

Teesmouth Bird Club Newsletter

April 2022 (No.81)



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The newsletter is published three times a year.

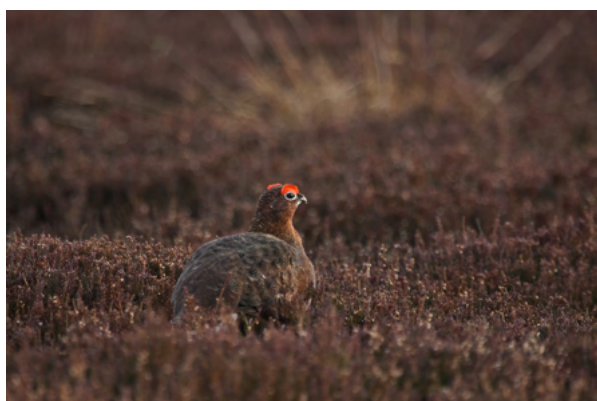
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Material for inclusion welcome; send to tbc.projects@hotmail.co.uk

Our Special bird (see page 4)



MONTHLY SUMMARIES

Chris Sharp reviews the birding highlights of the winter period.

NOVEMBER

The long staying Spoonbill was around the North Tees Marshes early in the month and was joined by a second bird 5th- 7th. Whooper Swans passed through during the first week in the month with the largest herd of 32 over South Gare on 3rd. Several large flocks of Pink-footed Geese were also recorded passing south at this time.

Sea watching on 4th saw a Little Auk off Cowbar and three Bonxies and four Great Northern Divers past Hartlepool.

The "Northern" Eider returned to Redcar on 5th. Two Great White Egrets toured the North Tees Marshes from 6th. Up to five Ruddy Shelducks were also present at this time.

A male Hen Harrier was at RSPB Salholme on 9th. Both Black-throated and Great Northern Divers were between South Gare and Seal Sands at this time. Long-tailed Ducks were at Redcar and two were at Greatham Creek.



Twite

Simon Stobart

The Spotted Redshank returned to winter at Greatham Creek on 14th. A Spoonbill was at Bowesfield the following day. Twite numbers reached 200 at Seaton Snook with several colour ringed birds from previous winters amongst them. A Bittern was regularly reported from Haverton Hole and up to six Bearded Tits were at Dorman's Pool.



Bittern

RSPB

Both Green and Common Sandpipers were at Portrack roundabout and both birds remained into 2022. Hartlepool saw four Little Auks on 21st along with 40 Puffins, the latter being an unprecedented number for this late in the year.

A very late Lesser Whitethroat was at Hartlepool on 22nd with a Siberian Chiffchaff at Dorman's Pool on the same day. Highlight of the month was a confiding Rustic Bunting at Ferry Road, Hartlepool on 24th. In what was a very poor autumn for passerines, this bird saved the day.

Snow Buntings numbered eleven at South Gare on 25th. Small numbers remained here for the remainder of the winter occasionally venturing across the river to Seaton Snook. A Glaucous Gull was at Seaton Carew on 25th and a Black Redstart was present at nearby Newburn on 26th.

The aftermath of Storm Arwen produced an excellent late autumn sea watch at Hartlepool on 28th. The highlight was undoubtedly Brunnich's Guillemot which was one of several reported from North Sea watching points on this day. If accepted it will represent the first record for Cleveland. Other birds seen were Storm Petrel, four Little Auks, two Long-tailed Ducks and a Manx Shearwater. An Iceland Gull was at Newburn and a Long-eared Owl at South Gare.

Another Little Auk was off Hartlepool on 29th but a White-billed Diver stole the show being seen by one observer off Saltburn. A Black-throated Diver was off South Gare on 30th and Iceland Gulls were in Hartlepool docks and at Redcar.

DECEMBER



Red-throated Divers Hartlepool Headland

Brian Martin



Glaucous Gull, Hartlepool Headland

Brian Martin

A 1st winter Glaucous Gull was in Hartlepool docks on 1st. Nearby a Great Northern Diver was at Jackson's Landing on 2nd with another on the Tees by the Riverside Stadium on 3rd. Two Black-throated and a single Great Northern Diver were on Seal Sands on 4th. More Red-throated Divers than normal were also offshore during the month with up to 35 in Hartlepool harbour.



Goosander

Brian Martin

Goosander numbers were above average with up to 35 at Charlton's Pond. A single Brent Goose was at RSPB Saltholme on 10th. A Single Cetti's Warblers were reported at Coatham Marsh and Dorman's Pool with up to four around Haverton Hole.

Two more Black-throated Divers were off Parton Rocks on 14th with another in Hartlepool harbour. A Hen Harrier was in Sleddale on 15th. Unusually a Spoonbill was at Dorman's Pool on 15th (a rare winter visitor to Cleveland).

Six Pale-bellied Brent Geese were on Seal Sands from 19th. The Spotted Redshank was around Greatham Creek and remained to winter. No Greenshanks were found wintering this year. A juvenile Little Gull was off Marske on 20th.

The remainder of the month was very quiet. A Great Northern Diver remained off South Gare and 1-2 Velvet Scoters were off Redcar. A Black-throated Diver remained in Hartlepool harbour

and a Siberian Chiffchaff was photographed in the Zinc Works Road bushes on 30th.

JANUARY



Red- and Black-throated Divers, Fish Quay

Brian Martin



Velvet Scoters, Fish Quay

Brian Martin

It was not to be a flying start for year listers. A Black-throated Diver remained around Hartlepool harbour along with three Velvet Scoters. Both Common and Green Sandpipers were at Portrack roundabout and a single Brent Goose was on Port Clarence Flood.

A Bittern was at Coatham Marsh on 2nd and a Mandarin was at Scaling on 3rd. Snow Buntings only numbered c20 at South Gare, a far cry from the numbers recorded in Cleveland only ten years ago. A long staying Velvet Scoter was off South Gare and up to three were regularly reported off Redcar.

71 Black-tailed Godwits were at Greatham Creek and a Bittern was at Haverton Hole on 4th. A Great Northern Diver was in Hartlepool harbour on 8th and a few Bearded Tits were heard at Dorman's Pool. It was another poor winter for Waxwings so two in Guisborough from 10th to 12th proved popular. A single White-fronted Goose was at Lockwood Beck on 13th and it remained here or at Scaling into March.

A Cetti's Warbler was at Margrove Pond on 14th. Bitterns continued to be seen at Haverton Hole and a single bird was again on Coatham Marsh on 16th. A Spoonbill was on Cowpen Marsh on 16th and a Great White Egret was at Saltholme the following day.

The Twite flock at Seaton Snook reached 150 on 19th. A single Long-eared Owl was roosting at Haverton Hole. Four Whooper Swans graced Scaling Dam on 21st A Great Northern Diver was in Middlesbrough docks on 23rd. A Glaucous Gull was at Hartlepool 24th-28th. The Spoonbill re-appeared at Haverton Hole on 30th and remained on the North Tees Marshes into March but often went missing for several days.

FEBRUARY

The Glaucous Gull continued to be reported from Hartlepool Headland early in the month and a second bird was on the Tees at Stockton.



Red-necked Grebe, Marina

Brian Martin

A Red-necked Grebe at Jackson's Landing from 6th remained for a week and was the first here for many years. A Second Spoonbill was at Saltholme on 7th. A Little Auk was seen off Redcar on 8th. Two Velvet Scoters and a Great Northern Diver were at South Gare on 9th.

Two Black Redstarts at Ferry Road, Hartlepool from 10th proved very popular with the local photographers. Bramblings were scarce this winter so two birds showing at the feeders at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park were welcome. The first Avocets returned to Saltholme on 12th. Whooper Swan was also present here. A Little Gull was off Saltburn on 13th. Up to five Short Eared Owls were on Greenabella at this time. A Black-throated Diver was off South Gare on 17th.

Mid month was generally quiet as usual at this time of year with few new arrivals. Both Spoonbill and Great White Egret present in February on the North Tees Marshes would have been unthinkable only a few years ago.

Two Shore Larks flew in off the sea on 22nd at Newburn. An unseasonal Manx Shearwater was of North Gare on 24th. Four Whooper Swans were at Scaling on 25th with a further seven at Lockwood Beck the following day. A ring-tail Hen Harrier flew through Haverton Hole on 26th. Five Shore Larks were at Huntcliff on 27th.



TITBITS

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

Lots more homes for Swifts

Following article on nesting sites for Swifts in the December Newsletter, It was interesting to read about the efforts of a Mr. John Stimpson, as reported in the *i* newspaper of 21st January. Over the last 18 years, Stimpson, a retired Wheetabix salesman now 80 years old, has reached his goal of making 30,000 Swift boxes, which accounts for a large proportion of the boxes in the UK according to the BTO. He was inspired by hearing screaming parties of Swifts prospecting for nesting holes. Though he has slowed a bit, he intends to continue until he is 99.

Crows defeated by lasers

In the same newspaper, there was a story of residents in Sunnyvale, California, scaring off crows by using lasers. The birds (species not mentioned of course) have roosted in the town centre for many years without any problems, but during the Covid crisis their numbers have increased, leading to complaints from businesses and outdoor eating establishments about noise and droppings. Using birds of prey did not solve the problem, so residents are being armed with lasers, green ones which have been found to most effective. As a last resort, broadcasting crow distress calls will be tried.

Good news about the Bird Fair

Like the mythical Phoenix, the bird fair rises from the ashes.

Tim Appleton, the original founder of the Rutland Bird Fair, is re-launching and re-branding the event. It is to be known as "Global Bird Fair" and will take place in July this year near the original site in Rutland. Early interest from previous attendees is encouraging he reports.

Information supplied by Alistair McLee

The world turned upside-down

We all know that Blackcaps in eastern Europe are now migrating westwards to winter in Britain, but even stranger is birds from France and northern Spain migrating north to winter in Britain, possibly attracted by mild winters and food provided in gardens. The BTO is studying these changes and

have colour-ringed 600 wintering birds. Any sightings should be reported to <mailto:blackcap@bto.org>

Endemic bird species

These are species that are unique to a region or country. Countries with a wide range of rich habitats can host high numbers, as seen in this list of the most endemic-rich countries :

Position	Country	No. of endemics
1	Colombia	1878
2	Peru	1858
3	Brazil	1813
4	Indonesia	1711

You can see the attraction of South America to world listers.

So where does Britain fit in this list? The short answer is near the bottom.



Red Grouse, Danby Moor

Eric James

At the start of the twentieth century, we had one, the Red Grouse, which for this reason was chosen as the logo for *British Birds*. Its status did not last, and in the 1980s, it was reclassified as a sub-species of the Willow Grouse, but lacking the partial moult to a white winter plumage and keeping summer plumage all year. This decision was supported by the discovery of an intermediate form on small islands near Trondheim in northern Norway. These birds do have the Willow Grouse's third, partial moult but it is not completed and dark feathers remain among the white.

However, all was not lost, as the BOU in 1980 promoted the Scottish Crossbill to full species status and hence endemic; this being confirmed in August 2006 on the basis of differences in song and call, which are sufficient for reproductive isolation from the Common Crossbill.

More recently, there has been progress with the status of the Red Grouse. Genetic comparison has shown it to be clearly separate from the Willow Grouse. Success!

The domestication of birds for meat and eggs

It has long been thought that keeping birds for food started 10,000 years ago, with Red Junglefowl being the first, but this is disputed since old remains have never been accurately dated and the bones might have been Pheasants'. The most firm evidence of domesticated hens from Junglefowl comes from only 5000 years ago

Researchers have now identified 232 goose bones at a Neolithic site at Tianluoshan in China and say there are several pieces of evidence that some of the geese were from at least partially domesticated birds.

Four of the bones belonged to immature [geese](#) that were less than 16 weeks old, with the youngest probably less than eight weeks old. This implies they must have hatched at Tianluoshan as they would have been too young to fly or breed.

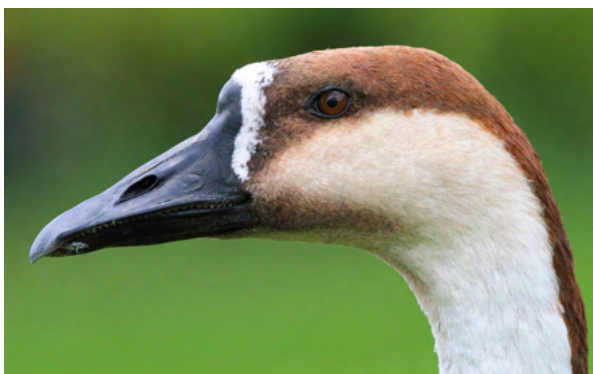
If this domesticated goose was kept as the normal breed in China, then it would have been one of these below. As well as a source of meat, they are also prolific egg layers, especially the young birds.



Chinese Goose, Margrove

Eric James

In appearance it is very similar to its wild ancestor the Swan Goose except the knob at the base of the beak is enlarged in the domesticated bird



Close up view of the head and beak of a Swan Goose

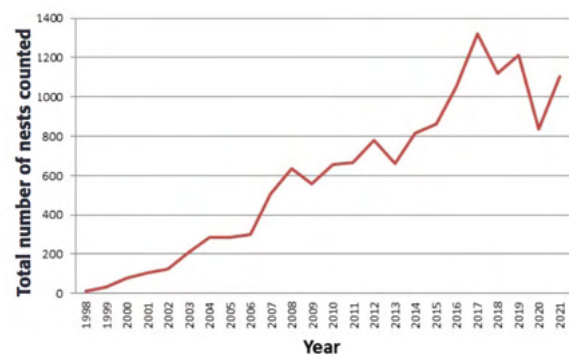
The BTO heronries survey continues

Having passed its 90th anniversary in 2018, the heronries survey has survived the Covid restrictions and is believed to be the longest running breeding bird survey in the world.



Grey Heron nesting

The 2021 results have been released, giving the latest UK population estimate of 9,479 apparently occupied nests, up from 9,121 in 2020. though the 2020 estimate might be unreliable because the poor Census coverage that year, but the 2021 estimate confirms a decrease has occurred from 9,998 in 2019. It's not obvious what caused this decrease since the winters of 2019/20 and 2020/21 were both relatively warm compared with the average, although 2019/20 was unusually wet and stormy, particularly in February when many herons would have been beginning nesting activity. The population has yet to recover from the sharp declines that occurred between 2007 and 2013 when there were several severe winters, which contrasts with the strong recoveries and continued increases that have occurred after previous declines caused by severe weather (1946/7 and 1962/3-- see page 9 for the graph and where this information came from) Little Egrets are now included in the survey :



Number of Little Egret nests counted

A total of 1,102 apparently occupied nests were submitted from 122 sites, with the largest count being made in Kent (94 nests). The total is down on the 1,215 nests at 126 sites in 2019, probably for the same reason that Grey Herons are down.



Polesia, or the 'Amazon of Europe'

No, I hadn't heard of it either, in fact I can't even remember where I came across it. Having collected information on the subject, I was about to start writing when the deluded President of Russia decided to send the army into Ukraine to free the people from the tyranny of their democratically elected 'Nazi' government.



Riverine woodland

The area is the wetlands associated with the drainage areas of rivers of Eastern Europe : the Bug in Poland, Dnieper in Ukraine, and the 750 km-long Pripyat, one of Europe's most pristine rivers. The altitude across the remarkable 186,000 km² region never varies by more than 150

metres. Being a natural feature, it ignores the human made national boundaries so the marshes are spread over southern Belarus, northern Ukraine, and parts of Poland and Russia; it acts as the drainage basin of the Western Bug and Pripyat rivers, which were joined by a canal that was built during the reign of [Stanislaus II of Poland](#), the last king of the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#) (something that was not mentioned in 'O' level history sixty years ago). As well as the marshes, the area has floodplain oak groves and black alder forests. There are habitats for waders such as Great Snipe and some endangered raptors. There are also 1.5 million migratory birds. Scarce mammals have been present, including Aurochs (the wild ancestors of domestic cattle, now extinct but represented by Heck cattle), European bison, bears, wolves, wild boar, deer, elk and lynx. More than 90% of all birds in Belarus are found in Polesia (which comprises the southern third of the country). There are over 70 Reserves to protect habitats, including one round the Belarusian thousand-year-old town of Turov where breeding birds include Lesser White-fronted geese, while there have been records of spring passage migrants of up to 400,000 Ruff, 200,000 Wigeons and 25,000 Black-tailed Godwits. More than 30 species of birds nest on Turov meadow, including a million ruffs and the highest breeding densities of

Lapwings and Redshanks in the world. 190,000-hectare Pripyat National Park is between the rivers Pripyat, Stviga and Ubort. It is used by 256 bird species, and contains the rare alluvial oak forests unique to eastern Europe.

Needless to say, harmful developments have happened, such as draining for farming (1960s to 1980s), forestry, and peat extraction, leading to habitat loss and the release of stored carbon.

Some improvements followed the most famous disaster to affect this part of the world when a nuclear accident occurred on 26 April 1986 at the No. 4 reactor in the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, near the city of Pripyat in the north of Ukraine (or the Ukrainian SSR as it was at the time). Huge areas were polluted by radioactive elements. The most polluted part includes the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone (CEZ) and the adjacent Polesie State Radioecological Reserve. This did something to promote a return to nature. These, and some other areas in the region, are still considered unsuitable for human habitation. After the disaster, there was a rise in cancer cases and birth defects; following the Soviet Union's habit of hiding bad news, cancer cannot now be recorded on death certificates. The lack of disturbance has allowed unrestricted 'passive' rewilding to develop, completely directed by Nature, unlike many previous schemes which had particular intended targets.



Birth defects don't just affect people

This unexpected wildlife bonus in the CEZ will need protection, starting with surveys led by the BTO to find what is present. They are using photo traps plus acoustic monitoring of bats and nocturnal birds as well as the normal bird trapping and counting techniques.

The whole project is part of the Endangered Landscapes Program, which is supported by the Frankfurt Zoological Society, APB (Birdlife Belarus) and USPB (Birdlife Ukraine).

The changes to the habitats have been visible in

satellite photographs. The changes in land cover throughout this period, and found significant shifts in habitat type, with a reduction in open areas and a 680% increase in wetland habitats.



Project leader Adham Ashton-Butt and a colleague set up an acoustic monitoring device.

© Daniel Rosengren / Frankfurt Zoological Society

The authors largely attribute this to succession, a natural progression in habitats that had previously been impeded by human land management, but now helped by the blockage of human-made drainage ditches to prevent the spread of radioactive material in water leaving the area. With water no longer draining away, existing habitats became flooded and new wetlands formed. This has caused considerable changes in raptor populations with falls in abundance of generalist species of open dry habitats, such as buzzards and Montagu's Harriers, but the 680% increase in waterlogged areas has seen species with special habitat requirements increase in abundance, such as Hobby and prey species including Great Snipe and Corncrake; of special importance are two species locally extinct in the area before the accident: Greater Spotted Eagle (still classed as Endangered in Europe) and White-tailed Eagle. Greater Spotted Eagles are an indicator of wetland habitat quality, and while declining throughout Europe in recent decades they have increased from zero to at least thirteen pairs, over the whole 2000 km² of the Belarusian CEZ.

The extensive wetland has been used for travel, for as long ago as the Vikings who passed through to make their frequent raids on Constantinople. The route can be traversed by small cargo vessels, but there are plans for the E40 waterway, a 2,000km (1,240-mile) inland shipping route linking the Black Sea and the Baltic, and also giving Belarus access to the Black Sea.

The economic benefits of the project are debatable, but what is certain is damage to Polesian habitats. The work will mean straightening of the rivers by elimination of

meandering sections. In addition, the rivers would need to be significantly dredged, broadened, with dams and dykes built and to allow ships at least 80 metres long to pass.



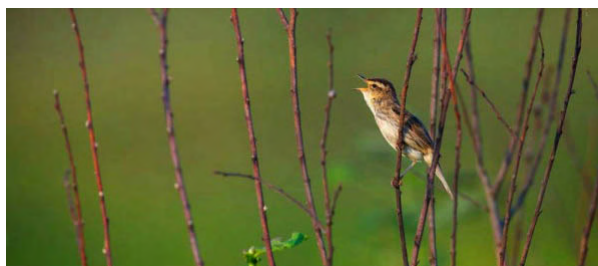
Proposed route of E40



So will it be Good-bye to this?



And this as well?



And to lots of these?

There should be some protection in Poland from EU rules, but there will be none in Belarus, Russia or Ukraine, though there should theoretically be some protection from Polesia being a UNESCO world heritage site. Under the present conditions, there doesn't seem much chance of progress, but some dredging has already been carried out in the CEZ, disturbing sediment with nuclear materials and poisoning the downstream river and

polluting the reservoir supplying water to the 2.8 million people (at the time of writing) in Kyiv.

There will be adverse effects on wildlife, including the important Greater Spotted Eagle population, but also the potential loss of three-quarters of the global population of the Threatened Aquatic Warbler. Other species in the area are Black Stork, Terek Sandpiper, Golden Plover, Common Crane and Great Grey Owl.

The BTO research into the Greater Spotted Eagles has involved fitting tracker tags to find their wintering areas, which were not known for certain but could have importance on the birds' survival. Estonian birds all wintered across southern Europe, whereas Polish and Belarusian birds wintered in Southeast Europe, the Middle East or Africa. Among the Belarusian eagles, there were differences between the sexes with males more likely to winter further south than females, with the majority of them wintering within a narrow belt in Eastern Sahel, the strip along the edge of the Sahara in Ethiopia and South Sudan, and females in coastal wetlands in Southeast Europe (southern Greece) and Turkey. The birds in Europe were in a small number of protected sites. The risk here is that 63% of Greece's wetlands were lost between 1950 and 1985. The situation in Africa is worse, With only two of the 12 African sites being protected, and both are within the same national park. If this leads to fewer males, there could be problems with hybridisation with other species and reduction of the purity of the gene pool.

PS Sorting out a pile of magazines that have accumulated by my favourite armchair, I found the Winter 2021 BTONews which has an article on Polesia, so that's where it came from. It has been mentioned twice in reports on the current situation : the first was in an interview with a woman who had escaped from Mariupol and said she was going to Polesia, probably meaning the north Ukraine or Polish sectors; the second was an indirect reference to the melting of the marshes being a problem for the invading Russians.

Eric James

And now, for a change, some good news -- about Greenabella and Greatham Creek

In the Club's September 2021 newsletter, the early design plans for this area were outlined. That scheme remains virtually unchanged except for the slight displacement of a pipeline by few metres. It is hoped that more detailed design will progress this summer. *From Alistair McLee*

BTO News March 2022

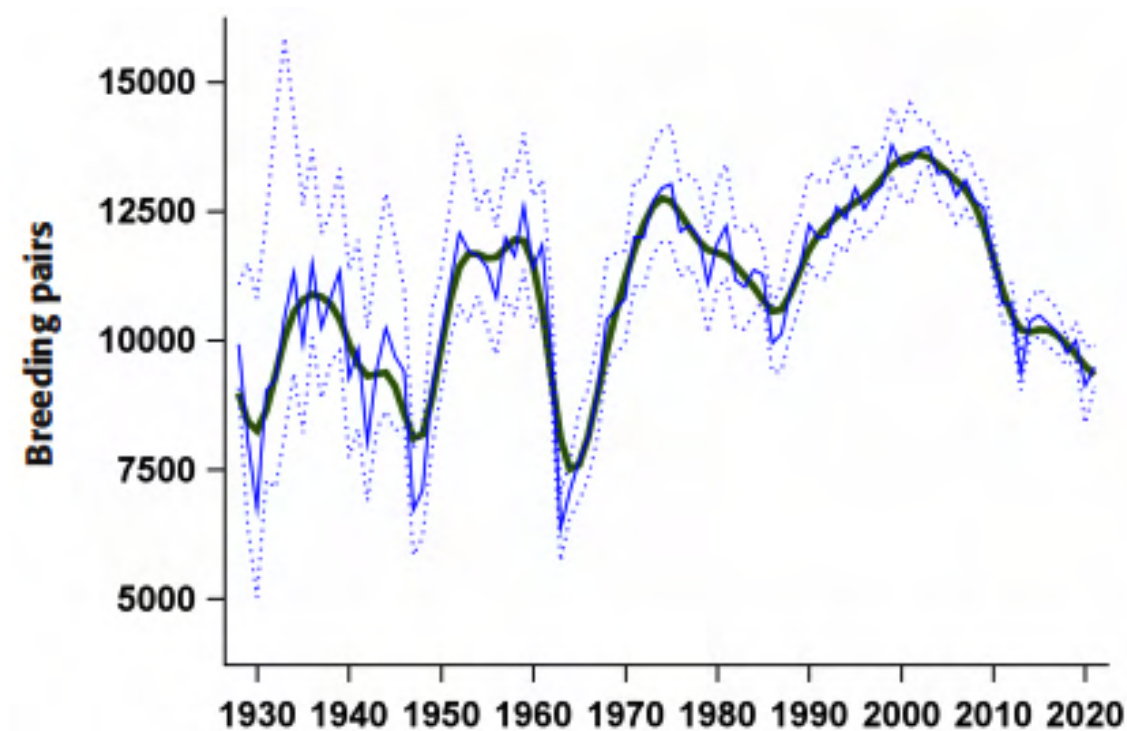
Heronries Census 2021 Results

(Ed - I wrote the article on page 5 after receiving a link from Alistair McLee and before seeing this summary).

The 2021 Annual Summary for the Census has recently been published on the BTO website: [Heronries Annual Summary for 2021](#)

The latest UK population estimate is 9,479 apparently occupied nests in 2021, up from 9,121 in 2020. It should be noted that the 2020 estimate may be unreliable due to the poor Census coverage that year, but the 2021 estimate confirms a decrease has occurred from 9,998 in 2019. It is unclear why this decrease might have occurred: the winters of 2019/20 and 2020/21 were both relatively warm compared with the average, although 2019/20 was unusually wet and stormy, particularly in February (UK Met Office) when many herons would have been beginning nesting activity. The population has yet to recover from the sharp declines that occurred between 2007 and 2013 when there were several severe winters, which contrasts with the strong recoveries and continued increases that have occurred after previous declines caused by severe weather.

UK Grey Heron population estimates 1928-2021 (the bold line shows the smoothed trend)



Recent Grey Heron numbers showing the big falls and rapid recovery after the hard winters of 1946/7 and 1962/3

Tawny Owl Calling Survey Results

A paper has recently been published on the results of the Tawny Owl Calling Survey, based on fieldwork carried out in 2005/06 and 2018/19 <https://www.bto.org/our-science/publications/peer-reviewed-papers/large-scale-citizen-science-survey-common-nocturnal>

Surveys carried out in the autumn and early winter were more likely to detect an owl at occupied sites than those carried out in the middle of winter, but there was an upturn in activity in early spring. Such patterns almost certainly reflect the changing territorial behaviour over this period, with Tawny Owls likely to be more

vocal in the autumn due to established adults responding to the settlement of dispersing juveniles, and another increase in vocal activity in the spring likely to coincide with breeding behaviour and pair-bonding. Tawny Owls were less vocal on cloudy nights and when it was raining, but more active on nights when the moon was fuller. Examination of the factors influencing whether Tawny Owls were present at a site highlighted that the two strongest factors influencing occupancy were the amount of broadleaf woodland cover locally and the amount of artificial light at night, the latter a measure of the degree of urbanisation. Occupancy increased with woodland cover, a not unexpected result, but declined as the degree of urbanisation (and artificial light at night) increased. Very many thanks to all the volunteers who took part in the Tawny Owl Calling Survey.

Nest Record Scheme and Nesting Neighbours

In 2020 the Nest Record Scheme hit an amazing milestone, receiving its two millionth nest record. The number of nest records submitted per year has been declining slowly over the past few years, so the BTO is working on a promotional push for Spring 2022 with the aim of bringing more nest recorders to both the Nest Record Scheme and Nesting Neighbours. Both schemes feed into the same Nest Records Scheme (NRS) database but are aimed at different volunteers. The Nest Records Scheme aims at nest recorders who generally record more than ten records per year and in the wider countryside, whilst Nesting Neighbours has a simpler inputting system for lower numbers of nest records over a limited number of locations such as a volunteer's garden. The NRS website is currently being restructured to help volunteers find information and support, including the distinction between these two schemes and provision of tutorial videos.

Breeding Birds Survey and Waterways Breeding Birds Survey

All Cleveland BBS and WBS volunteers should by now have received forms (should they have requested them) for the coming survey season; let me know if you haven't. Please do consider taking part in the Breeding Bird Survey. Most long-term volunteers find getting to know the breeding bird communities of a single 1km square a fascinating and rewarding experience. Only two sessions per 1km square are required (plus an additional short reconnaissance visit to record habitat) each taking no more than two hours. The following squares are currently available to allocate for 2022.

NZ3012	Hurworth Moor, Darlington	NZ3316	Sadberge
NZ3114	Lingfield, Darlington	NZ3717	Longnewton
NZ6321	New Marske	NZ6811	Moorsholm Moor
NZ7016	Liverton	NZ7017	Liverton Mines

All BBS squares are valuable to BBS/WBS, and it would be great to improve coverage, especially as we have lost some long-term volunteers recently. Full details are on the BTO website <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/bbs> where you can register.

Please contact me on 07510 996977 or mikelaquila@hotmail.com if you think you can help.

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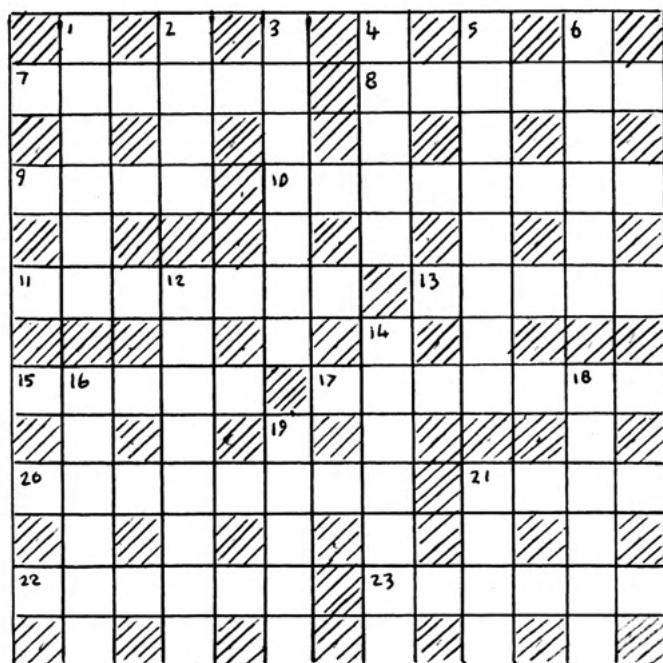
Mike Leahey, BTO Regional Representative for Cleveland

If you are desperate to see the solution to Crossword No.6, wait no longer, it's on the next page

Solution for Crossword No. 6

¹ B		² G		³ S				⁴ A		⁵ I		⁶ C	
⁷ R	O	L	L	E	R			⁸ P	L	O	V	E	R
O		U		A		⁹ S		E		O		O	
¹⁰ O	R	T	O	L	A	N		W	O	R	D	S	
K		T		S		O		I		Y		S	
¹² E	R	O	S			¹³ W	I	F	T				
D		N		¹⁴ K		G		E		¹⁵ P		¹⁶ R	
				¹⁷ H	E	R	O	N		¹⁸ H	A	R	E
¹⁹ A		²⁰ E		S		O		²¹ M		R		D	
²² S	H	I	F	T		²³ S	P	A	R	R	O	W	
T		D		R		E		C		O		I	
²⁴ E	L	E	V	E	N		²⁵ M	A	R	T	I	N	
R		R		L				W		S		G	

SOLUTION
Nº6



No. 7

CLUES ACROSS

- 7 Modern music by the hill for hunter (6)
- 8 Bad rash around L.A. for hewn stone (6)
- 9 Hawfinches conceal small island (4)
- 10 Card alan ruined for a lark (7)
- 11 Surprise dizzy starlet (7)
- 13 Pale wagtail? (5)
- 15 Playing card in the garden? (5)
- 17 Dissentious group (7)
- 20 Plover led otter astray (8)
- 21 Snakes as afterthought (4)
- 22 Seabird hid in carpet relic (6)
- 23 Small bird allowed around hotel (6)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Greedy seabird? (6)
- 2 Wear away some Parakeet charm (4)
- 3 U.S. bird may break leg around framework (7)
- 4 Comic raptor? (5)
- 5 Summer visitor sees gorse and talk (8)
- 6 Colourful creature gets state of equality by rubbish (6)
- 12 Small bird sees Russian's small pie (8)
- 14 Insect has rancour then off it goes (7)
- 16 20 across! (6)
- 18 Large bird has catch that is too big? (6)
- 19 Fish similar to turbot (5)
- 21 Reserve near change (4)

WETLAND BIRD SURVEY TEESMOUTH - WINTER 2021/2022 SUMMARY

	November 14	December 12	January 16	February 13	March 13
Little Grebe	<u>38</u>	27	16	9	18
Great Crested Grebe	4	17	<u>24</u>	1	21
Cormorant	143	387**	366**	113	<u>432**</u>
Mute Swan	<u>41</u>	40	32	25	25
Greylag Goose	<u>296</u>	240	92	15	95
Shelduck	283	243	461*	<u>500*</u>	468*
Wigeon	2862*	4072*	<u>4214*</u>	3465*	3797*
Gadwall	<u>217*</u>	136*	128*	160*	192*
Teal	1270*	<u>1713*</u>	1241*	1019	669
Mallard	192	<u>289</u>	247	191	140
Pintail	32	37	43	<u>56</u>	34
Shoveler	<u>141*</u>	127*	107*	100*	108*
Pochard	44	67	46	68	<u>92</u>
Tufted Duck	59	78	83	84	<u>127</u>
Eider	0	<u>22</u>	3	9	8
Goldeneye	37	31	48	40	<u>65</u>
Red-br. Merganser	38	<u>87**</u>	51*	63*	45*
Coot	379	467	<u>601</u>	517	369
Oystercatcher	<u>656</u>	381	644	225	256
Ringed Plover	0	0	14	9	<u>18</u>
Golden Plover	786	767	<u>1180</u>	202	1
Grey Plover	119	94	<u>206</u>	130	73
Lapwing	2667	2236	<u>3853*</u>	2499	483
Knot	126	137	<u>384</u>	100	178
Sanderling	24	<u>179**</u>	128*	39	20
Purple Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	<u>1</u>
Dunlin	247	186	276	241	<u>443</u>
Ruff	<u>1</u>	0	0	0	0
Snipe	<u>20</u>	10	16	15	<u>20</u>
Black-tailed Godwit	35	<u>67</u>	49	41	61
Bar-tailed Godwit	<u>34</u>	11	33	27	3
Curlew	291	296	<u>584</u>	246	485
Redshank	666*	586	<u>687*</u>	387	435
Turnstone	53	<u>61</u>	57	37	20

* Indicates a count of >50% of national importance

** Indicates a count of national importance

N.B. 'Teesmouth' includes Hartlepool Bay.

All WeBS data are collected on behalf of the WeBS Partnership, which retains exclusive rights to the sale or supply of these data for commercial purposes.

WETLAND BIRD SURVEY TEESMOUTH - WINTER 2021/2022 SUMMARY

An excellent level of cover was achieved with 203 of the scheduled 205 sector counts completed over the five months.

Over this series of counts the Tees Estuary and Hartlepool Bay recording area was nationally important for Cormorant (432, March), Red-breasted Merganser (87, December) and Sanderling (179, December).

Wigeon (4214, January), Cormorant (432, March) and Avocet (86, March) all set new winter maxima records utilising WeBS data which goes back to 1988. Red-breasted Merganser (87, December) had its best showing since 113 were recorded in the 2004/05 winter.

Purple Sandpiper (1, March) and Turnstone (61, December) set new record low counts for the winter period however no data was collected from the Hartlepool Bay sector which is an important location for these species. Oystercatcher (656, November) and Curlew (584, January) totals were also on the low side for the area.

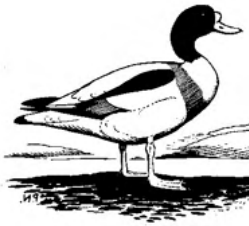
Other interesting records during the winter included 4 Pale-bellied Brent Geese (Peninsula West, December), 2 Ruddy Shelducks (Peninsula West, November), 5 Velvet Scoters (4 Redcar and Coatham Sands South and 1 Bran Sands North, February), 1 Black-throated Diver (Bran Sands North, January), 2 Great White Egrets (Saltholme East, March), 2 Spoonbills (Cowpen Marsh, November; 1 immature bird overwintered in the estuary), 1 Glaucous Gull (Fleet Field, February) and 3 Mediterranean Gulls (Paddy's Pool, March).

Adam Jones

WeBS Local Organiser

Solution to Crossword No.7

[illegible]



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

THE CLUB COMMITTEE

(Chairman) **Steve McDonnell**
 (Vice Chairman) **Barbara Crinson**
 (Hon Secretary) **Chris Sharp**
 (Hon Treasurer) **Mark Askew**
 (Ordinary Member) **Alistair McLee** (Co-opted)
 (Ordinary Member) **Julie Mason** (First Appointed 2017)
 (Ordinary Member) **Brian Clasper** (First Appointed 2019)
 (Ordinary Member) **Barbara Keville** (First Appointed 2020)
 (Ordinary Member) **Mike Leahey** (First Appointed 2021)

RECORDS SUB-COMMITTEE

(Chairman) **Alan Crossley**
Tom Francis
Graeme Joynt
Chris Brown
Ian Kendall
Chris Bell
Ian Foster
Chris Sharp
Ian Boustead
Geoff Iceton
Martyn Sidwell

**CONSERVATION
SUB-COMMITTEE**

(Chairman) **Alistair McLee**

Honorary Treasurer's Report 2021

In common with everyone's lives, Club activities in 2021 were disrupted by the pandemic. We are thankful to a loyal membership that kept subscriptions buoyant throughout. This is fortunate as much of our expenditure is effectively fixed cost such as associated with report publication or servicing the website. Overall this year was financially stable, with the excess spend being primarily due to renewal of the report editor computer, which, considering the high quality of publication, is money well spent. With interest rates so low now, the gift aid element of the subscriptions is ever more important. Thanks must go to Don Page who has continued to administer the gift aid ever since I took over from him as treasurer, which is a great help to me. Just one more year Don please and I'll pick up that element from you!

Otherwise, a donation gave a welcome boost to income and we also donated to the BTO's Denis Summers-Smith Tribute fund, set up to help young scientists. HSBC bank changed our current account to a 'charity' account and have begun charging us for the privilege. This has prompted us to seek a lower cost alternative with a relatively high ethical rating, not an easy task in a less than perfect world but one we hope to conclude shortly. Finally, in a period of relatively high inflation, it is reassuring to know some things will stay the same, at least for the next year, as we do not propose to change subscription fees.

Mark Askew

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

	Total	Full	Family	Junior	S/C	Life	Hon
2005	287	134	95	-	39	14	5
2006	317	157	89	-	52	14	5
2007	346	156	119	-	51	14	6
2008	421	176	170	-	55	14	6
2009	487	203	190	1	73	14	6
2010	521	209	209	2	78	13	5
2011	538	225	214	2	79	13	5
2012	548	312	217	1		13	5
2013	509	286	200	2		14	7
2014	488	261	207	2		12	6
2015	476	266	189	2		13	6
2016	480	268	192	1		13	6
2017	470	267	182	1		14	6
2018	453	266	166	1		14	6
2019	465	269	176	-		14	6
2020	451	270	162			14	5
2021	459	271	169			14	5

As can be seen from the above table the Club membership has remained fairly static in recent years despite the restrictions imposed on our activities by the coronavirus pandemic.

At £12 the membership fee still remains excellent value. Despite the fact that the junior membership rate was reduced to only £5 at the AGM in April 2016 the Club continues to thrive without any members in this category.

As in previous years the many hours of free time given by certain members is worthy of mention. Special thanks go to Eric James who resumed his role as editor of the newsletters in 2021. Eric also continues to provide much of the material for publication.

Jamie Duffie also doubles as our website manager and handles all the PayPal receipts for membership fees. This latter method is becoming an increasingly popular way for members to pay their subscriptions. The website continues to gain praise from everyone who logs on. The site is well used and with the ever increasing use of twitter as a means of reporting sightings and publishing photographs represents the best way of visitors to the area to keep up with what's around. The Club has updated and modernised the website in recent years and it is better than ever and more user friendly.

Since retiring as Treasurer in 2000 Don Page has continued to calculate and submit the Club's annual Gift Aid application. This is a significant source of income each year and Don can't be thanked enough for his continuing efforts.

The annual bird report is also a publication the Club can be rightly proud of. As a current member of the records sub-committee I know the amount of time that is spent collating the records and writing and checking the report. Our recorder Alan Crossley and the rest of the compilers must be thanked for their efforts. This year more than twenty compilers were involved in the writing of the report. Special thanks must go to Chris Brown who both edited and formatted the report. Although Tom Francis stepped down as recorder at the end of 2018 he and Graeme Joynt continue to assist Alan in his duties as recorder to ensure a smooth transition process.

Another member whose efforts for the Club go unrewarded is John Fletcher. John has been our sales officer for many years and he religiously is at the back of each indoor meeting selling old bird reports and books donated by members.

Chris Sharp

Report from the Chair 2021



The purpose of the Chair's report is to summarise the Club's activities throughout the year.

The period covered by Covid lockdown meant that Trustees meetings took place using Zoom, and we continue to meet this way.

Over the past year, the committee has met quarterly to discuss issues that enable the Club to run smoothly and to progress.

Regular events for Club members have included :

A programme of six successful outdoor meetings from September 2021 to March 2022.

A programme of six indoor meetings were held, the September meeting having to be cancelled because of Covid restrictions on indoor meetings. The first meeting was the AGM in October, having been delayed because of the restrictions.

Three Newsletters were published in September, December and April.

The 2020 Cleveland Bird Report was the forty-seventh published by the Club and is highly regarded by birdwatchers and other organisations throughout the country. Thanks are due to the County Recorder, members of the records committee and compilers for their hard work in ensuring the continued success of the publication.

A new site has been procured for a feeding station at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park, across the lane from the car park. Over time, the number of species visiting the site has been steadily increasing, proving the site's success.

We continue to fund feeding stations at Coatham Stob, Saltburn Valley gardens and at Stillington Nature Reserve.

As Chair, I have received correspondence from Hartlepool Power Station, the Tees Nature Partnership and the Tees Nature Tourism Marketing Group.

I have attended meetings with Chris Francis, Senior Site Manager, RSPB Saltholme.

We have sadly said good-bye to Barbara Keville who resigned her post on the committee due to re-location. We thank Barbara for her input and support during her time on the committee.

It has only been in this short period that I have come to recognise the continuous hard work of the Club's trustees and committee that enable the Club to operate with seamless ease. My thanks go to all the long-serving officers of the Club who continue to do an unenviable job.

It has been a pleasure to serve the Teesmouth Bird Club over the past year.

Steve McDonnell

Chair

TEESMOUTH BIRD CLUB						
Statement of Income & Expenditure for 2021						
(with 2020 for comparison)						
			2021		2020	
			Income	Payment	Income	Payment
Subscriptions			4159.42		4232.73	
Gift Aid			796.17		872.44	
Interest			5.78		428.57	
Meetings				167.88		211.60
Lecture Fees				40.00		164.00
TBC Gen Publications			239.76		349.44	
Bird Report				4651.00		2500.00
Printing & Stationery				180.00		521.00
Postage				368.23		1129.13
Subs to other Societies				50.50		50.50
Insurance				157.00		268.80
Sundries			0.00	0.00	0	16.00
Website				900.00		300.00
Donations			620.00	500.00	500.00	0.00
Feeding stations				463.65		745.59
Hide repairs				40.00		65.00
Data provision			0.00		55.00	
Bank charges				5.40		
			5821.13	7523.66	6438.18	5971.62
	Excess Income			-1702.53		466.56
			5821.13	5821.13	6438.18	6438.18
		Balance B/F 2020	60756.66	Balance B/F 2019	60290.10	
		Excess Income	-1702.53		466.56	
		Balance 31.12.2021	59054.13	Balance 31.12.20	60756.66	
		Cash In Hand	0.00		0.00	
		Bank Current Acc	1591.07		799.38	
		Deposit A/C 'PSMF'	0.20		0.20	
		NSB Investment Acc	57462.86		59957.08	
			59054.13		60756.66	

A late addition

Live Nest Cameras

A suggestion of some birding on your computer's monitor if you are tired of binge watching Netflix dramas, here is a source of all the emotions of any good TV series – infidelity, determination, sibling rivalry, dynasties, success, failure – you name it – it is all here. Go to *viewbirds.com*, and you will be presented with a huge selection of nesting sites in different countries, showing a selection of species as they breed in the present season. Often there are videos of highlights of earlier breeding season attempts. A Goshawk taking all three well-developed Osprey young from a nest over a period of two days. If infanticide is your thing, Black Stork culling the poorer young from a brood as the food demand begins to exceed supply rate. There are plenty of “ah cute ” moments too, like at the sight of Booted Eagle chicks.

Ali McLee