

CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB Bulletin No. 454



Opinions expressed in this bulletin are not necessarily those of the Club.

Welcome to the September / October 2017 Edition

RECENT BIRD REPORTS – *Headlines*

BLACK-NECKED GREBE Sept: Paxton Pits on the 2nd, Grafham Water on 3rd.

MANX SHEARWATER* Sept: Grafham Water on the 8th, Ely one taken into care on 13th.

LEACH'S PETREL* Sept: Grafham Water on the 17th, *the first county record since 2009 and the 24th in all.*

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER* Oct: Brownhill Stauch on the 26th – 28th, Haddenham Long Drove on the 27th, probably the same individual.

DOTTEREL Oct: Ouse Fen on the 28th.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER* Sept: Burwell Fen on 7th – 10th, Maxey GP on 17th.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE* Sept: Burwell Fen a juvenile on 14th – 15th, Grafham Water 26th – 27th.

GREY PHALAROPE* Sept: Grafham Water a possible on the 14th – 15th but not positively identified.

GREAT SKUA Sept: Foul Anchor 62 over south in six groups, *constitutes the highest number of this species in the records for the County.* Oct: Foul Anchor 12 flying over on the 29th.

SABINE'S GULL* Sept: Grafham Water a juvenile on the 14th.

WRYNECK Oct: Cherry Hinton Hall flying over and calling on the 15th.

BEE-EATER* Oct: Stanground Gullet on the 27th.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER* Sept: Stanground Wash on the 26th. Oct: Yaxley on 31st.

DARTFORD WARBLER* Oct: Magog Down seen briefly on the 24th.

WOODLARK* Sept: New Shardelows Farm Fulbourn a flyover on the 20th. Oct: Ouse Fen 2 flying over heading south-west on the 12th.

HAWFINCH Oct: *an invasion with almost all reports the result of Vis Mig:*

5th Wimpole; 14th Eaton Ford, Little Paxton 2; 15th Paxton Pits 2; 16th Cambridge (Lovell Road), Eaton Ford, Stretham; 18th Cambridge Chesterton a night-time flyover; 20th Witcham 4, Stow-cum-Quy 6, Over 1; 21st Grafham Water 7; 22nd Brownhill Stauch, Wisbech St. Mary, Witcham; 23rd Ferry Meadows 6, Grafham Water, Newton, Roswell Pits, Trumpington 2, Witcham 5; 24th Eaton Ford, Hilton; 26th Maxey GP; 27th Ferry Meadows CP 9, Grafham Water 6; 28th Earith, Cambridge (Chesterton), Ferry Meadows CP 17, Stuntney 4, Witcham; 29th Buckden 2, Ferry Meadows, Paxton Pits 2; 30th Ferry Meadows 6, Grafham Water; 31st Cambridge (Lovell Road and the Botanical Gardens).

LAPLAND BUNTING* Oct: Wimblington 3 on the 4th.

ORTOLAN BUNTING* Sept: Cambridge on the 3rd; *identified from a recording of a call from a night time flyover. This record, if accepted, would be the first of this species in the County.*

Records in this bulletin are unchecked and may be revised at a later date. Asterisks indicate species for which it is necessary to send a description to the County Recorder for records to be accepted. The term 'reported from' gives an indication of distribution. Some species give maxima when a number of counts have been received. Where no numbers are given the record relates to a single bird. Occasionally the abbreviations M and F and 'max' are used.

Editor's note: So many records were received for this issue that some harsh editing has been necessary; apologies to those who do not see their records in these pages. Also we have picked up records from a number of the Great Fen areas and some place names may be unfamiliar, e.g. Kester's Docking, Froghall Farm, and Summer Standing. A map of all these areas can be found at <http://www.greatfen.org.uk/Interactive-map/project-area>

Weather: after a series of Septembers with warm Indian-summer type weather, 2017 was more like recent Octobers with a succession of low pressure areas bringing showers and sometimes strong winds. In the final week there were a few days of warmer sunnier weather. October brought a classic autumnal mixture of sunshine, showers and periods of high winds, the tail ends of Atlantic hurricanes. The first frost came right at the end of the month.

Wildfowl

Mute Swan **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP 95 on 17th.

Whooper Swan **Oct:** *arrival in two phases, early and late in the month:* **Early:** on 5th Byall Fen 16; on 6th Burwell Fen 8, Coveney Byall Fen 16, Littleport May Farm 14, Nene Washes 27, Stretham 4; on 7th Ouse Washes 219. **Late:** 28th Paxton Pits 3 adults and a juvenile, Burwell Fen 9 flying over, Littleport May Farm 33; on 29th (all flyovers): Burwell Fen 10, Kingfishers Bridge 8, Ouse Fen 9, Peterborough 20; on 30th Farcet Fen 4, Yaxley 8; on 31st Pymoor 100.

Pink-footed Goose **Oct:** Helpston 40 over on the 6th, Littleport May Farm 32 over on 6th, Ferry Meadows CP 8 over on 29th.

Greylag Goose **Sept:** Sutton North Fen 630 on the 10th, Fowlmere NR 200 on 16th – 17th. **Oct:** Trumpington Clay Farm maximum 122 on 3rd, Grafham Water 447 on 8th, Burwell Fen maximum c450 on 25th, Wicken Fen 300 on 8th, Holme Fen 109 on 8th, Kingfishers Bridge 886 on 18th.

Canada Goose **Sept:** Kingfishers Bridge 187 on the 6th. **Oct:** Great Fen sites on 8th – 9th: Kesters Docking and Froghall 121, Holme Fen 55, Rhymes Reedbed 81, Old Decoy Farm 116, New Decoy Farm 75; elsewhere, Trumpington Clay Farm max 121 on 3rd, Kingfishers Bridge 600 on 29th.

Barnacle Goose **Sept:** Sutton North Fen 30 on the 10th, Farcet Fen 15 on 28th. **Oct:** Granta Park 13 on 23rd.

Brent Goose **Sept:** Cambourne 15 flew over on the 25th. **Oct:** Trumpington Clay Farm from 11th – 13th; *this bird, a female, was ringed in Friesland Netherlands in spring 2015 and wintered in that area in 2015 and 2016.*

Egyptian Goose **Sept:** Colne Fen GP 16 on the 10th, Maxey GP 4 on 11th, Littleport May Farm 2 all month. **Oct:** reports from 8 sites, the maxima Fen Drayton Lakes 12, Ouse Fen 20 on 28th.

Shelduck **Sept:** Littleport May Farm 2 juveniles from 1st – 14th, Burwell Fen 3 on 19th and 2 on 28th. **Oct:** Littleport May Farm 2 juveniles 3rd – 24th, Burwell Fen 2 on 30th.

Mandarin **Sept:** Stapleford 7+ on the 14th rising to c30 on 18th, Fowlmere NR on 17th, Wimpole Park 5 on 25th. **Oct:** Wimpole Park 5 on 9th, Ferry Meadows CP a drake on 10th.

Wigeon **Sept:** Fen Drayton Lakes 20+ on the 10th, Holme Fen 9 on 10th, Fowlmere NR 3 on 23rd, Burwell Fen c30 on 28th, Coveney Byall Fen 30 – 40 on 27th, Wicken Fen 16 on 19th, Ferry Meadows CP 50 on 25th, Fen Drayton Lakes 200+ on 24th. **Oct:** Fen Drayton Lakes 220+ on 5th, Holme Fen 30 on 8th, Ferry Meadows CP 101 on 9th, Burwell Fen 165 on 12th, Ouse Fen 300 on 28th.

Gadwall **Sept:** Holme Fen 30 on 10th, Wicken Fen 120+ on 19th, Burwell Fen 87 on 19th. **Oct:** Holme Fen 47 on 8th, Burwell Fen 220 on 12th, Ferry Meadows CP 61 on 22nd.

Teal **Sept:** Grafham Water 54 on 3rd, Burwell Fen 226 on 19th, Fowlmere NR 12 on 28th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen max 264 on 4th, Trumpington Clay Farm 7 on 15th, Wicken Fen 54 on 15th, Ouse Washes 11 on 22nd, Littleport May Farm 50+ all month.

Mallard **Sept:** Grafham Water 446 on the 3rd, Colne Fen GP 206 on 10th, Littleport May Farm up to 500 all month, and 80+ at Trumpington, Burwell Fen and Farcet. **Oct:** Grafham Water 295 on 8th, Woodwalton Fen 48 on 8th, Holme Fen 86 on 8th, Ouse Washes 100+ on 22nd.

Pintail **Sept:** Grafham Water on the 3rd – 5th, Wicken Fen on 4th and 19th, Paxton Pits 6 on 19th, Burwell Fen on 20th. **Oct:** Wicken Fen 3 on 29th, Grafham Water on 21st, Kingfishers Bridge on 29th.

Garganey **Sept:** Fen Drayton Lakes on the 3rd, Burwell Fen 7 on 4th, 9 on 6th, Paxton Pits on 14th and 18th, Burwell Fen and Kingfishers Bridge 2 on 26th, *the latest date*.

Shoveler **Sept:** Fen Drayton Lakes 260 on the 30th, Burwell Fen 158 on 19th. **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP 14 on 3rd, Grafham Water 111 on 8th, Burwell Fen maximum 108 on 10th.

Red-crested Pochard **Oct:** Fen Drayton Lakes a pair on the 15th, Paxton Pits on 15th.

Pochard **Sept:** Maxey GP 90 on 2nd, Tanholt GP 40 on 20th. **Oct:** Grafham Water 30 on 8th, Ferry Meadows CP 6 on 15th, Whittlesford GP 6 on 25th, Cambridge Research Park 22 on 28th.

Tufted Duck **Sept:** Grafham Water 921 on 3rd, Maxey GP 78 on 2nd. **Oct:** Grafham Water 1584 on 8th, Holme Fen 37 on 8th, Fen Drayton Lakes 120 on 25th.

Scaup **Sept:** Ferry Meadows CP a 'female-type' on the 15th. **Oct:** Paxton Pits a male on 9th and 16th, Grafham Water a male on 11th.

Common Scoter **Sept:** Grafham Water an immature/female on the 26th.

Goldeneye **Sept:** Maxey GP on the 2nd, Paxton Pits on 2nd and 23rd, Grafham Water on 5th. **Oct:** Grafham Water 43 on 8th, Ferry Meadows CP a male on 9th, a female on 21st, 3 on 30th, Cambridge Research Park a female on 20th (*unusual at this site*).

Red-breasted Merganser **Sept:** Earith a female/juvenile on the 17th.

Goosander **Sept:** Stapleford on the 14th. **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP 2 on 5th and 11th, 7 on 22nd.

Gamebirds

Grey Partridge **Sept:** Nine Wells 20 on the 5th and 38 on 26th, Tubney Fen 11 on 18th, Littleport May Farm 30+ all month. **Oct:** Nine Wells max 71 on 24th, Foxton max 30 on 19th.

Quail **Sept:** St Neots 2 on 13th.

Cormorants, egrets, herons and grebes

Cormorant **Sept:** Fen Drayton Lakes 100+ on 19th, Pampisford on 19th. **Oct:** reported from Burwell Fen (12), Fen Drayton Lakes (150), Fowlmere NR (13), Ferry Meadows CP (44), and Grafham Water.

Bittern **Sept:** reported from Bainton GP, Kingfishers Bridge and Wicken Fen. **Oct:** also at Cambridge Research Park, Farcet Fen, Fen Drayton Lakes and Nene Washes Eldernell (3).

Little Egret **Sept:** reported from Burwell Fen (8), Fen Drayton Lakes (max 38), Fowlmere NR (2), Grafham Water (8), Littleport May Farm (4) and Wicken Fen (11). **Oct:** reported from Cam Washes, Fen Drayton Lakes (50+), Ferry Meadows CP, Fowlmere NR (3), Grafham Water (10), Granta Park, Littleport May Farm (6), Paxton Pits (4), Trumpington Clay Farm (2) and Wicken Fen (9).

Great White Egret **Sept:** Fen Drayton Lakes throughout, Paxton Pits on 10th, 14th and 19th, Caxton on 18th, Nene Washes on 28th, Wicken Fen on 25th and Burwell Fen on 30th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen on 1st, Stretham over on 1st, Fen Drayton Lakes max 4 on 22nd, Wicken Fen and Burwell Fen on 3rd, Paxton Pits on 4th and 15th, Littleport May Farm on 6th, Godmanchester NR 2 on 8th and 11th, Burwell Fen 3 over on 20th. *Some reports may involve the same bird so it remains difficult to assess a county total.*

Little Grebe **Sept:** largest counts at Holme Fen (34), Colne Fen GP (30), and Littleport May Farm (15+). **Oct:** also at Trumpington Clay Farm (10), Grafham Water (15) and Fen Drayton Lakes (12).

Great Crested Grebe **Sept:** Grafham Water 236 on 3rd, Colne Fen GP 35 on 10th. **Oct:** Grafham Water 249 on 8th.

Raptors

Red Kite **Sept:** Wistow 17 on 14th, and reports from Fowlmere NR, Littleport May Farm, Holme Fen, Old Decoy Farm and Ouse Fen. **Oct:** Stilton 17 on 27th, and at Great Fen sites (Darlow's Farm, Kesters Docking and Froghall, Rhymes Reedbed, Summer Standing), and Ferry Meadows CP (4).

Marsh Harrier **Sept:** reported from Burwell Fen (2), Cam Washes, Chippenham Fen, Darlow's Farm, Fen Drayton Lakes, Ferry Meadows CP, Fowlmere NR, Littleport May Farm (up to 10) and Orton BP. **Oct:** also at Haddenham Fen, Nene Washes (3), Ouse Washes, and Woodwalton Fen (3).

Buzzard **Sept:** widely reported including Grafham Water (15), Cambridge (8), Littleport May Farm (10+), Pampisford and Six Mile Bottom. **Oct:** also at Fen Drayton Lakes (7), Fowlmere NR, Great Fen (Middle Farm (5), Summer Standing (3), Woodwalton Fen), Little Shelford, and Nene Washes (3).

Osprey **Sept:** Grafham Water on the 2nd, 2 on 3rd, a single on 4th and 5th, between Shepreth and Meldreth on 6th, Burwell Fen flyovers on 6th and 14th. **Oct:** Fowlmere NR a flyover reported on 1st.

Rails and crane

Water Rail **Sept:** reported from Littleport May Farm (6+), Kingfishers Bridge and 5 other sites. **Oct:** Sutton Gault Hole 6 on 9th.

Coot **Sept:** Grafham Water 1149 on 3rd, Kingfishers Bridge 420 on 21st. **Oct:** Fen Drayton Lakes 300+ on 5th, Grafham Water 977 on 29th.

Common Crane **Sept:** Ouse Washes 23 on the 10th (*including 2 known pairs each with 2 young, and "Beatrice" a colour-ringed bird originally from Somerset*), March 24 flying over on 16th (presumably the same group), Burwell Fen 2 on 18th. **Oct:** Littleport May Farm 11 feeding on tilled land on 11th, Wicken Fen on 9th, Nene Washes (Eldernell) 8 on 25th, Ouse Washes c28 on 28th.

Waders

Golden Plover **Sept:** Paxton Pits on the 2nd, Burwell Fen 150 on 4th and 500+ on 9th, Stapleford 1000 over on 18th, Littleport May Farm 256 on 30th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen 500+ on 9th, Trumpington A10/M11 junction 800 on 14th, Cam Washes 250+ on 8th, Nene Washes c500 on 17th, Queen Adelaide 300+ on 19th, Brownhill Staunch 1500 on 26th, Haddenham North Fen 3000 on 26th.

Grey Plover **Sept:** Kingfishers Bridge on the 10th. **Oct:** Nene Washes (Ring's End) 3 on 15th, Burwell Fen on 28th.

Lapwing **Sept:** Littleport May Farm 500+ on 30th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 2000+ on 20th, Burwell Fen c1230 on 28th, Nene Washes 800 on 28th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen 1000 on 8th, Ouse Fen c400 on 25th, Haddenham Fen c5000 on 26th.

Little Ringed Plover **Sept:** Burwell Fen 3 on the 7th. **Oct:** Littleport May Farm 2 on 24th – 27th.

Ringed Plover **Sept:** Burwell Fen max 50 on 25th, Paxton Pits 6 on 20th, Coveney Byall Fen on 18th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen max 13 on 1st, Cambridge overnight on 18th – 19th, Littleport May Farm 26th – 28th.

Curlew **Sept:** Grafham Water on the 2nd, Burwell Fen on 25th.

Black-tailed Godwit **Sept:** Burwell Fen 1 – 3 but 7 on 14th, Littleport May Farm 9 on 4th, Coveney Byall Fen on 13th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen max 9 on 28th, Littleport May Farm 3 on 3rd, Tubney Fen 9 over on 2nd, Kingfishers Bridge 10 on 29th.

Bar-tailed Godwit **Sept:** Burwell Fen on the 14th.

Turnstone **Sept:** Burwell Fen briefly on the 17th.

Knot **Sept:** Burwell Fen on 16th.

Ruff **Sept:** Burwell Fen numbers built to 64 on 29th and adjacent Swaffham Prior Fen 129 also on 29th; other sites such as Ouse Fen and Paxton Pits had single figure counts. **Oct:** Burwell Fen peaked at 173 on 6th and 127 on 20th, down to 13 on 29th, Kingfishers Bridge 123 on 16th (same flock?)

Sanderling **Oct:** Grafham Water on 21st.

Dunlin **Sept:** Burwell Fen increased from 5 on 1st to 30 on 26th, Coveney Byall Fen 2 on 18th, Paxton Pits 4 on 20th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen 13 – 16 throughout, Littleport May Farm 3 on 3rd, Grafham Water on 8th and 28th, Paxton Pits 3 on 15th, Cambridge overnight on 18th – 19th, Kingfishers Bridge on 29th.

Little Stint **Sept:** Burwell Fen 2 from 1st – 18th then rising to 10 on 30th, Paxton Pits on 10th, 5 juveniles on 18th – 19th, one on 23rd, Grafham Water on 16th, Fen Drayton Lakes 2 on 29th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen max 12 on 2nd, Fen Drayton Lakes on 1st.

Curlew Sandpiper **Sept:** Paxton Pits on the 13th, Grafham Water on 16th.

Common Sandpiper **Sept:** Burwell Fen 4 on 4th was the maximum with mostly singles at other sites until 24th. **Oct:** Littleport May Farm 2 on 3rd, Paxton Pits on 14th – 15th, Foul Anchor 3 on 22nd.

Green Sandpiper **Sept:** reported from Burwell Fen (max 9 before 18th dropping to 2 on 28th), Cam Washes, Coveney Byall Fen, Grafham Water (2) and Stapleford (3). **Oct:** also at Fen Drayton Lakes (2), Ferry Meadows CP, Littleport May Farm (4), Paxton Pits (3) and Trumpington Clay Farm (2).

Spotted Redshank **Sept:** Burwell Fen from the 6th – 30th with 2 on 10th, Littleport May Farm on 12th and 28th. **Oct:** Burwell Fen up to 20th, Wicken Fen (presumably the same bird) on 3rd and 9th, Littleport May Farm on 3rd.

Greenshank **Sept:** Burwell Fen max 8 on 4th slowly declining to singles by 28th, Fowlmere NR 2 on 2nd, Littleport May Farm 4 on 4th, Cam Washes on 9th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 9th, Paxton Pits 3 on 13th, Coveney Byall Fen 2 on 18th, Cottenham a flyover on 18th, Wicken Fen on 22nd. **Oct:** Burwell Fen 2 on 1st, Littleport May Farm 2 on 3rd, Kingfishers Bridge on 6th, Grafham Water on 23rd.

Wood Sandpiper **Sept:** Burwell Fen on the 25th – 26th.

Redshank **Sept:** reported from Burwell Fen (2), Cam Washes and Fen Drayton Lakes (2). **Oct:** also at Grafham Water (2), Great Fen Middle Farm and Littleport May Farm (6).

Jack Snipe **Oct:** Burwell Fen on 15th, Kings Dyke NR on 30th.

Woodcock **Sept:** Holme Fen on the 10th, Littleport May Farm 4 all month and into Oct.

Snipe **Sept:** reported from Burwell Fen (max 50 on 4th), Ferry Meadows CP, and Paxton Pits (4).

Oct: also at Littleport May Farm (50) Chippenham Fen, Fowlmere NR (4), Great Fen (several sites), Kingfishers Bridge (10), Trumpington Clay Farm (8) and Cambridge Lovell Road overnight.

Terns and gulls

Black Tern **Sept:** Grafham Water a juvenile on the 8th, Coveney Byall Fen on 13th, Fen Drayton Lakes a juvenile on 24th. **Oct:** Grafham Water a juvenile on the 5th – 8th.

Sandwich Tern **Sept:** Cambridge a flyover sound recorded at night on the 6th.

Common Tern **Sept:** Fen Drayton Lakes 10+ on the 3rd, Willingham on 5th, Grafham Water on 6th.

Arctic Tern **Sept:** Grafham Water a juvenile on the 14th.

Kittiwake **Sept:** Grafham Water an adult on the 14th.

Black-headed Gull **Sept:** Grafham Water 450 on 17th, Burwell Fen 324 on 19th, Bradley Fen 180 on 28th. **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP 500 on 17th, Fowlmere NR 300 on 11th, Kingfishers Bridge 267 on 11th.

Mediterranean Gull **Sept:** Grafham Water on the 13th, Ferry Meadows CP an adult on 29th. **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP on 8th, Bradley Fen on 12th, Burwell Fen on 24th.

Common Gull **Oct:** Littleport May Farm 23 on 3rd, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 120 on 31st.

Lesser Black-backed Gull **Sept:** Grafham Water 1100 on the 4th, Littleport May Farm 242 on 4th, Stapleford c150 in a ploughed field on 4th, Witchford 144 on 8th. **Oct:** Melbourn 900 following the plough on 3rd, Littleport May Farm 221 on 3rd, Fowlmere 400 near the NR on 11th.

Herring Gull **Sept:** Grafham Water 35 on the 4th, Littleport May Farm 136 on 4th, Darlow's Farm on 10th, Old Decoy Farm 3 on 10th. **Oct:** Melbourn 4 following the plough on 3rd, Littleport May Farm 112 on 6th, Great Fen Kesters Docking and Froghall 5 on 8th, Ferry Meadows CP 114 on 23rd.

Yellow-legged Gull **Sept:** reported from Grafham Water (15) and Stapleford. **Oct:** also at Fen Drayton Lakes, Fowlmere (2), Melbourn (7), Ouse Washes and Trumpington Clay Farm (an adult).

Caspian Gull **Sept:** Grafham Water on 4th. **Oct:** Melbourn 3 following the plough on 3rd.

Great Black-backed Gull **Sept:** Littleport May Farm 9 on 4th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fen 2 on 20th.

Oct: Littleport May Farm 3 on 3rd, Great Fen Summer Standing 4 on 8th, Wicken Fen 5 on 23rd, Haddenham Hinton Farm Reservoir 4 on 25th, Ferry Meadows 3 flying over on 30th.

Doves, owls and kingfisher

Stock Dove **Sept:** Darlows Farm 9 on the 10th, Woodwalton Fen 6 on 10th, Littleport May Farm 50+ all month. **Oct:** Great Fen sites on 8th: Kesters Docking and Froghall 69, Rhymes Reedbed 11, Great Fen Summer Standing 10; also Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 250 on 31st.

Woodpigeon **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP (Vis Mig) 450+ on 23rd, 1510 on 25th, 4000+ on 26th and 27th, 1259 on 30th, Littleport May Farm 5000 on 14th – 15th.

Collared Dove **Sept:** Burwell Fen 130 on the 18th. **Oct:** Littleport May Farm 100+ all month.

Barn Owl **Sept:** reported from Burwell Fen (2), Littleport May Farm (6), Litlington (4) and 6 other sites. **Oct:** also at Cambridge on 15th and 16th (night-time records), and Rhymes Reedbed.

Little Owl **Sept:** Littleport May Farm (max 4), Litlington (4) and Hinxtton. **Oct:** Gamlingay on 8th.

Tawny Owl **Sept:** at 5 sites including Cambridge and Orton Longueville. **Oct:** also at Bassenhally Pit, Hilton and Mepal.

Short-eared Owl **Sept:** Grafham Water on the 13th, Peterborough on 26th. **Oct:** Nene Washes on 6th, Fowlmere NR on 21st, and Histon Cambridge Science Park and Ouse Fen all on 29th.

Swift Sept: Cambridge groups of 20 – 60 on the 2nd and 3rd, Brampton on 4th, Cambridge Addenbrooke's Hospital 5 on 4th, Cam Washes 4 on 4th, then tailing off with 1 – 4 at various sites until Grafham Water 4 on 13th, Peterborough on 14th and Cambridge on 15th.

Kingfisher Sept & Oct: many reports of 1 – 2 from suitable sites around the county, including Toft, Cambridge, Trumpington, Tetworth and Maxey Cut.

Falcons and parrots

Kestrel Sept: Littleport May Farm max 12. **Oct:** Nene Washes 7+ on 25th, Littleport May Farm 20+.

Merlin Oct: Shepreth on the 5th, Cambridge one in pursuit of Skylarks on 14th, Fowlmere NR on 14th, Grafham Water on 15th – 16th, Little Paxton on 15th, Brownhill Stauch on 26th, Nene Washes on 25th, Fen Drayton Lakes on 29th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens on 31st.

Hobby Sept: reports from 19 locations maximum Paxton Pits 9+ at dusk on 13th. **Oct:** Fen Drayton Lakes 3 on 1st and 2 on 4th, Fowlmere NR on 3rd, Littleport May Farm on 27th, *the latest report*.

Peregrine Sept: reported from 12 locations including 2 on Kings Dyke brickwork chimneys on 21st. **Oct:** at a similar number of sites including Burwell Fen singles on 5 dates, Fowlmere NR on 21st chasing a passing Short-eared owl, and Brownhill Stauch 2 on 26th interested in Golden Plovers.

A young bird was discovered injured near Fulbourn on the 15th Sept and taken into care; an x-ray revealed an air gun pellet lodged near the humerus. This disturbing report follows closely on the fate of the Red-footed Falcon shot near Whittlesey in Sept 2015. Meanwhile, studies of the Cambridge Peregrines have shown that as well as many feral pigeons, prey items include Teal, Shoveler, Grey Partridge (2), Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Black-tailed Godwit, Woodcock, Common Tern, Blackbird, Redwing and Starling – a remarkable collection from over the city.

Ring-necked Parakeet* Sept: Ouse Washes on the 2nd. **Oct:** Soham on 6th, Peterborough on 26th, Cambridge 2 on 29th.

Corvids

Jackdaw/Rook Sept: Chippenham Fen a roost of 3000+ emerging at dawn on the 4th, Littleport May Farm 500+ throughout and into Oct.

Carrion Crow Oct: Wicken Fen c400 on 8th, Littleport May Farm 300+ all month.

Raven Sept: Paxton Pits on the 2nd, Fen Drayton Lakes 2 on 7th, Buckden 2 on 5th, Warboys 6 over on 22nd, *a new county record count*. **Oct:** scattered but frequent reports including Huntingdon 2 over on 1st, Great Cambourne 2, Little Downham, Litlington 2 on 15th, Abbot's Ripton, Foxton, Grafham Water, Knapwell Grange Farm, Paxton Pits 2 on 21st, and Ferry Meadows CP 2 on 24th and 28th.

Tits and larks

Firecrest Oct: Cottenham on the 9th, Dry Drayton on 18th, Witcham on 22nd.

Goldcrest Oct: *one ringed at Skeffling East Yorkshire on September 7th was caught at Wicken Fen on October 3rd, a distance of 149 miles.*

Marsh Tit Sept: Fowlmere NR on the 2nd (*very unusual at this site*), Tetworth Hall Estate on 6th, Monks Wood a total of 69 identified on 18th. **Oct:** reported from Chippenham Fen, Holme Fen, Knapwell Grange Farm, Aversley Wood, Ditton Park Wood, Paxton Pits and Woodwalton Fen.

Bearded Tit Sept: Ouse Fen (5). **Oct:** reported from Wicken Fen (c20), Kingfishers Bridge (4), Burwell Fen, Glassmoor Bank, Ouse Fen (3), and Paxton Pits (2).

Skylark Sept: Fowlmere NR 60 in a nearby field on the 24th and 28th. **Oct:** Great Fen sites on 8th: Middle Farm 59, Rhymes Reedbed 47, Summer Standing 22, Darlow's Farm 32; also Grafham Water 25+ on 15th, Littleport May Farm 100+ all month.

Hirundines and warblers

Sand Martin Sept: Ferry Meadows CP 65 on the 4th, Fen Drayton Lakes 1200 on 10th. **Oct:** Kingfishers Bridge 3 on 2nd, Littleport May Farm 12 on 3rd.

Swallow Sept: Ferry Meadows CP 200 on the 14th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens c100 on 8th, Old Decoy Farm 64 on 10th, Hauxton 50 on 27th, Duxford 60+ on 18th, Burwell Fen c80 on 19th. **Oct:** Croydon 70 on 1st, Cam Washes 8 on 8th, Graveley on 15th, Grafham Water on 21st, Wicken Fen 2 on 22nd, Littleport May Farm 9 on 23rd, Ferry Meadows CP on 23rd and 27th.

House Martin Sept: Grafham Water 3000+ hirundines (mainly House Martins) on 12th, c1000 on 13th, Ferry Meadows CP c200 on 15th, Cambridge 187 on 20th. **Oct:** Foxton sewage works c400 through on 1st, Eaton Ford 4 on 16th, Hartford Marina 2 on 17th, Dry Drayton 2 on 21st.

Cetti's Warbler Sept: reported from Ferry Meadows CP, Fowlmere NR (2), Littleport May Farm (3), Orton BP and Wicken Fen (10). **Oct:** also at Burwell Fen (2), Cam Washes, Darlow's Farm, Ferry Meadows CP, Fowlmere NR (4), and Paxton Pits.

Chiffchaff Sept: Cambridge Research Park c30 moving through on the 2nd, Wicken Fen 27 caught 14th – 16th, Fowlmere NR 15 on 23rd. **Oct:** *late dates from 10th, maybe complicated by over-wintering birds:* Ferry Meadows CP 5+ on 12th, Grafham Water 3 on 19th, Fowlmere NR 4 on 15th and one on 21st, Wicken Fen 2 on 19th, Paxton Pits on 24th, Burwell Fen on 31st.

Willow Warbler Sept: Cambridge Research Park 3 on the 2nd, Holme Fen on 10th, Wicken Fen on 15th, Kingfishers Bridge 2 on 21st.

Blackcap Sept: movement indicated by 54 birds caught at Wicken Fen 14th – 16th. **Oct:** *late dates (comment as per Chiffchaff):* Wicken Fen 3 on 12th and 2 on 29th, Cambridge dates up to 30th.

Lesser Whitethroat Sept: Grafham Water on 4th, Chippenham Fen on 6th, Comberton 4 on 17th, Fowlmere NR on 23rd.

Whitethroat Sept: Wicken Fen on 22nd, Ferry Meadows CP on 26th, Paxton Pits on 30th.

Grasshopper Warbler Sept: Fowlmere NR on the 23rd.

Sedge Warbler Sept: Fowlmere NR on the 28th.

Reed Warbler Sept: Bradley Fen and Fowlmere NR on the 28th, Kingfishers Bridge on 30th.

Nuthatch, starling and thrushes

Nuthatch Sept: Chippenham Fen a young bird ringed on the 6th, Elton on 28th. **Oct:** reported from Granta Park, Littleport May Farm, Wimpole Park, and Archer's Aversley and Ditton Park Woods.

Starling Sept: Haddenham/Aldreth Fens c300 on the 20th, Littleport May Farm 500+ all month.

Oct: Vis Mig observations – Ferry Meadows CP 385 on 15th, 800 on 22nd, 1170 on 24th, 1609 on 26th, 2870 on 27th, 2814 on 28th, 1912 on 31st, Wicken Fen c300 on 15th, Fowlmere NR 400 on 27th. Roosts at Tubney Fen 12000 on 10th, and Bolton's Pit 900+ on 21st.

Ring Ouzel Oct: *modest passage* – Fowlmere NR on the 8th, Cambridge night-time record of 1 – 2 on 18th – 19th, Coppingford on 26th, and Earith on 26th.

Blackbird Oct: Ferry Meadows CP 26 on the 31st.

Fieldfare Oct: First reported on the 8th with 25 at Godmanchester NR and 3 at Castor Hanglands. Thereafter, Earith 5 on 23rd, Ferry Meadows CP 8 on 24th, then 343 on 27th, 445 on 30th and 43 on 31st (all Vis Mig), Paxton Pits 14 on 25th, Grafham Water 190+ over on 28th.

Song Thrush Sept: Cambridge Chesterton night time passage recorded on the 26th. **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP 40 on 15th, Cambridge 114 over during the night of 15th – 16th, 30 on 17th – 18th.

Redwing Sept: Kingston/Toft 6 on 30th. **Oct:** Little Shelford c12 over on 6th, Cam Washes 55 and Castor Hanglands 135 on 8th, Hare Park Six Mile Bottom 40 on 9th, and Mepal 250+ on 9th. Larger counts (mostly Vis Mig): Grafham Water 140+ on 16th, Cambridge 450 overnight 8th – 9th, Ferry Meadows CP 320 on 23rd, 200 on 26th, and 1376 on 27th.

Mistle Thrush Sept: Tetworth 26 on 6th. **Oct:** Prior's Fen GP 18 on 7th.

Spotted Flycatcher Sept: *late dates* Wicken Fen on 21st, Fowlmere NR 2 on 24th, Hinxton on 27th.

Starts and chats

Redstart Sept: Fen Drayton Lakes on the 2nd, Buckden on 5th, Witcham 2 males on 8th, Eddington (the new West Cambridge development) on 9th, Fowlmere NR a male on 10th, Clopton a female on 16th, *the latest date for the year.*

Whinchat **Sept:** Holme Fen 2 on the 2nd, Darlow's Farm on 10th, Corney's Farm on 10th, Kingfishers Bridge on 10th, Linton on 10th, Burwell Fen 3 on 22nd and 24th, Cam Washes on 27th. **Oct:** Ouse Washes 2 on 2nd, *the latest date*.

Stonechat **Sept:** reported from Wicken Fen 4, Fowlmere NR, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 2, and 3 other sites. **Oct:** reported in greater numbers: Burwell Fen (6), Ferry Meadows CP (2), Great Fen sites (Corney's Farm 5, Darlow's Farm 6, Middle Farm 4, Kester's Docking and Froghall 4, Rhymes Reedbed 4), Kingfishers Bridge (6), Littleport May Farm (4), Nene Washes (2) and 10 other sites.

Wheatear **Sept:** Littleport May Farm max 9 on 12th, Fowlmere NR on 6th, Ouse Fen on 9th, Stapleford on 13th, Coveney Byall Fen 2 juveniles on 27th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens a 'Greenland' type on 20th, Swaffham Prior Fen on 29th. **Oct:** Witchford on 1st, Paxton Pits on 14th – 15th, Littleport/Queen Adelaide on 19th, Littleport May Farm 3 on 6th and 2 on 26th, *the latest date*.

Sparrows, wagtails and pipits

Tree Sparrow **Sept:** Sutton North Fen 10 on the 10th. **Oct:** Foxton on 18th, Littleport May Farm 18+ all month, Redmere Farm 120+ in Sept and Oct.

Yellow Wagtail **Sept:** Grafham Water 20 on the 17th, Nene Washes 12+ on 28th. **Oct:** Littleport May Farm 9 on 3rd, Nene Washes 2 on 6th, Ouse Washes on 8th.

Grey Wagtail **Sept:** reported from 23 sites, mostly singles but including Grafham Water (3) and Littleport May Farm (2). **Oct:** also widely reported including Eaton Ford (2), Ferry Meadows CP (3), and Grafham Water (3).

Pied Wagtail **Oct:** Witchford 29 on the 1st, Foxton SW c100 on 10th, Cottenham 50 on 10th, Granta Park 59 on 20th, Littleport May Farm 50+ throughout Sept and Oct.

Tree Pipit **Sept:** Cambridge a night time flyover on the 2nd, Fowlmere NR a flyover on 28th.

Meadow Pipit **Sept:** Fowlmere NR 100+ on 28th, Burwell Fen 79 ringed on 27th – 30th. **Oct:** Great Fen Middle Farm 164 on 8th, Rhymes Reedbed 53 on 8th, Grafham Water 60+ on 15th, Eaton Ford (Vis Mig) 47 on 23rd, Ferry Meadows CP (Vis Mig) 32 on 23rd, Littleport May Farm 100+ all month.

Rock Pipit **Sept:** Grafham Water the first of the autumn on the 12th. **Oct:** Grafham Water a flyover on 5th, 5 on 19th, 2 on 24th, Paxton Pits on 15th, 2 on 16th, Ferry Meadows CP a flyover on 23rd.

Water Pipit **Oct:** Burwell Fen on the 28th – 31st.

Finches and buntings

Chaffinch **Oct:** migrant records (mostly Vis Mig): Cambridge Lovell Road 71 overnight on 22nd – 23rd, Eaton Ford 43 on 23rd, Ferry Meadows CP 102 on 23rd, 183 on 26th, 55 on 28th, 39 on 31st.

Brambling **Oct:** (many Vis Mig), Cambridge a flyover on the 8th, *the first of the autumn*, Godmanchester GP on 10th, Grafham Water 3 on 15th, 2 on 27th, Earith 2 on 23rd, Eaton Ford on 23rd, Ferry Meadows CP 2 on 23rd, 7 on 26th and 28th, 5 on 30th, Littleport May Farm 6 on 23rd, 28 on 28th, 14 on 29th and 9 on 30th, Hilton on 24th, Paxton Pits on 25th and Fowlmere NR on 27th.

Greenfinch **Sept & Oct:** Littleport May Farm 50+ throughout.

Goldfinch **Sept:** (*counts 100+*), Cam Washes c150 on 3rd, Kingfishers Bridge 107 on 7th, Burwell Fen c130 on 26th. **Oct:** Witcham Gravel c 150 on 1st, Sutton Gault Hole 150 on 1st, Great Fen on 8th: Kesters Docking and Froghall 105 and Corney's Farm 136, Byall Fen c180 on 19th, Grafham Water c150 on 21st.

Siskin **Sept:** Fowlmere NR 2 over on the 16th, 2 with Goldfinches on 25th. **Oct:** Ferry Meadows CP 2 on 3rd, Cam Washes 5 over on 8th, Wicken Fen 6 on 6th, Kingfishers Bridge 3 on 15th, Paxton Pits 2 on 15th, Grafham Water 2 on 16th; thereafter mostly Vis Mig reports from Earith (14), Eaton Ford (11), Ferry Meadows CP (max 37), Fowlmere NR (20) and small numbers from other sites.

Linnet **Sept:** Kingfishers Bridge 3 on 15th. **Oct:** Mepal Fen 175 on 7th, Great Fen Kester's Docking and Froghall 725 on 8th, Kingston Hill 110 on 30th, Haddenham Fen 300 on 26th and 31st, Littleport May Farm 100+ all month.

Lesser Redpoll **Sept:** Fowlmere NR on the 23rd – *the first of the autumn*, Paxton Pits 2 on 30th. **Oct:** Wicken Fen 4 over on 2nd, Over 6 on 3rd, Ferry Meadows CP on 3rd and 9th, Fen Drayton Lakes 6 on

3rd, Foxton 3 on 4th, and Cam Washes 6 on 8th. Thereafter many reports, the largest being Block Fen c20 on 17th, Little Shelford 30 on 18th, Ferry Meadows CP 58 (Vis Mig) on 23rd.

Corn Bunting Sept: Trumpington 9 on the 7th, Haddenham/Aldreth Fens 8 on 20th, Shepreth c20 on 26th. **Oct:** Foxton 100+ on 12th, Great Shelford 32 on 26th, Littleport May Farm 50+ all month.

Yellowhammer Oct: Mepal 35 on 6th, Shepreth L-Moor c30 on 15th.

Reed Bunting Sept: Wicken/Burwell Fens 81 ringed on the 27th, Littleport May Farm 100+ all month. **Oct:** Great Fen Kesters Docking and Froghall 51 on 8th, Barway 100 on 26th, Fowlmere NR a roost of 610 on 31st.

Exotica

Black Swan Sept: St Ives on the 18th and 22nd.

Bar-headed Goose Sept: Farcet Fen on the 28th. **Oct:** Wicken Fen 2 with Greylags on several dates, also reported from Kingfishers Bridge and the Cam Washes.

Ruddy Shelduck Sept: Maxey GP on the 24th.

Harris's Hawk Oct: Witcham on the 5th, Barton on 6th.

Scaup-type hybrid Sept: Grafham Water on the 3rd. **Oct:** Grafham Water a male on 21st.

Contributors: Colin Addington, Richard Allison, John Atkins, Malcolm Ausden, Louise Bacon, Helen Bailey, Chris Barker, Geoff Barlow, Ian Barton, Rowena Baxter, Andy Bayes, Peter Beckenham, Guy Belcher, Peter Bircham, Will Bowell, Richard Broughton, Chris Brown, Roger Buisson, Mike Burdekin, Ian Burfield, Howard Butler, James Cadbury, Josh Carter, Pete Cook, Ade Cooper, Ali Cooper, Steve Cooper, Roger Cresswell, Nick Croft, Richard Dale, Martin Davis, Ian Dawson, Ian Dickerson, Joy Dingley, Brendan Doe, Steve Dudley, David Elliot, Ian Ellis, David Ellis, Pam Evans, Mike Everett, David Fisher, Mike Foley, Richard Fowling, Pete Fretwell, Katie Fuller, Paul Gallagher, Don Gardener, Simon Gillings, Ian Gordon, Richard Grimmett, Derek Gruar, Peter Gruar, James Hanlon, Andy Hannaford, Ron Harrold, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Jon Heath, Graham Hirons, James Hitchcock, Michael Holdsworth, Malcolm Holley, David Hollin, Pete Holt, David Hopkins, Neil Howard, Sarah Howlett, Richard Johnson, Colin Kirtland, Charlie Kitchin, Marcus Kohler, Derek Langslow, Vince Lea, Christina Leadlay, David Lee, John Le Gassick, Jeremy Lindsell, Owen and Monica Marks, Bruce Martin, Paul Mason, Rob McEwen, Matt Mellor, Andy Merryweather, Philip Miller, Steve Mumford, Alexey Murzin, Martin O'Leary, John Paice, Dave Palmer, Richard Palmer, Rob Partridge, Richard Patient, Mark Peck, Rob Pople, Duncan Poyser, Doug Radford, Norman Ratcliffe, Graeme Reed, Gareth Rees, Chris Rider, Duncan Ritchie, Tony Roberts, Kathleen Rosewarne, Martin Shadbolt, Martin Shelagh, Norman Sills, Bill Simmonds, Clive Sinclair, Bob Smith, Bob Steel, Nathan Stimpson, Brian Stone, Andy Symes, Jonathan Taylor, Michael Taylor, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne and the Wicken Fen Group, Bob Titman, Hugh Venables, Luke Wake, George Walthew, Mark Ward, Iain Webb, Matt Webb, Mike Weedon, David Wege, Jamie Wells, Peter Wells, Tony Weston, Kevin Wilson, Matt Wilson, David Withrington, Ken Wolstencroft, Pete Wood, Karen Woods, Hugh Wright, Bartow Wylie, and Christoph Zöckler.

Raptor Watch – a brief summary

On September 16th, observers counted raptors for the same hour, 11am – 12 noon, at 17 sites across the county. Most observations were in the south of the county, although we also had observers in central Huntingdonshire and the fenland eastern half of the county too.

The weather was reasonably bright for much of the time, but cloudy and breezy, although a couple of locations in the west of the county experienced heavy showers. Several observers reported a significant passage of hirundines, and one also had a Redstart migrant.

I will leave the full report to Robert, our research officer, but all but 2 locations recorded Buzzard, probably making it our commonest raptor. Other species recorded were Sparrowhawk, Red Kite, Hobby and Kestrel. Most birds were deemed to be local individuals rather than migrants.

A full analysis will appear in due course, but a big thank you to everyone who participated, and we hope to hold raptor-watch events again in the future.

Louise Bacon

Bird Populations over time: have they increased or declined?

Bob Jarman writes: Is the decline in birds overblown and disproportionate (Peter Bircham in Bulletin No. 453) or real (Vince Lea in No 453)? Wetland creation e.g. Ouse Fen, Great Fen, Somerset Levels, Lakenheath RSPB have been spectacular successes; targeted recovery programmes e.g. Red Kite, White-tailed Eagles, Corn Crake, Stone Curlew, Cirl Bunting have been successful; making egg collecting illegal and enforcing the law has been essential. EU conservation

regulations that have been incorporated into UK law have been important in wildlife protection. Adding conservation into farm management has also been important. Peregrines nesting in Cambridge city centre and Little Egrets over Arbury would have been unthinkable when I started watching birds.

But ...where do you start to estimate whether bird populations have increased or declined? Peter says population estimates depend on where you start; I say estimates start at the last census.

Two recent papers in *British Birds* (BB) contradict Peter's view.

August's issue has a detailed paper (Stanbury *et al*, 2017) looking at bird populations using assessments from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Regional Red List data (Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC). IUCN categorises 43% of GB birds as threatened compared to 13% in Europe. Some GB species do not appear as IUCN threatened but are Red Listed e.g. Skylark and House Sparrow (hedgerow nesting countryside House Sparrows maybe extinct in Cambs).The paper shows the overall changes in bird populations is decline.

In July's BB a paper shows climate change is affecting the abundance and distribution of species: the average shift across 122 species is 20.4km in a northerly direction which is roughly equivalent to 1km per year or almost 3m per day (Pearce-Higgins, 2017).

There is some mitigation – southern wetland species are colonising such as herons but the overall picture suggests decline and contraction. The process is hardening. Yields of arable farm crops have not increased in 20 years, farmers are forced to cultivate conservation margins to maintain profitability and use new generation chemicals such as neonicotinoid insecticides (they can still be used on non-flowering crops e.g. sugar beet). The pressure on bird populations is on. Vince is right!

At a farm site on the edge of Cambridge a field of short winter stubble set aside for a spring barley crop attracted 5 pairs of nesting Lapwings; the first nesting Lapwings at this site for at least 50 years. Get the habitat right and birds will return and populations can recover.

Martin O'Leary comments: In his article on the current state of bird populations in Cambridgeshire Peter Bircham states that "most of the population surveys do not cover suburban gardens". I have been recording birds from my medium-sized suburban garden in Burwell for over 20 years for BTO Garden Birdwatch. I record the garden birds for 10 minutes every day about the same time when I am in residence. The neighbourhood has not radically changed during the last 20 years, but both gardens and houses have been renovated and "tidied up", probably leading to the loss of nest sites for house sparrow and starling. Here are some of my records:

Birds recorded each week during the third quarter of the year in a Burwell garden:

	A	B	C	D
	1997 %	2017 %	1997	2017
House Sparrow	100	15	7	0.23
Starling	100	0	8	0
Chaffinch	75	0	1	0
Woodpigeon	25	100	Not recorded	2

Col A and B Percentage of weeks during the third quarter of the year when the species was recorded

Col C and D Mean number of individual birds recorded each week during the third quarter of the year

Generalist species like house sparrow and starling have been considered to be highly adaptable to urbanisation, but now appear to be in decline. For house sparrows in Cambridgeshire, see also Bob Jarman's "House Sparrow survey of Cambridge" in the Cambridgeshire Bird Report. My results for Chaffinch for summer 2017 may be anomalous, but I also haven't seen a chaffinch in Burwell village for the last 3 months.

What concerns me is the pace of change across the natural world. We can no longer take the frequency of any species for granted. While some bird species like woodpigeon will gain in frequency, many others appear likely to lose. We should also not forget that the creation of new wetland reserves in Cambs has come about as a result of the dedication and vision of

conservationists, scientists and volunteers, and plentiful supplies of public and private money. This may not be the case in the future.

And Vince Lea continues: We continue to get comments supporting the more pessimistic view proposed by myself. Mrs Vivian Mash sent in notes from her teenage years at St Leonards in Sussex (and various other holiday and evacuation locations) during the period 1941 – 46. While her observations were not particularly quantitative, some of the comments hinted at abundance and diversity that we no longer see in the general countryside:

13/1/1942 'more snow' – 27 species on the bird table

21/4/1942 – Many Cirl and Corn Buntings and Greenfinches about

13/2/1945 – Bird song is deafening!

12/3/1945 – nests everywhere. Blackbirds, Robins, Greenfinches and 3 Hawfinches in the hollies.

The nesting birds of her garden and neighbourhood gave a lot of interest to the young Vivian and why wouldn't they? There included all three resident woodpeckers, plus Wrynecks, the finches still common today plus Hawfinches and Redpolls. Turtle Doves, Cuckoo, Hobby and Red-backed Shrikes were around the area as were Willow and Marsh Tits, Spotted Flycatchers, Wood Warblers, Cirl Buntings and Tree Sparrows. It was a couple of years before a Nightingale was heard, which frustrated her as there were 'hundreds' at Battle not that far away! Winter visitors included Waxwings and a Jack Snipe on the local pond and another year there were 1000 Lapwings on the field nearby. There were a few rarities over the 5 years including Honey and Rough-legged Buzzards, a Grey Plover and other passage waders and one or two Black Redstarts. With other species added during trips to Dartmoor, the Isle of Wight and especially the Norfolk Broads (where a family connection got her to Hickling Broad and a guided tour by the famous Jim Vincent), her 10 pages of notes made it sound like a good 5 years, despite the war going on!

Final observations in the next edition. Ed

Nominations for Chair 2018

My term of office (5 years) comes to an end in April, so Council is seeking volunteers or nominations for the next Chair. It's a very rewarding post and not too taxing so please do consider if you might be interested or know someone who may be suitable. I am happy to describe the role as I see it, though of course there is scope to make what you want of the role and every Chair has been different. I think it would be good to get a different emphasis from someone with a different approach to birding in the county to myself – I'm a total non-lister, non-photographer and non-twitcher which is rather out of line with the general membership I feel! It would also be good to get someone from the northern part of the county, as the large size of Cambridgeshire, plus the fact that Peterborough has its own bird club, means that we are rather Cambridge-centred in some ways. And a female successor would be good to balance the gender of Council. I deliberately changed the post title to Chair at the start of my term to remove the gender bias of the old 'Chairman' title, in the hope that a female successor might be found.

Vince Lea

Annual Report News

Things are running a bit behind schedule this year, with one or two avoidable and unavoidable factors coming into play. As you may recall, 2016 was a bumper year for rarities, with a 1st, 2nd and 3rd for the county and large numbers of supporting species, so getting final decisions on many of these has taken some time, particularly as the abundance of Yellow-browed Warblers among other species, seemed to increase the reluctance of observers to submit descriptions for what is still quite a rare bird in reality. Add to that a broken wrist for one of the editorial team and various workload issues and trying a new approach to help deal with the vast amount of BirdTrack data. We will be working on the final stages over the next few weeks.

Vince Lea

Membership matters

We welcome new members James Heywood of Oakington, Tim Watling of Eaton Ford and Steve Millar of Cambridge. The club has lost contact with member Mr S P Foreman; if anyone has details for him could they contact the Membership Secretary. If any members would like to receive this bulletin electronically rather than as hard copy please email the Membership Secretary.

Next indoor meetings

**Friday 8th December, St Johns Hall, Cambridge, 7.30 for 8.00pm
Christmas Social**

Come and enjoy mince pies and mulled wine in good company while listening to inspiring short talks by club members.

Please contact [Vicki Harley](#) if you would like to give a short presentation.

**Friday 12th January, St Johns Hall, Cambridge, 7.30 for 8.00pm
Saving Albania's Vultures by Kevin Hand**

The Cambridgeshire Bird Club exists to promote the conservation of birds and their habitats in the county, identify areas of conservation value, and advance the education of the public in the study of birds.

www.cambridgebirdclub.org.uk

The editors would welcome contributions to the E-Bulletin and print edition, on topics such as identification problems, behaviour, summaries of club talks, and book reviews. Contact us at cbcbulletin@cambridgebirdclub.org.uk, and use this address to let us know if you would like to receive your bulletin in e-mail format rather than paper.

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Other Council Members: Mike Foley, Rob Pople

Bird Records, sightings and news

If you have seen a scarce or local bird, please submit the news to the '[What's about](#)' page on the Club website via [Pete and Paul](#) who maintain an up-to-date selection of recent highlights. You can also report interesting sightings on the [Cambirds](#) email group (not run by the Club, but we access the records).

Full lists of your records should continue to be submitted monthly, either via BirdTrack by the end of the month in question, or to **Louise Bacon** the County Recorder, preferably using the [spreadsheet](#) available on the Records section of the website, **by the 5th of the following month**. There is no need to duplicate records across both channels.

GOOD BIRDING!