



# *The Buzzard*

Shropshire Ornithological Society's  
Quarterly Magazine



Dotterel (Jim Almond)

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## Notices

### Indoor Meeting Co-Ordinator

It is with regret that Steve Dawes, who has been the Co-ordinator for the last few years, has given notice due to a change to his future commitments. He has done a really good job in booking the indoor speakers for our meetings, especially having to deal with matters over the pandemic, and this has been greatly appreciated by the Society.

Steve is in the process of booking speakers for 2023, but we now need to ask for a volunteer to take over this role, which is so important to the Society's role. This involves the booking of a variety of speakers for 7 months during the winter and autumn, co-ordinating with the Treasurer for the payments involved, and helping out with the meetings at Bayston Hill Memorial Hall. I am sure that Steve would be able to inform his successor about the role in more detail.

Please could anyone who would like to take this important role on, get in contact with me at [publicity@shropshirebirds.co.uk](mailto:publicity@shropshirebirds.co.uk) or phone Sue on 01939 262450.

## Fields Trips Organiser/Leader & Raffle Organiser

I wish to let the Society members know of my decision to resign from the above roles, which I have been doing for a great deal of time. The reason is that I have had recent health issues, but also feel that these roles need to be passed on to fresh hands.

I have been doing the Fields Trips Organiser role since 2008 and counting next year's programme this is a period of 15 years. This role requires making up a programme of monthly visits to various reserves or birding areas, indicating a leader for this visit, who hopefully would write up a short report of the visit for publication in the Buzzard and on the website. The types of visits would be up to the organiser which could include coach trips and weekends away to areas further afield. There is a deadline of the programme being ready for publication by November 1<sup>st</sup> annually.

I have been doing the Raffle at Indoor Meetings for over 20 years. This role helps with the financing of the Indoor Meetings, and can either be a Raffle with prizes or any other method which can be devised, such as the Bird Game. This is open to anyone, who would be happy to help with the Indoor Meetings during the season from October to April each year.

I would be grateful if anyone who can decide to take on these roles, would please get in contact with me at [publicity@shropshirebirds.co.uk](mailto:publicity@shropshirebirds.co.uk) or phone/text at 01939 262450 or 07713 164463.

**Sue Brealey**

## Coach Trip to WWT Martinmere

As can be noted from the programme, there is a coach trip to WWT Martinmere on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Due to the cost increases we are all affected by, I am unsure of the amount it will be to hire a coach. I therefore would be grateful if all those members interested in coming on this trip, could book their place(s) as soon as is convenient. Once I have the numbers I can book a coach, maybe a smaller coach than normal. I can then decide on the amount to charge, but in reality, I believe I may have to charge more than I have in the past. I am sure that members will understand these proposals, and continue to support this venture and enjoy a great day's birding at a supreme reserve.

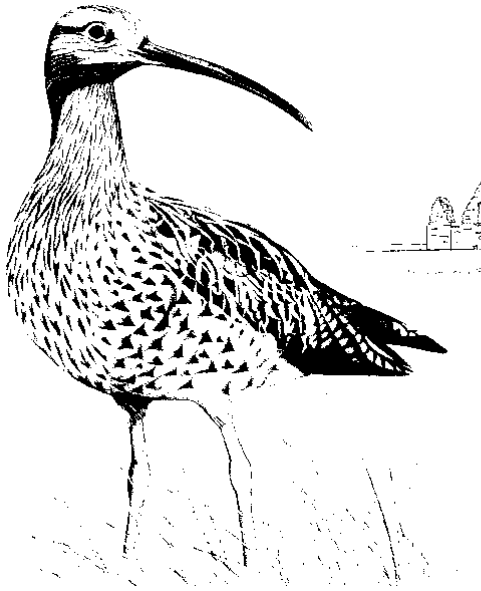
**Sue Brealey**

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## Save our Curlews Campaign



The SOS “Save our Curlews” Campaign again organised a nest finding and protection project, together with the Community Wildlife Groups in the Upper Clun, Clee Hill and Strettons areas. Thanks a lot to everyone who donated to the appeal, which made the project possible, and to the farmers and landowners who gave permission to operate on their land.

Several pairs from last year did not return to their breeding sites this year, but three nests were found in each area. Protection involves putting an electric fence around the nest. The fences protect the eggs from mammalian predators but are less effective in

keeping out avian predators. When the chicks hatch, they are fitted with radio tags before they leave the nest to feed themselves. Tracking them aims to find out how they use the landscape, and what happens to them. Failure of chicks to survive and fledge is a major cause of the Curlew population decline, locally and nationally, and we need a better understanding of the reasons so we can develop effective conservation measures.

Altogether 18 chicks hatched in the fenced nests, and were tagged. All except one were predated, usually within a few days of hatching. The exception apparently died of natural causes (starvation or hypothermia), surrounded by thick impenetrable silage. These are preliminary results - a detailed analysis of what happened to each nest and chick is being undertaken. This result is even worse than last year, when all except one of 21 tagged chicks were predated. No evidence was found that any chicks hatched in unfenced nests in the Clee Hill and Strettons areas, but four chicks from three unfenced nests in the Upper Clun area were found and colour-ringed when they were all within a week or so of fledging. These chicks are still being monitored, to see if they do fledge.



Foxes are the main predator, but Buzzard and Carrion Crow, and perhaps Raven and Red Kite, also contributed to nest and chick loss in 2022. All these predators have one thing in common – their numbers are much higher than the naturally sustainable level because they feed on the 60 million gamebirds released each year into the British countryside for shooting, only one-third of which are actually shot. SOS has called for gamebird releases to be limited to the number that are actually shot. At the current rate of decline the Shropshire Curlew population will halve in 12 years, and virtually disappear in 25, so this action is urgent.

Although the results are disappointing, at least we are clear on the main current cause of Curlew decline, and our results are being fed into the national and regional Curlew conservation bodies.

Thanks a lot to all the Community Wildlife Group members who located the Curlew territories, to nest finders Martyn Owen, Jon Lingard and Mick Hayhurst, to Tim Lewis for fencing the nests and tracking the chicks, and to Tony Cross, for fitting the radio-tags and ringing and colour-ringing the chicks, all of whom did excellent work.

Further information about the projects and the Campaign can be found on the website [www.shropshirebirds.com/save-our-curlews](http://www.shropshirebirds.com/save-our-curlews)

**Leo Smith**



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## A Day with Swifts

Six thirty on the morning of the 11 July and the day looked as if it was going to be very warm. I had spent the previous evening trying to video the Swifts that were spinning round my house until quite late. They are so fast and my reactions slow. They enter their nest cavities at over forty miles an hour and I had been annoyed with my attempts.

I noticed a small object on the bathroom windowsill. Swift poo! Obviously discarded from the nest above, I very carefully picked it up and placed it in the pot I keep for such things. Any careless or rough handling and the dropping would have turned to dust and blown back out of the window.

Along with projector, posters and an example of a nest box, I take a pot of Swift poo to presentations just in case anyone still thinks they are messy birds. I let them have a sniff then crumble some between my fingers. That evening however something a bit special had been planned.

Karen, my fellow nest survey partner, had arranged for us to visit Wenlock Priory. The owner was sure that Swifts were nesting somewhere on her property. It was a muggy evening and the cup of tea the lady suggested was very welcome.

While the kettle was boiling, we searched the old stone walls for possible nest holes. There were many. Then, as usual, we inspected the ground for the tell-tale signs. We were not disappointed and nesting was confirmed as a bird entered through a crack above a door frame, followed a few minutes later by a pair leaving the site. By this time our host and her friend had returned and they were delighted to learn their property was home to these amazing birds. We were happy to have another record.

If you too are the proud owner of a property used by Swifts, or know of some in your locality, please email [carolwood772@outlook.com](mailto:carolwood772@outlook.com) or Peta Sams [shropshireswifts@gmail.com](mailto:shropshireswifts@gmail.com)

Your records will help protect these birds for future generations to enjoy.

**Carol Wood**



## Corncrake and Cuckoos

My initiation into bird watching or birding as it is more commonly called today, was sparked by my parents buying me Bruce Campbell's book 'Bird Watching for Beginners' as a book to read whilst travelling by train to Cornwall for our family summer holidays in 1953. For me it was a 'Saul on the road to Damascus' moment and it was to shape my life from then on.

At the time, we lived in Oswestry and so my early bird-watching days were in that area extending to the Llanymynech region when the family moved to Four Crosses in 1956. I joined the newly formed Shropshire Ornithological Society and sent in my first record as a member early in 1956 just before we moved from Oswestry. When the 1955 report was recently published along with the 2020 one, I was amazed to see my report there of a wintering Chiffchaff and reflected on the fact that my name in the 1955 report was the only one still present in the 2020 one! However, I was even more amazed to read many reports of birds which have long since vanished from our County. This then took me back in memory to the early days of my new hobby.

I remember hearing a Corncrake calling on the old Oswestry fort site, seeing all three species of Wagtail often on the sewage filter beds down Maesbury Road in Oswestry. I also remember crawling along a hedge in the fading light of a spring day to get right under a singing Grasshopper Warbler, on the edge of the field where the Oswestry College now stands.

At that time, I met J H Owen who lived locally and whom I knew was an expert on birds, borne out by his contributions on the Sparrowhawk in the Handbook of British Birds. I took him a young Swift which fallen out of its nest on Salop Road and I remember in the conversation we had, that he told me he used to monitor the Red-backed Shrikes that used to breed around Llanymynech Hill though already by then no longer present. When we moved to Four Crosses Mr Owen used to come over and count the nests of Spotted Flycatchers, which we always had nesting in Virginia creeper around the house, as part of his survey of this species around the Llanymynech area.

Whilst we lived in Four Crosses, I frequently went birdwatching in the surrounding area, often hearing Turtle Doves purring in the woods around Pant, watching Whinchats carrying food to their nestlings along the railway embankment of the Oswestry to Welshpool line. Lapwings and Curlew bred in the surrounding fields, and I remember while cycling back from Oswestry to home, stopping to watch a Curlew chick slowly meander across the A483 whilst the parent hovered in alarm. It wouldn't have crossed the road with today's traffic! In the winter a roosting flock of some sixty Curlew used to gather on the gravel spits in the river Vyrnwy, whilst in the spring I often saw up to 4 or 5 Cuckoos congregating around a field of young crop shoots where they could find grubs etc.

In the early 60's, I started to train as a bird ringer with the BTO under the guidance of Julian Langford and Clive Minton. Once I had my permit, I was able to ring some of the Sand Martins which had several colonies in the banks of the river Vyrnwy, and nearly always saw several pairs of Common Sandpipers along the river where they bred on little islands. Alas, once the river was 'managed' to control flooding, the nature of the river changed and both the Curlew and Sandpipers disappeared !

Although technically not definitely seen in the county but just over the border between Llanymynech and Four Crosses, I had several memorable sightings. I found a Lesser Grey Shrike on a tree quite close to the river and it eventually flew, I think, into the county. I didn't report it as I thought a teenager's report of a rare bird would probably not be accepted. However, the species was reported in Cheshire several days later. The same bird? I often wonder.

Another vivid memory was having two Hoopoes on our front lawn for a fleeting moment one November, though these were not observed to venture towards the Shropshire border! We also had a pair of Crossbills build a nest in a pine tree, but they did not proceed to produce young and my brother reported a Redwing also building a nest in 1960 but again outside the county!

Although the 1955 report evoked some rather sad and wistful memories of species no longer with us, at least I can say that it's not all bad news. The Buzzard was pretty scarce in those days but today how different! I counted 20 in one field in the Lilleshall parish last year! All in all, I have been really lucky to have had so many years of very enjoyable birdwatching and bird ringing both in this Country and abroad. I think the most poignant memory is one of the Corncrakes in Oswestry and on the ringing front a nestling Robin I ringed near Llanymynech which was recovered right down in southern Spain, the most southerly recovery of a British-ringed Robin at that time and maybe still!

Yes, a happy life and I still think the notes of the Song Thrush encapsulate for me the joys and vitality of life. What more could one wish for? It has been 66 years of happy birding in the County!

**Peter Challinor**

## Field Trip Reports

### Thursday, 19 May to Sunday, 22 May 2022. Weekend Field Trip to Somerset

After 7 years and following no weekend trips due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a group of 13 members had booked onto this year's return trip to the Somerset Levels, staying at Glastonbury.

**On Thursday, 19 May**, a group of 11 members met up at WWT Steart Marshes, at the mouth of the river Parrot, which is being used as part of the flood defences further into the Somerset Levels and will be part of the new Somerset Wetlands National Nature Reserve which was announced on this day. The weather was clear, with some cloud and around 16°C temperature. The group first walked towards the Quantock Hide, and saw and/or heard a good range of Warblers:- Reed, Sedge, and Cetti's were flying around the reed bed. At the hide, we saw Avocet with chicks feeding independently, Little Ringed Plover sitting on a nest, and Oystercatcher. A stroll to the Mendip Hide provided good views of Peregrine, Magpie, Great Black-backed Gull, and a Skylark singing in the sky, a real treat. A Marsh Harrier quartered over its territory for some time.

**On Friday, 20 May**, at breakfast, the group discussed the weather and as it was to be inclement decided to go to Catcott Complex Nature Reserve and avoid RSPB Ham Wall, as it does not have much cover. We arrived at the car park about 10am. As expected, the weather was wet with drizzle & wind and around 12°C. During the morning, the birdwatching was good. Observing over the lakes and reed beds, the group saw Canada Geese with chicks, several Gadwall and Mute Swan along with the obligatory ducks: Shoveler & Teal.

A Marsh Harrier frequented, quartering the reed beds. A flock of 18 Black-tailed Godwit flew in to a scrape not visible from the hide after they landed. Several Great White Egrets were seen as well as Grey Heron and then a Buzzard was mobbed by a Carrion Crow, upsetting the Lapwings. As the rain started to abate, Swallow, House Martin & Swift were seen flying over the reserve.

The group broke up to go towards Ham Wall, a couple went to investigate other parts of Catcott and they saw or heard an additional 20 species that could be added to the list including: - Cattle Egret, Kingfisher and Whitethroat.

After the short trip to Ham Wall, we enjoyed lunch and then started into the reserve. Chaffinch at the feeding station and after a short while, Cetti's Warbler, Garden Warbler and Willow Warbler were heard among the trees & Shrubs.

Walking towards the bridge over a river, Blackcap, Great Tit and Dunnock were noted, and on distant waterways, Mute Swan were seen from the bridge.

Further into the reserve, a Bittern flew over the track, a great start to the trip. When the group came up to a viewing area, we stopped to see Marsh Harrier over the reeds, occasionally mobbed by a Carrion Crow.

What was notable was that only one Grey Heron was seen, but Great White Egrets were plentiful, with a few Little Egrets, and a couple of Glossy Ibis flew past, a great sight.

Swifts & Swallows were seen flying about and later a call heard which was unfamiliar but proved to be a group of 3 Whimbrel flying around, chatting amongst themselves! They entertained everyone for quite some time. Bitterns intermittently flew around.

The group split up to wander the reserve, and then to the hide opposite the viewing platform, where Black-tailed Godwit were seen and a Hobby was hunting for food on the fly. A Cormorant flew across with Moorhen feeding young. At the end of the day, on the way back to the car park, a Barn Owl flew over the group, not seen by all which was regretted.

**On 21 May**, the group gathered at RSPB Greylake, and made our way to the first hide. Greylag Geese were seen, with chicks, along with Little Grebe and Moorhen. After a Grey Heron flew across the area, a Little Egret emerged from the reeds, and a Great White Egret dropped in.

*As Cormorants flew over... the bird everyone had hoped for was seen in the distance, a pair of Common Cranes. These were closely studied as they moved amongst the fields behind the reed beds, so a full sighting was difficult. This meant; however, we didn't miss the Bittern as it flew overhead later.*

Moving to the other hide, Magpie and Carrion Crow were seen, along with the Marsh Harrier again quartering over the reed beds, a Snipe's flight across us, and we heard the pig squeal of a Water Rail. Other birds seen included Raven and Kestrel.

On to the car park at Ham Wall for lunch before a wander over to Shapwick Heath Nature Reserve, on the opposite side of the road. Walking along the old railway track, past a woodland, we came to an area of water surrounded by reedbed. The hide here in the woodland area, revealed Cetti's Warbler, Long-tailed Tit, and Whitethroat, noted mainly by song. In the lake, Great Crested Grebe were seen with chicks, along with Mute Swan, and Pochard.

A couple of pairs of Greylag Geese and their families were observed, while in the background Bitterns booming echoed over from Ham Wall. Kestrel hovered, as they will while hunting, before Hobby was seen elegantly scanning for food over the water.

A large flock of Jackdaws danced around the skies as Herring Gull, Jay, and Sparrowhawk graced the group with their presence.

**On the next day, Sunday 22 May**, the group split up and headed home. However, one couple decided to visit WWT Slimbridge and added Collared Dove & Rook to the list. All agreed they had enjoyed the weekend's activities and with a list totalling 86, judged it to have been a success!

**Sue Brealey**

## Sunday, 12 June 2022, Woolston Eyes

This Field Trip saw five of us led by Estelle Hughes to Woolston Eyes Nature Reserve. This is a permit-only nature reserve of over 200 hectares managed by a Conservation Group with the agreement of the owners, the Manchester Ship Canal Company. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). A bright and rain-free day, at times sunny but never quite as warm as one might have wished, due to a modest but cool breeze. A Buzzard being mobbed by some Carrion Crows attracted our attention in the small car park, and a Grey Heron flew under the footbridge into the reserve as we were about to cross. At the same time, we saw two Jays. The song of the Chiff Chaff seemed ever present as we made our way to the Viewing Screen, with a Nuthatch readily seen on a tree by the path, as were two Goldfinches on a dead tree nearby.

*A singing Reed Bunting was heard and seen in the reeds,  
as happened in each of the hides we visited.*

The Viewing Screen gave us our first view of the pools. Black-headed Gulls accompanied by their chicks attracted attention straightaway with their raucous calls. Difficult to count in view of the large number of reed and iris covered islands dotted around, but we were struck by the large number of Gadwall, with a lesser number of Tufted Duck and one or two Common Pochard. Mallard, too, were seen, but not in numbers, and a Little Grebe and chick attracted our attention. A singing Reed Bunting was heard and seen in the reeds, as happened in each of the hides we visited. We had frequent sightings of quartering Marsh Harriers, always female, which had to evade

attacks from time to time from the Gulls, when straying rather close to their breeding platforms. We then had our first sighting of a pair of Black-necked Grebes, the species for which this reserve is particularly known, as we believe holds around 25% of the country's breeding pairs, between 50 and 100 nationally.

A move to the Sybil Hogg hide gave us a Speckled Wood and Azure and Blue Damselflies, and some Broad-bodied Chasers, but the coolish weather did not produce many butterflies; a Red Admiral was later seen. A singing Common Whitethroat was around and we had two Blackcaps singing against each other not more than 30 ft apart.

From the Tower Hide we had Great Crested Grebe, a Greylag Goose and a party of Canada Geese. We noted that we had seen no hirundines but a few Sand Martins were seen later. At this hide we also saw three or four more Black-necked Grebes and a Kingfisher flashed past the front of the hide but did not stop unfortunately. We also came across two Lapwings. Other species seen were one or two Swifts, a Kestrel, Lesser Black-backed Gull and a Water Rail was heard.

A move to the John Morgan hide gave us some stunning views of four Bullfinches, all male, on the feeders. Greenfinch, Great Tit and a Great Spotted Woodpecker joined them. Coot had been ever present earlier, but here we saw a raft of some 40 adults.

A further walk through the meadows brought us to the last two hides we visited: The Frank Linley and the Warrington Rotary hides – a Hobby seen and a Stock Dove heard. We watched for some time some particularly aggressive behaviour between two Great Crested Grebes, sometimes moving at speed underwater. We were not sure what the issue was. Certainly, one had a chick close by. A Common Pochard had four young with her, but one seemed to be a Black-necked Grebe baby which was staying close to its adopted family.

A lovely day, well spent, with 47 species of bird noted.

**Jock & Mim Elliot-Smith**

# Bird Report

## Apr, May and Jun 2022

**Brent Goose.** One dark-bellied was present at Whixall Floods on 14-15 May.

**White-fronted Goose** A single adult Greenland bird was seen at both Adderley and Shavington Park on 12 Apr.

**Egyptian Goose** A breeding pair with nine goslings were present at Edgmond on 10 Apr and remained as a family group until the end of May. One was present at Polemere on 14 May and three at Ellesmere on 15 Jun.

**Ruddy Shelduck** One was present at Park Farm Floods on 10 Apr and presumably the same individual continued to be seen in the general area until 10 May. A single was also reported at Adderley and Shavington Park on 14 Apr.

**Garganey** A drake was present at Wood Lane for approx. 20 minutes on the morning of 9 May.

**Pintail** A late pair were present at Venus Pool between 22- 25 Apr.

**Green-winged Teal.** (below) The Venus Pool long stayer continued to be seen until last reported on 10 Apr.



**Red Grouse** Records of one or two from Stiperstones plus the Long Mynd between 8 Apr – 5 Jun.

**Grey Partridge** Reports of singles during the quarter came from Wall Farm, Bury Ditches and Moreton Corbet.

**Common Quail** The first returning birds were heard at Isombridge, Stoke Heath and near Market Drayton on 15 Jun. Two were heard calling near Prees on 28 Jun.

**Great White Egret** One was present at Venus Pool on 1 Apr, another was seen near Little Stretton on 8 Jun plus one at Chelmarsh on 17 Jun.

**Little Egret** Five were seen by the River Severn at Leighton on 30 Jun. Most records came from Venus Pool where one or two were present throughout the quarter.

**Osprey** Singles were seen at Shrewsbury on 1 Apr, Venus Pool on 3 & 11 Apr, Brown Clee on 15 Apr, Emstrey on 16 April and Leighton on 29 Jun.

**Marsh Harrier** (below) Three records of singles came from: Venus Pool on 2 May, marshland near Donnington 12-15 May and Whixall Moss on 20 Jun.



**Avocet** Two were present at Whixall Floods on 15 May, and were seen mating but moved on quickly, possibly due to disturbance.

**Golden Plover** 100 were seen at Wildmoor Pool on 15 Apr and 80 in flight heading towards Crudgington Moor on 7 Apr.



**Ringed Plover** (below) Singles were present at Wall Farm on 26 Apr and Park Farm Floods on 27 Apr. All other reports came from Venus Pool where a single was seen between 2–6 May and then two between 30–31 May.



**Little Ringed Plover** (above) Early arrivals were present at Venus Pool (one on 1 Apr) and Whixall Floods (five on 2 Apr). Numbers increased with up to five present at Venus Pool from the end of Apr throughout May when breeding was attempted without success.

**Dotterel** A confiding male was present at the Long Mynd Gliding station on 24-25 Apr.

**Black-tailed Godwit** An amazing flock of 51 were on Whixall Floods on 25 May (via ebird). Two were seen at Park Farm Floods on 8 Apr.

**Ruff** Up to five were seen at Park Farm Floods between 3-27 Apr.

**Dunlin** Four were present at Venus Pool on 11 Apr followed by singles between 13–31 May which may have involved other individuals.

**Common Snipe** Seven were present at Wall Farm on 11 Apr and the final sighting was at the Long Mynd on 5 Jun.

**Common Sandpiper** Most records came from Venus Pool where up to four were seen from 11 Apr. Three were also present at Polemere on 27 Apr. Singles were seen throughout the quarter at several other locations.

**Green Sandpiper** First reported at Chelmarsh on 6 Apr, other sightings came from Wall Farm, Shavington Park, Wyre Forest, Nr Donnington and Venus Pool. A few records in Apr, then none after 7 May until the first returning birds in Jun.

**Common Redshank** One was seen at Hales East Pools on 15 May.

**Greenshank** Two were briefly present at Wood Lane on 18 Jun.

**Little Gull** One was seen at Whitemere on 23-24 Apr. Another, or the same bird, was present with the Black-headed Gull colony at Whixall Moss the following day.

**Mediterranean Gull** One was present at Wood Lane on 18 Jun.

**Common Gull** There was a late record of two adults at Venus Pool on 2 Apr.

**Yellow-legged Gull** An adult and 2cy bird were seen at The Mere, Ellesmere on 5 Apr. Another 2cy bird dropped into Venus Pool, accompanied by Lesser Black-backed Gulls on 24 Apr.

**Sandwich Tern** One was reported via the Bird News Services near Bridgnorth on 12 Apr.

**Arctic Tern** (below) Two were present at The Mere, Ellesmere on 23 Apr and a single was at Venus Pool on 3 May.



**Common Tern** One was present at Venus Pool on 21 May. Two were seen at Chelmarsh Reservoir on 17 Jun, then a single on 23 Jun.

**Cuckoo** The earliest sighting was at Cressage on 15 Apr, followed by more reports at various locations over the following few days. There were numerous reports throughout the county from approx. eighty 'different' locations, as in 2020 and 2021!!

**Barn Owl** Records of single birds or pairs came from just six locations throughout the county.

**Tawny Owl** Seen or heard at sixteen locations, half the number reported during the equivalent quarter in 2021.

**Little Owl** Singles were reported from just four sites during the quarter.

**Long-eared Owl** Two were reported at an undisclosed site in South Shropshire between 3-5 Jun.

**Nightjar** Two were present at Catherton Common on 14 Jun and two males gave good views at Black Hill on 17 Jun.

**Common Swift** The first record came on 27 Apr at Priorslee Lake. There were no large counts but thirty were recorded at: Venus Pool on 25 May, Wootton on 25 Jun and Wall Farm on 29 Jun.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** A few records came from Wyre Forest, Ironbridge and two other undisclosed locations.

**Merlin** One was reported on the Long Mynd on 14 Apr. Another sighting (via the Whatsapp feed) came from Polemere where a distressed individual impaled itself on branches and after struggling free, fell into the water and drowned.

**Hobby** The earliest record came from Whixall Moss on 14 May where there were five present. More records followed from eight other locations, reporting clearly down relative to 2021.

**Willow Tit** Reported from just three sites all in the south of the County: Hopton Park, Bury Ditches and Mortimer Forest.

**Sand Martin** Just one three-figure count, 120+ on 12 Apr, which came from Venus Pool.

**Iberian Chiffchaff** A single was present singing (recording made) early morning at the Wrekin on 9 May. It soon moved on, sadly, and was not heard or seen again.

**Cetti's Warbler** One or two were seen / heard at Venus Pool between 1 – 14 Apr. Two males and three females were trapped at Chelmarsh Scrape in early May. Other records came from Hales Pools and Priorslee Lake.

**Wood Warbler** The first record came from Cressage Park Wood on 18 Apr. Wyre Forest dominated the reporting with sightings coming from Caer Caradoc, The Ercall, Clunton Coppice, Newcastle-on-Clun and Bury Ditches amongst other locations.

**Grasshopper Warbler** One was present singing near Baschurch plus another at Rednal on 15 Apr. Other sightings came from Whixall Moss and The Wrekin (Rifle Range).

**Lesser Whitethroat** Numerous reports. The earliest sighting came on 17<sup>th</sup> Apr at Adderley.

**Ring Ouzel** (below) The first sightings were on 8 Apr when three were seen at both Caer Caradoc and Titterstone Clee. Other sightings came from Stiperstones where five were seen on 18 Apr and Brown Clee, where there were six on 29 Apr. The last report was from the Long Mynd where two were seen on 2 May.



**Spotted Flycatcher** The earliest record was a single at Wyre Forest on 14 May. Four pairs were counted at Wall Farm on 14 Jun and many more records came from elsewhere.

**Pied Flycatcher** The first sighting (of at least seven) was on 13 Apr at Clunton Coppice. Reports from numerous locations followed with the highest count being 24 at Folly Brook, Newcastle-on-Clun on 26 Apr.

**Black Redstart** Two were present on Brown Clee between 15 Apr – 14 May.

**Common Redstart** The first record came from South Shropshire on 8 Apr. There were numerous countywide reports.

**Whinchat** The first sighting came from Whixall Moss where one was present on 18 Apr followed by two at Noneley on 20 Apr. The Long Mynd then produced most records with the highest counts of four in late May and early Jun.

**Wheatear** The first report came from Titterstone Clee on 2 Apr. There were good counts from the usual sites with thirty present during a comprehensive walk on Titterstone Clee, seventeen at Mitchells Fold on 14 Apr and twelve at Oakley Mynd on 15 Apr.

**Tree Sparrow** Most reports came from a site in Craven Arms where up to thirty were seen throughout the quarter. Other records came from: Oakley Mynd, Pentre, Venus Pool and Clunbury.

**Yellow Wagtail** The first report came from Venus Pool on 12 Apr. The highest count of six came from near Yeaton on 15 Apr.

**Tree Pipit** Records came from over thirty sites, with the first sighting at Wyre Forest on 10 Apr.

**Water Pipit** The long-staying individual at Whixall Floods was present on 1-2 Apr but not reported thereafter.

**Brambling** Fourteen were present in Shrewsbury on 5 Apr. Numbers then dwindled slowly with three reports in early May.

**Common Crossbill** Reported from twelve locations with most sightings in April. The highest count was twenty Pluss at Weymore Lane on 10 Apr.

**Corn Bunting** The highest count of thirty-eight came from Woolston on 27 Apr.

Some sightings are subject to acceptance by the records committee. Records for Bird Notes are extracted from the quarterly Birdtrack report for Shropshire. Due to the volume of records produced, common species are not normally included.

**Please ensure your records are accompanied with a sensible and accurate place name. Locations such as 'My Garden' or 'personal codes' may not be useable in these notes.**

All records must be recorded by observers in Birdtrack by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the end of each quarter to ensure consideration for inclusion. Given the short timescale for processing 'Bird Notes' it is not always possible to process personal lists. All rarities should either be entered into Birdtrack or submitted to the county recorder.

Photos, inc. cover, and text and compilation **Jim Almond**

## Indoor Meetings

### Shropshire Ornithological Society

Bayston Hill Memorial Hall, Lyth Hill Road, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury  
at 7:15pm

Please monitor the SOS website (under “Breaking News”) for confirmation of the arrangements under which each talk will be held, including the use of Zoom.

For more details visit: <http://www.shropshirebirds.com/indoor-meetings/>

**Wednesday, 5 October 2022, 7:15 pm Nick Martin – “Wild Wales”.**

A journey into some of the wildest places in Wales and the wildlife that inhabits them.

**Wednesday, 2 November 2022, 7:15 pm Nigel Spencer – “Journey to the Arctic”.**

A tour of one of the harshest and remote places on the planet, showcasing the wildlife and scenery of the top of the world

**Wednesday, 7 December 2022, 7:15 pm Mark Sissons – “Wild Islands: the Nature of the Falklands”.**

A journey through the Falkland Islands, detailing the range of wildlife that calls these islands home

### Shropshire Ornithological Society (Church Stretton)

The Methodist Church Hall, Watling St. South, Church Stretton  
SY6 7BG

Meetings commence at 7:30pm, doors generally open around 7:00pm.

**Monday, 24 October 2022. “Birds – Why They Flock” by Jeff Clarke**

**Monday, 28 November 2022, “Lions, Livingstone, and the Great Rift Valley” by Ben Waddams**

**Monday, 23 January, 2023. AGM followed by “Living with Swifts” by Carol Wood**

## Field Trips

### **Sunday, 18 September – Brandon Marsh – By Car – Organiser: Sue Brealey**

- Full Day – Meet at reserve car park at 10am. SatNav.
- Postcode for SatNav: CV3 3GW
- Directions: Take M6 to Junction 2. Take A46 south, and then turn left onto A45 towards Rugby. Turn left after about 200 yards, and then turn left after the Texaco Station into Brandon Lane. The Nature Centre is 1 mile along the lane. Follow the brown signs. Entry fees £2.50 for Adults & £1.50 for Concessions.
- See <http://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/reserves/brandon-marsh>

### **Sunday, 9 October – RSPB Burton Mere – By Car – Organiser: Sue Brealey**

- Full Day – Meet at the car park at 10am.
- Postcode for SatNav: CH64 5SF.
- Grid Ref: SJ 319 739
- Directions: Take A540 from Chester towards North Wirral. After the Two Mile Crossroads (A540/A550), take the next left turning into Puddington Lane. The reserve is sign-posted on the left, before coming to Burton village.
- See: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/dee-estuary-burton-mere-wetlands/>

### **Sunday, 20 November – Llanfairfechan & North Wales Coast – By Car – Organiser: Sue Brealey**

- Full Day – Meet at the car park at Llanfairfechan at 10am.
- Postcode for SatNav: LL33 0BY.
- Grid Ref: SH 680 753
- Directions: Take the A55 from Chester towards Anglesey. After going through the Conwy road tunnel, exit after 2nd roundabout (J14) into the town. At traffic lights turn right and continue to the car park on the sea front.

### **Sunday, 11 December – WWT Martin Mere – By Coach – Organiser: Sue Brealey**

- Full Day – Meet at the Shirehall car park at 8am
- Cost will be £15 per person for the coach plus entry to the reserve for non-members. More details at a later date. Please book with Sue Brealey from September 2022
- See [www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere](http://www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere)

**Contact Details:** Sue Brealey 07713 164463

For updates, please check Breaking News on our website  
<http://www.shropshirebirds.com>

Please send contributions for *The Buzzard* to [buzzard@shropshirebirds.co.uk](mailto:buzzard@shropshirebirds.co.uk)  
**Copy deadline for the Winter 2022 issue is: 1 November 2022**

*Views expressed in The Buzzard are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the SOS or its Committees, unless otherwise stated.*