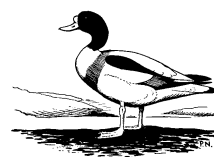


Teesmouth Bird Club Newsletter

April 2012 (No. 51)



Reg. Charity 508850

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How well are our
House Martins doing?

See page 12

MONTHLY SUMMARIES

Chris Sharp covers the highlights of a productive late autumn and winter period in Cleveland, which included some excellent birds.

NOVEMBER 2011

The early days of the month saw both Rough-legged Buzzard and Hen Harrier at Sleddale. A Marsh Harrier at Dorman's Pool remained into 2012 and thus became the first to overwinter at Teesmouth. A Black Redstart was at South Gare, as were a few Twite and up to 40 Twites were also on Greenabella Marsh.

Two Whooper Swans were on Greenabella Marsh on 2nd, with a further 30 at Crookfoot Reservoir on 5th. The latter date also saw a large movement of Pink-footed Geese through Cleveland, with *ca* 1,200 over RSPB Saltholme and 550 over Scaling Dam. The usual wintering flock of Snow Buntings were at South Gare, totalling about 55 in early November, and 20 Velvet Scoters on the sea off Seaton Carew was a good count for Cleveland. The immature Red-breasted Goose initially seen at Saltburn relocated to Scaling Dam from 6th and was present into December. Although its origins were unknown it was unringed and some observers believe it to be a wild bird. An influx of Short-eared Owls on 7th included three at Hartlepool and six at South Gare. Single Great Northern Diver and Long-tailed Duck also flew past Hartlepool.



Twites, South Gare

Mike Small



Desert Wheatear, Boulby

Neil Lay



Hume's Warbler, South Gare

Martyn Sidwell



Grey Phalarope, Hartlepool Headland

Martyn Sidwell

The autumn's good run of rare birds continued on 8th with a stunning male Desert Wheatear at Boulby. It stayed for three days and was the third Cleveland record. Four Lapland Buntings were at Saltburn Cliffs at this time and three Black Redstarts were at South Gare. A late Yellow-browed Warbler was at Boulby on 9th and October's immature Black Guillemot was still off Hartlepool on 10th. The long-staying Semipalmated Sandpiper continued to be reported from Greatham Creek. Another rarity of an exceptional year was a Hume's Warbler at South Gare from 11th to 12th. The bird gave terrific views as it fed in the 'Bomb Hole.' Other migrants present at the time included a Richard's Pipit at Boulby, a Shore Lark at Warsett Hill and 12

Waxwings at RSPB Saltholme. A Black Guillemot was also off South Gare.

The influx of scarce geese continued with 18 Tundra Bean Geese and two European White-fronted Geese at Kirkleatham and 14 of the latter species at RSPB Saltholme and seven on Seaton Common. A Hen Harrier was over Seaton Common on 13th and 14th. A redhead Smew was at Crookfoot Reservoir from 15th and this was probably last year's returning bird. Two Bewick's Swans were at Scaling Dam on 18th and nearby Lockwood Beck held a mixed goose flock in the adjacent fields which contained up to 44 European White-fronted and 16 Tundra Bean Geese. Both Hen and Marsh Harriers were at Dormans Pool on 18th, with a Rough-legged Buzzard at Sleddale on the same day.

A Grey Phalarope at Hartlepool from 19th meant all three Phalarope species had been recorded in Cleveland in the same year for the first time. The influx of rarer geese continued, with Crookfoot Reservoir holding 11 Tundra Bean Geese and 16 White-fronted Geese on 19th. A Spotted Redshank was at RSPB Saltholme from 20th for three days and the Semipalmated Sandpiper continued to be reported from the Reserve at this time, being last seen in early December.

Five Whooper Swans were on the sea off Skinningrove on 24th with a further 11 were off Redcar. Gull enthusiasts were rewarded late in the month with three Caspian Gulls amongst the large numbers of Herring Gulls on Seaton Common.



Kestrel, Scaling Dam

Harry Murphy

DECEMBER 2011

A Black-necked Grebe was off North Gare on 1st and the same location held a Red-necked Grebe, a Lapland Bunting and 27 Snow Buntings the following day. Nearby on Seaton Common varying numbers of European White-fronted Geese were present into 2012 along with a single Greenland White-front and the occasional Tundra Bean Goose.



European White-fronted Geese, Seaton Common
Renton Charman



Greenland White-fronted Goose, Seaton Common Ray Scott



Siberian Stonechat, Seaton Common Derek Clayton

The last rarity of the year was a stunning Siberian Stonechat on the Zinc Works Road on 3rd and 4th. This has recently gained full species status, having been split from Common Stonechat and thus gained its fair share of admirers. A Grey Phalarope, presumably last month's bird, returned to Hartlepool from 3rd and remained in the area, giving very close views. A Great Northern Diver was in the nearby Hartlepool Harbour, being joined by a second bird from 9th. Small numbers of Little Auks were also seen at the coastal stations at this time. A Jack Snipe was at RSPB Saltholme on 6th.

A Bittern was at Dormans Pool on 9th and the drake Ring-necked Duck returned to Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park from 9th and stayed for the rest of the winter. Nineteen Whooper Swans

were at Scaling Dam on 9th with two rarer Bewick's Swans with them. The latter remained into 2012. Hen Harriers were at Dormans Pool and Eston Moor on 10th. The larger white-winged gulls began to appear in Cleveland from mid-month, with a first-winter Glaucous Gull at Hartlepool and a 3rd-winter Iceland Gull at Cowpen Bewley.

A Black-necked Grebe was on Seal Sands from 11th. Numbers of White-fronted Geese increased to 82 at Scaling Dam. Two Waxwings in Yarm on 18th was one of the few records of this species this winter in stark contrast to the last couple of winters when large scale 'irruptions' took place. A Slavonian Grebe joined the two Great Northern Divers in Hartlepool Harbour from 19th and Caspian Gulls continued to be reported from Seaton Common. The two Great Northern Divers left Hartlepool Headland for Christmas, only to be replaced by a fine Black-throated Diver.



Whooper Swans, Scaling Dam

John Money



Caspian Gull, Seaton Common

Steve Clifton



Velvet Scoter, Hartlepool Headland

Ian Forrest

A Black Redstart was at Newburn from 26th and it remained for the rest of the winter. The last few days of the year saw two first-winter Glaucous Gulls at Hartlepool and the Cetti's Warbler was still at Dormans Pool.

JANUARY 2012



Glaucous Gull, Hartlepool Headland

Martyn Sidwell



Kumlien's Gull, Hartlepool Headland

Martyn Sidwell

As usual, plenty of birders were out on the first and year-lists were off to a good start with Ring-necked Duck, Smew, Marsh Harrier, Tundra Bean and White-fronted Geese, Black-throated Diver and Glaucous Gulls all to be seen. A Red-necked Grebe was also offshore at Hartlepool. Twenty-seven Red-breasted Mergansers were in Jackson's Landing on 2nd and at least 17 Red-throated Divers were in the nearby harbour, along with the Black-throated Diver.

Bitterns were at RSPB Saltholme early in the month, with another two at Coatham Marsh. Two Iceland Gulls were off Parton Rocks on 6th, with 17 Pale-bellied Brent Geese on Seal Sands the same day. A Black-necked Grebe was also on Seal Sands and a Slavonian Grebe was off Steetley. Three Waxwings were brief visitors to Boulby on 10th.

Barnacle Geese numbers increased to 67 at Saltholme Pools on 10th. The White-fronted Goose flock on Seaton Common, which included 1 Greenland, were joined by five Taiga Bean Geese

on 13th but the latter were only present for one afternoon. Meanwhile, large numbers of European White-fronted Geese continued to be reported from Scaling Dam and up to 150 remained for the rest of the winter. With three Bewick's Swans and a single Whooper Swan also present, Scaling Dam was a 'must' for the keen year lister.



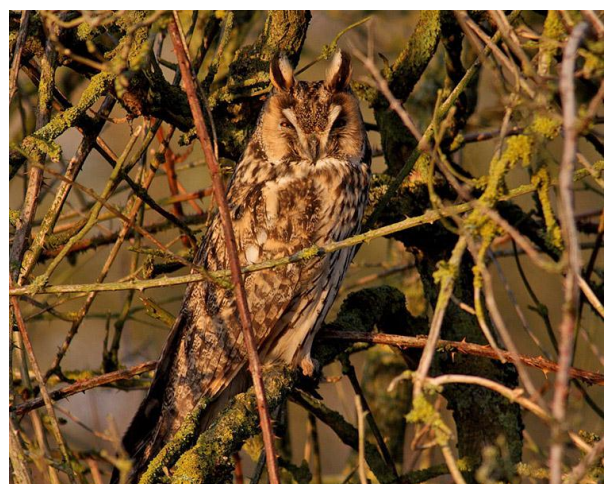
Bewick's Swans, Scaling Dam

John Money



Great Grey Shrike, Coatham Stob

Ian Forrest



Long-eared Owl

Ian Forrest

Up to 15 Lapland Buntings were at Cowbar mid-month but one of the highlights of the winter was a Great Grey Shrike, which was found wintering at Coatham Stob. A Long-eared Owl was at RSPB Saltholme but proved unreliable compared with last winter. A Rough-legged Buzzard was at

Sleddale on 22nd. Two Long-tailed Ducks were at Hartlepool on the same day. Long gone are the winters when this species was regularly to be seen on Seal Sands. Four Tundra Bean Geese commuted between Cowpen Marsh and RSPB Saltholme. White-winged Gulls continued to be reported from coastal localities and a well marked third-winter bird at Hartlepool from 27th was identified as a Kumlien's Gull. This would be the first accepted record of this Iceland Gull sub-species for Cleveland. With two Iceland and two Glaucous Gulls also regularly reported, Hartlepool Fish Quay area was much visited and a far pleasanter location than the local refuse tips.

The month ended with a 'Blue' Fulmar off Huntcliff on 29th and a Long-tailed Duck off Redcar late in the month.

FEBRUARY 2012

The beginning of the month was cold. The frozen waters saw Bitterns move out in the open at RSPB Saltholme and up to three were present. An influx of Woodcock also took place at this time. The long-staying Red-necked Grebe was also off Hartlepool. The Great Grey Shrike remained around Coatham Stob and first-winter Caspian Gulls continued to be reported from Seaton Common. An adult male Marsh Harrier joined the long staying female from 2nd. Records of the larger white-winged Gulls became more widespread, with three Iceland Gulls at Seaton Carew on 6th and one or two individuals also being seen at South Gare.



Iceland Gull, Newburn

Ian Forrest

Unusually large numbers of Gannets were offshore at this time, with about 25 following fishing boats into Hartlepool Fish Quay on 8th. A Black-necked Grebe was on Crookfoot Reservoir on this date, along with a Whooper Swan and a fly-through Hen Harrier. Another Black-necked Grebe was at South Gare and numbers increased to three by the month's end, being joined by a Slavonian Grebe, giving birders the chance to observe both these species together.



Brent Goose, Saltholme

Ray Scott



Snow Bunting, Cowbar

Ray Scott



Black Redstart, Newburn

Ian Forrest

Numbers of Tundra Bean Geese increased to four at RSPB Saltholme. They then relocated to the

nearby Cowpen Marsh, where they were joined by a Dark-bellied Brent Goose. A Rough-legged Buzzard was reported over Eastfields Farm, Nunthorpe on 10th. Five Pale-bellied Brent Geese were on Seal Sands from 11th and a Scaup was at South Gare from 12th. Two Waxwings were in Yarm on 12th.

Mid-month saw little in the way of bird movement but a Jack Snipe was at RSPB Saltholme and a Hen Harrier was at Sleddale. Numbers of Snow Buntings reached 120 at South Gare and were occasionally joined by a few Twite. The Cetti's Warbler was still calling at Dormans Pool and 24 Goosanders were on Wynyard Lake on 24th. The Black Redstart remained at Newburn and a Rough-legged Buzzard showed well at Scaling Dam on 28th. The month ended on a mild note and birders thoughts were directed toward the first spring visitors.

CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

A QUIET WORD IN YOUR EAR ABOUT THE PHIL STEAD HIDE

RSPB have asked the club to make the following request to members.

The RSPB has had a complaint made by a user of the Phil Stead Hide that a group of birders has been unacceptably raucous whilst the person concerned was in the hide one morning. It would have been expedient for the individual to have had a word with the birders at the time and asked for a bit of hush, but, for understandable reasons, this did not happen, hence this note. I suspect that birders tend to gather in this hide early before the Reserve itself is fully open and, being a friendly Club, as we indeed are, conversation may become excessive. Birds come very close to the windows and are disturbed and flush. So everyone is a loser. Nobody wants the interior of the hide to be festooned with "Do Not" notices, like some Blackpool boarding house, so please keep noise down. Thank you.

Alistair McLee

AN HISTORIC MILESTONE - THE SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC BIRD RECORDS

For the first time ever in the history of our Club, records are now being submitted to the Cleveland Recorder, Tom Francis, using the electronic spreadsheet devised by Neil Lay. The general feedback has been excellent, with most saying how quick and easy it is now to send in bird records compared with the tedious written card system. I personally submitted all my 2011 records in a fraction of the time it took me

previously and it is now possible for observers to keep their own electronic records of these for future reference. I am one of a number of volunteers who are now inputting historic records in order to do away with the many shoeboxes full of paper cards which are extremely vulnerable to loss or damage. Keeping records in electronic form will make their retrieval easy and it will be possible to sort them by location, date and observer, ideal for providing bird data to external organisations from which we can earn some income.

As with all new systems, ours is not without its teething problems. One of the commonest to date is observers merely typing in their records onto the spreadsheet without using the '*Data Entry and Sorting*' menu, which is the red box near the top of the spreadsheet. If you click on this, all the work of entering records is virtually done for you, although you must ensure you alter the date and number of birds involved. If you have a long list of records of the same species, merely tick the box '*Keep Species Name with New Record*' and you won't need to keep entering the species name.

We urge all members who have access to a computer to use the electronic records system and if you have any difficulties with it, please don't hesitate to contact Neil Lay, Tom Francis, Don Page or Ted Parker for further help.

Ted Parker

CAR STICKERS

The Club now has a new batch of car stickers for sale to members. The stickers are useful for identifying our vehicles as belonging to bona fide birdwatchers when parked on private land, such as at Dormans Pool, and for promoting the corporate image of the Club. We have been informed by Huntsman Security, which patrols the Dormans Pool and Reclamation Pond sites, that they are reassured when they see an unattended vehicle if it has a TBC sticker and do not wait to question the owners when they return.

The stickers cost £1.00 each and are obtainable from Chris Sharp at 45 Endeavour Close, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland, TS (Tel: 01429 865163). Stickers requested through the post should include a stamped addressed envelope for return.

Chris Sharp

TBC BESPOKE CLOTHING

Clothing with the club logo is available from Julie Mason. Please use the order form on **page 31**.

NORTHUMBERLAND HEN HARRIER PROJECT 2012

Every year bird clubs in the north of England receive a request from RSPB for members to refrain from visiting the North Tyneside Hen Harrier breeding location, especially during the critical early stages of the nesting cycle of these wonderful birds. This season is no different. Last year was a blank year but there is no reason to believe that 2012 should not be a potentially good breeding season. Information on any activity at the location will be posted on the RSPB 'Skydancer' blog or other outlets. Actual breeding site visits should always be co-ordinated with Dr Stephen Temperley, Species Protection Coordinator

His email is: stephen.temperley@rspb.org.uk

Alistair McLee

REPORTING HEN HARRIER SIGHTINGS

Would members please report any Hen Harrier sightings on potential breeding habitat in Cleveland and the North York Moors **immediately** to either Ted Parker or Mick Carroll. This applies particularly to displaying males or obvious pairs. Hen Harriers are still the most persecuted birds in the UK, with only about 12 pairs in England, where there should be many more.

Ted and Mick are volunteers with the National Harrier Recovery Project and work closely with Natural England and the RSPB to protect Hen Harriers by alerting these nature conservation bodies immediately so that 'rapid response' financial and human resources can be allocated to watch a site in order to afford as much protection as possible. Anyone seeing an illegal activity, such as disturbance of a nesting site or shooting of harriers, should record all relevant details and report incidents without delay.

Whilst this action may not be the panacea to all harrier persecution it may help some birds to breed in areas where they otherwise would not have survived or result in prosecutions (and hopefully heavy fines) of those who continue to persecute these magnificent birds.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Ted Parker

Home tel : 01642 275369

Mobile : 07710 232165

Mick Carroll

Home tel : 01751 476550

Mobile : 07931 250406

Ted Parker

CONSERVATION ISSUES

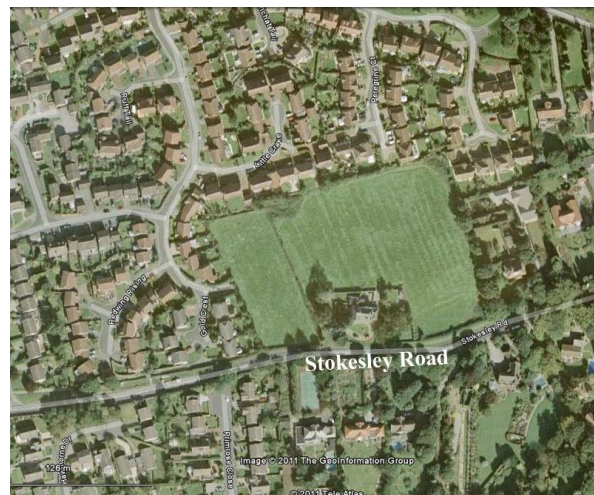
*As Chair of the Club's Conservation Sub-Committee, **Ted Parker** looks back at the main issues the TBC has been consulted on since the last Newsletter in August.*

Since the publication of the December 2011 Newsletter, the Conservation Sub-Committee (CSC) has been extremely busy, having been consulted by the local authorities on a number of important Planning Applications that could impact on birds. Our involvement in these projects, including attending site meetings and being represented on steering groups and working parties, reflects the continuing influence of the Club in shaping local developments. We have also been asked by a number of environmental consultancies to provide data for environmental impact assessments and comment on potential developments in the Cleveland area.

Some of the main projects we have been involved with are as follows.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND SCOPING OPINIONS

Spring Lodge Housing Development, Stokesley Road, Guisborough - Second Planning Application



The Club objected to a second Planning Application for the demolition of Spring Lodge and the building of approximately 40 houses on this green field site. Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's Planning Committee, having refused the first Application, granted approval for the second, with the developer having allayed the Committee's concerns over impact on bats, ancient hedgerows and tree cover. We remain concerned that open spaces and gardens within residential areas are being swallowed up for housing, with the consequent removal of trees, hedgerows and pastures.

Tees Valley Renewable Energy Facility, Reclamation Pond (Air Products)

Along with Natural England and RSPB, we commented on and suggested amendments for the final draft of the Construction Ornithological Monitoring Programme, which will assess the impact of this development on birds of the residual Reclamation Pond and Dormans Pool as the energy plant is constructed on the former site.

Re-wetting of Cowpen Marsh (RSPB)

TBC supported this Application to bring water back onto the dry marsh by a system of sluices, channels and re-excavation of former hydrological features. The Application was approved by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and work has now been completed and will greatly benefit this important site by retaining wet areas all year round. The marsh had previously dried up due to the adverse impact of the adjacent Cowpen Bewley landfill site on the hydrology of this important SSSI. One wonders whether such an effect as this was identified in the Environmental Impact Assessment for the landfill.

Grey Towers Farm Housing Development, Nunthorpe (Wilson Homes Limited)

Despite huge opposition from TBC, local residents, residents' groups, community councils, ward councillors, parish councils and the Constituency MP, Middlesbrough Council inexplicably approved in principle this damaging Outline Application for 'aspirational housing' on high quality green belt land and woodland on the southern fringe of the Borough bordering Poole Hospital and Grey Towers Farm. It is the last piece of true countryside left in the Borough and, as such, holds most of its breeding farmland bird species, many of which will now be lost to Middlesbrough.

Beacon Moor Wind Farm, Upleatham (Infinis) – Scoping Report

TBC commented on the developer's Scoping Report in November 2011 and identified additional survey work and research required as part of a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment. The turbines are to be of the largest, industrial type and will be sited in an area that holds two Schedule 1, nine 'Red List', 15 'Amber List' and three UK/Local BAP species, plus a number of breeding birds that are scarce in Cleveland. We will comment on the Planning Application and Environmental Statement when these are lodged with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and decide whether or not to lodge and objection. We

have already made an assessment of the breeding birds of the development site and shared this information with the Upleatham protest group.

See page 10 for map

RWE Gas Pipeline Realignment, South Gare – Amendment to Planning Application

We were asked to comment by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council on the proposed re-routing of RWE gas pipeline along the western edge of Coatham Marsh. We alerted TVWT, who had surprisingly not been consulted and they investigated the proposal. As TVWT considered that there would be no adverse impacts on their Coatham Marsh Reserve, TBC did not lodge an objection to the new route. We did recommend, however, that the hydrological effects be monitored post-construction and remedial measures put in place, if necessary.



Green line is Coatham Marsh Reserve boundary
Red lines are proposed and amended routes of pipeline

'River Tees: Our River', Landscape Partnerships : HLF Funding Bid (Groundwork)

Groundwork Middlesbrough has put in a bid for Lottery funding for a plan to improve the River Tees from Piercebridge to Teesmouth for people and nature through a number of 'themed' projects. Members of the Club attended a presentation at the annual meeting of the Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership and were able to question the thinking behind this project. TBC expressed concern that it was not included in the list of consultees and had not made any input into the plan despite our intimate knowledge of the lower section of the river. The Club was assured that it will be consulted as the themed projects are developed. Club Chairman, Ali McLee, has sent a letter of support in principle to Groundwork but it was on the basis that TVWT and TBC have a significant input to the wildlife aspects.

Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast European Marine Site – Code of Conduct (INCA)

Members will recall that Katherine Simpson of York University gave a presentation last year at one of our monthly meetings to outline the purpose and nature of this project, which aims to develop a 'Code of Conduct' for users of the European Marine Site (EMS) in order to protect it for future generations. The current problems mainly result from the public's general lack of knowledge of the importance of the EMS, rather than malicious activity. A Code of Conduct has been prepared for each user group (which include wind/kite surfers, birdwatchers/naturalists, bait diggers and dog walkers) in association with INCA and a leaflet has been prepared on which the Club's Conservation Sub-Committee commented. It is aimed at preventing damage and unnecessary disturbance to the EMS. The Club felt that, to be successful, the Code will require a two-pronged approach, reinforced with on-site signage, involving:

- **VOLUNTARY CO-OPERATION** by user groups which form discrete organisations, such as Teesmouth Bird Club, surfing groups and wind/kite surfers, who are more likely to comply due to established channels of communication via an organisational structure.
- **ENFORCEMENT** for those general user groups that do not have discrete organisations, are far less easy to reach and are more unlikely to comply, e.g. dog walkers and bait diggers.

Hartlepool Coastal Strategy SEA – Scoping Report (Environment Agency)

TBC commented on and responded to specific questions on this project, which concerns improving coastal defences for a 8.3 km length of coast between North Sands and Newburn, whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing biodiversity. In its response, TBC drew attention to the ornithological importance of this length of coastline and suggested that some superfluous topics be scoped out of the EIA, such as employment, health and social statistics, which seem to have little relevance to coastal defence works. We will be commenting further as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is developed by the Environment Agency.

Recycling Plant, Reclamation Pond – Scoping Report (Impetus Reclamation Limited)

TBC was requested by Impetus to comment on their Scoping Report. We expressed no major concerns but raised the potential adverse impacts of seepage, odour, mitigation/enhancement,

which should be addressed in the EIA, and TBC's future access to the Reclamation Pond. We questioned whether a recycling plant is an appropriate use for a former prime biodiversity site!

Hartlepool Power Station, Storage of Hazardous Material – Planning Application (EDF Energy)

No objection was raised as all proposed works are within the current site footprint and subject to strict legal and environmental controls.

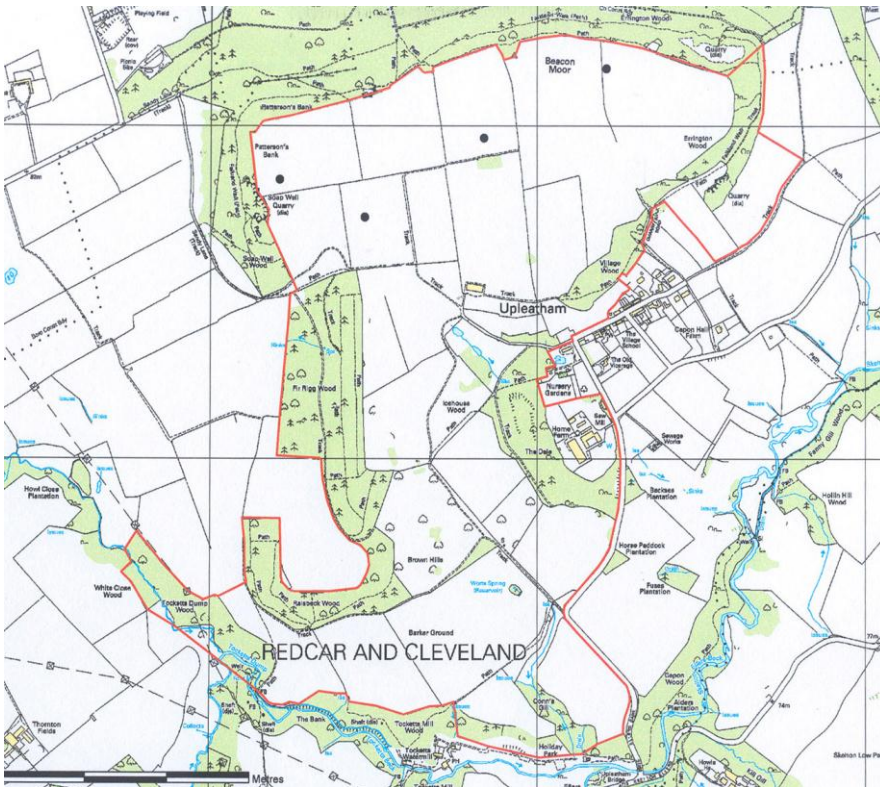
Installation of two Chlorinator Vessels, Tees Road Works – Planning Application (Huntsman Tioxide)

As this development is within the existing site footprint, is part of overall plant improvement and has no impact on the adjacent Greenabella Marsh, no objection was lodged.

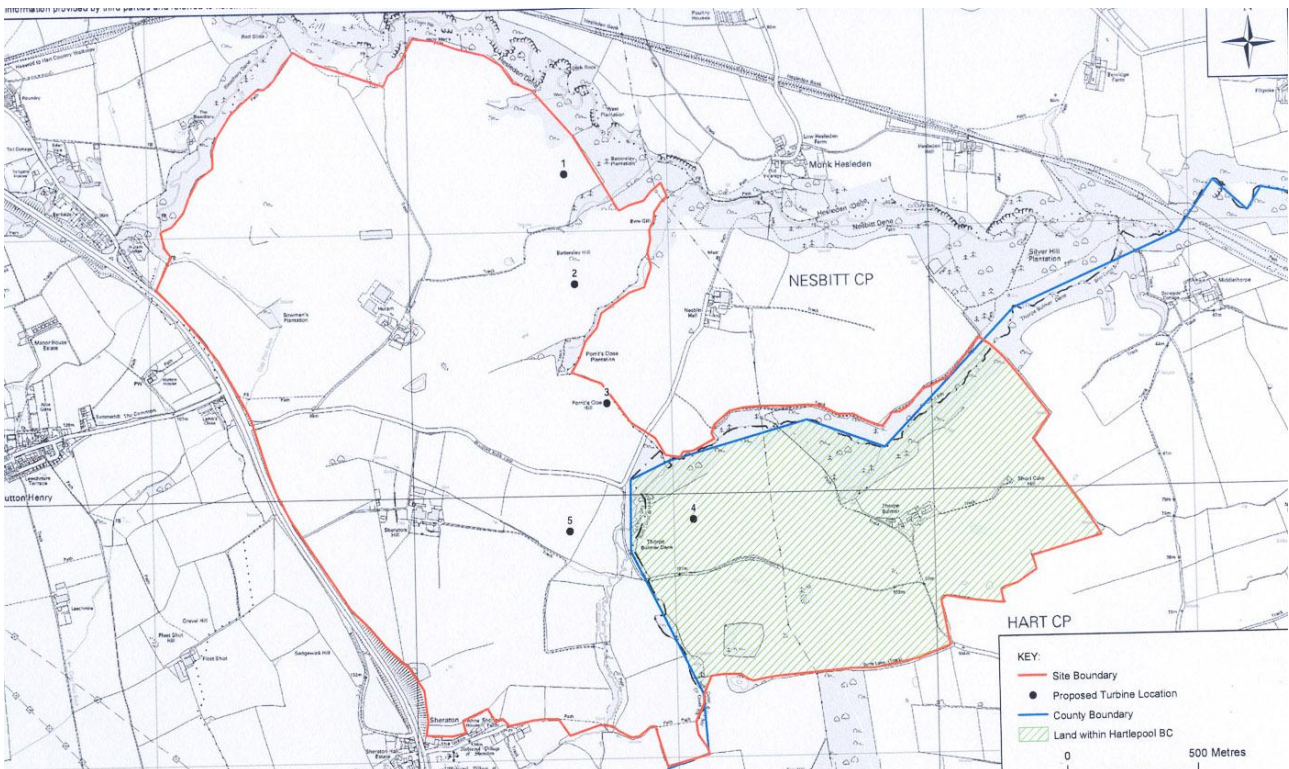
Sheraton Wind Farm, Hutton Henry – Planning Application and Environmental Statement (EDF Energy Renewables)

The Conservation Sub-Committee has previously commented on the Scoping Report for this proposed development which straddles the Hartlepool-Durham boundary. Only one of the five large-scale turbines is in the Cleveland area near Thorpe Bulmer Dene but it was considered necessary to comment on the development as a whole and we submitted our response to both Durham County and Hartlepool Borough Councils. The ornithological consultant for EDF Energy has undertaken all of the desk and on-site research recommended by TBC, including wintering and breeding bird surveys, vantage point surveys (to assess collision risk) and post-construction monitoring. We were satisfied with the results of the in-depth survey work and raised no objection with the Councils, although we recommended a number of Planning Conditions that we consider should be imposed if Planning Approval is granted, one of which is a five-year period of post-construction bird collision monitoring. The development will involve a three-year period of on-going breeding bird surveys and these will be extremely useful because there is a marked lack of research on the impact of onshore wind farms nationally on breeding bird numbers.

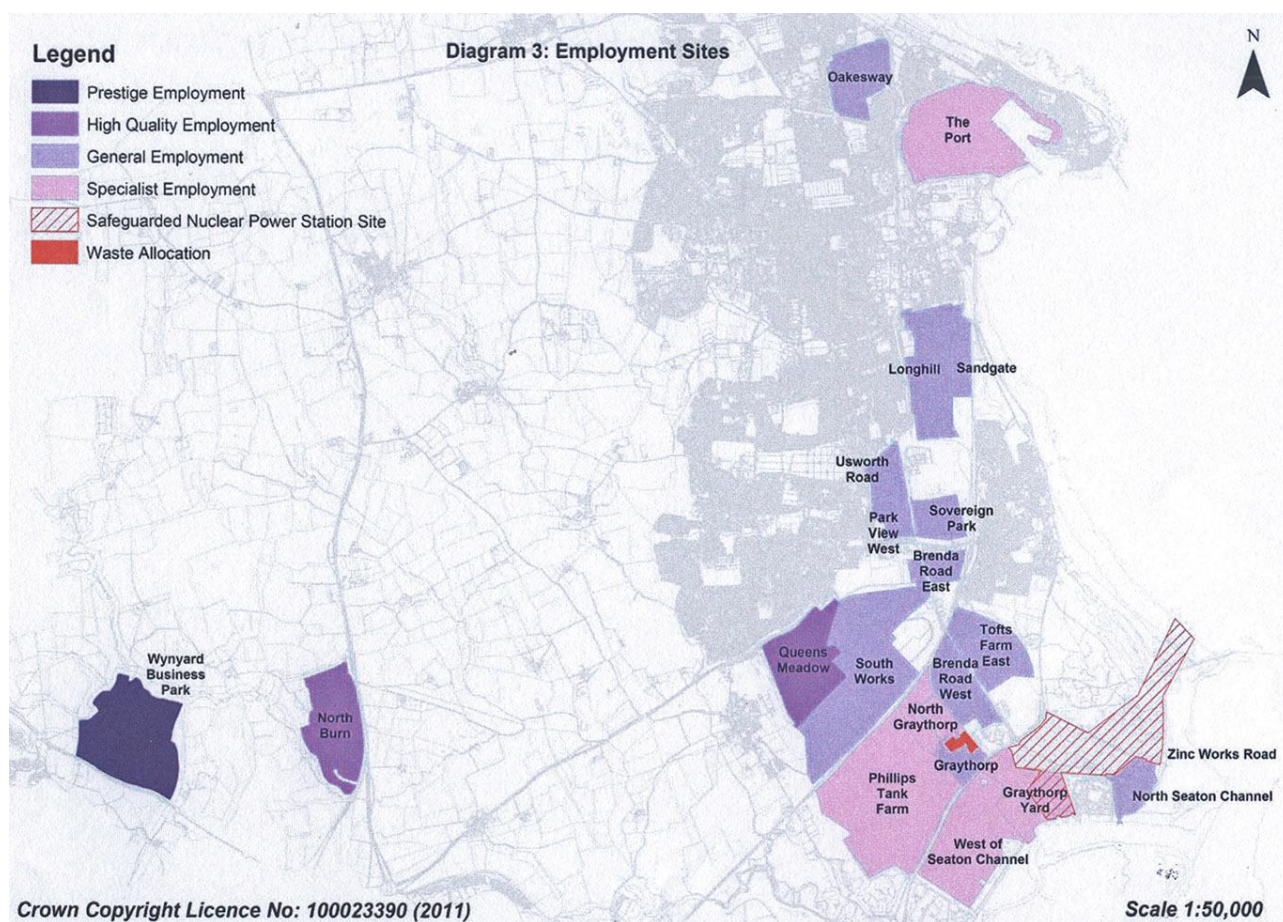
See map on next page



Location of Beacon Moor Wind Farm, Upleatham



Location of Sheraton Wind Farm (Hartlepool area shaded)



Hartlepool Borough BC's 'Core Strategy'

We have recently submitted our final comments on this document, which sets the scene for the future of the Borough of Hartlepool for key aspects, including housing, employment, leisure, transport and the environment. It identifies areas within the Borough that are reserved for development, some of which TBC has grave concerns over, notably:

- Further development on prime woodland and farmland at Wynyard (e.g. a business park, housing and the new hospital).
- Development at North Burn, a green field site in the southwest of the town, for business.
- Housing expansion on the southwest margin of the town, notably at Brierton and Claxton, which are prime farmland bird breeding areas.
- The Power Station Field, Zinc Works Road and part of Seaton Common for the proposed nuclear power station site and port-related use.
- Greenabella Marsh for specialist industrial development.

The loss of more sites around the Tees Estuary will be disastrous in view of what we have lost

already since the 1970s and we have objected in the strongest possible term in our formal response to the Core Strategy.

BIRD CONSERVATION

Local Wildlife Sites in Cleveland

In association with TVWT, the Club has recently completed its review of Local Wildlife Sites in Middlesbrough District and has now assessed the proposed sites for all four unitary authorities. Our review included the identification of new sites, recommending ornithological criteria for existing botanic sites and suggesting future management. All the boroughs in Cleveland now have full lists.

Bird Species of Conservation Concern

Through some outstanding work by Vic Fairbrother, the Club has developed an annotated list of bird species of conservation concern in association with TVWT, which is intended to aid Planners and other land-based professionals in assessing the impact of developments on vulnerable bird populations in our area. This has been circulated in draft for comment by a number of external nature conservation bodies, including Natural England, and their response has been excellent. The list is soon to be circulated to

relevant organisations to assist in making objecting decisions about our local environment.

Guidelines for Wildlife Photographers

Due to the growing number of new amateur bird photographers in our area, the Conservation Sub-Committee has developed some guidelines for responsible photography in association with RSPB and TVWT. It is recognised that there is a significant number of long-standing, experienced amateur bird photographers in our region who are fully aware of their legal and moral obligations when pursuing their photography and it is hoped that they will help those who are still gaining knowledge, fieldcraft and experience.

The guidelines are intended to provide advice for new and aspiring photographers and a guide to good practice to ensure that the photographer stays within the law. Some members have reported a growing number of incidents involving photographers in recent years, including disturbance of Schedule 1 breeding species, chasing or harassing birds and damage to habitat. The guidelines are in no way intended to be dictatorial or to stifle photographers' enjoyment but merely to provide some legal and moral guidelines that should underpin all responsible bird photography. They fall under four main headings, viz. :

1. *The welfare of wildlife is more important than getting closer for a photograph*
2. *Preserve and respect habitat*
3. *The experience of others should be considered at all times*
4. *Remember your legal obligations*

The first draft document has been commented on by a number of our leading Cleveland bird photographers and virtually all fully endorsed the Guidelines, subject to a few minor amendments, which have now been made. The final draft will shortly be published on the TBC's and TVWT's websites.

North East Cetacean Project

Through cetacean enthusiast Chris Bielby, the Club has been approached by Duncan Fyfe of Orca, who is looking to expand cetacean surveys into North East England. Orca is seeking volunteers to conduct surveys from charter boats. The Conservation Sub-Committee agreed unanimously that this would be an excellent 'offshoot' of TBC's work and fed back our positive response to Duncan Fyfe. Members will be kept informed of future developments, including a possible request for volunteers.

HOUSE MARTIN SURVEY



Martins collecting mud for nests

The House Martin, though a widespread species, is amber listed in the birds of conservation concern. This designation means the UK population has fallen by between 25% and 50%. Population declines are also widespread in continental Europe. With this background, the TBC Conservation Sub-committee has chosen this species as the subject for a breeding season survey in 2012. The results will be compared with those from the Club's 1999-2006 Cleveland breeding bird survey to detect any changes in the Cleveland population.

Apart from birds that nest on the cliffs near Saltburn, House Martins make their distinctive nests under the eaves of houses (the clue's in the name!) and other buildings, usually in colonies. This makes it easy to survey breeding birds and it is hoped that people with little or no previous experience will join in with the old hands.

'The Breeding Birds of Cleveland' shows that martins were nesting in 93 tetrads and it would be ideal if these tetrads were surveyed again. Observations of new colonies elsewhere would also be valuable. In view of this, there are various ways of contributing to the survey:

- 'Adopt a tetrad'. A tetrad is a 2km x 2km square, and if you have no previous experience it might seem daunting, but don't forget it's only the built-up areas that need investigating. Tetrads that consist mostly of open countryside will not involve too much effort. Those in towns are a different matter, but even these can be covered by half a dozen or so carefully planned walks or cycle rides. Unlike last year's Rookery survey, there are three months available to complete the coverage, so there's no hurry!
- 'Share a tetrad'. An easier option if the tetrad can be divided between surveyors.

- 'Casual records'. Record any nests you come across. This is useful, especially if it locates new colonies in previously unoccupied tetrads.

Nests should be complete, or almost complete, by the end of May so surveys can be done from June to the end of August. Instructions, survey sheets and a list of available tetrads will be available shortly for downloading from the Club Announcements section of the website Forum. Alternatively, you can get in touch with me using the details below.

Eric James

7 Hilderthorpe
Nunthorpe
Middlesbrough
TS7 0PT

Tel : 01642 310103

Email : tbc.projects@hotmail.co.uk



Nest building at Saltburn

EARLY HISTORY OF THE CLUB

John Fletcher, the Club Archivist, describes some new information that has come to light about the Club's history.

IMPORTANT HISTORICAL DOCUMENT FOUND

The Teesmouth Bird Report started as a monthly report in September 1958. The report of bird sightings was followed by a short list of sites, with the abbreviations used for them, and a list of observers whose initials were used in the report. This format continued up to the end of 1960. From January 1961, the report contained only the bird sightings since a list of 19 sites, with abbreviations, and a list of 70 observers had previously been circulated.

Long-standing member, Dave Simpson, has found the document on notes for observers, together with two appendices giving the lists of sites and observers to be used in 1961. These two appendices, given below, are an important

addition to the Teesmouth Bird Reports for 1958 to 1973, which have been issued on a CD.

Appendix (1): Abbreviations used in the T.B.R.

B.P.	: Billingham Pond
C.D.	: Crimdon Dene
C.R.	: Crookfoot Reservoir
D.P.	: Dorman's Pool
F.L.	: Fishburn Lake
G.C.	: Greatham Creek
H.	: Hartlepool
H.B.	: Hurworth Burn Reservoir
L.B.	: Lockwood Beck Reservoir
N.G.	: North Gare
R.	: Redcar
R.P.	: Reclamation Pond
S.C.	: Seaton Carew
S.D.	: Scaling Dam
S.P.	: Saltholme Pool
S.S.	: Seaton Snook
T.S.F.	: Tursdale Sewage Farm
Z.W.P.	: Zinc Works Pool

Appendix (2): Observers whose initials may be used in the T.B.R. (with apologies for omissions):

M. Allison, W. Anderton, J.S. Bailey, K. Baldridge, A. Barnard, D.G. Bell, C. Bielby, T. Bowbeer, E.G. Brown, V.F. Brown, B.J. Coates, G. Coates, N. Charlton, J. Coles, J.G. Cook, Mrs. A.L. Cooper, A.P. Davis, P. Dent, Mrs. D.L. Duckworth, J. Dunett (*sic*), P. Evans, F.G. Grey, P. Harland (PH), P. Hogarth (PHO), P.L. Hogg, J.V. Henderson, J. Ingram, S.B.C. Jones, D. Laing, I.C. Lawrence, R.J. Lightfoot, J. Lumby, R.T. McAndrew, I. McKinlay, R.A. McKinlay, J.S. McIntyre, J.S.C. Morris, P. New, J.C. Nicholson, M. Nicholson, R. Newson, R.M. Palmer, M. Passman, Mrs. I. Parker, K. Patterson, G. Proctor, P. Ramsden (P.Ra), P. Reid (P.R.), H.P.K. Robinson, M.G. Robinson, W.K. Robinson, D.R. Seaward, Mrs. P. Seaward, E. Shearer, A. Siddle, M.K. Sidgwick, K. Smith, J. Sprat, P.J. Stead, I.F. Stewart, J.D. Summers-Smith, A.C. Taylor, G.T. Tinkler, B. Tucker, G. Tuffnell, A. Vittery, A.J. Vittery, Miss R. Ward, T. Winter and F. Wigglesworth.

N.B: Please keep the above key to abbreviations and observers, as no key will be provided in future issues of the Report.

Thirty people were listed in "*Birdwatchers of Teesmouth 1600 to 1960*" as having attended the founding meeting at the Dorman Museum in November 1960, or were members of the "*Hartlepool Bird Club*". That list was based on the memories of some of the people who attended that meeting. But clearly, Appendix (2) above gives a much fuller picture of the birdwatching

community on Teesside in 1960, although not all of those listed became members of the Teesmouth Bird Club.

In the May 1960 Bird Report it was announced that a Committee had been formed to consider unusual records. Dave's document states that the Records Sub-Committee, consisting of D.G. Bell (Recorder), B.J. Coates, D.R. Seaward, P.J. Stead and I.F. Stewart was elected by the Committee of the Teesmouth Bird Club. This presumably happened at the first meeting of the Committee of the Club.

Apart from Dave's document, the only other documents from the 1960 to 1962 period is the application form for membership and the Treasurer's Statement of Receipts and Payments for 1961. John Fletcher, the newly-appointed Club Archivist, would be grateful if members disposing of any Club materials for 1960 to 1980 would pass them to him. In particular John would like to obtain copies of the Annual Reports for the first twelve years and Newsletters Numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 to 22 and 29, 30 and 31.

HISTORICAL SNIPPET

As a result of new information from David Laing and Denis Summers-Smith it is now possible to record details of the first two meetings of the Teesmouth Bird Club. The first meeting was held at the Billingham Technical College in January 1961. The speaker was Ralph Chislett, who compiled the ornithological reports for the whole of Yorkshire, which were published by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union.

The speaker for the second meeting in February 1960 was Ken Williamson. He had been appointed as the first Director-cum-Warden of the observatory at Fair Isle, where he introduced more rigorous recording of biometric details by ringers. He went on to become Migration Officer of the BTO and then took over the Common Birds Census. On his visit to Teesside he stayed with Denis Summers-Smith and was intrigued by the observation of a Ring Ouzel nesting in a pine tree. It had been discovered by TBC founder member, Margaret Summers-Smith, during the survey of her regular CBC patch in Guisborough Forest. Ken Williamson was able to confirm the Ring Ouzel nesting site.

Note: It has been previously stated that early meetings of the Club were held at the Billingham Community Centre. Bert Mitchell has unearthed Newsletter No. 11 for April 1965. That announces a talk by J.C. Nicholson on "*Problems of Bird Protection in Cyprus*" to be held in the Science Lecture Theatre, Billingham Technical College.

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

THE CLUB COMMITTEE

Alistair McLee *Chairman*
Dave Nelson *Vice-chairman*
Chris Sharp *Hon Secretary*
Mark Askew *Hon Treasurer*
John Fletcher *Ordinary Member appointed 2008*
John Crussell *Ordinary Member appointed 2009*
Sylvia Brennan *Ordinary Member appointed 2009*
Neil Lay *Ordinary Member appointed 2010*
Colin Walker *Ordinary Member appointed 2011*

RECORDS SUB-COMMITTEE

Tom Francis *Chairman*
Chris Brown
Stewart Hinley
Graeme Joynt
Graham Megson
Mark Rowbottom
Eric James
Ian Foster
Chris Sharp
Chris Bell

MARKETING & MEMBERSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE

Chris Sharp *Chairman*
John Fletcher
Eric James
Julie Mason
Russell McAndrew
Ted Parker
Dave Nelson
Pat Brunt

CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Ted Parker *Chairman*
Alistair McLee
Graham Megson
Vic Fairbrother
Alan Snape
Sue Antrobus
Toby Collett

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2011



The purpose of a chairman's report for any charity is to provide members with a brief synopsis of the year's activities and to demonstrate that the charities objectives have been broadly achieved. (*For details of the Club's objectives, see the Forum on the Club's web site*)

Regular activities

We have held eight well attended meetings (average 77 members, guests and visitors), excluding this AGM, in the newly refurbished lecture room at Stockton Library and produced three newsletters over the period. Our Annual Bird Report was once again both informative and superbly endowed with topical bird pictures.

We have run two, well supported bus trips outside our area to Leighton Moss and north Northumberland as well as a variety of local birding walks to good bird watching sites in our immediate area. New members have availed themselves of our personalised tours to become familiarised with bird hot spots in the county. For staff of Huntsman Tioxide, Club's volunteers have led monthly birding parties on their works land at Greenabella.

Projects

The Phil Stead Hide project can now be said to have been finally completed with the formal opening in June by members of Phil's family – sadly his widow Anne, could not be with us as she had died suddenly in April, and so her daughter performed the ceremony.

"Bird Watchers of Teesmouth 1600 – 1960" continues to sell steadily and "The Breeding Birds of Cleveland" is all but sold out with only a handful of copies retained for new members.

A survey of rookeries, stemming from the breeding atlas, has been carried out by volunteers and the interesting data published in the annual report.

The progress towards a bespoke seabird observatory at the Heugh Headland continues. A design, based on birders' requirements, has been specified; architectural plans and formalised submission is presently before the planning office of Hartlepool Borough Council and can be anticipated to be considered at their April meeting.

Online entry of bird records is now operating and the new computer system can be interrogated to provide data which would previously require much tedious effort. Entry of historic records onto the database remains a great task and volunteers for inputting are now eagerly sought.

Sales

This diverse activity continues with items of Club clothing, prints, back numbers of Annual Reports, our own publications of book titles, and bird population information to consultants working for local developers.

Conservation Matters

Much of the Club's conservation activity this year has been directed towards comments on a host of planning and development proposals which had the potential to impact on birds and their habitat. The list is long, but can be categorised thus : developments at the Rec. Pond; wind farms; modifications to existing industrial sites; pipelines and power lines; residential and commercial green field building; flood alleviation schemes; local authority habitat enhancement projects.

Another aspect of the Club's conservation involvement has been liaison with a broad spectrum of local and national bodies – Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, INCA, Tees Ringing Group, Natural England, RSPB, Local Biodiversity Action Group, Natural England and local authority ecology officers.

Thank you

I now have the pleasant task of saying a huge thanks to all who have helped and supported both the Club and me : individual volunteering members, my three most able sub-committees and my fellow trustees. This is my last year as Chairman and Dave Nelson, current Vice-chairman, is stepping up to the mark and I am sure you all will give him the same backing as you have given me. I shall not vanish totally as I will be serving as Dave's Vice-chairman for this next year, but I shall be seeking a replacement for my post of Vice-chairman.

Alistair McLee *TBC Chairman*

April 2012

TREASURER'S REPORT 2011

The most significant item this year was the long awaited completion of the Phil Stead hide at Saltholme RSPB. While quality doesn't come cheap, the cost of this was substantially offset by the funding from landfill tax by Impetus and the hide will be a fitting long term asset, helping to raise the profile of the Club. The overall excess expenditure of £11000 in 2011 was more than accounted for by the Club funds contribution to this project.

General running costs were unexceptional and comfortably covered by income from subscriptions and associated gift aid. There was a healthy income from publications, especially the Birdwatchers of Teesside published in 2010.

With club outings our aim is to break even but they continue to be well supported and make a slight profit.

The Club contributed £300 to replace equipment for the Tees Ringing Group. One suspects with the rate development of technology and reduction in costs that the next donation will be towards electronic tracking equipment!

With the ongoing healthy state of accounts, the Committee do not propose any changes to subscription rates.

Mark Askew

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

As can be seen from the table, the membership numbers continue to increase each year. It is amazing to think that the membership has risen by over 200 in the past five years.

As a Club we have managed to keep the subscriptions at a relatively low level and I am certain that in these austere times this is one of the reasons behind the Club's success. In addition the many hours of free time given by certain members are also a factor. Both Dave Nelson and John Fletcher have shown many new members the main bird watching sites in Cleveland and I am sure their efforts are much appreciated. In addition, Eric James has done a great job with the newsletter and the website manager Jamie Duffie has also overseen a website that gains praise from everyone who logs on. The hard work put in by the Records Sub-committee in producing a bird report to be proud of cannot also be understated. Particular mention must be made of the umpteen hours our recorder Tom Francis puts in. From the sorting of records, the inputting of data and the chasing up of descriptions, Tom works tirelessly and together with the rest of the sub-committee always get the bird report published in the autumn months.

Special thanks must also go to Alistair, who is retiring as Chairman after three years at the helm. Ali has overseen the construction of the Phil Stead hide and together with Dave Nelson has taken the Hartlepool Observatory project to a position where planning permission will be sought in the next few weeks.

Chris Sharp *Hon. Secretary*

LOCAL OUTINGS - REPORTS

We are grateful for the time members give up to lead local outings for the benefit of our members. We are always looking for new leaders, so if you have an area you particularly like and feel inclined to show this to others, please contact Julie Mason. You don't need to be an expert to lead an outing!

GREATHAM CREEK

Sunday 11th December 2011

About 12 members met in the Teesmouth National Nature Reserve Car Park at Cowpen Marsh. It was good to meet several new members as we walked down the path towards to the Seal Sands hide. Despite the chilly conditions, members were rewarded with good views of a Black-necked Grebe swimming in Greatham Creek. There was also a Little Grebe present so we could compare the size and characteristics of both birds. Once in the Seal Sands hide, we spotted a flock of approximately 30 Ringed Plovers feeding alongside the regular waders such as Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Dunlin and Knot. In the water channel, both male and female Red-breasted Mergansers were fishing. After spending some time in the Seal Sands hide the group decided to walk along to the Long Drag hide to show the new members. As we walked along the path a Peregrine flew low over our heads and eventually perched on one of the

Year	Total	Full	Family	Junior	S.C.	Life	Hon
2001	231	120	67	-	24	14	6
2002	254	130	79	-	25	14	6
2003	259	135	77	-	27	14	6
2004	270	132	78	-	40	14	6
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

tall towers. Despite perching high up the tower, we still got good views through our telescopes. We returned to the car park to conclude a very enjoyable morning.

Julie Mason

HARTLEPOOL HEADLAND

Saturday 28th January 2012

About 30 members met by the Heugh Gun Battery on a cold but fairly calm morning. We initially walked around the sea front to Hartlepool Fish Quay. As usual, on the rocks between the two piers, an adult Mediterranean Gull was present. In fact we saw two, one bird having much more black about the head. We were hoping for divers and grebes in the harbour area and were not disappointed. Only the commoner species were found, with several Red-throated Divers and a single Great Crested Grebe. A fine first-winter Glaucous Gull was on the Fish Quay roof but unfortunately there was no sign of the Iceland Gull that had been seen earlier in the morning. We then retraced our steps and headed north towards Parton Rocks. The winter has been poor for the numbers of sea duck off Hartlepool and we only found a few Common Scoters and Eiders. The close in rocks however provided a nice selection of the common waders, including Purple Sandpiper, Turnstone and Knot. As a nice end to the morning, a few of us drove around to Newburn where the wintering Black Redstart gave tremendous views on the rock armour.

Chris Sharp

COWPEN BEWLEY WOODLAND PARK

Thursday 16th February 2012



The Mound at the Park

Ian Forrest

A nice dry and not too cold, for February, day this year saw 32 people turn up for this year's walk. The feeders had the usual Tree Sparrows, Robin, Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Yellowhammer and tits and the crow sat on someone's car. We slowly set off

towards the lake, with several stops to chat about different paths and places to see birds throughout the year. Lots of duck were on the water, with several Tufted Ducks, Gadwall and Pochards, and the female Smew was soon found: 'scopes gave everyone a good look. One of our sharp-eyed group found a Kingfisher sitting in a tree at the far side and 'scopes were moved onto this before it flew off. The walk up the stream side produced very little bird wise except for a Woodcock fly through, which was only seen by a couple of people. When we reached the cycle track, a scan of the fields produced a lovely pale-fronted Common Buzzard sitting on a post, unfortunately too far to photograph but it was still sitting there when we left. We walked back along the cycle track, with a diversion onto the eastern part of the Reserve showing people another route to follow and returned to our cars. All in all, we had a good day with some nice birds.

Dave Nelson

LOCAL OUTINGS – MAY TO AUGUST

BOWESFIELD MARSH

Sunday 20th May 2012

Join Julie Mason for a walk around Bowesfield Marsh, Stockton to look for migrants. Meet in the reserve car park near Archer's Law offices at 10am.

Leader Julie Mason, Tel 07789 731429

June 2012 – To be confirmed. Check website for information.

SEATON SNOOK

Saturday 28th July 2012

Join **Graham Joynt** for a walk at Seaton Snook looking at shorebirds. Meet at the end of the Zinc Works Road at 12.30 pm

HARTLEPOOL HEADLAND SEAWATCH

Saturday 25th August 2012

Join **Ted Parker, Chris Sharp** and **Don Page** for a morning seawatching from the Headland. Meet near the Heugh Battery at 9.30 am

TBC COACH TRIPS - REPORTS

LEIGHTON MOSS – 23rd October 2011

*Junior Member, **Harry Murphy**, reviews the successful members' day trip to the RSPB's Leighton Moss reserve, Lancashire.*

After Pallid Harrier and Glossy Ibis turning up in our local area the week before, a full bus of brave

members left the east coast on a clear morning for a good day's bird watching at RSPB Leighton Moss, near Morecambe Bay in Lancashire.

On arrival at the reserve, most were dropped off at the Visitor Centre, while several others stayed on the bus for the short ride up to the Eric Morecambe Complex. At the Eric Morecambe hides a good variety of waders were seen, such as Greenshank, Black tailed Godwit, and Curlew. Other birds, like Peregrine and Little Egrets, were also seen. Members' luck varied on the main reserve, with some treated to fine views of a secretive Bittern flying over the reeds, while others had fantastic views of Bearded Tit on the grit trays, which are put out especially for them. Although the local otters proved very elusive when we were there, the rutting Red Deer did not disappoint. Other birds, like Redwing, Fieldfare and Long-tailed Tit were abundant and the feeders held Marsh Tit, Nuthatch, Brambling and Bullfinch. The day finished off with a superb, soaring Marsh Harrier high over the reed beds as the bus left the reserve.



Red Deer



Nuthatch



Brambling

NORTHUMBERLAND - 12th FEBRUARY 2012

*The main events of this highly successful and enjoyable visit by Club members to the ever popular Northumberland are highlighted by one of the co-leaders, **Chris Bielby**. The day's tally of 83 species included some excellent birds.*

Thirty-one intrepid birders boarded the little white bus and headed north, last year's veterans armed with multiple layers of super waterproof gear in the hope that they wouldn't be needed!

The skies brightened as we approached Lindisfarne after an uneventful journey, with little to record apart from a few loafing Common Buzzards by the A1. We met Graham Bell at the car park by the causeway and crossed over to the Island with our honorary escort on board and soon parked up by the village.

Our first views across the Lough revealed some close Dark-bellied Brent Geese with odd birds of the Pale-bellied race in the field with Curlews and Lapwings, and Teal, Mallard, Wigeon and Shoveler feeding by the water's edge. As it was such a nice morning, Graham suggested we walk along Straight Lonnen and across to the hide at the Lough. A smart Redwing perched on top of one of the hawthorns, while across the field to our left seven Roe Deer grazed placidly in the set-aside on the near skyline and a superb Peregrine sat on a stone wall, probably digesting its last meal judging by the size of its crop! Further back, a male Stonechat perched on a fence, occasionally dropping down into the long grass and as we continued along the lane a male Merlin perched on a gate post, soon flying towards the set-aside in the search for prey.

We turned east towards the dunes with still no sign of the Short-eared Owls which had been seen regularly on previous days but the Stonechat gave better views, as did the Peregrine, still ruminating on the wall. We continued south towards the Lough and then paused to scrutinise the wildfowl on the pool. Brent Geese were conspicuous, as were Shelduck, Shoveler, Mallard and Teal, with a few Tufted Ducks and odd Grey Herons stalking the reeds. After careful scanning, the local celebrity, a drake Green-winged Teal was located, tucked into the reeds and not giving brilliant views but a new tick for many, just the same. As we approached the hide, a Water Rail was feeding a few metres away between us on the dyke and the reedbeds, giving superb photo opportunities for the many photographers on the trip.

A few Turnstones and Redshanks fed on the ledges and rock pools and an opportunistic Great Black-backed Gull dived for scraps from a feeding Grey Seal, which took exception to this

impudence and repeatedly lunged at the gull, attempting to bite it and chasing it about 20 metres until it took refuge on a high rock, well out of reach! The bow wave it created was reminiscent of that produced by the seal-hunting Orca on Attenborough's wonderful *'Frozen Planet'*.

We continued along the track below the magnificent castle where an early Fulmar was already on site, and along to the harbour. Once again, telescopes came into their own as many Eiders, Shags, Cormorants and a few Red-breasted Mergansers were spotted. Soon the dapper little Slavonian Grebes gave themselves up, together with Long-tailed Ducks, including one superb male that had attracted two admiring females. Odd Red-throated Divers also fed in the channel, while Oystercatchers, Curlews and a few Bar-tailed Godwits probed amongst the rocks and along the sandbanks below the "Needles" on Ross Back Sands. A quick view from the Heugh yielded closer views of 3 Slavonian Grebes and the Long-tailed Ducks as well as a single Red-necked Grebe, which unfortunately kept its distance.

We rendezvoused back at the coach for lunch then headed back across the causeway, dropping Graham off at his car, which we then followed towards Budle Bay, passing another Peregrine sitting in a field en route. A brief stop at the lay-by allowed distant views of Barnacle Geese and a loafing Buzzard, which gave us an identification challenge until it took flight. The mudflats of Budle Bay were packed with gulls and waders, including large flocks of Knot, with scattered Dunlin, Redshank, Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwits and a few Grey Plovers. The Barnacle Geese continued to wheel about in the distance and a single Peregrine perched on a log out in the bay. A small flock of scavenging crows included a single Hooded Crow, which was a surprise addition to our list. Many Common Gulls, with Herring and Black-headed Gulls, roosted on the mud or followed the feeding waders in the hope of stealing a worm. Shelduck sieved the mud by the channels and Wigeon grazed on the algae, as the Teal seemed more interested in each other with their tinkling calls a constant background. Some Pink-footed Geese soon added to our tally as we re-boarded our coach before heading to Stag Rocks at Bamburgh.

As we walked up to the lighthouse another Peregrine flew over, this time carrying prey inland before landing in a field to feed. On reaching the lighthouse, we again 'scoped the sea, immediately spotting a flock of Common Scoter, which had two Slavonian Grebes with it. Red-throated Divers flew by and a few were on the sea with odd Razorbills and Guillemots, and eventually

some distant Long-tailed Ducks were spotted. Turnstones and Purple Sandpipers fed on the wave-washed rocks below, as Eiders dived for mussels escorted by Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, which were waiting to mug the successful ducks. A few lines of Gannets flew north a long way out to sea but only a few auks were moving in the calm conditions. As we returned to the coach, a final check out to sea found a winter plumaged Black Guillemot which we thought would be our last tick of the day. However, as we drove to Seahouses, a Short-eared Owl flew alongside until startled by the shouts of delight from our coach.

The drive home was uneventful and thankfully, without the humidity of last year's journey, and everyone seemed to have enjoyed what was a brilliant team effort with many people finding and identifying birds totalling around 83 species, and willingly sharing their 'scopes and expertise. Our thanks to the driver and to Julie Mason for organising and spotting during the trip and to Graham Bell for once again being our expert ghillie!



Water Rail



A rather distant view of the ruminating Peregrine



Last look before leaving Bamburgh

FORTHCOMING TBC COACH TRIPS

COQUET ISLAND AND DRURIDGE BAY AREA *Sunday 17th June 2012*

This trip will be led by Julie Mason and Pat Brunt and members can expect to have good views of the beautiful Roseate Terns of Coquet Island. The day will include a 1 hr 15 minute boat trip around the island to enable good views and photographs of Common, Arctic, Sandwich and Roseate Terns. The island holds 90% of the UK population of Roseate Tern, along with thousands of Puffins and hundreds of Eider. We plan to visit several nature sites such as Cresswell Pond and Druridge Bay over the course of the day. Members who do not want to go on the boat will visit Hauxley Nature Reserve before rejoining the group. There are 24 places on the boat, booked on a first-come-first-served basis.

The 33-seater coach will collect members at the following pickup points:

Middlesbrough (Dorman's Museum) 08:00

Stockton High Street (ex-Swallow Hotel) 08:15

Hartlepool (M&S Car Park) 08:30

The cost will be £18.00 per person (including boat trip to Coquet) or £11.00 (land-based reserves only). A packed lunch will be required.

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

Address : 11 Redmire Road, Grangefield,
Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 4JR

Email : juliemason@redmire1.freeserve.co.uk

Tel. : 07789 731429

Please make cheques payable to 'Teessmouth Bird Club'.

NOTE: A seat on the coach and boat can only be guaranteed with a deposit.

DEADLINE FOR BOOKINGS IS 31st MAY 2012

Julie Mason

BRITISH BIRDWATCHING FAIR, RUTLAND WATER *Sunday 19th August 2012*

The Club is willing to arrange a 33-seater coach to take members to the Bird Fair on Sunday 19th August 2012. The cost for the coach will be £14 plus the entrance fee to the event, which has yet to be confirmed by organisers. Sunday 19th August is the last day of the fair and members of

the RSPB get in at a reduced adult rate and under 16s are free.

The 33-seater coach will collect members at the following pickup points:

Hartlepool (M&S Car Park) 08:00

Stockton High Street (ex-Swallow Hotel) 08:15

Middlesbrough (Dorman Museum) 08:30

Please can members send an email or telephone Julie Mason to provisionally book places on this trip, so that details can be finalised. Once entrance fees have been published all details will be publicised via the Club website and email.

Email: juliemason@redmire1.freeserve.co.uk

Tel. : 07789 731429

LAST DAY FOR PROVISIONAL BOOKINGS IS 30th JUNE 2012

Julie Mason

OSPREY TOWERS FOR SCALING DAM

Ted Parker outlines an exciting project for Scaling Dam over the next few years to try and attract breeding Ospreys to this scenic and well-stocked stretch of water.

Those who visit Scaling Dam regularly will be aware that in recent years there have been increased occurrences of Ospreys here and at Lockwood Beck during the summer months. Indeed, one, possibly two birds summered in this area in 2011.

With the spread of breeding Ospreys outwards from their core areas into other parts of the UK, notably England and Wales, there is a real possibility that suitable stretches of water in appropriate habitat will eventually be colonised. To this end, the Scaling Dam Wildlife Advisory Group (SDWAG), on which Martin Blick and I represent the Teessmouth Bird Club, erected an Osprey tower in 2006 on the sloping pasture behind the plantation on Bog House Lane. This was never meant to be its intended location and was to have been erected on the south side of the Reserve in a more remote and inaccessible area. Due to logistical problems by the contractor, however, a less desirable, alternative location had to be found.

The summering bird last year has given SDWAG renewed impetus to review the provision of Osprey towers, with the possibility of relocating the existing one and erecting a second, both in more appropriate locations. To this end, SDWAG has sought the advice of Roy Dennis, naturalist, broadcaster and of one of country's leading experts on Ospreys. He has been instrumental in

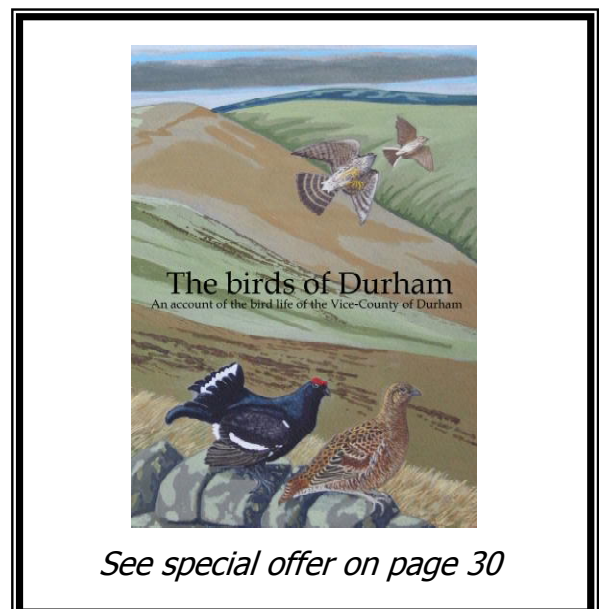
successfully enticing them to breed at a number of sites by the erection of strategically placed towers and has given SDAWG some extremely useful guidance on design and siting, which we will follow up.



A sequence showing how to erect an Osprey tower

It is hoped that this exciting project will roll out over the next couple of years and that, hopefully, within the next five years or so, we will have Ospreys breeding at Scaling Dam, which is ideal habitat for them. As Nothumbrian Water regularly stocks up the reservoir with many thousands of large fish, the birds won't have to travel far for a meal!

We will keep you informed.



LOCAL SITE – HUNT CLIFF AND WARSETT HILL

***Damian Money** describes an area on the south Cleveland coast that he has come to know so well over many years and to which he devotes much of his birding time. Saltburn Cliffs and adjacent coast have produced some outstanding birds, many of them found by Damian himself whilst bird watching and ringing here, including Cleveland's second only Red-flanked Bluetail.*

BACKGROUND

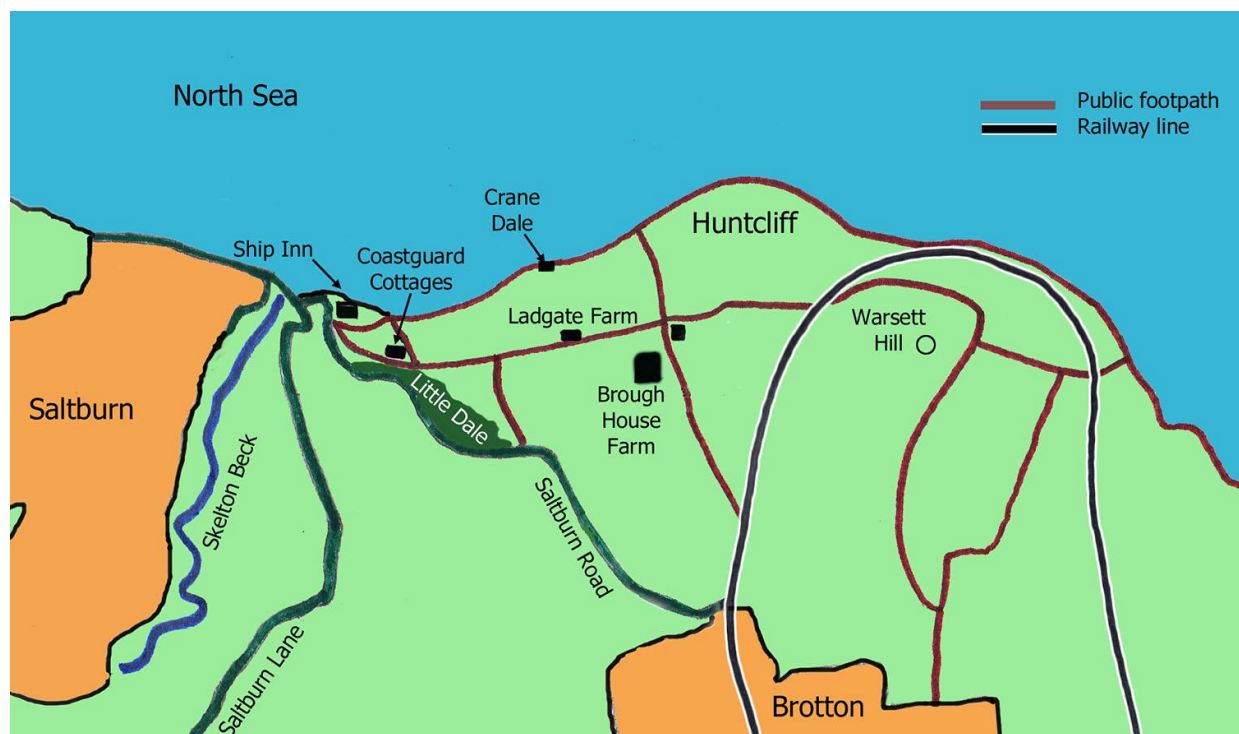
The landscape to the east of Saltburn is dominated by Hunt Cliff and Warsett Hill. The large sea cliffs at Hunt Cliff support good numbers of breeding seabirds, most notably Cormorants, Fulmars, Herring Gulls and Kittiwakes. The loud calls from the Kittiwake colony are synonymous with the summer months at Saltburn. The rocks below also hold a few pairs of Rock Pipits, an uncommon breeding bird in Cleveland. There is plenty to see throughout the year but being a coastal site it receives its fair share of migrant birds and if the conditions are right then many migrants can be seen here during the spring and autumn. The majority of the area is farmland, which hosts many associated species such as Grey and Red-legged Partridges, Skylarks, Tree Sparrows, Yellowhammers and Linnets. The 'jangly' song of the Corn Bunting was once a common sound in late spring; sadly, however, it is many years since one has held territory here. The Cleveland Way footpath runs the entire length of the site and as such offers access to most parts, as the map below shows, and many other public footpaths are available to search other areas but perhaps the best route is that

outlined below.

ACCESS, LOCATION AND STRATEGY

Starting at the base of the cliffs by the Ship Inn pub (do not park here as it's a private car park) you can either climb the steep steps up to the cliff top or walk up the path that runs behind the cliffs to the Coastguard Cottages. This path offers the best chance of seeing something, although the scrub is very thick in places. When approaching the cottages it is worth checking the gardens as they often hold migrant birds and Red-backed Shrike has been found here. The large and well-wooded ravine behind the cottages is called Little Dale and is a great place for finding something unusual. Although there is no access, part of it can be viewed from the footpath, though patience is the key here.

From Little Dale, follow the path to the left and down past the cottages, heading towards the sea to join up with the Cleveland Way footpath. Continue east along the cliffs towards the high point of Hunt Cliff, all the while checking the various scrubby areas on the under-cliff. Approximately half a mile east of the Coastguard Cottages you will come to a small patch of scrub and trees situated in a dip in the cliff to the left of the path: this is Crane Dale. I have planted many trees here over the years and the area has attracted a considerable number of rare species. If the tide is low then the exposed rocks at the base of Hunt Cliff can be viewed from here and good numbers of waders, terns and gulls can be present. The path climbs steadily from here and continues up to Hunt Cliff.





Cliff top from the Ship Inn



Crane Dale



Hunt Cliff and Warsett Hill



Hunt Cliff bushes – site of the Red-flanked Bluetail

On reaching the highest point of the cliff there is a short stretch of mainly hawthorn hedging at the site of a former Roman signal station (long since lost to the sea). This area is, unfortunately, prone to much disturbance from walkers, being so close to the Cleveland Way but is always worth a check, which can be rewarding.

Continuing down the coast, the next area is the scrub and gorse along the railway line at the base of Warsett Hill. Take care crossing the railway by the sculptures and walk up the bank and over the fence to view. Check the upper hill slopes, if you have the energy!

After searching Warsett Hill, you can take the footpath back down towards Saltburn. Cross the railway line and head towards Brough House Farm, checking the fields either side of the path, particularly in autumn and winter. The gardens of the farm contain some mature trees and can be viewed distantly from the footpaths and should be thoroughly checked. Please respect the privacy of the owners, however, and stay on the public rights of way.

Heading further down the path will take you past Ladgate Farm and on towards the Coastguard Cottages and back to the start of the walk.



Hunt Cliff sign



Warsett Hill



Coastguard Cottages

BIRDS

At Little Dale Pallas's and Yellow-browed Warblers have turned up in recent years, as has Red-breasted Flycatcher and at times it can be teeming with common migrants, such as Redwings and Goldcrests. As this is the largest wooded area on the patch it hosts a number of birds not usually seen elsewhere on the route, such as Great Spotted Woodpecker, Jay, Marsh Tit and Treecreeper. Roe deer are also a frequent sight here. A glance over the cliff edge where you join the Cleveland Way footpath will often reveal a Stonechat, as a pair is often present in this area throughout the year.

The scrubby under-cliff can be viewed from the Cleveland Way footpath up to the high point of Hunt Cliff. Unusual species seen here have included Ring Ouzel, Richard's Pipit and Yellow-browed Warbler. Whitethroat is a common breeder in this location and in most scrubby areas in the wider area. During June and July the cliff-top here is sometimes swarming with Narrow-bordered Five-spot and Six-spot Burnet Moths. Seawatching in autumn from any part of this stretch can produce Manx and Sooty Shearwaters, several of the rarer divers and grebes and plenty of the commoner seabirds, such as Gannets, terns and gulls. Grey Seal is frequent and Harbour Porpoise and Minke Whale have also been recorded. This is also, perhaps, the best part of the cliffs for observing passing migrant birds, particularly in spring, when hirundines, pipits, wagtails and finches pass by, sometimes in large numbers.

Crane Dale merits special attention as it has attracted many rarer species, such as Long-eared Owl, Wryneck, Black Redstart, Water Rail, Red-backed Shrike, Yellow-browed Warbler and best of all, a very smart, male Siberian Stonechat in October 1999. If the tide is low, check the exposed beach area: Iceland and Glaucous Gulls are sometimes seen here during the winter months but, sadly, the small wintering flock of Goldeneye that was often present here has now gone following the removal of the sewage outfall pipe. As the path rises up to Hunt Cliff from Crane Dale, scan the adjacent fields, which regularly hold good numbers of Wheatears in spring, with the occasional flock of Snow Buntings and Lapland Buntings in late autumn/winter. Skylark and Meadow Pipit are the most numerous breeding birds here, whilst passing migrants such as Shore Lark and Honey and Rough-legged Buzzards have also been seen on this part.

On reaching the highest point of the cliff, check the short length of hawthorn hedge, as this has

produced dividends on a number of occasions, including Firecrest, Marsh, Yellow-browed and Barred Warblers, Hobby and more recently, Cleveland's second Red-flanked Bluetail in October 2010. Convolvulus and Hummingbird Hawk-Moths have also been noted here, proving that it's not just migrant birds that are attracted to this area. Further along the path, after crossing the railway by the sculptures, check the scrub below Warsett Hill. This is hard to work in places but the rewards can sometimes be worth it, as Long-eared and Short-eared Owls, Firecrest, Black Redstart, Great Grey and Red-backed Shrikes, Richard's Pipit, Shore Lark and Barred and Yellow-browed Warblers have been located here. Warsett Hill itself should produce Stonechats, as it is the best breeding place on the site for this species, and for finding passage Ring Ouzels in spring, although it is often necessary to climb the steep upper slopes for the latter. Raptors find this area very attractive and Honey and Common Buzzards, Marsh and Hen Harriers and several Hobbies have flown over here, as did the Sandhill Crane in September 2011. Clouded Yellow butterflies have been recorded on a couple of occasions, whilst other migrant Lepidoptera, such as Silver Y moths can be particularly numerous during good migration years. A small colony of Common Blues is spread along the railway line and Stoats and Weasels are often here too, no doubt attracted by the numerous rabbits.

After leaving Warsett Hill, follow the footpath down towards Saltburn, cross the railway and head towards Brough House Farm. Check the fields on either side of the path for thrushes and finches in autumn and winter. Brown Hare is frequent here throughout the year. The farm gardens can be viewed distantly from the footpaths and should be checked thoroughly as they have produced Great Grey Shrike and Yellow-browed Warbler, along with many common migrants. The immediate area is also home to Little Owl, Grey and Red-legged Partridges and Tree Sparrow.

My personal bird list for the area is 198 species, all recorded during my 21 years of visiting this site. If visiting please stick to the public rights of way and do not use any of the private roads to access parts of the site. This is not an easy patch to cover but the scenery and occasional good bird can sometimes make it worthwhile!

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Ted Parker continues his reminiscences from years gone by with an astonishing event that took place whilst he was holiday at Spurn Bird Observatory in 1968. Some will have heard this story before but for those who haven't, it epitomises those special moments that live long in a birder's memory.



The Point, Spurn



The Narrows

Thursday 22nd August 1968 will forever live in my memory for a number of reasons. Many birders have those special, never-to-be-repeated events that they replay over and over again in their minds and this date held one such event for me.

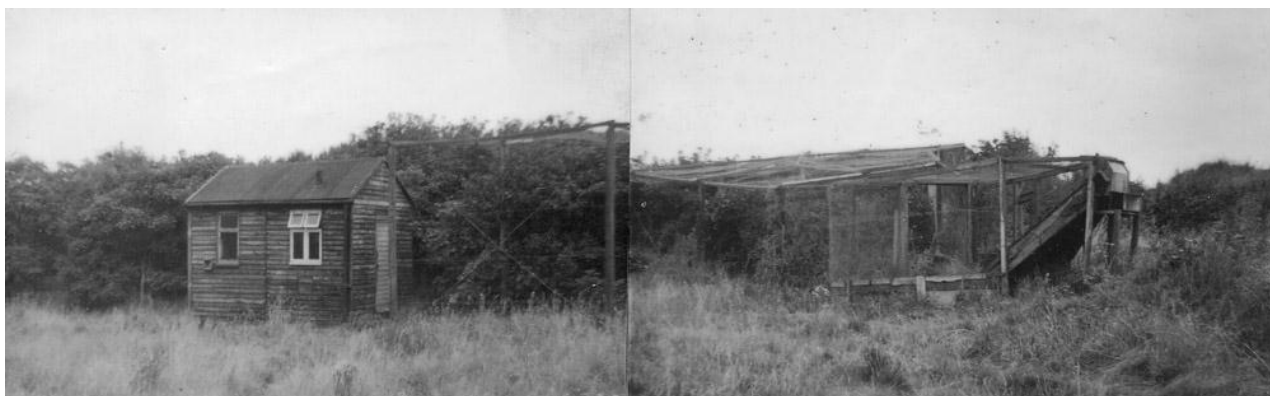
I was staying at Spurn Bird Observatory for two weeks with my then birding friends, Graham Ekins from Middlesbrough and Mike Marsden from Bridlington (whom I had first met several years earlier on a Young Ornithologists' Club holiday to

Northumberland). Graham and I both had Lambretta Li 150cc scooters, mine bedecked with a chrome backrest, wing mirrors, twin exhaust pipes and a front carrier. It was my pride and joy and we had made the journey down to Spurn on our two-wheeled transport on 17th August, with all our luggage and optical equipment strapped on the back. We had an uneventful stop at Scaling Dam, arriving at Spurn by mid-afternoon.

Our accommodation was in the then meagre dormitories in the converted wartime huts at The Warren, the 'HQ' of Spurn where most of the ringing takes place and where one of the main Heligoland traps was (and still is) located.

The first few days of the holiday began quietly, with the few highlights being a range of common migrants including Barn Owl, Cuckoo, Redstart, Black Redstart, four unseasonal Fieldfares, Garden Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat. Our stay was nearly curtailed when we received our marching orders from the long-time warden, Barry Spence, for being drunk and disorderly during the log call and resulting in Graham projectile vomiting from the top bunk of our dorm! In mitigation, we were young and carefree and I had just found out from a 'phone call home that I had passed all of my GCE O-levels, which I felt warranted a few celebratory beers! After a grovelling and sincere apology to Barry next morning, he allowed us to stay on condition of future our good behaviour!

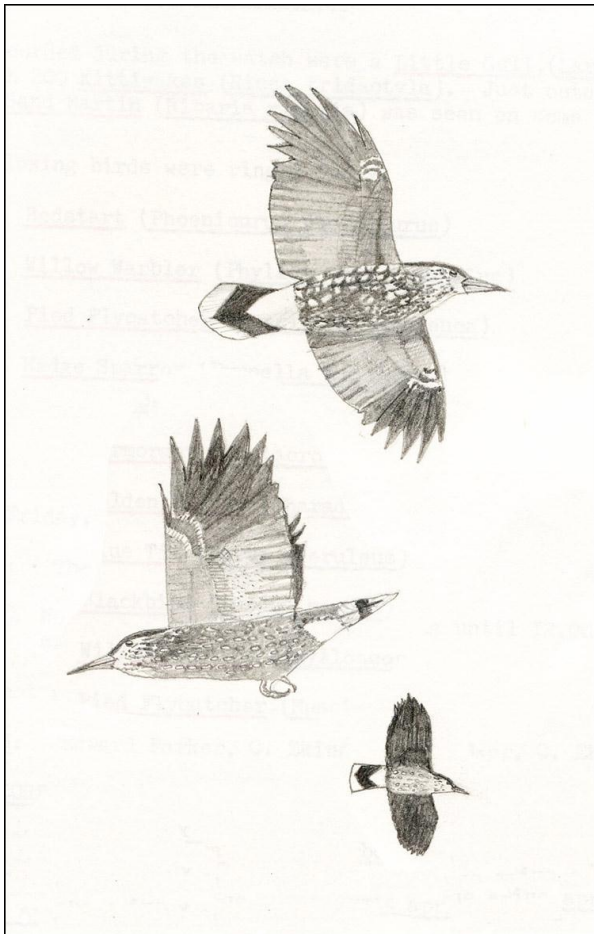
It's a good job our apology worked because all hell broke loose on 22nd August. The day dawned into a beautiful, warm, sunny and clear summer's morning and we were just rising to start another early round of the ringing sites. I was still in just my underpants when I heard a cry from outside: "*Nutcracker*". In disbelief, I grabbed my bins and ran outside and, after a quick scan, incredibly, there flying low towards me some distance away was indeed a Nutcracker! In a daze I jumped on my scooter (still in just my underpants!), kick started it and within seconds I



The Warren Heligoland Trap

was riding down Spurn Peninsula with the Jay-sized Nutcracker flapping its way towards the Point only 3 or 4 metres above my head! The views were absolutely fantastic and I was able to drool over its chocolate brown plumage liberally spotted with large, white spots; vivid white vent and under-tail coverts; white under-tail sporting a broad, black central band; its huge, long bill; and distinctive profile. Fantastic! I still believe I still hold the world record for seeing a Nutcracker dressed only in underpants whilst travelling, erratically I might add, at 30 mph on a motor scooter! What a sight I must have made! I followed the bird for about 2 kilometres and then lost it just before the Point, where it presumably continued south over the Humber. It was not seen again.

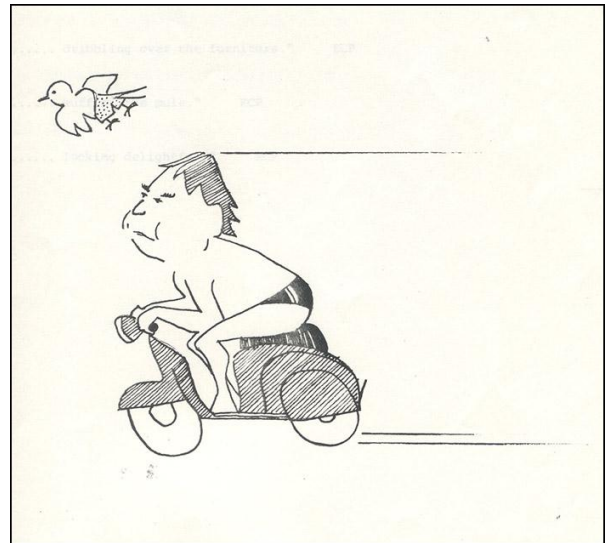
This bird, almost certainly of the northeast Russian/Siberian thin-billed race, *macrorhynchos*, was part of an 'irruption' of Nutcrackers into southern and eastern England during the late summer/early autumn period of 1968, where over 60 birds had been recorded. Such irruptions are normally triggered by poor pine seed crops in parts of their normal geographic range, with birds migrating westwards in the early autumn onwards into Central Europe.



Ted's sketches of the Nutcracker

The rest our two-week stay couldn't really match this but we did see some quality birds, including Wryneck and Barred, Subalpine and Greenish Warblers.

I think I've still got those underpants as a souvenir but after all the excitement that day, I'm not sure they're still white!



Ted, scooter & Nutcracker

John Elm

PROFILE – CHRIS BROWN

Ted Parker talked to Chris Brown, a long-standing Cleveland birder and experienced ringer, about his birding life. He is an active member of the Club and has sat on the Records Sub-Committee for many years. He writes the ringing section for the annual 'Cleveland Bird Report' and had a major input to the 'Breeding Birds of Cleveland', including professionally formatting the whole document to an extremely high standard.

Chris was born in Middlesbrough in 1953. He was married, now divorced, and has four children. He has been subsequently widowed following the tragic passing of his new partner, Sandy. He now lives in his beloved Hartlepool Headland, a place that he speaks about with passion and pride and says that he couldn't imagine living anywhere else. Chris was a graphic designer by profession but now largely devotes his working hours to gardening and sign erection, which he says he enjoys as it gets him out into the fresh air.

He has been birding for "30 something years" and has seen a very envious 338 species in Cleveland, which places him well up there in the top 25 of Cleveland Listers. His local patch is, needless to say, Hartlepool Headland, which lies on his doorstep and which he loves for the people, the architecture and the fact that "anything can turn up" (as 2011 proved). His favourite other Cleveland site is the Peninsula in the Tees Estuary, where he rings waders at night with other members of the Tees Ringing Group. He

particularly likes and peace and quiet of this site and the staggering display of the lights of industry: *"It's a very beautiful place"*.

Chris's optics are Leica 10 x 40 binoculars and a Kowa 'scope with a 20-60x zoom. He uses a Canon SLR digital camera but only for photographing birds in the hand when ringing. He acknowledges that there are so many high quality bird photographers in Cleveland nowadays that there is no point in trying to compete!

Like many 'profilers' that have gone before him, Chris's favourite book is the *'Collins Field Guide'*, because this is *"up to date"* and has excellent, life-like illustrations, rather than stylised plates. His other interest focuses entirely on ringing, which he has been doing since 1984. He holds a Schedule 1 Licence for certain species and is a ringing trainer, helping to train the next generation of local ringers. The most impressive birding sites Chris has ever visited are probably Bardsey Island, for its beauty, tranquillity and natural environment, and the west coast of Scotland (apart from the midges!). He admits that he has been to few places abroad and there is little anywhere in the world to compare with his much loved Hartlepool Headland!

Chris can't remember a specific best day's birding in Cleveland but mentions *"any large falls in October involving Pallas's Warblers"*. His best personal find locally has to be the incredible White-throated Robin on his home patch within a few metres of his front door in June 2011. This 'mega' rarity that no-one could have predicted would turn up in Cleveland resulted in a huge National 'twitch' and brought hundreds of birders to the Headland. His biggest birding

disappointment was missing two Slender-billed Gulls on a 'twitch' to Cley, Norfolk in May 1987 with Ted Parker: the birds had been present at dusk but were gone by dawn the following day when they arrived! This subsequently put Chris off long-distance twitching! On the other side of the coin, his most memorable birds were an American Redstart at Gibraltar Point in 1982 and a Needle-tailed Swift in Shetland in 1986. The former was particularly enjoyable because, although the bird had been present for some time, in the early 1980s when there were no Pagers or bird information services, Chris and his birding friends were unaware of the bird's presence and found it for themselves. When asked about his ambition bird, Chris said: *"I haven't got one"*. Similarly, he can't remember a specific most embarrassing moment as he has had *"too many to single one out"*!

Chris feels that things are getting better in modern day bird watching but he would like to see a reversal of the continuing loss of habitat and more people employed in nature conservation. During these times of economic hardship and major staff cutbacks being made by nature conservation organisations such as Natural England, he feels that these are *"false economies"* when compared with the huge amount of financial waste in Central Government generally. Chris feels that these cutbacks will adversely affect the environment in the coming years. Changes for the better he would like to see in the local environment include *"no new power station"*. He considers the proposed site to be completely inappropriate due to the proximity of Seaton Common SSSI and the possibility of flooding as a result of sea level rise and the serious problems that this would engender. He would also like to see less development on sites of nature conservation value generally.

When asked about his aspirations for the future, Chris said: *"to carry on ringing and I would like to go to America and Israel"*. We hope these ambitions come to fruition.



The White-throated Robin

Martyn Sidwell

WETLAND BIRD SURVEY TEESMOUTH - WINTER 2011/2012 SUMMARY

Coverage was perfect with all 132 sector counts undertaken over the five months (a new sector, Haverton South Reedbed, was added in February).

The only new WeBS seasonal records came from little grebe (56, November) and mute swan (73, November), though the latter equalled the 2007/2008 peak. Greylag goose put in a strong showing, with the 619 counted in January constituting our second best winter maximum ever. Recent cormorant declines in autumn were not evident in the colder months; indeed, the count of 237 in January was our best for eight winters.

Among the ducks, the shelduck peak (319, March) was comfortably our poorest ever, 171 birds short of last winter's disappointing tally. The mallard maximum was similarly dire (215, January). Wigeon returned a consistent if unremarkable series of counts, peaking with 1737 in February. Gadwall (177, November) fared rather better than last winter, but this was still a poor showing. Pintail (28, November) recorded the worst figures since 2001/2002, while tufted duck (151, November) were definitely below par following five consecutive winters of 200+ maxima. On a more positive note, the goldeneye (104, February) and red-breasted merganser (86, December) peaks were both above average.

Mild weather conditions in midwinter probably helped lapwing numbers (4941, January) to recover from last year's low point, while for knot (1573, February) this was no better than an average winter by modern standards. Sanderling managed one decent total (269, March), but the star performance amongst the waders undoubtedly came from bar-tailed godwit (211, March); our best seasonal figure since 2002/2003.

The dunlin peak (137, March) did not reflect a large yet short-lived cold weather influx of 1400 to Seal Sands in February. Black-tailed godwits (28, November) were surprisingly scarce, and this was another poor season for redshank (901, March). After a run of four-figure winter maxima, curlew now appear to be on a downward trend, with the 628 counted in November constituting our worst winter peak for 20 years. For turnstone (183, March), this was the poorest showing since 1993/1994.

Following this winter's series of counts, and measuring our five-year means of annual winter peaks against the criteria for international and national importance, the Tees and Hartlepool Bay

WeBS site remains of national importance for sanderling (gadwall having lost this status).

Mike Leahey

WeBS Local Organizer

March 2012



Bar-tailed Godwit, the star performer



'Knot' above average

WETLAND BIRD SURVEY TEESMOUTH - WINTER 2011/2012 SUMMARY

Species	November 6	December 4	January 8	February 19	March 11
Little Grebe	<u>56</u>	30	22	2	18
Great Crested Grebe	25	2	3	<u>39</u>	<u>39</u>
Cormorant	139	164	<u>237</u> *	82	177*
Mute Swan	<u>73</u>	46	46	23	26
Greylag Goose	583	222	<u>619</u>	265	206
Shelduck	285	308*	313*	282	<u>319</u> *
Wigeon	1464	1420	1409	<u>1737</u>	1381
Gadwall	<u>177</u> *	114	88	74	121
Teal	<u>926</u>	556	577	353	442
Mallard	137	150	<u>215</u>	105	167
Pintail	<u>28</u>	17	16	25	26
Shoveler	<u>171</u> *	142*	56	38	74
Pochard	42	58	67	78	<u>81</u>
Tufted Duck	<u>151</u>	107	82	116	145
Eider	8	0	<u>10</u>	1	8
Goldeneye	12	34	56	<u>104</u> *	66
Red-breasted Merganser	36	<u>86</u> **	55*	47*	66*
Coot	<u>676</u>	609	383	368	240
Oystercatcher	824	751	914	785	<u>1112</u>
Ringed Plover	11	8	<u>47</u>	24	23
Golden Plover	849	437	<u>1172</u>	56	32
Grey Plover	2	35	49	<u>110</u>	19
Lapwing	2155	3640*	<u>4941</u> *	1414	195
Knot	115	383	845	<u>1573</u>	1064
Sanderling	71	101*	78	160**	<u>269</u> **
Purple Sandpiper	7	12	0	<u>56</u>	25
Dunlin	30	55	56	69	<u>137</u>
Ruff	<u>5</u>	2	1	0	1
Snipe	<u>12</u>	1	1	4	0
Black-tailed Godwit	<u>28</u>	9	26	8	16
Bar-tailed Godwit	54	38	13	20	<u>211</u> *
Curlew	<u>628</u>	280	496	532	436
Redshank	748*	477	323	597	<u>901</u> *
Turnstone	<u>183</u>	86	115	110	153

* 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.



Durham Bird Club
Registered Charity No 515101

This ground-breaking publication is the definitive account of every species of bird that has been recorded in County Durham up until the end of 2011. It is the first full Avifauna to be published since 1951 and is packed with facts and figures about all 385 species recorded to date. With more than 600 pages of text and over 100 full colour photos it is an essential addition to the library of anyone with an interest in birds in North East England.

With a publication date scheduled for April 2012, and with a limited print run of 1200 copies, now is the time to order your copy of this eagerly awaited book. With a very reasonable price tag of just £30 (+ £5 postage and packing) it offers superb value for money, but there is a further saving and a reduced price (only £25 + £5 postage and packing) to members of the Durham Bird Club, Durham Upland Bird Study Group, Durham Wildlife Trust, Natural History Society of Northumbria and the Teesmouth Bird Club, all of whom contributed as partners to The Birds of Durham Heritage Project. It is envisaged that copies of the book will also be available to buy (post free) on a limited number of dates via Durham Bird Club, Durham Wildlife Trust, Natural History Society of Northumbria and Teesmouth Bird Club. (Please check with your organisation for full details of events)

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I enclose herewith cheque/P.O for £ made payable to The Durham Bird Club.

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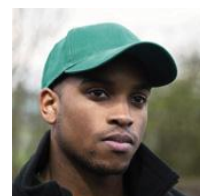
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Baseball Cap Green			£9.00



SIZING GUIDE

<u>Size</u>	<u>Chest</u>
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M	38-40"
L	42-44"
XL	46-48"
XXL	50-52"
XXXL	54-56"

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