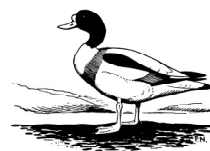


Teesmouth Bird Club Newsletter

December 2009 (No.44)



Reg.Charity No.508850

CONTENTS

Temporary Meetings venue	1
Monthly Summaries	1
News from the Committee	8
Access to RSPB Saltholme	9
Sale of cards and prints	9
HBC bird disturbance survey	9
Rookery survey	11
Hanson Challenge : Scaling Dam	12
Mammal records	12
Local wildlife sites	12
Reports on local outings	12
Local outings 2009/10	13
TBC day trip to Blacktoft	14
TBC day trip to Martin Mere	15
Swallow roost : Kwazulu Natal	16
Teesmouth in the Fifties	17
50 years ago : Dusky Thrush at Hartlepool	18
Woodpeckers	19
Redcar-Marske Stray	20
Profile : Ted Parker	23
Obituaries	25
Wetland Survey Results	26

The TBC Newsletter is published three times a year.

*Production : Editor Ted Parker, layout Eric James,
distribution Chris Sharp, web download Jamie Duffie.*

PLEASE NOTE! CHANGE OF VENUE FOR EVENING MEETINGS FROM JANUARY TO APRIL 2010 INCLUSIVE

Stockton Library is to undergo major repairs, starting in December 2009. As a result, we have had to seek out a new venue for our monthly meetings on 4th January, 1st February, 1st March and 12th April 2010.

We have secured a lecture theatre in the Ebsworth Building of the Stockton Campus of Durham University. The dates and start times remain the same at 7.30 pm and we do not have

to leave swiftly at 9.30pm, as has been the case at Stockton Library. Unfortunately, the dreaded Health and Safety does not allow self-service of coffees and teas in the room but there is a vending machine upstairs if anyone wants a drink. The location is attractive, modern, well lit and has secure parking. The room is on the ground floor to the left as one enters the atrium, opposite the Security Reception

Enclosed in this newsletter is a copy of a map and directions (**see page 31**). If you choose to walk, then easiest route is over the new Infinity Bridge over the river. Please note this change in your diaries to prevent a cold evening in a Stockton building site in January! We will be back at Stockton Library from September 2010 onwards, as normal.

MONTHLY SUMMARIES

***Chris Sharp** reviews the birding highlights of the autumn period, which, despite expectations produced no major 'falls' of migrants. Nevertheless, there were some memorable birds. Please note that this summary is a diary of the main birding events and sightings of rarer species have not yet been assessed by the Teesmouth Bird Club Records Sub-Committee.*

JULY



Osprey, Crookfoot & Hurworth Burn

Renton Charman

An Osprey commuted between Crookfoot and Hurworth Burn Reservoir from early July and remained until the end of summer, allowing many birders to see this majestic raptor. A probable Great Reed Warbler was singing from sycamores

at Hummersea on 3rd but disappeared after a heavy downpour. A Quail calling at Upsall early in the month was one of several heard in Cleveland this year. More unusual was a Corncrake, which 'sang' at RSPB Saltholme from 3rd to 4th. The annual ringing of Storm Petrels at Hartlepool produced 7 birds on 4th and with a full moon some birds could even be seen fluttering over the sea. A Roseate Tern at RSPB Saltholme on 5th was the first of several reports from the reserve over the next few days. The adult Mediterranean Gull returned to Newburn early in the month and was often to be found on its regular lighting column. A Crossbill over Skelton heralded a series of reports of this irruptive species during the month.



Common Crossbill, Hartlepool Headland

Eric James



Common Crossbill, Hartlepool Headland

Ian Forrest



Pectoral Sandpiper, Tidal Pool

Mick Brennan



Little Gulls, Tidal Pool

Ian Forrest



Curlew Sandpiper, Greenabella

Ian Forrest

As usual, July saw an increase in passage waders, though numbers this autumn were down on previous years. A Pectoral Sandpiper around the Brinefields from 15th was the first scarce wader of the autumn. An unseasonal Dark-bellied Brent Goose was on Seal Sands on 20th and up to 12 Little Gulls were around Dormans Pool at this time. An escaped Griffon Vulture over Normanby on 24th must have been an impressive sight and set the finder's heart racing in view of influxes on the near Continent in recent years. This bird, however, was proved to be an escape. Flocks of Crossbills numbering 530 birds were in Guisborough Woods late in the month and

passage waders included small numbers of Green and Wood Sandpipers, 1-2 Curlew Sandpipers on Seaton Snook and a single Little Stint at RSPB Saltholme. The latter site also held up to 75 Black-tailed Godwits. The adult Yellow-legged Gull returned to the Tees Barrage on 28th and up to 16 Little Egrets were on the wet meadows at RSPB Saltholme.

AUGUST

The month started well with a Pectoral Sandpiper on Saltholme Marsh on 1st, which remained until 6th. The following day saw a Hobby over Birk Brow and a Marsh Harrier at Scaling Dam. Two Marsh Harriers were at Sleddale on 3rd, with a Red Kite at Errington Woods. Another Quail was near Urray Nook until 6th. Eight Green Sandpipers at Scaling Dam on 4th was a good count and up to 3 were at RSPB Saltholme at this time, along with 10 Greenshanks. A juvenile Mediterranean Gull was on the Calor Gas Pool on 6th and 2 adult Curlew Sandpipers on Seaton Snook on the same date were part of a poor autumn passage for this species.

The first seabird movement of any note was 153 Manx Shearwaters off Hartlepool Headland on 12th in an autumn that was to prove below average for seabirds in general. August proved particularly poor, with just an adult Sabine's Gull which lingered off Hartlepool on 19th being the only bird of note.



Marsh Harrier, Cowpen Marsh

Ian Forrest



A Hobby was over Skelton on 17th and a juvenile Black-necked Grebe at RSPB Saltholme from 18th remained until early September. One or 2 Roseate Terns were on Seaton Snook at this time and Marsh Harriers were regularly reported from the North Tees Marshes.



Citrine Wagtail, RSPB Saltholme

Steve Keightley

RSPB Saltholme continued to come up trumps, with a juvenile Citrine Wagtail showing extremely well from the Visitor Centre from 23rd-24th. This was only the 3rd Cleveland record. A Pied Flycatcher and 10 Willow Warblers at Hartlepool on 25th constituted a large fall in the context of an extremely poor early autumn for passerine migration. Three adult and 2 juvenile Roseate Terns were on Seaton Snook late in the month, along with 6 juvenile Curlew Sandpipers.



Hooded Merganser, Scaling Dam

John Money

Excitement was stirred when a female Hooded Merganser was found at Scaling Dam on 25th. The bird was only present for one day but, amazingly, reappeared on the North Tees Marshes in September. Four Barnacle Geese were at Scaling Dam on 27th and the same day saw 20 Wheatears and 4 Whinchats around RSPB Saltholme. Another Pectoral Sandpiper was at Greatham Creek on 29th and a Bittern was seen on Cowpen Marsh. Two Marsh Harriers were at Dormans Pool late in the month. A Buzzard over the Fire Station Pool on the last day of the month was one of several reported from the North Tees Marshes during the month. This species continues to spread westwards in this country and the

number of Cleveland records continues to increase year on year.



Little Owl, Pudding Poke Farm

Thomas Horne

SEPTEMBER



Hooded Merganser, RSPB Saltholme

Ian Forrest

The Hooded Merganser reappeared on the Calor Gas Pool on 1st and commuted between here and RSPB Saltholme for much of the month. Photographic evidence indicated that it was the same individual which had been accepted as a wild bird in Fife in 2008. It continued to attract a steady stream of visitors and occasionally gave excellent, close range views. Forty-four Black-tailed Godwits were on Bowesfield Marsh and 8 first-summer Little Gulls were at RSPB Saltholme early in the month.

On 3rd, 760 Manx Shearwaters and a Pomarine Skua were off Hartlepool Headland and the following day 12 Bonxies and 2 Pale-bellied Brent Geese passed here. Little Stint numbers peaked

at a lowly 3 at this time and up to 4 Curlew Sandpipers were around the Tidal Pool and 25 Ruff were at RSPB Saltholme.



Curlew Sandpiper, RSPB Saltholme

Ian Forrest



Purple Heron, Dormans Pool

Jamie Duffie

An adult Sabine's Gull was off Hartlepool on 6th, along with a Great Northern Diver. The year's second Purple Heron was at RSPB Saltholme on 7th, before moving to Dormans Pool later in the day where it gave good views. The month was to prove particularly poor for falls of migrants on the coast, although birds were still on the move, evidenced by 10 Spotted Flycatchers at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park on 9th and 30 Crossbills over Skelton next day. A single Avocet was at RSPB Saltholme from 11th to 12th and a Hobby was over Cowpen Bewley on the latter date. An intermediate phase Gyr Falcon perched on the cliff edge at Hummersea on 12th set the observers' hearts racing. It was watched flying around at close range before disappearing around the cliffs towards Boulby. These birds are notoriously difficult to distinguish from some of the hybrid escapees from collection but the observers were convinced of its identity.

Sea watching at Hartlepool finally got going on 13th, with 3 Sabine's Gulls, 6 Sooty and 1 Balearic Shearwaters and 1 Long-tailed, 7 Pomarine and 42 Great Skuas. The following day, a Cory's Shearwater was the highlight as it flew slowly north, albeit rather distantly, and singles of Sabine's Gull, Balearic Shearwater and Long-tailed

Skua were also just rewards for those convinced that sea watching would eventually pick up. 11 'Sooties' were seen on 15th and the 16th produced a Leach's Petrel, Red-necked Grebe and 64 Scaup.

Pink-footed Geese are now a regular sight over Cleveland in late September and 128 seen off Hartlepool and 26 over Skelton on 17th were the first of the autumn. A female Goshawk over Coulby Newham on 19th must have been an impressive sight and a Red-backed Shrike at Dorman's Pool from 20th performed well into October.



Red-backed Shrike, Dormans Pool

Mick Brennan



Blue-winged Teal, Haverton Hole

Tom Francis

An Osprey was over Redcar on 20th and a Bittern was regularly reported from the Haverton Watchpoint at RSPB Saltholme from 23rd into October. Another long-stayer was a drake Blue-winged Teal; commuting between the Allotment Pool and Port Clarence Flood, it initially appeared in drab eclipse plumage but over the course of its stay into late October it developed into resplendent, full adult plumage. A Buff-breasted Sandpiper also lingered at RSPB Saltholme at this time, continuing the reserve's impressive record since its opening in January.

A Honey Buzzard was over Dormans Pool on 25th. The bird of prey theme continued the following day, with an Osprey, a Hobby and 5 Buzzards over RSPB Saltholme. Another Hobby was over RSPB Saltholme on 28th and the same day saw a Hawfinch on feeders in a Stockton garden. The last day of the month produced a Lapland Bunting at North Gare and a passage of Barnacle Geese, which included 139 at RSPB Saltholme and 250 at South Gare.



Lapland Bunting, North Gare

Martyn Sidwell



Brent Geese, South Gare

Mick Brennan



Snow Bunting, Hartlepool Headland

Ian Forrest

OCTOBER

The Red-backed Shrike remained at Dormans Pool until 1st. Two Garganeys were remained around RSPB Saltholme. Sea watching at Hartlepool Headland on 1st produced 540 Manx

Shearwaters, 5 Sooty Shearwaters and 30 Pomarine and 3 Long-tailed Skuas. Single Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint remained on the North Tees Marshes early in the month. A Spotted Crake showed well at RSPB Saltholme on 4th, the reserve's second scarce crake of the year, and 68 Pink-footed Geese were on the site on this date. A Whooper Swan and a Jack Snipe were at Bowesfield Marsh on 5th. This remains a much under-watched area. Yet another Pectoral Sandpiper appeared at RSPB Saltholme on 7th and several Greenshanks were still in the area but many observers commented on the scarcity of Spotted Redshanks this autumn.

Two adult Mediterranean Gulls were at Newburn on 8th, with 4 Scaup on Seal Sands on the same date. The wind swung around to the southeast on 10th and several scarce migrants were present on the coast over the next few days, although no large 'falls' occurred.



Yellow-browed Warbler, Seaton Cemetery

Jamie Duffie



Yellow-browed Warbler, South Gare

Neil Lay

Yellow-browed Warblers appeared at Seaton Carew and South Gare on 10th, with a Firecrest and 3 Bramblings at Hartlepool Headland. Another Yellow-browed Warbler was at Seaton Cemetery the following day with 1-2 Lapland Buntings at Brotton. Two more Lapland Buntings were at South Gare on 12th and 2 Firecrests and 2 Yellow-browed Warblers were at Hartlepool Headland next day.



Firecrest, Hartlepool Headland

Ian Forrest

The Hooded Merganser, which had last been reported from the North Tees Marshes on 1st, reappeared for a single day at Hemlington Lake on 12th. Long-staying Buff-Breasted Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper and Blue-winged Teal were present around RSPB Saltholme at this time.



Richard's Pipit, South Gare

Neil Lay

A Richard's Pipit at South Gare from 15th initially had observers thinking it might be the similar, but rarer, Blyth's Pipit based on size and call. Excellent photographic coverage, however, proved that it was a Richards Pipit; even so, this is a scarce and hard-to-see species in Cleveland. A Black Redstart was also at South Gare at this time.



Black Redstart, South Gare

Neil Lay

Sea watching at Hartlepool Headland produced 3 Great Northern Divers on 16th, along with 7 Whooper Swans, 10 Dark-bellied Brent Geese, 9 Velvet Scoters, 28 Great Skuas, 7 Pomarine Skuas, 1 Little Auk and 3,500 Guillemots.



Bluethroat, Hartlepool Headland

Jamie Duffie

A showy Bluethroat entertained observers at Hartlepool Headland on 17th and 2 Long-tailed Ducks flew past here. Several skeins of Pink-footed Geese flew south on the same date, one and one containing a superb white phase Snow Goose, which was watched from Seaton Common and the North Tees Marshes, having previously been seen to the north of Cleveland.



Pink-footed Geese



Slavonian Grebe, RSPB Saltholme

Neil Lay

A Yellow-browed Warbler was at Errington Woods on 18th and a juvenile Slavonian Grebe showed well at RSPB Saltholme from 19th. Up to 16 Snow Buntings were at North Gare, remaining until the end of the month. A Firecrest was trapped at Hartlepool on 21st and a Yellow-browed Warbler was present here, with another at South Gare. The following day, a Common Rosefinch was seen briefly at Hartlepool but a Shore Lark was much more obliging at South Gare.



Shore Lark, South Gare

Martyn Sidwell

A Black Redstart was at the Jewish Cemetery and a Siberian Chiffchaff was present there on 23rd. A late Redstart in the same location was one of the few seen in Cleveland this autumn. A Lapland Bunting was at Seaton Common 24th and autumn 2009 proved particularly good for this species. One or 2 Jack Snipes were seen well at RSPB Saltholme from 26th; viewed from the screen at Bottom Tank this is a species that is rarely observed on the ground. A Shore Lark at North Gare on 28th was presumably the same bird as that seen at South Gare. Visible migration over North Gare on this date included Crossbill, Twite, 146 Redpolls and 189 Siskins, and a Richard's Pipit was at Boulby on 29th. The month ended with the wintering Twite flock having returned to Greenabella Marsh and a Bittern being regularly seen from the Haverton Watchpoint, along with

an impressive flock of Starlings numbering *ca* 20,000 coming in to roost in the reed bed.

This was a somewhat disappointing autumn overall, with no falls of migrants of any note, few days of northerly or onshore winds and, consequently, few sea-watching highlights. There was a particular lack of rare waders on the North Tees Marshes. Still, there's always next year!



Marsh Harrier, Dormans Pool

Ian Forrest

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

HARTLEPOOL OBSERVATORY

At its October meeting, the Club Committee gave its full backing to this imaginative project, subject to funding and future maintenance/insurance requirements being resolved. Our architects, JDDK, have therefore been requested to firm up the costs of the four building options outlined in the Feasibility Study we commissioned and to make reductions where possible, without materially affecting the quality or appearance of the building. Work has also started in earnest on seeking out sources of funding for what we believe will be the first bespoke sea watching observatory ever built in the UK.

BIRD CONSERVATION ISSUES

Since the last Newsletter, the Conservation Sub-Committee has been in over-drive dealing with a significant number of planning applications, scoping reports, environmental statements and requests for bird data. Despite more than a century of habitat loss, which has seen huge tracts of mudflats, saltmarsh and other habitats disappear, there are still major development pressures around the Tees Estuary and some of the issues currently being dealt with include a proposed five-turbine windfarm at the Augean Landfill Site (Hargreave's Quarry); a combined heat and power plant/liquid natural gas plant on reclaimed Seal Sands, which will include huge storage tanks; a proposed overhead power line diversion by the National Grid; a gas-fired power plant at the Reclamation Pond; an extension to

Hart Quarry; the proposed new North Tees Hospital at Wynyard; the Red Gap Moor windfarm, Hartlepool; proposed works to Town Wall, Hartlepool Headland and the minerals and wastes policy and sites strategy for the Tees Valley. Some of our responses to these can be found on the Club's Website.

In addition, the Conservation Sub-Committee has also had a major input into the identification and categorisation of Local Wildlife Sites in Cleveland, in conjunction with the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust and Hartlepool Borough Council. Broad principles have been agreed with Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council for the future management of the Fox Covert, Marske, following a site meeting, attended by Ted Parker (Vice-Chairman), Steve Norman (member) and Keith Ferry (Wildlife and Countryside Officer). At the time of writing, we are also engaged in a thorough review of Durham County Council's database, *'Mapping Sensitive Bird Sites in Durham'*, which includes the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, at the request of the Council. All this work certainly keeps us on our toes!

THE PHIL STEAD MEMORIAL HIDE

The Club now has £6,000 to contribute towards the hide, which is to be located at the site of the screen by the Bottom Tank on RSPB Saltholme. Many who have watched from the screen will have been amazed at the close-range views of many wetland bird species, which recently have included 2 Jack Snipes (a rarely seen species on the ground in Cleveland – or anywhere else for that matter), Little Egret, Black-tailed Godwit and Curlew Sandpiper. We are grateful to an anonymous donor who personally gave £1,000 to boost the amount the Club could contribute and, having talked to Anne Stead, Phil's widow, we know that she is overwhelmed by the efforts being made and sums of money involved to secure a lasting memorial to her much-missed husband. We are now working hard with RSPB to raise the remaining £14,000 needed from various funding sources to secure a hide of a quality that the RSPB considers appropriate for its Reserve.

CLUB REPRESENTATION AT FORMAL EVENTS

Fiftieth Anniversary of Teesmouth Field Centre

Some Club members, including Ali McLee, Chris Sharp and Ted Parker attended the fiftieth anniversary of Teesmouth Field Centre, by kind invitation. The evening event was opened by Ann Oxley, who gave a presentation on the Field Centre's history and main achievements and thanked all those who have been major

supporters during its existence. Representatives from other local organisations were present, including Natural England, Hartlepool Borough Council, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust and the Station Manager of Hartlepool Nuclear Power Station, which has sponsored the Centre so generously over many years. Attendees were treated to a PowerPoint presentation, followed by a sumptuous buffet and drinks. TBC has always had a very close relationship with the Field Centre and we would like to wish all involved in its management another 50 successful years in helping to educate our young people in the delights that nature has to offer on their own doorstep.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUT OF HOURS VISITING TO SALTHOLME POOLS HIDE, RSPB SALTHOLME

A system has been set up to enable Club members to access the Saltholme Pools Hide at RSPB Saltholme out-of-hours, for a trial period over this winter. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays only, the Saltholme Pools hide can be utilised before the Reserve itself officially opens at 10am. The actual opening dates and times will be dependant upon the volunteer hide wardens. Details will be posted on the TBC website by the reserve wardens. The main Reserve gate will be unlocked on these mornings but will remain closed. After entering through the gate, please shut it behind you. Cars are to be parked in the bottom bay section of the main car park. Pedestrian access to Saltholme Pools hide will be solely via the gate and track to the east of the play area and then onwards towards the Saltholme Pool hide only. The hide wardens will keep records of all visitors in a hide log. Members wishing to volunteer as either hide wardens or key holders should contact Emma Birnie (Reserve Warden) on 01642 546625.

This is the first stage of a trial that will, hopefully, lead to further access during the evenings throughout the spring and summer. RSPB Saltholme is a great asset to us all and we appreciate that the RSPB have invested significantly in it. We all know of the potential trouble from local villains, so the security of the site is of paramount concern and key to the continuation of this initiative.

On behalf of the club I would like to thank the Management of the Reserve in setting up this facility and I'm sure that Club members will be as anxious as I am that the operation is both smooth and to the satisfaction of all parties.

Alistair McLee

SALE OF TBC LIMITED EDITION PRINTS, GREETINGS CARDS AND POSTCARDS

The Club has recently produced 200 high-quality, limited edition prints from the original signed artwork for the cover of '*The Breeding Birds of Cleveland*' by Andrew Hutchinson of a Barn Owl at RSPB Saltholme. These are on sale at a very competitive price of £20.00 each and will make a special Christmas gift for anyone who has a love of nature. The prints are A3-sized and have been shrink-wrapped onto stiff board. They will be ideal for framing and anyone wishing to purchase a copy should **contact our Sales Officer, John Fletcher, on 01642 818825.**

We have also produced 1,000 greetings cards, with envelopes, in packs of 10 using the same unique artwork and these are priced at £4.99 per pack or 60p per card. They are blank inside so that they can be used for any event: birthdays, Christmas cards or notelets to send to friends or relatives. They have the TBC's logo, name and other details on the back. Similarly, we have produced 1,000 postcards and these are priced at 60p per card. **Both items are available from John Fletcher.**

The goods are also on sale in the shop at RSPB Saltholme.

John Fletcher

MEMBERS' HELP WANTED BY HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Hartlepool Borough Council's ecologist, Ian Bond, appeals for help from Club members in monitoring disturbance to shorebirds along the inter-tidal section of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA. Here, Ian describes why the study is being undertaken and the form of help he requires. The recording form is provided with this Newsletter.

Hartlepool Borough Council is proposing to do some monitoring of the effects of various forms of disturbance on birds along our coastline. This is part of the Council's obligations to the management scheme for the European marine site, which is the inter-tidal part of the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area (SPA). The aim of the monitoring is to determine whether any form of disturbance is having a significant effect on the birds for which the SPA is designated. From this information we would intend to discuss with other relevant authorities whether there are any management actions that it would be appropriate for us to undertake to try and decrease the disturbance. The objective is to gather some initial information to assess the scale of various forms of disturbance.

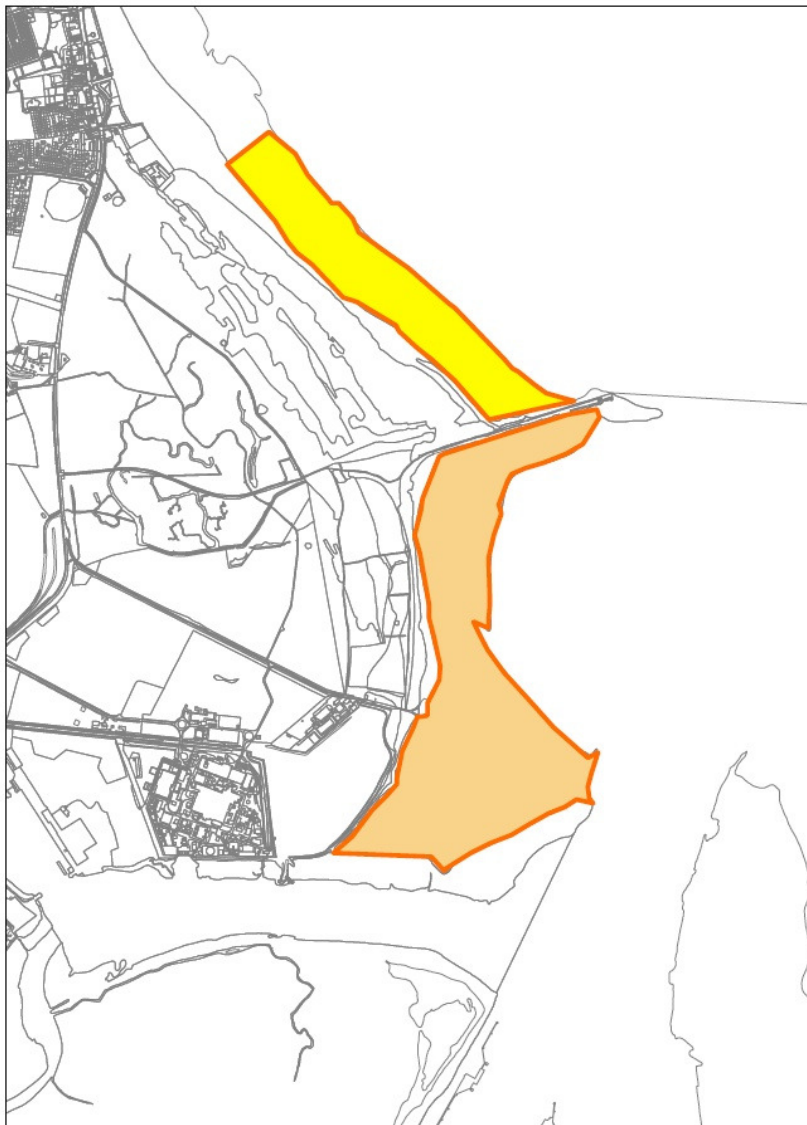
At this stage, the monitoring is fairly informal but the more information that we can get on this the clearer the picture will be. Consequently, I am asking whether members of the Teesmouth Bird Club might be prepared to assist. The monitoring need only be for short periods of time, eg 30 minutes to one hour, as and when people have the opportunity. However, to be meaningful, it needs to be standardised, eg watched for x minutes during which y sets of dog walkers caused z numbers of bird disturbances. The numbers of all types of activities that could potentially cause disturbance to birds need to be recorded so that it can be established which, if any, of them are a problem. **On page 29 is a recording *pro-forma*** that would be a useful way of collecting the information. Page 28 shows a sample set of results

The two areas that we particularly want to target are Seaton Sands, from Seaton Carew to North Gare, and what I refer to as the 'Blue Lagoon', ie from North Gare to the Seaton Snook training wall. However, information on North Sands and the area from Little Scar to Newburn Rocks would also be very useful.

If you would like to get involved or for more information please contact Ian Bond at ian.bond@hartlepool.gov.uk or tel: **01429 523431**.

I would like to thank you in anticipation of your assistance.

Ian Bond



Bird disturbance study areas



Seaton Sands



Blue Lagoon

MEMBERS' BIRD SURVEY 2010

The Club has always been keen to involve as many members as possible in survey work, particularly new members and those who regard themselves as 'beginners'. To this end, the Conservation Sub-Committee is to run a simple survey in the early part of 2010 in which all members can take part.



Rookery

Ken Baldrige

In deciding on an appropriate survey, it was vital that it would not be daunting for those who have not done such work before and that it would provide useful, meaningful data for the Cleveland Bird Report. Following discussions with the County Recorder, Tom Francis, and editor of the bird report, Graeme Joynt, it has been decided to run a Rookery Survey. This will produce valuable data, which can be compared with that collected for 'The Breeding Birds of Cleveland' to see if there have been any changes since, both positive and negative.

The survey will also identify whether any Rookeries are no longer in use: certainly, one near me on Guisborough Road in Nunthorpe has been abandoned over the past few years for unknown reasons.

Rookeries are obvious, easy-to-see features and locating them should present no real problems. Members are simply asked to do the following:

- Locate the nearest Rookery to where you live (or one you know about elsewhere).
- Please let Ted Parker know which Rookery you have chosen in advance of your survey.

- Make a count of the total nests and then count those that you can see are in active use.
- Make a note of the name location of the site (a six-figure grid reference or a 1 kilometre square reference). If you are unable to read grid references, please provide a road, landmark or other name so that we can reference the Rookery concerned for you.
- Your visits will need to be made between February and mid-April as Rooks are early breeders and nests will need to be located before the leaves come out.
- Two or three visits at the most will suffice to ensure that your counts are as accurate as possible.
- If the Rookery is on private land, please seek the owner's agreement for access.
- Send your survey results to Ted Parker, 9 Morton Carr Lane, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, TS7 0JU or email: ecparker@supanet.com
- Please provide your name, address and contact details just in case we need to contact you.

A simple form has been devised for this purpose, **see page 30.**

It does not matter if more than one person counts the same Rookery 'by accident' or intentionally: this will merely give greater accuracy to the results. However, if you are aware that a site is already being counted, then it would be better to choose another. The distribution of existing Rookeries during the Breeding Birds Survey is shown on page 316 of 'The Breeding Birds of Cleveland'.

This is a serious attempt to involve members of the Club at all levels of ability, from expert to beginner. We are not going to ask people but leave the initiative up to you, so its success is in your hands! I do hope you will take this opportunity to help and add to our knowledge of birds of the Cleveland area.

Ted Parker

Chairman, Conservation Sub-committee

SCALING DAM – BTO HANSON BIRD CHALLENGE 2010

Scaling Dam has again been entered by Northumbrian Water Limited for the 2010 BTO Hanson Bird Challenge, starting on 1st January. This follows on from the highly successful year in 2008, when the site came second overall nationally in its category, with 159 species in what was an exceptional year.

Members are requested to visit the reservoir as frequently as possible and, above all, to list all their sightings in the logbook and tick off species on the list pinned up in the hide. As 2010 proved, success is directly proportional to the time expended and so the more people who can make a visit the better. The list will be managed by Martin Blick and any relevant instructions will be placed in the hide, as before.

Ted Parker

(Scaling Dam Wildlife Advisory Committee)

MAMMAL RECORDS IN CLEVELAND

Ian Bond would like members to submit any records of mammals they have encountered in Cleveland while out bird watching, including Brown Hare, Weasel, Stoat, Badger, Red Fox and bat, deer, mouse and vole species. The data will be used to produce a more thorough atlas of the distribution of mammals across Cleveland, along with an assessment of their relative abundance, similar to our breeding birds atlas. The information required is the species, the date of the observation (to the nearest year if you can't remember the exact date), the name of the observer and a grid reference (4 figures will suffice). If you have time, details of the habitat in which the species was seen would be useful but not essential. Please send your records to Ian at the contact address provided in this Newsletter.

Records for North Yorkshire should be sent to Geoff Oxford of the North Yorkshire Mammal Group.

Ted Parker

(Chairman: Conservation Sub-Committee)

LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES IN CLEVELAND

Tees Valley Wildlife Trust has now received funding from the Tees Valley Local Authorities to develop and manage the list of sites identified as part of the authorities' new Local Development Frameworks, in response to a Government directive.

Hartlepool Borough Council has produced its own list, assisted by the Club: we produced a schedule of ornithological sites we felt worthy of LWS status and how these should be improved and

managed in the future, as required by the new legislation. Some of these sites are located on or near Hartlepool Headland and include The Croft, Borough Hall Gardens and West View Cemetery. We are pleased that Ian Bond, the Council's ecologist, is using our sites list to develop the Borough's own Biodiversity Action Plan and works are already planned in line with the Club's suggested long-term management suggestions: at least 48 new trees (berry-producing Swedish Whitebeam) are to be planted across the Headland to supplement the existing tree stock and considerable lengths of new hedging are to be planted in West View Cemetery for the benefit of breeding and migrant birds.

This demonstrates the benefit of the Club working in close partnership with other agencies for the benefit of birds in our area and we are very pleased that our work is not only recognised but used for practical conservation. TBC's schedule of sites in Hartlepool District can be found on our Website.

Ted Parker

(Chairman: Conservation Sub-Committee)

REPORTS ON LOCAL OUTINGS

SEA WATCHING AT HARTLEPOOL HEADLAND

Saturday 8th August 2009

Over 20 members gathered at Hartlepool Headland from 8.30am for a session of sea watching with Chris Sharp, Don Page and myself. The weather did not bode well for seabirds, being sunny, hot and cloudless, with a flat calm sea. Nevertheless, over the next 3 hours or so, some good birds were seen, a number of which were 'lifers' for several of those present. It was nice that members took the opportunity to quiz the three leaders on the identification of more tricky species, such as Long-tailed and Pomarine Skuas, and Puffin, Guillemot and Razorbill.

Three Arctic Skuas glided past, one giving excellent views as it passed close inshore and seventeen Manx Shearwaters gave some members their first ever views of this black and white 'shearer'. A single Fulmar and 3 Gannets flew south, as did a Great Crested Grebe, the latter close enough for us to see its distinctive wing pattern, which, along with size, separates it from Red-necked. A sizeable flock of 40 Common Scoters flew north and two smaller groups of 16 and 4 were also seen. Finally, two groups of Whimbrel (20 and 17) passed south, uttering their far-carrying, distinctive whistles. Four or five Harbour Porpoises performed well offshore to end an enjoyable morning.

Ted Parker

NORTH TEES MARSHES
Sunday 26th August 2009

Unfortunately, due to extremely wet weather, only 4 people, perhaps understably, turned up for this outing, led by John Grieveson, while another had a car accident en route! The usual marshland sites were covered, including Dormans Pool and Saltholme, where a good selection of the expected waders was seen, including Ruff, Greenshank, Dunlin, Redshank and Black-tailed Godwit. A stop at Newburn produced good views of both the near-resident adult Mediterranean Gull and Purple Sandpiper.

John Grieveson

RINGING AT HARTLEPOOL HEADLAND
Sunday 27th September 2009

The ringing demo by Mike Gee and myself on the Headland this year was a slight improvement on last year's event, in that we actually caught some birds! This is always useful for demonstration purposes! A steady stream of westerlies meant a dearth of migrants and, as a consequence, we only trapped a few of our local birds: 3 Blackbirds and singles of Dunnock, Robin, Wren, Blue Tit and Greenfinch. About twelve people turned up and seemed to enjoy seeing the birds close-up and learning a bit about ringing. It's especially pleasing to see the enjoyment a child gets from seeing birds in the hand and it reminds me of how privileged I am to be able to pursue this pastime!

Chris Brown

SOUTH GARE
Tuesday 13th October 2009

About 14 birders attended this trip on a fine day with a light breeze from the west. The visibility was pretty good, which was just as well as many of the birds spotted by the group were quite distant.

The only evidence of migration was a single Swallow seen when driving past the steelworks, a Redwing, which posed only briefly, and a Fieldfare flying into the distance from Paddy's Hole. The assemblage of dozing waders at the end of the reef were unfortunately disturbed by a dog walker just as we approached but some remained to test our skills at identifying hunched up brownish blobs as Curlews, Bar-tailed Godwits, Redshanks, Turnstones and Dunlins. Fortunately, Meadow and Rock Pipits were in close proximity, as were several Stonechats, Greenfinches and the usual Starling flock. About a dozen of that well known sea duck, Teal, took to flight and then flew round us before settling back on the sea. Red-breasted Mergansers were seen at the start and finish of

the trip. A single Goldeneye flew over us, presumably joining a small group of dots on the sea off Seaton Carew, which we reckoned were also Goldeneyes. A couple of distant Great Crested Grebes and Red-throated Divers were spotted. So, while it was pleasant birdwatching, it was a good thing that most of those present had telescopes.

John Sharp

LOCAL OUTINGS 2009/2010

SEAL SANDS
Saturday 5th December 2009

Join Julie Mason to look out onto Seal Sands from the excellent hide at the Power Station. A good variety of ducks, waders, grebes and divers can be expected. Meet at the Teesmouth Field Centre at 10.00 a.m.

For further details ring **Julie on 01642 614583**.

BOWSFIELD MARSH
Sunday 17th January 2010

Join Eric James for a walk around this TVWT Reserve. Expect a good variety of ducks. A large flock of Golden Plover and Lapwing is also present here in the winter, along with other waders, including Ruff and Black-tailed Godwit. Meet at the car park by Archers Law Building at 9.30 a.m.

For further details ring **Eric on 01642 310103**.

COWPEN BEWLEY WOODLAND PARK
Thursday 4th February 2010

Join Dave Nelson for a walk around this attractive LNR. A good variety of wintering passerines can be expected. The feeding station is particularly attractive to Tree Sparrow and Yellowhammer and other regulars seen here include Willow Tit, Siskin and Redpoll. The lake should also hold a variety of ducks.

For further details ring **Dave on 01642 824755**.

HARTLEPOOL HEADLAND
Sunday 7th March 2010

Join Chris Sharp for a walk around the Headland. A good variety of waders, including Purple Sandpiper, is guaranteed. There should be a number of sea duck still present, including, hopefully, Velvet Scoter and Red-breasted Merganser, along with grebes and divers.

For further details ring **Chris on 01429 865163**.

Could you lead a local outing?
Contact Chris Sharp on 01429 865163

CLUB OUTING TO BLACKTOFT SANDS RESERVE (RSPB) AND NORTH CAVE WETLANDS (YWT)



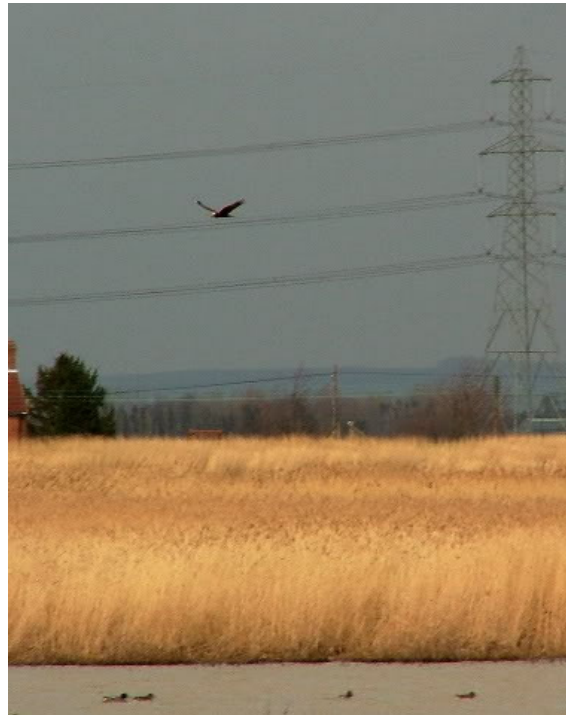
The second club trip of 2009 was led by Julie Mason on Sunday 20th September to two completely different wetland reserves in the Humberside area. The 26 birders were coached first to the North Cave Wetlands, a series of worked out and flooded mineral workings which have been contoured and depth-modified to provide a variety of habitats.



The circular walk was serviced by hides overlooking the deeper water and shallow scrapes and, as well as the usual two predictable goose species, there were large numbers of Tufted Duck, with at least one Scaup among them. Also present were Teal, Mallard, Gadwall, Wigeon and Shoveler. Most of the party had views of chasing Kingfishers. Apart from a few Snipe, waders were scarce as the breeding Little Ringed Plovers and Avocets had departed. The best wader for all was a single Little Stint, which had most inconsiderately not stationed itself beside a Redshank or a Dunlin to demonstrate how tiny they really are. Common Buzzards were periodically overhead but the best views were of three birds thermalling upwards beside the road as we departed for Blacktoft Sands.



Blacktoft Sands RSPB Reserve, at the confluence of the River Trent and the Humber, is one of the largest reed beds in the UK and is well serviced by hides, which look northwards away from the sun. In fact, the whole day had that wonderful Indian Summer feeling, with a bus load of redundant outdoor clothing to boot. Upon arrival, and after registering, we were told a Hobby was in fine performance outside a particular hide. Those of the party who participated in the world record attempt of the most number of birders in a hide did indeed get stunning views of the falcon.



Nobody missed out on the breeding Marsh Harriers, which were in almost constant view, and the same can nearly be said for a Merlin, which posed for a long period in the open. Amongst the Dunlin and Redshank were 6 Curlew Sandpipers and these were viewed from as little as 20 metres at times. Some of the party were fortunate to see Spotted Redshanks but everyone dipped out on the 600 Bearded Tits, resident on the Reserve which, given the sunny and windless conditions, was rather puzzling.



On behalf of the Club and all the party, I would like to thank Julie for arranging this most successful outing. The tides I know you figured out from tables, Julie, but how was the cracking weather planned?

Alistair McLee

**TBC DAY TRIP TO MARTIN MERE
WILDFOWL AND WETLANDS TRUST:
SUNDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2010**



Another members' day trip has been arranged for Sunday 28th February 2010. The day will be spent at Martin Mere, Lancashire, which is an outstanding wetland reserve of over 150 hecatres and has thousands of wintering swans, geese and ducks. In particular, it has spectacular numbers of Pink-footed Geese and Whooper Swans and you can also expect to see smaller numbers of Bewick's Swans. There is also a good chance of seeing Peregrine, Merlin, Hen Harrier, Marsh Harrier, Barn Owl and Short-eared Owl hunting. European Beavers have also been reintroduced on to the Reserve and this is one of the few places you can have a chance of seeing this incredible animal.

To make the trip viable, we will require at least 30 people to make a booking before the first evening meeting of 2010 on 4th January to ensure that it goes ahead. The costs will be £15.50 for the

coach, plus an entry fee to Martin Mere, as follows:

Adults	£7.90
Concessionary	£5.85 (over 65s)
WWT members	Free

The pick-up points are as follows:

Hartlepool , M&S car park	8.00am
Stockton , former 'Swallow Hotel'	8.15am
Middlesbrough , Dorman Museum	8.30am

A packed lunch will be required unless you intend to use the WWT café facilities.



Hen Harrier Hide, Martin Mere

Nigel Homer

TO BOOK A PLACE, PLEASE CONTACT JOHN TODD AND SEND A £5 NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT :

Address: 1 Henry Street, Seaham, Co Durham

Tel: 07810 347333

Email: johntodd@tiscali.co.uk

Please make cheques payable to 'Teemouth Bird Club'.

Don't forget.....

Subscriptions are due at the end of the year.

Like many organisations, we depend upon prompt payment of subscriptions to help our financial viability and to enable us to conduct our business. We would greatly appreciate it if everyone would pay their subscriptions immediately.

Pay at a Club meeting or send a cheque, with a subscription renewal form (**see page 32**), to

**Chris Sharp 20 Auckland Way,
Hartlepool TS26 0AN**

KWAZULU NATAL – BARN SWALLOW ROOST

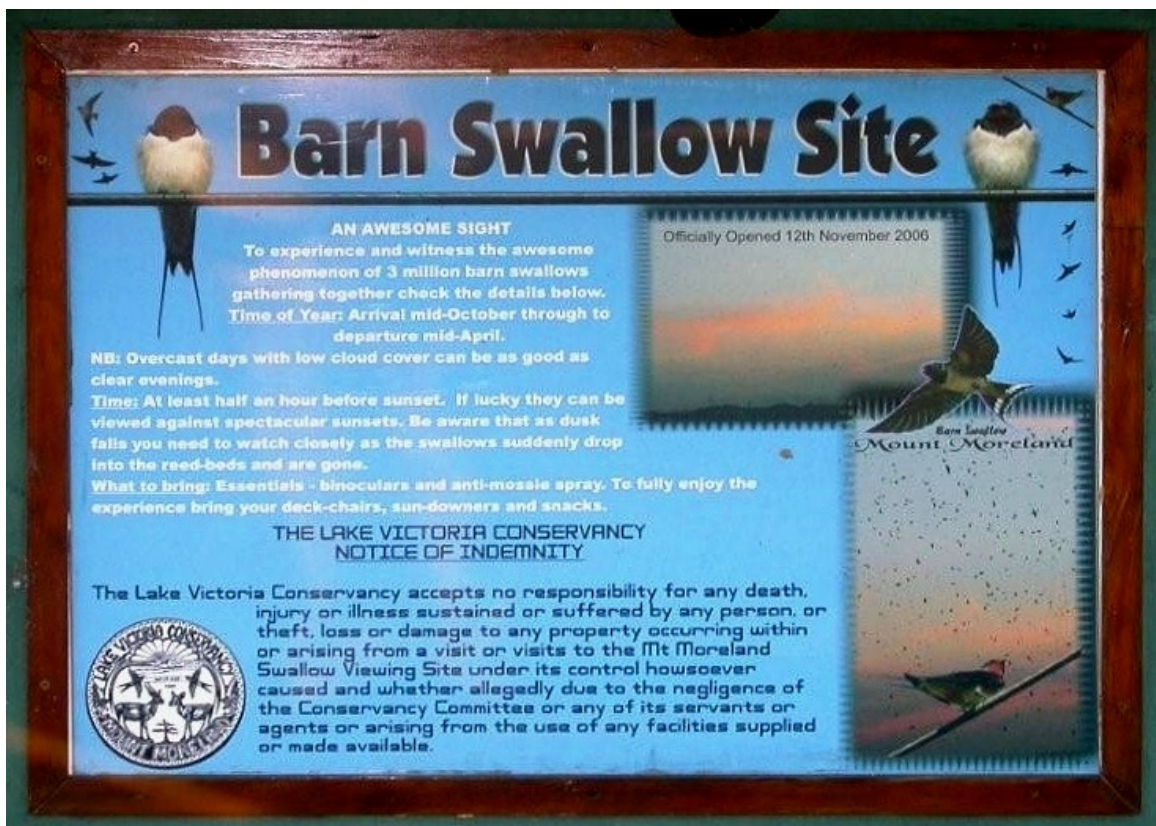
Alistair McLee describes an amazing experience when he visited a huge Barn Swallow roost in Kwazulu Natal, which must surely one of the most impressive sights in the birding world.

While visiting friends in Durban we were privileged to visit one of the largest of five swallow roosts in RSA. Depending upon the time of year up to 3,000,000 birds use the site, with the peak numbers in early to mid April when the wintering birds are gathering prior to their migration to the breeding sites in the Northern Hemisphere. We visited in mid February when the numbers were not at their peak, but even a million birds mustering half an hour before sunset is still very impressive. There is not the synchronised aerobatics of a Starling roost but rather a melee of smaller flocks silently interweaving with each other and then performing low level sweeping runs over the reeds until, as if a huge vacuum sucks the birds into the dense stands of reeds which cover a small lake, they disappear. Within 10 minutes it is all over. The rushing of wings has ceased and the late stragglers, which have no inclination to perform solo, dive straight into cover with no aerobatic preamble. I did not see the dawn exodus, which is a sudden and noisy affair, particularly at

migration season, when huge, excited flocks pour north-eastwards to follow the coast on the first stage of their big journey to the Northern Hemisphere.

The roost site is unimpressive in itself: a small, reed-overgrown lake, barely larger than two football fields and surrounded by undulating fields of sugar cane and small patches of natural woodland on the slopes of the steeper hillocks. The local community is Mount Moreland and the lake itself revels in the name Victoria. The site has been used as a roost for at least the last 40 years and probably much longer than that. Its continuation had been in jeopardy as a new, large airport was to be constructed only a few kilometres to the north. There was a fear that the risk of bird strikes on aeroplanes would be unacceptable and the lake would have to be drained and the roost destroyed. Fortunately, thorough and objective environmental impact studies showed that the Swallows did not fly high enough to pose a collision risk, the time period in which they were on the wing above the roost was brief and bird sensitive radar would detect problems should they arise. Should push become shove and there is possibility of risk, flights could be delayed as necessary. Somehow I cannot envisage such a liberal attitude in this country.

The birders and general public who arrive to witness the roost are well catered for, with a



large, sloping area of mown grass dotted with tables and facilities to have a 'brai' (barbeque to us). There is always a group of local volunteers present to supply information and generally welcome visitors.



The return of the Swallows in their Spring is something of a local festival and over 1,000 people turn out. Ringing takes place once a month and birds, ringed as nestlings in Finland, Estonia and Whitby, have been re-caught. Data gathered over the years suggests that this particular roost is one of a series in southern Africa. The numbers using it fluctuate as the tide of birds moves back and forth, as Swallows move further south to the Cape area and pass through again heading northwards to breed. Some Sand Martins are caught in small numbers but I doubt if these are our birds, as ringing returns show their wintering grounds to be sub-Saharan West Africa.



You have to wonder what the 12 resident breeding species of swallow make of this massive invasion of migrant Barn Swallows when they are starting their breeding season. The locals have chosen lifestyles in their own particular niches and the Barn Swallow was probably once no different. Then something changed: it started breeding to the north, formed non-migratory populations in northern Africa and then followed the post glacial warming into Europe at the time when Man was clearing the forests, rearing cattle and building

structures in which they could nest. They were on a roll and, if sheer numbers are indicative of success, then the Barn Swallow is a winner.

At a large roost of any species there is always a high possibility of seeing raptors and speaking to the locals this was usually the case with Bat Hawks and African Hobbies putting on a show but not on the 2 nights we attended; but I did not dip out on Bat Hawks completely. I was taken to see Southern Hemisphere rugby at the 'Shark Tank' in Durban, where the local Sharks were playing the Jo'burg Lions. This temple to rugby is a stadium with huge arches that are used at a nesting site for a colony of Little Swifts, which feed in the twilight on the insects attracted to the floodlights. A Bat Hawk duly turned up and made up for the discrepancy of the evenings before at the Swallow roost. To cap it all, the Sharks won and I was a participant in the world's largest post-match 'brai' extending over 11 rugby pitches outside the ground!

Alistair McLee

TEESMOUTH IN THE FIFTIES

*In a continuation of 'nostalgic' features, **Fred Cooke** takes a look back at Teesmouth in the 1950s.*

The recent article in the Teesmouth Bird Club Newsletter by Ken Baldrige reminded me of my early visits to Teesmouth in the 1950s. Like Ken, I was a member of the Junior section of the Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club and for those of us in the Darlington area who were budding birdwatchers, Teesmouth offered birding delights unavailable nearer to home.

It was through friends made in the Junior Field Club during my early teenage years that a lifelong interest in birds developed. It was the Baldrige brothers, Alan (who now lives in California) and Ken (still a Darlington lad), who first introduced me to Teesmouth. Although some of our early trips were by train and took us to Redcar and the South Gare, later visits were by bicycle to the north side of the river. Twenty miles each way meant that we never arrived early. The route took us through Sadberge, Longnewton and Billingham and the trip to the Hartlepool Battery was quite a formidable one when strong winds were from the east. We used to walk through Cowpen Marsh, where I saw my first Jack Snipe, watched Whimbrel along Greenabella Marsh, ate our soggy tomato sandwiches in the World War II pill boxes, looked for Lesser Whitethroat at North Gare and scoured the waters of the estuary at Seal Sands for Long-tailed Ducks. At the Battery we would sit for hours with old-fashioned telescopes, occasionally finding distant Skuas. Then we had to ride back to Darlington again.

In those early days we could never have imagined the progress towards protection of avian habitats that would occur during the next 50 years. At the time it seemed to us that Teesmouth industry was slowly gobbling up most of the good birding sites and that eventually the area would become an industrial wasteland. There were so few of us who seemed to care for the avian visitors in our region and so many who saw the land as prime industrial sites. However, thanks to changes in the attitude of the public and to the dedication of conservationists and organisations such as the RSPB, the Teesmouth Bird Club, the Teesmouth Field Centre (under the indefatigable Angela Cooper MBE, MSc), the Cleveland Wildlife Trust and English Nature, there are still lots of bird habitat in the Tees Estuary.

Not many birders visited the estuary in those days and most of those that did seemed to be young. From my perspective, there were two groups: those living in the Middlesbrough area and those from Darlington. I was the only one from Darlington whose family had a telephone, so when there was a rarity I would get a phone call. I remember once in the late fifties when Brian Coates 'phoned excitedly saying he had just found a Dusky Thrush in Old Hartlepool. A group from Darlington were soon on the scene with some newly developed technology – a mist net! Soon the bird was caught, measured, ringed and examined, and then released. Apart from the Dusky Thrush, I do not remember many rarities but it was a place where I learned to recognise some of the less common species, such as Purple and Curlew Sandpipers, Snow and Lapland Buntings, Little Stint, Spotted Redshank and Roseate Tern. We also learned to look for Glaucous and Iceland Gulls on the local tip.

My contacts with Teesmouth diminished when I went off to university and, after gaining a PhD in biology, I emigrated to Canada and began a career in ornithology. I ran a long-term research programme on a nesting population of Snow Geese in Northern Canada and later set up a research programme with the Canadian Wildlife Service in British Columbia for the last 8 years of my career. During that time I became President of the American Ornithologists' Union until my retirement, when my wife and I moved back to the UK to live in Norfolk, overlooking the Wash. Recently I re-connected with the Teesmouth Bird Club.

One of the lasting memories of those early days was the friendships formed in the fifties. It is a constant pleasure to me to know that I am still in touch with many of the friends, whom I first met in the Darlington Field Club. I am still in regular contact with Alan and Ken Baldrige. Sylvia Bonner, whom I first met at the Field Club in

1952, is now my wife. Other friends from that period are Pauline Porter (née Bonner) who lives in the Peak District; John Nicholson, now retired, living in Skegness and a frequent visitor to Gibraltar Point; John Lumby, now living on the Northumberland coast, and Elizabeth Esteve-Coll (née Kingdon) who became Director of the V and A Museum, later Vice-Chancellor of the University of East Anglia and now resides in Aylsham, Norfolk. I knew people who lived in the Middlesbrough area less well, but remember Brian Coates, Alan and the late Tony Vittery, the late Phil Stead and a less frequent but revered visitor Denis Summers-Smith. He is the only one with whom I have kept in touch.

I am currently on the Council of the RSPB and through that organisation I have been able to keep in touch with developments at Saltholme. Such a development would have seemed unthinkable in the 1950s and is a tribute to the dedication of local birders, who have continued to understand the importance of the Tees Estuary throughout the years.

Fred Cooke

50 YEARS AGO – DUSKY THRUSH AT HARTLEPOOL

*In this nostalgic feature, **Russell McAndrew** gives a personal account of this piece of beginner's luck from half a century ago.*

During 1958, Peter Hogg and Pete Reid introduced me to birdwatching on Hartlepool Headland. I soon learnt that a telescope was essential equipment and by the summer of 1959, at the age of 14, I had saved up the 13 guineas required for a Broadhurst & Clarkson leather-bound brass instrument. During that autumn I delighted in using it to view as many species as possible.

The morning of Saturday 12th December found me watching from our recently acquired Hartlepool Observatory with Geoff Proctor, Robert Lightfoot and George Coates. There was not a lot to be seen at sea so I turned my new telescope onto a late migrant Fieldfare and a couple of 'Redwings' that were feeding near the gun emplacement at the far end of the Heugh Battery. Panning from one Redwing to the other I was shocked to see that it was one of the rare thrushes whose front halves were portrayed in the Peterson Field Guide: bold head pattern, heavily marked breast ... Siberian? Dusky? One of my companions had a copy of Peterson in his rucksack, so while they jostled to view the bird I was able to announce that it was a Dusky Thrush, the second for Britain!

After a few minutes it flew off, circling over the Friarage field (then Henry Smith's school field). As Geoff and I left the battery in pursuit, Brian Coates arrived and came with us, though clearly sceptical about our claim. We soon re-found the bird near the bowling green and the identification was confirmed. On the Sunday morning it could not be found but Ken Smith discovered it in the afternoon in bushes near the school. It was flighty and did not give good views until dusk, when a few of us watched it around the bowling green.

Although now it seems incredible, the Thrush was then left alone for a week, since in those days work and school took precedence over bird watching, which was largely a weekend activity. This lack of disturbance may have enabled the bird to settle into a routine, as by the following Saturday it was much less wary and giving good views on the school field. Many of the leading local birdwatchers saw it that weekend and national interest began to rise. It was a slow-burning twitch with many people deciding to travel only if it stayed until after Christmas or into the New Year. It did, and I enjoyed ticking off the big names such as Ron Johns, James Ferguson-Lees and Ian Wallace. Sunday 10th January 1960 was enlivened by visiting ringers from Yorkshire catching it in a mist-net on the school field. It was photographed in the hand and ringed by Pete Reid, then a trainee with Frank Wrigglesworth.

During its ten-week stay it roamed around the Headland but could usually be found feeding on earthworms on the school field or in the bowling green area. I saw it on every one of my 26 visits to the Headland between 12th December 1959 and 14th February 1960, but not thereafter. There were sightings by others but it had become elusive, perhaps with the onset of the spring migratory urge. Brian Coates published a detailed account, with photographs, in the June 1960 issue of *'British Birds'*.

Unlike most other Siberian varieties, Dusky Thrush has not become more common with the increase in birder activity. There have been six subsequent records in Britain but none since 1987 and it is high on most birders' wants lists. Keep checking those winter thrushes!

I have to end on a sad note: my three companions in the observatory on 12th December 1959 – George, Robert and Geoff – were all to die at a young age in vehicle crashes.

Russell McAndrew

WOODPECKERS

*In this feature **Keith Robson** takes a light-hearted look at woodpeckers*

The first fact to bear in mind about woodpeckers (1) is that they always drum on the "other" side of the tree, i.e. the side out of view. I have not done a lot of bird watching recently. However, my main aim on my few trips out this year has been to spot a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. At both Potteric Carr and Fairburn Ings there had been regular sightings of this small, elusive woodpecker during January and February but not when I visited. The second fact to bear in mind about woodpeckers (2) is that the term "*lesser*" refers not to size but to the number of times this bird is spotted, i.e. lesser = fewer!

Once more disillusioned with bird watching, I took to city breaks. In cities you get pigeons. They never do anything out of sight! So with the prospect of nothing but pigeons, I left my binoculars and field guide at home when I visited Prague. Anyway, I was only there for three days. On the third day, tired of Gothic castles and churches with ostentatious rococo interiors and sick of goulash and dumplings, I ventured to the funicular up the side of the hill to Prague's version of the Eiffel Tower. It is not my year! The funicular was closed for maintenance. No worries: I would walk up the hill and jolly pleasant it was too. It was a warm, sunny early Spring day. The hillside had relatively recently been planted with saplings, some of which were already in blossom, and wild violets were in profusion. From behind, to my right, loud but distant, came a yaffling; but was it a Green Woodpecker or one of those others, whose name I could not remember, which covered pages of the European field guide? A bit further up the slope there was a few birds foraging among dead leaves with a pinkish, black and white tailed or wing feathered specimen among them. Was it a Hoopoe without a crest or a Jay? Why hadn't I brought my binoculars? More frustration – another woodpecker – surely a Great Spotted, started drumming. It was persistent and as I ascended the slope it became nearer and louder. It was no use becoming excited, it did not matter that I was without my binoculars because it was, of course, on the other side of the tree. Then, to rub salt into an already gaping wound, another bird started drumming, but the drumming was shorter, more shrill and higher pitched. I just know it was a Lesser Spotted but why did I continue to peer up into the trees when the first rule tells me that the objects of my curiosity are drumming on the other side of the tree? So I gave up and instead argued with my wife about which spire or tower belonged to

which palace or cathedral as we overlooked the city spread out below.

Professor Yaffle continued to laugh at me from the lower slopes and just as we turned to start our descent, I spotted a bird popping down on to the grassy terrain from one of the older blossom trees. I crept towards it and saw a red head bobbing above the grass as it searched for insects. This was a different bird from the yaffler way below. It appeared oblivious to our presence. We soon were close enough to see the whole bird, surely Green Woodpecker but there were doubts. It was not green enough and it had very pale neck and breast colouration. My wife started taking photos. She is not keen on bird watching but does not mind birds of prey, woodpeckers and Kingfishers and stuff like that (2). But that was annoying as well, because over the years she has mocked my attempts with my Brownie, Instamatic and other state of the art (in their day) cameras to capture red squirrels, various butterflies and stuff like that (2). I did not expect the photographs would add to the evidence of which species of woodpecker this bird might be. With lighter heart I returned to the city. At least I had seen a woodpecker of some description.



On my return, it was not long before I referred to my 'Complete Guide to the Birdlife of Britain and Europe' (Peter Hayman and Rob Hume). Grey-headed woodpecker, perhaps a little strangely, in view of its name, has a red head (or cap). Its neck and breast (oh well, and its head) are pale grey. It is found in Central Europe and it likes small or young trees. So what other evidence might I have that my woodpecker was Grey-headed? The beauty of digital cameras is that you can look at your photos on your PC as soon as you return from your hols. So I had a look at my wife's photos. Expecting to have a laugh and extract revenge for years of scorn poured on my photographic efforts, I was surprised, and not a little miffed, to find that her photos were good enough to confirm Grey-headed Woodpecker. A life tick is a life tick, and somehow more

rewarding for gaining it the hard way. But I will take my binoculars on my next city break. Had I had them with me this time, I might have found that the shrill drummer was Lesser Spotted or Black or Three-toed or Syrian or Middle Spotted or White-backed. Meanwhile I continue on the trail of the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.

Keith Robson

Notes

- (1) *These facts are not necessarily recognised as facts by RSPB or other recognised ornithological bodies.*
- (2) *"Stuff like that" – a technical term for various flora and fauna indigenous to the habitat in the context of the immediate subject matter.*

REDCAR-MARSKE STRAY

Graham Megson reviews the birding potential the Redcar - Marske Stray. Probably under-watched, this coastal strip provides good birding all year round, but particularly in autumn and winter. It offers seabirds, shorebirds, migrants, wintering passerines and a few breeders, including one of the few Sand Martin colonies in Cleveland.

Background

Redcar and Marske are typical of many seaside towns in that they have convenient parks and gardens close to the first landfall of tired migrants. The area covered by this mini-guide covers the coastal strip from Majuba Road car park at the western end of Redcar to St Germaine's Church in Marske. It includes four kilometres of foreshore and sand dunes, The Stray, the extensive coastal fields and hedgerows, and the wooded gully known as Fox Covert. It has been watched for many years and is a good mix of park and garden, seashore and open field birding, although disturbance is an issue.



The Stray foreshore

Location, Access and Strategy

This is a good area to cover on its own or after visiting South Gare or Locke Park. Starting in Redcar stop/park in Majuba Road car park, which is pay and display if you are leaving a vehicle. Walk the beach and dunes or view the sea.

Continuing through Redcar along the esplanade, there are roadside bays to stop and scan the shore, for example near the roundabout at NZ 613249. At low tide the scars are exposed and hundreds of waders and gulls will be foraging. At high tide scan the sea for seabirds. There is a good cafe on The Stray should you fancy any refreshments.

Continue east on the A1085, Coast Road, and just before the end of the built up area turn right on to Green Lane at NZ 621238.



Green Lane ends at the sports ground but a track with a double hedgerow continues inland and then follows the railway corridor eastwards to the sewage treatment works. From Green Lane, The Stray can be explored and the coastal fields viewed, although to fully cover the latter a number of viewing points will need to be visited. There are two very public car parks and toilet blocks overlooking the sea.

At the eastern end of the coastal fields is the Fox Covert (NZ 630232), a narrow, well vegetated, shallow ravine owned by Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. The TBC is currently working with the Council to advise on the future management this site and return it to its former glory days, when the ringing group 'worked' it. In its present state, it is neglected, impenetrable and over-mature.

On the Marske side of the ravine is Bylands School, with a large playing field and as the buildings start The Stray comes to an end. The old part of Marske has a narrow, green corridor which runs from the beach up into the town.

For a good sea watching location, follow Coast Road until reaching St Germaine's church, of

which only the steeple remains. This offers a good vantage point over the sea.



Beyond the town there is continued good access to the cliffs and shore all the way to Saltburn, with a footpath and some interesting dunes, boulder clay cliffs and gullies.

Birds

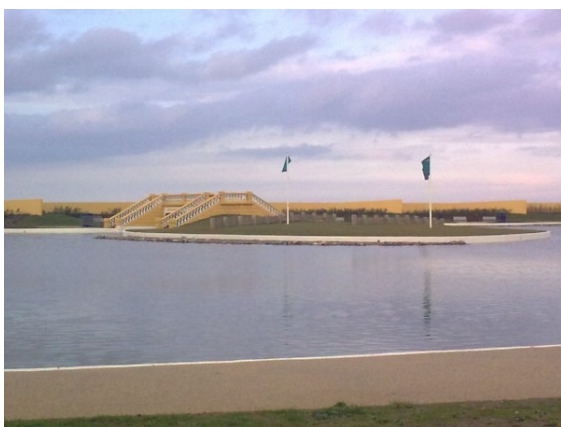
Many of us wish for a repeat of 5th October 1892, when, at Windy Hill Farm, an adult male Macqueen's (then named Houbara) Bustard was present. This individual was shot and is preserved at the Hancock Museum in Newcastle but a repeat would be treated somewhat differently. Until writing this article, I had always assumed that this sighting was on the coastal fields between Redcar and Marske but examination of the OS map shows that Windy Hill Farm actually lies between Marske and Saltburn and, although this is just outside the main scope of this site guide, it is worth a mention simply because it is only 1km from my house! Interestingly this article also includes another very rare bird, so read on.

The foreshore and sea at Majuba Road car park are good for seabirds and 'scoping the sea during the winter may reveal grebes and divers, although seemingly not as many as in years gone by. I walk this stretch every month as part of the co-ordinated Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) count and Snow Buntings are often present in winter near the car park, although these are fewer in number than formerly and do range a kilometre or so down to South Gare. I have seen Little Auk and all four species of skua from here over the years,

the most memorable occasions being 4 Pomarines flying down the beach one October and, another year, an adult Long-tailed Skua doing the same.

At high tide, waders roost half way to South Gare but can also be seen along the line of the flowing tide. Sanderlings have crashed in numbers in recent years and now a flock of 50 is notable. Turnstones, Redshanks, a few Knot, occasional Bar-tailed Godwits and Oystercatchers can be logged. Looking out from the Regent Cinema, there are usually five or six immature Eiders, Cormorants and, in the winter, Red-breasted Mergansers. On favourable days, Common Scoter and flocks of Wigeon and Teal can be seen.

Majuba Road car park itself holds a flock of opportunistic feeding Black-headed Gulls and Starlings.



The boating lake, renovated in 2008-09, used to hold a high tide roost of 100-200 Redshanks but these have not reappeared since the work was completed. In October 1993, 3 Long-tailed Ducks appeared on the lake and gave stunning, close range views, but Canada Geese and Mallards are now more frequent.

At low tide, the scars provide feeding grounds for waders and gulls. Long-tailed Ducks were also present on the sea near The Stray cafe for a few days one winter and Grey Phalaropes have been found 'dancing' in the surf on a number of occasions.



The sandy Stray has itself produced some good birds over the years, with the commoner pipits, wagtails, finches, Lapland Buntings, thrushes and Wheatears on passage and, on 19th February 1986, one of Cleveland's few Arctic Redpolls, which was caught and ringed. There is a Sand Martin colony in the exposed face of the boulder clay 'cliff' near the northernmost car park and in 2008, this contained 30 pairs. At high tide, waders forage on the short turf and roost on the fenced off playing field of Bydales School. Gulls join them and are worth checking for Mediterranean Gull.

Green Lane can be fruitless, but then so are most places when there are few birds visible. I have always fancied it for passage warblers and redstarts but haven't seen much more than winter thrushes and in the summer singing Whitethroats and Blackcaps. Wintering Tree Sparrows are worth looking for.



The coastal fields are a magnet for birds, especially when they are left with stubble for the autumn and winter. Grey Partridge is resident and various feral-type pigeons forage, along with numerous more 'natural' Wood Pigeons. Check through these for Stock Dove. Lapwing and Golden Plover numbers build up in the autumn and these frequently attract the attention of Sparrowhawks and Peregrines. Merlins occasionally hunt the passerines. Not surprisingly the 'Goldies' have pulled in rarer waders and both Buff-breasted Sandpiper and American Golden Plover have been expertly picked out. Once well known for larks and buntings, including Lapland Bunting, the coastal fields have recently been relatively poor in this respect. Snow Buntings still occur but the regular, small, wintering Twite flock is no longer present. On occasions, geese visit the coastal fields and these have recently included Brent Goose.

On to the Fox Covert, which in its heyday, attracted passage migrants and vagrants. I recall seeing a Red-backed Shrike in the scrub and ringers caught one of the early Cleveland Radde's Warblers here. But now on to that other ultra-rare

bird for this section of coast. The last net round of the evening, on 23rd September 1975, produced a real shock for one ringer, with the capture of a Black-billed Cuckoo. This North American vagrant was roosted overnight as per BTO guidelines and released in Locke Park, Redcar the following day. A true red-letter day for some of the Club's older members! More recently, a Marske back garden held a Booted Warbler in September 1993 for two days.



Finally to St Germaine's, where, in the spring, hirundines stream past and at other seasons the sea's bounty of birds may be glimpsed through spray and rain! However, one memorable February day was a mill pond of a day and on view were Great Crested, Slavonian and Red-necked Grebes, Great Northern, Black-throated and Red-throated Divers, Eiders and Common Scoters.

As shown by this article, surprises are always a distinct possibility and this whole area would benefit from greater birder coverage.

Mammals and Insects

No article is complete without reference to non-bird wildlife, as other animals can help to round off a good day out in the field. At sea Grey and Common Seals can be seen, along with the occasional Harbour Porpoise, especially in calm sea conditions. On land, Brown Hares are common on the coastal fields. The common butterflies are present in the right months and occasionally 'in off' the sea migration of Painted Ladies can be witnessed.

Graham Megson

PROFILE – TED PARKER

*Ted Parker was Chairman of the club for 5 years until April 2009. He is a past member of the Records Sub-Committee, currently chairs the Conservation Sub-Committee and sits on the Marketing and Membership Sub-Committee. **Chris Sharp** spoke to him to gain an insight into his birding life.*



Ted was born in Middlesbrough in 1951. Shortly after birth, he was given the last rights by the local vicar because he was born with very severe physical problems and wasn't expected to live. When he did survive, doctors told his parents that he would never walk but, fortunately, he proved the medical profession wrong on both counts! His walking came at a price, however, in the form of many painful operations during his life and particularly his early years, during which he spent most of his time in hospital.

From 1970-74, he spent 4 years at Dundee University, obtaining an MA Honours Degree in Geography and followed this with 2 years at Manchester University to undertake a Diploma in Landscape Design. By profession, Ted is a Chartered Landscape Architect but now only works part-time for a private, multi-national consultancy following a serious, debilitating illness in 2001. He has been bird watching for 45 years, which is reflected in an official Cleveland List of 331, though there are additional species which he considers legitimate. He saw the 4 Demoiselle Cranes at Cowpen Bewley in 1967, which he still thinks should have been accepted as wild birds, and, with his best friend, Don Page, saw a White's Thrush come in off the sea at close range at Hartlepool Headland in September 2008 but, to many people's incredulity, it was considered 'Not Proven' by BBRC, despite both observers having had good views of the bird and previous experience of the species in Hong Kong and China.

His favourite local patch is the coast between Hummersea and Skinningrove. He likes this area because it is possible to combine looking for migrants with sea watching. It is also a beautiful area, being on the Cleveland Heritage Coast, in addition to which the locals are friendly and, being more remote, is generally under-watched. Birds Ted has found or co-found in this small area include Corncrake, Pallid Swift, Rustic Bunting, Honey Buzzard, Hobby, Great Reed, Barred, Pallas's and Yellow-browed Warblers, Gyr Falcon, Red-breasted Flycatcher and, just this year, his first Hen Harriers for the site (a male and juvenile on separate dates in November).

Ted's greatest passion is sea watching and he spends many hours at Hartlepool and Skinningrove each autumn. He is usually accompanied by Don Page and rumours that they are joined at the hip have only recently been dispelled. The two of them are legendary for their flasks of coffee, which they generously dish out to other birders whilst sitting looking out to sea in the hope of a fly-by goodie.

Ted uses Swarovski binoculars (10 x 42 EL) and telescope (80 AT HD) and would never change

what he believes is optically superb equipment. He leaves bird photography to others but occasionally uses a Sony Digital Camcorder. The standard of bird photography in Cleveland he thinks is very high and he would struggle to combine both photography and watching birds.

His favourite bird books are the '*Collins Field Guide*' and the '*Flight Identification of European Seabirds*' by Blomdahl *et al.* The latter is full of fabulous photographs of seabirds in flight, just as you would see them in the field, which he finds more helpful than idealised, hand-drawn plates.

Apart from birdwatching, Ted also has a keen interest in archaeology, history and architecture, and his MA Thesis was on the distribution of settlements in prehistoric of Cleveland. His other interests were put to good use when he wrote the introductory section on the geology and landscape of Cleveland in the recently published '*The Breeding Birds of Cleveland*'. His love of old relics perhaps goes some way in explaining his long association with Don!

His hobby has taken him to many parts of the world, including Morocco, Sweden, Scandinavia, Turkey, Israel, Hong Kong and most of Europe, but one of the places he remembers most fondly is China, which he visited in 2000 with other Teesside birders. One day in the 'Magic Wood' stands out in particular, when a large fall of birds produced thousands of sought-after eastern rarities, such as Siberian Thrush, Two-barred Greenish Warbler, Lanceolated Warbler, Siberian Rubythroat, Red-flanked Bluetail and up to 4,000 Radde's Warblers! Point Pelee in Canada also sticks in his memory for its huge visible migration and Mai Po Marshes in Hong Kong, for the sheer numbers of waterbirds, which included Baikal Teal, Falcated Duck, Baer's Pochard, Grey-headed Lapwing, Yellow Bittern and thousands of herons, egrets and other species.

One of his best day's birding in Cleveland was in early June 2002, when, at South Gare, there was not only a Rose-coloured Starling but also Marsh, Icterine and Subalpine Warblers; later that day, he saw a Spoonbill and 2 Garganeys on the North Tees Marshes but still managed to dip an Alpine Swift by Hartlepool Power Station! Quite a day.

His many finds in Cleveland have included Pallid Swift, Richard's and Tawny Pipits, Rustic Bunting and Bee-eater, plus, of course, the White's Thrush at Hartlepool.

Having done a fair amount of twitching in his time, Ted's biggest disappointments have been driving long distances only to find the bird has flown off. Two Slender-billed Gulls at Cley and a Belted Kingfisher at Peterculter in Scotland are two such occurrences. Being very keen on his

Cleveland list, missing anything here is also a major disappointment. Other birders usually get excited when Ted is on holiday because he does have a habit of missing goodies whilst away and these have included 2 Caspian Terns, Pacific Golden Plover, Red-eyed Vireo and Roller. He also dipped on Cleveland's first Red-flanked Bluetail at Cattersty Gill, as he was recovering from one of his many bouts in hospital.

Ted's most memorable bird is a Black-shouldered Kite, which he found in Hong Kong in 1984. This was Hong Kong's first record and Ted took great delight in reporting it to the Hong Kong Bird Club, members of which managed to re-find the bird with him a few days later, several kilometres from its original location. A male Siberian Thrush in China ran this bird close. He also got great pleasure from seeing the Great Snipe at South Gare in September 2008 with 32 stitches in his abdomen following a gall bladder operation, an outing that nearly cost him his marriage!

There are still lots of places Ted would like to visit and amongst the birds he would really like to see are Crab Plover, Steller's Sea Eagle and Caspian Plover.

His most embarrassing moment came whilst he was a voluntary warden at Loch Garten in 1967. He was at the visitors' hide looking out over the Osprey's nest with a group of American visitors. Ted excitedly called out that a Golden Eagle was flying towards them. The Americans were more excited than Ted but as the bird got nearer Ted realised that it was a Grey Heron. As the visitors all thought that the wardens were going to feed the Ospreys by hand, Ted decided he shouldn't divulge his embarrassing mistake, as no-one would probably know anyway!

The biggest change Ted would like to see in birding is a greater degree of tolerance being shown to fellow birdwatchers at whatever level of skill and acceptance of the fact that mistakes are, and always will be, made in identifying birds. People should not be made to feel afraid to call birds out for fear of getting them wrong and embarrassing themselves.

When asked about his views on the Teesmouth Bird Club, Ted admitted to a certain bias, having been Chairman for 5 years, but is pleased that the Club is now recognised as a potent, well-organised force for nature conservation in the Northern Region. He feels that there is now in place an excellent team of people, focused on achieving the targets set out in the Five-Year Plan. He is also delighted that increased attendance at Club meetings of 75-80+ members reflects the successes achieved over the past 5 years. He considers that the Club could, perhaps,

do more in practical conservation work and is disappointed in the lack of junior members but this latter point probably just reflects a change in society.

When asked about changes he would like to see in the local environment, Ted wants to see the brakes put on further development in the Tees Estuary. With 3 local working tips, power plants, refineries, ship dismantling and power lines he feels enough is enough and the small area remaining should be rigorously protected. The fact that the Reclamation Pond has been sacrificed to industry he considers a disgrace and that 'jobs at any price' should not always take precedence over environmental impact.

As to his aspirations, Ted simply wants to travel and see more birds, within the limitations of his disabilities. Another trip to China is high on his agenda, along with visits to Georgia and Kazakhstan.

OBITUARIES

PETER LAURENCE HOGG (1920 – 2009)



Peter Hogg, who died on 24th July 2009 at the age of 89, was one of our oldest and most distinguished members. His father was three times Mayor of West Hartlepool and his maternal grandfather was twice Mayor of Old Hartlepool; Peter's own life was steeped in local history and in

voluntary public service. He was one of the very few birdwatchers active on the North Tees Marshes in the years before 1940, sending his records to George Temperley for industry in the Northumberland and Durham reports.

During wartime service with the RAF in Egypt he joined two birdwatching colleagues in compiling a privately-produced book of their observations. Returning in 1945 to work in the family shipbroking firm, Peter became much involved in bird protection issues, acting as an expert witness for the police and providing information to the proponents of the 1954 Protection of Birds Act.

By the 1950's his main fieldwork consisted of doing the monthly 'duck counts' (we had no geese then) at Crookfoot, Hurworth Burn and Hartlepool Bay. Peter was elected to the Committee of Teesmouth Bird Club at the inaugural meeting in November 1960 and for many years was our link with Hartlepool Borough Council, the owners of the Hartlepool Observatory. He served as our first Vice-Chairman in 1971. In 1979, along with Angela Cooper and Alan Tompsett, Peter led the formation of the Cleveland Nature Conservation Trust (now TVWT) and served as its first Chairman.

He helped many other charities and was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for Cleveland. In later years, as his interests focused on a local and family history, he produced a series of thoroughly researched books and articles on many aspects of the history of the Port of Hartlepool. Peter was a constant and generous help to other researchers; his unrivalled local knowledge will be sorely missed.

Russell McAndrew

MISS BERYL CAIL (1916-2009)

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of the Club's oldest member, Beryl Cail, in September 2009. She was a loyal member for over 35 years, attending many of our evening meetings when she could, occasionally getting lifts from her gardener so as not to miss one. She will be sadly missed.

Ted Parker

WETLAND BIRD SURVEY - AUTUMN 2009 SUMMARY

Coverage was once again perfect, with all 104 potential sector counts being successfully made over the four months.

Virtually all the eye-catching totals of the autumn derived from wildfowl as opposed to waders. New all-time Tees WeBS records were set by mute swan (121, August), gadwall (480, October) and tufted duck (303, July), while both great crested grebe (39, July) and pintail (52, October) yielded new seasonal records.

The wigeon peak (1593, October) was our best autumn figure since 1994, while that of pochard (140, August) was the highest since 2000, and that of teal (1095, October) was the largest for six autumns. Shoveler were also abundant (300, October), only the second time ever three hundred have been counted on the Tees.

On the debit side, the cormorant maximum (284, August) was our poorest since 1993, underlining the steady decline in numbers over recent years.

In another autumn of generally unspectacular wader numbers, there were some notably poor performances, pre-eminent among which was turnstone (95, October); an all-time seasonal low. This compares with a five-year mean of seasonal peaks of 622 during 1990-1994!

Terns experienced another mediocre autumn; the Sandwich tern (249, August) and common tern (342, July) peaks were low, though in the latter case the figure hardly reflected the breeding population.

Following this series of counts, in autumn the Tees and Hartlepool Bay WeBS Site remains of national importance for cormorant, gadwall, shoveler and redshank.

Mike Leahey

WeBS Local Organizer

November 2009



Saltholme

WETLAND BIRD SURVEY TEESMOUTH AUTUMN 2009 SUMMARY

Species	July 19	August 16	September 20	October 18
Little Grebe	26	47*	<u>70*</u>	50*
Great Crested Grebe	<u>39</u>	27	25	23
Cormorant	176*	<u>284**</u>	272**	148*
Grey Heron	45	<u>75</u>	54	43
Mute Swan	72	<u>121</u>	112	81
Shelduck	112	110	257	<u>333</u>
Wigeon	3	24	677	<u>1593</u>
Gadwall	41	167*	457**	<u>480**</u>
Teal	14	90	759	<u>1095</u>
Mallard	125	203	<u>417</u>	385
Pintail	0	0	31	<u>52</u>
Shoveler	6	136*	290**	<u>300**</u>
Pochard	88	<u>140</u>	110	48
Tufted Duck	<u>303</u>	177	270	180
Ruddy Duck	1	<u>8</u>	4	0
Coot	546	996*	<u>1388*</u>	1012*
Oystercatcher	433	768	981	<u>1477</u>
Ringed Plover	64	<u>126</u>	103	11
Golden Plover	1	53	271	<u>382</u>
Grey Plover	0	3	71	<u>73</u>
Lapwing	890	845	<u>1584</u>	1115
Knot	44	30	1	<u>176</u>
Sanderling	75	<u>82</u>	43	33
Little Stint	0	<u>1</u>	0	0
Curlew Sandpiper	0	1	<u>3</u>	0
Purple Sandpiper	0	0	0	<u>9</u>
Dunlin	261	233	<u>356</u>	136
Ruff	3	11	<u>22</u>	0
Snipe	3	24	43	<u>60</u>
Black-tailed Godwit	0	42	45	<u>51</u>
Bar-tailed Godwit	4	1	41	<u>70</u>
Whimbrel	<u>22</u>	5	0	0
Curlew	<u>667</u>	645	496	362
Spotted Redshank	0	<u>2</u>	0	0
Redshank	627*	852*	1176*	<u>1331**</u>
Greenshank	3	<u>16</u>	<u>16</u>	2
Green Sandpiper	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	1	<u>3</u>
Common Sandpiper	<u>2</u>	1	0	0
Turnstone	71	47	61	<u>95</u>
Sandwich Tern	140	<u>249</u>	0	0
Common Tern	<u>342</u>	264	8	0
Arctic Tern	2	<u>5</u>	0	0
Little Tern	<u>30</u>	4	0	0

Underlined counts indicate Autumn 2009 maxima.

* Denotes count of >50% of national importance

** Denotes count of national importance

N.B. 'Teesmouth' includes Hartlepool Bay and the whole of the RSPB Saltholme Reserve.

SAMPLE BIRD DISTURBANCE SURVEY FORM

EMS BIRD SURVEY - HARTLEPOOL

LOCATION: BLUE LAGOON

DATE: 14/10/2009 **TIME (start)** 09:15 **TIME (finish)** 10:15 **LOW TIDE** 06:12 **HIGH TIDE** 12:25

Species	BIRD NOS (START)	Species	BIRD NOS (FINISH)	
Redshank	1	Redshank		
Knot		Knot		
Oystercatcher	5	Oystercatcher		
Sanderling		Sanderling		
Ringed Plover		Ringed Plover		
Turnstone		Turnstone		
Purple Sandpiper		Purple Sandpiper		
Gulls	55	Gulls	7	
Curlew		Curlew		
TOTAL	61	TOTAL	7	
Activity Nos		Disturbance Cat 1	Disturbance Cat 2	Disturbance Cat 3
Dog off lead	11	3	1	
Dog on lead				
Walking	1			
Horse Riding				
Water Sport				
Vehicles				
Sand reclamation				
Other				
TOTAL	12	3	1	0
TOTAL TIME (HOURS)	1			

Notes: The Cat 2 event involved 1 Oystercatcher, all other events involved gulls.

HBC BIRD DISTURBANCE SURVEY SHEET

EMS Bird Disturbance Survey Hartlepool

Location

Date **Time (start)** **Time (finish)** **Weather**

Species	Bird Nos (start)	Species	Bird Nos (finish)	
Redshank		Redshank		
Knot		Knot		
Oystercatcher		Oystercatcher		
Sanderling		Sanderling		
Ringed Plover		Ringed Plover		
Turnstone		Turnstone		
Purple Sandpiper		Purple Sandpiper		
Gulls		Gulls		
Curlew		Curlew		
Others		Others		
Activity	Activity Nos	Disturbance Cat 1	Disturbance Cat 2	
Dog off lead				
Dog on lead				
Walking				
Horse Riding				
Water Sport				
Vehicles				
Sand reclamation				
Other				

Notes: Category 1 disturbance - birds fly but re-alight in survey area..
Category 2 disturbance - birds leave survey area.

TEESMOUTH BIRD CLUB - ROOKERY SURVEY 2010

SITE NAME:		GRID REFERENCE OR SITE LOCATION:	
OBSERVER'S NAME:		ADDRESS:	
TEL. NO:		EMAIL:	
SURVEY RESULTS			
¹DATES VISITED	TOTAL NO. OF NESTS	TOTAL NO OF OCCUPIED NESTS	
²COMMENTS			

¹ Please make at least 2-3 visits during the period late February to mid-April 2010.

² These can include adverse effects of weather (e.g. high winds), factors affecting nesting (e.g. disturbance), species of tree(s) the birds are nesting in or anything else you consider to be relevant.

TRAVELLING TO QUEEN'S CAMPUS

By Road

Queen's Campus, Stockton is linked by the A66 to the A1(M) and the A19.

From A19 North to Queen's Campus, Stockton

1. Join the A66, signposted Stockton/Darlington
2. Take the first slip road from A66, signposted Teesside Retail Park/Teess Barrage
3. Turn right at the traffic lights, over the bridge across the A66, following signs for the Barrage.
4. Turn left at the roundabout.

For Holliday Building, Ebsworth Building and Wolfson Research Institute:

5. Turn right at the next small roundabout into East Drive and keep forward into the Main Campus Car Park. Buildings are signposted and large campus maps are located around the car park.

From A19 South

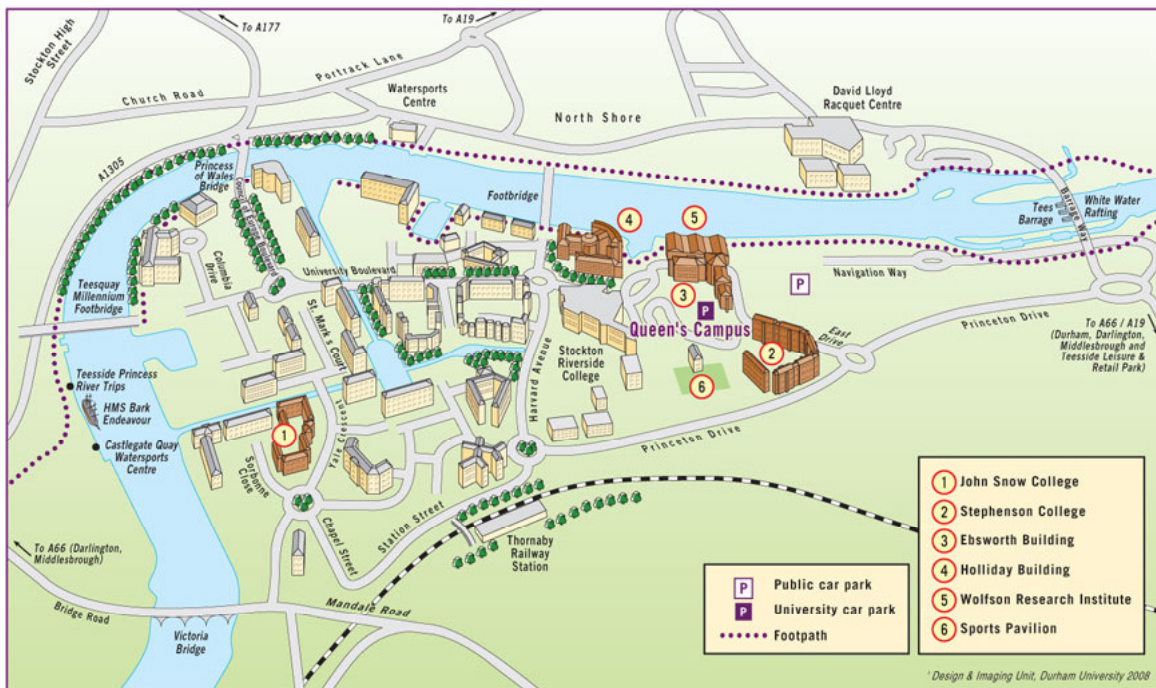
1. Join the slip road for the A66 signpost Stockton/Darlington.
2. Keep on the slip road and follow the signs for the Barrage as described above.

By Bus

Regular services run from Stockton and Middlesbrough to Teesdale and X1 services from Newcastle, Durham, Sedgefield and Middlesbrough stop outside the Holliday Building on University Boulevard and travel direct to the Durham University Science Site.

By Rail

The National Express high speed service runs from London, York and Edinburgh to Darlington, with a connection to Thornaby Railway Station.



TEESMOUTH BIRD CLUB

PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are due on 1st January and the current rates are :

Full	£12.00
Family	£16.00
Junior/Senior Citizen	£10.00



Reg. Charity No.508850

Please forward your cheque made payable to 'Teesmouth Bird Club' to Chris Sharp, 20 Auckland Way, Hartlepool, TS26 0AN. If you prefer, you can set up a Standing Order.

I enclose my subscription of £for the year.....

Name.....

Address.....

..... Post Code.....

STANDING ORDER MANDATE – TO BE SENT TO YOUR BANK

To : The Manager.....Bank

Bank address.....

I,, the undersigned, of Bank Sort Code.....

and Bank Account Number.....agree to pay a yearly Standing Order of £.....

to TEESMOUTH BIRD CLUB, Sort Code 40-22-27 and Bank Account Number 90799599 to commence on

.....and to continue until further notice.

SIGNED..... Date.....

TEESMOUTH BIRD CLUB GIFT AID DECLARATION

Surname..... Forename(s).....

Address.....

..... Post Code.....

I want the **TEESMOUTH BIRD CLUB** to treat all subscriptions/donations I have made since the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations

SIGNED..... Date.....

To qualify as a Gift Aid donor you must be a taxpayer and have paid or will pay an amount of tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your subscriptions/donations.

Should you cease to be a taxpayer, please notify the Club so that further claims under this declaration may be cancelled.

IF YOU ELIGIBLE, PLEASE SIGN THE GIFT AID DECLARATION IF YOU HAVEN'T PREVIOUSLY DONE SO. IT COSTS YOU NOTHING BUT ENABLES THE CLUB TO RECOVER THE TAX ON YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS/DONATIONS.