Burwell Fen, Cam Washes, Castor Hanglands, Clopton, Fen Drayton Lakes, Fowlmere NR, Kingfishers Bridge, Ouse Fen, Paxton Pits and Wicken Fen (3).

Sedge Warbler following the records on the final day of March reports from March Farmers: on the 1st, Ely Beet Factory: on the 2nd and Cambridge Research Park: on the 3rd, Wicken Fen and Fowlmere NR on the 6th, indicate the steady return.

Reed Warbler Fowlmere NR and Wicken Fen on the 4th (first of the summer), Grafham Water: on the 9th.

Waxwing, Starling and thrushes

Waxwing Cambridge (Bulstrode Gardens): 8 flushed by a Sparrowhawk on the 4th, (Lovell Road) 7 flew over on the 7th, Chesterton: 6 flying over on the 8th - seems to be the latest record.

Nuthatch Milton CP: on the 30th.

Starling Trumpington Clay Farm: c80 on the 20th, Littleport May Farm: 100+ all month.

Ring Ouzel Ferry Meadows CP: on the 7th, Morbourne: on the 8th, another on the 16th, Hope Farm Knapwell: 2 on the 12th, Coveney Byall Fen: on the 11th - 13th, Wicken Fen: on the 15th, Folksworth: 19th - 21st, Great Fen: on the 20th, Ferry Meadows CP: on the 21st - 22nd, Woodwalton Fen: on the 24th.

Fieldfare Fowlmere NR: 9 flew over on the 1st, Littleport May Farm: 8 on the 6th, Woodwalton Fen: 2 on the 23rd, Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 29th - late date.

Redwing Fowlmere NR: on the 4th - the latest reported so far.

Nightingale Castor Hanglands: on the 12th, Paxton Pits: on the 12th, Marsh Lane GP: 3 on the 12th (first reports of the summer), then: Wicken Fen: 2 on the 13th and subsequently, Castor Hanglands: 2 on the 17th, 4 on the 21st, Paxton Pits: on the 23rd.

Starts and chats

Black Redstart Hardwick: a female on the 8th,

Redstart Knapwell Grange Farm: a male on the 13th (first of the year), Castor Hanglands: on the 15th, 2 on the 16th, one on the 17th, Clopton: a female on the 16th, Paxton Pits: on the 22nd,

Whinchat Coveney Byall Fen: on the 28th - the first of the year, Grafham Water: a male on the 29th - 30th.

Stonechat Wicken Fen: a pair on the 23rd, one at an undisclosed site on the 30th, Littleport May Farm: 5-6 all month.

Wheatear Paxton Pits: on the 9th, 2 on the 25th, 10+ on the 28th - 29th, Kingfishers Bridge: a male on the 10th, Maxey GP: 3 on the 11th, Cam Washes: on the 11th, Swaffham Prior Devil's Dyke: 3 on the 14th, Haddenham Long Drove: 2 on the 13th, Bedford Purlieu: 11 on the 15th, Burwell: 3 on the 15th, Littleport May Farm: 8-12 from the 15th, Blackbush: 2 on the 16th, Ouse Washes: 9 near Pymoor, 3 at Way Head on the 17th, Coveney Byall Fen: on 21st, Pymoor: 4 on the 21st, Burwell Fen: 4 on the 23rd, 3 on the 29th, Tick Fen Chatteris: on the 23rd, Grunty Fen: 3 on the 23rd, Haddenham/Aldreth Fen: 11 on the 23rd, Coveney Byall Fen: 6 on the 28th, Duxford: 3 on the 28th,

Fen Drayton Lakes: on the 28th - 29th, Littleport May Farm: 7 on the 28th, Melbourn: 2 on the 28th, Wicken Fen: on the 28th, Chatteris Fen Drove: on the 29th, Fowlmere village: on the 29th, March Farmers: 3 on the 29th, Ferry Meadows CP: on the 30th.



Wheatear at Ouse Fen: photo by Thomas Reed

Sparrows, wagtails and pipits

House Sparrow Littleport May Farm: 25+ all month.

Tree Sparrow Redmere Farm c85 all month.

Yellow Wagtail Farcet Fen: on the 3rd,: Ouse Washes: on the 8th, Paxton Pits: on the 9th, 5 on the 11th, thereafter *reported from*: Burwell Fen, Cam Washes, Grafham Water (12+), Haddenham Long Drove, Tick Fen Chatteris (25), Littleport May Farm (9).

Grey Wagtail *reported from*: Clayhithe (2), Paxton Pits and Stanground.

Pied Wagtail Fowlmere NR: a roost of 12 on the 9th, Littleport May Farm: 100 all month.

White Wagtail Paxton Pits: on the 1st, 12th, 16th, 3 on the 17th, Littleport May Farm: 4+ from the 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes: 2 on the 17th, one on the 28th, Grafham Water: 3+ on the 20th, one on the 24th, Duxford: on the 28th.

Tree Pipit Castor Hanglands: on the 16th (first of the year), Paxton Pits on the 25th,

Meadow Pipit Littleport May Farm: 100+ all month.

Water Pipit Ouse Washes: on the 1st.

Finches and buntings

Chaffinch Littleport May Farm: 20 all month.

Greenfinch Littleport May Farm: 50+ all month.

Goldfinch Littleport May Farm: 80+ all month.

Linnet Littleport May Farm: 50+ all month.

Corn Bunting Haddenham Long Drove: 6-8 on the 13th, Littleport May Farm: 50+ all month.

Reed Bunting Littleport May Farm: 100+ all month.



Corn Bunting at Fowlmere NR: photo by Ian Harris

Exotica

Black Swan Ouse Washes on the 5th.

Ross's Goose Wicken Fen the resident bird seen flying over with Greylags on the 20th.

Hybrids

Glaucous Gull x Herring Gull Cottenham Long Drove a 2 c.y. on the 2nd.

Keeping up the list: at the end of April (according to the E-bulletin records) the county species total is now 186. New species this month: Purple Heron, Stone Curlew, Black-winged Stilt, Dotterel, Whimbrel, Turnstone, Knot, Sanderling, Common Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank, Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper, Arctic Tern, Black Tern, Sandwich Tern, Turtle Dove, Cuckoo, Swift, Hobby, Ring-necked Parakeet, Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Grasshopper Warbler, Ring Ouzel, Nightingale, Redstart and Whinchat.

Contributors:

Colin Addington, Richard Allison, Richard Aste, Malcolm Ausden, Louise Bacon, Stuart Ball, Geoff Barlow, Andy Bayes, Peter Bircham, Chris Boness, Will Bowell, Mark Brandon, Georgine Bray, Chris Brown, Mike Burdekin, Ian Burfield, Pete Cook, Ade Cooper, Steve Cooper, Roger Cresswell, Neil Crossman, Ian Dawson, Martin Davis, Tim Dee, Ian and Sheila Dickinson, John Dingemans, Brendan Doe, Steve Dudley, David Ellis, Mike Everett, Andy Frost, Tony Fulford, Paul Gallagher, Andrew Gardener, Don Gardener, Ed Gill, Simon Gillings, Andy Golding, Ian Gordon, Richard Grimmett, Derek Gruar, Lyn Guy, James Hanlon, Andy Hannaford, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Fred Heath, Jon Heath, Mark Hill, Graham Hirons, Michael Holdsworth, Carl Howard, Chris Jones, Jo Jones, Colin Kirtland, Nick Langley, Nick Laughton, Stella Laughton, David Lee, Peter Leonard, Keith Lievesley, Bob Mansfield, Paul Mason, Duncan McNiven, Giles Merritt, Steve Mumford, Dick Newell, Norman Ratcliffe, Martin O'Leary, John O'Sullivan, Dave Palmer, Richard Palmer, Rob Partridge, Richard Patient, Duncan Poyser, Doug Radford, Norman Ratcliffe, Gary Rawlings, Graeme Reed, Gareth Rees, Chris Rider, Mathew Rodgers, John Roote, Trevor Sawyer, Bill Simmonds, Jim Stevenson, Brian Stone, Jonathan Taylor, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne and the Wicken Fen Group, Calum Urquart, Hugh Venables, Ken Venus, Luke Wake, Mark Ward, Robin Ward, Matt Webb, Mike Weedon, Luke Wake, Jamie Wells, John Wells, Tony Weston, Kevin Wilson, David Withrington, Hugh Wright, Christoph Zöckler and the Kingfishers Bridge wardens.

Next indoor meetings:

Friday 12th May, Cottenham Village College<

Reclaiming South Georgia by Tony Martin

Two centuries ago, rats and mice were inadvertently introduced to the UK overseas territory of South Georgia by sealers and then whalers. Over time, these unwelcome guests ate their way through most of the island's wildlife, reducing the bird population by more than 90%. They threatened the extinction of an endemic bird and fundamentally changing the entire ecosystem of this globally important sub-Antarctic wildlife refuge. Tony Martin led a 6-year project to eradicate these invaders on behalf of the South Georgia Heritage Trust, using 3 helicopters, 300 tonnes of bait, £8m and a team of 40 people. This talk will explore what was involved in carrying out the world's largest rodent eradication project on a remote, glacier-encrusted island, the very encouraging results so far, and what lies ahead before South Georgia can finally be declared rodent free.

Tony Martin is Professor of Animal Conservation at the University of Dundee, and currently under secondment to the South Georgia Heritage Trust as Director of the South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project. He was previously a researcher at the Sea Mammal Research Unit and then the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge for 30 years, working on cetaceans and other aquatic vertebrates, especially in polar regions and the Amazon. At home in Cambridgeshire, Tony's garden has grown alarmingly, now hosting breeding avocets, harriers, kingfishers and sand martins.

FIELD TRIPS contact/booking via Louise Bacon, cbcrecorder@gmail.com

Friday June 9th .6pm..your chance to visit MAY FARM LITTLEPORT courtesy of Steve Mumford, Biodiversity officer on site. Please book with Louise Bacon for this evening visit which will be a walk to admire the site, followed by a talk with hot drink afterwards.

Friday July 14th Great Fen project. Meet 6.30pm at the 'Last of the Meres trail' parking on the B660. A walk to see some of the areas coming into the Great Fen project, returning arable land to wetland habitats

Friday August 11th Cavenham Heath. Time tbc, Booking essential. Site Manager for Natural England, Mike Taylor, will lead a walk around the heath, hopefully with a chance to see the post-breeding Stone Curlew aggregation which often occurs at that time of year.

***Club research - you can help with.....reminder
Sand Martins and Spotted Flycatchers and phyllosc warblers***

1. Sand Martin Survey

Robert Brown

The Cambridgeshire Bird Atlas notes that a survey of Sand Martins (*Riparia riparia*) is overdue. I recently volunteered to become the club's research officer and would like to instigate such a study in 2017.

The study will be in two parts. First, I would like to get an accurate and comprehensive record of nesting colonies. Secondly, I believe it would be valuable if we could get a more general idea of where the birds are and what they are doing. Sand Martins are insectivores but arrive early and leave late so certain habitats must be vital to their well-being.

User-friendly forms to assist in the survey work will be available from the club's web site, or by request from Robert Brown or Louise Bacon by email to research@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk.

Finally and importantly, care is needed particularly when surveying Sand Martins. Obvious hazards are deep water bodies and steep unstable slopes. The laws relating to trespass and access also apply.

2. Cambridgeshire Spotted Flycatchers

Michael Holdsworth

The CBC is planning to continue the Spotted Flycatcher Project into 2017.

2016 was the second year of this survey and we found many more pairs than we had in 2015, mainly because we put in more effort and hours. A hundred or so observers sent in records. A high proportion of these turned out not to be Club members but ordinary householders (often still BTO and RSPB members) responding to publicity in parish magazines and on websites.

If you just see even a single Spotted Flycatcher after 1 June this year, it will be worth following up. Do you know of a pair nesting near you this year, or of a traditional site which may be being used again?

Email me at spofl@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk with any information you have, including records of single birds; and please provide a map reference, preferably to 100m (as TL000000). Follow your leads up and keep us informed or we can arrange to follow up if you don't have time yourself.

secretary@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

3. Whiffwaff singers

Tony Fulford is continuing his investigations into why some Willow Warblers sing like Chiffchaffs. Last year, with help from local birders, he found eight such singers. This allowed

some preliminary playback experiments to discover how Willow Warblers (ordinary and wiffwaffs) and Chiffchaffs react to one another's songs. In order to follow up these studies this year he is again asking people to listen out for and report (to tonyfulford@gmail.com) any wiffwaffs they might come across in Cambridgeshire this spring. Listen for "chiffchaff" songs sung rather too fast (4 notes per second rather than 3) or with odd stray notes in them, or for Willow Warblers adding odd scratchy bits to the end of their usual liquid song; such birds often sooner or later reveal themselves to be mixed singers. They are commoner than you may think.

WICKEN FEN (BIRD RINGING) GROUP

Brief news for April 2017

There were netting sessions at the Fen on 16 different days in April. The month's ringing total was 124; with another 145 birds retrapped or controlled. Individual species totals (the first figure new birds, the second retraps) were:

Woodpigeon	1, 0	Sedge Warbler	5, 1
Green Woodpecker	0, 1	Reed Warbler	3, 1
Great spot Woodpecker	0, 1	Grasshopper Warbler	2, 0
Jay	1, 0	Tree Creeper	0, 3
Blue Tit	1, 8	Blackbird	4, 6
Great Tit	2, 20	Song Thrush	2, 1
Long-tailed Tit	0, 11	Wren	6, 13
Cetti's Warbler	3, 6	Robin	9, 8
Chiffchaff	17, 14	Dunnock	2, 11
Willow Warbler	2, 0	House Sparrow	8, 9
Blackcap	22, 2	Chaffinch	5, 6
Lesser Whitethroat	2, 0	Goldfinch	4, 2
Whitethroat	1, 0	Bullfinch	7, 5
Garden Warbler	0, 1	Reed Bunting	15, 15

Old birds retrapped during the month were:

Dunnock L504728 at 6y 0m,

Garden Warbler Y408038 at 4y 10m and Reed Bunting Y855026 at 4y 0m.
