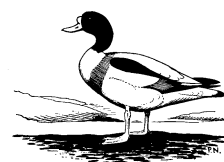


Teesmouth Bird Club Newsletter

August 2020 (No.76)



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CONTENTS

1	Denis Summers-Smith
1	Monthly Summaries
4	Report from the Chair
5	Tit Bits
7	Wandering of a breeding Starling
7	Physiology of Birds as shown by dissection of a Roast Chicken
8	Robin Migration
9	Birds and Prey
9	Hen's Teeth - Really Rare?
10	BTO News
11	Crosswords

DENIS SUMMERS-SMITH

Sadly, Denis passed away on 5th May 2020 at the age of 99.

He was a founder member of the Teesmouth Bird Club and was twice elected chairman.

You can read about his life and achievements in the April 2020 newsletter which was published shortly before his death.

MONTHLY SUMMARIES

Martin Blick reviews the birding highlights of the March to June period.

MARCH 2020

After an extremely wet and windy February, the month of March was drier, but will long be remembered as the month that saw a coronavirus known as Covid-19 dominate the world headlines. It originated in China at the end of 2019, killed many thousands of people around the world and severely restricted the movement of almost all of mankind for about three months.

The Ruddy Shelduck was around Cowpen Marsh and Haverton Hole all month, the first migrating Chiffchaff was on Hartlepool Headland on 3rd, six Waxwings were on Coatham Marsh on 6th, a Northward-bound movement of Whooper Swans was evident on 7th (and 16th), and a strange drake on Hardwick Pond on 15th was eventually identified as a hybrid between Gadwall and Shoveler.



Whooper Swan

Ian Forrest

The first 'real' spring migrant, a Wheatear, was at South Gare on 15th, the same day as a smart male Black Redstart was at the same place, a Red Kite was over Acklam on 16th, and a herd of about 130 Whooper Swans passed over Skelton, also on 16th.

A Sand Martin was reported at Seaton Carew on 18th, the same day as a colour-ringed 2nd-summer Mediterranean Gull joined the Saltholme Black-headed Gulls. It had been ringed in the nest in Sweden in June 2018 before wintering in Spain and Portugal in the 2018/19 winter; it was with us for three weeks.

The first Little Ringed Plovers were six on Cowpen Marsh on 21st, another Black Redstart was at Scaling Dam on 23rd-24th, another Red Kite was over Ormesby on 24th, the same day as two Common Redpolls were in Guisborough Forest.

The 'lockdown' as decreed by Boris Johnson's government to combat the coronavirus took effect on 24th, and it was to be nine weeks before normal service began to be resumed. Without doubt numerous birds were not seen that normally would have been, and some of the first dates for summer visitors will not be comparable with previous years.

The first singing Blackcap was at Portrack on 25th, the first White Wagtail was on Cowpen Marsh on 26th, 99 Avocets were counted around the North Tees marshes on 28th and a Black-throated Diver passed Hartlepool on 29th in a bitterly cold Northerly wind.

APRIL 2020

After a lot of rain in February and March, this was the sunniest April since records began locally; not what the UK population wanted whilst the lockdown for the coronavirus continued.

As has been the norm in recent years, Red Kites were seen on several dates; over Skelton and Guisborough on 1st, two over Redcar on 5th, Hartlepool on 8th,

Guisborough again on 10th, and Upleatham on 21st,

The count of Avocets around North Tees marshes reached 102 on 1st (and 112 on 18th), Ospreys passed over Cleveland on 2nd and 7th, two Ruddy Shelducks passed Marske on 3rd, a second 2nd-summer Mediterranean Gull joined the yellow-ringed bird on Saltholme on 4th, and the first Willow Warblers were singing on the same day. These were followed by Swallows and Ring Ouzels on 5th, and a Hooded Crow at Hunt Cliff on the same day, then House Martin, Yellow Wagtail and Sedge Warbler on 7th.

Excitement on 8th came in the form of two Cattle Egrets at Haverton Hole, a Great White Egret on Cowpen Marsh, perhaps the same Hooded Crow between Saltburn and Marske, the first Reed Warbler and an increase of Mediterranean Gulls on Saltholme to four, three 2nd- summers and a 1st-summer. The first Grasshopper Warbler was recorded on 9th, the first Whitethroat on 10th, Lesser Whitethroat and the first spring Common Sandpiper on 11th, the first Whinchat on 12th, the first Manx Shearwaters past Hartlepool on 13th, the first Redstart on 15th and an early Wryneck in ICI Wilton, also on 15th.

Whimbrel and Pied Flycatcher were recorded on 16th, the first of very few Little Gulls on 17th, Garganey and the first spring Greenshank on 18th, and a second Great White Egret joined the first, also on 18th

A rather early Hobby was at Marton on 19th, the first Cuckoo was heard and seen on 21st, but spectacular bird of the month must go to the White-tailed Eagle in Sleddale on 22nd. It was said to be one of four Isle of Wight birds wandering (and being tracked) around England.

The first Common Terns were seen on 24th, the first Garden Warbler on 25th, a drake Scaup was on Saltholme on 26th, the first Swift on 27th, a rather late Redwing in Ward Jackson Park on 28th and a total of eight Dotterel on 29th, six on Guisborough Moor and two at Saltburn, the two still being there next day .

Two more Mediterranean Gulls arrived at Saltholme on 30th, this time a pair of adults.

MAY 2020

After seven weeks of serious restrictions across the UK, due to Covid-19, the government relaxed some conditions slightly on 11th, followed by more in the last week of the month.

The only Slavonian Grebe seen in the first half of the year was off Saltburn on 2nd, the same day as an Osprey began its seven-day stay at Scaling Dam, and the first Little Terns were noted, a Wood Sandpiper was on Saltholme on 3rd and four late Fieldfares were at Eastfield Farm on the same day.

A Spotted Flycatcher was at Scaling Dam on 5th, but bird of the month (for rarity value, not spectacle) was Cleveland's first spring Dusky Warbler on Hartlepool Headland, also on 5th. Next day, another of the Isle of Wight White-tailed Eagles was seen, over Freebrough Hill, and the first Ruff of the year, a stunning black, white and rust-coloured male, was on Back Saltholme on 8th and 9th. A single Bee-eater flew over one observer in Stockton on 8th, the first Nightjar of the year was heard on 9th and the first Arctic Skua of the year was recorded on 10th.

As a direct result of Covid-19 spreading across the world, the demand for all types of fuel plummeted. Whilst this was of great benefit to the planet, it was also good news for those using petrol when the price at the pumps dropped below £1/litre on 12th, for the first time since Feb 2016. There are still some of us that can remember when petrol was £1/gallon in 1970s, significantly less than a quarter the price it is today.

The first (two) Spoonbills of the year were around Saltholme from 13th, a first-summer Little Gull was there on 16th, a Hooded Crow was beside the Zinc Works Road on 17th, perhaps the same two Dotterel were at Saltburn on 19th and 20th, and the highest

temperature of the year so far, 28C was recorded on 20th.

A singing Wood Warbler found at Slape Wath was there for at least six days from 21st, a Honey Buzzard was over New Skelton and two Hobbies were over Saltburn, both on 26th, a Crane was at Haverton Hole, then over Saltholme, Middlesbrough and Kirklevington on 27th, the first of four Red-backed Shrikes was by Saltholme Pools, also on 27th and another Great White Egret was on Saltholme from 28th, staying throughout June.

Single Red Kites were over Saltholme, Norton and New Skelton on 29th, 30th and 31st respectively, another Spoonbill was on Back Saltholme for less than an hour on 30th, another Red-backed Shrike was at South Gare on 31st, but the rarest bird seen in Cleveland in 2020 was reserved for just two observers as a Calandra Lark flew North over Greatham Creek, also on 31st.

By the end of the month, the almost complete lack of rainfall rendered this the sunniest May on record, and despite February being the wettest on record, some areas were looking arid by the end of the month.

JUNE 2020

June started as May had ended, hot and dry, but overnight on 2nd-3rd, the wind changed to Northerly, bringing rain and rough seas for almost two weeks. Sea-watching was interesting, with hundreds of Guillemots, Razorbills, Puffins, Gannets and Manx Shearwaters passing over that period. A very few Arctic and Great Skuas were also seen as well as a summer-plumaged Black-throated Diver, but the most unexpected bird was a Caspian Tern on 3rd, first seen on Haverton Hole in the afternoon and later relocated on Back Saltholme in the evening.



Caspian Tern

Ian Forrest

A Spoonbill was on Back Saltholme on 4th, a male Red-backed Shrike was in the Zinc Works bushes on 8th-9th, six Roseate Terns passed Hartlepool on 12th, a Marsh Warbler was at South Gare on 13th and seven Spoonbills and two Ruddy Shelducks arrived on Back Saltholme on 15th.

Because the wind had been from the North and East for so many days, dead birds were coming ashore in the middle of the month, totalling over 100, and mostly comprising Kittiwakes, Herring Gulls, Guillemots and Puffins.



Spoonbill

Ian Forrest

A Long-tailed Duck was at South Gare on 17th-18th, the first party of Cleveland-bred Bearded Tits ever seen was in the Dormans Pool phragmites from 19th, and a flock of six Ruddy Shelduck arrived on Back Saltholme on 21st, the same day as recently fledged juvenile Cetti's Warblers were found on Portrack Marsh, the first in Cleveland since 2011.

The 24th saw the daytime temperature reach 30 C, and on 25th, a single Ruddy Shelduck flew South along the Durham coast before joining the six on Cowpen Marsh, a second brood of juvenile Bearded Tits was located on Dormans Pool, the first (three) returning Green Sandpipers were at Scaling Dam and another Red-backed Shrike was at Port Clarence.



Bearded Tit

Ian Forrest

For four – five days from 23rd, large numbers of Crossbills flew South along the Yorkshire coast, but very few were seen over Cleveland until 144 flew over Scaling Dam in an hour on 26th.

A single Spoonbill took up residence on Back Saltholme on 27th, a Little Gull was in the same place on 28th, two Ruddy Shelduck (part of the seven?) were on Cowpen Marsh from 28th and the number of young Bearded Tits at Dormans Pool reached eleven by the end of the month, equating to two broods.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – AUGUST 2020

As everyone is aware, the club has had to suspend group activities due to Covid-19. Advice from the government is changing frequently and so, at the time of writing, it is difficult to predict exactly when and how we will be able to resume our programme of events. Any social occasion needs to be safe, permissible and unhindered by onerous restrictions, which would otherwise detract from the overall enjoyment.

Organisations up and down the country have been unable to hold annual AGMs leading to the inevitable consequence of committee members and officers remaining unofficially in post for an extended period of time. We aim to hold our own AGM later in the year but, at this juncture, nothing is set in tablets of stone. Over the lockdown, some “doorstep” bird ringing and Webs counts have taken place. I have to extend an enormous thank you to Jamie Duffie for his mammoth efforts over the same period. Despite being an essential worker, coping with immense stress and responsibility, he managed to compile the last newsletter for us and has continued to run our website admirably. Also, thanks to Graeme Joynt for taking over the responsibility of updating the county listing. This section now appears on the forum under General Discussion in the topic entitled Cleveland Listing Statistics.

Martin Blick has been busy revamping the identification board, ready to be re-installed at the Scaling Dam hide, and he has also assisted me in providing support remotely to the Tees Valley Nature Tourism group. Sadly, I needed to aid members to either attend the funeral of Denis Summers-Smith or access the service online, and I have also been in touch with Stockton Borough Council regarding the closure of The Long Drag. There has been an expected delay in proceedings at council but the matter has not been forgotten and is still in hand. Documents have apparently been sent to the legal team at Sabic.

The Tees Valley Nature Partnership held a virtual conference in June and 120 people attended. The organisers were ambitious with the technology and content, moving from live nature reserve tours to interactive workshops, videos and a live expert panel for nature. There was also the opportunity to benefit from some expert T'ai Chi instruction!

Despite the inconveniences we have all faced, it has been fascinating to keep an eye on our Twitter feed to discover what people have found in their own backyard. Close attention

has been paid to the daily changes taking place around us as spring unfolded, and wildlife experiences have been reported which we would otherwise, no doubt, have missed. Please do send us your “lockdown snippets” for inclusion in the next newsletter. Meantime, I shall share just one of my own special moments below.

Barbara Crinson

TIT-BITS



A collection of bird related news and facts, compiled by **Eric James**

A TUBBY OWL

Friends who put out food for birds sometimes say they don't like Starlings 'because they are 'too greedy'. My usual response is to ask if they have seen any over-weight Starlings or any other species.

Of course, birds can put on fat, but only when needed, such as migration (When Sedge Warblers can increase their weight by over 50% in two weeks in preparation) and as fuel for warmth when roosting during long winter nights. However, I was surprised to read a report of an owl (species not given) brought into a rescue centre in Suffolk, having been found in a ditch and too heavy to fly. *British Birds* later published the whole story. The bird was a female Little Owl and weighed 245 g, a third heavier than the healthy weight. It was thought that the mild winter had caused a glut of food and the owl had overindulged. On a strict diet, she lost up to 30 g each week for a fortnight and was released back into the wild.

SEAGULL CONFUSION

Herring Gulls are frequently in the news, usually referred to as seagulls. While this might be forgiven in non-birdwatchers and ignorant journalists, it's now starting to spread to people who really should know better. An example occurred in a recent TV programme following a walker along the Cornish coastal footpath; he had reached Lynmouth and a local 'expert' was describing the cliff nesting seabirds: "The brown and white ones are Guillemots, the black and white ones are Razorbills and there are a lot of birds that look like seagulls, but they aren't – They are Kittiwakes (!)". Since Kittiwakes spend the winter in the Atlantic, with those which do not breed successfully and leave the colony early reaching the east coast of North America, they could be more justifiably called seagulls.

On the subject of ignorant journalists, one word they avoid using or don't know of is 'species'. This can lead to strange statements, a recent one being, "There are five breeds of owl resident in Britain", and don't get me started on those who think twitcher and birdwatcher are synonyms.

WHATEVER NEXT?!

We've probably reluctantly accepted that Turtle Doves are not going to be common any time soon, and that our breeding seabirds are struggling, but finding that Chaffinches, one of our most numerous species, are in serious decline comes as a shock. In fact, BTO figures show a fall of 30% in eleven years since 2007. It's thought that the birds are suffering from trichomoniasis, the disease that seriously affected Greenfinches and cut their numbers down.

VOCAL SOUNDS BELOW WATER

Whales, dolphins, seals and even sea turtles can make vocal calls under water, and penguins can now be added to that list. Researchers in South Africa taped cameras with audio recorders to the backs of six King Penguins, ten Gentoo Penguins and two Macaroni Penguins. The recording equipment

was housed in aluminium tubes to withstand pressures at depths of up to 300 m., where these birds hunt (if I've got my conversion factors right, 300 m. of water is about 427 lb/in²). The team recorded 203 vocalisations from all three species during four hours and 43 minutes of underwater footage. The calls were quite different from the calls given on land, being very short chirps – typically only 0.06 seconds long, – and very different from the penguins' intensively studied land vocalisations, which are around 3 seconds long, much louder and include a variety of different sounds.

The calls mostly occurred just before capturing prey and were given more often when they are feeding on their own, suggesting that they call to attract other penguins, their hunting success being greater when they forage in groups; another possibility is the sounds might disorient prey.

IN PRAISE OF PARASITES

When a species goes extinct, a further unnoticed and probably unlamented loss is any parasites that were unique to the species.

Parasites can have surprising effects beyond the hosts. A clam called the New Zealand cockle lives in many of the nation's mudflats, using its muscular foot to burrow into the ooze. A fluke (*Curtuteria australis*) embeds itself in the cockle's foot. If they become heavily infested, cockles lose their ability to hide in the mud and find themselves stranded. Research reveals that mudflats with more parasitised cockles had higher species diversity. Creatures living in the sediment are less disturbed by burrowing shellfish and the exposed cockles are taken readily by waders and fish. In addition, their shells offer a new habitat for barnacles and other aquatic species.

As well as disrupting ecosystems, the loss of parasites could even be bad for their hosts. When scientists gave anti-parasitic drugs to Oystercatchers, they found that treated chicks were more likely to die than the untreated ones. The researchers aren't exactly sure why, but they think the lack of parasites may have interfered with the proper functioning of the

bird's immune system. This is similar to what is thought to happen in humans. Known as the hygiene hypothesis, some evidence suggests that in our hyper-clean, low-parasite modern world (kills 99.9% of household germs!), our immune system isn't trained to deal with the worms and bacteria with which our species evolved. As a result, it overreacts to what should be harmless targets, causing allergies and autoimmune diseases such as Inflammatory Bowel Disease, which includes Crohn's disease. The presence of parasites helps to redirect the immune system away from the prolonged inflammation indicative of these conditions.

PS : I am not recommending that you should start licking the kitchen floor.

EASY FEEDING FOR PENGUINS

Not all penguins like to make deep dives for food, at least not when there's an easier alternative.

Two Little Blue Penguins took this to the extreme and set up their nest in a mobile sushi store. The police had to repeatedly deal with the intruders and escort the reluctant birds back to the sea.

It started when staff at the Sushi Bi store in Wellington, New Zealand, first noticed something was amiss when they heard 'cooing and humming' from the warm grills beneath their mobile truck.

The local police were called and escorted one 'grumpy bird' back to the sea.

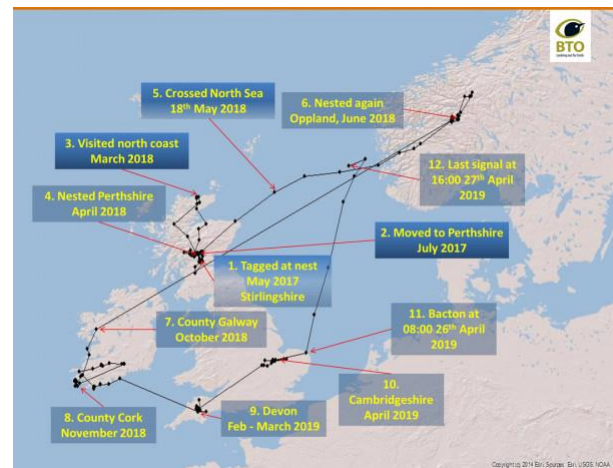
However, it's difficult to separate a penguin from a good supply of food and it returned to the store – this time with a friend.

In the species, it is the male is responsible for selecting the place for the nest, and they prefer hidden places with little light such as below tree trunks or inside small crevices on the rocks.....and under mobile food vans.

THE WANDERING OF A BREEDING STARLING

Bird tracking continues to find unexpected results. A female Starling fitted with a

tracking device has seems to have bred in Scotland and in Norway in the same year



The movements of the female Starling tagged in Stirling that apparently bred in both Scotland and Norway in the same year.

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF BIRDS AS SHOWN BY DISSECTION OF A ROAST CHICKEN

Carving roast birds is the closest most of us get to studying the structure of birds. Eric James highlights some of important aspects.

Birds, being tetrapods (i.e. vertebrates with four limbs), have skeletons similar to mammals, reptiles and other members of the group but modified to accommodate their flying ability. This is not always realised and many people think that birds have backwards knees. Birds do have knees which are articulated in the normal manner, but are generally hidden by feathers. Like land mammals, birds have two bones between knee and ankle (tibia and fibula). However, chomping on a chicken drumstick, which is the bird's calf, shows one substantial bone and one that is little more than a splint. The point of having two bones is that it makes rotation of the foot possible, which is certainly important for primates when swinging through the trees, but less useful for birds. as a result, in embryonic birds growth is concentrated into the tibia. However, the fibula still has its ancestral ability to grow fully and this was demonstrated in an experiment where a thin sheet of mica was

placed between the two bones in one leg of an embryo; both bones grew to their full length and each articulated with a corresponding ankle bone. The other leg developed in the normal way with a thick tibia which joined up with both ankle bones. The remaining ankle bones are fused with the tarsometatarsus which is the obvious part of the leg. Another oddity of the bird leg is that the femur (thigh bone) is normally horizontal, only made possible by large associated muscles evident in the carved chicken. Walking in such a position is difficult for humans but has been used as part of a stage performance called duck walking, first used by Blues singer T-bone Walker and later popularised by Chuck Berry.

Another aspect of bird physiology is shown when carving breast meat. The outer muscle, the pectoralis major, exerts the powerful downstroke of the wing. Behind it is the smaller but clearly separate pectoralis minor, which raises the wing via a tendon that wraps over the scapula and attaches to the humerus. The muscle would be thought to be better above the wing, but must have flipped over, ensuring the bird's centre of gravity is below the wings and making flight more stable. Behind the breast muscles is the breastbone (sternum) which is which is much larger than in other animals and has a prominent vertical section (keel) for attaching muscles and withstanding the associated forces. The importance of this can be obvious by comparing a bird gliding on outstretched wings with the enormous effort and strength needed by a human gymnast holding this position:



Beating wings put a strain on the bird's torso which has led to further modifications, the most obvious being the collar bones being fused together, forming the best known

feature of the avian body, the wishbone. Another feature is growths on the ribs so each is supported by the adjacent one, very useful for deep diving species

ROBIN MIGRATION

Electronic tagging for recording the movements of birds is advancing quickly with the tags now light enough to be carried by small songbirds. Rather than recording information on the tag, there is a radio signal which is picked up by ground based receiving stations, the signal identifies the individual bird as well as its position. The sort of information that this system can provide is illustrated by the discovery of a migration feat of a Robin. The bird was the subject of a research project conducted by collaboration between Hull University, the BTO, the Bird Observatories Council, the Bat Conservation Trust, Wageningen University and the Institute of Avian Research "Vogelwarte Helgoland. The bird was fitted with the tiny 0.3g radio transmitter on the island of Helgoland, which is off of the coast of north Germany.

Six receivers were installed in the UK, at Spurn Bird Observatory, Dungeness, and four in East Anglia, including at Landguard Bird Observatory, where the Robin was picked up on the 21st October 2019 at just after midnight, the bird, weighing around 19g, having finished its 140 mile autumn migration across the North Sea in only four hours.

In the future, The project seeks to expand their network of receivers across the UK, and also increasing pan-European monitoring of flying animals as they undertake their migrations.

Perhaps we might at last find how all those Yellow-browed Warblers find their way to Hartlepool.

Eric James

PREDATOR AND PREY

I count myself very fortunate to live in a beautiful place with the river Swale in walking distance from my house. One early, glorious morning during lockdown, I sat inconspicuously at the water's edge, observing the feeding antics of a family of elegant Grey Wagtails. The parent birds were back and forth dashing nimbly over the rocks and pebbles in pursuit of flying insects, mimicked quite admirably by their offspring. Frequently, they would propel themselves upwards in pursuit of larger flies which were out in profusion a few feet above the river. The family was also joined by an equally proficient Pied Wagtail, and at that moment a Great Spotted Woodpecker dropped from the tree-lined bank opposite, into the pool closest to the edge of the river, for a very thorough wash and brush-up.

It was obvious to me that the woodpecker had been watching the activities of the smaller birds and after its bath it headed back up to the nearest tree, at which point it then took me completely by surprise. It proceeded to launch itself out from the tree and bounce about mid-air above the river catching insects! It flew back to the same spot with its prize and repeated the same trick four times. I was utterly enthralled by the live theatre which had played out before me and I can honestly say, I have never witnessed such behaviour from a Great Spotted Woodpecker before. I would dearly love to know if anyone else has experienced the same spectacle!

I have to say, it reminded me of the song, "Anything You Can Do-----".

Barbara Crinson

HEN'S TEETH – REALLY RARE??

A quirky look at the criteria of rarity by Eric James

Similes for extreme rarity usually involve either Rocking horse droppings or Hen's teeth, but are the latter really appropriate?

Early birds certainly did have teeth, but had lost them by the time the large dinosaurs were killed off by the asteroid impact 60 million years ago. For a flying bird, a mouth full of heavy grinding equipment is a definite handicap; much better is a muscular gizzard which, with the help of ingested grit, can grind up food. It is assumed that if some part of an organism is not used, the genetic code for constructing it gradually degenerates as errors accumulate without Natural Selection being able to weed them out (Dollo's Law). In spite of this, some remnant of tooth forming genetic code still exists in Hens as shown by a genetic mutation called *tuplid* which is fatal to the chicks, but examination of the chicks shows that tiny tooth buds have formed. It is possible that the genetic code is also used for other parts of the embryo's development, and hence its retention.

To see how much genetic code was still present in Hens, two American researchers, E.J.Kollar and C. Fisher did an interesting experiment.

The growth of teeth requires proteins from two different sources : mesenchyme produces dentin which is the interior part of the tooth and which we all know from television adverts for tooth paste is yellow, however it only produces spongy bone unless it is in contact with the other essential source, the epithelium which then produces enamel, or the 'white shining armour' of the TV advert. Kollar and Fisher combined epithelial (outer) material from a chick embryo with mesenchyme from where molars would form in a mouse embryo. When the combination was grafted into several adult mice and in some of them it developed into a complete tooth. It was complete but did not have the cusp which would have been present in a normal mouse tooth; so was it the form of the last avian tooth? This experiment might sound like cheating, but in tetrapods, the jaws and even the small bones in the ear are evolved from the gill supporting bone of an ancestral fish which is why the embryos have gills during their course of development.

Never mind, we've still got the rocking horse droppings, or rather we haven't.

Covid-19

It's great so many volunteers have been about to get out and do some surveying as the lockdown eased, and it has been good to read the tweets on the BBS (@BBS_birds) and WeBS (@WeBS_UK) Twitter accounts as volunteers return to the field. You can keep up to date with Covid-19 advice for BTO volunteers [here:](https://www.bto.org/community/news/202007-bto-and-covid-19)

<https://www.bto.org/community/news/202007-bto-and-covid-19>

BBS/WBBS

There was no pressure to survey this season, but to date, data for 1648 BBS squares and 119 WBBS stretches have been entered into the system nationally. Unsurprisingly, the majority were from Late visits. Here in Cleveland, data have so far been entered for 15 visits (41% of the potential total). If you still have outstanding 2020 data to input please do so as soon as possible.

WeBS

WeBS is largely back to normal; at a national level, counts undertaken and submitted online around the June priority date were 92% of the 2019 equivalent period, and July was 108% of 2019 equivalent, compared with less than 9% during lockdown in April.

Diversity and BTO

Two new blog posts that are worth a read. Youth Advisory Panel member, Arjun Dutta asks "[does birdwatching have a diversity problem?](#)" and staff member Jamey Redway explains [why diversity is important in birding](#).

Garden BirdWatch

Recruitment for GBW free has remained buoyant; over 8,500 people have now joined since April, meaning that there are now 20,000 GBW members nationally. It has been agreed that BTO will continue with this free

product (without Bird Table) for the foreseeable future, so we can now say that all our surveys are free! Our challenge is to ensure paying supporters feel valued - it is intended that they will be stewarded just like members and that, in the future, any member will be able to choose between Bird Table or BTO News for their Membership magazine.

Mike Leahey

Cleveland BTO Regional Representative

CROSSWORD 1 SOLUTION BY BILL IRVING

SOLUTION No 1

ACROSS

- 1 BITTERN
- 4 CREEP
- 7 ERNE
- 8 GREAT TIT
- 10 TIGER MOTHS
- 12 HORNET
- 13 CANALS
- 16 SHEATHBILL
- 20 ISOPTERA
- 21 SORA
- 22 ROOKS
- 23 MONTANA

DOWN

- 1 BRENT
- 2 TANAGERS
- 3 NARDOO
- 4 COACH
- 5 EATS
- 6 PETRELS
- 9 TREE
- 11 SAXICOLA
- 12 HARRIER
- 14 ASHY
- 15 MARRAM
- 17 HATES
- 18 LLAMA

SOLUTION No 1

1	B	I	2	T	E	R	N		4	C	R	5	E	E	6	P
	R		A				A		O		A				E	
7	E	R	N	E			8	G	R	E	A	T	T	I	T	
	N		A		9	T	D		C		S				R	
10	T	I	G	E	R	M	O	T	H	S					E	
		E		E		O					11	S			L	
12	H	O	R	N	E	T		13	C	14	A	N	A	L	S	
	A		S					15	M		S		X			
	R				16	S	17	H	E	A	T	H	B	I	L	18
	R		19	D		A			R		Y		C		L	
20	I	S	O	P	T	E	R	A			21	S	O	R	A	
	E		D		E		A						L		M	
22	R	O	O	K	S			23	M	O	N	T	A	N	A	

CROSSWORD 2 BY BILL IRVING



No2 CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Large bird spooked hare (4)
- 3 Clever one on TV quiz (7)
- 8 Droop with some ermine (6)
- 9 Wader upset at cove (6)
- 10 Songster derailed work load (8)
- 11 Epidermis found in Esk in spate (4)
- 12 Raja can account for hiding bird (6)
- 15 Number in chapel evensong (6)
- 17 Personality upset rodents (4)
- 19 Bird has part of 1 down on account (8)
- 22 Different road routed badly (6)
- 23 Cat upset the French coot (6)
- 24 Titmouse sees saint in statement of beliefs (7)
- 25 River existing twice? (4)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Change one horn to get the beast (5)
- 2 Australian beast chained in error (7)
- 4 Bird finds crag crumble as elk panics (7)
- 5 Night calls? (5)
- 6 Fish has beer with partner (3-4)
- 7 Whale seen in U.S.A or Canada (4)
- 13 Animal upsets neat bar (3,4)
- 14 Growth of redesigned heaters (3,4)
- 16 Dove is one of these of peace (7)
- 18 Roost spoiled by rhizomes (5)
- 20 Chess piece for crow (4)
- 21 Cats destroy lino on a point (5)