

Teesmouth Bird Club

Newsletter



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Thanks to the contributors to this issue:- Chris Sharp; Mike Leakey; Dave Britton; John Sharp; Ted Parker.

All unsolicited copy will be most welcome, ideally sent by email, or on 3.5" computer disk, using word processing software, but typed and handwritten copy is equally acceptable. Any topic concerned with birds or the local environment is grist to the mill.

MONTHLY SUMMARY by Chris Sharp

November

The 13th Pallas's Warbler of the autumn was trapped at the Zinc works Road (1st) and remained until 3rd. Several small flocks of Whooper Swans were seen on the North Tees Marshes during the month with 5 on Dormans Pool being the first. Five Waxwings at Brotton (4th) were the first of a large scale autumn influx into the county. As the month progressed more and more were seen with the largest flocks being 220 in Billingham, 142 in Hemlington and 50 in central Middlesbrough. A drake Common Scoter was on the river Tees by Portrack Marsh (5th). A Richard's Pipit was heard flying over Billingham Technology Park (7th) with another 'schreeping' over the Long Drag (9th). 5 Bewick's Swans on the sea off Marske (7th) were the first of the year of this increasingly scarce visitor to the area. A strong north-easterly (8th) produced 2 Sabine's Gulls off Hartlepool. A Black Redstart and an out of location Yellowhammer were also seen here and South Gare held a Firecrest and 3 Black Redstart. Another Firecrest was found at Hart Warren (9th) whilst 60 Scaup flying north at Hartlepool the same day was one of the largest passages of this duck in recent years. A Bewick's Swan was at Scaling Dam (10th). This site also attracted 3 Whooper Swans (16th) and a Smew, which remained into 2004. The Greylag flock by Saltholme Marsh attracted 3 Tundra Bean Geese (15th) with 6 Pink-footed Geese also in the area for comparison.

A single Greenshank remained around Greenabella Marsh (until 16th). This site also held up to 42 Twite during the month along with a flock of 420 Stock Doves. The Scoter flock off Parton Rocks, Hartlepool increased towards the month end. Some 220 Common Scoter were seen and up to 34 Velvet Scoter were seen, though numbers varied from day to day. A Long-tailed Duck was on Seal Sands (23rd). Small numbers of this sea duck used to regularly winter on Seal Sands with a large flock of Goldeneye. Any Goldeneye on Seal Sands are now noteworthy- a sad reflection on the demise of this area for diving duck.

The Green Sandpiper returned to winter at Portrack roundabout. 2 Taiga Bean Geese (27th-30th) were at the same location as the previously reported Tundra Bean Geese. A Firecrest in the Shrike Bushes at South Gare (29th) may have been the bird seen earlier in the month and it lingered into 2004.

The month finished with a Red-necked Grebe off Parton Rocks and a Slavonian Grebe amongst the huge flock of Coot on the Reclamation Pond (30th).

December

Waxwings continued to be reported in good numbers early in the month with 100 at Teesside Park, 40 in Billingham and 30 at Port Clarence being the largest flocks reported. Numbers were much reduced towards the month end as the birds moved further south. The Scoter flock off Hartlepool continued to attract Velvets and another flock off Saltburn held 20 Velvet and 300 Common Scoter and a single Long-tailed Duck. The Smew remained at Scaling Dam throughout the month and the first of the winter on the North Tees Marshes was on Dormans Pool (8th). It was joined by a second bird later in the month (a poor return compared to the last few winters). 3 Whooper Swans were on Dormans Pool (13th) while 3 Bewick's Swans were briefly on Saltholme Marsh (18th). 3 Barnacle Geese were also here the same day whilst a Red-necked Grebe joined the long staying Slavonian Grebe on the Reclamation Pond.

The generally mild weather meant a dearth of scarce winter visitors. A Greenshank was still around Seal Sands (to 24th), up to 31 Black-tailed Godwit were wintering on the North Tees Marshes along with a couple of Ruff. A Hooded Crow in the Dormans Pool/Hargreaves Quarry area late in the month was the rarest bird of a quiet month.

January

As usual year-tickers were out in force on New Years Day. The wintering Firecrest in the shrike bushes at South Gare proved attractive and was accompanied by 2 Chiffchaff. A Bittern was seen to fly in off the sea at South Gare (1st), land on the beach

briefly before flying off inland (a most unusual occurrence). 10 Crossbills were at Birkbrow (2nd) and 3 Bearded Tits flew over Dormans Pool (3rd). A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was seen again at Hutton (4th). The Green Sandpiper was again wintering at Portrack roundabout. A Red-necked Grebe was off Newburn (10th). A Buzzard was seen off here the same day being mobbed by large gulls. It was forced down into the sea, where it remained for a couple of minutes before trying to fly off. It was again forced down by the gulls and unfortunately drowned.

The regular adult Glaucous Gull failed to appear at Hartlepool this winter, so first-winters at Hargreaves Quarry (2nd) and Hartlepool (11th-12th) were much appreciated. 2 Mealy Redpolls were at Stillington Pond (14th) – a rarely visited site. A northerly blow (16th) saw an early Pomarine Skua fly past Hartlepool along with 2 Brent Geese. A single Brent Goose was on Seal Sands mid-month. A Great-northern Diver was in Jacksons Landing (17th) but remained for only the one day. Several small flocks of Waxwing were seen with 10 at Sainsburys, Middlesbrough and a few in Billingham. The Slavonian Grebe remained around Seal Sands or the Reclamation Pond all month and Smew numbers increased to 3 at the latter locality from 24th. 2 White-fronted Geese were reported from Dormans Pool (24th) on which day 3 Barnacle Geese were at Scaling Dam along with

the wintering Smew. Up to 5 Bearded Tits were on the Long Drag from late month but proved very elusive being heard more often than seen.

February

The first wintering Little Egret for Cleveland was present around Dalton Piercy and the outskirts of Hartlepool but often proved elusive to find. It had first been reported by farmers from late November. In February it was discovered roosting in Rossmere Park, Hartlepool and showed extremely well amongst the ornamental geese. In what was a very quiet month indeed the Hooded Crow remained around Hargreaves Quarry, 2 Jack Snipe were regularly seen on Greenabella Marsh and Slavonian Grebe increased to 2 on the Reclamation Pond. A Black-throated Diver was off South Gare (16th) and was also seen from North Gare 5 days later. A Rough-legged Buzzard flew over Long Newton (21st).

3 Little Auks and several 'Blue' Fulmars were off Hartlepool (29th). The month ended with the 3 Smew still on the Reclamation Pond accompanied by 3 Scaup. Seal Sands held 2 Slavonian Grebe, a Long-tailed Duck and the Black-throated Diver was also here (29th).

BBRC RARITIES NOT YET SEEN IN CLEVELAND

In early 2003, I wrote a paper on rare birds recorded in Britain which had yet to be found in Yorkshire (Yorkshire Birding: Volume 12, pages 35 & 36). The present analysis covers Cleveland in a similar way. This 'county', which is really a group of four county boroughs, has a much smaller bird list than Yorkshire, with 72 fewer rarities. This provides many opportunities for the keen rarity finder to add new species to the county list. A UK rarity is defined as a species currently requiring acceptance by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC).

A list is appended of 92 rarities not yet on the Cleveland list, where at least six individuals have been accepted by the BBRC for Britain (excluding Northern Ireland) during 1958 to 2002. A further 104 rarities yet to be found in Cleveland have occurred fewer than six times in Britain since 1958. These comprise 9 seen 5 times, 13 seen 4 times, 13 seen 3 times, 24 seen twice, 34 seen once and 11 not recorded at all since before 1958.

The results largely speak for themselves but are clearly distorted by geographical bias for some species, most notably Wilson's Petrel, where all 'at sea' records are now included in the BBRC statistics. American land birds have a UK distribution strongly focussed on the southwest of England, the Scilly Isles and other islands. The species most likely to be added to the Cleveland list in the future are those regularly reaching Britain from an eastern origin. The more abundant missing American waders are also likely additions as, apart from Upland Sandpiper, they generally do not exhibit the strong southwesterly bias shown by new world land birds and Cleveland is well endowed with easily watched wader habitat.

So what are the most likely additions to the Cleveland list based on past records and our geographical position? Long overdue species must include Yellow-breasted Bunting (208), Long-billed Dowitcher (158), Black-headed Bunting (157), Whiskered Tern (104), Two-barred Crossbill (100), Lanceolated Warbler (87), Sardinian Warbler (62), Western Bonelli's Warbler (60), Pechora Pipit (59), Isabelline Shrike (58), Collared Pratincole (54), Squacco Heron (50), Black-throated Thrush (48), Blyth's Reed Warbler (47), Killdeer (38), Pied-billed Grebe (37), Sociable Plover (36), Pine Bunting (35), Cape Verde (Fea's) Petrel (30), Black-winged Pratincole (30), River Warbler (30), Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler (26), Least Sandpiper (24), Collared Flycatcher (23), Solitary Sandpiper (22), Stilt Sandpiper (20), Greater Yellowlegs (18), Forster's Tern (18), Steppe Grey Shrike (15) and Greater Sand Plover (13).

No less than 25 of these 30 predicted species have already occurred in Yorkshire. Few birders would dispute Long-billed Dowitcher as the hot favourite and no-one would have predicted that Short-billed Dowitcher would be our first Dowitcher. This nicely illustrates the pitfalls of predicting rarities! Despite its impressive total, Nutcracker is an unlikely addition because the vast majority

of UK records occurred during the 1968/69 invasion, since when it has been very rare in Britain (only seven during the past 20 years).

One species listed below may already have occurred in Cleveland. A Black-eared Wheatear was seen 'in a quarry at Roseberry Topping' on 6th June 1915. This well documented record, accepted by Witherby for the 'Handbook', pre-dated by over half a century the creation of Cleveland County and the exact locality was then immaterial. The county boundary runs east to west right through the summit of Roseberry Topping. As it was watched for three hours it is very likely to have spent some time inside Cleveland but, so far, all efforts to determine exactly where it was seen have failed.

Dave Britton, Marske-by-the-Sea

Appendix: Rarities seen over 5 times in UK since 1958 but not yet in Cleveland

<u>Species</u>	<u>Total in UK</u> <u>1958 – 2002</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Total in UK</u> <u>1958 – 2002</u>
Nutcracker	355	Swainson's Thrush	20
Wilson's Petrel	340	Dark-eyed Junco	20
Yellow-breasted Bunting	208	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	20
Long-billed Dowitcher	158	Baltimore Oriole	20
Black-headed Bunting	157	Little Bustard	19
Snowy Owl	156	Greater Yellowlegs	18
Gyr Falcon	124	Forster's Tern	18
Whiskered Tern	104	Eyebrowed Thrush	18
Two-barred Crossbill	100	Black-browed Albatross	17
Lesser White-fronted Goose	89	American Robin	17
Lanceolated Warbler	87	Common Nighthawk	16
Sardinian Warbler	62	Steppe Grey Shrike	15
Western Bonelli's Warbler	60	Yellow-rumped Warbler	15
Pechora Pipit	59	Alpine Accentor	14
Isabelline Shrike	58	Northern Parula Warbler	14
Collared Pratincole	54	Greater Sand Plover	13
Squacco Heron	50	Chimney Swift	13
Black/Red-throated Thrush	48	Black-and-white Warbler	12
Blyth's Reed Warbler	47	Pallid Harrier	11
Black-eared Wheatear	44	Blyth's Pipit	11
Grey-cheeked Thrush	41	Desert Warbler	11
Killdeer	38	Steller's Eider	10
Pied-billed Grebe	37	Sooty Tern	10
Sociable Plover	36	Calandra Lark	10
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	36	Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	10
Pine Bunting	35	Slender-billed Gull	9
Brunnich's Guillemot	34	Harlequin Duck	8
Blackpoll Warbler	32	Sora Rail	8
Little Crake	31	American Bittern	7
Cape Verde Petrel	30	Lesser Kestrel	7
Black-winged Pratincole	30	Crested Lark	7
River Warbler	30	Hermit Thrush	7
Upland Sandpiper	29	Spanish Sparrow	7
Scops Owl	27	Trumpeter Finch	7
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	26	Song Sparrow	7
Black Duck	25	Canvasback	6
Least Sandpiper	24	Cream-coloured Courser	6
White's Thrush	24	Western Sandpiper	6
Bobolink	24	Red-necked Stint	6
Collared Flycatcher	23	Needle-tailed Swift	6
White-throated Sparrow	23	Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	6
Solitary Sandpiper	22	Crag Martin	6
Short-toed Treecreeper	21	Veery	6
Great Bustard	20	Iberian Chiffchaff	6

Stilt Sandpiper	20	Northern Waterthrush	6
Rock Thrush	20	Common Yellowthroat	6

TEESSIDE OFFSHORE WIND FARM, REDCAR

Background

EDF Energy is investigating the possibility of building a 30-turbine wind farm off the Redcar coast, at South Gare (see plan below). The wind farm will occupy an area of 10 square kilometres and will be located approximately 1.5 km offshore at its nearest point to land (Coatham Sands). The current proposal involves the largest size of turbine (similar to those at Elwick), having a tower height of 60-100m above mean sea level and a rotor blade diameter of 80-115m. The turbines will be 300m apart in 3 rows of 10, with approximately 600m between the rows. When in use, the blades rotate at over 100 mph.



LOCATION OF SOUTH GARE WIND FARM Source: EDF Energy Factsheet

The site has been chosen following a technical feasibility study of a number of sites on the North East coast, which suggested that Redcar is viable for a wind farm on the basis of wind resource, water depth (20m), sea bed geology, ease of connection to the National Grid and nearby port facilities. The site has been allocated by the Crown Estates for a study to appraise the viability of a wind farm in more detail and this agreement lasts until the end of July 2004. The Redcar Wind Farm is the only one proposed in North East England at the present time and cannot be extended. Due to the presence of the South Gare Dunes SSSI, land-based works will involve directional drilling beneath this to avoid disturbance to sensitive and important habitat.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Environmental Consultants, Entec UK Ltd of Newcastle, have been appointed by EDF Energy to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and produce an Environmental Statement (ES). The latter is due to be issued in the near future for a response by statutory and non-statutory bodies, including the Teemouth Bird Club (TBC). Ecology Consulting of Durham has also been appointed to carry out a detailed ornithological survey of the wind farm area and Steve Percival has been carrying this out for over a year. The Teemouth Bird Club has provided vital, largely unpublished count information on seabird movements and passerine 'falls' covering a 50-year period, in order to ensure the completeness of the ornithological study. This information clearly demonstrates the huge numbers of seabirds that pass along the North East coast in relation to the siting of the wind farm.

In order to obtain as much information as possible, the TBC Committee has carried out some of its own research into wind farms, based on information already published. Club representatives also attended both the public meetings held in Hartlepool and Redcar in late

August 2003. The mood of the local Redcar residents at the latter meeting was very antagonistic towards the project, mainly on visual grounds. Ted Parker and Dave Britton addressed the Redcar meeting and outlined the reasons for opposition on ornithological grounds.

Basis Of The TBC's Opposition To The Wind Farm

The TBC Committee opposes this development and has had a number of special meetings with EDF Energy and their consultants to fully outline our grave concerns over the siting of the wind farm. In order to 'test' the views of as many of our members as possible, the consultants were invited to give a presentation at the Club's October 2003 meeting, at which the general response of members was supportive of the Committee's stance. The RSPB's Local Members' Group leader, Mark Stokeld, also attended one of the special meetings and was very supportive of the Club.

We oppose the wind farm for the following main reasons:

1. The UK is unique in having huge seasonal movements of seabirds around its coastline, mainly during spring and autumn. These usually occur during particular, adverse weather conditions, which, in the North East, involve strong winds with a northerly and/or easterly component. Hundreds of thousands of seabirds and wildfowl are involved (including Gannets, divers, geese, ducks, gulls, skuas and auks) and smaller birds (including huge numbers of thrush species during October) and these move along or arrive off the coast every year. The birds frequently pass quite close to the shore during optimum conditions, usually between 1-8km offshore, and the siting of this wind farm will, therefore, have a severe adverse environmental impact. Many birds will die as they pass through the turbine field, with the 30 proposed turbines having blades up to 110m in diameter, which rotate at nearly 100mph.
2. The siting of the Redcar wind farm is mainly based on technical research with an engineering and economic bias and on the location of Crown Commissioners' land. The Government and RSPB have at last recognised that wind farms are potentially harmful to seabirds and have agreed that all Round 2 developments will be located at least 8 km offshore, increasing to 13km in more environmentally sensitive areas.
3. There is major evidence from abroad, notably Spain and the US, of birds being killed at wind farms in their thousands, including hundreds of White Storks and 500-1000 Griffon Vultures (near Tarifa in Spain), over 30 Golden Eagles and 120 Red-tailed Hawks (in California) and many other species. Studies of the famous Tuno Knob Wind Farm in Denmark have revealed that the populations of Common Scoter and Eider fell by 90% and 70%, respectively, after the turbines were installed. Arguments, therefore, by the energy companies and their consultants that such occurrences are rare or have happened solely because the wind farms have been poorly sited are erroneous. The Teesside Offshore Wind Farm is sited in a highly environmentally sensitive location but, being in Round 1, will not qualify for the 13km offshore minimum limit.
4. For over a year, the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Redcar development largely ignored the issues of seabird movements until the Teesmouth Bird Club brought them to the attention of the environmental consultants (the Club was not consulted about the planning or execution of the ornithological research and, in fact, only became aware when the public meetings were locally advertised in August 2003).
5. The wind farm will have a serious impact on birds moving into and out of the Teesmouth RAMSAR site, SPA and SSSI's, which lie immediately onshore, as well as causing severe disturbance to offshore feeding areas during periods of sprat 'wrecks' (as occurred in the autumn of 2003).
6. Being a relatively recent phenomenon, insufficient research has been carried out on the environmental impact of wind farms, particularly on seabirds, both during the day and at night. Much of the work that has been done to date has largely been by consultants working for or with a vested interest in the wind farm industry. It is smaller organisations, such as ours, that are raising awareness of the potential dangers of wind farms to birds and providing active opposition, despite meager resources.

Action Already Taken by TBC

- Ted Parker, on behalf of the Club, has prepared a comprehensive report, giving details of the UK seabird pattern, the regional pattern and the local context. It outlines the timing of the seabird movements, the 'favourable conditions' for large passages, the species involved, the distances these normally pass offshore and those species most at risk. There are also 60 pages of records of the key seabird counts and *passerine* 'falls', from the early 1960's to the present day. The report was submitted to Ecology Consulting in mid-December and its key purpose was to provide valuable information to allow a more objective assessment during the EIA process. A considerable proportion of the material we provided was unpublished and, therefore, unavailable from any other source. We have been requested to make a number of modifications to the report, to which we have no objections. Entec UK intend to append the report to their Environmental Statement.

- Russ McAndrew has prepared a summary of our key concerns and submitted this to Entec UK.
- We have written to the Department of Transport, Redcar & Cleveland Council (including all the Redcar & Cleveland Elected Members, the Chief Executive and Director of Planning), the DTI and local MP's lodging our concerns.
- We have written to the RSPB and English Nature, as two of the key strategic environmental 'players' in the Teesmouth area to request their views on the wind farm. Their replies are typically 'politically diplomatic' and both organisations appear to be 'sitting on the fence', at least until the Environmental Statement is published.
- We have liaised with the Durham Bird Club, to enlist as much support as possible from its members and provided a copy of this feature for its Newsletter.
- We provided details for the *'Evening Gazette'*, which published an article on the Redcar wind farm on 3rd December 2003.
- A number of our members attended a public meeting in Redcar 13th March, chaired by Vera Baird MP, the local MP for Redcar. She is opposed to the wind farm and has set up an anti-campaign committee, on which will be represented by Ted Parker.

The Next Steps

Once the draft Environmental Statement has been published the Club will scrutinize and comment on the ornithological aspects of this and feed these back to EDF Energy and their environmental consultants. If EDF Energy decides to proceed with the project and lodge a Planning Application with the DTI (for the offshore works) and Redcar & Cleveland Council (for the onshore works), we will prepare detailed objections and continue our campaign of raising awareness of the dangers to birds.

Conclusions

As a bird club, we have confined our arguments solely to ornithological issues but there are, of course, many other concerns, including the long-term efficiency and economic viability of wind power, the effects of low frequency noise on humans and the visual impact on this scenic part of the North East coast. We will continue to oppose this potentially damaging development.

Any members of the Club who wish to support the TBC's opposition should write as soon as possible to Vera Baird MP at the House of Commons, Westminster, London. Now we have political support we can defeat this development, so please write your letter!

Ted Parker

WETLAND BIRD SURVEY TEESMOUTH AUTUMN 2003 SUMMARY

Coverage was exceptional, with all 92 sector counts carried out.

The only conspicuously poor performance among the wildfowl was that of Wigeon (peak of 596), but this may well have been largely attributable to the relatively early October count date. In contrast, Cormorant set a new Tees WeBS record, the August total of 773 surpassing the 676 counted in September 1995. Similarly, Mute Swan (100, August), Tufted Duck (245, July) and Coot (1477, October) all provided new WeBS records, while Great Crested Grebe set a new seasonal WeBS record (30, August). In an otherwise undistinguished series of counts for the species, the September Teal total of 1655 was almost two and a half times the size of our recent seasonal norm, and constitutes the best autumn figure since October 1984.

As far as the WeBS Counts were concerned this was a poor autumn for the scarcer passage waders, with Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Wood Sandpiper and Common Sandpiper all faring badly. However, the marked Ruff peak (44, August) was the best since 1993. While Purple Sandpiper numbers continued on a seemingly inexorable decline, August brought a massive count of 2849 Dunlin (the best autumn tally on the Tees since as long ago as October 1976). Yet, if anything, the Redshank counts were even more impressive, peaking with a new Tees all-time record of 2455 in October; this (along with the September total) comfortably exceeded the previous best of 2042 logged in October 1988.

This proved to be an excellent autumn for terns too. In August the Sandwich Tern maximum of 2601 was our best for eight years, while the corresponding Common Tern figure of 1678 constitutes a new Tees WeBS record.

Following this series of counts, in autumn the Tees and Hartlepool Bay WeBS Site remains of national importance for Little Grebe, Cormorant, Gadwall, Shoveler and Sanderling and of international importance for Redshank.

MIKE LEAKEY

WeBS Local Organizer
November 2003

	July 13	Aug 10	Sep 14	Oct 12	Autumn 2003 maximum as % of average peak count over previous five autumns
Little Grebe	28*	<u>70</u> **	58**	17	96%
Great Crested Grebe	12	<u>30</u>	22	21	183%
Comorant	346**	<u>773</u> **	137**	264**	160%
Grey Heron	50	<u>63</u>	36	62	100%
Mute Swan	73	<u>100</u>	81	56	171%
Shelduck	263	98	123	<u>266</u>	77%
Wigeon	8	0	401	<u>596</u>	52%
Gadwall	39	37	117**	<u>155</u> **	136%
Teal	39	76	<u>1655</u> **	737*	240%
Mallard	84	461	<u>519</u>	276	118%
Pintail	0	0	17	<u>23</u>	107%
Shoveler	14	26	141**	<u>164</u> **	99%
Pochard	<u>63</u>	53	12	13	78%
Tufted Duck	<u>245</u>	237	132	80	175%
Ruddy Duck	35	46	52	<u>68</u>	125%
Coot	964*	1207**	1058*	<u>1477</u> **	213%
Oystercatcher	335	833	1262	<u>1816</u> *	125%
Ringed Plover	27	<u>196</u> *	66	23	80%
Golden Plover	32	5	24	<u>513</u>	82%
Grey Plover	5	29	<u>58</u>	16	98%
Lapwing	753	340	994	<u>1517</u>	131%
Knot	5	<u>70</u>	46	4	85%
Sanderling	137	<u>338</u> **	117	206*	96%
Little Stint	0	0	<u>2</u>	0	14%
Curlew Sandpiper	0	0	<u>6</u>	0	31%
Purple Sandpiper	3	7	2	<u>11</u>	27%
Dunlin	600	<u>2849</u> **	734	250	261%
Ruff	4	<u>44</u>	9	2	237%
Snipe	2	<u>27</u>	33	26	55%
Black-tailed Godwit	22	38*	<u>42</u> *	37*	116%
Bar-tailed Godwit	3	12	<u>43</u>	21	82%
Whimbrel	<u>12</u>	7	1	0	78%
Curlew	<u>789</u> *	773*	685*	599	118%
Spotted Redshank	1	0	<u>3</u>	0	65%
Redshank	847*	1642***	2301**	<u>2455</u> **	155%
Greenshank	3	<u>16</u>	13	7	68%
Green Sandpiper	0	<u>4</u>	0	0	63%
Wood Sandpiper	0	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	0	71%
Common Sandpiper	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	0	0	48%
Turnstone	36	<u>335</u> *	57	179	90%
Sandwich Tern	682	<u>2601</u> ***	176	3	231%
Common Tern	847	<u>1678</u>	389	0	208%
Arctic Tern	1	<u>14</u>	1	1	79%
Little Tern	<u>5</u>	1	0	0	12%

Underlined counts indicate Autumn 2003 maxima.

- * Denotes count of >50% of national importance
- ** Denotes count of national importance
- *** Denotes count of international importance

N.B. 'Teessmouth' includes Hartlepool Bay.

NOTICEBOARD

Old TBC Annual Reports

I get occasional requests from prospective purchasers of back numbers of our reports, sometimes for a report for a specific year, sometimes for a complete set of reports. For various years I have plenty of spare copies but for others, I have none left for sale.

My last appeal, about three years ago, produced a quite reasonable response but I have now sold all these to aid club funds and could do with some more. Any of our annual reports would be welcome, but particularly those for the following years:- 1974, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1997.

So if your bookcase shelves are sagging or the pile in the corner has reached the ceiling and you no longer need them, I would be pleased to take them off your hands and try to find a new home for them.

John Sharp, TBC Sales, 10 Glendale, Guisborough, Redcar and Cleveland, TS14 8JF. Telephone: 01287 633 976.

Jeff Youngs Hide Disabled Access

As many members will know, the Jeff Youngs Hide was officially opened on 6th September 2002 by Roy and Daphne Youngs, the late Jeff's mother and father. The ceremony was attended by members of the Club's Committee, Jeff's close birding friends and representatives of the RSPB (Kevin Bayes), Teesside Environmental Trust (Cliff Shepherd), Tees Valley Wildlife Trust (Jeremy Gardside) and Huntsman Tioixe (Tony Marron). Afterwards, there was a reception buffet in the Teessmouth Field Centre.

The hide was financed from a generous legacy left to the Club by Jeff and it will be a lasting testimony to a talented birder, artist and photographer, who suffered a terribly debilitating illness during the latter part of his life. A number of Jeff's photographs embellish the walls of the hide.

Since its construction, the hide has been accessed by a mown pathway and we are very grateful to John Regan, who has strimmed this, free of charge, over the past 2 years. It has always been our intention, however, particularly in view of Jeff's disability, to construct a proper disabled access to the hide, which is nearly half a kilometre from the car park. Ted Parker prepared the design details and Bills of Quantities and sought sponsorship for the project. Work commenced on 5th March 2004. The end result will be a 1.2m wide, rolled gravel pathway, with a disabled 'kissing gate' from the car park suitable for wheelchairs (similar to that on the pathway to the Seal Sands hide). The work was carried out by the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust and has been funded jointly by the Teessmouth Bird Club, Teesside Environmental Trust, RSPB, English Nature and Huntsman Tioxide. We are very grateful to these bodies for their contributions.

A tree screen has been planted along the Dormans Pool side of footpath and this is doing well and should form an effective barrier over the next 3-5 years. We are extremely grateful to Richard Taylor, John Regan, John Grieveson and others who gave up their own time (and energy!) to plant several hundred willow trees.

Members wishing to have a key to the hide should contact Chris Sharp (Tel: 01429 865163).

Ted Parker