# The Birds of Whitlingham & Thorpe 2022



Compiled by James Emerson

# **Contents**

- Page 2 Contents & contact details
- Pages 3-5 Introduction & site map
- Pages 6-8 Scarcest Whitlingham bird of the year Shag
- Pages 9-13 The year of the Scaup
- Pages 14-16 Feeding behaviour of a Slavonian Grebe
- Pages 17-21 The apparent changing status of Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) at Whitlingham CP, Norwich by Justin Lansdell
- Pages 22-23 Successful breeding of Grey Herons
- Pages 24-25 A Ring-necked Parakeet conundrum
- Pages 26 A pink-billed Tufted Duck
- Pages 27-28 Norwich Mute Swan colour-ringing project update
- Pages 29-33 Ringed Black-headed Gulls at Whitlingham part X
- Page 34 Whitlingham Wildfowl Count
- Page 35-67 Whitlingham & Thorpe classified species list
- Page 68 Appendix A Recorded species linked to reintroduction schemes
- Page 68 Appendix B Recorded birds thought to be escapes or of dubious origin
- Page 68 Appendix C Birds reported from the area but not accepted onto the main list
- Page 69 Appendix D Hybrid birds
- Page 70 Appendix E Unrecorded but likely species
- Page 71 Appendix F Selected additional bird sightings from the Norwich area
- Page 72-73 Acknowledgements & Further reading

### Get in touch

I would welcome any comments, corrections or constructive criticisms about this report. These can be sent to me, along with any sightings for inclusion in the 2023 report, by emailing: whitlinghambirds@yahoo.co.uk.

### All text copyright © James Emerson 2023

All photos are attributed to the photographer and copyrighted to him/her. I am particularly grateful to Robin Chittenden, Drew Lyness, David Ratcliffe and Gary White for providing a large amount of photos from Whitlingham for use in this report, and also to the other photographers who have allowed their pictures to be used (a full list of contributors can be found in the acknowledgements).

# Introduction

This is the eleventh annual bird report documenting the bird life of the Whitlingham area (including Thorpe Marshes NWT reserve), covering sightings from 2022. As always I am very grateful to all those who support the report by supplying sightings, data and photographs.

It should be noted that this bird report is independent from any of the organisations that manages the sites covered by it, notably Whitlingham Charitable Trust, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and South Norfolk Council. A map showing the recording area covered by this report can be found on page 5. Within this area most of the sightings come from Whitlingham C.P. (particularly Whitlingham Great Broad) and Thorpe Marshes.

The previous two years had seen an increase in sightings as a result of periods of 'stay local' Coronavirus guidance, but 2022 saw a return to more usual levels as birders once again were free to travel more widely.

There were no confirmed records of new species for the recording area this year, although for the second year in a row there was a possible sighting of Raven, so this species remains very much on the radar as a potential addition to the site list. Most of the articles in this year's report are therefore relatively short portraits of some of the more interesting species seen, including the first Shag since 2011 and unusual numbers of Scaup. The report also includes an article from Justin Lansdell on the changing numbers of Pochard in recent winters.

In August 2022 Thorpe Marshes regular Mike Burrows passed away aged 79. Mike was an internationally renowned bicycle designer and many obituaries are available online (e.g. <a href="here">here</a>). What these mostly fail to mention is that Mike was a dedicated patch birder and these bird reports have included many of his sightings — typically either told to me when I bumped into him or passed on via <a href="Chris Durdin's Honeyguides website">Chris Durdin's Honeyguides website</a> as Mike didn't use social media etc. My thoughts are with Mike's family.

A large number of records in this report have been supplied by other local birders, to whom I am grateful. This year I have also been able to download local records from eBird, which has been useful for adding detail to the commoner species and also firming up last days of scarcer ones. I have included the majority of records in my sightings analysis, however as always I reserve the right to decide what sightings make the final report. The sightings in this report are therefore a mixture of personal observations, directly reported records and 'citizen science'-type records. Some may relate to birds that were only seen flying over or were heard only. As a result, I consider that for formal recording purposes the sightings in this report should be treated as unverified records, i.e., sightings should probably not be taken directly from the report to be used for any 'official' purposes unless accompanied by a photo – observers are encouraged to submit their records to the county recorder directly or log them on a system such as BirdTrack or eBird, to which the county recorder has access.

In general, when considering what records and details to include in the main systematic list I have adopted the following categorisation:

**Resident species and regular migrants** – reports have been used to write a general summary for the species, with records only omitted if they were particularly unusual, for example very early or late records. High counts or unusual records may be attributed to the observer.

**Species recorded annually in low numbers at Whitlingham** – species that occur in most years are dealt with as above but with more detail regarding the sightings

Species seldom recorded at Whitlingham or particularly scarce locally – records included in the report with \* before the species name. As much detail as possible is included with each of these records, in particular it is mentioned if the species recorded was photographed, if it was seen by more than one individual, if there were any other sightings nearby etc. These records also have the initials of the person who reported the sighting where this is known. Note that this won't necessarily be the person who first found the species in the case of multi-observed records.

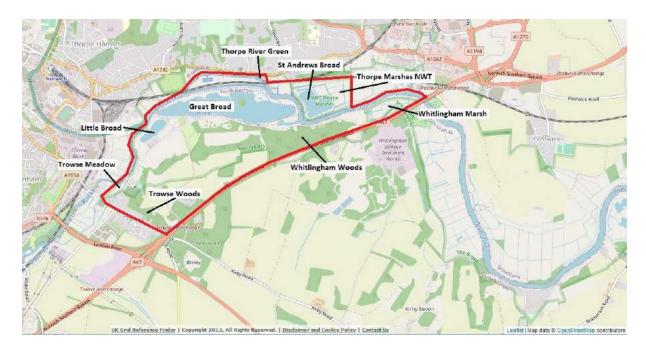
**County or national rarities** – included solely at the editor's discretion. Details of the record included as with local scarcities, but with an additional note as to whether the record has been submitted to and/or accepted by the relevant rarities committee, based on the latest WIP (work-in-progress) files.

Birds covered by the above process form the main systematic species list. The presence of a number of recently reintroduced species in Norfolk has necessitated a specific appendix to these reports, although no species are included on it this year. As with the past few years I have included selected additional species seen elsewhere in Norwich out of general interest. The appendices to the report are as follows:

- Appendix A Recorded species linked to reintroduction schemes
- Appendix B Recorded birds thought to be escapes or of dubious origin (where not already mentioned in the systematic list)
- Appendix C Birds reported from the area but not accepted onto the main list
- Appendix D Hybrid birds
- Appendix E Species notably not recorded in 2022
- Appendix F Selected additional bird sightings from the Norwich area

# The Whitlingham Recording Area covered by this report

Where possible distinctive features make up the boundaries, for example the railway line along part of the north of the area and the A47 to the south.



The key sites that make up the recording area are:

- Whitlingham Country Park (including Whitlingham Little Broad and Great Broad)
- Trowse Meadow \*
- Trowse Woods
- Thorpe Marshes NWT (including St Andrew's Broad)
- Thorpe River Green
- Whitlingham Woods
- Whitlingham Marsh LNR

Crown Point Estate land north of the A47 is currently included, although as most of it has no public access there are seldom any sightings from this area. Whilst Thorpe St Andrew sits just outside of the recording area, Thorpe River Green is included in the more recent reports. This area, which sits adjacent to the old course of the River Yare just north of the railway line is now the primary part of the area for reading colour rings on gulls, and was previously covered by this report despite nominally being just outside the area.

<sup>\*</sup> Public access to Trowse Meadow was withdrawn part way through 2022 by the Whitlingham Charitable Trust, so sightings in the latter part of the year relate to birds seen looking on to the meadow from Whitlingham Lane. Hopefully access will be restored in due course.

# Scarcest Whitlingham bird of the year: Shag

With no additions to the site list this year, the scarcest bird of the year was a 1<sup>st</sup>-winter Shag, found by Drew Lyness on Whitlingham Great Broad on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan. This was the first site record for over ten years. It remained for two-and-a-half weeks, being noted for the final time on 20<sup>th</sup> Jan. Whilst sometimes seen swimming and fishing on the Great Broad, it also spent lots of time during the day on one of the floating pontoons. Shag becomes the 196<sup>th</sup> species of bird accepted for the area since 2012, of which 152 have been photographed (78%).

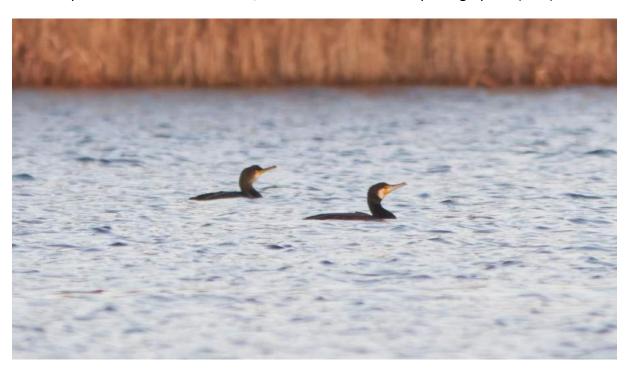


Figure 1 – Shag (left) and Cormorant (right) on Whitlingham Great Broad. Photo © Patrick Safford

There have been very few records of Shags in the Whitlingham area. The previous Whitlingham area records that I am aware of are as follows:

1994: 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> Jan – Two on Thorpe Marshes (from county archive)

14<sup>th</sup> Mar – A flock of eight over (from county archive)

1995: 4<sup>th</sup> Feb – One juvenile (from county archive)

2010: 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan – One on the Great Broad (photographed)

2011: 18th Sept – One on the Great Broad during the WeBS count

In the past Shags were considered to occur fairly frequently in the city, being mentioned as such in the 1999 edition of Birds of Norfolk (Taylor et al). It is likely that most city centre birds would have travelled along the River Yare past Whitlingham before tracking the River Wensum into the city centre. This is particularly likely with the 2009 individual, which was found less than a mile outside of the recording area. In the past 20 years records in Norwich city centre have largely reflected those at Whitlingham, insofar as there have only been two recent records:

2009: 8<sup>th</sup> Aug – A juvenile on the River Wensum behind the old Laurence Scott factory (multi-observed).

2013: 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Feb – an adult on the River Wensum between Friar's Quay and Cow Tower (photographed, later found dead).



Figure 2 – Shaq on the Great Broad. Photo © Patrick Safford.



Figure 3 – Shag on an old wooden platform at Whitlingham Great Broad. Photo © Allan Archer at <u>talk: Wildlife</u>



Figure 4 – Shag defecating towards a juvenile gull. Photo © Chris Lansdell

# Acknowledgements

Thanks to Drew Lyness for finding the bird and Allan Archer, Chris Lansdell and Patrick Safford for allowing their photos to be used.

# The year of the Scaup

Scaup are regular visitors to the Whitlingham area, with records from six of the past 10 years. Most records relate to single birds, however there have been records of multiple birds before, with three on the Great Broad on 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2017 and a pair on St Andrews Broad at Thorpe on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2018. This year during the second winter period a minimum of five individual Scaup were present on the Great Broad at varying points from 17<sup>th</sup> Nov onwards, with four individuals present simultaneously on the Great Broad from 16<sup>th</sup> Dec to 19<sup>th</sup> Dec.

Determining the number of individual Scaup present over a period of time is not a straightforward task. Past experience of long-staying birds at Whitlingham suggested that young drakes in particular can undergo quite significant moult over a month or so, which is something noted in Billard & Humphry (1972) who stated "Males molted (sic) intensively during November and December". Weather conditions also affect how bright the white feathering around the bill can look on female birds. A further pitfall is that some Scaup have slightly asymmetrical patterning on each side of the face — as a result I have resisted the temptation to flip photos of the individual Scaups to get them to all face the same way! I have attempted to picture each bird, record its duration of stay and days when it was present (see Table 1) and to explain the reasoning for the identification of different individuals in this piece.

The main debate in terms of the Whitlingham Scaup was whether a seemingly advanced 1w drake seen from 16<sup>th</sup> Dec was the same individual present earlier, or if it was a new, sixth, individual. When considering this I found the series of pictures of a moulting 1w drake Scaup in Warks (Dean, 2020 - <a href="http://deanar.org.uk/general/localgallery/wildfowl/scaup.htm">http://deanar.org.uk/general/localgallery/wildfowl/scaup.htm</a>) particularly useful as they show the level of plumage transformation within a short period, and I was able to put together a similar set of photographs taken at roughly weekly intervals (Figures 7-12). Having reviewed as many pictures as possible and seen the apparent development of feathers in the mantle amongst others, it is my opinion that this potential 'bird 6' is most likely to be the original 1w drake ("bird 2").

No.	Age/sex	17-Nov	18-Nov	19-Nov	20-Nov	21-Nov	22-Nov	23-Nov	24-Nov	25-Nov	26-Nov	27-Nov	28-Nov	29-Nov	30-Nov
1	1w female														
2	1w drake														
3	1w female														
4	1w female			·							·				
5	Ad drake														

No.	01-Dec	02-Dec	03-Dec	04-Dec	05-Dec	06-Dec	07-Dec	08-Dec	09-Dec	10-Dec	11-Dec	12-Dec	13-Dec	14-Dec	15-Dec	16-Dec
1																
2																
3																
4																
5																
No.	7-Dec	.8-Dec	9-Dec	.0-Dec	1-Dec	2-Dec	3-Dec	4-Dec	5-Dec	6-Dec	7-Dec	8-Dec	9-Dec	0-Dec	1-Dec	

 S
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O
 O

Table 1 – presence of each individual Scaup (numbered 1-5) from 17<sup>th</sup> Nov until 31<sup>st</sup> Dec.

The first two Scaup found were a 1<sup>st</sup>-winter female and a 1<sup>st</sup>-winter drake, shown together in Figure 1 and individually in Figures 2 (bird 1) & 3 (bird 2) The female bird had an extensive white area around the bill, and importantly near the end if its stay it had developed a few grey feathers in the mantle. The young drake had a dark head with no white feathering around the bill, and some restricted pale feathers on the mantle and rear flank.



Figure 1 – Scaup #1 & #2 together on 30<sup>th</sup> November. Photo © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)



Figure 2 – Scaup 1: 1w/female (30/11/22) Figure

Figure 3 – Scaup 2: 1w drake (30/11/22)



Figure 4 – Scaup 3: 1w/female (11/12/22)

Figure 5 – Scaup 4: 1w/female (11/12/22)



Figure 6 – Scaup 5: Drake (14/12/22)

Figures 2-6 all © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

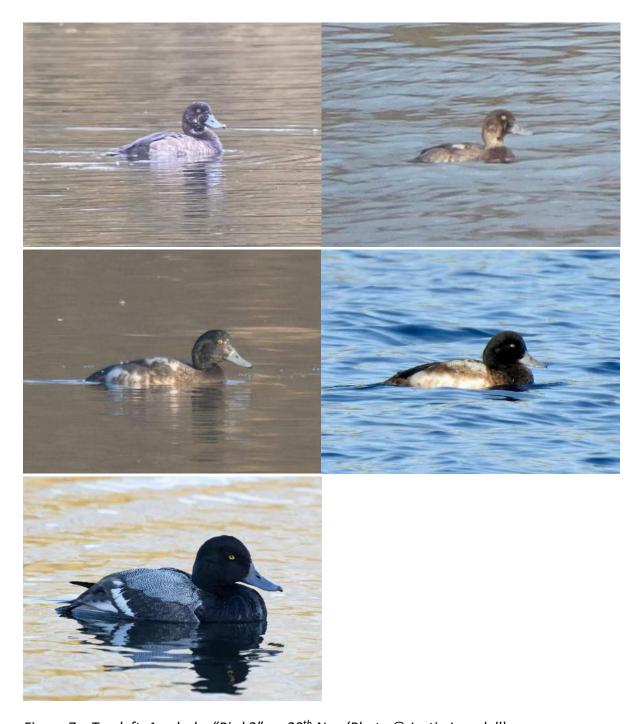


Figure 7 – Top left: 1w drake "Bird 2" on 29th Nov (Photo © Justin Lansdell)

Figure 8 – Top right: 1w drake (presumed to be Bird 2) on 7<sup>th</sup> Dec (Photo © Drew Lyness)

Figure 9 – Middle left: An advanced 1w drake ("Potential bird 6" – thought by the author to be likely to be bird 2 nine days further in moult) on  $16^{th}$  Dec (Photo © Robin Chittenden)

Figure 10 – Middle right: Advanced 1w drake on 20<sup>th</sup> Dec (Photo © David Ratcliffe)

Figure 11 – Bottom left: Advanced 1w drake on 29<sup>th</sup> Dec (Photo © Robin Chittenden)

Next to arrive were two different 1<sup>st</sup>-winter female types (Figures 4 & 5). These did not overlap with the original female, but could be separated by the extent of their moult. Individual 3 had extensive white feathering either side of the bill – initially it did not extend cleanly over the top, but towards the end of its stay it did. Importantly the mantle was completely dark brown, lacking the grey feathers of bird 1. The second female, bird 4, was a rather muted individual with a rather dull and restricted patch of pale feathers near the bill base. This appeared whiter in brighter conditions, which perhaps explains why one observer felt there were four female birds present over the month rather than the more widely held view that there were three females. They were joined by an adult drake on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec (Figure 6), sometimes being seen together as in Figure 12.



Figure 12 – Scaup #5 (far left), #4 (right of centre) and #3 (far right) with a female Tufted Duck, photographed on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. Photo © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

From 16<sup>th</sup> Dec these three were joined by a 1<sup>st</sup>-winter male (Figure 9). This could have been a sixth individual Scaup, but the general consensus of local birders is that it was the same 1w male that had been present until 30<sup>th</sup> Nov (shown in Figure 7) which had disappeared for a week before being seen again on 7<sup>th</sup> Dec (Figure 8).

The females were last seen on 19<sup>th</sup> Dec, however the two drakes continued to be seen until 24<sup>th</sup> Dec. After this date only the 1w drake was present. On 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Dec it showed quite close in to the shore and there were concerns about its health, particularly as it was not seen for the last two days of the year. Surprisingly though, it was seen again on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2023.

# References

**Billard, R.S. and Humphry, P.S.** (1972) Molts and plumages in the Greater Scaup. *The Journal of Wildlife Management* Vol. 36, No. 3 (Jul., 1972), pp. 765-774.

**Dean, A.R.** (2020) Moult-progress in 1W drake Scaup, Warks, Nov. 2019 - Jan. 2020. <a href="http://deanar.org.uk/general/localgallery/wildfowl/scaup.htm">http://deanar.org.uk/general/localgallery/wildfowl/scaup.htm</a>

# Acknowledgements

Scaup photographs are reproduced here with kind permission from Robin Chittenden, Justin Lansdell, Drew Lyness and David Ratcliffe. Thanks are also due to the large number of birders that reported the Scaup during their stay, which enabled me to put together the table of occurrence.

# Feeding observations of a Slavonian Grebe

A Slavonian Grebe on Whitlingham Great Broad on 31<sup>st</sup> October was an excellent find by Mark Eldridge. The timing was unusually early in the year, with most previous area records arriving in a fairly narrow window from mid-December until the end of January (the one exception being a report of one in April 2010). The grebe was last seen on 18<sup>th</sup> November, but it did appear to go missing for several consecutive days during its stay (see the table below).



Red = Days when the Slavonian Grebe was seen at Whitlingham

Grey = Days when observers were definitely present and did not see the Slavonian Grebe.

White = No news received either way



Figure 1 – Slavonian Grebe at Whitlingham. Photo © Robin Chittenden (<u>www.robinchittenden.co.uk</u>)

# **Previous Whitlingham records:**

2005: 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec into 2006 (long-staying bird)

2006: Present from 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2005 until 1<sup>st</sup> Mar 2006 (long-staying bird)

2010: 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Jan – One on the Great Broad (multiple observers)

 $6^{th}$  Apr – A summer plumaged reported on the Great Broad (per bird news services)

2012: 15<sup>th</sup> Dec – One on St Andrews Broad (photographed)

2013: 18<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> Jan – One on the Great Broad (photographed)

2017: 31<sup>st</sup> Jan – One reported on St Andrews Broad (but a Black-necked Grebe present the following day – see 2017 Whitlingham Bird Report for discussion)

Whilst the Slavonian Grebe was at times elusive in its appearances, when it was present it was well watched and photographed as it fed along the edge of the Great Broad. It often appeared to be bringing up small pieces of waterweed, however an excellent series of photos by Robin Chittenden, two of which are kindly reproduced here, show that it was actually catching Caddisfly larvae which it then removed from their larval cases before swallowing.



Figure 2 – Slavonian Grebe removing a caddisfly larva from its case.

Photo © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)



Figure 3 – Slavonian Grebe eating a caddisfly larva. Photo © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Unfortunately caddisfly larvae usually need close examination to identify them to species level, so even with Robin's excellent pictures it is not possible to be sure which species of caddisflies were being consumed. Norfolk Freshwater Recorder Dan Hoare suggested that the larvae might be one of the larger Limnephilid caddisflies, whilst Craig Macadam of the Freshwater Biological Association felt that they were most likely to be *Phryganeidae*, another group of large caddis.

# **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Mark Eldridge for finding the bird, Robin Chittenden for allowing his photographs to be used here plus Dan Hoare and Craig Macadam for commenting on the possible identity of the caddisfly larvae.



For over two decades since gravel extraction and subsequent flooding transformed Whitlingham into a large freshwater lake, Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) have been a familiar sight in winter, occurring in numbers large enough to make it a key site for the species in Norfolk (see Fig 1). I have always kept a keen eye on their flocks, as they are both a charismatic species and a prolific carrier species for scarcer *Aythyas* such as Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*) and my dream Norfolk find, Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*).

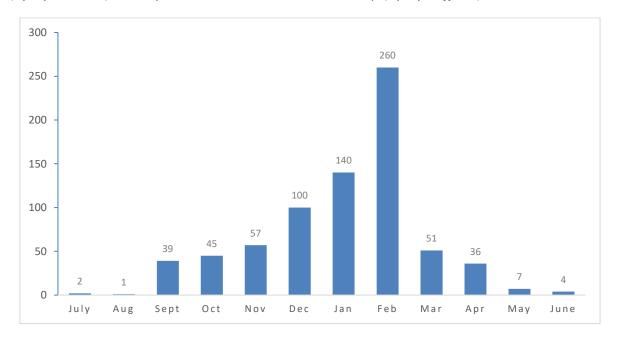


Fig 1. All-time monthly peak counts of Common Pochard at Whitlingham CP

Over this period of time numbers at the site have ebbed and flowed due to cold and milder winters, but when considered over a protracted timescale the trend has been one of relative stability despite hearing anecdotal feedback of their decline elsewhere. For example, Pochard have become increasingly scarce in the Lowestoft area (R. Wilton pers. comm.) and have become something of a 'local rarity' in South Wales, where as recently as 2012 I enjoyed a flock of 43 at Cosmeston Lakes, Glamorgan. Declines are not just localised, the species moved from amber to red status in BoCC4 due to its declining wintering population (Eaton *et al* 2015) and remained there in BoCC5 (Stanbury *et al* 2021), with an estimated 69% decline in wintering birds in the past 25 years based on WeBS counts (BTO 2020).

Having been seemingly protected from this decline for a period, over the past few winters the drop in numbers has become evident at Whitlingham too, and more than a simple decline in the wintering population, there are tentative signs of a change in status to become predominantly an autumn and late winter/early spring migrant.

Figure 2 shows peak counts during winter 2018/19 broken into 10-day time periods, rather than simple monthly peaks, to give greater granularity. This shows an interesting pattern atypical of winter visitors, with a late autumn peak followed by a brief dip before larger numbers in late winter/early spring. Whether this is a genuine 'double hump' or a product of deficient data is difficult to ascertain from a single year.

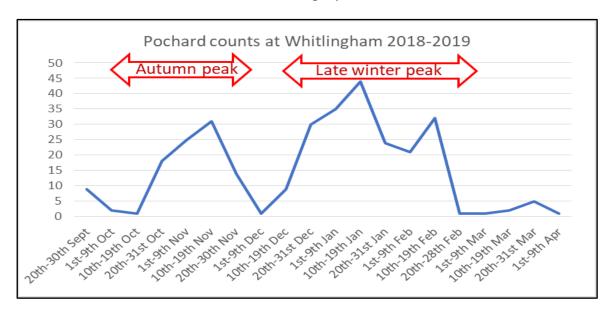


Fig 2. Pochard counts at Whitlingham during winter 2018/19

Figure 3. shows the following winters of 2019/20 and 2020/21 in the same detail and adds weight to that theory with only a small number of birds remaining through the mid-winter period with an even longer mid-winter 'lull'. The winter 2021/22 changes the picture again with the autumn and early spring passage still potentially just visible, although further

depressed numbers mask the lighter autumn passage (see Fig 4). Those lower numbers throughout the season also suggest a worrying overall decline as noted elsewhere.

Interestingly monthly peak counts do not show the pattern as clearly with fluctuations in numbers occurring over a few short weeks/months, neither do winter maximums portray the full picture as they remain broadly in the 30-40 bracket. Although it is unwise to draw too many conclusions from such data in individual seasons, a succession of similar winters hints at a changing status and winter 2022/23 has started much the same with very low numbers of Pochard present (pers.obs.)

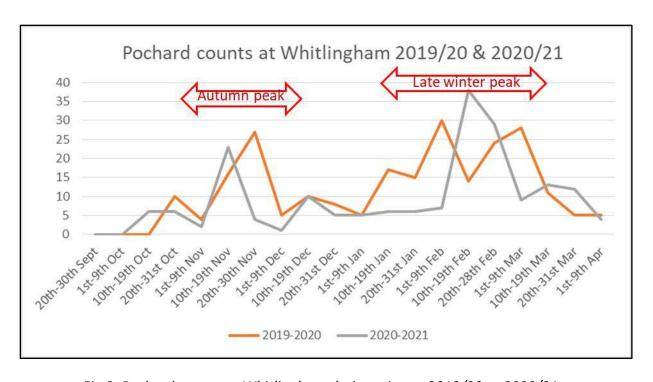


Fig 3. Pochard counts at Whitlingham during winters 2019/20 to 2020/21

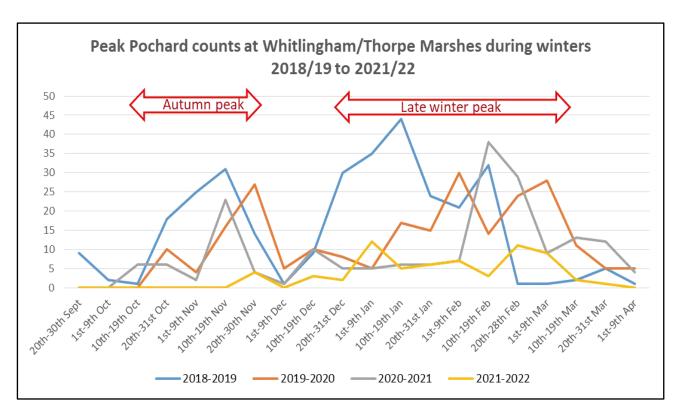


Fig 4. Pochard counts at Whitlingham during winters 2018/19 through to 2021/22

That at least some Pochard arriving in the UK merely pass through to winter in Iberia and North Africa is already well known and documented (e.g. Owen and Dix 1986, Folliot 2018). Anyone who has visited Welney in mid-winter cannot have failed to notice the disparity between the much more abundant males and lesser numbers of females that travel further to winter (Carbone and Owen 1995). In January 2009 a female Pochard with a Portuguese bill-saddle was recorded at Whitlingham (pers. obs.). When numbers are stable it is tempting to believe that the same birds persist rather than a turnover of individuals stopping over, but changes in the sexual composition of flocks, the short-lived presence of *Aythya* hybrids and distinctive birds (e.g. a dark mantled male present for a few days in March 2021) betrays a passage of individual birds. Therefore, the turnover of birds is clearly more than is evident in peak number graphs.

What is causing the change in status to an autumn/spring migrant remains unknown. The classic pattern of changed migratory behaviour in winter wildfowl due to the warming climate, known as 'short stopping', where less severe temperatures enable birds to remain to winter closer to Scandinavian and East European breeding areas ultimately resulting in a lower number of birds present here for a shorter period (arriving later and departing sooner as we see for example, in the Yare Valley Taiga Bean Geese) but that's not what the Pochard graphs for 2018/19 to 2020/21 seem to indicate, rather the onward migration to winter elsewhere persists and it is over wintering at Whitlingham where the drop is most obvious.

The graph for 2021/22 changes the picture again and suggests short-stopping (or an overall population decline in Europe) so perhaps multiple factors are at play with this species.

Another facet of the changed status is the UK breeding population of Pochard that has bucked the trend and increased 57% over the last 25 years (Eaton 2022) perhaps suggesting two different populations co-exist in the UK! As with many other species, changes in the status of Pochard in the UK are faster paced and more dynamic than ever before, and there is still much to learn. It will be fascinating (and maybe alarming) to see what happens in the next few winters, I for one hope Pochard's chestnut head continues to brighten the winter months at Whitlingham for a long time to come... after all I still need to find that Lesser Scaup!!

### References

**BTO** (2020) *Waterbirds in the UK 2019/2020*. Available at <a href="https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/publications/wituk1920forweb.pdf">https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/publications/wituk1920forweb.pdf</a>

**Carbone C. and Owen M** (1995) *Differential migration of the sexes of pochard Aythya ferina:* results from a European survey. Wildfowl 46: 99-108

**Eaton M. A.** *et al* (2015) *Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the populations status of birds in the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man.* British Birds 108: 708-746

Eaton M. (2022) Rare breeding birds in the UK in 2020. British Birds 115: 623-686

**Folliot, B. et al** (2018) Patterns of spatial distribution and migration phenology of common pochards Aythya ferina in the Western Palearctic: a ring-recoveries analysis – Wildlife Biology 2018: Issue 1, 1-11

**Owen, M. and Dix, M.** (1986) *Sex ratios in some common British wintering ducks*. Wildfowl, [S.I.], p. 104-112.

**Stanbury A. et al** (2021) The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds 114: 723-747

# **Successful breeding of Grey Herons**

This year a pair of Grey Herons built a nest along the edge of the Great Broad, in a location that could be viewed from across the water. The nest was first noticed in mid-February, but it looked like it was still being added to, and being an early breeding species there was some discussion as to whether eggs would be laid this year or if they had left it too late. By May it was clear that chicks had hatched and were being fed, but the distance meant that it was difficult to be sure how many chicks were present. Two were usually visible, however it was later confirmed that there were three, albeit with considerable size differences between them (see Figure 4 where the smallest chick is below the largest on the left-hand side of the nest).

This appears to be the first time, at least in recent years, that Grey Herons have nested around the Great Broad, although a pair did nest in riverside trees within the recording area in 2016 and 2017.



Figure 1 –  $3^{rd}$  March, a pair of adult Grey Herons at the nest. Photo © Roger Parker.



Left: Figure 2 – May  $7^{th}$  two young birds visible at the nest. Photo © Justin Lansdell. Right: Figure 3 – May  $7^{th}$  an adult returns to feed the young birds. Photo © Justin Lansdell.



Figure 4 –  $15^{th}$  May and all three young herons are visible (youngest in bottom left of the nest). Photo © James Emerson

# **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to Justin Lansdell and Roger Parker for providing additional updates and photos of these birds.

# A Ring-necked Parakeet conundrum

Ring-necked Parakeets have been established in the Greater London area since the 1970s, but the Norwich population is much more recent. One was seen at several locations in Norwich before settling down in the Hellesdon area in 2017. At some point it was joined by at least one more bird, and now breeding pairs are known from at least three locations in the south and west of the city. Ring-necked Parakeets were first seen at Whitlingham in 2017, but there were only occasional sightings until summer 2021, after which at least one bird roosted regularly on the Great Broad island, usually flying in from the direction of Thorpe St Andrew.

During the autumn Gary White noticed a Ring-necked Parakeet showing well at Whitlingham (Figure 1). Whilst not originally noticeable, as the parakeet fed on Alder cones Gary noticed that it was metal-ringed (Figure 2). Gary was able to take a series of photos of the ring, managing to capture most of the code (Figure 3). This could have been a particularly interesting recovery, showing where one of our local parakeets had come from, however there was seemingly no address on the ring (wild ringed birds usually have the address of the ringing scheme along with a code). The BTO confirmed that this appears to be a captive ring, although they were unable to suggest a way of notifying the (former) owner.



Figure 1 – Ring-necked Parakeet feeding in an Alder tree. Photo © Gary White



Figure 2 – Feeding Ring-necked Parakeet showing metal ring. Photo © Gary White

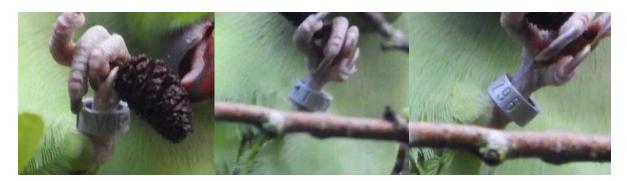


Figure 3 – close ups of the metal ring showing additional digits. Photos © Gary White

Having established that this particular sighting relates to an escaped individual, the question is how many of the other sightings might also be attributable to the same bird? Fortunately, there have been several sightings of multiple birds, including one this autumn, so there is no question of having to remove Ring-necked Parakeet from the site list. Most records relate to birds seen or heard distantly (for example flying over the Great Broad to roost on the island), where checking for a small metal ring would be impossible, so rather than throw the baby out with the bathwater I have decided to continue to record all sightings other than those where a ring is seen in the main body of the report.

# Acknowledgements

Thanks to Gary White for his perseverance in photographing and reporting the bird.

# A pink-billed Tufted Duck

On 26<sup>th</sup> November Drew Lyness noticed that one of the drake Tufted Ducks on Whitlingham Great Broad had a pink bill rather than the usual bluey-grey. This bird was then noted on a range of dates throughout December. Views and photographs of the bird were good enough to rule out the colouration being due to a bill saddle, dirt etc. Despite several diving ducks having red or pink beaks (Red-crested Pochard, Rosybill) there was no indication of any hybrid involvement – size, shape and plumage are all that of a standard drake Tufted Duck. A suggestion is that Tufted Ducks might have a gene for this colouration that is only very rarely expressed. Some anecdotal evidence that this might be possible in ducks comes from Wigeon x Gadwall hybrids, which sometimes have pink beaks despite neither parent species usually expressing that colouration. I would be interested to hear from anyone with any other suggestions, or who knows of similarly pink-billed birds in the literature.



Pink-billed Tufted Duck. Photo @ Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)



Pink-billed Tufted Duck (right) alongside a typical drake. Photo © Gary White

# **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Dave Appleton for his thoughts on this bird, plus Robin Chittenden and Gary White for the use of their photos.

# Norwich Mute Swan colour-ringing update 2022

The UEA Ringing Group has colour-ringed over 200 Mute Swans in the Norwich area since their swan ringing project began in spring 2020. This includes 135 ringed at Whitlingham or Thorpe: 94 in 2020, 25 in 2021 and a further 16 during 2022.

Birders at Whitlingham continue to contribute data to the project by reporting ring combinations read in the field – this year there were 422 reports from Whitlingham, relating to 74 individual Mute Swans. Colour rings used so far for this project are orange with black lettering making up a four-digit code: 4DU\*, 4DZ\*, 4ES\*, 4EN\*, 4EO\*, 4EX\*, 4FD\*, 4FN\* where '\*' can be any letter of the alphabet. You can report sightings of these birds by visiting <a href="https://stephenvickers.shinyapps.io/swansubapp/">https://stephenvickers.shinyapps.io/swansubapp/</a> and filling in the form, which will then give you an instant sightings history for your bird.

### Norwich Swan Project sighting submissions

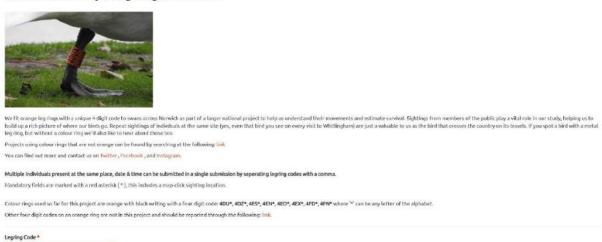


Figure 1 is an updated map showing all East Norfolk sightings involving birds ringed at or reported from Whitlingham. As you would expect, most movements involve birds from around Norwich or further downriver along the Yare Valley, however there were a few additional sightings from further out during 2022 including at Bure Park Great Yarmouth, one at Wroxham and one near Lowestoft (the second swan from the project to be recorded outside of Norfolk). Figure 2 gives a wider view of the sightings to show the few larger movements. The Thetford and Eastbourne (East Sussex) sightings occurred during 2021, but the bird seen in North-west Norfolk was a 2022 sighting.

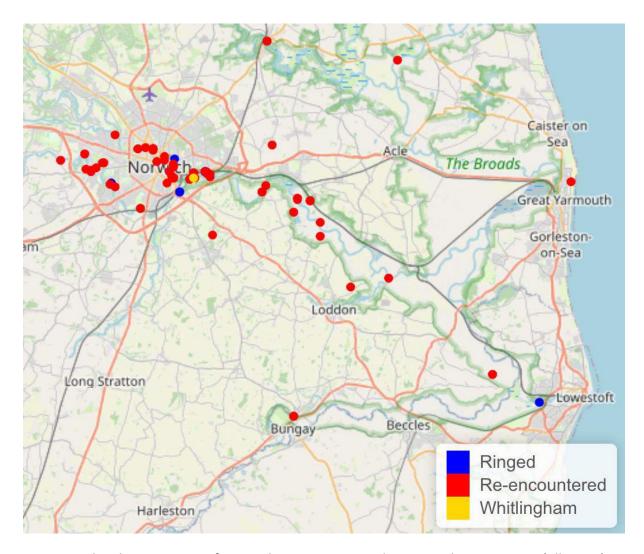


Figure 1 – local movements of Norwich Swan Project colour-ringed Mute Swans (all years)

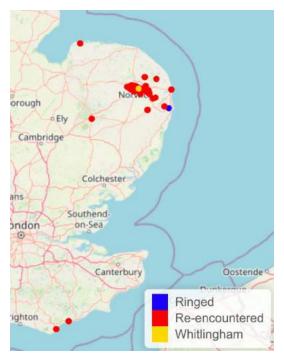


Figure 2 – map of larger movements of Norwich Swan Project colour-ringed Mute Swans (all years)

# Acknowledgements

The Norwich Swan Project is run by the UEA Ringing Group and the author is particularly grateful to Stephen Vickers from the group who provided a Whitlingham-specific update in mid-December 2022.

# Ringed Black-headed Gulls at Whitlingham part x

This report is the tenth in a series of annual articles documenting the ringed Black-headed Gulls that have been reported from Whitlingham or across the river at Thorpe River Green. Most colour-ringed gulls seen in the area are now locally-ringed birds, so for clarity I have split the article up into sections covering foreign ringed birds and then locally ringed ones.

A brief summary of gulls ringed or sighted abroad since 2012:

Number of individuals recorded (full codes only): 38

**Countries of origin of ringed birds seen at Whitlingham:** 9 - Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Sweden

**Countries where Whitlingham/Thorpe ringed birds have been sighted:** 6 - Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Russia, & Sweden

**Furthest distance travelled:** Blue 2E16 ringed at Whitlingham has travelled 1934km to summer near St Petersburg in Russia. Of the foreign ringed birds, metal-ringed ST305.473 from Finland has so far travelled the furthest to reach Whitlingham (1841km).

**Most years recorded:** 6 (White A341). A gull metal ringed in Denmark has been seen between 2013 – 2022, a range of 10 years, but has only noted in five of them.

Most winters recorded: 6 (Green J6U2).

# **BLACK-HEADED GULLS RINGED OUTSIDE OF NORFOLK**

Six Black-headed Gulls, ringed in four foreign countries, were noted during 2022. These countries were Denmark, Germany, Lithuania and Poland. The Lithuanian bird was metal ringed and the full code could not be read, but it might well have been the same metal-ringed Lithuanian gull that was recorded earlier in the 2021/22 winter. Four of the others were returning birds, leaving one new Polish-ringed bird, yellow-ringed TNWJ. In addition, a UK metal-ringed bird not known to have been locally ringed was seen, but the whole code wasn't read so it has not been possible to trace it.

If you see a colour-ringed gull (other than one of the locally ringed gulls with white codes on blue – see further down for more detail) then the best place to locate contact details for the scheme is to visit <u>cr-birding.org</u> and add as much detail about the ring and code as you can.

Ring number	Date first seen	Place ringed	Date ringed	Distance travelled / Km	Seen previously?
Metal-ringed HAxxxxx	01/01/22	LITHUANIA	Not end	ough details	to confirm
T2X8	11/01/22	Zachodniopomorskie, POLAND	20/05/17	868	First seen in Nov 2017
Metal ringed 6241523	08/02/22	Odense, DENMARK	26/11/10	666	First seen in Feb 2013
Metal ringed ?M29817	28/02/22	ИК	Ş	?	NEW
TNWJ	06/03/22	Dąbie, Lubczyna POLAND	15/05/19	895	NEW
TEX7	09/02/22	Mietkowski, POLAND	24/06/19	1063	First seen in Nov 2019
AF614	08/03/22	Hammerbrook, Hamburg, GERMANY	23/10/15	590	First seen in Nov 2016

Table 1 – Ringed Black-headed Gulls seen in the first winter period (Jan-Mar) 2022, excluding birds ringed locally.



Figure 1 – Black-headed Gull Polish ringed TNWJ. A new bird to the area in early 2022. Photo © Drew Lyness

Only three foreign-ringed gulls were reported in the second-winter period, all returnees from past winters.

Ring number	Date first seen	Place ringed	Date ringed	Distance travelled / Km	Seen previously?
TEX7	06/10/22	Mietkowski, POLAND	24/06/19	1063	First seen in Nov 2019
T2X8	07/11/22	Zachodniopomorskie, POLAND	20/05/17	868	First seen in Nov 2017
Metal-ringed ST305.473	07/11/22	Keski-Suomi, Konnevesi, FINLAND	10/06/18	1841	First seen in Nov 2018

Table 2 – Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls seen in the second winter period (Oct-Dec) 2022

### LOCALLY RINGED BLACK-HEADED GULLS

At the time of writing in mid-December, 53 individual Black-headed Gulls had been colour-ringed at Whitlingham or Thorpe River Green during 2022. This is in addition to 24 ringed within the recording area in 2021 and a further 13 from 2021 (making 90 in total).

The UEA Black-headed Gull ringing effort is part of national project using dark blue rings with white text. All codes have four digits and begin with a 2, either followed by a letter and two numbers or two numbers then a letter. Codes that have been used so far include 2K\*\*, 2E\*\* and 2\*\*N where \* = a number.

Sightings can be reported at https://waterbirdcolourmarking.org/

During 2022 the scheme received 157 re-sightings of gulls ringed in the Whitlingham area, relating to 54 gulls. As well as sightings from the Norwich area and elsewhere in the UK, some of these birds have been reported in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Russia and Sweden. Figure 2 shows the locations of these re-sightings (note that each dot is not necessarily a unique bird, as some individuals were noted passing through a country and then later noted elsewhere). Examples of Whitlingham area ringed birds seen elsewhere include:

Ring code	Ringing location	Ringing date	Country sighted in	Sighting date	Distance travelled / km
2E01	Thorpe River Green	Dec 2021		April 2022	371
2E18	Whitlingham C.P.	Jan 2022		Feb 2022 April 2022	360 (NL) 1547 (FI)
2E29	Thorpe River Green	Feb 2022		April 2022	246



Figure 2 – map showing re-sighting locations of Whitlingham/Thorpe colour-ringed Black-headed Gulls.

# Focus on... Blue 2E16

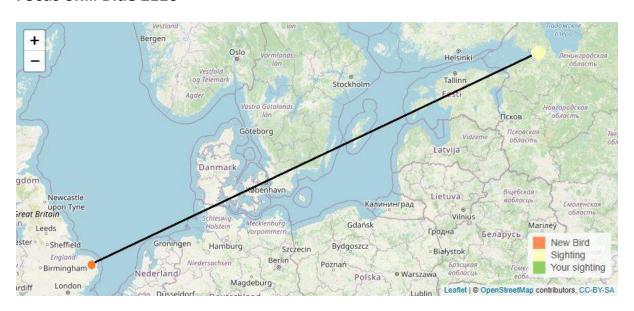


Figure 3 – Resighting location of Whitlingham-ringed gull 2E16

Date ringed	Last seen at Whitlingham	First seen in Russia	Last seen in Russia	Seen back at Whitlingham	Last sighting of the year
06/01/22	29/01/22	09/05/22	07/06/22	04/08/22	Present until year end

# UEA colour-ringed Black-headed Gulls seen within the recording area Jan to Mar 2022

The graphic below shows the codes of colour-ringed Black-headed Gulls seen by or reported to the author during the first three months of the year.



# UEA colour-ringed Black-headed Gulls seen within the recording area Aug to Dec 2022

Forty-one returning birds were reported within the area after the summer, whilst a further 27 were ringed in the autumn/winter. The codes below are those seen by or reported to the author during this period. All birds were originally ringed at Whitlingham or Thorpe except those with a red border, which were ringed elsewhere around Norwich.



<sup>\* 2</sup>K77 was ringed at Carrow Bridge, whilst 2E44 was ringed at Wensum Park.

# **Acknowledgements**

Many thanks to Nick Elsey, Justin Lansdell, Roger Parker, David Ratcliffe and Stephen Vickers for supplying additional 2022 information. Particular thanks to Stephen for providing details and maps of the UEA-ringed birds.

# **Whitlingham Wildfowl Survey**

The monthly wildfowl counts here are based on the combined counts for Whitlingham Little Broad and Great Broad using WeBS methodology, with St Andrews Broad also counted where possible (this is more important in winter, when large amounts of ducks commute between the two sites). The counts are not necessarily high counts for the month – ad hoc and high counts are described in the individual species accounts. The species order does not change to allow better comparison with previous bird reports.

Species	Jan *	Feb	Mar *	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
				\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$
Mute Swan	27	18	14	26	45	112	62	24	25	14	4	11
Greylag Goose	5	8	9	54	18	414	41	1	48	2	1	0
Barnacle Goose	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Canada Goose	4	5	5	9	8	64	10	0	0	0	0	0
Egyptian Goose	10	2	8	18	29	46	42	20	19	4	22	12
Mandarin	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shoveler	13	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Gadwall	130	48	23	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	12	112
Wigeon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mallard	88	47	47	38	43	45	85	63	116	74	62	74
Teal	132	2	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Pochard	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Tufted Duck	233	232	130	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	73	185
Goldeneye	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Scaup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Goosander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Cormorant	32	29	21	11	7	8	3	11	18	22	24	16
Grey Heron	6	0	1	2	2	1	2	1	0	0	3	5
Little Egret	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
Little Grebe	4	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
Great Crested Grebe	7	2	5	4	4	4	7	0	2	8	9	3
Water Rail	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Moorhen	16	6	4	4	1	2	4	2	6	1	2	11
Coot	88	57	17	2	2	2	2	5	15	15	79	140
Common Snipe	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black-headed Gull	330	182	82	19	1	1	5	104	13	53	195	284
Common Gull	14	7	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	5	13
Lesser Black-backed Gull	2	6	11	5	19	14	39	85	5	5	7	0
Herring Gull	33	30	66	1	6	2	43	5	0	0	14	4
Common Tern	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kingfisher	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

<sup>\*</sup> Counts at Whitlingham and Thorpe conducted on different days

<sup>\$</sup> No WeBS count carried out at Thorpe this month.

# Whitlingham and Thorpe Classified List

The systematic list in this bird report follows the latest taxonomical order used by the British Ornithologists Union (BOU) and based on decisions made by the International Ornithologists Congress (IOC) world list. The most recent list used is IOC 12.2, which made no changes of particular consequence to this report.

The description on the right refers to the chances of encountering a species if visiting at the appropriate time of year (common/scarce/rare) along with whether it is resident, a migrant, rarity or a species that usually just flies over.

Sightings of birds that are locally scarce or rare, some early or late reports or particularly high counts have initials after them – these relate to observers, a list of which can be found at the end of the classified list.

# Canada Goose Branta canadensis

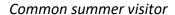




Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Numbers often in single figures, with no counts higher than 20 during January-May or August-December. Numbers reached 80 on 6<sup>th</sup> June, with the highest count of the year 162 on 16<sup>th</sup> June (including one of the birds with extra white on the face that was also noted several times last summer). Other high counts after that date included 64 on 19<sup>th</sup> June and 72 on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

A pair with two goslings was seen on the Great Broad on 15<sup>th</sup> May, a similar date to 2021, but there were no further reports of them, suggesting that they might not have survived.

### **Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

### Occasional visitor



The tame bird that arrived at Whitlingham in August 2019, later colour ringed blue J96, was still present at the start of the year but appeared to have departed by early spring – the last report of it was on 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr. It was then reported four more times in Norwich city centre, lastly near the yacht station on 21<sup>st</sup> Apr.

An un-ringed bird (see photo) was present on the Great Broad on 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> May (DL, KL) and again on 4<sup>th</sup> July (DL). A sighting of one on the Great Broad (so legs not visible) on 5<sup>th</sup> May might have referred to either bird. **Photo: Drew Lyness** 

# **Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

### Common resident



Numbers throughout most of the year varied anywhere between 1-50, with the exception of the usual summer peak in June/July. Three figure counts were all in June: 150 on 6<sup>th</sup>, 160 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 407 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 414 on 19<sup>th</sup>. The counts of 400+ are the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest site counts respectively, behind a count of 445 from 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2013. In July the highest count was 80 on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Only one brood noted at Whitlingham this year, two recently fledged

birds on the Great Broad on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May.

Five birds were fitted with white darvic leg rings at Whitlingham during 2022. So far all of the re-sightings have been confined to the Norwich area, with evidence of movement between a small flock of Greylag Geese at Wensum Park moving to Whitlingham over the summer.

### **Photo: James Emerson**

# **Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Occasional flyover

Flocks of Pink-footed Geese flew over Norwich regularly during the second winter period, so many birds would have flown through the area unrecorded. Flocks were noted over on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov, 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Nov, plus a flock of around 100 over Thorpe Marshes on 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec.

## Mute Swan Cygnus olor

#### Common resident



As usual numbers peaked in June when 120 on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 107 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 110 on 19<sup>th</sup>. A minimum of three nests noted at Whitlingham during April/May, one on the Little Broad and two on the Great Broad. Two broods of two cygnets each were present on the Great Broad on 19<sup>th</sup> June, but there was no sign of any with the Little Broad pair. A pair also nested at Thorpe but no records of cygnets were submitted so its success is unknown.

The count of four Mute Swans on the November WeBS count was the lowest such count for any month for over ten years, and raised fears that some may have succumbed to avian influenza. Many of the Whitlingham birds are ringed and so far however there have not been any records sent in of deceased ringed birds from the area, so their location is a mystery.

The Norwich Swan Project colour-ringing scheme continued this year with a further 16 swans ringed at Whitlingham or Thorpe River Green (see article on pages 27-28 for a brief update). Interesting movements of Whitlingham-ringed birds this year include one in north-west Norfolk and one in Great Yarmouth, whilst a swan ringed at Oulton Broad near Lowestoft was also reported at Whitlingham. **Photo: James Emerson** 

## \* Bewick's Swan Cygnus columbianus

Rare flyover



Three were seen and photographed flying east over Whitlingham C.P. on 15<sup>th</sup> Dec (RC). They had earlier been seen flying over the city.

\* Whooper Swan Cygnus cygnus

(<u>www.robinchittenden.co.uk</u>)

Photo: © Robin Chittenden



Rare flyover

Two adults were found on Trowse Water Meadows on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov (ME, CS) but departed later the same day. This is a rare species locally, even more so on the ground. Based on posts on social media and the bird news services there appeared to be a modest arrival of Whooper Swans throughout Eastern England either side of this date. This sighting has similarities to the only other record of non-flyover Whooper Swans in the Whitlingham area during

the past ten years, which was when two were seen on the Great Broad on 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 2016 before later flying off eastwards. **Photo: James Emerson** 

# **Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Common resident.



A similar pattern of occurrence to 2021. As usual numbers generally less than 20 and peaked in early summer with 69 on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 49 on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 46 on 19<sup>th</sup> June and 42 on 17<sup>th</sup> July.

No records of goslings early in the year, but a brood of three young goslings on 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug, all of which survived until at least 19<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

### \* Shelduck Tadorna tadorna

Scarce spring visitor

Two present on Whitlingham Great Broad 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Apr (DF, DR, DL) and three flew south on 5<sup>th</sup> May (per eBird).

# Mandarin Aix galericulata

Scarce visitor (one bird regularly roosts)



The local drake roosted on the Great Broad slipway regularly during January, and was then periodically reported until 17<sup>th</sup> Apr. Photos show that it has a problem with its left eye, although otherwise it appears healthy.

It was reported at Whitlingham again from 6<sup>th</sup> Sept but not with any regularity, and it was also seen occasionally at Thorpe River Green.

Photo: Drew Lyness

# \* Garganey Spatula querquedula

Scarce spring migrant



One record, a drake seen and photographed on the Great Broad on  $14^{th}$  Mar (DR).

Photo: David Ratcliffe

# Shoveler Spatula clypeata

# Regular winter visitor



Four present at the start of the year, rising to 17 from 5<sup>th</sup> Jan. Initially these were split across the site (13 Great Broad, 4 St Andrews Broad) however all 17 were seen on the Great Broad on 10<sup>th</sup> Jan. Ten still present on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb, 6 on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar and still present on At Andrews Broad until at least 8<sup>th</sup> Apr. Last seen at Whitlingham Great Broad on 12<sup>th</sup> Apr when ten present, but a pair were on St Andrews Broad on 4<sup>th</sup> May and last noted there on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

First noted back on 28<sup>th</sup> Oct when two on St Andrews Broad, with six on the Great Broad on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. Numbers increased in mid-December around the time of a spell of cold weather, peaking at 27 on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec (all on Whitlingham Great Broad) and 15<sup>th</sup> Dec (21 on the Great Broad, 6 on St Andrews Broad). **Photo: Gary White** 

# Gadwall Mareca strepera

### Common winter visitor



Around 200 present at Whitlingham on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan, but counts closer to 100 for the rest of the month. By March numbers no higher than 41, and April no more than 11. Last of spring three seen on the Great Broad on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

First noted back on  $9^{th}$  Sept but numbers not reaching double figures until 35 on St Andrews Broad on  $19^{th}$  Oct. The peak count for the second winter period was 112 on both  $11^{th}$  and  $15^{th}$  Dec.

# Wigeon Mareca penelope

# **Photo: Gary White**



Scarce winter visitor

No double-figure counts reported this year. One present on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan then two seen on several dates mid-month. No February records and only recorded in March as a calling bird heard flying over on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar. On 1<sup>st</sup> Apr six on the Great Broad, and a drake remained until at least 4<sup>th</sup> Apr.

First returning bird seen on 6<sup>th</sup> Sept, an early date, and remained throughout the month, often on the slipway

with Mallards. Highest count of the second winter period was five on 29<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

# **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*



#### Common resident

Typically between 40-70 present throughout the year, with occasional peaks as a result of influxes from elsewhere in the catchment. These included 97 on 11<sup>th</sup> Jan (69 present earlier in the day), 85 on 17<sup>th</sup> July and 116 on 11<sup>th</sup> Sept.

Two or three broods noted, 11 ducklings on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 5 older ducklings on 15<sup>th</sup> May might refer to the same family. One other duckling with a female present on the latter date.

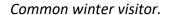
Photo: Gary White

### \* Pintail Anas acuta

Scarce winter visitor

Three reported on the Great Broad on 5<sup>th</sup> Feb (per eBird). These were not photographed but the timing is fairly typical of this species here.

## Teal Anas crecca





Counts of 20-30 made on both the Great Broad and St Andrews Broad regularly during January, with a high count of around 190 on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan when 128 counted on St Andrew's Broad and c60 on the Great Broad at the same time. Single-figure counts then from February until 27<sup>th</sup> Apr.

First noted back on 10<sup>th</sup> Sept but numbers generally low, the highest count 16 on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec.

# **Photo: Gary White**

# **Pochard** Aythya ferina

### Common winter visitor



A poor year for this species (see Justin Lansdell's article on pages 17-21 for a more detailed look at the recent decline in wintering Pochard here). The sole double-figure counts 12 on  $3^{rd}$  Jan, 13 on  $23^{rd}$  Feb and 11 on  $20^{th}$  Dec. Otherwise 1-9 present until  $12^{th}$  Apr, a female on St Andrews Broad on  $2^{nd}$  Oct and again 1-9 from  $1^{st}$  Nov until the year end.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

# **Tufted Duck** Aythya fuligula

#### Common winter visitor



Numbers fluctuated a lot during January. A base of around 200 present, with a year high count of 425 on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan and 354 on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan. Numbers still high during February, with a high count of 340 on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb. March peak 196 on 7<sup>th</sup> and April peak 143 on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Last of spring two on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

First returnees on 29th Sept, building to around 200 in

November and a high count of 261 on 20<sup>th</sup> Dec. An bird with a pink beak was present from November onwards (see the article on page 26 for photos)

Photo: Drew Lyness

# \* Greater Scaup Aythya marila

## Scarce winter visitor



An exceptional winter for this species, with a minimum of five individuals present at various times between 27<sup>th</sup> Nov and 29<sup>th</sup> Dec (various observers). The five were an adult drake, a 1w drake and three females, with a maximum of four of them present concurrently on 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Dec, which is a site record count (previously three). For more details see the article on pages 9 - 13.

Photo: © Robin Chittenden (<u>www.robinchittenden.co.uk</u>)

## \* Common Scoter Melanitta nigra

### Near-annual visitor



A female-type bird found on the Great Broad on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov (DFi), was photographed and present until 19<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

## Goldeneye Bucephala clangula

## Scarce winter visitor

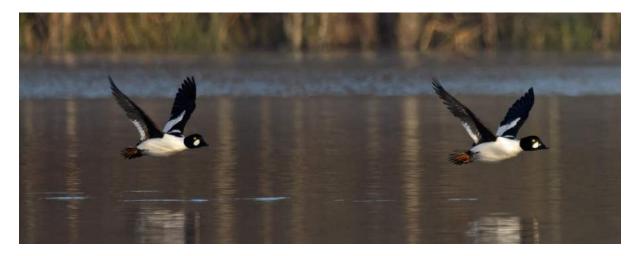


Photo: © Robin Chittenden (<u>www.robinchittenden.co.uk</u>)

A maximum of 4 birds seen at any one time between 1<sup>st</sup> Jan and 26<sup>th</sup> Feb, although sightings involve at least 6 individuals (1 adult male, 1 first-winter male and 4 females).

In the second winter period 2 present from 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov, including one adult drake (similar to 2021 when 2 present from 7<sup>th</sup> Nov). Six present on several dates, with seven on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. Sightings involved a minimum of eight individuals (3 drakes, 1 adult female, 4 first-winter females).

# \* Goosander Mergus merganser

Scarce winter visitor



Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

A drake flew over the Great Broad on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb (DL). The timing fits with the departure of a drake present in the UEA Broad area for 8 days previously.

In the autumn a female was found on the Great Broad on 8<sup>th</sup> Nov (DL), with two females from 15<sup>th</sup> Nov (DL) and intermittently into December. On 16<sup>th</sup> Dec four present, the two long-staying females and an additional pair (DF).

#### Pheasant Phasianus colchicus

## Fairly common resident



Present throughout the area in low numbers — a scattering of sightings from both Thorpe Marshes and Whitlingham C.P.

**Photo: Gary White** 

**Swift** Apus

Common spring visitor

Not seen until 29<sup>th</sup> Apr. The only count of note was of 110 over the Great Broad on 11<sup>th</sup> May. The last sighting of the year was on 17<sup>th</sup> July. The Swift tower in the Whitlingham barn car park remains unused.

### **Cuckoo** Cuculus canorus

Scarce spring migrant

One heard and seen at Thorpe Marshes by two separate observers on 14<sup>th</sup> Apr was a new earliest record for the site (previously 16<sup>th</sup> Apr). One calling from Whitlingham on 17<sup>th</sup> Apr and then 2 there on 27<sup>th</sup> Apr. Seen or heard on various dates during May, with three birds present on 23<sup>rd</sup> May – a male and 'bubbling' female at Thorpe Marshes and another calling male heard across the river at Whitlingham. Last noted on at Thorpe Marshes on 10<sup>th</sup> June.

# Feral Pigeon Columba livia

Common resident

Flocks around the edges of the recording area, records mostly from January to May although the birds involved are presumably resident.

# Stock Dove Columba oenas

Scarce resident



An unobtrusive resident species here. Three flew over the Great Broad on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan and this remained the highest count of the year, with many records of one or two birds.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

**Woodpigeon** Columba palumbus

Common resident

A common resident species with additional birds flying over early mornings. Counts of 240 on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr and 158 on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov were of note and presumably involved birds flying over.

Eighteen records this year, of between 1-4 birds, mostly via eBird. The majority of sightings were from Whitlingham C.P. but sightings were also made at Thorpe Marshes on 8<sup>th</sup> Apr, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May and 20<sup>th</sup> Aug.

## Water Rail Rallus aquaticus

Secretive resident/winter visitor



Up to three heard at Whitlingham and two at Thorpe Marshes during the first winter period, both likely to be under-counts. Heard at Thorpe Marshes on several dates in April plus 6<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Birds heard again at Thorpe Marshes from 5<sup>th</sup> Aug, mostly singles but 2 on 29<sup>th</sup> Sept and 16<sup>th</sup> Nov. Birds heard at Whitlingham from 4<sup>th</sup> Nov with 4 noted on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. **Photo: Roger Parker** 

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* 

Common resident



Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Present all year round both sides of the river with a high count of 14 at Whitlingham C.P. on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan and 15<sup>th</sup> Mar. At least two broods raised on the Great Broad, with an independent juvenile noted on 13<sup>th</sup> Aug and two fairly old juveniles on 11<sup>th</sup> Sept.

### Coot Fulica atra

## Resident/Common winter visitor



Numbers typically 70-100 during January and February, although 150 noted on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Numbers below 30 in March then single figures until September. Second winter peak counts were 124 in Nov and 141 in Dec.

A single bird was colour-ringed by UEA ringing group in October but so far it has remained at Whitlingham.

**Photo: Gary White** 

\* Crane Grus grus



# Scarce spring flyover

Three sightings this year, all in the first half of the year. Interestingly all sightings around midday (but beware observer bias – birders visiting on their lunch break?!) One flew west over Whitlingham C.P. at 11:29 on 9<sup>th</sup> Jan (SWo), one over Thorpe Marshes at 13:34 on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar (SW) and one flew north over Whitlingham at "midday" on 7<sup>th</sup> May (JS). **Photo: Stuart White** 

**Little Grebe** Tachybaptus ruficollis

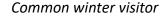




Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Numbers peaked at 18 on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan (a new high count since these reports began – previous record was 16), with maxima of 10 in February, 3 in March and 2 in April. Last of spring was on 27<sup>th</sup> Apr. Seen again from 14<sup>th</sup> Oct, numbers rising to 14 by 17<sup>th</sup> Dec.

## **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

#### Resident



Numbers generally in single figures with the exception of 12 on 6<sup>th</sup> June and on various dates in November when the peak was 14 on 24<sup>th</sup> (the same peak count as in 2021).

No nest noted this year but a pair with a juvenile bird were seen on the Great Broad on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July, with another seen on St Andrew's Broad on 9<sup>th</sup> Sept.

**Photo: Gary White** 

# \* Slavonian Grebe Podiceps nigricollis

Rare winter visitor



Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

One found on Whitlingham Great Broad on 31<sup>st</sup> Oct (ME) was the first at Whitlingham since January 2013. It was last seen on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov, but was seemingly absent on quite a few days in between those dates. The arrival date is the earliest area record for this species – most other records are of birds arriving in December or January (with a record of a summer plumaged bird in April an outlier). For more photos and discussion see the article on pages 14-16.

# **Oystercatcher** Haematopus ostralegus

Regular spring visitor

First seen at Whitlingham on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb (a new earliest site record) and at Thorpe on 12<sup>th</sup> Feb. A high count of four at Whitlingham on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb and again on 14<sup>th</sup> Mar, with 1-3 seen on a range of dates until 27<sup>th</sup> June.

#### \* Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta

Rare spring visitor

One record – a bird calling multiple times as it flew west over the Great Broad after dark (DL, LC).



Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

During February one over Whitlingham on 13<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 25 over on 14<sup>th</sup>. During the spring sightings restricted to Thorpe Marshes when one 6<sup>th</sup> May, seven 21<sup>st</sup> June and 11 on 27<sup>th</sup> June. Several flocks flew over Whitlingham in November and December, including 110 on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov and 36 on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec.

# \* Golden Plover Pluvialis apricaria

Rare passage migrant

One flew over Whitlingham C.P. on 13th Feb (DA).

# \* Grey Plover Pluvialis squatarola

Rare occasional migrant

Two circling Whitlingham Great Broad calling on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov were initially found by DL but then also heard by SW as they flew over Thunder Lane at Thorpe St Andrew.

### \* **Dunlin** Calidris alpina

Scarce passage migrant

One flying around Whitlingham Great Broad in foggy conditions on 28<sup>th</sup> Nov (DL).

## \* Woodcock Scolopax rusticola

Scarce winter visitor

Three sightings in the first winter period, all from Whitlingham C.P. seen from the main path around the Great Broad - 13<sup>th</sup> Jan (DL), 1<sup>st</sup> Feb (LC) and two on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb (DL). In the second winter period one seen flying past the barn café on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov (DL) and two detected using a thermal imager on Trowse Meadow during a cold spell on 15<sup>th</sup> Dec.

# \* Jack Snipe Lymnocrypters minimus

Scarce winter visitor

Likely to be under-recorded as a result of its cryptic behaviour. The only records this year were from Thorpe Marshes where one on 3<sup>rd</sup> and two on 25<sup>th</sup> Apr (both per eBird). Interestingly none were found on seemingly suitable habitat at Trowse Meadows on 15<sup>th</sup> Dec despite the use of a thermal imager (which did find Woodcock as noted in the above account).

## **Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

#### Common winter visitor

A rather poor year for records of this species, which is almost certainly under-recorded at Thorpe Marshes out on the inaccessible areas of marsh. Noted as present at Thorpe in February, March, October, November and December. At Whitlingham one on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar, four on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov and two on 16<sup>th</sup> Dec.

# **Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypolucos*

Spring migrant



First seen at Whitlingham on 25<sup>th</sup> Apr and then on various dates until 15<sup>th</sup> May. A flock of four noted there on 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May. A sighting at Thorpe Marshes on 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug was the only 'autumn' passage bird noted.

**Photo: Gary White** 

# \* Green Sandpiper Tringa ochropus

Scarce spring migrant

Once again only a single record of this once regular species. This year rather than in spring one (perhaps a bird overwintering nearby) was seen and heard calling over the Great Broad on 28<sup>th</sup> Dec (DL).

# \* Redshank Tringa totanus

Scarce spring migrant

A single record this year, of two seen flying over Trowse railway bridge towards Whitlingham on 4<sup>th</sup> Apr (WW).

## Black-headed Gull Chroicocephalus ridibundus

Common resident



Numbers on the Great Broad up to c330 in the first winter period. In November daytime numbers peaked at 400, whilst 320 were seen in cold conditions on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. Large numbers of gulls fly eastwards over Whitlingham to roost every evening, some of which often briefly land before continuing their journey, however on at least two occasions (17<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> Dec) c1000 appeared to roost on the Great Broad along with c200 Common Gulls.

There were not many foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls reported from the area this year, but there were some interesting recoveries from the UEA ringing group project that has ringed gulls locally – see the article on pages 29-33 for details.

Photo: James Emerson

# \* Little Gull Hydrocoloeus minutus

## Scarce spring migrant



A winter-plumaged adult over the Great Broad on 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar (DL) is the earliest record for the area, and two were present the following day (RP). The only other spring bird was a summer-plumaged adult on 25<sup>th</sup> Apr (SW).

A record on the Great Broad on 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov (DL) and photographed by JS was unusual – only the 3<sup>rd</sup> autumn record here and the first from November.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

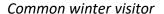
\* Mediterranean Gull Ichthyaetus melanocephalus Scarce spring migrant



Two summer-plumage adults on Whitlingham Great Broad on 21<sup>st</sup> Apr (DL) and a 2cy dropped in at the same site briefly on 25<sup>th</sup> Apr (DL) before flying off eastwards.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

**Common Gull** Larus canus





Numbers relatively stable at the start of the year with up to 20 present. An estimated 350 flew over on the way to roost on 1<sup>st</sup> Mar. Last bird of spring noted on 15<sup>th</sup> May, however one also seen on 16<sup>th</sup> June (JL), an unusual date. Returning birds present from 9<sup>th</sup> Oct. As noted with the Black-headed Gull account, unusually there appeared to be a proper gull roost on the Great Broad (as opposed to pre-roost gatherings) on 17<sup>th</sup> Dec when 200 birds present

and similarly on 27<sup>th</sup> Dec when 210 Common Gulls were amongst c1000 Black-headed Gulls.

**Photo: James Emerson** 

### \* Great Black-backed Gull Larus marinus

#### Occasional visitor



Fourteen records considered, two of which excluded from final analysis. Some records on consecutive days presumably relate to the same bird. All singles except a report of four on  $16^{th}$  Mar (per eBird, no photo). Details:  $3^{rd}$  &  $4^{th}$  Jan,  $5^{th}$ - $8^{th}$  Feb,  $28^{th}$  Feb, 4 on  $16^{th}$  Mar,  $14^{th}$  Oct,  $24^{th}$  Nov and  $17^{th}/18^{th}$  Dec.

**Photo: Roger Parker** 

**Herring Gull** Larus argentatus

Common winter visitor

Numbers variable but typically up to 50 present on the Great Broad, with large numbers flying over in the evening. One particularly high count, 350 on 17<sup>th</sup> Dec, one of the evenings when a large mixed gull roost was noted on the Great Broad. There were no reports of colour-ringed birds this year.

# **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*

Common summer visitor



Single-figure counts during January and February with the exception of 10 on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb. Numbers increased in early spring, with 49 on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr and a year high of 85 on 14<sup>th</sup> May (equalled on 13<sup>th</sup> Aug).

Most birds will be sub-species *graellsii*, however a slightly smaller, darker bird on 19<sup>th</sup> May might have been *intermedius*. The third subspecies, Baltic Gull (*fuscus*) is

both rare and difficult to separate from *intermedius*, so any future claims of that subspecies would need to be assessed by the relevant rarities committee. **Photo: Gary White** 

### [\* CASPIAN TERN Hydroprogne caspia

National rarity

Confirmation that the 2021 bird was accepted by the Norfolk County Rarities Committee – see The Birds of Whitlingham & Thorpe 2021, pages 6-7 for details of the sighting.]

### Common Tern Sterna hirundo

Common spring migrant



First of the year at Whitlingham on 10<sup>th</sup> Apr, a day later than in 2020 and 2021. Several noted throughout the month, peaking at six on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Last noted on 11<sup>th</sup> July although possibly present but un-recorded for a few days after that.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

# **Arctic Tern** Sterna paradisaea

# Scarce spring migrant



A small passage of birds in late April, firstly one on 24<sup>th</sup> Apr, seven on 25<sup>th</sup> and six remaining on 26<sup>th</sup>.

The only other sighting reported was two on 1st May.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

### **Cormorant** *Phalocrocorax carbo*

## Common winter visitor



Roost counts of 87 on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan and 82 on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan were the highest counts of the year. During the day numbers more typically around 30-40 during winter and single figures over the summer. The only roost count received in the second winter period was 80 on 24<sup>th</sup> Dec.

\* Shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Photo: David Ratcliffe

Local rarity



A 1<sup>st</sup>-winter bird found on Whitlingham Great Broad on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan (DL) remained until 20<sup>th</sup> Jan. This was the first Whitlingham record since September 2011 and the first Norwich bird since 2013. For pictures and more detail see the article on pages 6 - 8.

**Photo: Dave Andrews** 

#### **Bittern** Botaurus stellaris

### Scarce but annual winter visitor



One first seen on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan, with two seen on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. One or both of these birds continued to be seen until 11<sup>th</sup> Mar. On 17<sup>th</sup> Feb three birds were present, the two photographed here near the bird screen and a third opposite the slipway. The only previous record of three Bitterns at Whitlingham was on 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013. Despite seemingly ideal weather conditions to bring them in, there were no sightings in the second winter period.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

# Grey Heron Ardea cinerea





A maximum count of seven this year, seen on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan and 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. A pair bred in a nest on the north shore of the Great Broad – see article on pages 22 & 23 for more details.

**Photo: Gary White** 

# \* Great White Egret Ardea alba

# Rare flyover

Only a single record in the first winter period, one seen from Thorpe Marshes flying west over the railway bridge on 12<sup>th</sup> Jan (CD). In November two flew along the river past Thorpe Marshes towards Whitlingham on 15<sup>th</sup> (BB), the first record of multiple birds here. One of them appeared to linger in the area, being seen again at Whitlingham 16-18<sup>th</sup> Dec (but not present all day) and then on the morning of 29<sup>th</sup> Dec (RC) having seemingly roosted on the Great Broad island overnight.

# **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Regular winter visitor



Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Near resident now, seen in every month of the year except July. Numbers roosting varied but nine on the Great Broad island on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Dec was only one off the site record of 10, set on 13<sup>th</sup> Dec 2019. Monthly high counts, mostly either of roosting birds seen in late evening or early morning are shown below:

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Count	5	3	4	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	6	9

# Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus



# Resident

Seen in most months of the year. All records of single birds except three seen on  $8^{th}$  Mar.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

# **Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Fairly regular flyover

As in 2021 most sightings in the first six months of the year, with a mixture of male and female records. Two seen together over Thorpe Marshes on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr and over Whitlingham Great Broad on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec, whilst a red-tagged young male bird (code not read) was seen at Thorpe Marshes on 29<sup>th</sup> Apr.

#### **Red Kite** Milvus milvus

# Scarce flyovers



Recorded on six dates this year, over Whitlingham on  $26^{th}$  Jan and two on  $8^{th}$  Mar, then a cluster of records at Thorpe Marshes perhaps relating to the same bird on  $6^{th}$ ,  $8^{th}$  and  $13^{th}$  Apr. In the latter half of the year one over Whitlingham C.P. on  $12^{th}$  Dec.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

# **Buzzard** Buteo buteo

# Resident nearby



Between 1-4 seen regularly throughout the year, with sightings from every month except June (likely to be the result of low observer coverage rather than genuine absence). Most of these sightings probably relate to birds breeding locally, but eight up over the Great Broad on 3<sup>rd</sup> Mar suggests some wandering or passage birds.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

# Barn Owl Tyto alba

Scarce resident

Very few sightings this year – one seen over Whitlingham Marsh on 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Jan, then at Whitlingham C.P. on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Feb.

# **Tawny Owl** Strix aluco

Scarce resident

Lack of records presumably down to the lack of night-time visits. One heard at Whitlingham on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb and three there on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar, plus two at Thorpe Marshes on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec.

# **Kingfisher** Alcedo atthis

Scarce resident



A spread of records from Whitlingham, Thorpe Marshes and along the River Yare throughout the year. Highest count from a single visit were five on 10<sup>th</sup> Sept and again on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

# **Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopus major*

Resident

Recorded during each month with the exception of October (although undoubtedly present all year round). Drumming heard on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb.

# **Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Resident



Regularly seen at Whitlingham, with a scattering of records from Thorpe Marshes. All records of 1-2 birds with the exception of three on 1<sup>st</sup> May.

**Photo: Gary White** 

### **Kestrel** Falco tinnunculus

Resident



Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Sightings from both Thorpe Marshes and Whitlingham C. P. and presumed to be resident in the area, however most records clustered into spring (April to early June) and November-December.

## **Hobby** Falco subbuteo

# Scarce passage migrant

A similar pattern to the previous year, sightings on 11<sup>th</sup> May at Whitlingham C.P and 12<sup>th</sup> May at Thorpe Marshes then nothing until September when one at Whitlingham on 10<sup>th</sup> and two there on 13<sup>th</sup>.

# **Peregrine** Falco peregrinus

# Scarce flyovers

The cathedral pair fledged two young this year. Despite this there continues to be a paucity of sightings from the area, with only four reports  $-2^{nd}$  Jan,  $14^{th}$  Jan and  $3^{rd}$  Feb (all from Thorpe Marshes) and  $6^{th}$  Feb (Whitlingham C.P.)

# Ring-necked Parakeet Psittacula krameri

Scarce visitor



One seen on a range of dates from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan until 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb, typically flying in from the direction of Thorpe St Andrew and roosting on the island on the Great Broad just before dusk. Two were present at Whitlingham C.P. on 19<sup>th</sup> Oct (KS). An escapee was present on 10<sup>th</sup> Sept (with a captive ring – see article on pages 24 & 25) and possible the same bird might account for various sightings during autumn.

Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

# Jay Garrulus glandarius

### Common resident



Seen regularly throughout the year with a high count of five on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> Mar.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

## Magpie Pica pica

### Common resident



Present throughout the recording area. The only roost counts reported were 105 on  $5^{th}$  Jan, 101 on  $14^{th}$  Jan and 75 on  $24^{th}$  Dec.

**Photo: Gary White** 

### Jackdaw Coloeus monedula

#### Common resident

Various estimated counts of 200 or 300, with higher counts including 995 at Whitlingham Marsh on 12th Jan, 780 at Whitlingham C.P. on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar and 460 on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan.

# **Rook** Corvus frugilegus

Resident nearby but scarce flyover here

Resident nearby but only occasionally flying over and perhaps over-recorded (not all records included in this summary). A flock of 13 east over Whitlingham Marshes on 12<sup>th</sup> Jan, one over Whitlingham on 13<sup>th</sup> Jan, one over on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2 over on 25<sup>th</sup> Apr, one over on 22<sup>nd</sup> May and 14 over on 10<sup>th</sup> Sept.

### **Carrion Crow** Corvus corone

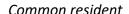




Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

A common species, with a high count of 20 reported on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb and 26<sup>th</sup> Apr. No reports of chick predation noted, but one was seen eating fish on 16<sup>th</sup> Dec during the cold spell (see picture).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater* 

# Scarce resident



Regularly seen in the first six months of the year, plus two on  $10^{th}$  Sept. All records from the Whitlingham side of the river and all relate to 1-3 individuals with the exception of seven on  $13^{th}$  Jan.

**Photo: Gary White** 

## Marsh Tit Poecile palustris

#### Scarce resident

Eleven sightings this year – one from Thorpe Marshes on 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan but all of the rest from Whitlingham C.P. All records of single birds except two on 13<sup>th</sup> Jan.

# Blue Tit Cyanistes caeruleus

Common resident



Common throughout the recording area.

Photo: David Ratcliffe

**Great Tit** Parus major

Common resident

Common throughout the recording area.

# **Skylark** Alauda arvensis

Scarce flyovers

Five sightings this year, all from Whitlingham C.P. and presumably relating to flyovers: two on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan then singles on 30<sup>th</sup> Apr, 4<sup>th</sup> Nov, 5<sup>th</sup> Nov and 12<sup>th</sup> Nov.

# **Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Common spring visitor

A poor year for hirundines locally. First of the year seen on 1<sup>st</sup> Apr, with a peak count of 128 on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr. A flock of 40 on 23<sup>rd</sup> Apr was the only other count of note. The last sighting of spring was two at Thorpe Marshes on 24<sup>th</sup> May, after which the only sighting was from Thorpe Marshes again on 21<sup>st</sup> July.

### **Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Common summer visitor

A similar occurrence pattern to Sand Martin, also being first seen on 1<sup>st</sup> Apr and with 40 on 23<sup>rd</sup> Apr as part of a mixed hirundine flock. Reported daily between 23<sup>rd</sup> Apr and 4<sup>th</sup> May, but after that two at Thorpe Marshes on 19<sup>th</sup> May and three there 23<sup>rd</sup> May, then one at Whitlingham on 3<sup>rd</sup> July and five there on 17<sup>th</sup> July.

# House Martin Delichon urbicum

Common spring visitor

First seen on  $7^{th}$  Apr, with a scattering of other sightings in April, mostly near the end of the month and as with the previous species peaking at c40 on  $23^{rd}$  Apr. Last of spring noted on  $1^{st}$  May, and nine seen on  $10^{th}$  Sept.

### **Cetti's Warbler** Cettia cetti

#### Common resident



Common at both Whitlingham and Thorpe Marshes. Highest counts of calling birds noted at each site were eight and four respectively.

Photo: David Ratcliffe

Long-tailed Tit Aegithalos caudatus

### Common resident



Common throughout the recording area. A high count of 38 noted around Whitlingham C.P. on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Photo: David Ratcliffe

Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus

### Declining summer visitor

Common summer visitor

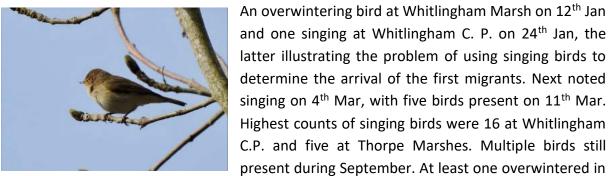


First singing bird at Whitlingham on 11th Apr, followed by one at Thorpe Marshes on the following day. This arrival is much later than in 2021 (31st Mar).

Numbers stable year-on-year, with up to three reported from Whitlingham and another two at Thorpe Marshes.

Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita

**Photo: Gary White** 



and one singing at Whitlingham C. P. on 24th Jan, the latter illustrating the problem of using singing birds to determine the arrival of the first migrants. Next noted singing on 4th Mar, with five birds present on 11th Mar.

Highest counts of singing birds were 16 at Whitlingham C.P. and five at Thorpe Marshes. Multiple birds still present during September. At least one overwintered in

the second winter period, with sightings from Whitlingham on 29th Nov, 2nd (singing!), 8th and 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. Photo: David Ratcliffe

# [\* Siberian Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita tristis

County rarity]

A Chiffchaff seen on 6<sup>th</sup> Jan at Whitlingham was thought by the finder to probably be Siberian Chiffchaff, but it couldn't be re-found to confirm the ID.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* 

Common summer visitor



First of the year at Thorpe Marshes on 10<sup>th</sup> Apr, over a week later than in 2021. Seemingly a large arrival on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr when 12 present at Thorpe Marshes and one at Whitlingham C.P. At Whitlingham five on 1<sup>st</sup> May was a decent count.

Photo: David Ratcliffe

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* 

Common summer visitor

First recorded at Thorpe Marshes on 14<sup>th</sup> Apr and Whitlingham C.P. from 21<sup>st</sup> Apr (when three singing birds heard). Maximum counts of 14 at Whitlingham and four at Thorpe Marshes.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia* 

Scarce summer visitor



First reeling bird at Thorpe Marshes on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr, the same date as in 2021. Four reeling on 26<sup>th</sup> Apr remained the highest count of the year. Later in the season at least two were again reeling on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

Blackcap Sylvia atricapilla

Common summer visitor



First singing bird heard at Whitlingham on 21<sup>st</sup> Mar, two days earlier than in 2021. Ten singing around Whitlingham C.P. on 5<sup>th</sup> Apr and 14 on 1<sup>st</sup> May, comparable numbers to the previous year. An overwintering bird seen at Whitlingham C.P. on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

# Garden Warbler Sylvia borin

### Scarce summer visitor



First of the year one at Whitlingham on 26<sup>th</sup> Apr, with three at Thorpe Marshes on 28<sup>th</sup> Apr. Four present at Whitlingham on 1<sup>st</sup> May, with the highest count of the year being six singing birds on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

**Photo: Gary White** 

# \* Lesser Whitethroat Curruca curruca

Scarce summer visitor

One at Whitlingham on 1st May (GW) was the sole record received this year.

## Whitethroat Curruca communis

## Common summer visitor



First heard at Whitlingham on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr and Thorpe Marshes the following day (a similar first arrival time to 2021). The highest count received was of eight at Whitlingham on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Last reported at Thorpe Marshes on 18<sup>th</sup> Aug.

**Photo: Gary White** 

**Goldcrest** Regulus regulus

## Common resident



Reported from Whitlingham throughout the first half of the year and then again in November and December. As in 2021 no records received from Thorpe Marshes.

Photo: David Ratcliffe

# **Wren** *Troglodytes* troglodytes

### Common resident



Widespread and common throughout the recording area.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea* 

### Scarce resident



Recorded from Whitlingham C.P. and Trowse Woods between January and March, presumably the easiest time to detect them as they protect territories. One in scrub along the riverbank at Thorpe Marshes on 18<sup>th</sup> Aug was of note, although opposite a large area of woodland.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

**Treecreeper** Certhia familiaris

### Common resident



Recorded during eight months of the year (although undoubtedly present all year round), with a maximum of four noted on 6<sup>th</sup> June.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

# **Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

### Scarce resident

A murmuration of c2000 over Thorpe Marshes on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan was seemingly not repeated. A further ten sightings over the year reflect the occasional nature of this species in recent years (with the exception of birds flying over early morning or late at night), with small flocks seen occasionally on the field opposite the CP. Most sightings were in March/April, although 10 present on 6<sup>th</sup> June and also noted on 29<sup>th</sup> Nov.

# **Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

## Common resident



Recorded from both Whitlingham C.P. and Thorpe Marshes throughout the year, typically in low numbers although eight seen/heard on 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr. Also an interesting record of ten heard flying over after dark in the evening of 15<sup>th</sup> Mar.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

Mistle Thrush Turdus viscivorus

## Scarce resident(?)



Only five records received this year, all from Whitlingham CP. Two on 7<sup>th</sup> Jan, singles on 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr and 21<sup>st</sup> Apr, two on 20<sup>th</sup> Nov and one on 29<sup>th</sup> Nov.

All records of this species are welcomed for future reports.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

**Redwing** Turdus iliacus

#### Common winter visitor



Small numbers present around Whitlingham and Trowse Woods, with larger flocks flying over at times, including c100 on 19<sup>th</sup> Jan, 80 on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar and 150 (flocks of 80 and 70) on 31<sup>st</sup> Mar. Last of spring noted on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

Few records in the second winter period, when seen from 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov onwards.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

**Blackbird** Turdus merula

Common resident

Common throughout the recording area.

# Fieldfare Turdus pilaris

Common winter visitor

Just three records of this species in 2022 - 18 at Thorpe Marshes on  $5^{th}$  Jan, one at Whitlingham on  $3^{rd}$  Apr and 36 at Whitlingham on  $5^{th}$  Nov.

All records of this species are welcomed for future reports.

### Common resident





Both photos: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Common throughout the recording area.

The individual pictured on the left was observed using a tunnelling mole as a way of finding food after hard frosts during December.

# [Black Redstart Phoenicurus ochruros

No recent records

Readers of the Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report might have noticed a spring record attributed to Thorpe Marshes, Norwich, in the 2021 report. Having checked this with the county recorder it was in fact an error, and relates to Thorpe Marshes, Haddiscoe]

### Stonechat Saxicola rubicola

Scarce winter migrant



A pair were present from the start of the year at Thorpe Marshes, and breeding was confirmed for the second year in a row when a recently fledged bird was seen there on 13<sup>th</sup> May (anecdotally it might have been seen as early as 6<sup>th</sup> May). A second juvenile was also noted on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

In addition to the resident pair, an additional adult male was noted at Thorpe Marshes on 4<sup>th</sup> May. All records in the second half of the year relate to one or two birds, with the exception of three on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. **Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

### \* Wheatear Oenanthe oenanthe

Rare spring visitor

One reported from Thorpe Marshes on 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr (per eBird). No photo but date and location are reasonable for this species, which is recorded on average every other year within the recording area.

# \* House Sparrow Passer domesticus

Rare wanderer from local populations

One record this year, at Whitlingham C.P. on 14th May (per eBird).

Observers are reminded that this is actually a very rare species within the recording area, so all records are welcomed, ideally photographed.

### **Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

Common resident



Photo: © Robin Chittenden (www.robinchittenden.co.uk)

Common throughout the recording area.

# \* Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava

Scarce spring flyover

A single record this year, one over Whitlingham C.P. on 24<sup>th</sup> Apr (per eBird).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea* 

Scarce resident

Eight records this year, one from Whitlingham Marsh and the others from Whitlingham C.P.

# Pied Wagtail Motacilla alba

Common resident



Resident and seen regularly throughout the year.

**Photo: Gary White** 

# **Meadow Pipit** Anthus pratensis

Passage migrant/winter visitor

Presumably under-recorded this year. Noted from Thorpe Marshes during February, March and October, whilst at Whitlingham two on 10<sup>th</sup> Sept, three on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov and two on 20<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Chaffinch Fringilla coelebs

Common resident

Widely seen throughout the recording area.

Brambling Fringilla montifringilla

Scarce winter visitor



Three records this year, all in early spring: one on 22<sup>nd</sup> Mar, one on 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr and three on 11<sup>th</sup> Apr (all at Whitlingham C.P.).

**Photo: Gary White** 

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* 

Scarce resident

Only seven records received, all at Whitlingham C.P. in the first half of the year. This represents a rather low return for a species that is presumably still resident on both sides of the river.

**Greenfinch** Chloris chloris

Fairly common resident

Many records from Whitlingham C.P. and also recorded sporadically from Thorpe Marshes. A particularly large roost of 80 birds was seen in trees near the barn café on 19<sup>th</sup> Jan, but doesn't appear to have been repeated as no other double-figure counts were received.

**Linnet** *Linaria cannabina* 

Scarce resident

Low numbers reported from both Whitlingham C.P. and Thorpe Marshes. Most records from spring, but also noted multiple times in January and November.

**Lesser Redpoll** Acanthis cabaret

Fairly scarce winter visitor



In the first winter period no more than six were present at Whitlingham C.P, where noted until 15<sup>th</sup> Mar.

In autumn reported again from 5<sup>th</sup> Nov, with a peak count of a flock of 30 on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov. No sightings received from Thorpe Marshes this year.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

### **Goldfinch** Carduelis carduelis

### Common resident

Present throughout the year, with no counts over 25.

# **Siskin** *Spinus spinus*





Typically flock size between 30-60, with high counts of 86 on 29<sup>th</sup> Jan and 119 on 6<sup>th</sup> Feb. One at Thorpe Marshes on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb was heard giving brief snatches of song.

First reported back on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov and then seen in small numbers at both Thorpe Marshes and Whitlingham C.P. The only count of note during November or December was 45 at Whitlingham on 20<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

# **Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

## Common summer visitor



Present at Whitlingham and Thorpe Marshes from January onwards, with singing birds first noted at Whitlingham on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. The highest count was eight at Thorpe Marshes on 6<sup>th</sup> May.

**Photo: David Ratcliffe** 

Total: 129 species

# Appendix A – Recorded species linked to reintroduction schemes

Species listed here are those that would otherwise have appeared in the main species list but are either known or suspected to have originated from reintroduction schemes rather than self-sustaining natural populations. This currently includes Corncrake, White Stork and White-tailed Eagles, but schemes for several other species are at various stages of development.

None this year.

# Appendix B – Recorded birds thought to be escapes or of dubious origin

Note that species on Category C of the British List (for example Barnacle Goose and Mandarin) without captive-type rings are typically given the benefit of the doubt and included in the main systematic list, so this category typically covers things like Black Swan, Muscovy Duck, Ruddy Shelduck etc.

# Ring-necked Parakeet Psittacula krameri

Scarce visitor



On 10<sup>th</sup> Sept one showed well in Alders at Whitlingham and was seen to be wearing a captive-type ring (see article on pages 24 & 25 for further pictures). This escaped bird might account for some or all of a series of records during autumn, with the exception of 19<sup>th</sup> Oct when two seen together at Whitlingham C.P. (KS).

**Photo: Gary White** 

# Appendix C – Birds reported from the area but not accepted onto the main list

Species listed here are those that have been reported but not included on the main species list. This will typically be national or county rarities, species not previously recorded in the area (or species that have been reported second-hand with insufficient detail) that have not been photographed or seen by multiple observers.

### \* Raven Corvus corax

Local rarity, slowly recolonising Norfolk

A pair of corvids heard and seen flying high south over Thorpe St Andrew towards Whitlingham on 1<sup>st</sup> Sept were thought by the observer to be Ravens, but he wasn't 100% sure and despite mentioning it on Twitter at the time unfortunately no local birders were able to corroborate the sighting. Towards the end of the year there were multiple sighting of Ravens in the mid Yare valley, which does provide some anecdotal evidence that these might indeed have been the first site Ravens.

# Appendix D – Hybrid birds

# **Canada x Greylag Goose**

Occasional visitor

Only two sightings this year, both associated with the summer peak in goose numbers - two on 16<sup>th</sup> June and one on 11<sup>th</sup> July.

**Greylag x Chinese Goose (aka domestic Swan Goose)**Resident

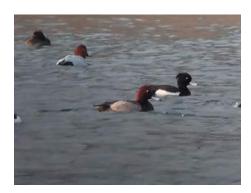


The long-staying bird, resident for over ten years, was still present at the start of the year, but was last seen on 5<sup>th</sup> May and has presumably passed away.

**Photo: Chris Lansdell** 

Aythya hybrid – Pochard x Ferruginous Duck(?)

Uncommon but previous records



This bird was present on Whitlingham Great Broad on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Whilst difficult to identify with any certainty from a single picture, the suggested ID for this one is Pochard x Ferruginous Duck.

**Photo: Drew Lyness** 

# Appendix E – Species notably not recorded in 2022

These are a selection of birds that have been seen frequently in the recording area (here defined as having occurred in at least four of the previous five years) but were not reported during 2022.

\* Red-legged Partridge Alectoris rufa

Scarce spring visitor

Although never frequent, this species had been seen for the past five years, usually being seen in early spring.

\* Little Ringed Plover Charadrius dubius

Scarce spring visitor

This species used to be recorded annually at Whitlingham, however there were no sightings in 2021 and it was again absent in 2022.

\* Whimbrel Numenius phaeophus

Scarce flyover

Recorded as a flyover in four of the past five years.

\* Curlew Numenius arguata

Scarce flyover

Recorded as a flyover in each of the past five years.

\* Greenshank Tringa nebularia

Scarce spring flyover

Recorded in four of the previous five years prior to 2022.

\* Black Tern Chlidonias niger

Scarce visitor

Recorded in four of the previous five years prior to 2022.

\* Water Pipit Anthus spinoletta

Rare winter visitor

Recorded in four of the previous five years prior to 2022.

\* Firecrest Regulus ignicapillus

Rare spring visitor

Recorded in four of the previous five years prior to 2022.

\* Common (=Mealy) Redpoll Acanthis flammea

Scarce winter visitor

Recorded in four of the previous five years prior to 2022.

\* Yellowhammer

Scarce flyover

Recorded in each of the past five years as a flyover, sometimes multiple records per year.

# Appendix F – Selected additional bird sightings from the Norwich area

These are species with no accepted records from within the recording area this year, but seen elsewhere around Norwich. Details are included here for general interest and in some cases as it might help to establish future patterns of occurrence within the area.

# \* Spotted Crake

Noc-mig record of one flying over Costessey on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

# \* Ringed Plover

One flew over Lakenham on 27th Sept.

## \* Whimbrel

A noc-mig record from Hellesdon on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr. Two flew over a south Norwich garden on 19<sup>th</sup> July, one over Costessey on 24<sup>th</sup> July and another over Earlham Road on 25<sup>th</sup> July

### \* Curlew

One over Thorpe St Andrew on 8<sup>th</sup> Mar, two over Britannia Road on 9<sup>th</sup> July, one over Thorpe St Andrew on 9<sup>th</sup> Aug and one over a south Norwich garden on 18<sup>th</sup> Oct.

# \* Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus

Former county rarity

One was seen flying over Hotblack Road in Norwich on 14<sup>th</sup> Mar, before being found on Earlham Marshes the following day. It remained in the Earlham/Bowthorpe area for several weeks.

# \* Ring Ouzel

One at Earlham Marsh on 15th Apr, also Bowthorpe Southern Park 4th May

## \* Black Redstart Phoenicurus ochruros

Four Black Redstarts within the Norwich Cathedral area in autumn suggested that they might have bred successfully there this year.

# Acknowledgements & initials for scarce/rare species

I am grateful to everyone who has reported birds from the Whitlingham area this year, be it directly to myself, to the bird news services, via WhatsApp groups or by posted sightings on Twitter. I am also grateful to members of the UEA Ringing Group who have provided additional information and answered queries about their work. I would particularly like to thank the following for providing records, information or photos:

P. Allen, D. Andrews (DA), A. Archer, S. Betts, S. Buck, B. Bufford (BB), R. Chittenden (RC), G. Clarke, L. Curson (LC), C. Durdin (CD), M. Eldridge (ME), N. Elsey, C. Emerson, J. Emerson, D. Farrow (DF), D. Filby (DFi), A. Greenizan, C. Gunn, M. Hoit, D. Holman, K. Langdon (KL), C. Lansdell, J. Lansdell (JL), S. Lee, D. Lyness (DL), M. McCarthy, J. Morris, R. Parker (RP), T. Phillips, D. Ratcliffe (DR), P. Safford, D. Russell, J. Sharpe (JS), C. Small, S. Smith, K. Sowter (KS), C. Spinks (CS), S. Vickers, W. Walmsley (WW), P. Walton, S. White (SW), G. White (GW) and S. Woodhouse (SWo).

This year I have included sightings taken from <u>eBird</u> to enhance the report. These were provided as a download and records were anonymised. Records of common species were used to create the summaries in the species accounts. Records of scarcer species from this dataset were assessed using the same criteria as records from named observers and if included are listed as 'per eBird'.

### Citations for the eBird dataset used is:

eBird Basic Dataset. Version: EBD\_relNov-2022. Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Nov 2022.

Photographers of pictures used in the report are: Dave Andrews, <u>Allan Archer</u>, <u>Robin Chittenden</u>, <u>James Emerson</u>, Chris Lansdell, <u>Justin Lansdell</u>, Drew Lyness, Roger Parker, David Ratcliffe, Gary White and Stuart White.

## **Local information**

The following websites regularly contain sightings from the Whitlingham area:

https://jamesbirdsandbeer.blogspot.co.uk/ (The author's blog, containing updates from Whitlingham & Thorpe, and a site guide and a site bird list)

http://www.honeyguide.co.uk/thorpemarshes.htm (Thorpe Marshes NWT unofficial site)

http://yarevalleywildlife.synthasite.com/ (Yare Valley Birding website)

# **Bird information services**

Several sightings and dates relate to sightings reported to the bird information services. If you are fortunate enough to find a rare or locally scarce bird, please report it to one of them. Contact websites and phone numbers of the main providers can be found below.

Rare Bird Alert (0207 0382820), BirdGuides (0333 5772473) or www.birdlineeastanglia.co.uk.