

CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB

Bulletin No. 373



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

RECENT REPORTS MARCH AND APRIL 2004

These are unchecked reports rather than confirmed records, and comments are made by Bruce Martin (Grebes to Wildfowl), Mark Hawkes (Raptors to Coot), Jonathan Taylor (Waders), Steve Cooper (Skuas to Near Passerines and Hybrids and Exotica), Stuart Elsom (Larks to Thrushes), Mike Foley (Warblers to Tits) and David Wege (Wood Nuthatch to Buntings). If you have valid reasons to dispute comments (e.g. further records) please forward these to the relevant county recorder (addresses on back page).

MARCH & APRIL

Observations of migration during this period included the departure of all Tundra Swans from the county by the end of March and all Whooper Swans by mid-April. A flock of 59 Pochard seen on a single day at Grafham Water may well have been on migration. Among the waders, passage of Bar-tailed Godwit was notable and included two flocks totalling 150 birds over Grafham at the end of

April. Among passerines 5 Black Redstarts, 3 Redstarts and 4 Whinchat were noted passing through. As for resident species, your records suggest that Buzzard is now as widespread as Sparrowhawk – all records of both species are welcome.

Oystercatchers by Graham Easy



Numbers in brackets indicate March and April maximums.

DIVERS TO HERONS

Little Grebe Recorded at 12 sites with double figure counts at, Kingfisher's Bridge (12, 18), Ouse Washes (18, 6) and Paxton Pits (12, 6).

Great Crested Grebe Grafham Water continued to hold high numbers with 453 birds counted on Mar 6th. Double figures were noted at Fen Drayton GP, Kingfisher's Bridge, Orton BP, the Ouse Washes, Paxton Pits and Roswell Pits. Single figures were noted at 11 other sites.

Red-necked Grebe A bird was present at Grafham Water from Mar 2nd to 28th.

Slavonian Grebe A group of 5 birds in summer plumage made a fine, if distant, sight at Grafham Water on Apr 16th. This equals the largest group (5 at Grafham in October 1973) and latest date for the county.

Black-necked Grebe A bird was seen at Prior's Fen on Apr 22nd.

Northern Fulmar A bird seen standing on ice for 10 minutes at Paxton Pits on Mar 1st follows the record of a bird seen at Grafham Water the previous day.

Great Cormorant At Fen Drayton GP (24, 18) and Ouse Washes (155, 141). At Paxton Pits 115 active nests were counted on Mar 22nd, some with well grown young. Also at Paxton a sample on Apr 19th of 12 nests produced average brood sizes of 2.75 per nest but 50% were still sitting. Birds were also reported from 9 other sites.

Great Bittern Again this year birds were heard booming at 3 sites in the county.

Little Egret Noted at 2 sites during the period.

Grey Heron At the Ouse Washes (41, 52) and at Paxton Pits 20 birds were counted on Mar 7th. Three to four active nests were noted at the latter site on Mar 22nd. Birds were also reported from 16 other sites.

White Stork Two birds that had been reported earlier in Bedfordshire were seen flying high along the Cambs/Beds border near St Neots on Apr 12th. They were later seen in Yorkshire.

WILDFOWL

Mute Swan At the Ouse Washes (132, 369) and at Over Fen 120 on Apr 11th. Double figures were noted at 7 other sites.

Tundra Swan On Mar 2nd 475 birds were counted on the Ouse Washes; 299 birds were at the Nene Washes on Mar 6th and 34 birds at Paxton Pits on the same day, but by the end of March all the birds had left the county.

Whooper Swan At the Ouse Washes the 2540 birds recorded had dropped to 21 by the early April count on the 5th. Flocks ranging from 15 to 52 passed low over Elm heading northwest on Mar 28th and 30th, with 3 birds over on Apr 12th; the last to be seen.

Bean Goose Five birds were at the Nene Washes on Mar 6th.

Pink-footed Goose A presumed feral bird was at Weybridge GP on Mar 27th, and another at Needingworth GP during April. Five birds were at the Nene Washes on Apr 21st.

Greater White-fronted Goose A presumed feral bird was at Chippenham Park on Mar 13th.

Greylag Goose Broods of young seen at many sites indicated another successful breeding season. Apart from 182 at Paxton Pits on Mar 21st, double figures were noted at 8 other sites.

Canada Goose Counts over 100 were Chippenham Park, 124 on Mar 13th and Kingfisher's Bridge, 118 in March. Double figures were noted at 9 other sites.

Brent Goose A bird was seen at Grafham Water on Apr 23rd.

Barnacle Goose Feral birds were noted at Needingworth GP (5), Paxton Pits (3) and Whittlesford GP (3). Singles were seen at Grafham Water and the Ouse Washes.

Egyptian Goose Two birds were seen at Fen Drayton GP on Mar 6th. A pair hatched a brood of 7 at Chippenham Park in early April. Single records from the Cam Washes, Kingfisher's Bridge, Swaffham Prior Fen and Wicken Fen were possibly the same bird; which was also seen associating with a captive female in a collection at Wicken.

Ruddy Shelduck One on the Ouse Washes on Apr 4th in close company with a Common Shelduck.

Common Shelduck Counts on the Ouse Washes produced (219, 164). Double figures (under 20) were seen at the Cam & Nene Washes and Grafham Water. Single figures were noted at 8 other sites.

Mandarin Duck Pairs were seen at Coton and Jesus Green and a single male at Castor Hanglands.

Eurasian Wigeon As can be seen by the maximum monthly counts there was a mass exodus at most sites during March. At the Cam Washes (740, 3), Fen Drayton GP (279, 4), Kingfisher's Bridge (285, 1), Ouse Washes (12982, 5101), with just 46 left on the late April WeBS count. Paxton Pits (332, 2) and Wicken Fen (400, 2). The only site that didn't fit in with this departure was Over Fen where there were still 1500 birds on Apr 25th.

Gadwall At the Cam Washes Upware (24, 16), Fen Drayton GP (20, 20), Grafham Water (46, 45), Kingfisher's Bridge (24, 30), Ouse Washes (643, 247), Paxton Pits (42, 4) and Wicken Fen (45, 24). Notable counts were recorded at Needingworth GP (80) and Mepal GP (63). Eight other sites had single figures.

Eurasian Teal At the Cam Washes Upware (122, 78), Fen Drayton GP (36, 30), Grafham Water (69,-), Kingfisher's Bridge (68, 50), Long Drove (Cottenham) (42, 30), Ouse Washes (2728, 1325) and Wicken Fen (30, 12). Also noted at 7 other sites.

Mallard At Fen Drayton GP (90, 61), Grafham Water (92, -), Kingfisher's Bridge (63, 47), Ouse Washes (1507, 1078) and Wicken Fen (61, 25). Double figures were also noted at 8 other sites.

Northern Pintail At the Ouse Washes (1547, 251). Small numbers were noted at 6 other sites.

Garganey Noted at 9 sites with a maximum of 7 at the Ouse Washes on Apr 26th.

Northern Shoveler At the Ouse Washes (860, 837). Double figures were noted at 7 other sites

Red-crested Pochard A pair were at Paxton Pits during the period.

Common Pochard At Fen Drayton GP (90, 10), at Grafham Water 59 were seen on Mar 6th which may have been a migrating flock as it wasn't seen the day before nor the day after, Ouse Washes (1009, 116) and Paxton Pits (73, -). By the period end just single figures were noted at 5 sites.

Ferruginous Duck A male was seen at Kingfisher's Bridge for one day on Mar 30th.

Tufted Duck At Fen Drayton GP (412, 330), Ouse Washes (580, 401) and Paxton Pits (346, -). Also noted at 18 other sites.

Greater Scaup The 4 females present at Grafham Water from Jan/Feb remained until Mar 16th when 2 left. The remaining 2 stayed until the 29th at least. A female was at Shropshire's Reservoir on Apr 1st.

Black Scoter Five birds were at Grafham Water on Mar 28th with smaller numbers seen up to Apr 26th when 12 birds were present for 2 days.

Common Goldeneye At Fen Drayton GP (93, 80), Grafham Water (30, -), the Ouse Washes (34, 1) and Paxton Pits (93, 112). Also noted at 7 other sites.

Smew Two birds were at Orton BP on Mar 1st with one on the 9th. Fen Drayton GP and Paxton Pits each had 3 birds on Mar 2nd and Prior's Fen had one bird from mid-March to Apr 14th.

Red-breasted Merganser Four birds were seen at Grafham Water on Apr 16th.

Goosander The 13 birds at Grafham Water on Mar 1st had dropped to 3 birds by Mar 16th and the 10 at Paxton Pits were down to 5 on Apr 2nd (the last date seen). Fen Drayton GP was home to a female from Mar 2nd to the 30th.

Ruddy Duck Fen Drayton GP had a maximum of 15 during the period whilst single figures were noted at 10 other sites.

RAPTORS

Red Kite Singles recorded in March at Grafham Water on 6th, Ellington on 17th, Paxton Pits on 21st, Over on 26th, Beechwoods (Gog Magog) on 31st and 1 around Holme during the month and into April. Further April sightings included singles at Sawtry on 5th, Connington on 11th, Woodwalton Fen on 12th, Fowlmere on 14th, Kingfisher's Bridge on 23rd and Little Paxton on 26th.

Eurasian Marsh Harrier Recorded from 22 sites during the period. The main concentrations being along the washes, with peak counts including Ouse Washes (-, 5), Nene Washes (4, 3) and Wicken Fen

(5, 6). Display noted at several sites, and overhead migration noted at at least 6 sites.

Hen Harrier Only noted at 6 sites, with just single records from the Nene Washes (on Mar 5th) and Ouse Washes (on Mar 31st). Wicken Fen had the highest concentrations (3, 2), with birds from here noted at several near-by sites.

Northern Goshawk Singles seen at Soham on Mar 8th, Wicken Fen on Apr 4th and Monks Wood on Apr 13th and 22nd. This species has yet to get a toe-hold in Cambs, unlike most of our neighbouring counties,. Surely the habitat is available somewhere?

Eurasian Sparrowhawk Recorded from 40 sites, all involving 1-3 birds. In April, one at Paxton Pits, took a Little Ringed Plover into a reedbed, but released it when it was spooked!

Common Buzzard Recorded from 40 sites (as widespread as Sparrowhawk!). Most sightings were of 1-3 birds, although 5 were noted from 2 sites.

Osprey A possible was seen at Ferry Meadows on Mar 28th, with the only other sightings being from Paxton Pits on Apr 10th and 26th (the former also taking a trout from Grafham Water).

Common Kestrel Recorded from 19 sites, all involving 1-3 birds, apart from 9 in the Long Drove (Cottenham) and Smithy Fen area on Mar 12th, and 5 at Haddenham on Mar 6th.

Merlin Recorded from 7 sites. Peak counts; Ouse Washes (1,1) and Nene Washes (2,1). Recorded elsewhere as follows, Great Raveley on Mar 2nd, Farcet Fen on 4th, Fowlmere on Mar 14th, Woodwalton Fen on Mar 19th & 20th and Paxton Pits on Apr 10th.

Eurasian Hobby Recorded at 11 sites. The earliest was reported at Ramsey Mereside on Apr 8th, with peak counts of 3 at both Fen Drayton GP & Paxton Pits, and 2 at Grafham Water. Singles were seen at Ouse Washes, Girton, Coe Fen, Wicken Fen, Ely, Fenstanton and Cambridge Veterinary School.

Peregrine Falcon Recorded at 11 sites. Only regular on Ouse Washes (2,1), with 2 also seen on Nene Washes mid-March. Seen elsewhere as follows, Peterborough on Mar 1st, Grafham Water on Mar 5th, Hemmingford Abbots on Mar 9th, Wicken Fen on Mar 14th and 30th, Elton on Mar 21st, Kingfisher's Bridge on Mar 26th and Apr 3rd, Littleport on Mar 29th, Paxton Pits on Apr 12th and Priors Fen on Apr 20th.

GAMEBIRDS TO COOT

Red-legged Partridge Recorded from 13 sites. Numbers ranging from 1-23 birds.

Grey Partridge Recorded from 26 sites. Numbers ranging from 1-8, but with 22 at Fowlmere on Mar 21st.

Common Pheasant Recorded from just 8 sites. Numbers ranging from 1-91 birds.

Water Rail Recorded from 10 sites. Numbers ranging from 1-5 birds.

Spotted Crake Two were calling on the Nene Washes on Apr 23rd and a single on the Ouse Washes on Apr 27–28th.

Common Moorhen Recorded from 16 sites. Peak counts included; Cam Washes (39, -), Fen Drayton GP (11, 13), Kingfisher's Bridge (18, 20), Ouse Washes (47, 52) and 50 along River Lark (Isleham) in April.

Common Coot Recorded from 12 sites. Peak counts included; Fen Drayton GP (258, 114), Grafham Water (106, -), Ouse Washes (1432, 1105) and Paxton Pits (318, -).

Common Crane A group of 7 possibles were seen flying over Duxford on Apr 4th, and then an obliging immature was seen in the Wicken Fen/Burwell area Apr 16–18th.

WADERS

Eurasian Oystercatcher Numerous records from the valleys of the Ouse, Cam and Lark and from various gravel pits. Largest counts were 15 at the Ouse Washes on Mar 22nd and 19 on Apr 26th, 6 at Kingfisher's Bridge and 5 at Paxton on Mar 29th. Birds settled to breed at some sites; hopefully the next bulletin may be able to record their success.

Pied Avocet Flocks of 6 at the Nene Washes and Prior's Fen, 5 at the Ouse Washes, 12 at the Cam Washes and 4 at Kingfisher's Bridge were indicative of the current status of this once rare species. There was also one at Long Drove, (Cottenham) on Apr 10th. It was hoped that some would stay to breed but late flooding on the Ouse Washes prevented any attempt there.

Little Plover First noted on Mar 17th at Paxton, where nest-scraping was observed on 26th and 4 birds had arrived by Apr 4th. Further records from Kingfisher's Bridge on Mar 20th, 3 by the new lake at Cambourne on 22nd (illustrating the species' readiness to find new sites) , 3 at Abington on 24th, singles at Upware on 25th and Weybridge Pits on 27th, 4 at Isleham on 30 th and one at Long Drove (Cottenham) on 31st. More records in April, max. 8 at Upware on 7th. A pair at Barleycroft was chased off by Ringed Plovers, as often happens at sites where both species occur.

Ringed Plover Reported from most suitable localities: max. counts were 18 at Paxton Pits on Mar 22nd, 14 at Upware on Apr 28th and 6 at Fen Drayton on Apr 14th.

Eurasian Golden Plover By far the largest numbers were at the Nene Washes where 6080 were counted on Mar 6th. There were 3000 at Over Fen on Apr 8th, 900 at Burwell on Apr 2nd, 800 at Wicken on Apr 9th, 600 at Toft on Mar 21st, 500 at Kingfisher's Bridge on Apr 13th, 400 at Wendy on Mar 27th and several smaller flocks recorded. Reports of flocks heading north in April could well refer to migrating birds rather than local movements.

Grey Plover One March record from the Ouse Washes on 5th. April records of singles at the Ouse and Nene Washes, Kingfisher's Bridge, Upware

and Paxton. Two at Grafham on Apr 30th were seen flying north-east with Bar-tailed Godwits.

Northern Lapwing Max. counts in March of 17,160 at the Nene Washes on 6th, 4124 at the Ouse Washes on 8th and 2000 at Paxton on 6th. A passage of 715 eastward in 4 flocks over Stretham on 6th suggests that the large numbers reported at this time were continental birds flocking before migration. At Kingfisher's Bridge 6 nests were found on Mar 17th and 9 or 10 territories noted on Apr 27th, but pairs were 'suffering predation by Carrion Crows'. An aberrant individual with a pale back was seen at Wicken on Mar 25th.

Sanderling Singles at Paxton on Mar 28th, Apr 5th and 29th and at the Nene Washes on Apr 23rd.

Little Stint One record only: an early report from Paxton on 15th.

Dunlin As expected, the highest numbers were attracted to the Ouse Washes where 174 were seen on Mar 8th. Paxton had 12 on Mar 7th and 20 on Apr 29th while suitable conditions at Upware resulted in a count of 26 on Apr 29th. A few reports from Grafham including 2 moving with Bar-tailed Godwits on Apr 30th.

Ruff Up to 156 on the Ouse Washes on Mar 22nd, decreasing to 64 by Apr 5th and 9 by 26th. Upware had a max of 12 on Apr 29th with 13 at Kingfisher's Bridge the same day. Also reported from Wicken, Barleycroft, Fen Drayton and Paxton.

Jack Snipe Singles only at King's Dyke on various dates, Grafham on Mar 2nd and 3rd, Nene Washes on Apr 12th and Kneesworth on Mar 13th (after which this arable flood was drained). No records from some formerly regular sites such as Block Fen. This species prefers short vegetation with open ground for feeding and although the early and intermediate stages of gravel extraction provide good habitat, the eventual growth of phragmites and willow render such situations unsuitable.

Common Snipe Highest counts at the Ouse Washes of 201 on Mar 8th and 300 on Apr 2nd. Other concentrations included 52 at Upware on Mar 7th, 40 at Barleycroft on Apr 11th, 29 at Wicken on Mar 2nd, 26 at Kingfisher's Bridge on Apr 7th, 25 at Paxton and 20 at Fen Drayton on Mar 6th, 15 at Isleham on Mar 30th and 9 at Kneesworth on Mar 13th.

Eurasian Woodcock Reported from Wicken, where 6 roding on April 15th, Fowlmere, Kingfisher's Bridge, Monks' Wood, Ferry Meadows, Dogsthorpe, Grafham and Castor Hanglands. A nest with 4 eggs was found at Aversley Wood on Apr 23rd.

Black-tailed Godwit A count of 2050 on the Ouse Washes on Mar 26th, rising to 2310 by Apr 5th. Other site max. were 210 at Barleycroft on Apr 21st, 158 at Upware on Apr 17th, 67 at the Nene Washes on Mar 25th, 44 at Fen Drayton on Apr 16th, 40 at Wicken on Apr 22nd and 24 at Paxton on Apr 12th. One bird at the latter site had pale yellow over green rings on both legs. Many of the larger flocks, particularly of birds in breeding

plumage, were identified as the brighter Icelandic race.

Bar-tailed Godwit A notable influx from Apr 23rd, when 1–3 reported at Nene Washes, Paxton, Kingfisher's Bridge, Barleycroft, Prior's Fen, Grafham and Upware. The passage culminated in a spectacular movement on 30th when 10 flew east over Ely B.F. and 2 flocks totalling 150 flew north-east over Grafham. This combined figure beats the previous county record of 140 over Hilton in April '82. (On a personal note, these events recall the passage in April '62, when during a period of north-easterly winds, Owen Marks and I saw a flock of 22 flying ENE over Fulbourn Fen and 2 days later, cycling home from a day out in the Breck, a flock of 120 flying low overhead near Risby, also heading ENE.)

Whimbrel As with the previous species, migration was recorded from Apr 23rd, when 3 were at Paxton, followed by 5 on 24th, 2 on 25th and 1 on 30th. There were 2 at Barleycroft on 26th, otherwise singles at Fen Drayton, Upware, Ickleton Grange, Wicken, Kingfisher's Bridge and Grafham.

Curlew Ones and twos reported from various localities.

Spotted Redshank Single birds at the Ouse Washes, Paxton, Kingfisher's Bridge, Barleycroft, Wicken and Upware. Apart from 1 at the Ouse Washes on Mar 23rd, all records were from Apr 5th to 27th.

Redshank At the Ouse Washes 116 were counted on Mar 8th, increasing to 231 on Apr 5th. Max counts elsewhere were 75 at Over Fen on Apr 11th, 44 at Upware on Apr 8th, 25 at Wicken on Mar 25th and Isleham on 30th, 20 at Paxton on Mar 23rd and 16 at Kingfisher's Bridge on Mar 31st. The only report from the Nene Washes was of 16 on Mar 25th.

Common Greenshank One March record from Paxton on 23rd, then 1–2 at several sites from Apr 14th, with 3 at Kingfisher's Bridge on 27th and 4 at Upware on 27–29th.

Green Sandpiper Mostly singles, but 2 on the new lake at Cambourne on Mar 23rd, 3 at Werrington on Mar 28th, 4 at Upware on Apr 5th and 7 on 8th. The small temporary flood at Kneesworth attracted passing birds on Mar 28th and Apr 18th.

Wood Sandpiper One report only, from Paxton on Apr 28th.

Common Sandpiper The wintering bird at Paxton remained at least until the end of March; 2 were present on Mar 28th, Apr 4th and 28th, singles on 5 other dates. One at Wicken on Apr 13th, otherwise a general influx noted from 20th, mainly singles but 3 at Barleycroft on 21st and Grafham on 29th.

SKUAS TO TERNS

Mediterranean Gull Noted in March at Long Drove (Cottenham) on 1st also 2 adults NE on 31st,

Dogsthorpe Star Pit on 2nd–9th and Ferry Meadows on 18th. Disappointingly there were no April records.

Little Gull At Kingfisher's Bridge 7 adults flew east on Mar 29th and a 2cy also present remained to 31st. The main spring movement began on Apr 15th with birds recorded at Barleycroft GP (2), Ferry Meadows CP (12) and Grafham Water (3), numbers peaked at the later site on the 25th when up to 40+ birds were present, mostly being stunning summer-plumaged adult birds.

Black-headed Gull Numbers at breeding sites included 500 at Paxton Pits and 400 at Kingfisher's Bridge; please send in all records of breeding birds.

Mew Gull The peak spring passage was noted on Apr 11–12th when 69 north at Barleycroft GP and 32 noted day roosting at Heydon.

Lesser Black-backed Gull At Godmanchester Tip 220 were noted on Apr 29th this was the highest number reported, a poor return from a period that should produce very large numbers passing through Cambs.

Herring Gull Either numbers were genuinely low or this is another gull species receiving very little attention as no count for the period reached double figures!

Western Yellow-legged Gull Regularly noted at Long Drove (Cottenham), Ouse washes and Paxton Pits during the period.

Caspian Gull In March a single noted at Long Drove (Cottenham) and 2 on the Ouse washes on 5th. An adult was at Priors Fen on the Apr 14th and three 2cy birds were at Long Drove (Cottenham) on Apr 19th.

Iceland Gull The 2cy bird remained in the Dogsthorpe Area until Mar 11th. The same or another was at Tanholt GP on Mar 27–28th and Long Drove (Cottenham) on Apr 8th.

Glaucous Gull A single noted at Grafham Water on Mar 20th.

Greater Black-backed Gull Under recorded!

Black-legged Kittiwake Unusually single adult birds were noted at Long Drove (Cottenham) on Mar 7th and Apr 8th. Two adults were noted at Grafham Water on Mar 13th and Apr 4th with a single there on Apr 18th.

Sandwich Tern First noted at Grafham Water (2) on Apr 2nd; 1–2 birds were also noted there on 4th, 7th and 24th.

Common Tern First noted at Grafham Water on Apr 3rd with a peak count of 60 on 24th elsewhere 46 at Paxton Pits and 30 at Ferry Meadows on 30th.

Arctic Tern First noted on Apr 17th at Paxton Pits and 20 at Grafham Water the next day when also noted at Fen Drayton GP and Barleycroft GP. Another wave of passage birds noted at Fen Drayton GP (19), Paxton Pits (10) and Grafham Water (45) on Apr 27–28th.

Little Tern A single at Grafham Water for 40 minutes on Apr 22nd.

Black Tern The only record for the period was 2 at

Grafham Water on Apr 24th.

NEAR PASSERINES

Rock Pigeon Reported from 3 sites, Drummer Street (61), Elizabeth Bridge (53) Cambridge and 130+ regular in Wisbech town centre.

Stock Pigeon Largest counts from Ouse Washes, Chain Corner 46 roosting and 44 at Welches Dam.

Common Wood Pigeon At Wicken Fen 3000 noted on Mar 4th.

Eurasian Collared Dove Just 4 records, largest count was 24 at Streham in March.

Eurasian Turtle Dove At Barway the wintering bird was noted to Apr 7th at least. First migrant noted at Diddington on Apr 17th with further records from 14 other sites.

Common Cuckoo First noted at Paxton Pits on Apr 12th with further records from 14 other sites.

Barn Owl Records received from 21 sites.

Little Owl Records received from 14 sites.

Tawny Owl Records received from 19 sites.

Long-eared Owl. Records received from 2 sites.

Short-Eared Owl In March, 1–2 noted at Ouse Washes, Nene Washes and Paxton Pits. The only April record was on the Nene Washes on 9th.

Common Swift Early arrivals widespread from Apr 21st onwards with records from 14 other sites during the next 7 days.

Common Kingfisher Records received from 24 sites with up to 6 noted along the R.Lark at Islalam and at Ferry Meadows CP.

Hoopoe A single showed well at Stibbington on Apr 25th.

Green Woodpecker A very widespread species reflected by the 54 records received from 36 sites and up to 7 noted at Fen Drayton GP.

Great Spotted Woodpecker Over 46 records received including up to 8 at The Gloucesters. A male regularly fed on sunflower seeds in a Newnham garden.

Lesser-Spotted Woodpecker

1–2 regular at Woodwalton Fen further records from 9 other sites .

PASSERINES

Sky Lark Reported from 14 sites with a maximum of 39 singing males at Lark Rise Farm, Barton in April.

Sand Martin The first of the year were noted at St.Ives on Mar 14th and Paxton Pits next day. Peak counts during the period included: 180 at Paxton Pits and 150+ at Fen Drayton.

Barn Swallow The first migrant was noted on Mar 17th at Grafham Water. Wet and windy conditions on Apr 29th resulted in some large-scale arrivals with 400+ noted at Fen Drayton and 300+ noted at Cow Lane, Godmanchester.

House Martin First arrival noted at Paxton Pits on Mar 26th. Maximum count received was on Apr 29th as with the above species. Cow Lane Godmanchester with 200+ and Fen Drayton with 100+ in blustery conditions

Tree Pipit Only 1 report received of a single at Grafham Water on Apr 9th.

Meadow Pipit Records were received from 18 sites with the highest count coming from Ouse Washes with 84 noted on Mar 22nd. At this time Fen Drayton and Monks Wood both recorded 70 birds present.

Water Pipit Singles were recorded at Ouse Washes and Nene Washes during the period.

Yellow Wagtail Arrival dates were noted across the county from Apr 4th with singles at Grafham Water, Barleycraft and Woodhurst. A maximum of 40 was noted from Ouse Washes on Apr 21st.

Blue-headed Wagtail Several were recorded during April. The first was at Priors Fen On 14th with another next day at Roswell Pits Ely which remained until 19th. A female was noted at Grafham Water on 20th

Grey Wagtail Reports were received from at least 20 sites with the majority of records concerning pairs preparing to breed. The maximum was 4 at Little Paxton on Apr 5th.

Pied Wagtail The only records of note were of 47 at Hauxton on Mar 5th. Records of the continental race '*alba*' or 'White Wagtail' came from 7 sites with a maximum of 8 at Priors Fen on Apr 22nd

Bohemian Waxwing Following the average numbers in January and February, a number remained throughout March and into April. The maximum reported during the period was 20 at Thorpe Park Road, Peterborough on Mar 18th. Last noted from this location with 5 on Apr 1st.

Common Nightingale First noted singing at Paxton Pits on Apr 9th with a maximum of 23 singing males present on Apr 25th. Recorded from a further 5 sites.

Black Redstart Several were recorded. The first was at Ouse Washes on Mar 24th, singles followed at Wicken Fen on Mar 26th and from both Witcham and Monks Wood on Apr 20th.

Common Redstart Three singles noted during April. The first was at Roswell Pits, Ely on 19th with further records from Wandlebury on 22nd and from Paxton Pits on 26th.

Whinchat Singles in April at Burwell Fen and Wicken Fen on 21st with 2 at Paxton Pits on 25th.

Stonechat Records were received from 6 sites during the period with all records referring to single birds, which were noted at: Nene Washes, Woodwalton Fen, Four Balls Farm, Paxton Pits, Coveney and Farcet Fen.

Northern Wheatear Recorded at 17+ sites with the first record from Abbotsley on Mar 15th. The maximum count was 4 at Knapwell on Mar 17th.

Ring Ouzel Two singles recorded from Cambourne on Mar 28th and from Knapwell on Apr 23rd.

Common Blackbird Counts were received from 16 sites with maximum of 40 reported from Paxton Pits on Mar 7th.

Fieldfare Records received from at least 15 sites. Highest counts were from Long Drove (Cottenham) with 380 on Mar 22nd and Monks Hardwick,

St. Neots with 296 on the previous day. Last noted at Elm in mid-April.

Song Thrush Counts were received from 12 sites with 3–6 individuals being the norm at most sites, however 15 at Paxton Pits on Mar 7th were noteworthy.

Redwing Reports were received from 14 sites with 220 at Priory Park, St. Neots on Mar 15th being the highest count. Last noted from Monks Wood on Apr 19th.

Mistle Thrush Reports were received from 17 sites with 1–2 being the norm. Only record of note was from Elm with 6 on Apr 30th

Common Grasshopper Warbler Noted at Block Fen GP, Castor Hanglands, Fen Drayton GP, Landbeach, Paxton Pits, Somersham and Wicken Fen. The earliest record was Apr 13th; the highest count was 12 at Castor Hanglands (Apr 18th).

Sedge Warbler Reported from 20 sites, the earliest record was at Paxton Pits on Mar 28th, just 3 days later than the earliest ever (again at that site in 2002), and 9 days earlier than the 1990–1999 average. The Apr 16th RSPB Ouse Washes (Cambs) WeBS count revealed 33 birds. Fen Drayton GP boasted 47 singers on Apr 24th.

Eurasian Reed Warbler From only 15 locations, 12 were noted and singing at Fen Drayton on Apr 24th, and 5 were located at Kingfisher's Bridge on Apr 27th. The earliest was an individual at Wicken Fen on Apr 19th (precisely the 10-year mean date).

Lesser Whitethroat Recorded at 20 sites (more than last year), 1 was within Cambridge (Apr 23rd), and only 1 was encountered during the monthly Ouse Washes – Apr 26th – RSPB WeBS count. At other sites, no more than 2 birds were recorded at any visit. The earliest report was on Apr 16th at Witcham.

Common Whitethroat From the records, there is no strong indication of an early arrival of migrants (10-year mean Apr 10th). Of the 19 sites where noted, the earliest was on Apr 13th at Witcham.

Garden Warbler These were encountered at 8 sites, and no earlier than Apr 15th (Paxton Pits, Ferry Meadows). Up to 4 birds were recorded at Grafham Water.

Blackcap Numerous reports from early March. Rotting apples or fat-balls seem a good food-source for enticing birds into gardens early on! Twenty-three singing males were countered at Fen Drayton GP on Apr 24th.

Wood Warbler A single individual was reported from Monks Wood (Apr 26th).

Common Chiffchaff There were 48 records in March and 42 in April, from numerous sites. The maximum for the period was 25 at Wicken Fen on Apr 3rd. The individual of the Siberian form (*tristis*) present from February at Needingworth was still present until Mar 11th.

Willow Warbler Of numerous reports the earliest was on Mar 30th, at Paxton Pits. This was 3 days earlier than the 1990–1999 average.

Goldcrest From 14 sites, numbers ranged from 1 to 5+. (the latter at Paxton Pits).

Firecrest One 'possible' was encountered at the University Botanic Gardens, Cambridge on Mar 29th.

Bearded Tit One individual continued its stay to Grafham Water until Mar 2nd at least. Two were sighted at Wicken Fen on Apr 13th.

Long-tailed Tit Reported from 9 sites, numbers ranged from 1–2 garden visitors, to 100 at Paxton Pits (Mar 7th).

Marsh Tit Although reported from only 10 sites, Monks Wood held impressive numbers (up to 40 during March), but none were reported from that site in April. Other sites included (showing maxima by month) – Hayley Wood (5, 2), Grafham Water (0, 2), Hardwick Wood (2, 2), Ouse Washes (1, 1), Paxton Pits (2, 2), The Gloucesters Wimpole (4, 2), and Woodwalton Fen (4, 12 pairs).

Willow Tit A 'possible' was seen – but not heard – at Grafham Water on Mar 23rd.

Coal Tit Noted at 15 sites, up to 8 were recorded on one day (Hayley Wood, Mar 13th). Most other records consisted of singles.

Blue Tit Sites with higher numbers included Paxton Pits with 70 on Mar 7th, Milton CP (18, 13), and The Gloucesters, Wimpole (13, 10).

Great Tit Sightings of more than 5 birds were made at Fen Drayton GP (20), Milton CP (9, 15+), Newnham, Cambridge (c. 6, Apr 30th), Paxton Pits (70 on Mar 7th), and The Gloucesters, Wimpole (9, 9).

Wood Nuthatch Recorded from just 6 sites. Five at Monks Wood on Mar 9th, and 3+ at Hayley Wood on Apr 25th are noteworthy.

Eurasian Treecreeper Records received from 19 sites. Maximum counts of 7 at Woodwalton Fen on Apr 4th, 5 at Hayley Wood on Mar 13th, and 5 at Monks Wood on Mar 30th are all noteworthy.

Red-backed Shrike There was an unconfirmed report of an individual at Wicken Fen on Apr 24th.

Eurasian Jay Recorded at 17 sites, with maximum counts of 8 at Paxton Pits on Apr 11th, 6 at Earith GP on Mar 31st, and 6 at Fen Drayton GP on Apr 14th.

Black-billed Magpie Records come from 6 sites! A roost of 30 at Ouse Washes (Gault Hole) on Mar 26th, and a count of 20 at Ouse Washes on Apr 26th are noteworthy.

Eurasian Jackdaw Records received from just 9 localities. However, 400+ in a roosting flock at Fortrey's Hall on Mar 23rd, 300+ in a pre-roost gathering at Ouse Washes (Chain Corner) on Mar 2nd and 300+ in a roost at Chrishall Grange on Mar 21st (dropping to 200+ in April) are certainly notable.

Nordic Jackdaw A single bird was at Lode on Apr 3rd and 5th, and an individual was seen at Chrishall Grange on Apr 10th.

Rook Records from 11 sites, with 100–150 noted at Paxton and Ouse Washes in late March.

Carrion Crow Records received from 8 sites. 90+

at Ouse Washes throughout the period and 135 at Wicken Fen on Apr 9th were the highest counts.

Common Starling Highest counts received were of 3000 at dusk in Little Thetford on Mar 6th and 400 in stubble at Long Drove (Cottenham) on Mar 22nd.

House Sparrow Highest counts received were of 125 at Stretham on Mar 3rd, 60+ at Elm on Apr 30th and 25 at Upware on Mar 8th.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow Recorded from 9 sites. Maximum counts were of 43 at Witcham on Mar 8th, up to 40 at Block Fen in April, and a maximum of 25 at Ouse Washes throughout March.

Chaffinch Highest counts of 68 at Ouse Washes on Mar 8th and 44 at Fen Drayton on Apr 14th.

Brambling Records were received from an incredible 17 sites, although most records were of single birds. However, up to 17 were at Ouse Washes until mid-April, and 10 were recorded from Fen Drayton GP, also in mid-April.

European Greenfinch Surprisingly, the highest count throughout April was 30+ at Elm.

European Goldfinch Noted from 13 sites. Highest counts of 53 at Kneesworth on Mar 1st, 30–40 at Ouse Washes in March and 25 at Fleam Dyke on Mar 6th.

Eurasian Siskin Recorded from 15 sites. Maximum counts were of 40 at Woodwalton Fen on Mar 7th, 26 at Monks Wood on Apr 2nd, and 25 at Paxton Pits on Mar 7th.

Common Linnet Records were received from over 20 sites. Peak counts included 80 at Ouse Washes (Earith) on Mar 26th and 80 at Eversden on Apr 19th.

Lesser Redpoll Records received from 11 sites. Counts of 20+ at Woodwalton Fen on Apr 4th, and 19 at Ferry Meadows CP on Mar 28th were significant. In this period last year, Lesser Redpoll was recorded in ones and twos from just 4 sites.

Mealy Redpoll Records of: 2 at Paxton Pits on Mar 15th, and 4 on Mar 29th, and singles at Ouse Washes on Mar 16th and Paxton Pits on Mar 29th.

Common Crossbill Just one report of 6 birds at Orton Brickpit on Mar 2nd.

Common Bullfinch Reported from 17 sites. Four pairs at Fleam Dyke on Mar 6th was the highest count.

Hawfinch A single female at Monks Wood on Mar 19th, 23rd and 30th was a good record.

Yellowhammer Recorded at 19 sites. High counts of 70+ at Grange Farm (Witcham) on Mar 25th, 50+ at Burnt Hill, Witcham on Mar 8th, and 60 at Hardwick on Mar 16th are noteworthy.

Reed Bunting Recorded at 20 sites. 150+ at Needingworth on Mar 2nd (with at least 75 there a month later), and 75+ at Burnt Hill, Witcham on Mar 8th were excellent counts.

Corn Bunting Records were received from 27 sites. Over 50 were at Block Fen on Apr 30th with 40 at Block Fen GP on Apr 2nd. Paxton Pits and Soham both had flocks of over 30 in early March, and flocks of 20 were at Swaffham Prior Fen and Cam Washes (Upware) on Apr 6th.

HYBRIDS

Greylag x Canada Goose A single noted at Kingfisher's Bridge throughout.

Greylag x Barnacle Goose A single regular at Needingworth GP in April.

Pochard x Tufted Duck A redhead type at Grafham Water on Mar 26th.

Pochard x Ferruginous Duck A female at Buckden GP on Mar 13–27th at least was almost certainly the bird seen there in Feb 2002. A male bird was at Paxton Pits on Mar 28th.

Pochard x Red-crested Pochard A female noted at Paxton Pits on Mar 2nd.

EXOTICA

Black Swan A single still on the R. Cam in Cambridge.

Bar-headed Goose A single still at Paxton Pits during March.

Saker One noted on the Ouse Washes at Chain Corner on Apr 7th.

Purple Swamp Hen Now residing along the R. Ouse in the Fen Drayton area.

Contributors: Richard Allison, Jake Allsop, Dave Anderson, Catherine Andrews, Paul Atkinson, Louise Bacon, Ian Barton, Rowena Baxter, Dorothy Best, Peter Bircham, Bob Bunten, James Cadbury, Robert Coleman, Steve Cooper, Robin Cox, Ian Delgado, Steve Dudley, Ian Ellis, Stuart Elsom, Dr Mike Foley, Don Gardener, Will George, David Griffiths, Vicki Harley, Kevin Harris, Jack Harrison, Brian & Sheila Harrup, Mark Hawkes, David Heath, Fred Heath, Peter Herkenrath, Jem Holding, Pete Holt, David Hopkins, John Hoppitt, Julian Hughes, Bob Humphrey, Robin Jones, Will Kirby, Jim Lawrence, John Le Gassick, Vince Lea, Jono Leadley, Stuart & Rita Lingard, Tony Mallyon, Bruce & Gwen Martin, Paul Mason, Duncan McNiven, Mark Missin, Terry Murfitt, John Oates, Richard Palmer, Rob Palmer, Richard Patient, Mark Peck, Mark Pettit, Doug Radford, Graeme Reed, Tony Roberts, Kathleen Rosewarne, Paul Rule, Bob & Ann Scott, Ellis Selway, Clive Sinclair, Brian Stone, Richard Thomas, Chris Thorne, Phillip Todd, Alan & Brenda Wadsworth, George Walthew, Mark Ward, P. M. Warrington, Christoph Zöckler.

Apologies to anyone whose name has been omitted. Any records received after the deadline date may not appear in the Bulletin though the observers may be acknowledged. They will be entered on the Clubs database for the Annual Report.

BAPs (part 2) – Bittern

Vince Lea¹ and Catherine Weightman²
¹CBC member. ²Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan Co-ordinator

Following last bulletin's article outlining the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) process, this article will describe the process as it relates to conservation of the Bittern in Cambridgeshire.



Bittern by Graham Easy

The Bittern used to be a common breeding bird of the fens before drainage and agriculture eradicated suitable habitat, leading to the loss of this species as a breeding bird. It is now breeding regularly at only a small number of sites nationally, and is Red-listed as a priority species in the review of birds of conservation concern. It is still not a regular breeder in Cambridgeshire, although occasional attempts are made and it is regular as a wintering species in single figures. This wintering population is thought to be of continental birds.

The Cambridgeshire County Council's BAP for this species is of course closely linked to plans for wetland improvement, in particular extending and enhancing reedbed habitat. The current low population of the species means that a particular priority at the moment is in recording all occurrences of the species, in order to monitor changes in its status and to allow active protection measures to be made should any Bitterns appear at a site. There are numerous other short- to medium- term plans for habitat creation and management which would benefit the Bittern, with a long-term goal of establishing five breeding pairs in the county by 2020. These plans fit in with a UK-wide plan to reverse the decline seen over the last 25 years and establish a more sustainable breeding population, and there are numerous schemes for reedbed improvement, extension and creation around the rest of the country.

For such a rare species, site confidentiality and protection are significant concerns, and the publicly available information on the BAP webpages refers to well-protected sites where Bitterns are known to overwinter – Wicken and Woodwalton Fens, and the Nene Washes. Any Bird Club members with information on Bitterns at other sites should submit their records via the appropriate county recorder and all sensitive site information will be kept confidential. Information provided by such records is of great value in the effective monitoring of the species and is vital to ensuring effective conservation measures are in place. The Bittern BAP is the only one to make specific mention of the Cambridgeshire Bird Club in this regard and it is important that we submit all records of this species

for consideration; even if you see or hear a Bittern that you think is already known about, the information on the length of its stay and areas of a site that are frequented could be useful.

The structure of the BAP for Bittern follows a logical progression, from a review of the current status (as mentioned above) and factors affecting the population, through a summary of current activities and objectives to future action. This is then linked to other Local Species and Habitat Action Plans (LSAP, LHAP), such as the LHAP for reedbeds, floodplains and fens. The action plan is subject to periodic review to ensure its continued effectiveness. This arrangement is typical for Species Action Plans.

The principle reason for the decline of the Bittern is identified as a loss of both quantity and quality of large reedbed habitats, coupled with other factors – loss of fish (especially eels) in appropriate size classes, fragmentation of the population to critically low levels and vulnerability to hard winters restricting access to food. Consequently, the current actions being taken to conserve Bitterns involve reedbed creation and restoration at a number of sites, including Wicken and Woodwalton Fens, the Nene Washes, and the RSPB – Hanson project at Needingworth. The aim is to give all reedbeds conservation status by 2005 and getting all reedbeds into favourable condition for Bittern breeding by 2010. This should provide the basis for meeting the target of five pairs by 2020. The future actions listed in the plan include targets for gradually increasing the reedbed provision within the county, with 100 ha new reedbed by 2005 and 400 ha by 2010, using land of low conservation value. This will ideally be in blocks of 20 ha or greater whilst ensuring connectivity to existing habitat. Full details of the plan for Bittern are available on the Internet by navigating from: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/sub/cntryside/biodiv/plans/index.html> (just click on the word Bittern!)

The Paxton Challenge

Martin Davis, Julian Hughes and Jamie Wells

More than a decade ago, we discussed with Laurence Rose, a stalwart birder from Little Paxton, the possibility of seeing 100 species in a day around the Paxton Pits complex. One day, Laurence said, he'd give it a go, but then a new job took him to a new life in Yorkshire.

Seeing over eighty species at Paxton Pits is relatively easy in early May, but the next 20 require a combination of putting in the time and having a lot of luck. In April 2004, JW clocked up 94 species in a day, and this spurred us on to taking up Laurence's challenge. It was timely for two reasons: Bardon Aggregates, manager of nearly all the land at the Pits outside the nature reserve, has entered the *BTO/Hanson Business-Bird Challenge 2004*, and is maintaining detailed records of the birds here during the year. And we comprise three-quarters of Team Paxton in the Cambridgeshire Patch Race, organised by Mark Hawkes. Our fourth member, Neal Parkin, was away that weekend, however, and we could hear his frustration each time we phoned to tell him of another good bird!

We decided to give it a shot on the first Sunday of May, though when deciding that a week in advance, we had no idea that it would prove to be one of the best ever days at the Pits. Unlike a county birdrace, we didn't 'stake' anything out, we simply relied on our knowledge of our local patch. Also, unlike a county birdrace, we took it relatively easy: no dawn start, no late finish and a pub lunch in the middle of the afternoon. You could say we were almost casual about it.

The first hour, from 6.30 am, ticked along nicely, and we quickly clocked up the first 30. A Snipe was a bonus, as often they have left for their breeding sites by the end of April, and then, while scanning one of the islands specially designed for breeding waders and terns, the angelic form of a Little Tern glided into view. Only the eighteenth ever seen at Paxton, and the first for JH and JW, it seemed to be a good omen for the day. Indeed, within a few minutes, we had seen Turnstone and two Bar-tailed Godwits – leftovers from a remarkable wader passage during the previous week – and late-staying Wigeon, Goldeneye and Pochard. Ruff, Dunlin, Red-crested Pochard and two male Garganeys augmented the list, while the scrub around the pits began to yield the migrant warblers and buntings, including the ‘jangling keys’ of a Corn Bunting, now a breeding season rarity in the area. In the air, huge numbers of Swifts and hirundines fed, joined by a couple of Hobbies.

Totting up over a cup of tea revealed the list already comprised 80 species, and a phone call told us that a female Whinchat was perched in a field of oil seed rape. By the time we arrived, it had gone to ground, though a Wheatear was nice compensation. Our tally crept up gradually, in tandem with the miles we walked. Nightingales, for which the nature reserve is perhaps best known, were easy, though a female Redstart and a Spotted Flycatcher, the second earliest ever at the Pits, gave us the run around for almost an hour. But that was the beauty of this escapade. Unlike a county birdrace, we were not constantly watching the clock, thinking of where we should be next. We could only be wherever we could walk to!

While looking for the Flycatcher, Buzzard and Marsh Harrier were added to the list, the latter being our hundredth species, and it was only 2 p.m.! This was supposed to be difficult, but we had done this with some ease. Over a pint, we decided to keep going, and see as many as possible, even though we were now pretty tired. Another search for the Whinchat revealed it, but Marsh tit was to elude us all day. By early evening, we were mopping up species that we knew might be around, including Teal and Common Gull. A Greenshank called as it flew many hundreds of feet above the pits, but the last Green Sandpiper of the winter must already have departed.

By now, the sun was going down and we were ready to quit at 105. But we hadn’t yet accounted for an Osprey that flew slowly but intently north, eliciting a noisy response from a colony of Black-headed Gulls. And as we walked back to the car, a quick scan found two Whimbrels, which soon followed the Osprey north.

It was not yet dark, and we could have hunted for an owl or two, but we’d done what we set out to do, and were content to leave it there, at 107. We’d seen almost every breeding species around the Pits, and 12 waders, 11 ducks, 7 gulls and 6 raptors, plus several scarce passage species. Laurence had been right, and we’d had luck on our side, but we’d put 13 species over the previous highest Paxton count, and more to the point, it had been a lot of fun.

Has anyone else seen more than 100 species in a day at a site in Cambridgeshire? As a benchmark, the county daylist record stands at 130, while in neighbouring Bedfordshire it is 111.

Information: Paxton Pits is adjacent to the A1, west of St Neots. The southern pits are a nature reserve owned and managed by Huntingdonshire District Council. There is no access to the northern pits, an active quarry, but some can be viewed from a network of public footpaths between Little Paxton, Diddington and Offord Cluny. For more information about the Pits complex, with regularly updated sightings, visit www.paxton-pits.org.uk.

HOT NEWS

Please note this date in your diary:-

Thursday 18th November 2004

7.30 pm Wood Green Animal Shelter, Godmanchester

THE FUTURE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT & PEOPLE

Your club has been instrumental in bringing together all the bird and wildlife groups in the county for a special environmental lecture and forum, we need you to be there. The programme planned is a talk by Jeremy Greenwood, a 45-minute break, followed by an Environmental Forum – 'The Environment for Wildlife and People'

Full details later.

INDOOR MEETINGS CO-ORDINATOR

The Club is looking for someone who is prepared to oversee the smooth running of meetings, particularly at St John's. This would entail making sure the Club projector and extension lead is available if required, putting out and replacing chairs, supplying tea and coffee or organising a rota of persons to do so. This need not be an onerous job – helping at one or two meetings would be a worthwhile contribution. Please contact the Secretary, Meetings Secretary or Chairman if you can help or would like to know more (contact details on back page).

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS 2004

September 10th – Milton Country Park Visitor's Centre RSPB Reserves and how we manage them by Richard Powell

The talk will be about the reserves of the region and their importance and their management, including a few key examples of how the reserves develop and how they have been created them from dry or humble beginnings into great habitats, dealing mostly with habitat creation and design. It will also touch on other work of the RSPB regional office to give a flavour of the broad job they do, with lots of pictures of birds, other wildlife and machines!!

Richard Powell became the Regional Director of the RSPB in Eastern England in 1994 having worked for them since 1988. He has experience in all aspects of the management of land and people especially, with a great interest in sustainable development. He is involved in a variety of organisations concerned with the countryside and development including the East of England Development Agency, Renewables East (promoting renewable energy in the region), the Broads Authority, Regional Environmental Protection Advisory Committee (REPAC) of the Environment Agency and the National Rural Forum as well. He is a Graduate of Common Purpose, and chairs the Suffolk Advisory Committee. Richard is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

SUMMER OUTDOOR MEETINGS

July 9th – Woodwalton Fen –Guided walk.

In Upwood village (4 miles south west of Ramsey) take the B1040 signposted to Peterborough and Whittlesey. Follow this road out of the village for approximately 3 miles until you reach a sharp right hand bend. At this bend there is a track on the left named Chapel Road. Follow this road to the end and Woodwalton Fen Nature Reserve is directly in front of you. There is off-the-road parking available by the site by parking along the dyke bank. There is no disabled access. Dogs are not allowed on this reserve. We will meet the warden Alan Bowley at 1900hrs and the walk will last for about 2 hours. For further details please contact Stuart Elsom by email (Stuart.Elsom@tringa.co.uk) or telephone 01480-471910.

August 13th – Barbecue at Fowlmere RSPB Reserve.

Arrive any time during afternoon/evening for birding. Escorted walk at 6.30 pm.
Barbecue cooking in the picnic area from 7.30pm. – bring your own food to cook.
Salad, baps, sauces, soft drinks available – donation towards costs welcome. Toilets are available.
Contact Ann Scott (01480 214904) or Vicki Harley (01954 250340) by 8th August if you intend to come – this will help us with the catering.

BULLETIN by EMAIL

Would you like to receive your bulletin by email? If so please send your email address to the bulletin editor, Vicki Harley, (vicki.harley@care4free.net).

FROM THE SECRETARY

New Members.

We welcome the following new members, Robin Jones from St Ives and Dr David Gareth Rees from Bassingbourn.

A note from Jeff Baker (Head of Membership, BTO)

Your club members might be interested to know about four new pieces of work that have just been put on to the BTO web site:

The first is that all the distribution maps from the three BTO atlases can now be viewed online by going to <http://www.bto.org/atlases/index.htm>

Secondly, further results from the Winter Farmland Bird Survey have just been published. View these at <http://www.bto.org/survey/special/wfbs/resultshome.htm>

the third, UK Bird Trends for 2003 can now be viewed at <http://www.bto.org/birdtrends/index.htm>

and the fourth is the Breeding Waders of Wet Meadows report at <http://www.bto.org/survey/special/bwmm.htm>

Cambridgeshire Bird Records by computer.

Members willing to send in their records by e-mail, please contact John Oates. He will send you a copy of the spreadsheet. Please let him know if you have Excel, Works 2000 or whatever system you are using.

Cambirds email group.

Don't forget you can now use this news group for any information relating to the Bird Club or to let others know of recent sightings. Please contact me for details.

Bruce Martin

CLUB CONTACTS

Chairman

Bob Scott
8 Woodlands
St Neots, Huntingdon, Cambs PE19 1UE
Tel: 01480 214904
Email: abscott@tiscali.co.uk

Secretary

Bruce Martin
178 Nuns Way, Cambridge CB4 2NS
Tel: 01223 700656
Email: bruce.s.martin@ntlworld.com

Treasurer

Rita Lingard
14 Spens Avenue, Cambridge CB3 9LS
Tel: 01223 356476
Email: rita.lingard@ntlworld.com

Indoor Meetings Secretary & Bulletin Editor

Vicki Harley
30 Margett Street, Cottenham, Cambs CB4 8QY
Tel: 01954 250340

Website

Simon Stirrup
33 Brenda Gautrey Way, Cottenham, Cambs
CB4 8XW
Tel: 01954 250207
Email: simon.stirrup@virgin.net

Research Officer

Dr Bill Jordan
31 East Hatley, Hatley St George, Sandy, Beds
SG19 3JA
Tel: 01767 651737
Email: bill@31hatley.fsnet.co.uk

Publicity & Promotions

Ann Scott
8 Woodlands, St Neots, Huntingdon, Cambs PE19
1UE
Tel: 01480 214904
Email: abscott@tiscali.co.uk

County Recorder (Old Cambs)

John Oates
7 Passage Close, Lode, Cambs CB5 9EH
Tel: 01223 812546
Email: joates9151@aol.com

County Recorder (Hunts)

John Clark
7 Westbrook, Hilton, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 9NW
Tel: 01480 830472
(No email)

Other Council Members

Louise Bacon
236 Wimpole Road, Barton, Cambs, CB3 7AE
Tel: 01223 263962
E-mail: lb117@cam.ac.uk

Rowena Baxter

14 Pettitts Close, Dry Drayton, Cambs, CB3 8DQ
E-mail: rcb@eng.cam.ac.uk

Stuart Elsom

117 Andrew Road, Eynesbury, St Neots, Cambs
PE19 2PP
Tel: 01480 471910
Email: stuart.elsom@tringa.co.uk

Peter Herkenrath

50 Sherbourne Close, Cambridge CB4 1RT
01223 420736
Email: peter@herkenrath.fsnet.co.uk

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.cambridgeshirebirdclub.org.uk

Birdline number

Remember that your Cambs bird sightings can be phoned in free of charge to Birdline East Anglia on 0800 083 0803.

Please send records to: John Oates by July 7th

Next Bulletin due out August 2004, covering May and June

GOOD BIRDING!