

# KOS News

The Newsletter of the Kent Ornithological Society

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May 2025



*Cuckoo by Steve Ashton*

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**KOS Contacts – Committee Members details are available on the society website**

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**“The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. “**

At least, according to the *Song of Solomon* in the King James version I reluctantly grew up with. I was no Bible scholar as a schoolboy, but I knew enough natural history to know that turtles were not known for their vocal accomplishments. Later I came across other more grounded scholars who quickly reinforced my view, and although Turtle Doves were scarce in my corner of South Wales eventually, I was uprooted and transplanted to the Surrey/Sussex border where they were commonplace in those heady days of the mid 1960’s and became an icon of Summer.

When I moved into this small house in Ash in 1995 I found Turtle Doves to be regular visitors to the garden and adjacent fields and for at least fifteen years a pair or two bred each year in my biggest cherry plum tree, until a winter storm removed the favourite branch and subsequent breeding transferred to an adjacent hedge, I managed to ring several chicks over the years and even a few adults also, caught when attracted to my chicken run. The “song of the turtle” became as much a defining feature of Spring as the first Cuckoo or Swallow.

But not this year. For the first time in thirty years no Turtle Doves sing around my garden. Today I saw my first one of the year, but not here. Instead, it flicked rapidly across the fields at Grove Ferry and disappeared before I could truly pay my respects. Turtle Doves are birds of open farmland chequered by dense hedges and scattered with rough scrub, always near enough to standing water to slake their thirst. These are all features little valued in our modern rural landscape and all too readily despised valueless or wasteland by those casting an avaricious eye over our fast-diminishing natural world with a view to profit. The song of the turtle will not be heard in our land in years to come.

Good birding  
Norman

News and announcements

**Avian Influenza and BirdTrack**

With a new breeding season upon us please be vigilant and look out for sick or dead circumstances where bird flu is suspected, around the coast and inland wetlands and bodies.

Defra guidelines for reporting have recently you should report to Defra if you find:

- **One or more dead bird of prey, goose or duck in the same place**
- **Five or more dead wild birds of species in the same place**

**Report at**

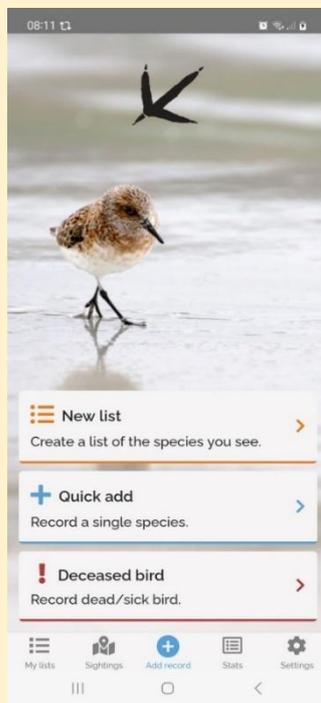
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-birds>

The BirdTrack ‘Deceased bird’ tool on the provides a quick and easy way for you to or sick birds which are not on the Defra for reporting. An example could be a single Heron or Woodpigeon, or if you find fewer the priority species, such as three Black-Gulls.

The additional data collected through BirdTrack complements information collected through the Defra scheme and the Epicollect system used by site managers working for country agencies. Thank you very much for taking the time to submit these records.

**References, links and further reading:**

Defra: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-dead-wild-birds>  
Birdtrack: <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/birdtrack>



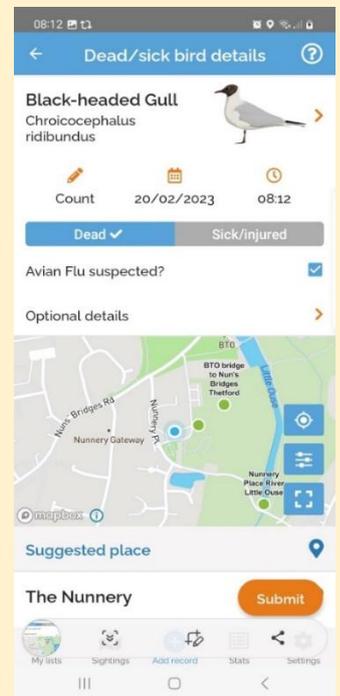
continue to birds in especially water

changed and gull, swan,

any other

dead-wild-

phone app report dead priority list as Grey than five of headed



## **BTO Heathland Bird Survey 2025**

Volunteers should make between two and four visits for each of the species during the species' survey periods:

**Woodlark** (15 February – 31 May) – two early morning visits between sunrise and 11 a.m.

**Dartford Warbler** (1 April – 30 June) – two early morning visits between sunrise and 11 a.m.

**Nightjar** (25 May – 15 July) – two evening visits covering the two-hour period after sunset, or the two hours prior to sunrise.

### **The main emphasis in Kent will be to survey Nightjars**

A national survey of heathland birds (**Nightjar**, Woodlark and Dartford Warbler) is taking place this year, in partnership with the RSPB, as detailed in the March KOS Newsletter.

Woodlark and Dartford Warbler do not really feature in Kent, mainly due to our lack of heathland, which is generally the preferred habitat (although some areas do exist around Pembury, Hothfield and on the Blean) so there were only a few squares (1km) to be surveyed. However, Kent does have a population of Nightjars, mostly in woodland habitats, which have been the subject of BTO surveys at intervals in the past (1981, 1992 and 2004), and so, after an interval of 20 years, it will be great to survey Nightjar again and get an update on its status in Kent.



In terms of the other species, the occasional pair of Woodlark and Dartford Warbler do sometimes breed, but they are RBBP (Rare Breeding Bird Panel) species and survey effort has mostly been directed to a few local observers for the known potential breeding sites.

The species favours areas of clear-felled and freshly replanted conifers and areas of Sweet Chestnut coppice up to about 3 years of age. It is recommended that anyone volunteering to survey Nightjars should make a daytime recce visit before the survey is undertaken in order to establish if suitable habitat is present, and if so where. This will save time wandering around at dusk during the survey to locate suitable areas.

There are a large number of 1km squares available for survey which cover the main woodlands in Kent where Nightjars do or have occurred. Areas where volunteers are particularly required are:-

**Bedgebury Forest**

**Hemsted Forest**

**Denge Woods**

**Blean Woods (particularly south of A2)**

**West Blean/Thornden Woods**

**Orlestone Forest**

**Lyminge Forest (West Wood,  
Elhampark Wood)**

Volunteers selecting squares (see below for how to do this) will notice that the BTO have attempted to identify areas of suitable habitat and shaded out areas deemed unsuitable. Please ignore this (toggle to remove this feature before printing map) and make a daytime visit (as suggested above) to identify suitable areas. In Kent, the coppicing of chestnut can continue quite late into the season (even early April) so potential areas will likely be missed on the BTO assessments. It will probably be the case that many of the squares do not contain any suitable habitat, in which case please notify the organiser and select another square.

Nightjar survey instructions are given here:-

[https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/nightjar\\_survey\\_methods\\_2025.pdf](https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/nightjar_survey_methods_2025.pdf)

In brief, volunteers should make two visits (at least 10 days apart) during the survey period which is **(25 May – 31 July)** covering either the two-hour period after sunset, or the two hours prior to sunrise. Volunteers are asked to mark locations of any birds recorded on a printed off map with date and time of visit and some basic habitat details. Volunteers are asked to record a few other species if present and to make a note of these, something that may add purpose and interest to visits if there are no Nightjars! The species of concern in Kent are Hobby, Long-eared Owl, Cuckoo, Stonechat, Grasshopper Warbler, Tree Pipit and Linnet.

### Sign up

Have a MyBTO account already?

- [Log in and sign up to the survey.](#)

Don't have a BTO account?

- [Create a MyBTO account](#) and then sign up to the survey.

Once logged in, you will find the survey sign up for the survey in the 'Sign Up for Projects' section.

### Request a site

Once signed up, you can request a square via the survey portal.

- [Log in to the survey portal](#) using your MyBTO account details.

Full details of the Nightjar survey can be found on the BTO website for the survey [Heathland Birds Survey | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology](#)

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## BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS)

BBS is the principal scheme for monitoring the population changes of the common and widespread breeding birds in the UK. The survey involves two early-morning spring visits to an allocated 1-km square, to count all birds seen or heard while walking two 1-km lines (transects) across the square.

Thank you very much to all volunteers who completed a BBS in 2024. Thanks also to those who carried out the Waterways Breeding Bird Survey (WBBS). WBBS extends the methodology of BBS to linear waterways in the county, although carried out on a much smaller scale in terms of the number of sites surveyed.

BBS is a very rewarding survey in which to take part, and only requires two visits of approximately two hours each per year. Further details can be obtained via:

<https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/bbs/taking-part>.

Alternatively, if interested to take on any of the 1 km squares shown in the table please contact Bob Knight for further details: [rjknight53@gmail.com](mailto:rjknight53@gmail.com)

**Bob Knight**

## Reporting Breeding Birds

**Please use breeding codes when submitting bird records during the breeding season.** This greatly improves the value of the record both nationally and at county level. Every year the KOS receives thousands of records either directly from the KOS website or from platforms like BirdTrack or eBird which get downloaded to the KOS database at the end of each year. Authors of species accounts in the Kent Bird Report have to try and interpret these records when it comes to documenting the breeding status. The task would be a lot easier if observers gave more information. There are nationally agreed codes to determine if a bird is possibly, probably, or definitely breeding. **The breeding codes used by BTO BirdTrack can be found here [Microsoft Word - BreedingStatusCodesforweb.doc](#) These codes are now also incorporated in the KOS sightings database. Similar codes are available in eBird.**

During the breeding season (usually taken as 1 April to 31 July, but some species breed earlier and later!), please try and add the most appropriate code, if possible, to your record submission, especially for less common species. If you are concerned that reporting a breeding bird may lead to disturbance you can report it directly to the Kent Recorder, Barry Wright [umbrellabirds66@gmail.com](mailto:umbrellabirds66@gmail.com)

## Rare Breeding Birds (RBBP species) in Kent

The following list gives the typical RBBP species recorded in Kent in recent years. **It is particularly important to submit all confirmed or suspected breeding records of these species**, using the recording systems and evidence of breeding codes detailed in the "Reporting Breeding Birds" article. Whilst caution should be exercised when submitting breeding records of any RBBP species, it's important to know breeding locations for the Kent and UK RBBP ornithological archives. Records giving location details (OS grid or 1km square reference) can be marked sensitive on BirdTrack, whilst there is now a sensitivity button on the KOS sightings database which will prevent public disclosure of the record on the website. In many cases, such as broods of ducks and fledged waders, reporting locations is not an issue. For others, more robust breeding populations or inaccessible nest sites lessens the effect of disturbance. However, **in most cases, the location of rare breeding birds should not be publicly disclosed or discussed**, especially not on social media, to avoid disturbance from unscrupulous birders and photographers, gamekeepers and pigeon fanciers, and egg collectors.



Quail  
Garganey  
Shoveler  
Wigeon  
Pintail  
Pochard  
Turtle Dove  
Spotted Crake  
Black-necked Grebe  
Black-winged Stilt  
Avocet  
Little Ringed Plover  
Mediterranean Gull  
Little Tern  
Eurasian Bittern  
Cattle Egret  
Little Egret  
Honey Buzzard  
Goshawk  
Marsh Harrier  
Long-eared Owl  
Short-eared Owl  
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker  
Hobby  
Peregrine Falcon  
Golden Oriole  
Bearded Tit  
Woodlark  
Marsh Warbler  
Savi's Warbler  
Dartford Warbler  
Black Redstart  
Hawfinch



Please submit records of these species directly to the County Bird Recorder – Barry Wright [umbrellabirds66@gmail.com](mailto:umbrellabirds66@gmail.com) or the Kent RBBP rep. David Smith [DavidSmith@epr.uk.com](mailto:DavidSmith@epr.uk.com)

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## Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP)

The Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) is a partnership between BTO and JNCC (Joint Nature Conservation Committee), in association with the RSPB. BTO took over the organisation of the programme in July 2022 and the survey is under the leadership of Sarah Harris, former organiser for BBS/WBBS.



The Seabird Monitoring Programme monitors population changes of our internationally important breeding seabird species at **coastal** and **inland** colonies across the UK.

For further details please see [www.bto.org/our-science/projects/seabird-monitoring-programme](http://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/seabird-monitoring-programme)

Within Kent volunteers can register and sign up to count sites with breeding Gulls, Terns, Fulmars or Cormorants. These can be coastal or inland sites and all are marked on the Map of Seabird Monitoring Sites which can be accessed via the above link. This shows the current sites registered in Kent and for which data has been submitted in the past. By zooming in to view the master sites, any component ones will be revealed. Clicking on a site will start the process of requesting to become a counter. Once registered and allocated the site, you can then enter breeding data from visits you make. Hopefully this is something that you would continue to do each year, in much the same way as volunteers do for schemes such as the Heronry Census. You will be making a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the state of UK seabirds!

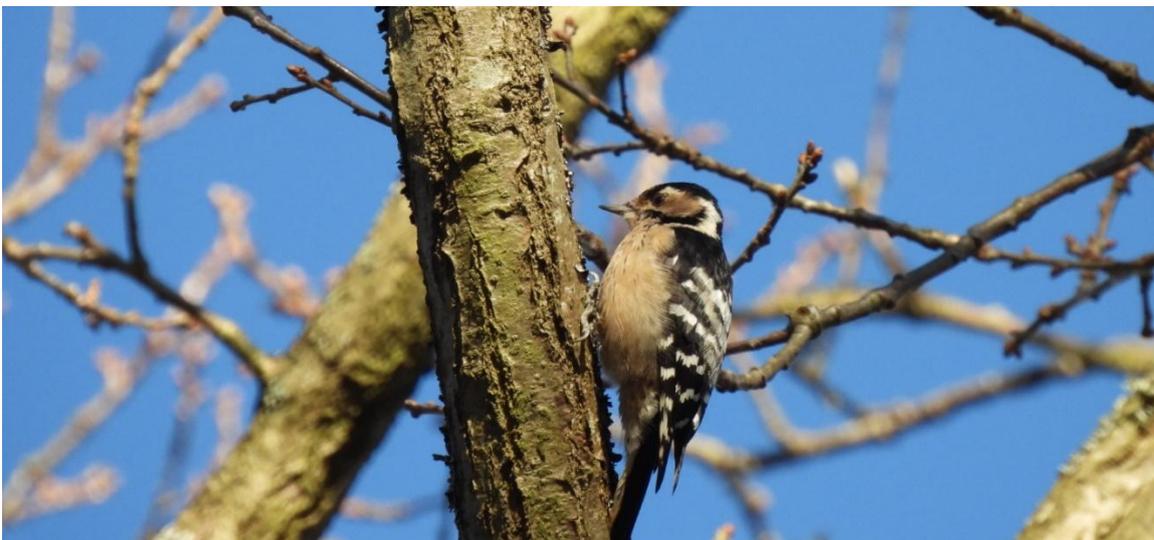
The following sites are currently marked as vacant. It would be great if someone could register as a counter for one or more of these sites and supply records each year. One or two visits are all that's required with a count of breeding birds present. The expected/likely species are given against each site and details of when and how to count each species are provided in the link above. Please note that the cliff sites pose obvious hazards and counting should not be undertaken without appropriate risk assessment and local guidance.

**The Warren & Abbots Cliff - Fulmar**  
**Samphire Hoe - Fulmar**  
**Langdon Cliff & Bay – Fulmar, Herring Gull**  
**Crab & Fan Bay Cliffs – Fulmar, Herring Gull**  
**Hope Point – Fulmar, Herring Gull**  
**Stodmarsh – Common Tern, Cormorant**  
**Seaton Pits – Common Tern**

If you would like to get involved with the Seabird Monitoring Programme, please let me know [murray.orchard@live.co.uk](mailto:murray.orchard@live.co.uk). Thanks.

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## Help Monitor Kent's Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers in 2025



*Image credit: Heather Mathieson*

### What to Record

When you see a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, please provide as much detail as possible, including:

1. **Number of birds seen:** Were there single individuals, a pair, or a small group?
2. **Sex:** Males have a red crown, while females do not.
3. **Location:** Use precise GPS coordinates or a *what3words* location using the app on your smartphone.
4. **Activity:** Note whether the bird is:
  - **Foraging:** Searching for insects on branches or bark.
  - **Drumming:** Rapid, repetitive pecking used to communicate.
  - **Calling:** Vocalizations to attract mates or defend territory.
  - **Displaying:** Territorial or courtship behaviours.
  - **Perching or flying:** Resting or moving between locations

## How to Submit Your Records

Please enter your sightings into one of the following platforms:

- **BirdTrack:** The BTO's free app accessible on your smartphone.
- **eBird:** Free recording App, accessible on your smartphone.
- **Kent Ornithological Society (KOS) website:** If you are based in Kent you can submit your records directly to the KOS database via their website [www.kentos.org.uk](http://www.kentos.org.uk)

## Get in touch

If you would like more information about the survey, please email Heather Mathieson (Survey Coordinator) ([heathermathieson@outlook.com](mailto:heathermathieson@outlook.com)).

## Happy woodpecker spotting!

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### KOS branded clothing.

Just a friendly reminder that our branded clothing is available for purchase through LogoThatPolo. You can find the link on the KOS website or search for Kent Ornithological Society on [www.logothatpolo.co.uk](http://www.logothatpolo.co.uk). As the weather starts to cool down, it's the perfect time to pick up a hat, fleece or hoodie for yourself or as a Christmas present and don't forget a portion of the proceeds is given back to the society.

**Martin Collins**

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We would like to encourage members to contribute items or photographs for inclusion in the newsletter, especially regarding birds in Kent. If you are interested, I am always happy to offer advice or assistance to aspiring authors. To facilitate page composition text needs to be presented as a Word document, photos or illustrations as j-peg files.

Norman McCanch (Editor) : [nvmccanch@hotmail.com](mailto:nvmccanch@hotmail.com)

We like to keep in touch with all our members, so if you change address, email address or phone numbers please remember to inform our membership secretary, Chris Roome. He can be contacted at:

**Chris Roome, Rowland House, Station Rd., Staplehurst TN12 0PY**

**Tel: 01580 891686 e-mail: [chrisroome105@icloud.com](mailto:chrisroome105@icloud.com)**

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## ARTICLES

### Mr. Güldenstädt and his glorious redstart



A few years ago I found a book in a local bookshop being sold at a hugely discounted price that has since proved a valuable source of information, adding an extra layer of interest to my birding. "Biographies for Birdwatchers" by Barbara and Richard Mearns was published in 1988 in both London and San Diego. The book's focus is on the lives of those people commemorated in Western Palearctic bird names. Set out alphabetically, short chapters tell the stories of key bird finders from Edward Adams (White-billed Diver, *Gavia adamsii*) to Alexander Wilson (Wilson's Storm Petrel, *Oceanites oceanicus*, and others). It is a great read, full of the trials and tribulations of the largely eighteenth and nineteenth century naturalists and adventurers, at a time when much of the world map and its avifauna was only faintly pencilled in. Recently returned from a birding trip to Georgia, where the Güldenstädt's Redstart was one of the star birds, it was this book that was one of the first that I reached for when home to find out more about the bird's finder and his story.

The Güldenstädt's Redstart (*Phoenicurus erythrogastrus*) is a beautiful and charismatic bird, and on this winter trip I was fortunate to see many. It is essentially a high-altitude species usually found above the treeline and up to the highest peaks of the Caucasus and into the Himalayas. It breeds on alpine

meadows and rocky areas at up to 17000 feet. Two sub-species are known. It is a large member of the redstart clan, built stockily, the male being rusty red and black in colour with a white crown and nape, and huge broad wing patches. On its high Spring and Summer grounds it is a challenging bird to find; on group trip in May 2019 to the area we had found just one individual. In Winter, however, it leaves the high peaks, descending to the valleys and foothills to find the food it needs and here, changing its diet from eating insects to feasting on Sea Buckthorn berries, it can be numerous and easy to enjoy. It is a fine bird, stunning in flight, and like most redstarts happy to show itself off perching on the tops of bushes or chasing off rivals. Over several days in suitable habitat near Stepantsminda, in the north of Georgia, my birding group recorded seeing over 70 individuals of both sexes



*A trio of males on Sea Buckthorn bushes near Stepantsminda*



*The white wing bars are very showy in flight*

A certain Johann Anton Güldenstädt was the first person ever to record and describe this dashing and then new to science species. Johann was born in Riga on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 1745. During his short life he was to become well known as a zoologist, geologist and botanist. In 1768 he joined an expedition led by Peter Simon Pallas (Pallas's Warbler, *Phylloscopus proregulus*, and others), setting out from St.Petersburg to explore eastwards into the hinterlands of Russia. Heading south over the next few years, Güldenstädt, crossed the Caucasus mountains where he found the redstart now named in his honour. His travels were to take him through landscapes dominated by hostile tribes to the edge of the Caspian Sea where he became the first person to describe the Terek Sandpiper (*Zenus cinereus*) He returned to St Petersburg in 1775 and just a few years later in 1781 he was struck down by a local epidemic and died, aged 36, before he was able to publish all his findings, a task taken on later by his colleague and fellow ornithologist, Pallas.

We live in a world where travel is easy, new species of bird are very rarely found and more and more are going missing through habitat loss and climate change so it is hard to imagine both the challenges and excitements of these early naturalists. Seeing those wonderful redstarts in good numbers in their Winter habitat was a great thrill and privilege. I understand moves by the American Ornithological Society to remove the names of the birds' finders and change them to something less risky but to me the links to the individual are important reminders of a world and its birds waiting then to be discovered by dedicated and adventurous men and women. These early ornithologists often faced considerable dangers and risks to life in their quests to explore new regions and record new species. Many would perhaps not agree but in my mind Guildenstadt's endeavours should be remembered and celebrated. The proposed new name, White-winged Redstart, is descriptive but really rather dull. I am pleased to have found out a little more of the bird's discovery; it adds to my enjoyment. If Johann was around today I would shake his hand warmly for introducing this glorious bird to the world.



**Martin Garwood**

(Martin travelled to Georgia in March with Birding Caucus)

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## Rookery Census 2025



The 2025 Census was undertaken between 22<sup>nd</sup> March and 2<sup>nd</sup> April. The weather was dry and sunny throughout. The cold experienced in the early months of the year no doubt contributed to the lack of foliage on the taller mature trees making counting that much easier. Although Ivy clad trees particularly at Lydd Town, Church Whitfield and Sarre can make counting difficult. It was not possible to visit Bilting as the A28 road was closed from Chilham to Ashford. One new Rookery was found at Mount Pleasant(Minster) on the A299 with six nests. The total number of nests from 55 sites was 1,415 a record high and an increase of 14.5% over 2024.

If we assume that the site at Bilting maintained its yearly average of 25 then this year`s total would be close to 1,450. Thirty five of the 55 sites showed an increase and 14 a decrease in number the remainder showed little variation. Several of the larger Rookeries showed substantial increases, Monkton Village and Quex Park, Birchington were up around 50%. On the debit side numbers at Kent University which peaked at 43 in 2013 have slowly leaked away with only 12 this year

. A similar reduction appears to be underway at Wingham (East) down from 60 in 2014 to 30 this year. Berwick House (Lympne) which at the time of my visit last year was undergoing extensive thinning of diseased Ash trees showed a small reduction from 67 to 58 nests. The situation along the A2070 from Brenzett Roundabout to the Oasis cafe for Old Romney remains fluid but overall numbers at the four sites increased from 87 to 119(3)



*Rooks feeding young by Bill Osborn*

Map ref	Site Name	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>TR3060</b>							
306670	Quex Park, Birchington	10	7	13	25	28	42
313663	Cleave Court (Acol)	17 \$\$	25	30	32	40	51
311658	Mount Pleasant(Minster)						6
310646	Minster village	6	6	13	11	10	13
329642	St Augustines G C	n.v	13	10+	6	n.t	4
336635	Stone Lees G C			6 \$	8	19	12
333618	A256Richboro. Opp KFC	15	36+	51+	37	43	42
333602	A256 Thanet Waste	19	28	24	55	15	42
<b>TR3050</b>							
301582	Europa Nursery (Ash)				27	10	16
350580	Royal St Georges. G.C				58	39	38
327580	Sandwich Town Centre	4	8	9	9	7	7
350577	Sandwich Bay Toll	4	n.t	n.t	5	3	3
358576	Sandwich Bay Estate	4	n.t	n.t	nt	n.t	nt
340545	Hacklinge A258	18	23	18	20	29	28
<b>TR3040</b>							
300445	Whitfield(A2 Rbout)	11	8	12	10	12	15
314458	Church Whitfield	32+	20+	25	22	22	17
<b>TR2060</b>							298
276670	St Nicholas R`bout					7	3
230632	Upstreet A28	12	17	15	19	19	32
286657	Monkton R`bout	35	29	27	25	17	24
280653	Monkton Village	46	48	27	45	37	56
271651	Gore Street(Monkton)	n.t.	8	13	8	8	9
217601	Stodmarsh village	76	75+	78	75+	70	73
244607	Preston (nr church)	11	9	11	12	8	11
258651	Sarre	19	22+	22+	35	32	36
268622	Stourmouth					11	14
<b>TR2050</b>							258
228542	Adisham Village					11	11
263524	Nonington (nr Nonington Court)	15	11	5	2	n.t	nt
255518	Nonington Cricket club	18	38	34	32	39	34
268566	Staple (Church)	9	12	2	9	9	15
273568	Staple (Rowen Close)		13	20	17	8	5
202501	Barham Village					17	13
226568	Bramling A257				3	27	2

284584	Knell Lane(Ash)				3	nt	nv
242578	WinghamVillage(Wst	5	n.t	3	3	n.t	nt
245576	Wingham Village(Est	34	42	44	35	26	30
<b>TR2040</b>							
283491	Eythorne Village	23	28	22	13	10	11
256424	Alkham Village					8	20
<b>TR1050</b>							
143602	Kent Uni (Cbury)	39	32	20	20	22	12
<b>TR1040</b>							
177436	Elham village	24	17	30	36	40	46
198477	Barham Vineyard	29	33	29	28	19	33
161416	Sibton Park					5	5
<b>TR1030</b>						463	237
123342	West Hythe	44	8	n.t	Nt	n.t	2
125350	Shepway Cross	26	24	15	20	10	9
128357	Lympe(Berwick House)	20	35	42+	52	67	58
139371	M20Service Area	α	29	30	35	19	25
140368	Sandling Park area	38	22	23	24	24	35
149368	Sandling Station	25	28	26	29	24	29
<b>TR0040</b>							
60498	Bilting A28	30	35	25+	25	25	nv
TR0030							
013 294	Snave (church)	31	16	13	13	7	8
013 296	Jct A2070/Ivychurch Road	15	6	4	10	8	9
0.04121	Lydd Town	193	222	144	144	190	220
<b>TR0020</b>							395
0.006271	BrenzettR' bout					7	nt
0.019259	A259/Prospect Farm			20+	29	21	29
0.23284	NW of Ivychurch	26	22	16	15	14	18
0.029277	Ivychurch	9	6	9	9	n.t	12
0.034252	Old Romney (church)	9	7	10	10	n.t	nt
0.035253	Old Romney Jct with A259	29	50	25	29	44	63
040 249	East of Old Romney(Oasis café)			9	10	15	29
0.06825	New Romney	4	6	10	6	5	17
0.078261	New Romney. KNT visitor centre)	18	32	33	25	24	12
0.088269	St Mary`s Bay(Taylor Road)	2	3	6	14	15	9

							189
<i>Totals</i>		162	236				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>YEAR TOTAL</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>1159</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>1160</b>	<b>1235</b>	<b>1415</b>
	Sub total		664	566	624		
						230	
306670	Quex Park, Birchington	10	7	13	25	28	
310646	Minster village	6	6	13	11	10	
333618	A256Richboro. Nr. (Electrical Depot)	15	36+	51+	37	43	
217601	Stodmarsh village	76	75+	78	75+	70	
244607	Preston (nr church)	11	9	11	12	8	
258651	Sarre	19	22+	22+	35	32	
280653	Monkton Village	46	48	27	45	37	
271651	Gore Street(Monkton)	n.t.	8	13	8	8	
314458	Church Whitfield	32+	20+	25	22	22	

<b>Nine Rookeries visited in at least 17 of the 20 years 2004 - 2024</b>									
	Max	Min	Avg	Notes					
Church Whitfield	35	20	27	Many ivy covered trees, a difficult site to count					
Gore Street	13	0	7	Birds often move to nearby Monkton village					
Minster Village	19	2	10						
Monkton Village		18	44	Collective totals for small sites within the village					
Preston Church	35	8	18	Steady decline since peak in 2007					
Quex Park	48	3	16						
Richborough Power	51	4	24	Situated on the A256 numbers have increased almost year on year since reaching double figures in 2009					
Sarre Village	35	7	18	Increase in numbers since 2019					
Stodmarsh	78	30	57	By far the largest Rookery I have located in East Kent.					

	<b>New in 2024</b>	<b>Nests</b>						
	Alkham Village	8						
	Barham Village	17						
	Sibton Park	5						
	East/West Stourmouth	11						
	St. Nicholas R`bout	7						
	Brenzetr R`bout	7						

	<b>No trace in. 2024</b>							
	Nonnington Court	Steady decline from a peak of 44 in 2016						
	Wingham West	Only once reached double figures						
	Ivychurch village	Competition from 3 nearby sites						
	Old Romney Church	Trees cut down						

**John Websper**

**Editors Note**

*John has provided an annual Rookery census spreadsheet every year since 2004, often with significant comments and footnotes. As the years have passed it has become impossible to include the full spreadsheet in the limited space of the newsletter and I have been compelled to summarise the contents significantly. However, every year John provides the complete version to the KOS so that the entire data set is preserved for future analysis., an extraordinarily valuable record of Rook populations through changing times. This is an example of amateur ornithology at its very best.*

**Dealing with slippery customers**



*New Zealand Bittern with an eel by Imogen Warren*

Hérons, Bitterns and Egrets have a particular fascination for eels. Not really surprising as they are a substantial, highly nutritious meal and can often be found in shallow water. However, they do come with one inescapable problem, copious amounts of gloopy slime.

A number of bird species have key adaptations to deal with this issue, the most remarkable of which is **powder down** This is a patch of specialised plumage usually situated on the upper breast which is friable and breaks down to produce highly absorbent powder which can be used to coagulate the slime on the plumage, The bird has to access the patch and break up the feathers to release the down and sometimes Bitterns and Herons can be seen with heads bent forward nibbling at their upper breast feathers.



*Dead Bittern showing the white patch of powder down by Norman McCanch*

To facilitate removal of the drying powdered slime, Herons, Bitterns and Egrets also have an adaptation to assist grooming known as pectination, a row of tooth-like projections along the edge of the middle claws forming combs.



*Middle claw of a Bittern showing pectination by Norman McCanch*

The pectinate claw is believed to help with preening, by straightening feathers and removing feather sheaths. This feature can be seen on a number bird species in the world. Apart from herons, egrets and bitterns, they're also found on grebes, cormorants, terns, frigatebirds, nightjars, barn owls and dippers.

**Norman McCanch**

### **KENT BIRD SIGHTINGS FOR MARCH-APRIL 2025 - Chris Hindle**

*Species printed in **red** require descriptions or good quality photographs to be accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee (species in capital letters) or the KOS Rarities Committee (species in lower case). The results of these committees' deliberations are regularly published in this newsletter.*

#### WEATHER

**March** saw persistent high pressure bring settled conditions for most of the month that began with cooler than average temperatures. The high pressure slowly shifted eastwards and milder temperatures temporarily extended south. Temperatures then became colder again with a high-pressure system over the UK bringing a chilly easterly wind to Kent. England saw its sixth driest March.

**April** started in a similar vein to March, with high pressure bringing settled conditions with the first two weeks seeing very little rain over the UK. Temperatures were above average for the first week, before cooler air from the east moved in from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>, leading to temperatures slightly below average particularly in the southeast. The 12<sup>th</sup> saw the high-pressure shift and low pressure bringing in rain on the 15<sup>th</sup> before more settled conditions returned. It was UK's third warmest April on record and also a very dry month.

#### **EARLIEST SPRING MIGRANTS IN 2025**

For some species like Whimbrel, Greenshank, Common Sandpiper, Black Redstart, Blackcap and Chiffchaff it can be difficult to unpick wintering birds from newly arrived migrants.

*Arrival dates compared to the Kent mean: (-) = earlier, (0) = the same, (+) = later*

**Garganey** – a male arrived at Stodmarsh on Mar 15<sup>th</sup>. **(+5)**

**Common Swift** – one flew south at North Foreland on Apr 19<sup>th</sup>. **(+4)**

**Cuckoo** – one was heard at Bough Beech on Apr 11<sup>th</sup>. **(+12)**

**Turtle Dove** – there was one at Marden on Apr 15<sup>th</sup>. **(-4)**

**Little Ringed Plover** – a single bird flew over Sandwich Bay on Mar 4<sup>th</sup>. **(-12)**

**Whimbrel** – three were counted at Elmley NNR on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>. **(-10)**

**Common Sandpiper** – one was seen at Sandwich Bay on Mar 24<sup>th</sup>. **(-16)**

**Greenshank** – two birds arrived at Oare Marshes on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>. **(-13)**

**Wood Sandpiper** – the first bird was seen at Stodmarsh on Apr 21<sup>st</sup>. **(0)**

**Sandwich Tern** – an early bird flew E at DBO on Feb 18<sup>th</sup>. **(-14)**

**Little Tern** – three birds flew E at DBO on Apr 6<sup>th</sup>. **(-5)**  
**Common Tern** – three flew E at DBO on Apr 4<sup>th</sup>. **(+8)**  
**Arctic Tern** – 27 flew E at DBO on Apr 7<sup>th</sup>. **(-5)**  
**Black Tern** – one flew E at DBO on Apr 14<sup>th</sup>. **(-3)**  
**Osprey** – a bird flew NW at Weddington on Mar 29<sup>th</sup>. **(+4)**  
**Hobby** - one was reported from Dungeness RSPB Reserve on Apr 2<sup>nd</sup>. **(-2)**  
**Sand Martin** – one was seen at Bough Beech on Feb 21<sup>st</sup>. **(-16)**  
**Swallow** – one was seen at Tenterden on Mar 5<sup>th</sup>. **(-6)**  
**House Martin** – one was recorded at Worth Marshes on Mar 29<sup>th</sup>. **(+8)**  
**Chiffchaff** – a bird was seen at Bishopstone on Feb 24<sup>th</sup>. **(-15)**  
**Willow Warbler** – on Mar 25<sup>th</sup> birds were seen at Reculver and Worth. **(+1)**  
**Sedge Warbler** – one was recorded from DBO on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>. **(-6)**  
**Reed Warbler** – two were heard at Stodmarsh on Apr 7<sup>th</sup>. **(+1)**  
**Grasshopper Warbler** – one was heard at Oare Marshes on Apr 12<sup>th</sup>. **(+2)**  
**Lesser Whitethroat** – one was heard at Bough Beech on Apr 11<sup>th</sup>. **(0)**  
**Common Whitethroat** – a male was singing at Oare Marshes on Apr 5<sup>th</sup>. **(+1)**  
**Garden Warbler** – one was recorded from Seasalter on Apr 13<sup>th</sup>. **(+1)**  
**Blackcap** – a male was heard singing at Sandgate on Mar 5<sup>th</sup>. **(-14)**  
**Ring Ouzel** – two were seen at Langdon Bay on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>. **(-9)**  
**Nightingale** – one was heard at New Hythe on Apr 4<sup>th</sup>. **(-2)**  
**Black Redstart** – two were found at DBO on Mar 6<sup>th</sup>. **(+6)**  
**Common Redstart** – a female was seen at Swalecliffe on Mar 24<sup>th</sup>. **(-10)**  
**Northern Wheatear** – two birds arrived at DBO on Mar 21<sup>st</sup>. **(+15)**  
**Whinchat** – one was seen at Sandwich Bay on Apr 15<sup>th</sup>. **(-4)**  
**White Wagtail** – a male was seen at North Foreland on Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>. **(-16)**  
**Yellow Wagtail** – one flew over North Foreland on Mar 25<sup>th</sup>. **(+6)**  
**Tree Pipit** – one flew along the embankment at Reculver Marshes on Mar 21<sup>st</sup>. **(-8)**

#### PARTRIDGE TO WILDFOWL

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A **Pale-bellied Brent Goose** was seen at Muswell Manor on Mar 5<sup>th</sup> whilst another flew past DBO on Mar 19<sup>th</sup> and one was seen at Pegwell Bay on the 21<sup>st</sup> and during March and April up to nine **Barnacle Geese** were seen at Sandwich Bay, Worth Marshes, Brooksend, Cliffe Pools and Elmley NNR.

During March there were still up to 320 **Russian White-fronted Geese** at Swale NNR with smaller numbers at Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Leysdown-on-Sea, Sandwich Bay, Worth Marshes, Stodmarsh, Bockhill, Dunorlan Park, Postern Park and Chislet Marshes. One was seen at Dungeness RSPB Reserve on Apr 21<sup>st</sup>.

The long-staying **Lesser White-fronted Goose** was still at Capel Fleet on Mar 15<sup>th</sup> and a **Whooper Swan** was reported flying over Bough Beech on Mar 5<sup>th</sup>.

Up to 23 **Egyptian Geese** were recorded at Elmley NNR, Sandwich Bay, DBO, Cliffe Pools, Oare Marshes, Swalecliffe, Nickoll's Quarry, Cock Ash Lake, River Beult, Halstow Marshes, Lympne, Hadlow, Sevenoaks WR, Haysden CP and North Foreland. A **Ruddy Shelduck** was seen at Sevenoaks WR on Apr 11<sup>th</sup>. As many as four **Mandarin** were seen at Thornden/West Blean Woods, Penschurst Place, Tonbridge, Garrington, Haysden CP, Hothfield and Chiddingstone.



*Garganey by Tim Gutsill*

After the first male **Garganey** was seen at Stodmarsh on Mar 15<sup>th</sup> five flew E at St Margarets-at-Cliffe and a male was seen at Dungeness RSPB on the 18<sup>th</sup> whilst on the 19<sup>th</sup> eight flew E at DBO. Four flew E at Hythe and one flew E at DBO on the 20<sup>th</sup> and on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 27 flew past DBO, three flew past Samphire Hoe and a female was seen at Stodmarsh. There was another impressive count of 25 birds flying E at DBO on Apr 1<sup>st</sup>. After this, as many as four were seen at DBO, Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Stodmarsh/Grove Ferry, Worth Marshes, Reculver, Conningbrook, Foreness, North Foreland and Higham.

After 222 **Pintail** flew E at DBO on Mar 6<sup>th</sup>, a record count for the Observatory of 3,705 flew E there the next day.

Male **Green-winged Teals** were discovered at Worth Marshes on Apr 5<sup>th</sup> and at Cliffe Pools from Apr 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>. If accepted by the KOS Rarities Panel these will be the 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> Kent records for this species.

A male and female **Red-crested Pochard** was seen at Dungeness on Apr 21<sup>st</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>.

The wintering **Scaup** remained at Collard's Lake until Apr 12<sup>th</sup> and the Scotney bird was still there until Mar 7<sup>th</sup>, mainly in Sussex but occasionally in Kent. A female also flew W at Tankerton on Mar 15<sup>th</sup> and a male flew E at DBO on the Mar 18<sup>th</sup>.

A male **Surf Scoter** that had previously flown past Beachy Head flew past DBO with Common Scoter on Apr 12<sup>th</sup>. This is only the 11<sup>th</sup> record of this species in Kent.

During March and April as many as 10 **Velvet Scoter** were seen at DBO, St Margarets-at-Cliffe and Swalecliffe. In addition, there was a larger count of 22 flying E at DBO on Mar 30<sup>th</sup>.



*Long-tailed Duck by Peter Maton*

The wintering **Long-tailed Duck** recorded at Dungeness RSPB Reserve was seen until Mar 8<sup>th</sup> and the same bird was seen at Lade on the 13<sup>th</sup> but it was back at Dungeness RSPB from Mar 24<sup>th</sup>-Apr 21<sup>st</sup>. In addition, a male flew E at DBO on Apr 26<sup>th</sup> with another bird on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

The long staying red head **Smew** was at Dungeness RSPB Reserve until Mar 5<sup>th</sup> and during March up to four **Goosanders** were seen at DBO, Bough Beech and Haysden.

#### NIGHTJAR TO WADERS

An adult **Common Crane** was seen at Elmley NNR on Mar 1<sup>st</sup>.

A **Red-necked Grebe** flew E at DBO on Apr 11<sup>th</sup> whilst a **Slavonian Grebe** flew E at Tankerton on Mar 11<sup>th</sup> and there was one at Sandwich Bay on Mar 13<sup>th</sup>. On March 22<sup>nd</sup> three were seen off St Margarets-at-Cliffe and one was also seen at Walmer.

Four **Black-necked Grebes** flew E past DBO on Mar 19<sup>th</sup> and five flew past on the 26<sup>th</sup> and another was seen there on Apr 11<sup>th</sup>. One was also recorded from Bough Beech on Apr 11<sup>th</sup> with another at Dungeness RSPB on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Two **Stone-curlew** were reported from at Paddlesworth on Apr 7<sup>th</sup> and a **Black-winged Stilt** was seen at Dungeness RSPB from Apr 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>.

A **Temminck's Stint** was identified at Worth Marshes on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>.

As many as 21 **Purple Sandpipers** were recorded from Foreness, North Foreland, Swalecliffe, Plumpudding and Scotney Court GPs with the last 12 birds seen at Foreness on Apr 21<sup>st</sup>.

One or two **Jack Snipe** were recorded at Dungeness RSPB Reserve, DBO, Swalecliffe, Lade, Bough Beech and Grove Ferry/Stodmarsh with the last one seen at Worth Marshes on Apr 16<sup>th</sup>.

The first **Wood Sandpiper** of the spring was seen at Stodmarsh on Apr 21<sup>st</sup> after which up to four birds were seen at Grove Ferry, Worth Marshes and Cliffe Pools.

One or two **Spotted Redshanks** were seen at Conyer, Oare Marshes, Worth Marshes, Scotney GPs and Cliffe Pools.

#### GULLS TO SHEARWATERS

Up to 91 **Little Gulls** were recorded from DBO with smaller numbers seen at Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Mill Point, Worth Marshes, New Hythe, Sandwich Bay, Collard's Lake and Oare Marshes.



*Little Gull by Terry Laws*

A juvenile **Glaucous Gull** flew E at Foreness on Mar 7<sup>th</sup> and a juvenile **Iceland Gull** was seen at Hope Point on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>.

As many as three **Caspian Gulls** were seen at Foreness, Samphire Hoe, **Stodmarsh**, **Sevenoaks WR**, Langdon Bay, Graveney Marshes, Seasalter, Sandwich Bay, North Foreland, St Margarets-at-Cliffe, Pegwell Bay, Worth Marshes and DBO. During April there were two birds at DBO on the 6<sup>th</sup>. As many as four **Yellow-legged Gulls** were seen at Dartford, DBO, Foreness, North Foreland, Reculver, Cliffe Pools, Coombe Bay, Dover Marina, Pegwell Bay and Sandwich Bay.

A **CASPIAN TERN** flew over Swalecliffe on Apr 21<sup>st</sup> and a **Roseate Tern** flew E at DBO on Apr 29<sup>th</sup>.

After the first **Black Tern** was seen at DBO on Apr 14<sup>th</sup> as many as eight birds were recorded from DBO, Dungeness RSPB Reserve and North Foreland.

During April up to five **Great Skuas** were seen off DBO and an **Arctic Skua** was seen at DBO on Mar 20<sup>th</sup> with two on the 22<sup>nd</sup> whilst in April up to 22 were counted at DBO with smaller counts at North Foreland, Samphire Hoe and St Margarets-at-Cliffe.

The first two **Pomarine Skuas** of the spring flew past DBO on Apr 18<sup>th</sup> with single birds at DBO and North Foreland on the 20<sup>th</sup> and DBO on the 21<sup>st</sup>. On Apr 23<sup>rd</sup> there were four at DBO, three at St Margarets-at-Cliffe and single birds at Sandwich Bay and North Foreland. One flew E at DBO on Apr 28<sup>th</sup> whilst there were 18 there on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 11 flying past St Margarets-at-Cliff and on the last day of the month 45 flew past DBO including a flock of 26.

A **Puffin** flew E at DBO on Apr 26<sup>th</sup>.

Up to three **Black-throated Divers** were recorded from DBO, St Margarets-at-Cliffe, Samphire Hoe and Reculver but there was a peak count of 10 at DBO on Apr 23<sup>rd</sup>. One or two **Great Northern Divers** were seen at DBO, Foreness, Sandwich Bay, North Foreland, Walmer Beach and Palm Bay with the last bird at DBO on Apr 27<sup>th</sup>.

Two **Manx Shearwaters** flew past DBO on Apr 16<sup>th</sup> with five on the 20<sup>th</sup>, seven on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and two on the 30<sup>th</sup> whilst one also flew S at North Foreland on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

## WHITE STORK TO WOODPECKERS

A **White Stork** flew over Sandwich on Mar 19<sup>th</sup> and in off the sea at Abbotscliffe the following day with birds also seen at Orlestone, DBO and Worth Marshes on Apr 4<sup>th</sup> and at Bockhill and Worth Marshes on the 5<sup>th</sup>. There were also single birds at Worth Marshes on Apr 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> and at Worth Marshes, North Foreland and DBO on Apr 22<sup>nd</sup>.

One or two **Shags** were seen at Foreness, North Foreland, Samphire Hoe, Aycliffe, Palm Bay, DBO, Swalecliffe and Seabrook and as many as six **Spoonbills** were seen at Elmley NNR, Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Oare Marshes, Bishopstone, Plumpudding, Foreness, Worth Marshes, Allhallows, Ramsgate and Harty Ferry.

**Bitterns** were recorded from Grove Ferry/Stodmarsh, Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Worth Marshes and Elmley whilst up to 34 **Cattle Egrets** were seen at Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Grove Ferry/Stodmarsh and Sandwich Bay.

Two **Purple Herons** were found at Dungeness on Apr 10<sup>th</sup> and remained there the next day whilst another flew over Worth Marshes and on to Fowlmead on Apr 17<sup>th</sup>. It was seen again at Worth Marshes on the 19<sup>th</sup> whilst one was also seen in the New Hythe area on Apr 27<sup>th</sup>.

As many as six **Great White Egrets** were seen at Reculver Marshes, Oare Marshes, Northward Hill, Capel Fleet, Aldergate Bridge, North Foreland, Bough Beech, Tonbridge, Sandwich Bay and Worth Marshes.

The first **Osprey** of the year flew NW at Weddington on Mar 29<sup>th</sup> after which single birds were recorded from Swalecliffe, Herne Bay, Tankerton, Stodmarsh, Wouldham and Weddington.

The first **Honey Buzzard** of the spring was reported from North Foreland on Apr 26<sup>th</sup>.



*Booted Eagle by Jonathan Dodds*

A pale phase **BOOTED EAGLE** arrived at Broadstairs on the evening of Apr 10<sup>th</sup> and was still in the area the next morning but soon flew high north. If accepted this will be a new species for Kent. However, a bird seen in Ireland and many sites in southern England including Kent during 1999 and 2000 was relegated to Category D by BBRC and this record is now being reviewed.

There were a number of coastal reports of **Goshawks** this spring with a male flying N at Dover on Mar 12<sup>th</sup>, one at Oare Marshes on the 14<sup>th</sup>, a male at Aycliffe on Apr 1<sup>st</sup> and a female at North Foreland on Apr 8<sup>th</sup>.

Up to five **Hen Harriers** were seen at Grove Ferry/Stodmarsh with one or two seen at Swale NNR, Harty, Capel Fleet, North Foreland, Swalecliffe, Chilham, DBO, Worth Marshes, Conningbrook, Leysdown-on-Sea, Shuart, Shorne Marshes and Oare Marshes.

What may have been the same **Black Kite** was first seen flying NNE at Kingston and then S at Worth Marshes on Mar 31<sup>st</sup> whilst another was recorded from Stonar and Sandwich Bay on Apr 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. The next bird flew over Abbotscliffe on Apr 17<sup>th</sup>.

A female **White-tailed Eagle** (G542) from the Isle of Wight reintroduction scheme was seen at Dungeness RSPB Reserve on Mar 13<sup>th</sup>. It subsequently crossed the Channel into France. An immature bird from Sussex was also seen flying E at Oare Marshes on Apr 12<sup>th</sup> and at various sites on the 13<sup>th</sup> whilst G542 was seen again at Dover on Apr 14<sup>th</sup>. One was also seen at Lamberhurst on Apr 19<sup>th</sup> and Cliffe Woods on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Single **Long-eared Owls** were recorded from Bishopstone, North Foreland and Oare Marshes and up to five **Short-eared Owls** were seen at Swale NNR, Chetney Marshes, Reculver Marshes, Cliffe Pools, Foreness and Sandwich Bay.



*Hoopoe by Phil Smith*

It was an exceptional spring for **Hoopoes** with single birds seen at Kingsdown on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>, Lydd on Mar 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, at Samphire Hoe on Mar 28<sup>th</sup> and at Hope Point on Mar 29<sup>th</sup>. During April birds continued to be seen at Charing on the 1<sup>st</sup>, at North Foreland on the 4<sup>th</sup>, near Bough Beech on the 5<sup>th</sup>, at Farningham on the 7<sup>th</sup>, at Hythe and St Nicholas-at-Wade on the 9<sup>th</sup>, at Samphire Hoe on the 11<sup>th</sup>, DBO, Seasalter, Canterbury and Monkton on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Minster Marshes on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Sandwich Bay on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> and at Stodmarsh on the 15<sup>th</sup>. On Apr 18<sup>th</sup> there was a bird seen at North Foreland and Foreness with one seen at Marden on Apr 24<sup>th</sup> and the final bird heard at Old Park, Canterbury on the 29<sup>th</sup>. This makes a total of 21 birds counted.

After the first **Wryneck** was seen at DBO on Apr 11<sup>th</sup> one was seen at Bishopstone on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### FALCONS TO HIRUNDINES

During March and April as many as three **Merlins** were recorded from Shuart, Reculver Marshes, Netherhale, Stodmarsh, Oare Marshes and Dungeness.

A **Great Grey Shrike** was seen at Charing on Apr 25<sup>th</sup> and a **Hooded Crow** flew NE at North Foreland on Apr 22<sup>nd</sup>.

A "**Continental**" **Coal Tit** was seen at Margate on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Two **Woodlarks** flew in off the sea at North Foreland on Mar 6<sup>th</sup>, another was seen at Langdon Cliffs on Mar 12<sup>th</sup> and single birds were recorded from Bockhill and DBO on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> and at North Foreland and South Foreland on the 20<sup>th</sup>. On Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> another flew over Seabrook and the next day there was one at Ramsgate with another at Sandwich Bay on the 25<sup>th</sup> and one at Pegwell Bay on the 28<sup>th</sup>. In April one flew W at Swalecliffe on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and another was recorded from DBO on the 13<sup>th</sup>.



*Red-rumped Swallow by John Carnell*

A **Red-rumped Swallow** was seen and photographed at Dungeness RSPB Reserve on Apr 13<sup>th</sup> as was one at North Foreland on Apr 22<sup>nd</sup> and another was seen at Godmersham on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

#### WARBLERS TO WHEATEARS

There was an exceptional record of a singing male **Pallas's Warbler** at Walpole Bay on Apr 16<sup>th</sup>.

A **Siberian Chiffchaff** was reported from Worth on Mar 8<sup>th</sup> and an **IBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF** was discovered in a garden at Dungeness on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> where it was also seen the next day. If accepted by the BBRC it will be the sixth record for Kent.

After the first **Grasshopper Warbler** of the spring was heard at Oare Marshes on Apr 12<sup>th</sup> single birds were recorded from Reculver Marshes, Oare Marshes, New Hythe, Foreness, Sandwich Bay, South Swale LNR and Victory Wood. A wintering, eastern type **Lesser Whitethroat** was seen in a garden in Tankerton on Mar 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>



*Eastern Lesser Whitethroat by Jim Bloor*



*Ring Ouzel by Neil Colgate*

The first two **Ring Ouzels** of the year were seen at Langdon Bay on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> after which birds were recorded from Bockhill, Langdon Bay, DBO, Pegwell Bay, Lower Hope Point, Cliffe Pools, Shuart, Sandwich Bay, Seaton, South Foreland, Oare Marshes, Stodmarsh, Minster Marshes, Northdown Park, Samphire Hoe, Uplees and North Foreland.

A male **Pied Flycatcher** was seen on the cliffs at Bishopstone on Apr 12<sup>th</sup>.

Up to 14 **Black Redstarts** were seen at DBO with single figure counts at Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Tankerton, Dover, Sandwich Bay, North Foreland, Langdon Cliffs, South Foreland, Chestfield, Staplehurst, Margate, Walmer, Kingsdown, Chartham, Bysing Wood, Ramsgate, Cliftonville, Walpole Bay, Hythe, Folkestone, Foreness, Reculver, Hothfield, Shadoxhurst, Cheriton, Brasted Chart, Staplehurst, Deal, Ham Road GPs and Bapchild.

#### SPARROWS TO BUNTINGS

It was a good spring for **Blue-headed Wagtails** following two at Worth Marshes and one at Shellness on Mar 26<sup>th</sup> one or two birds were then seen around the coast at Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Worth Marshes, Langdon Cliffs, South Foreland, Pegwell Bay, Cliffe Pools and Reculver Marshes.

A male **ASHY-HEADED WAGTAIL (M. f. cinereocapilla)** was photographed at Worth Marshes on Mar 30<sup>th</sup>. If accepted by BBRC it will be the fourth record of this Yellow Wagtail subspecies to be recorded in Kent. The previous three being at Bough Beech on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1973, at Oare Marshes on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1986 and at Sandwich Bay on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1991.

A **large Pipit** was reported flying N at North Foreland on Mar 31<sup>st</sup>.

As many as 18 **Water Pipits** were recorded from Grove Ferry/Stodmarsh, Dungeness RSPB Reserve, Worth Marshes, Pegwell Bay, Stoke, Minster Marshes, Cliffe Pools, Langdon Bay, Elmley NNR and Oare Marshes.



*Hawfinch by Tom Cackett*

Up to 17 **Hawfinches** were seen at DBO, Peshurst, Godmersham, Westbere, Chislet, Wickhambreaux, Ickham, Ditton, Boughton Street, Orlestone Forest, Bough Beech, South Foreland, Ramsgate, Bockhill, Walmer, Bridge, Edenbridge, Sandwich Bay, Reculver Marshes, Peshurst and Chislet.

During these two months as many as 11 **Crossbills** were seen at Denge Wood, Longbeech Wood, South Foreland and Park Wood. Up to three of the **Serins** seen at Sandwich Bay in February were still there until Mar 9<sup>th</sup>. Single birds also flew over Fan Bay on Mar 25<sup>th</sup> and DBO on Apr 12<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.



*Serin by Dave Langham*

The male **Snow Bunting** remained at Reculver until Mar 13<sup>th</sup> whilst one was seen at Cliftonville from Mar 17<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>.

**DBO** = Dungeness Bird Observatory    **BBRC** = British Birds Rarities Committee  
**RSPB** = Royal Society for the Protection of Birds    **BOU** = British Ornithological Union  
**"The Patch"** = the warm water outflow from Dungeness Nuclear Power Station  
**NNR**=National Nature Reserve    **NR**=Nature Reserve    **LNR**=Local Nature Reserve  
**FC** = Field Centre    **WR** = Wildlife Reserve    **GP** = Gravel Pits    **CP** = Country Park

## CONTRIBUTORS

This summary owes much to the contributors to the various sites in "Latest Sightings" on the KOS Website at [www.kentos.org.uk](http://www.kentos.org.uk), KOSForum, Twitter and the RBA Hotline.

Records have been contributed by A. Appleton, Bockhill Birders, R. Bonsor, Bough Beech (per A. Ford), E. Brown, D. Bunney, N. Burt, G. Burton, F. Cackett, J. Cantelo, J. Carnell, P. Carr, R. Carr, M. Casemore, J. Chantler, P. Chantler, M. Chidwick, R. Collins, G. Coultrip, K. Cutting, DBO (per D. Walker), B. East, D. Ellingworth, A. Farrar, D. Faulkener, Folkestone and Hythe Birds (per I. Roberts), C. Gibbard, M. Gould, R. Heading, J. Headley, A. Hindle, C. Hindle, M. Hindle, G. Hollamby, M. Hollingworth, P. Holt, G. Honey, M. Kennett, S. Kennett, J. King, R. Knight, G. Lee, O. Leyshon, A. Lipczynski, K. Lord, R. Mace, A. Malone, N. McCanch, S. McMinn, S. Message, S. Mills, S. Mitchell, S. Mount, R. O'Reilly, M. Orchard, J. Partridge, K. Privett, C. Powell, M. Puxley, R. Rackliffe, M. Roser, K. Ross, B. Ryan, Samphire Hoe (per P. Holt and P. Smith), SBBO (per A. Lipczynski and S. Walton), Sevenoaks WR, I. Shepherd, D. Smith, P. Smith, R. Smith, W. Stoneham, M. Sutherland, Swale NNR (per D. Faulkner, B. Whatmore, T. Hilsden), A. Swandale, D. Taylor, P. Trodd, C. Turley, J. Turner-Moss, D. Tutt, M. Watts, A. Wells, C. White, M. Wilson, T. Wilson, J. Woolgar, B. Woolhouse, D. Wrathall, B. Wright, M. Wright and J. Young.

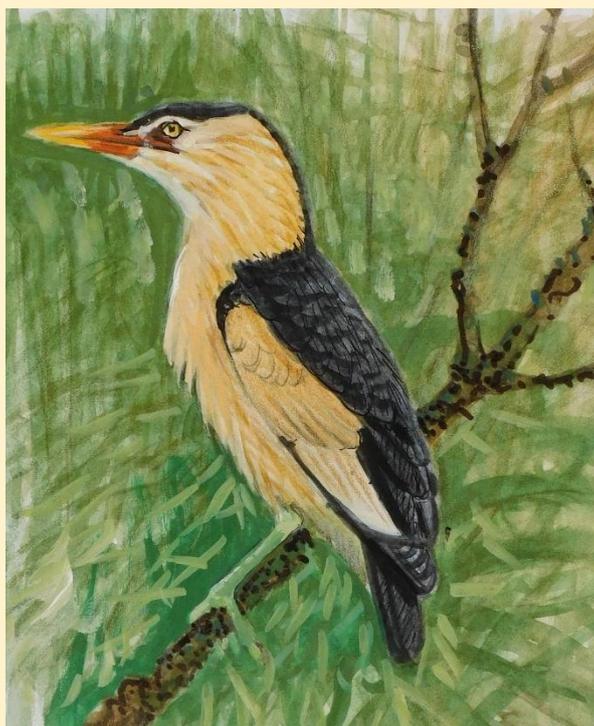
Please send records for this review to Chris Hindle at [christopherhindle@hotmail.com](mailto:christopherhindle@hotmail.com)

Records sent to me may not all be used for this report as I try to extract the more interesting sightings, however all records are equally important and I forward them to the appropriate Area Recorders and they are then entered onto the KOS database.

**Please also send to me any descriptions or photos of rare birds so that they may be assessed by the relevant committee.**

## Fifty Years Ago

### Little Bittern



*Little Bittern by Norman McCanch*

A male was present at Stodmarsh between May 25th-27th (RIC.O, PJ, SJM).

**KBR 1975**