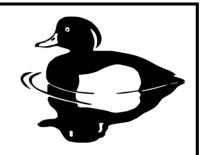
# BERKSHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

# **BOC Newsletter**

August 2020 No 82



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# Introduction

Iain Oldcorn bocmembershipsec@hotmail.co.uk

Welcome to our 82nd BOC Newsletter. Renton is able to update us on some of this year's breeding successes; later he is looking for assistance with our annual report. Member John Hard bemoans the overzealous tidying up approach of some Councils. reminisces nostalgically about three Autumn trips to Shetland and Andy completes his saga of the Lockdown Competition marathon. We can put you out of your misery about the puzzles in our last Newsletter including the Colour-coded birds. Ray shares a vision of our next Outdoor plans while Ken updates us on the Newbury scene and this edition's Gallery on the last page is devoted to some images of Ken's Newbury Peregrines.

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in articles in this Newsletter are those of their respective authors and are not necessarily representative of those of the BOC or of any of its Committee Members.

#### **Conservation Notes**

With the relaxation of lock down rules it has been possible to get out and get on with conservation activities, which, apart from me sitting at my desk to write reports and grant applications, are largely outdoors. And there is some good news to tell.



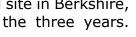
towns and

Peregrines are now well established in Berkshire. with territories in several successful

collaborations between conservationists and the owners of the buildings that these splendid birds occupy. In Bracknell, Robin Dryden has been looking after a pair which this year have raised two chicks. In Newbury, Ken and Sarah White have provided a daily photo diary of the Peregrine pair on the BT building that have successfully reared three young. The birds can now be seen all over Newbury and its environs. We hope next year there will be a camera on the nesting platform to monitor more closely their behaviour. Thanks to Robin (above) and Ken (two at left) for the photos.

Other raptor news: a pair of Goshawks bred successfully for the third successive year at an undisclosed site in Berkshire, producing a total of seven young over the three years.





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Although there have been a number of breeding attempts in Berkshire reported since the 1970s, this is the first known to have been successful.



The floods early in the year prevented Little Ringed Plover from occupying some of their regular sites, but as they dried, they provided opportunities for new breeding sites elsewhere. One ploughed field in West Berkshire that was flooded in March, as it dried, was occupied by two pairs of Little Ringed Plover which went on to nest. With the help of a grant from the BOC Conservation Fund, Debby Reynolds

and a colleague, negotiated compensation with the farmer to leave the land untouched until after the plover had finished breeding. At the end of June, it was great to hear that one brood of three chicks had fledged and a second brood was well on the way. Thanks also to Debby for the photos.



Lastly, although it was disappointing not to have been able to complete the installation of all our Swift boxes because of the lock down, it was good to see Swifts making use of some that SSE had put up for us in my road in Reading.

# **BOC Managing Editor**

Renton Righelato

We are seeking someone to help out with the Club's publications, a project manager for the annual bird report, and occasionally other material.

The Managing Editor coordinates the editing and publication process for the Club. Typically, the content is prepared in draft by others. For the annual report, the Recorder or a member of the Berkshire Records Committee prepares the systematic list and further articles and photos are sought from others with the help of the Editorial Board. The role is one of project management – coordination of the work of the authors, artists and publisher, it does not require specialist technical expertise.

Specific tasks for the Managing Editor are:

- Convening the Editorial Board (typically one or two meetings a year).
- Agreeing the publication programme with the content contributors and monitoring progress.
- Compiling the content and organising the final editing of the report.
- Liaising with suppliers of artwork (normally Robert Gillmor for the cover image and any advertisers).
- Liaising with publisher (Rob Still) on layout and printing.
- Developing ideas for other publications (optional).
- Reporting progress and agreeing timescales and costs with the BOC Committee.

The Managing Editor need not be a member of the BOC Committee, but would normally attend meetings dealing with publications issues. If you can help in this role, please contact Sally Wearing or Robert Godden.

This is a bit "tongue in cheek" but I hope that you follow my argument!

The closure of swimming pools meant that my target of qualifying for the Olympics had to be put on hold. Instead my exercise regime became many more regular walking expeditions with the associated opportunities for birding and keeping an eye on all things natural.

These excursions coincided with the last sightings of our winter visitors such as Redwings and Fieldfares. However, these were quickly replaced by the summer arrivals, initially Chiffchaffs, soon followed by other migrants in their bright yellow or orange plumage – the Council grounds maintenance employees. Where they spend the winter is unclear but they quickly arrive once the grass, flowers etc start to grow.

Armed with their equipment of strimmers, mowers, chainsaws etc, they set to work with gusto in their attempts to control Mother Nature. Quite why they do it has often puzzled me. I can understand that the Council (in my case Wokingham) can get complaints about the state of our green spaces – and I sometimes think that the residents will not be content until their patch of greenery resembles the Centre Court on the opening day of Wimbledon. I also appreciate the need to trim back growth for road safety reasons, or to provide access to other infrastructure.

BUT I do not understand the need to keep cutting back the herbage which, after all, supports much of the wildlife (insects etc), provides essential cover for fledglings and small mammals and which will with luck give a stunning display of wild flowers.

This was brought home to me when ambling along the Blackwater Valley near Bracknell Forest's Horseshoe Lake. In the middle of May, I met a very large blue tractor with a flail attachment – and it was attacking the nettles, brambles and other growth for about one to two metres along the edge of the path. The path was not overgrown nor obstructed; it was wide enough for the tractor so "social distancing" was not a problem; there appeared to be no logical reason for this other than "tidiness". And this was in a "Nature Reserve".

(Ed. I'm reminded of my time working in Texas; I quickly realised that there the term "nature reserve" has two meanings: one is that it's a place to preserve nature so that one can later come along and be certain that there's plenty to shoot, and the other is that it's a place to preserve nature, full stop.)

#### **Autumn Birding Trips to Shetland**

Robert Godden

As an alternative to an autumn trip to the Isles of Scilly, my son Nicholas and I decided to spend a fortnight in the Shetland Isles in autumn 2015. Shetland is well-known for attracting rare birds at migration times, but with a larger area at our disposal (Shetland occupies four OS Landranger maps) and fewer birdwatchers, Shetland appeared to offer us a better chance of finding our own rarities compared to the Isles of Scilly. The success we enjoyed in 2015 led us to return to Shetland in 2016 and 2017. We were joined on these visits by various friends, including Andy Tomczynski and Mike Taylor from the BOC.

So, while a trip to the Isles of Scilly can be decided almost on a whim, a trip to Shetland requires a considerable amount of planning: where to stay, how to travel there, whether to take a car over or hire a car, the possible impact of weather on travel plans, the cost etc. We flew from Heathrow, so with an early departure and a good connection in mainland Scotland we could arrive at Sumburgh Airport at lunchtime. Each year we spent the first week of the stay in the iconic Sumburgh Lighthouse cottage – this offered us dramatic views of the south Shetland coastline and to Fair Isle on the horizon, cosy accommodation as well as good habitat for birding on our doorstep and proximity to other good sites such as Quendale and the Pool of Virkie. The second week was spent in different locations further north.



Sumbrugh Head with the lighthouse complex

Whereas the auks, shearwaters and petrels have long left their breeding sites, some special birds (for a Berkshire birder) remain into the autumn. These include Fulmar and Great Skua which cruise along cliff tops, Black Guillemots, Eiders and Red-breasted Mergansers in the bays and Twite around the crofts. Expected migrants include a good variety of waders, passerines such as Common Redstart, Wheatear and Spotted Flycatcher, while later in the autumn parties of Barnacle Geese can be seen approaching low over the sea and landing on some remote headland. These birds are all fairly obvious but to find some of the rarer species that the Shetland Islands is renowned for can require some persistence, patience and luck.

A good starting point is to check out any trees and bushes. Shetland is far from treeless - the stone walls of gardens provide shelter for sycamores, while a stream running through a gully will be bordered with Sallow and these offer food and shelter for migrant passerines. Here we frequently encountered Yellow-browed Warblers, often far outnumbering the so-called commoner species; in 2015 there was a large arrival on Shetland shortly after ours and their distinctive calls could be heard from every patch of suitable habitat, or they would be flitting ahead of us through the nettles as we walked a field margin. After a few days their numbers dropped but I reckon I saw at least 80 of these delightful birds on that visit.

Over the three years we saw many scarce and rare birds, for example: Rustic Bunting, Arctic & Greenish Warblers, Swainson's Thrush, Red-flanked Bluetails, Short-toed Lark, Shrikes (Red-backed, Great Grey and Brown), Common Crane, Pallid Harriers, American Golden Plover and so on. However, we particularly enjoyed the birds that we found for ourselves:



Greenish Warbler

Bluethroat,
Grasshopper
Warbler, Redbreasted
Flycatcher,
Parrot
Crossbill and
Little Bunting
- one field we
watched on
Unst held a
flock of three
of the latter!



Red-backed Shrike

Naturally some of the most memorable moments involved rarer species. One day after doing the rounds at Sumburgh Head we were driving north stopping to explore along the way when we heard the news that a Collared Flycatcher had been found back Sumburgh Lighthouse. Surely we overlooked this earlier! The bird was performing brilliantly, flitting around the stone walls of the lighthouse compound, and once shared a rope fence with two Yellow-browed Warblers. The bird remained all day to the delight of many birders, and our final memory was of the bird still active in the failing light, illuminated from time to time by the passing beam of the lighthouse as we watched from the comfort of indoors.



Collared Flycatcher

Shetland is by far the best place in the UK for a chance of seeing certain species, including the rarer grasshopper warblers. These typically occur in the extensive beds of Iris, and would go undetected if it were not for birders paying these habitats special attention. Thus, one particularly wet week was enlivened by a brief view of a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler which revealed the distinctive pale tips to its tail feathers as it flew just in front of us.



Another time, a Lanceolated Warbler had been found in a dense bank of Rosa rugosa near a stream. Birders watched from a respectful distance in case the bird popped out – some chance! After a while, it was realised that the bird was moving to and fro just inside the close edge of the rose clump. There followed the incongruous sight of many birders on their hands and knees with heads inserted between the rose stems, trying to keep still despite the discomfort, but it was all worthwhile for soon afterwards the bird hopped along like a mouse just a few feet away, briefly landing on my hand as it passed by!

Another early morning saw us driving the length of the islands to Unst in the hope of seeing the Siberian Thrush that had been found the previous afternoon in Uyeasound. It was soon apparent that the thrush had departed and we contented ourselves with a Barred Warbler and an Olive-backed Pipit before moving on to explore other parts of the island. The phone signal was patchy and we were wondering what bird news we were missing ... when we learnt from a passing birder that a White's Thrush was showing at Skaw, Britain's most northerly settlement not far away. The bird showed well on the side of a cliff, not moving at all in the two hours we were watching it – not the most memorable performance but we knew we were fortunate to see one of the most sought-after birds on the British list.

Probably our most unexpected sighting came in our first year, late one afternoon. We had spent the day searching in vain for a Pechora Pipit (though we did see it a few days later) around Sandwick, a peaceful but relatively populous community far away in western Mainland, untouched by conveniences such as phone signals. On our return towards Sumburgh we learnt that a Thick-billed Warbler had been found at Quendale, just three miles from where we were. This constituted just the sixth occurrence of this species in the UK but a major twitch such as this in early autumn only drew a crowd of around thirty. We had several views of this large warbler and it once perched briefly in the open revealing its beady black eye set against a plain face.

While birds were the focus of these trips, we had a few encounters with interesting mammals. Otters were seen on each visit, including one that came very close to us at Grutness. Both grey and common seals occur around Shetland and we were surprised to see several hedgehogs. One evening while waiting outside the lighthouse for it to get dark enough to stand a chance of seeing the predicted Aurora Borealis a bat, most probably a Nathusius's Pipistrelle, was flying around the aerials. However, the greatest excitement was when we heard of a party of four killer whales near Sumburgh Head. We tried to anticipate their movement and were delighted to catch up with them off Scatness. Although some way out, the bull stood out with its six-foot dorsal fin and massive bulk.



Otter

We were glad to have had the opportunity to make these trips; the weather was challenging at times with some long periods of heavy rain or strong winds, and sometimes travel arrangements were disrupted, but on the other hand the sun frequently shone on some fantastic scenery and we saw some amazing birds that we wouldn't have seen elsewhere in the UK.

Berkbirds Covid-19 Lockdown Garden Competition Part Two

The flock of Fieldfare "chacking" whilst flying over the field to the north on the 5<sup>th</sup> April was a real bonus as they were relatively late. On a murky 15<sup>th</sup> April, whilst scanning to the north I got excited to see three white birds in the distance flying slowly east. Straining through the bins, initially I could only make out they were egrets in the gloom. I thought they were probably Little Egrets. I had taken to carrying my camera into the garden every day, so I picked it up and fired away at these distant birds. Reviewing the images confirmed they were Little Egrets, which happened to be a garden tick. Great stuff!

Birding every hour of the day in the garden one gets highly tuned to every bird call or song and variations thereof. So, at about 15:00hrs on a warm, sunny, calm 8<sup>th</sup> May, I noted a different sound of a bird singing loudly in gardens west of mine. It was a loud, repetitive song comprising of three phrases exactly the same in quick succession. It went on for several minutes. I was sure it was a Marsh Tit, but that would be a garden tick. So, to be absolutely sure I checked my Collins Bird guide app on my phone and heard the identical song. It must have ventured away from some local woodland and I was lucky to hear it.

Whilst sitting on the bench at the bottom of the garden an unfamiliar soft double noted call occurred directly overhead, three ducks flying fast south west. On lifting my binoculars, I saw the longish spatulate bills and plumage colours of Shovelers. A very unexpected garden tick and one for the competition list. I can't recall hearing Shovelers that often which is why I didn't twig what they were immediately.

Surprisingly Cuckoo was not on my garden list. So, I was pleased to hear one distantly in woodlands to the north east on the  $8^{th}$  May at 06:00hrs having opened the bedroom window wide, and again more clearly on the  $12^{th}$  May.

Having learned that other birders were recording waders flying overhead during the night I thought I would give it a try. So, I tried for a few hours on several nights standing at the far end of the back garden. Hearing several Tawny Owls calling didn't really make up for it being

pretty dire! However, at 11:40hrs on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, after a warm calm day, followed by a clear starry night I heard the distinct call of a Whimbrel high to the south. The repeated calls came closer and passed directly overhead heading north. The calls were so crystal clear in the dark starry sky above. Result! And, another garden tick.

I was aware that I should have Little Owl on my garden list but I had never heard one. So, I made the effort to continue the evening stints out in the back garden. On the 9<sup>th</sup> May at 11:30hrs, on a calm quiet night, I heard the loud song and calls of a Little Owl coming from the copse across the field and then distantly as it moved away. Still the only time I have heard one, and one for the Lockdown list.

Observing migrating birds is exciting for any birder so I feel a minimum of 15 migrant species on my Lockdown list was reasonably good. I was really surprised and pleased to hear a Lesser Whitethroat singing in gardens to the east of mine on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, and more so when it flew into my garden singing, before moving off to the west; the only day it appeared. Likewise, a Common Whitethroat more of less repeated this pattern the following day. Willow Warbler was only seen three times and Chiffchaff two times. I presume six Song Thrushes feeding closely together on the far side of the field early on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> April, and not seen again, were migrants. As we sat in the garden on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, it was quite exciting to see two Sand Martins fly low over our heads with their rasping calls, heading north into the distance; a species rarely recorded from my garden.

I enjoyed seeing a pair of Lapwings displaying on the 30<sup>th</sup> April in the bare field adjacent to our garden, spending some time trying to photograph their activities. I had seen them over more distant fields, but this was the only time they came to this particular field, but as it turned out, it was probably not to their liking. Other observations included seeing two Coal Tits come under our front porch on the 11<sup>th</sup> April to feed on insects on our potted plants, two Sparrowhawks flying together low over the garden on the 18<sup>th</sup> April and the pair of Mandarins that visited our garden pond from the 3<sup>rd</sup> April and several days thereafter to consume all our frog spawn.

Lastly, the most memorable event was on the Garden Bird Race Day of 3<sup>rd</sup> May. Very early that morning I had opened a back-bedroom window and was looking through my bins at some Goldfinches on top of our mature winter flowering cherry tree some 15m from the house. I literally heard a "woosh" sound as something dived close past the window, and every bird on the tree scattered. I lowered my binoculars to see a Hobby veering away from the tree having missed the birds, showing its classic silhouette of long pointed swept back wings, and a blue grey back, and when it banked the "red trousers" and streaked underparts. "Wow" I thought.

So, the Lockdown was eased and the competition ended and I stopped recording a daily list. Apart from the fun it was an interesting exercise in learning what birds use the garden and what flies by or over either on a regular basis or just as a random movement. During Lockdown I also noted the usual butterflies, such as: Orange Tip, Comma, Holly Blue, Tortoiseshell, Green-veined White, Peacock, Red Admiral; and subsequently, after Lockdown: Small Heath, Brown Argus, and best of all, a Dingy Skipper and a Green Hairstreak, both garden ticks.

#### **Membership Matters**

Iain Oldcorn bocmembershipsec@hotmail.co.uk

If you change your postal or email address please remember to advise me so that we can maintain contact with you.

At the time of writing (26 July2020) access to QMR for our BOC Permit holders is still problematic. DWSC are slowly returning to normal operation, but so far in the evenings only and their gate remains closed to all but their own members. We will keep you advised.

PUZZLES Page Iain Oldcorn

Here are the answers to the grid in the last Newsletter with its rather different (maybe unique) style of Word Search; all the hidden words are based on familiar birds. There were 15 in the table. Each hidden word is derived from a bird name by either adding or removing one or two letters from the start or finish and is shown in BLUE text in the grid:

WREN(CH), ( $\le$ )WALLOW, (ES)CROW, DIVER(SE), (+)LOVER, (+)EAGLE, (+)EGRET, (+)OWL, SHOVEL(+), SNIPE(+), (+)HAG, CRAN(+), (+)SKIN, (+)ARROW, HOOP(+).

There were a few "red herring" near misses, shown in the grid where possible by RED text:

 $FLAMING(\Theta)$ , (B)RAMBLING,  $(P\Theta)CHARD$ .

Here's the solution for the last BOC-U-DO that used the letters: CDEHIORTW.

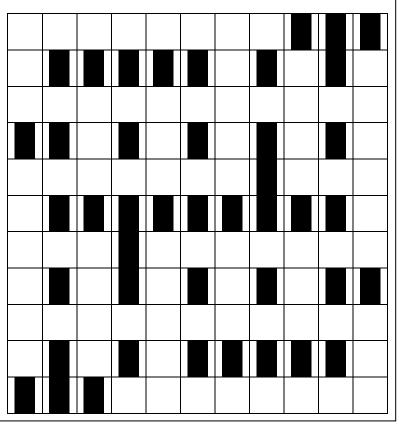
С	I	О	R	W	T	Н	Е	D
W	Е	R	D	I	Н	C	T	O
Н	T	D	О	Е	C	R	I	W
T	О	C	Е	Н	R	D	W	Ι
I	Н	Е	W	C	D	О	R	T
R	D	W	Ι	T	О	Е	Н	C
D	R	I	T	О	Е	W	C	Н
О	C	T	Н	R	W	Ι	D	E
Е	W	Н	C	D	I	T	О	R

Е	Е	R	U	Н	K	Α	W	I	W	W
G	L	S	G	C	U	L	L	W	0	В
G	G	Α	R	Z	Ι	В	Ι	Ш	R	Α
R	Α	Α	R	ш	Τ	J	Ш	S	R	K
Е	ш	Α	Ξ	R	>	Α	K	G	Α	Е
S	В	G	0	V	W	Ι	Ν	0	W	Р
Т	Ν	Ν	R	8	Ν	Ν	D	Е	Е	R
Т	I	Ι	W	Е	L	Α	Α	Τ	ш	Е
Ι	Μ	Μ	P	В	H	W	Α	R	S	٧
Н	Α	Α	М	Е	R	R	Н	Т	С	0
S	Α	Α	Ι	R	R	Ι	U	0	R	L
О	R	L	Е	٧	0	Ξ	S	0	0	L
R	0	F	М	Е	Е	W	Α	Р	W	Р

#### Crossbill

Here's another different type of puzzle. Place the words listed in the grid provided – no clues, you just have to work out where they can be slotted in: Lek, Owl, Sac, Hen, Iff, Cur, Via, Roi, Lice, Bill, Crake, Congo, Snakes, Grouse, Giraffe, Coverts, Forensic, Hawfinch, Secondaries, Nictitation.

(Sorry for the bad presentation of a crossword grid and for the two abbreviations, but many of the words have an ornithological flavour.)



Here are the answers to the colour coded British bird quiz in the last Newsletter.

Thanks to Patrick Crowley for the answers:



(Ed. Please don't blame me if you haven't seen any of the rare migrants in Britain. I thought the representation of the Wren splendidly captures it's Jizz.)

# **Some Things to Do Regularly**

Iain Oldcorn

Thanks mainly to Jane Campbell for the following ideas:

The BTO Garden Birdwatch survey: join here

Chris Packham's Live stream at 10am each day: watch this on FaceBook

Follow Fraser Cottington's blog here on YouTube

RSPB Breakfast birdwatch between 8 and 9 am: follow here

Look for rare migrants visiting Berkshire amongst many other sightings) here

And of course, a number of webcams will continue to show you Osprey activity, including this year's juveniles; use the links available at: <a href="http://www.ukospreys.uk/cams-uk.htm">http://www.ukospreys.uk/cams-uk.htm</a>

## The 2020-2021 Outdoor Season

Ray Reedman (on behalf of the team)

Please note that there are new arrangements in force this year for Outdoor activities.

Because we need to be in step with a changeable external situation, you will need to contact the leader in advance to register your contact details and to be updated. We ask you not to turn up without prior booking. And there is also a reminder that in the event of anyone under 18 wishing to attend, the leader must be notified of this fact in accordance with our safeguarding policy.

......

It is no exaggeration to say that planning this year has been a bit like nailing jelly to the wall - but we are optimists!

We were potentially short of leaders from the start, but the late loss of stalwart, Marcus I'Anson to health issues (unrelated to the epidemic) was a big blow. Marcus has been a lynch pin for several years and I can't thank him enough for what he has done. He tells me he is making good progress and we wish him well. It helps enormously that Andy Tomczynski and Brian Bennett have each taken on an event.

Then there is the small matter of Covid-19. Suddenly, car-sharing, crowded hides and coaches all look impossible in the shorter term: the planned September coach trip has been withdrawn, thoughts of Slimbridge in January abandoned, and long weekends discarded. With the exception of Christmas lunch, the four events before Christmas are open air trips which we can attend individually – and that applies to most of the events on offer in 2021. The viability of Christmas lunch and of the remaining coach trips will be reviewed nearer the time and clearly, we will need provisional bookings well in advance.

So what *is* on offer? We have aimed, as always, to provide a wide range of experiences. If you join every trip, you will have good birding year, but you have plenty of choices.

Firstly, there are four longer day-trips by car: Titchfield Haven (September); Selsey/Pagham Harbour (October); a mystery day in Kent (November); and Keyhaven/Pennington Marshes (March).

An assortment of walks within Berkshire will take in Coley Meadows, Moor Green, Hosehill Lake, Combe Hill, Whiteknights Park, Dinton Pastures, Southcote Meadows, and Compton Downs, to cover a range of habitats, seasons and times of day.

The coaches, should they function, will offer you Dungeness, Rainham Marsh and Rutland Bird Fair.

The Great Bustard reintroduction project can be visited privately, but it is also on offer as a flexible club event. That all adds up to sixteen events, rather fewer than usual, but there is plenty of choice.

And please remember that we are still desperate for volunteer leaders for the future: just one event will be a huge help.

So, the message is, stay well, stay positive and look to the future.

Newbury News Ken White

Very poor light this morning (25/7/2020), but early mornings seem best for some action from the Newbury Peregrines. Colour-ringed juvenile Blue YL - rescued by us from the car park in June - was restless first thing, and whether out of boredom, hunger or intrigue, she flew straight towards us (parked on the top deck of Sainsbury's) and overhead (photo overleaf) before returning to the BT building and ousting Mrs Newbury from her perch. The sequence can be seen on the following link: <a href="https://photos.app.goo.gl/pVazYvTYuueiaSVFA">https://photos.app.goo.gl/pVazYvTYuueiaSVFA</a>

The young are gadding about the town centre and have been seen on the very outskirts of town. The three juveniles are going from strength to strength but are still totally dependent



on their parent's food provision, and now take dead prey from them while on the wing.

All observations of these Newbury Peregrines will be gratefully received (Please phone me, text me or WhatsApp me, Tel: 075 286 725 87 – but, please, no voice mails).

# Polish Colour Ringed Black-headed Gull

Ken White

While checking the base of the BT building for remains from the Peregrine dinner plates on Sunday, I found a fresh carcass of a Black-headed Gull with colour ring Yellow T48T. I submitted the record directly from the cr-birding website and had an acknowledgement yesterday. The 'full' report arrived this morning.



It was ringed in July 2016 as 1st Cal bird in the Gdansk area, subsequently seen once in May 2019 474 km away, and then found by me at the foot of the BT building 26/07/2020, 1083 km away. Shame for it to end up on the Newbury Peregrine dinner plate, but it does show how soon birds depart from their breeding areas in

the late summer! Whether it bred this year or was a failed breeder we will never know.

Apart from the inevitable racing pigeon rings, this is the first 'wild' bird ring that we have found at this site. We are keeping a full list of finds and any feathers or body parts we cannot recognise go straight to Ed Drewitt for formal identification. The list grows more interesting by the week.

You might recall that I reported a Norwegian colour-ringed Black-headed Gull Green L0J1 last November in Victoria Park (live and well) only 300 metres from BT!

I did see it twice, and you will remember that the heavy winter rains started in earnest with widespread flooding and the gull roost at the Wharf just disappeared as I guess they all went off foraging in the flooded fields. We will keep a check there to see if it (or any other) returns there as it's only minutes away from BT.

# **Gallery**

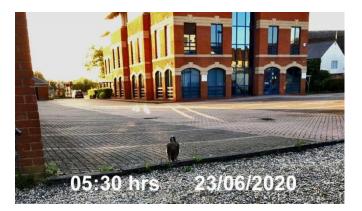








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