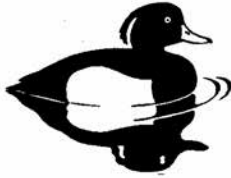


# The Birds of Berkshire

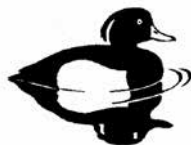


Annual Report  
2011

Published 2014

# Berkshire Ornithological Club

Registered charity no. 1011776



The Berkshire Ornithological Club (BOC) was founded as Reading Ornithological Club in 1947 to promote education and study of wild birds, their habitats and their conservation, initially in the Reading area but now on a county wide basis.

It is affiliated to the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). Membership is open to anyone interested in birds and bird-watching, beginner or expert, local patch enthusiast or international twitcher. The Club provides the following in return for a modest annual subscription:

- A programme of indoor meetings with expert speakers on ornithological subjects
  - Occasional social meetings
  - An annual photographic competition of very high standard
  - A programme of field meetings both locally and further afield. These can be for half days, whole days or weekends.
  - Regular mid week bird walks in and around many of Berkshire's and neighbouring counties' best birdwatching areas.
  - Exclusive access to the pre-eminent site Queen Mother Reservoir (subject to permit)
  - Conservation involvement in important local habitats and species. BOC members are involved in practical conservation work with
- groups such as Friends of Lavell's Lake, Theale Area Bird Conservation Group and Moor Green Lakes Group.
  - Opportunities to participate in survey work to help understand birds better. The surveys include supporting the BTO in its work and monitoring for local conservation management.
  - The Club runs the Birds of Berkshire Conservation Fund to support local bird conservation projects.

This Berkshire Bird Report is published by the Club and provided free to members. Members are encouraged to keep records of their local observations and submit them, electronically or in writing, to the Recorder for collation and analysis.

The informative and fully illustrated County Atlas and Avifauna, The Birds of Berkshire, published in 2013, can be purchased at [www.berkshirebirdatlas.org.uk](http://www.berkshirebirdatlas.org.uk), price £35, and is available to members at meetings at the discounted price of £30.

For further details of the Club and membership visit [www.berksoc.org.uk](http://www.berksoc.org.uk) or contact the Hon. Secretary:

Sally Wearing, 9 Deans Farm, The Causeway, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5JZ  
telephone 0118 946 3125;  
e-mail [berksocsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:berksocsecretary@gmail.com)

# The Birds of Berkshire

*Annual Report for 2011*

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## Introduction

Here is the Berkshire bird report for 2011. Although we have managed to publish three years of reports in the last twelve months, we still have a way to go to get really up to date and for this we need your help!

Firstly, Derek Barker has had to step down as Editor. I have stood in for this year, but we are seeking a volunteer to take on this key role for the future.

Secondly, although the great majority of observers submit records on line during the year, we are still receiving a minority a year or two after the year end. The county database of bird records is the source of information for research, for advising conservation organisations and planning authorities and for preparing these annual reports. Please help us maintain a database that is complete and up to date by submitting records promptly, preferably on line at [www.berksbirds.co.uk](http://www.berksbirds.co.uk) or as excel or .csv files to [records@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:records@berksoc.org.uk). See below for submission guidelines

Thirdly, in 2015, we are reviewing the whole process of recording, record review and publication and would welcome views on how it can be improved (comments to [renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk) by 31st January 2015).

2011 was the last of the survey years for the national and county atlas (2007-2011). As a result a great many more records on the commoner species were available than is normally the case. This is best viewed in the new edition of *The Birds of Berkshire* or at <http://berkshirebirdatlas.org.uk>.

We are again including a summary of records of dragonflies and damselflies as many bird-watchers' interests extend to the Odonata. We would like to invite readers to submit similar county summaries of records for other taxa, *e.g.* butterflies and moths, bats *etc.*

## Acknowledgements

The preparation of the County bird report relies on the voluntary efforts of many people for data collection, species account writing, preparing articles, providing photographs, editing and, critically, the observers who put in their records. At the end of this report is a list of the observers whose records contribute to the reports. We hope the list is accurate: please let us know of any errors or omissions, for which we apologise.

We are grateful to the species account writers (page 25), to Richard Burness for copy editing the accounts, to the County Recorder, Chris Heard, chair of the Berkshire Records Committee, for the review of records and editing the systematic list. Our thanks also go to Tim Ball, Chris Heard, Mike Turton and Renton Righelato who provided articles and to the photographers who generously provided their excellent shots. Thanks also to Robert Gillmor for his cover picture of the Roseate Tern that visited Queen Mother Reservoir in May 2011.

*Renton Righelato*

Editorial Board: Tim Ball, Chris Heard,  
Ken Moore, Renton Rghelato (Chair), Marek Walford.

## Submitting records

Sending your records promptly and electronically will enable the County database to be kept complete and up to date. To facilitate review and report preparation, records may be sent throughout the year and anyway should be filed within three months of a year end. If you are unable to send your records electronically, we may be able to help: please contact Renton Righelato1.

Records can be entered on line at [www.berksbirds.co.uk](http://www.berksbirds.co.uk) or sent by email to [records@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:records@berksoc.org.uk) as an excel file or as a CSV file. Excel files should have the following eight columns in this order:

**Species, Site, Grid reference, Arrival date, Departure date, Number, Notes, Observer, Breeding status.**

**Species:** Required. If possible please use the species name from BWP. Please not use plurals. *i.e.* do not enter "Siskins" or "Canada Geese", but "Siskin" or "Canada Goose".

**Site:** Required. If possible please use the site terminology used in this report and on [berksbirds.co.uk](http://berksbirds.co.uk). Please enter the site as the nearest landmark on an OS map and if necessary quantify this with a grid reference in the "Grid reference" field. Sites such as "my garden", "River Thames", "3 miles east of Reading" or "by the A33" are examples of inappropriate site names.

**Grid reference:** Optional. Four or six figure grid ref. The prefix, either "SU" or "TQ" should be included and there should be no spaces between characters. Grid references are only required for less well-known sites, or to give a very precise location within a large site.

**Arrival date:** Required. In the format "dd/mm/yyyy" *i.e.* "01/01/2005". For records that refer to more than one day enter the first date in this field and the last date in the "Departure date" field.

**Departure date:** Optional. In the format "dd/mm/yyyy" *i.e.* "01/01/2005".

**Number:** Required. Whole number only. *i.e.* the following are not valid: "c10", "10+", "1-2", "many". Enter any quantifying information in the notes field.

**Notes:** Optional. Use the notes field to enter information on age, sex, behaviour, breeding details *etc.* Any reference to other species made in this field will not be recorded for that species – please make a separate entry for each species.

**Breeding Status:** Optional. Please use the BTO breeding evidence codes: <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdatlas/methods/breeding-evidence>.

**Observer:** Required. Please enter your full name and include your middle names if you have any.

CSV files should use the same eight fields separated by commas (whether or not they contain data) and note that any field containing a comma should be enclosed in double quotes. Thus, for example: Siskin,"Searles Lane, Burghfield",03/02/2001,,100,,,,MJT

**Confidentiality:** Confidential records should be sent separately but in the same format, and noted as confidential in the covering email. The locations of records for rare breeding species will, in any case, be held in confidence.

**Species requiring a description:** Records of rarer species will be reviewed by the Berkshire records Committee and may require a description or additional notes – please see the BRC report on page 16.

<sup>1</sup>Renton Righelato tel 0787 981 2564, email [renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk)

# CHANGES IN EARLIEST ARRIVAL DATES OF SUMMER VISITORS IN BERKSHIRE

Renton Righelato

## Summary

After accounting for changes in abundance, most of the summer visitors from Africa that come to breed in Berkshire have advanced their arrival dates by approximately one week (4-12 days) over the 20 years between 1980-89 and 2000-09. This is similar to the advance in Spring temperatures over the period. A few species, notably Willow Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat, appear to have shown little or no advance, a factor that may have contributed to the sharp decline in the abundance of these two species. In addition, Wheatear, an early migrant that does not breed Berkshire, showed no advance in earliest arrival date.

## Introduction

The warming trend of recent decades has resulted in an advance of spring, which can present particular problems for summer visitors. Migrant birds have to time their arrival and nesting to the fit in with the appearance of their invertebrate prey and it has been suggested that failure to adjust arrival time may be a contributory factor to the decline in some of our long-distance migrants (eg Both *et al.*, 2010).

Advances in arrival date of afro-european migrants have been widely reported (eg Jonzen *et al.*, 2006; Menzel *et al.*, 2006; Ockenden *et al.*, 2012), though there are relatively few studies of changes in arrival time of summer visitors on their UK breeding grounds. Mason (1995) described a 50 year dataset from 1942-91 for Leicestershire, which showed trends towards earlier arrival for some shorter range migrants but no consistent trends for longer distance migrants. Local datasets such as this remain a largely untapped resource. In Berkshire, the county annual reports provide a list of earliest observed arrival dates of the commoner summer visitors from 1974 onwards, which were used to investigate changes occurring between the atlas survey periods of 1987-9 and 2007-11 (Righelato, 2013) and which are examined further here. Between the 1980s and 2000s March, April and May temperatures at Heathrow rose by approximately 1Co, equivalent to an advance of Spring of about 10 days.

## Methodology

The species considered were those summer visitors (a) for which there were arrival dates recorded for all years in the decades 1980/89 and 2000/09 and (b) whose abundance was reasonably high in both survey periods, ie recorded in at least 10% of tetrads in the 1980/89 survey. Arrival dates were taken from the county annual reports and are based on records submitted from all sources and reviewed by the Berkshire Records Committee. The Berkshire abundance measure used was the proportion of tetrads in which breeding was recorded as confirmed or probable in the atlas surveys of 1987-9 and 2007-11. This measure probably understates the change in population density, which was not measured in the earlier survey. The national abundance change was taken from the CBC/BBS indices published by the British Trust for Ornithology.

## Results

The average advance in the median of the observed arrival date of the 16 species in Table 1 was 5.2 days over the 20 years 1980/89 to 2000/09. However, the limited Berkshire dataset appears to comprise two subsets. Between the decades 1980-89 and 2000-09, ten of the 16 species for which data were available showed significant advances of 5 to 12 days in the decade medians of their earliest arrival dates, whilst the remaining six species showed little or no change. Whilst an increase in numbers of observers submitting records could create a bias toward earlier arrival dates being recorded in the later decade, such a bias would be expected to apply equally to all species. However, decrease in abundance would be expected to reduce the chance of observing an early arrival and *vice versa*.

**Table 1**  
Change in earliest observed arrival dates of summer visitors to Berkshire between 1980-9 and 2000-9.

	Mean (median) earliest observed arrival date <sup>1</sup>		95% c.i. (days +/-)	95% c.i. (days +/-)	Change days	% tetrads occupied 2007-11	Berkshire trend <sup>2</sup>	UK trend <sup>3</sup>	Wintering area <sup>4</sup>
	1980-89	2000-09							
Cuckoo	12 (13) Apr	10 (10) Apr	2	3	-2 (-3)	52	0.3	0.4	Central Africa
Swift**	22 (22) Apr	12 (16) Apr	2	5	-10 (-6)	54	0.7	0.7 <sup>5</sup>	Central/Southern Africa
Sand Martin	17 (16) Mar	10 (10) Mar	5	4	-7 (-6)	13	1.4	1.2	Sahel
Swallow**	31 Mar (2 Apr)	23 (22) Mar	5	3	-8 (-12)	86	0.9	1.4	Southern Africa
House Martin*	2 (3) Apr	26 (26) Mar	5	5	-7 (-8)	72	0.7	0.6	Southern Africa
Yellow Wagtail**	3 (4) Apr	27 (26) Mar	7	4	-7 (-8)	17	0.9	0.3	West Africa
Tree Pipit	4 (5) Apr	1 (2) Apr	4	5	-3 (-3)	8	0.3	0.1	West Africa?
Wheatear	11 (14) Mar	13 (14) Mar	3	4	2 (0)	31 <sup>6</sup>	n/a	1.0 <sup>5</sup>	Sahel
Spotted Flycatcher	29 Apr (3 May)	29 (29) Apr	8	9	0 (-4)	31	0.4	0.2	West/Central Africa
Nightingale**	11 (12) Apr	5 (4) Apr	1	2	-6 (-8)	9	0.3	0.4 <sup>5</sup>	West Africa
Sedge Warbler**	9 (8) Apr	1 (1) Apr	5	3	-8 (-7)	25	0.7	1.3	West Africa
Reed Warbler**	22 (22) Apr	16 (17) Apr	2	4	-6 (-5)	27	1.3	1.7	West Africa
Garden Warbler	18 (19) Apr	13 (14) Apr	4	4	-5 (-5)	60	1.2	0.9	West Africa
Lesser Whitethroat	21 (23) Apr	18 (22) Apr	3	2	-3 (1)	43	0.4	0.7	Sahel
Whitethroat**	14 (15) Apr	8 (7) Apr	4	4	-6 (-8)	91	1.2	1.7	Sahel
Willow Warbler	26 (26) Mar	27 (26) Mar	4	4	1 (0)	67	0.4	0.4	West Africa

\* change significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (Student's T test)

<sup>1</sup> date for non-leap years

<sup>2</sup> change in Berkshire tetrads with breeding confirmed or probable between 2007-11 and 1987-9 Atlas surveys (Bucknell *et al.* 2013).

<sup>3</sup> CBC/BBS index change 2005/1985

<sup>4</sup> Migration Atlas (Wernham *et al.*, 2002)

<sup>5</sup> Data available for 1994-2005 only

<sup>6</sup> % tetrads with records March-June

**Table 2**  
**Effect of change in abundance on earliest observed arrival dates.**

	Median Arrival Day 2000-9			Record doubling interval (days) <sup>1</sup>	Berkshire abundance change 2005/1985	Change in first arrival 1980-9 to 2000-09 (days) <sup>2</sup>		
	[a]	[b]	[c]	[d]	[e]	[f]	adjusted for abundance [g]	adjusted for observers [h]
Number of records <sup>3</sup>	1	5	10					
Cuckoo	99.5	103.0	105	2	0.3	-3	-6**	-4*
Swift	106.0	109.5	114	2	0.7	-6**	-7**	-5**
Sand Martin	68.5	75.5	79	3	1.4	-6	-5	-1
Swallow	80.5	87.0	91	3	0.9	-12**	-12**	-9*
House Martin	84.5	92.5	100	5	0.7	-8*	-11*	-6
Yellow Wagtail	86.0	96.5	104	5	0.9	-8**	-9**	-4
Tree Pipit <sup>4</sup>	92.0	99.5	n/a	3	0.3	-3	-8**	-4
Spotted Flycatcher <sup>5</sup>	119.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.4	-4	n/a	n/a
Nightingale	94.5	104.0	106	3	0.8 <sup>6</sup>	-8**	-9**	-7**
Sedge Warbler	91.0	96.0	100	3	0.7	-7**	-8**	-5*
Reed Warbler	106.5	109.0	111	1	1.3	-5**	-5**	-4**
Garden Warbler	104.0	110.0	112	2	1.2	-5	-4	-1
Lesser Whitethroat	111.5	113.0	115	1	0.4	-1	-2	-1
Whitethroat	97.0	103.0	107	3	1.2	-8**	-7*	-4
Willow Warbler	84.5	88.5	90	2	0.4	0	-3	-1

<sup>1</sup> Number of days over which the records of new arrivals doubled:  $([c] - [a]) / \log_2 10$

<sup>2</sup> Data are the changes of the medians of the annual earliest arrival dates of the two decades. Advance in arrival [f] adjusted by the record doubling interval [d] and abundance change [e]:  $[g] = [f] - \log_2(1/[e]) * [d]$ . For column [h] the abundance factor [e] was doubled to reflect the two-fold increase in observers between 1980-89 and 2000-09.

<sup>3</sup> Median arrival day for the earliest arrival [a], the first 5 records of different new arrivals [b] and the first 10 records of different new arrivals [c]

<sup>4</sup> As too few records were received to provide the median of the first 10 arrivals, the calculation of the adjustment was based on the first 5

<sup>5</sup> Too few records were received to provide data for columns b and c.

<sup>6</sup> Abundance change in the Kennet valley only: see text.

\* Change significant at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (Student's T test)

All of the Berkshire breeding species whose arrival dates appear not to have advanced significantly (Cuckoo, Tree Pipit, Lesser Whitethroat, Willow Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher) showed a greater than 50% decrease in breeding abundance between the atlas surveys of 1987-9 and 2007-11. By contrast, all but one of the species whose earliest arrival date advanced showed only small changes in breeding abundance, both increases and decreases. The exception was the Nightingale, whose abundance in Berkshire fell by 70%, virtually disappearing from the woodland in the county. However, they have showed little change in abundance in their strongholds around gravel workings, along the River Kennet, where most of the first arrivals were recorded.

The Berkshire trend in abundance, measured as the change in the number of tetrads in which breeding was confirmed and recorded as probable, largely reflected the UK trend measured by the British Trust for Ornithology's breeding bird survey. A significant exception was the Yellow Wagtail, which, between the 1987-9 and 2007-11 Atlas surveys, had vacated its historic strongholds in the river valleys and occupied as many tetrads in arable areas, mostly on the Berkshire downs.

To examine the effect of abundance on observed arrival date, the median of the arrival dates of the first recorded arrival in the county and the median arrival dates for the first five and first ten new arrivals are shown in Table 2 (because it is not a species that breeds in Berkshire, Wheatear is not included). As these data are not available for the 1980-9 period, only the records in the Berkshire county database for the ten year period 2000-9 could be used. The data suggest that decrease in abundance could account for approximately a 2-3 day underestimate of the trend shown in Table 1 for most of the species whose abundance had fallen: Cuckoo, Tree Pipit, Willow Warbler and 1 day for Lesser Whitethroat.

The number of observers listed in reports as submitting records was approximately twofold higher during the 2000-09 decade than in 1980-89. If it is assumed that the chances of an early arrival being detected is proportional to the number of observers, the effect would be the same as that of a doubling of bird abundance. Applying this as a further adjustment (Table 2, column h) reduces the advance by an average of 2.8 days. However, this may overstate the effect of increased numbers of observers: as bird-watchers tend to visit the same sites, increased numbers of observers probably increase duplication rather more than increasing detection rate. Because of this uncertainty, the adjustment for observer numbers is not included in Figure 1.

## Discussion

After adjusting for abundance changes, the average advance in arrival date of the 14 species for which data were available (Table 2) was 6.8 days over the 20 years 1980-89 to 2000-09, a little higher than the 2.5 days/decade reported by Menzel *et al.*, (2010) for a wide range of summer visitors to Europe. There were four species that showed statistically insignificant advance in arrival over the 20 year period when abundance change was taken into account, Sand Martin, Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat and Willow Warbler. It is possible that failure to adapt to earlier springs on their breeding grounds in Berkshire may have contributed to the large (>50%) declines in abundance in the latter two species.

Ockendon *et al.* (2012) linked declines in British-breeding afro-palaeartic migrants to wintering zones in Africa, suggesting that land use or climate changes in the tropics were driving decline in the UK. They found that the longer distance migrants had advanced their arrival time in the UK less than those that wintered north of central Africa. However, the measure of arrival time, observations at coastal observatories, may have been strongly influenced by local "fall" conditions and may not be a good indicator of arrival on breeding

**Figure 1 Advance of the earliest arrival dates of some summer visitors to Berkshire**

Points represent the medians of the earliest recorded arrivals:

- 1980-9;
- 2000-9;
- 2000-9 adjusted for changes in abundance (table 2).



grounds. The small Berkshire dataset shows no such link between the wintering zone and advance in arrival, with the largest advances being seen in species wintering in southern Africa: Swift, Swallow and House Martin.

Given the close temporal association between the warming trend in spring in the UK and the advance of arrival times, the mechanism bringing about earlier arrival is unlikely to rely on selection for that behaviour, driven by greater breeding success, which would be expected to take many years to become dominant in the population. Conditions in the wintering grounds or on passage are more likely to be involved, as suggested by Finch *et al.* (2014). Studying inter-annual variation in arrival of Redstart, Wood Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher, they found a closer relationship between temperature in the Mediterranean area when they were on passage than the temperature on their breeding grounds.

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# THE BERKSHIRE BIRD INDEX 2011

*Renton Righelato*

The Berkshire Bird Index (BBI) is a measure of the change in abundance of commoner species in the county, derived from the BTO's annual Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). BBS surveyors record all birds seen or heard along two 1 km transects within randomly selected 1km squares during visits early and late in the breeding season. Visits are made in the early morning and take approximately 2 hours. In Berkshire the number of 1 km squares surveyed was 20 in 1994 and was 73 in 2012. The data are collected by the BTO, which publishes the regional and national trends derived from the surveys. The BTO has provided us with the analysis of the Berkshire dataset, which was published up to 2009 by Patrick Crowley, Jerry O'Brien and Chris Robinson as the Berkshire Bird Index. We plan, in future, to publish the BBI in the Birds of Berkshire Annual Report and on the BOC website.

The index is a snapshot for the year of the ratio of that year's abundance to a base year. In the table the base year for calculation of the Berkshire index is 1994, prior to which too few 1 km squares were covered to produce a reliable starting point. In general, the Berkshire index reflects the national trends for those species that are sufficiently abundant to calculate a statistically valid index. However, year on year changes can be large: in addition to actual changes in abundance between years, apparent fluctuations can arise due to, for example, weather conditions during surveys, their timing and observer changes. Longer term trends may better be assessed using several years of data. So, in addition to the index, in the table the trend in abundance is shown, calculated as the slope of the least squares linear regression of the annual indices from 1994 to 2011.

Species increasing in abundance nationally and in Berkshire over the period 1994 to 2011 (bold text on grey) include Buzzard, Woodpigeon, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Blackcap, Whitethroat, Robin, Blue tit, Nuthatch, Goldfinch. Species in decline nationally and in Berkshire (white text on black) include Cuckoo, Swift, House Martin, Willow Warbler, Starling, Linnet.

Some species, however, appear to show county level changes that differ markedly from the national trends (*BTO Birdtrends*), both upwards (Stock Dove, Song Thrush, Rook) and downwards (Collared Dove). In most of these cases, though not for Rook, the recent Atlas surveys, comparing 1987/9 data with 2008/11, show trends in the same direction as the BBI. Further analysis may be needed to confirm and understand these apparent differences between the national and local pictures and we would welcome comment from readers for publication in the next issue.

To take part in BTO surveys, contact the Berkshire BTO Reps:  
Ken and Sarah White: [btoberks.ken.sarah@googlemail.com](mailto:btoberks.ken.sarah@googlemail.com)

Thanks are due to Kate Riseley at the BTO and to Ken White for providing the Berkshire data and index analysis.

1 Trends calculated applying Excel's LINEST function to annual indices from 1994 to 2012.

2 Indices provided by BTO.

3 Red Kites started to breed in Berkshire in 2000; index data are based on the year 2000; 1994-2012 trend not calculated.

Probability of change in abundance <0.05, \*, <0.01, \*\*, <0.001, \*\*\*

Berkshire Bird Index 2011	Trend <sup>1</sup>	Index <sup>2</sup>	Index change 1994 to 2011 (95% confidence limits) %	Index 2011/1994
Species	1994 to 2011 trend % per year	Index change 2010 to 2011 %		
Canada Goose	-0.3 +/- 2.7	-18	-48 (-9 / -71)	0.52*
<b>Mallard</b>	4.9 +/- 4*	-48	54 (124 / 6)	1.54*
<b>Red-legged Partridge</b>	12.9 +/- 6.2**	8	112 (275 / 20)	2.12*
<b>Pheasant</b>	1.9 +/- 1.3*	-3	4 (32 / -18)	1.04
Grey Heron	-1.2 +/- 11.1	-5	104 (369 / -11)	2.04
Red Kite		41	6300	64
Buzzard <sup>3</sup>	54.4 +/- 7***	218	979 (2103 / 428)	10.79*
Kestrel	1.6 +/- 2.6	2	-13 (56 / -51)	0.87
Moorhen	0.3 +/- 2.3	-19	-27 (15 / -53)	0.73
Lapwing	-0.3 +/- 4.9	-40	45 (154 / -18)	1.45
<b>Stock Dove</b>	12.5 +/- 5.2***	21	274 (579 / 107)	3.74*
<b>Woodpigeon</b>	5.9 +/- 3.6**	10	97 (146 / 57)	1.97*
Collared Dove	-1.7 +/- 2.8	-4	-43 (-15 / -62)	0.57*
Cuckoo	-2.9 +/- 0.8***	4	-56 (-29 / -72)	0.44*
Swift	-5 +/- 3.5*	-25	-63 (-25 / -82)	0.37*
Green Woodpecker	2.9 +/- 3.4	-71	22 (91 / -21)	1.22
<b>Great Spotted Woodpecker</b>	4.8 +/- 3.2*	-4	92 (181 / 32)	1.92*
Skylark	-1.2 +/- 1.2	6	-2 (22 / -22)	0.98
Swallow	2.4 +/- 2.3	29	67 (153 / 10)	1.67*
<b>House Martin</b>	-3.7 +/- 1.7**	38	-33 (1 / -56)	0.67
Pied Wagtail	-2.1 +/- 3	9	-33 (13 / -60)	0.67
Wren	1.1 +/- 3.1	-12	19 (45 / -2)	1.19
Dunnock	1 +/- 1.8	-26	-24 (-2 / -42)	0.76*
<b>Robin</b>	3.5 +/- 1.7	18	46 (74 / 23)	1.46*
<b>Blackbird</b>	2.6 +/- 1.9*	1	25 (46 / 7)	1.25*
<b>Song Thrush</b>	5 +/- 3.9*	-15	22 (68 / -11)	1.22
Mistle Thrush	-4 +/- 4.8	21	-38 (-1 / -62)	0.62*
<b>Blackcap</b>	9.8 +/- 4.4**	135*	275 (400 / 182)	3.75*
<b>Whitethroat</b>	11.4 +/- 6.4	151	389 (648 / 220)	4.89*
Chiffchaff	2.4 +/- 4.7	56	68 (132 / 22)	1.68*
<b>Willow Warbler</b>	-2.6 +/- 1.9*	2	-52 (-31 / -67)	0.48*
Goldcrest	-1.8 +/- 4.8	37	17 (92 / -29)	1.17
Long-tailed Tit	0.7 +/- 1.9	-9	18 (75 / -21)	1.18
<b>Great Tit</b>	2.6 +/- 1.7*	17	36 (69 / 10)	1.36*
<b>Blue Tit</b>	2.0 +/- 0.8***	-2	23 (48 / 2)	1.23*
Coal Tit	4.2 +/- 4.1	-72	20 (108 / -30)	1.2
<b>Nuthatch</b>	7.8 +/- 4.9*	-99	114 (237 / 35)	2.14*
Jay	0.2 +/- 2.4	-27	-19 (28 / -48)	0.81
Magpie	2.5 +/- 3.4	23	73 (130 / 30)	1.73*
<b>Jackdaw</b>	9.7 +/- 2.9***	60	212 (358 / 112)	3.12*
<b>Rook</b>	23.7 +/- 13**	76	391 (856 / 152)	4.91*
<b>Carrion Crow</b>	4.5 +/- 3.6	14	29 (76 / 5)	1.29*
<b>Starling</b>	-2 +/- 1.7*	-2	-21 (15 / -47)	0.79
House Sparrow	-4.8 +/- 4.5	14	11 (70 / -28)	1.11
Chaffinch	1.7 +/- 1.6	-10	17 (40 / -2)	1.17
Greenfinch	-2.4 +/- 2.7	-4	-24 (10 / -48)	0.76
Goldfinch	1.5 +/- 4.3	30	45 (124 / -6)	1.45
<b>Linnet</b>	-6.5 +/- 3.3**	-2	-55 (-25 / -72)	0.45*
Yellowhammer	-0.7 +/- 2.2	22	11 (48 / -18)	1.11

## GLOSSY IBISES IN BERKSHIRE

Chris Heard

Before 2010 there had been just one definite record of Glossy Ibis in Berkshire: one (of two birds) was shot as it flew over the River Thames, a few miles from Reading, during September 1793 (Lamb, 1880); this now stands as the first record of the species in Britain (Palmer, 2000).

There have since been another three records and, remarkably, all three could be seen during 2011. The first of these was first seen 2010 when it was found by Jerry Woodham at Freeman's Marsh, Hungerford on December 9th. While most of the county's watery habitats were icebound the chalk-streams of West Berkshire, fed by the the underground aquifer, remained flowing and the ibis found refuge along the River Dun and adjacent channels, often in the company of Green Sandpipers (West Berkshire's chalkstreams subsequently provided refuges for both Great White Egret and Dipper). It was enjoyed by a large number of observers up until it's departure on 9th January and what was presumed to be the same bird then arrived at Dungeness the following day.

Four months later another Glossy Ibis put in a brief appearance at Lea Farm scrape, Dinton Pastures. It was found by Les Blundell and Ian Paine on 7th May, but only stayed for around half-an-hour (allowing some record shots to be taken), before flying off North; it was then relocated less than 3 hours later at Dorney Lake, Bucks where it stayed until the following morning.

The third sighting of the year came in October, when I found a first-winter at Horton on 22nd-25th. It favoured the angling lake known to birders as 'Horton Fields pit' but actually part of the Eric Mortimer Rayner Memorial Lakes. There is no public access to this site but, fortunately, it could be viewed from the adjacent Arthur Jacob NR. For most Berkshire birders this wasn't even a year-tick (!) but it excited more interest from London listers, for whom it was the first twitchable one within the LNHS recording area since 1974. Three years later on, and we are still awaiting the next Berkshire occurrence.

This increase in Glossy Ibis occurrences is, of course, part of a nationwide pattern and this has changed dramatically during my ornithological lifetime. Back in 1974 I was a participant in a 10-day mini-bus tour of France - one of the highlights of which was a Glossy Ibis at Etang de Vaccares in the Camargue. But then, soon after returning home, I was making my way to see another - this time at Swanscombe in North Kent. This has been described as "the first truly twitchable bird of the BBRC era" (Hudson, 2012) but, it has to be admitted, this was not one of the most salubrious places to see a Glossy Ibis (at one point it was picking at a used condom!). In December of the following year another arrived at Stodmarsh, where it remained for several years, and was subsequently joined by a second individual in October 1979; this protracted stay was, at the time, considered indicative of a captive origin but we now recognise that this species is prone to long stays. Occurrences in the UK then became more-or-less annual, with distinct influxes of 18 in 1986 and 29 in 2007 (including a flock of 17 by the River Severn in April of that year). Following a record total of 126 in 2012, the species was dropped from the list of BBRC species.

The upward trend in UK Glossy Ibises seems likely to continue, especially in view of the successes of other large European waterbirds (Spoonbill, Little Egret, Great White Egret *etc*), and Berkshire will hopefully share in this.

Hudson, N. 2013 Report on Rare Birds in Great Britain in 2012. *Brit Birds* 106: 585  
Lamb, T. 1880. Ornithologia Bercheria. *The Zoologist* 4: 313-325.  
Palmer, P. 2000. *First for Britain & Ireland* 1600-1999.

## Damselflies and Dragonflies in Berkshire

### 2011 Highlights

The balmy Spring weather resulted in new earliest emergence dates for a number of species. As ever, **Large Red Damselfly** *Pyrrosoma nymphula* was the first to appear with one at Greenham Common on 7 April (6 days before the previous earliest date). In all, 10 species set new earliest emergence dates, some by up to 2 weeks. The record goes to **Brilliant Emerald** *Somatochlora metallica* with one being recorded at Swinley Brickpits on 10 May, a full month earlier than in previous years. The last recorded sighting of the year was of a **Common Darter** *Sympetrum striolatum* on 30 November. The downside to the early appearances must be the reduction in numbers of some species, epitomised by the lack of reports of the usual clouds of **Common Blue Damselflies** over the county's lakes.

**Beautiful Demoiselle** *Calopteryx virgo* was, as usual, recorded mainly along the R. Kennet and tributaries, but there are also increasing numbers on the R. Loddon and R. Blackwater.

With only scattered records of **Emerald Damselfly** *Lestes sponsa* from across the county, it is probable that this species is under-recorded. The main populations at Sole Common and Decoy Heath both showed reductions, though the population at Englemere Pond was up on recent years.

**Variable Damselfly** *Coenagrion pulchellum* had a poor year. It was recorded on only two sites, the main one being at Southcote on the R. Kennet where a maximum of just 31 were recorded, against 92 in 2010.

The first reported records of **Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura pumilio* since 1996 at Decoy Heath marked a welcome return for this species. There was speculation that the species was still present at Decoy Heath, but, even though the site is popular with dragonfly watchers, there had been no reported sightings until this year when a maximum of 4 were recorded on the weekly transect run by BBOWT.

Numbers of the county's other damselfly species were generally down on 2010, significantly so in the case of the **Common Blue Damselfly** *Enallagma cyathigerum*. The exception was **Red-eyed Damselfly** *Erythromma najas* where numbers were up.

Following the influx in 2010, **Hairy Dragonfly** *Brachytron pratense* seems to be establishing itself in the county with at least 17 (the highest number ever recorded in a single year) being recorded from 14 sites around Swinley Forest, Twyford and Theale as well as Radley Lakes and Cholsey Marsh further north. Breeding was confirmed for the first time in Berkshire with a record of a female ovipositing at Thames Valley Park, just outside Reading.

**Common Club-tail** *Gomphus vulgatissimus* continues to do well with both range and numbers similar to last year. John Ward-Smith reported 21 emerging on the R. Thames at Pangbourne on 29 April. A recently-emerged **Common Club-tail** was recorded on the R. Kennet at Padworth; only the 2nd breeding record on the river since 1999. There have been several isolated records from the Kennet valley over the past 11 years - any records will be very welcome to help determine whether these are isolated incidents involving individuals from the population on the R. Thames or whether there is an established small breeding population on the R. Kennet.

**Common Hawker** *Aeshna juncea* also had a poor year. This is a rare species in Berkshire at the best of times, but 2011 saw only the one record, in Crowthorne Woods.

**Downy Emerald** *Cordulia aenea* had a good year, particularly at sites in Swinley Forest and at Paice's Wood. Berkshire's other **Emerald**, **Brilliant Emerald** *Somatochlora metallica*, also continues to do well.

More details for all the species occurring in Berkshire are given in the annual report and newsletter, available from the email address below. If you have any records, please send them to me at [berksdragonflies@gmail.com](mailto:berksdragonflies@gmail.com).

Mike Turton, County Dragonfly Recorder

[berksdragonflies@gmail.com](mailto:berksdragonflies@gmail.com)



# REPORT FOR 2011 BY THE BERKSHIRE RECORDS COMMITTEE (BRC)

By Chris Heard

Committee for 2011: Chris Heard (Chairman), Ken Moore, Peter Standley

The BRC examines all records that involve rare species (see the accompanying lists), unusual dates and unusually large counts that are accompanied with descriptive notes. Unfortunately there are still a substantial number of records that have to be omitted from the report due to the lack of supporting notes. On occasions when the bird has been seen by a large number of observers the BRC may accept the record without further details. However the record may run the risk of being attributed to the wrong observer/s, or may be attributed to many observers (MO).

Species for which notes or descriptions are required fall into 3 categories: (Cat 1) Nationally rare species for which records first have to be accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC); (Cat 2) Locally rare species for which a full description is required (these includes all former BBRC rarities); (Cat 3) Locally scarce species (or commoner species seen at an unusual time of year or exceptional circumstances) for which short supporting notes are required. The species in categories 2 and 3 are as follows:

## Category 2

Bean Goose; Pink-footed Goose; American Wigeon; Green-winged Teal; Ring-necked Duck; Ferruginous Duck; Velvet Scoter; Fulmar; Manx Shearwater; Storm Petrel; Night Heron; Cattle Egret; Great White Egret; Purple Heron; White Stork; Spoonbill; Glossy Ibis (from 2013); Honey Buzzard; Black Kite; White-tailed Eagle; Goshawk; Rough-legged Buzzard; Golden Eagle; Redfooted Falcon; Spotted Crake; Corncrake; Crane; Kentish Plover; Dotterel; Pectoral Sandpiper; Purple Sandpiper; Red-necked Phalarope; Grey Phalarope; Pomarine Skua; Arctic Skua; Long-tailed Skua; Great Skua; Sabine's Gull; Ring-billed Gull; Caspian Gull; Iceland Gull; Glaucous Gull; White-winged Black Tern; Roseate Tern; Guillemot; Razorbill; Little Auk; Puffin; Alpine Swift; Short-toed Lark; Shore Lark; Red-rumped Swallow; Richard's Pipit; Tawny Pipit; Red-throated Pipit; Olive-backed Pipit (from 2013); Dipper; Bluethroat; Aquatic Warbler; Marsh Warbler; Icterine Warbler; Melodious Warbler; Pallas's Warbler; Yellow-browed Warbler; Bearded Tit; Golden Oriole; Woodchat Shrike; Hooded Crow; Rose-coloured Starling; Serin; Twite; Common (Mealy) Redpoll; Parrot Crossbill; Common Rosefinch; Lapland Bunting; Cirl Bunting; Ortolan Bunting; Little Bunting; all rare subspecies (e.g. Scandinavian Rock Pipit; Yellow Wagtail races and Siberian Chiffchaff) and all non-BBRC Rarity species (Cat 1) not currently on the Berkshire List.

## Category 3

Bewick's Swan; Whooper Swan (unless feral); White-fronted Goose; Brent Goose; Barnacle Goose (unless feral); Garganey; Scaup; Eider; Long-tailed Duck; Common Scoter; Redbreasted Merganser; Quail; Red-throated Diver; Black-throated Diver; Great Northern Diver; Red-necked Grebe; Slavonian Grebe; Black-necked Grebe; Leach's Storm Petrel; Gannet; Shag; Bittern; Marsh Harrier; Hen Harrier; Montagu's Harrier; Osprey; Merlin; Avocet; Grey Plover; Knot; Sanderling; Little Stint; Temminck's Stint; Curlew Sandpiper; Black-tailed Godwit; Bar-tailed Godwit; Whimbrel; Spotted Redshank; Wood Sandpiper; Mediterranean Gull; Little Gull; Yellow-legged Gull (spring records); Kittiwake; Little Tern; Sandwich Tern; Arctic Tern; Long-eared Owl; Hoopoe; Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

(where i.d. is based on drumming only); Wryneck; Woodlark (away from usual habitat); Rock Pipit; Water Pipit; White Wagtail (rump colour needed and full details for autumn records); Waxwing; Black Redstart; Ring Ouzel; Wood Warbler; Pied Flycatcher; Willow Tit; Redbacked Shrike; Great Grey Shrike; Raven; Tree Sparrow; Hawfinch; Snow Bunting.

**Review of records for 2011:** Records that the Committee has not been able to accept are listed below; although as comprehensive as possible, some of the unaccepted records may not have been included. Note that \* indicates that no description was received; 'date' indicates an unusual sighting; and 'count' indicates a highly unusual number.

Bewick's Swan	1, Shurlock Row 10/1*
Scaup	1, Padworth Lane GP, 15/1*; 1, Burghfield GP 12/2, 28/2*
Bittern	1, Thatcham Marsh, 9/9*
Great White Egret	1, Lavell's Lake, 15/4; 1, Hungerford, 22/11*
Honey Buzzard	1, Lower Farm GP, 23/10*
Goshawk	1, Crowthorne, 9/3*; 1, Moss End, 22/4*; 1, Moatlands GP, 23/4*; 1, Inkpen, 11/11*; 1, Lavell's Lake, 22/12
Hobby	2, 25/3*
Spotted Crake	1, Thatcham NDC, 3/9
Grey Plover	1, Woolhampton GP, 23/3*; 1, Lower Farm GP, 28/9*
Curlew Sandpiper	1, Lower Farm GP, 17/11*
Little Stint	1, Lower Farm GP, 29/6*
Wood Sandpiper	1, Woolhampton GP, 14/7*
Little Tern	1, Bowdon Woods, 20/4*
Long-eared Owl	1, Coldharbour, 8/5; 1, Bowdon Woods 27/12*
Woodlark	5* Englefield, 5/11*
Yellow Wagtail	1, Jubilee River, 27/11*
Marsh Warbler	1, Pangbourne 11/4*
Wood Warbler	1, North Standen House, Hungerford 21/6*
Siberian Chiffchaff	1, Sandhurst 7/1*
Pied Flycatcher	1, Woodley, 5/4*
Red-backed Shrike	1, Mapledurham playing-fields, Reading, 5/9*
Great Grey Shrike	1, Wishmoor Bottom, 23/10*
Tree Sparrow	5, Thatcham, 3/1*
Hawfinch	1, Greenham Common, 28/8*
Reed Warbler	1, Woolhampton GPs 31/3 (date)
Garden Warbler	1, Bottom Lane, Theale, 1/4 (date)
Lesser Whitethroat	5, Caesars Camp 25/5 (count)
Wood Warbler	1, Cake Wood 17/4*; 1, Frogmill Hurley, 6/8*
Yellow-browed Warbler	1, Cow Down 2/10
Spotted Flycatcher	1, Windsor Great Park 3/5 (heard only)
Willow Tit	1, Englemere Pond 29/3*
Tree Sparrow	3, Chapel Row, 13/1*; 2, Frogmill Hurley, 22/10*
Brambling	1, California CP, 24/5 (date)
Mealy Redpoll	2, Eversley GP 27/11*
Parrot Crossbill	2, Padworth Common 9/4-10/4*



*Bittern, Dorney Wetlands, January 18. Photo: Michael Hunt.*



*Black-necked Grebe, Woolhampton Gravel Pits, March 17. Photo: Mike McKee.*

*RIGHT: Ferruginous Duck, Dinton Pastures, November 30. Photo: Linda Gardner-Langham.*



*BELOW TOP TO BOTTOM: White-fronted Geese, Burnthouse Lane, February 2. Photo: Marek Walford. Pink-footed Geese, Lower Farm GP, April 10. Photo: Marek Walford. Scaup, Blackpotts Viaduct, January 1. Photo: Marek Walford.*





*Pectoral Sandpiper, Crookham Common, September 24. Photo: Marek Walford.*



*Wood Sandpiper, Lea Farm, August 7. Photo: Roger Murfitt.*



*TOP: Knot, QMR, August 20.  
Photo: Marek Walford.*

*ABOVE: Purple Sandpiper, QMR,  
November 8. Photo: Mike McKee.*

*RIGHT: Spoonbill, Lower Farm GP,  
May 8. Photo: Marek Walford.*



RIGHT: *Flamingo (escape)*, Lower Farm GP, April 28. Photo: Marek Walford.

BELOW: *Roseate Tern*, QMR, May 12. Photo: Mike McKee.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Grey Phalarope*, QMR, September 14. Photo: Andrew Moon.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Shag*, QMR, September 17. Photo: Andrew Moon.



*Snow Bunting*, QMR, November 6. Photo: Mike McKee.



*Bearded Tit*, Lavell's Lake, November 24. Photo: David Harris.



*Black Redstart*, QMR, November 26. Photo: Mike McKee.



*Tree Sparrow, Jealott's Hill, February 2. Photo: Dave Bartlett.*

Tree Sparrows were last recorded in Berkshire in the winter of 2010/11 and were last seen in the breeding season in 2002. However, they can be quite elusive and it is possible that a remnant population remains or dispersing birds may arrive from elsewhere.

Modelled on successful Tree Sparrow recovery projects in Oxfordshire and Wiltshire, in November 2014 the BOC started winter feeding, initially at three sites at which Tree Sparrows have been recorded in the previous four years. If Tree Sparrows are discovered, feeding will be continued through the year and nest boxes installed in an attempt to rebuild the population.

Please help by sending any records of Tree Sparrows to the project manager, Renton Righelato ([renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk); tel 0787 981 2564).

## THE SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 2011

*Species accounts were compiled by the account writers listed below and copy-edited by Richard Burness. The Systematic List was edited by Chris Heard.*

Ken Moore	<i>Swans, Geese and Rails</i>
Derek Barker	<i>Ducks and Nightjar</i>
Andy Horscroft	<i>Gamebirds, Divers, Grebes, Gannet to Shag and Herons</i>
Steve Ricks	<i>Birds of Prey</i>
Marek Walford	<i>Waders</i>
Paul-bright Thomas	<i>Skuas, Gulls and Terns</i>
Adam Bassett	<i>Pigeons, Ring-necked Parakeet and Cuckoo</i>
Renton Righelato	<i>Owls, Chats and Thrushes</i>
Mark Whitaker	<i>Swift and Woodpeckers</i>
Pete Gipson	<i>Larks, Swallows, Pipits, Wagtails, Waxwing, Wren and Dunmooch</i>
Richard Crawford	<i>Warblers and Crests</i>
Roger Stansfield	<i>Flycatchers, BeardedTit, Tits, Nuthatch and Treecreeper</i>
Fraser Cottington	<i>Shrikes, Crows and Starling</i>
Richard Burness	<i>Sparrows Finches and Buntings</i>
Chris Heard	<i>Escapes and Hybrids</i>

### Abbreviations and place names

Abbreviations used in the systematic lists are shown below. For place names difficulties arise where there are several names for the same sites including where, for example, a gravel pit complex is named but not the individual pit. A map and guide to the main sites is included towards the end of the report to assist with identification and further detail can be found at [www.berksbirds.co.uk/pits.asp](http://www.berksbirds.co.uk/pits.asp).

#### AGE/SEX

<b>ad</b>	Adult
<b>f/s</b>	First summer
<b>f/w</b>	First winter (plumage)
<b>imm</b>	Immature
<b>juv</b>	Juvenile
<b>s/p</b>	Summer plumage
<b>s/s</b>	Second summer
<b>s/w</b>	Second winter
<b>w/p</b>	Winter plumage
<b>w</b>	Winter
<b>3/s</b>	Third summer
<b>3/w</b>	Third winter
<b>4/s</b>	Fourth summer

#### PLACES/LOCALITIES

<b>CP</b>	Country Park
<b>GC</b>	Golf course
<b>GP</b>	Gravel Pit(s)
<b>R.</b>	River
<b>SF</b>	Sewage Farm
<b>STW</b>	Sewage Treatment Works
<b>QMR</b>	Queen Mother Reservoir

Please note that the Moor Green Lakes LNR is represented under Eversley GPs

## MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

*Locally common resident*

The highest count of the year was, as usual, at The Promenade in Windsor, 285 on Mar 25.

**Breeding:** Nesting is generally very much under-recorded and we have little information on fledging success. However, the Atlas surveys of 2008-11 confirmed breeding in 131 of Berkshire's 394 tetrads, a 30% increase on the surveys 20 years earlier.

Monthly maxima at regular count sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GPs	51	14	15	–	–	–	–	–	35	38	36	46
Dinton Pastures CP	30	15	10	30	5	14	–	18	–	–	60	54
Eversley/MGLR	18	20	17	12	–	5	45	41	28	18	19	30
Lower Farm GP	7	6	7	6	5	2	3	7	6	10	5	4
Newbury, The Wharf	59	68	38	30	31	13	32	27	31	42	42	–
Thatcham Marsh GPs	3	13	13	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	4	2
Theale GPs	50	25	22	11	–	32	38	34	25	27	65	65
Twyford GPs	53	22	15	4	2	7	2	6	24	35	19	27
Windsor, The Promenade	187	–	285	249	–	198	238	–	–	173	148	–
Wraysbury/Horton GPs	119	62	79	–	5	–	–	23	–	–	–	73

## BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*

*A scarce and declining passage migrant and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

The recent small increase in records continued in 2010 with 2 records involving 8 birds in the second winter. Three adults briefly visited the BA pit at Wraysbury GPs on Nov 30 (CDRH) and a family party of 5 (2 ads 3 imms), first located at Marlow GPs, Bucks on Dec 4, visited Cock Marsh on Dec 5 (ADB *et al.*) remaining to Dec 6.

## BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabialis rossicus*

*Rare winter visitor*

A single first-winter bird of the Tundra race *A.f rossicus* was found at Great Meadow Pond on 17 Dec (CDRH) and was then seen regularly, into 2012, usually associating with Greylag Geese (CDRH, DJB).

## PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

*Scarce winter visitor*

A good year for this species, albeit that all the sightings were in the first winter period.

Brimpton GPs had the first of the year on Jan 6 (GEW), just for the one day. The next was at Woolhampton GPs on March 6 (KEM), which stayed for another three days (MO). The next sighting, again a single bird, was on March 20 at Hosehill LNR (AVL), remaining until Mar 31 when it moved to the Bottom Lane Floods, staying there for a day or so. A group of 3 Pinkfooted Geese (2 adults and a first year) arrived at Lower Farm GP on Apr 9 (RP; JEA), and were last seen on May 4 (NC).

## WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

*Uncommon but regular winter visitor, scarce passage migrant*

The first record of 2011 was a single adult at Manor Farm, SE of the Albert Bridge, Old Windsor on Jan 3 (KPD). On Jan 29, a party of 4 birds (2adults and 2 immatures) flew over Pingewood GPs landing to the S, by Burnthouse Lane Farm (ABT). They stayed in the immediate area until March 8 (CDRH). It is interesting to note that a party of 4 White-fronted Geese (2 adults and 2 immatures) were seen on Feb 13 (RFug) at Mortimer STW. In the second winter period, a flock of 6 circled at Horton GP on Nov 8 (CDRH), then on Dec 10 a single adult bird was present for approx 48 hours at Streatley (NJB) with a Greylag flock.

## GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

*Common and widespread introduced resident (northern wild populations are Amber Listed)*

Shown below are monthly maxima figures at the main sites for this year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eversley/Moor Green Lakes	52	22	8	11	–	7	9	140	211	203	2	26
Padworth Lane GP	161	–	–	–	7	–	–	84	–	104	25	65
Summerleaze GP	–	6	–	–	42	60	111	118	–	–	11	72
Theale GPs	141	112	201	12	8	15	30	60	119	84	205	156
Twyford GPs	–	–	2	32	9	32	15	223	–	2	–	–
Windsor Great Park	277	139	424	359	404	255	440	383	202	157	17	372

Individual counts over 100, not in the above tables were: 102 Aldermaston GP Jan 13 (JPM), 151 Dukes Lane Jan 29 (DJB), 199 Borough Marsh Aug 20 (DJB) and 213 at Winkfield on Dec 25 (CDRH). The count of 440 for Windsor Great Park in July is the highest ever recorded at Great Meadow Pond (DJB). **Breeding:** was reported at 14 sites, with 59 broods and an estimate of 315 young, no doubt very much under recorded.

## SNOW GOOSE *Chen caerulescens*

*Occasional escapee and feral resident at one site where numbers are in decline, has bred*

The last remaining Snow Goose from Eversley GPs, survived into 2011. It was frequently seen at Eversley GPs during the year. Other white morph Snow Goose sightings were: Remenham Jan 30 (MSFW), Thatcham GPs Feb 12 (TPo) and at Swallowfield Nov 25, any or all of which may have been the Eversley bird.

## CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

*Common and widespread introduced resident*

The monthly maxima at regular 'count' sites are detailed below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GPs	48	46	71	–	2	–	–	–	22	48	110	44
DPCP/Lea Farm	363	282	83	68	100	–	–	–	9	–	348	–
Eversley GP/Moor Green Lakes	178	185	152	–	4	54	249	537	374	143	134	154
Lower Farm GP	127	180	60	11	67	41	55	180	56	60	150	220
Thatcham Marsh / GPs	49	58	41	–	27	79	90	111	64	167	70	49

Theale GPs	119	112	221	100	14	5	27	9	129	147	104	81
Twyford GPs	66	24	83	46	13	-	18	131	75	177	39	18
Windsor Great Park	46	148	158	103	176	30	156	39	92	205	6	20
Windsor Promenade	171	-	142	88	-	188	128	-	-	277	204	-

Other than those mentioned above, additional counts in excess of 150 were as follows: approximately 300 birds at Borough Marsh Jan 10 (RDR), 201 at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill Aug 20 (DJB), 695 at Queen Mother Reservoir Aug 25 (PBT), 520 at Summerleaze GP in Aug (BDC), 185 on the R.Thames, Reading Oct 17, and 284 on Dec 17 (both WEBs) and at Remenham, 263 on Nov 5 and 335 on Dec 19 (both DJB). **Breeding:** as usual much under reported, but at least 24 sites with 46 broods were recorded, however little is known of fledging success.

## BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

*Localised and declining feral resident, extremely rare wild vagrant*

The start of the year began very much as last year finished. Two groups of Barnacle Geese were present in Berkshire, mixed in with the occasional individual wanderer. The East Berkshire group (present since Dec 7 2010) started the year with 15 at Dorney Wetlands on Jan 1 (DT; MFW; BDC), then again on Jan 2 (BAJC) and at Queen Mother Reservoir on the same day (CDRH). This group was not seen again until Jan 22, again at Dorney Wetlands (ABT) and finally at Queen Mother Reservoir on Feb 1 and 2 (CDRH; MMc). The second group, 'the Berkshire residents', were first recorded in 2011 on Jan 2 at Eversley, the 'usual' 14 birds plus the 'usual' 2 hybrids (JMC). They were seen very regularly until the end of August. However counts from Aug 30 (RGi) refer only to 13 Barnacle Geese, suggesting that one had been lost.

**Recorders Comment:** despite wishful thinking by a number of county listers, there are no grounds to believe that the QMR/Dorney Wetlands flock were truly wild birds (as stated in the 2010 Report, they are believed to be the same birds that had been at QE II Reservoir, Surrey - for their second year - and which at one point included an escaped Red-breasted Goose!). The latest update of 'Non-native breeding birds in the UK, 2009-2011' estimates approximately 1000 breeding pairs of feral Barnacle Geese in the UK (*Brit. Birds* 107: 122-141), including up to 133 counted at Cotswold Water Park in July 2011 and up to 423 at Willington GPs in Bedfordshire (Bedfordshire Bird Report 2011).

## BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

All the Brent Geese recorded in 2011 were in the second winter period and all sightings were of 'dark-bellied bernicla. The records in date order follow. The first record was of 4 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Oct 29 (CDRH), a juvenile on the water at 9.20am and an additional flock of 3 (including 2 adults), which flew East over the reservoir half-an-hour later (CDRH). The next sighting was at Horton GPs on Nov 5 when another flock of 3 flew towards Queen Mother Reservoir but seemed to be 'put off' by Red Kites, and headed South-east (CDRH). On the same day an adult was at Queen Mother Reservoir, until at least 10am, with another 2 there on Nov 7, an adult briefly during the morning followed by a first-winter in the afternoon (both CDRH). On Nov 8 a single bird was at Lower Farm GP (NC), which stayed until the following day, when the last sighting of the year was of another 2 adults at QMR (CDRH).

## EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

*Common introduced resident in Mid and East Berkshire, more local in the West*

This introduced species continues to expand its range in Berkshire. The monthly maxima at the regular 'count' sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eversley/Moor Green Lakes	25	26	8	13	1	6	35	41	180	189	112	92
Dinton Pastures CP / Lea Farm	5	2	2	16	7	14	21	11	2	21	12	1
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	2	-	11	14	-	27	-	26	13	18	-
Remenham/Remenham Hill	65	-	-	-	-	-	30	26	6	2	90	74
Theale GPs	19	15	22	20	4	18	23	10	7	9	11	15

The only other high counts were 37 at Temple on Jan 12 and 74 at Summerleaze GP on Sep 4 (both CDRH). **Breeding:** Atlas surveys in 2008-11 confirmed breeding in 87 Berkshire tetrads. In 2011, 170 young were reported to have been produced by 40 pairs, but there was little information on fledging success.

## SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

*Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor (Amber Listed)*

Records were received from 31 locations, 9 in West Berkshire, 8 in Mid Berkshire and 14 in East Berkshire. The monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	-	1	2	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pingewood GPs	3	4	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dinton Pastures CP	2	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Dorney Wetlands	3	3	2	5	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Eversley GPs	-	-	2	2	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Great Meadow Pond	-	1	4	8	16*	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP	1	3	5	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Padworth Lane GP	9	4	7	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	1	-	9	25	12*	15*	13*	9	1	1	3	-
Slough Sewage Farm	-	1	-	6	16	17	1	2	-	-	-	1
Theale GPs	3	-	2	2	1	-	4	-	-	5	2	-
Woolhampton GPs	4	3	6	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Elswhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	-	6	5	8	9	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Number of Birds</b>	-	8	14	21	30*	2	-	-	-	-	-	-

\* counts include young birds

High counts involving just adults included 9 at Padworth Lane GP on Jan 19 (KEM), 8 at Great Meadow Pond on Apr 16 (CDRH) and after a build-up of birds at QMR in April,

numbers peaked at 25 on Apr 22 (CDRH), the highest ever county total to involve just adults! Numbers were also high at Slough SF where 16 were located on May 30 increasing to 17 on Jun 3 (CDRH). Away from the main sites no counts exceeded 4 birds. **Breeding:** took place at six E Berkshire locations and involved 8 pairs, making 2011 the best year since 2002! Surprisingly 3 broods were hatched at QMR, with at least 11 juveniles fledging (CDRH). Elsewhere, single broods were noted at Oakley Green (CCH), Great Meadow Pond (DJB, CDRH), Prince of Wales Pond, Windsor Great Park (KPD) and Horton Brook Quarry (CDRH). A very young duckling found alone in Old Windsor on May 29 was successfully hand-reared and later released at Dorney Wetlands on Jul 10 (KPD).

## MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

*Locally common introduced resident*

Birds were reported from at least 63 locations, 27 in East Berkshire, 28 in Mid Berkshire and 8 in West Berkshire. The monthly high counts at the most regularly counted sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eversley GPs	1	5	6	6	4	-	1	6	6	3	-	13
Great Meadow Pond	2	-	8	7	13	3	4	15	8	11	2	-
Whiteknights Park Lake	11	-	-	2	22	15	-	-	51	-	43	24
Windsor Great Park*	7	5	19	1	4	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wraysbury GPs	-	-	3	4	2	-	15	-	-	-	-	1

\* counts made away from Great Meadow Pond

The high counts of 51 and 43 at Whiteknights Lake occurred on Sep 7 (PG) and Nov 25 (PEH). Totals for Windsor Great Park are obviously based on casual observations as this area is arguably the species stronghold within the county and a thorough survey would no doubt increase the monthly counts. Away from the main sites, double figure counts were; 19 at Savernake Park Bracknell on Jan 3 (TS) and 15 there on Feb 20 (JGo), 22 at Silwood Park on Oct 22 (RJD) and 26 at Prospect Park Reading on Dec 21 (AVL). The highest West Berkshire count was 9 at Shalford near Brimpton on Jan 15 (GEW). **Breeding:** was confirmed at 13 locations; in East Berkshire there were 2 broods at Old Windsor (KPD), 3 Broods at Great Meadow Pond (DJB) and 1 brood respectively at Maidenhead (BDC), Windsor Great Park (MHu) and Sunninghill Park (DJB). In Mid Berkshire a nest with at least 8 eggs was found at Beech Hill (TGB), single broods were noted at Beenham (TGB), Oval Pond (PH), Arborfield (DJS) and at Whiteknights Park Lake where a female was observed with 18 ducklings on May 11 (DFi). Two broods were located at the Thames Valley Park on May 31 (JLS). There were 2 breeding records for West Berkshire, a brood of 6 on the R Enbourne at Brimpton on May 27 (GEW) and a female with 1 duckling on the R Kennet at Woolhampton on May 31 (GF).

## WIGEON *Anas penelope*

*Locally common winter visitor and rare summer visitor that has bred (Amber Listed)*

Records were received from at least 32 locations throughout the county (birds were recorded from 38 sites in 2010). The monthly high counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GPs	140	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	122	181
Dinton Pastures CP	350	144	100	7	1	-	-	3	7	7	118	80
Eversley GPs	524	120	124	2	2	-	-	-	-	84	221	313
Great Meadow Pond	34	1	-	-	-	-	2	6	18	59	88	133
Horton GPs	300	300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	13
Lower Farm GPs	100	200	20	2	-	-	1	1	3	6	7	35
Pingewood GPs	100	87	200	2	-	-	-	-	-	21	150	100
Theale GPs	375	200	52	4	4	2	1	4	35	160	179	315
Twyford GPs	459	67	52	-	-	-	1	-	70	150	92	180
Woolhampton GPs	3	1	6	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-	2
Wraysbury GPs	27	43	2	-	-	-	-	-	42	-	17	14

**First winter:** the cold weather of Dec 2010 continued into 2011 producing high counts of 459 at Twyford GPs on Jan 14 (WEBs) and 524 at Eversley GPs on Jan 17 (JMC). A leucistic female was with a flock of 300 on Horton fields pit on Jan 26 and Feb 2 (CDRH). Numbers began decline in Feb and by March only a few sites were recording birds, so 200+ at Pingewood GPs on Mar 23 (ABT) was a surprising total. The highest count in April was only 7 and by May late birds lingered at only 3 locations. A drake and female remained at Theale GPs into Jun (the drake to Jun 3 on Main Pit (ABT) whilst the female summered on Hosehill Lake). **Second winter:** the first returning birds appeared in July with 2 eclipse drakes at Great Meadow Pond on Jul 10 (DJB), 1 at Lower Farm GP on Jul 14 (LSe), 21 at Wrays GP on Jul 21 (CDRH) and an eclipse drake at Twyford GPs on Jul 23 (MFW). Numbers slowly increased in Aug/Sep before the main arrival from late Sep into Oct, high counts of 160 at Theale GPs Oct 16 (WEBs) and 150 at Twyford GPs on Oct 17 (WEBs) being noteworthy. As winter progressed, it was clear that numbers were much lower than the corresponding period in 2010, the highest count being only 315 at Hosehill Lake, Theale GPs on Dec 18 (WEBs).



**GADWALL** *Anas strepera*

Common winter visitor, uncommon summer resident which breeds in small numbers (Amber Listed)

Records were received from over 40 locations throughout the county, the monthly high counts at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	1		5	7	6	5*	2	10	–	2	2	–
Bray GPs	93	41	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	14	32	44
Burghfield GPs	146	140	31	–	–	–	–	–	44	42	94	174
Dinton Pastures CP	200	120	35	11	9	25*	10*	18	51	49	100	140
Dorney Wetlands	41	36	3	12	–	12	–	–	10	27	–	50
Eversley GPs	94	46	10	8	2	10*	4	2	23	53	93	160
Great Meadow Pond	56	67	40	21	33	50	39	44	63	97	159	213
Horton GPs	897	749	19	–	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	48
Harveys Meadow, Hungerford	–	2	12	6	6	8	–	–	–	–	6	2
Lower Farm GP	102	200	156	70	11	18	9	12	40	14	24	48
Summerleaze GP	26	–	–	–	4	–	–	–	–	3	4	26
Thatcham GPs	–	3	6	11	4	4	–	4	6	7	–	–
Theale GPs	129	70	16	5	–	–	–	–	46	58	266	419
Twyford GPs	163	142	46	7	2	4*	–	13	40	74	58	91
Woolhampton GPs	5	1	2	–	1	–	3	5	16	3	–	–
Wraysbury GPs	105	83	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	66
Elsewhere	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Number of Birds</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10*</b>	<b>12*</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>–</b>

\* includes young birds. Note as with other duck species WEBS counts for Theale GPs were not all done on the same date thus figures from Jan to Nov are not complete!

**First winter:** the record counts at Horton GPs in Dec 2010 were broken again on Jan 2 when 897 were on the Kingsmead Pit with 749 still present on Feb 8 (JMC). Away from Horton the largest counts involved c200 birds at Dinton Pastures CP on Jan 3 (FJC) and the same number at Lower Farm GP on Feb 24 (NC). Away from the main sites, 45 were on floods at Home Farm Kintbury on Feb 20 (RGS). **Summer/Breeding:** was confirmed at 8 locations. The main site was Dinton Pastures CP where a brood of 9 was found on Lavell's Lake on Jun 4 (MFW), a further 2 broods of 6 and 7 respectively were on Sandford Lake from Jun 8 (RM). Single broods were noted at Twyford GPs on Jun 5 (MFW), Thames Valley Park on Jun 11 (JLe; RDr), Lower Farm GP from Jun 12 (NC), Aldermaston GP on Jun 15 (JPM), Eversley GPs on Jun 26 (BMA), Pingewood GPs on Jun 28 (RRi) and Donnington Grove on Jul 29 (IW). Away from the breeding sites, birds were noted at 11 locations between May and July, the highest count being 50 at Great Meadow Pond on Jun 12 (DJB). **Second winter:** winter migrants began to augment the summer population from August. However, numbers did not match those of the first winter period (milder conditions?) and only 5 sites recorded counts of over 100 birds. On Nov 21, 266 were present at Theale Main GP, increasing to 419 on Dec 18 (WEBs). Elsewhere the only count to exceed 200 came from Great Meadow Pond where high numbers present at the site since June culminated with 213 there on Dec 11 (DJB).

**TEAL** *Anas crecca*

Common winter visitor, rare in summer, has bred (Amber Listed)

Records were received from about 40 locations throughout the county, the monthly high counts at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	12	25	13	–	–	–	10	24	31	24	40	–
Bray GPs	8	–	11	9	–	–	–	–	–	5	9	6
Dinton Pastures CP	182	35	17	11	–	–	–	5	3	11	40	74
Dorney Wetlands	50	10	13	4	–	–	–	–	–	9	–	4
Eversley GPs	25	21	12	8	2	–	2	9	12	12	7	62
Great Meadow Pond	6	2	15	6	–	1	3	2	1	16	6	1
Lower Farm GP	200	100	30	11	4	–	1	20	29	30	53	167
Pingewood GPs	27	20	100	7	–	–	3	2	6	12	15	66
Slough SF	–	–	–	12	–	–	4	15	6	–	59	120
Theale GPs	6	3	1	2	1	–	–	1	–	2	23	1
Woolhampton GPs	8	2	4	2	–	–	–	6	7	4	7	19
Elsewhere	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Number of Birds</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>31</b>

**First winter:** the high numbers that had been present in Dec 2010 had largely dispersed by the beginning of 2011. Only 2 sites held in excess of 100 birds in Jan: Lea Farm Pit, Dinton Pastures had 180 on Jan 3 (FJC) and 182 on Jan 30 (MFW) and 200+ were noted at Lower Farm GP on Jan 12 (NC) with 100+ still present in early Feb (NC). High Counts in March involved 70 on floods at Home Farm Kintbury from Mar 1 to Mar 9 with 60 there on Mar 17 (RGS) and c 100 at Pingewood GPs on Mar 23 (ABT). Although much reduced in numbers, birds were still to be found at 14 sites in April, however by May the only records were: 1 drake at Hosehill Lake from April to May 2 (AVL), 1 pair at Padworth Lane GP to May 1 (MFW), 1 drake at Eversley GPs from May 1 to May 5 (BMA), 1 pair at QMR on May 1 (CDRH) and 2 pairs at Lower Farm GP on May 2 (NC), one of the drakes remaining to May 21 (JL). The only June record involved a drake at Great Meadow Pond on Jun 19 (DJB). **Second winter:** the first records of returning birds involved 4 at Slough SF on Jul 4 (CDRH), 7 at Aldermaston GP on Jul 7 increasing to 10 on Jul 9 (JPM) and 3 at Great Meadow Pond on Jul 10 (DJB). A slow but steady increase followed throughout the autumn, the only counts of 100+ were in December when 167 were counted at Lower Farm GP on Dec 10 (IW; JL) and 120 at Slough SF on Dec 31 (CDRH).

## MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Common (locally abundant) resident and winter visitor (Amber Listed)

The monthly high counts at the most regularly counted sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	21	16	7	7	-	-	20	54	36	34	28	-
Thames, Boveney to Bray	55	51	60	41	67	99	102	80	23	-	11	-
Dinton Pastures CP	66	80	60	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	44
Eversley GPs	52	50	37	-	-	-	59	50	67	96	102	124
Great Meadow Pond	42	15	24	20	48	39	66	39	47	59	24	20
Lower Farm GP	30	9	7	13	13	10	60	80	42	100	19	24
Thatcham NDC and GPs	104	196	73	-	-	110	135	122	98	99	91	166

The high count of 196 at Thatcham occurred on Feb 12 (TPO). Elsewhere 98 were on Searles Farm GP, Burghfield GPs on Nov 27 (WEBs). **Breeding:** was confirmed at 26 sites involving 52 broods, the main sites being Dinton Pastures with 9+ broods (MO) and Great Meadow Pond with 6 broods (DJB).

## PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers (Amber Listed)

There were 17 records from 12 sites involving 47-50 birds. The monthly status is shown in the table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	7	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	1
Number of Birds	24	4	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	16	1

**First winter:** after no records in Dec 2010, a January influx! This began with a first winter drake taking up residence at Padworth Lane GP from Jan 3 into April (KEM *et al.*). This was followed by 2 drakes at Lower Farm GP on Jan 10 (NC), 1 remaining to Jan 12 (NC), 8 at Woolhampton GPs on Jan 16 (WEBs), 6 (2 drakes and 4 females) at Eversley GPs on Jan 18 (GDu; KEM), 3 (2 drakes 1 female) at Hosehill Lake on Jan 20 (KHe) with 1 drake remaining to Jan 22 (MO), 1 drake at Borough Marsh on Jan 20 (RRi), 2 (Hosehill birds?) at Wigmore Lane GPs, Theale on Jan 23 (MRWS) and a drake at Eversley GPs from Jan 25 to 27 (PKe; BMA). A further record in February involved 1 drake and 2 females at Aldermaston GP on Feb 9 (JPM). Meanwhile the Padworth Lane drake continued to be seen throughout March and into April being last reported on Apr 16 (MFW) and may have been the drake seen briefly at Hosehill Lake the same day (AVL). **Second winter:** passage began in October when 4 were located on the Hurst Green Pit, Twyford GPs on Oct 2 (AR; IDP) a drake was reported from Eversley GPs on Oct 18 (MGLR). A November influx produced 5 records beginning with 10 flying NE over Wraysbury from Windsor Great Park on Nov 6 (CDRH). Then single females were located at QMR (MMc) and Hosehill Lake (KEM) on Nov 12, 2 drakes were at Wraysbury GPs on Nov 13 (CDRH) and a pair at Eversley GPs from Nov 15 (RMB) to Nov 24 (MO). Finally a drake visited Lower Farm GP on Dec 3 (IW; JL).

## GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

Scarce passage migrant rarer in summer, has bred (Schedule One and amber Listed)

Marginally better than the 2010, which was a poor year for this species, with 7 records involving perhaps 6 birds! **Spring:** began with a drake located on the R Thames at Old Windsor on May 1 (SK). Nearby a drake circled QMR at 0836hrs on May 8 before flying off south and is presumed to be the same individual that was found later that day at Horton GPs (CDRH). The last spring record involved another drake at Hosehill Lake on Jun 1 (KEM *et al.*). **Autumn:** an immature was on the Berry's Lane pit, Burghfield GPs on Aug 21 (RCr) being seen again on Aug 22 and 28 (MFW). One (probably an eclipse drake) was at the eastern end of Summerleaze GP on Sep 27 (CDRH) and finally 1 (not aged or sexed) was with Pintails on Hurst Green pit, Twyford GPs on Oct 2 (IDP; AR).

## SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Locally common winter visitor, scarce in the summer, occasionally breeds (Amber Listed)

Records were received from about 40 locations throughout the county, the monthly high counts at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	8	4	5	2	-	-	-	-	2	4	6	-
Burghfield GPs	170	2	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	32	67
Dinton Pastures CP	28	24	25	8	-	1	6	8	18	17	5	8
Dorney Wetlands/ Slough SF	2	-	11	4	2	2	3	32	-	7	-	4
Eversley GPs	48	23	21	6	-	-	-	-	10	18	29	55
Great Meadow Pond	21	8	16	3	2	3	8	36	9	10	9	12
Lower Farm GP	40	60	70	15	3	4	2	12	36	61	78	95
Pingewood GPs	4	3	4	11	2	-	-	1	-	12	1	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	3	5	1	-	1	1	1	-	13	7
Thatcham GPs/NDC	20	20	6	-	-	-	1	-	7	5	44	35
Theale GPs	119	152	10	10	-	-	1	6	13	22	53	66
Twyford GPs	38	29	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	22	41
Whiteknights Park Lake	19	19	16	4	-	-	-	-	-	27	32	35
Woolhampton GPs	15	-	5	-	3	2	-	-	4	4	-	-
Elsewhere	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Number of Birds</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>57</b>

The table shows that the only counts to exceed 100 came in the first winter period with 170 at Burghfield GPs on Jan 8 (JA) and a peak of 152 on Theale Main GP on Feb 2 (RJB), the highest second winter count was 95 at Lower Farm GP on Dec 24 (IW; JL). Away from the main sites, significant counts came from Moatlands GP with 50 on Feb 13 (MFW) and Wraysbury GPs with 56 on Sep 24 (CDRH). As usual small numbers were present during the summer; however there were no signs of breeding.

## RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

Scarce visitor of presumed feral origin, has bred

Records were received from 12 locations, 3 in W Berkshire, 2 in Mid Berkshire and 7 in E Berkshire. The monthly status is shown in the table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	8	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	4	3
Max. number of birds	17	2	1	3	3	8*	7*	3	1	2	11	5

**First winter:** the high numbers recorded in Dec 2010 continued into Jan 2011 and it is likely that most January birds had arrived in 2010. Apart from the Thatcham resident drake, that was present all year (present since 2009); all reports came from the east of Reading. At Eversley GPs, the pair present since Dec 2010 remained to Jan 18 (GDU; KEM), an adult drake and 2 females were found on Bray GPs on Jan 2 (DJB) and were regularly seen to Jan 22 when only the females were present (DJB). Further east 1 drake and 2 females were on the Jubilee River at Eton on Jan 3 (KPD) and on Jan 13 another 3 (1 first winter drake and 2 females) were located on Horton GPs (CDRH) and though clearly not the Bray birds could possibly have been the Eton trio. Later a first winter drake and a female were on Wraysbury GPs on Jan 26 (CDRH), the drake being seen again on Feb 13 (CDRH) and an adult pair were on Orlitts Lake on Jan 29 (CDRH). It is probable that at least some of these birds may relate to the flock of 9 that were present on QMR on Dec 30 2010 having since dispersed. The only Mid Berkshire record involved a drake at Twyford GPs on Jan 30 (SAB). **Spring/Summer:** a drake was at Woolhampton GPs on Apr 10 (KEM), this bird or another drake then appeared at Hosehill Lake on Apr 29 (RJG) and remained to Jun 3 (ABT). Nearby at Bottom Lane GP a female with a brood of 5 well grown ducklings was discovered on Jun 25 (KGW) remaining into July and being last seen on Jul 9 (RM) when the young were close to fledging. This is the second confirmed breeding record for Berkshire. Autumn/**Second winter:** 2 at Theale GPs on Aug 15 (CJ) were followed by 5 at Woolhampton GPs on Nov 2 (RF) with 1 drake to Nov 7 (KEM). A first winter drake was located at Wraysbury GPs on Nov 10 (CDRH) and a leucistic adult drake appeared on Heron Lakes, Wraysbury on Nov 26 (CDRH). Finally 3 (1 drake and 2 females) were reported at Wigmore Lane GPs on Nov 27 (WEBs) before they moved to Hosehill Lake on Dec 6 (RCr)

## POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant, uncommon in summer though occasionally breeds (Amber Listed)

The monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	17	29	6	–	–	3	3	4	28	30	2	–
Bray GPs	160	88	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	25	64	110
Burghfield GPs	37	34	25	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	26	34
Dinton Pastures CP	51	52	40	–	1	–	–	–	2	12	24	53
Eversley GPs	63	37	36	1	1	–	–	1	8	15	21	22
Great Meadow Pond	96	114	42	12	7	34	107	105	12	11	7	29
Lower Farm GP	20	28	25	9	8	10	16	14	26	33	15	26
Thatcham Marsh/GPs	35	29	28	3	3	–	5	6	5	22	23	32
Theale GPs	47	200	21	–	1	3	3	–	8	29	170	102
Twyford GPs	39	21	13	–	–	–	–	–	–	10	5	2
Woolhampton GPs	70	24	29	2	2	3	3	10	8	29	25	20
Wraysbury GPs	100	237	115	–	–	–	20	–	–	–	–	100
Elsewhere	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Number of birds</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>59</b>

**First winter:** high main site totals included 160 at Bray GPs on Jan 2 (DJB), 200 at Hosehill Lake on Feb 5 (DAMD), 114 at Great Meadow Pond on Feb 6 (DJB) and 237 at Wraysbury GPs on Feb 8 (JMC). Away from the main sites, the highest count was 58 at Summerleaze GP on Jan 16 (BDC). **Spring/Summer:** the lack of WEBs counts at this time probably reduces the number of sites where Pochard are recorded, however birds were still recorded from 7 locations in April and an encouraging 12 in May! Although breeding was not confirmed at Lower farm GP this year, breeding was confirmed at Great Meadow Pond where 2 broods of 7 and 2 ducklings respectively were seen on May 29 (DJB), unfortunately all had disappeared by Jun 12, probably due to predation by pike (DJB). June records came from 7 sites including 10 at Lower Farm GP on Jun 28 (IW) whilst at Great Meadow Pond, the annual summer influx lead to 34 including 13 juveniles being present on Jun 26 with numbers continuing to increase into July with 80 present on Jul 3 increasing again to an unprecedented 107 by Jul 31 (DJB). Elsewhere 20 were on Wraysbury GPs on Jul 21 (CDRH) and 6 fully fledged juveniles were noted at Lower Farm GP on Jul 14 (IW) and 5 juveniles (same group?) were on a Thatcham Marsh pool on Jul 24 (IW; JL). Autumn/**Second winter:** the high numbers at Great Meadow Pond continued into August with 105 on Aug 7 and 101 on Aug 14 (DJB). Numbers then fell quickly to a peak Sep count of only 12. Throughout the rest of the county numbers slowly increased as winter immigrants arrived, however, compared to the first winter, numbers were low and the only counts of note were 170 Theale GPs on Nov 27 (WEBs) and 100 at Wraysbury GPs on Dec 9 (JMC)

## FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

The 35th and 36th records for the county came in the form of 2 first winter drakes. The first, located at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Oct 1 (IDP *et al.*) showed very well and although there was some initial uncertainty of its identity, identification was confirmed by CDRH. This bird remained in the area until at least Dec 4 (RJG). The second record involved a very skulking individual present for only 1 afternoon at Heron Lake, Wraysbury GPs on Nov 27 (CDRH). (The long staying escape was again located on the Jubilee River at Dorney W in Feb and early Mar (BDC; KPD; PEH)).

## TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Common resident, numbers increase in winter

The monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	16	20	17	12	2	9	5	8	19	12	4	–
Ascot Heath	–	–	–	22	–	–	–	22	8	23	22	33
Bray GPs	794	412	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	143	333	318
Burghfield GPs	334	393	235	–	–	–	–	–	43	94	419	417
Dinton Pastures CP	95	206	102	29	13	9	–	14	4	–	126	71
Eversley GPs	227	233	222	217	–	18	59	102	113	107	176	273
Great Meadow Pond	19	30	35	53	18	15	20	13	7	2	3	17
Horton GPs	305	269	109	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	408
Lower Farm GP	21	33	44	32	21	8	24	25	19	43	26	26
Queen Mother Reservoir	6	31	65	–	–	–	–	–	210	386	189	70
Thatcham NDC	29	36	27	–	6	5	16	28	34	17	22	40
Theale GPs excluding Theale Main	133	139	106	–	–	–	10	–	59	149	302	260*
Theale Main GP	199	224	198	98	–	–	7	–	–	–	290	260*
Twyford GPs	157	114	146	39	46	8	22	8	54	106	57	131
Woolhampton GPs	56	81	96	52	31	34	–	22	13	22	26	53
Wraysbury GPs	901	743	441	27	6	–	–	78	–	–	–	739

\* 260 total is for all Theale GPs, Dec only month when WEBs counted all waters on same date.

**First winter:** 901 at Wraysbury GPs were noted on Jan 2 (JMC), 794 at Bray GPs occurred on Jan 16 (BDC). Away from the main sites, 255 were present on Summerleaze GP on Jan 16 (WEBs). **Second winter:** totals were lower, maximum counts involved 419 at Burghfield GPs on Nov 27 (WEBs) and 739 at Wraysbury GPs with another 408 nearby on Horton GPs on Dec 9 (JMC). 260 at Dorney W on Dec 29 (RGi) was the largest count away from the main sites. **Breeding:** was confirmed at only 7 locations, high totals being 4+ broods Lower Farm GP (MO) and 3 broods at Great Meadow Pond (DJB). A leucistic female (plumage wholly pale buff) was at Sunnymeads GP, Wraysbury on Mar 19 (CDRH) and another aberrant female, with whitish ‘spectacles’ around the eyes (recalling fem Ring-necked Duck!) as well as extra white in the primaries, was at QMR on Oct 17 and then at Wraysbury GP in Nov and Dec (CDRH)

## SCAUP *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

**First winter:** birds, possibly all relating to the 2010 influx could still be found at a selection of sites in East Berkshire. At the confluence of the RThames and Jubilee River at Blackpotts, Eton, the 2010 first winter drake and female remained to at least Jan 11 (ADB; KEM) whilst the Aston first winter drake was still present on Jan 1 (CDRH). A female was located on the RThames at Old Windsor on Jan 7 and 8 (KPD) and 3 (first winter drake, first winter female and adult type female) were on Horton GPs from Jan 21 to 29, with 2 still present from Feb 2 to 8 (CDRH). A first winter female was at QMR on Feb 19 (CDRH) and a first winter drake at Bray GPs from Feb 26 (MFW) to Mar 3 (BUp). The last record was of a moulting first winter female at Horton GPs from Mar 7 to 14 (CDRH). **Second winter:** the only records during this period involved single adult drakes at Theale GPs on Oct 31 (KEM) and QMR from Nov 15 (CDRH) to 19 (CDRH; MMc).

## COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor (Red Listed)

A better year than 2010 with 5 records involving 7-8 birds. **Spring:** the only record involved 2 drakes on Theale Main GP from Apr 19 to 22 (KEM *et al.*). **Summer/Autumn:** all records came from QMR; after 2 drakes briefly on Jul 4 (CDRH), a first winter drake on Aug 1 (CDRH; MMc) with 2 drakes being present the following day, (MMc; ABT). Finally a juvenile appeared on Nov 8 remaining to Nov 19 (CDRH *et al.*).

## VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca*

Rare winter visitor

The adult female present since Dec 29 2010 remained at QMR to Jan 22 (CDRH).

## GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Locally common winter visitor (Amber Listed)

Records were received from 13 locations, 3 in West Berkshire, 4 in Mid Berkshire and 6 in East Berkshire. The monthly high counts at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures CP	9	18	16	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	6
Eversley GPs	3	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
Horton GPs	11	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	10	7
Moatlands GPs	8	11	12	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	4
Queen Mother Reservoir	2	1	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	3	3
Theale GPs	10	14	6	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	4
Wraysbury GPs	26	50	39	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	15	31
Elsewhere	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Number of birds</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

**First winter:** the high counts of 18 at Dinton Pastures CP (WEBs) and 50 (17 drakes 33 females) at Wraysbury GPs (JMC) both occurred on Feb 8 and may reflect an early Feb

influx? Away from the main sites, there were 2 females at Dorney Wetlands on Jan 1 and 2 (MO), 1 drake at Lands' End GP, Twyford GPs on Jan 4 (WEBs), 2 females at Great Meadow Pond on Jan 16 (DJB) and 1 drake at Thatcham NDC on Jan 25 (GJS). Although still present at their favoured sites in March (39 at Wraysbury On Mar 13: (JMC)) only 2 birds were reported in April! One female remained at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures CP until Apr 8 (MFW) and another female remained at Hosehill Lake until Apr 19 (CDRH).

**Second winter:** the first returning bird was an adult female at Wraysbury GPs on Oct 7 (CDRH); subsequent observations by CDRH at Wraysbury GPs revealed that no less than 7 birds visited the site during Oct. Other Oct records came from QMR with 2 on Oct 16 (WEBs), 1 female at Lower Farm GP also on Oct 16 (MFW) until Oct 22 (IW; JL) and 2 females at Woolhampton GPs on Oct 29 (KEM). During Nov-Dec birds were reported from 10 sites and away from the main sites, 1 was reported from Woolhampton GP on Nov 2 (RF), 1 female at Thatcham NDC on Nov 16 (IW) and a drake at Lower Farm GP on Dec 4 (NC). At the main sites the highest count involved 31 at Wraysbury GPs on Dec 9 (JMC).

### SMEW *Mergellus albellus*

*Uncommon winter visitor but regular to preferred sites (Amber Listed)*

Records came from only 6 locations, 3 in Mid Berkshire and 3 in East Berkshire, the site monthly maxima are shown in the table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aston	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dorney Wetlands/JR	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moor Green Lakes	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Theale GPs	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Twyford GPs	3	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wraysbury GPs	18	10	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4

**First winter:** a redhead was still present on the R Thames at Aston on Jan 1 (CDRH), 5 (1 drake 4 redheads) were on the Jubilee River on Jan 1 (WMO), 3 redheads were still present on Jan 2 (BAJC) and 2 redheads and a first winter drake were present on Jan 4 (ADB) plus a redhead was reported from Eversley GPs on Jan 9 (JBak). At the more regular sites, 18 (inc. 4 drakes) were counted at Wraysbury GPs on Jan 1 (CDRH) whilst 13 together on the BA pit, Wraysbury on Jan 9 included 5 drakes (MSW) and 10 (inc. 4 drakes) were still present on Feb 19 (CDRH). One drake and 2 redheads were present on Twyford GPs throughout Jan (MO) and increased to 4 (inc. 1 drake) on Feb 5 (ABT). At Theale GPs, a redhead was located on Bottom Lane GP on Feb 13 and Mar 14 (MRWS). Other March records involved 4 at Twyford GPs on Mar 11 (WEBs) and at Wraysbury GPs a drake and 1 redhead were noted on Mar 11 (CDRH) and 2 redheads were on the Sunnymeads pit on Mar 16 (CDRH) and Mar 17 (JMC). **Second winter:** birds were very scarce in this period; the first returning birds were 2 redheads on Heron Lakes, Wraysbury on Nov 13 (CDRH). On Nov 18, 3 (2 eclipse drakes, 1 redhead) were located at Wraysbury, however numbers did not increase by much and the highest Dec count for the site was only 4 (2 drakes 2 redheads) on Dec 25 (CDRH). Apart from Wraysbury, Theale GPs were the only site to record birds, with 2 redheads visiting Bottom Lane GP and Hosehill Lake from Nov 26 (RJB) to Dec 6 (RCr).

### RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, has declined in recent years*

Another poor year with just 2 records involving 5 birds. A group of 4 including a first winter drake was located on Theale Main GP on Nov 8 (KEM *et al.*); these were followed by an adult drake at QMR on Dec 10 which flew in from the North-east at 8.45am (CDRH).

### GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

*Uncommon winter visitor though regular at preferred sites, has summered.*

Records were received from 20 locations, 2 in W Berkshire, 6 in Mid Berkshire and 12 in E Berkshire. The monthly high counts at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GPs	10	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eversley GPs	95	92	59	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	40
Moatlands GP	7	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Padworth Lane GP	6	2	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Theale GPs	6	12	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Wraysbury GPs	20	19	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	12
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Number of birds</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>

**First winter:** high counts were dominated by the Eversley GPs roost. Of 83 roosting there on Jan 11 (JMC) 18 were drakes! Numbers increased to 95 (inc. 20 drakes) on Jan 31 but the smaller count of 74 on Jan 17 included 23 drakes (JMC)! The Feb peak at Eversley of 92 occurred on Feb 1 and thereafter numbers slowly declined to 59 on Mar 3 (JMC) and to 2 on Mar 22 (RFM; GDU). Elsewhere the highest count at Wraysbury GPs was 20 on Jan 29 (CDRH), whilst away from the main sites the highest count involved 7 at Heath Lake on Jan 22 (DJS). The last birds of the period were 3 redheads at Woolhampton GPs on Mar 25 (MRWS) and 1 redhead at Old Slade on Mar 27 (CDRH). **Second winter:** the first returning records included 3 at Eversley GPs on Nov 10 (MGLR) increasing to 11 by Nov 28 (JMC), there was 1 redhead at Wraysbury GPs on Nov 16 (CDRH) and 1 redhead at Lower Farm GP on Nov 19 (JA). December records came from 11 locations, but at most sites counts were of only 1-2 birds. Sites with higher counts were Wraysbury GPs with 12 on Dec 20 (DGC) and Eversley GPs with 40 including 21 drakes on Dec 24 (JMC).

### RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

*Once a regular breeding species albeit in small numbers now a scarce and declining visitor due to the continued national cull of this species*

Records came from 5 locations throughout the county; the monthly status is shown in the table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-
Number of birds	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-

**First winter:** the wintering female at Dorney W remained through Jan to Feb 4 (KPD) whilst another female was seen at Moatlands GP on Jan 3 (RCr) and Jan 9 (MFW).

**Spring:** the only record involved a female that did not linger at Great Meadow Pond on Apr 10 (DJB). **Autumn/Second winter:** the only multiple record of the year of the year involved 2 female/immatures at Eversley GPs on Sep 26 (NS *et al.*). These were followed by the only drake of the year, a winter plumaged individual at Heron Lakes Wraysbury GPs on Oct 14 (CDRH) and nearby at Wraysbury Village pit a female remained from Nov 7 to 19 (CDRH). Finally another female was present at Great Meadow Pond on Nov 13 (DJB).

## RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

*Locally common introduced resident with numbers inflated in autumn at certain sites for shooting*

Records were received from 82 locations. The highest counts were as follows: 43 birds in 3 coveys of 12, 15, and 16 at Compton Downs on Sept 9 (DJB), at the same site 43 birds in 3 coveys of 12, 15, and 16 on Oct 21 (DJB), 100 birds at Great Shefford on Sept 9 (JLS), 30 at Long Lane, Cookham on Dec 7 (DJB), 60 at Lower Green, Inkpen on Oct 27 and Nov 13 (RHar), 141 birds at Remenham on Oct 7 (DJB) and finally 80+ at Thurle Down, Streatley on Feb 12 (RJD). Of course most of these larger counts will be of captive bred birds turned out for shooting. Breeding was proven from 4 sites, these being Binfield on Jul 10 (MSFW), Englefield on several dates (RCr), Kings Bridge on Sept 9 (SRJB), and Windsor Great Park on May 31 (KPD).

## GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

*Localised and declining resident (Red Listed)*

Another encouraging year for this species with records received from 35 locations, mainly Mid and West Berkshire. The larger counts were reported from; Bucklebury with 10 birds on Jan 1 (TCu), 40 birds at Bury Down on Jan 20 (RCo), 8 at Compton Downs on Sept 8 (CDRH), the largest count at Englefield this year was 17 birds on Sept 13 (RCr), there were 20 at Roden Down, Compton on Sept 9 (DJB), and 8 Birds at White Waltham on Sept 22 and 29 (DJB). Breeding was recorded from several sites and included , Burghfield, where 4 adults with 3 chicks were observed on Aug 1 (RCr), a pair with a chick at Drift Road, Braywood on Jun 26 (DJB), the highest chick count at Englefield was 10 on July 11, Aug 17 and Sept 13 (RCr), 4 juveniles were seen at Lambourn Downs on July 24 (PBT), 4 juveniles were at East Garston on July 23 (GDS) and finally 8 juveniles were at Roden Down, Compton on Sept 9 (DJB).

## QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

*Uncommon summer visitor in varying numbers, most common on the downs (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

An average year for this charming little bird, with calling birds being reported from: Aldworth with at least 3 calling on July 22 (MRWS), 8 birds were disturbed by a Combined Harvester at Bury Down, including 5 adults and 3 juveniles on Aug 21 (ABT), 1 bird was at Farnborough on June 26 and Jul 10 (GDS), 2 at Fawley on June 25 (ABT), 4 birds at Lambourn Downs Jun 3 (RGI), on Jul 1 12 calling males were recorded at 5 sites between East Ilsley and Wellbottom Down (CDRH). The last record was at Bury Down on Sep 10 (MFW). The recorded totals indicate a welcome increase on 2010.

## PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

*Widespread and locally abundant introduced resident in rural areas, large numbers are released annually for shooting*

Unusual sightings for this species were recorded from: Maidenhead town centre on Oct 13 (Br), in a garden in Reading on Jan 16 (LBM), and in a garden in Twyford on Jan 23 and 26 and also Dec 28 (VFo). Wild breeding was reported from Brimpton on Apr 13 (GEW), Coldharbour, Knowl Hill on July 2 (DJB), Grazeley on July 23 (PBT), Windsor Great Park on July 10 (DJB), Hungerford on May 25 (JSWo), Lower Farm GP's on May 15 (DJB) and Valley Gardens, Windsor Great Park on May 15 (DJB).

## GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*

*Rare winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

Records received were all from the east of the county. The first winter period included 2 individuals, the first was seen on Mar 3 from Arthur Jacob LNR as it flew low ESE towards Wraysbury Reservoir, where it was later observed to be moulting from juvenile to first summer plumage (CDRH). It was then recorded at QMR on several dates (MO) until Mar 17, when a second first summer bird arrived (MMc). The 2 birds then remained until Apr 25 (CDRH) commuting between QMR and Wraysbury Reservoir, when one disappeared, with the second individual being finally reported on Apr 27 (MMc). One of these birds was no doubt involved in the sighting of juvenile moulting into first summer plumage at Horton GP on Mar 13-14 (CDRH *et al.*); on the first date it was being followed by a f/w Mediterranean Gull!. The second winter period produced a juvenile at QMR on Nov 24 (CDRH); this was joined by a second juvenile on Dec 1 (CDRH), with both present until dusk. Only one bird was present the following day and this was reported regularly until Dec 18 (MO).

## LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

*Common and widespread resident (Amber Listed)*

The monthly maxima for this species at the most regularly reported sites are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures	15	3	2	1	2	2	10	8	9	11	12	1
Eversley GPs	1	2	1	2	-	-	5	6	3	2	1	-
Freemans Marsh	7	5	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1
Harveys Meadow, Hungerford	-	7	3	2	2	1	3	6	3	4	4	5
Jubilee River/Dorney Wetlands	10	7	2	-	-	-	-	8	10	10	-	30
Lower Farm GPs	1	2	8	9	8	8	9	12	10	9	4	1
Thatcham Marsh	-	1	2	2	2	3	2	-	-	2	2	1

The high count at Jubilee River of 30 occurred on Dec 7 (PNe), whilst other high counts were at Barton Court, Kintbury with 5 on Oct 4 (JD), 6 at Pingewood GPs on Aug 9 (MFW), 6 birds were at Moatlands GP Theale on Oct 7 (MFW), 9 at Padworth Lane GP on Jan 27 (KEM), 13 at Rapley Lake, Swinley Forest (1 pair with 4 chicks plus 7 other adults) on May 13 (DJB) and 6 birds at Wraysbury GPs on Jan 2 (JMC). **Breeding:** adults with young birds or juveniles were reported from at least 20 locations. The 2007-2011 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 41 tetrads with an obvious bias towards the south and the east of the county. This is a considerable reduction from the findings of the 1987-89 survey.

## GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

*Common resident and winter visitor*

Records were received from 44 locations throughout the county with monthly maxima from the most regularly reported sites are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures	15	13	12	12	10	–	–	17	–	–	12	8
Eversley GPs	13	22	17	14	2	–	15	17	30	15	8	10
Lower Farm GPs	1	3	6	6	5	4	3	3	2	1	1	–
QMR	149	6	9		68	–	–	–	19	50	21	4
Thatcham Area	5	10	7	5	10	5	5	4	8	5	13	11
Theale GPs	31	12	25	22	–	18	–	–	15	68	20	13
Windsor Great Park	–	6	8	8	12	14	8	8	8	10	2	–
Wraybury GPs	13	34	38	10	8	–	–	–	–	–	–	35

The count of 149 at QMR was on Jan 4 (PBT), putting in the shade the 92 at the same sight on Jan 1 (DJB). Breeding was confirmed at 25 sites including Windsor Great Park, with at least 3 pairs with chicks on several dates (DJB), Eversley GPs with a minimum of 2 pairs with chicks on July 10 (JMC) and at least 2 pairs with chicks at Dinton Pastures CP on Jun 11 (RM). The 2007-2011 Atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in 88 tetrads (an increase over the 1987-89 survey) but with breeding restricted to East and Mid Berkshire.

## RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena*

*Scarce and declining winter visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Just one record, for the third year running, of this once regular winter visitor, with a bird in first winter plumage at QMR for just one day on Jan 5 (ADB *et al.*).

## SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*

*Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Four birds were recorded in 2011. A full summer-plumaged bird was at QMR on Apr 15 (MMc *et al.*). At Eversley GPs a juvenile was present on Nov 3 (Bob Warden *et al.*). A first winter bird was at QMR on Nov 11 (CDRH *et al.*) and, on the same date, a winter plumaged bird was present at Theale Main Pit (KEM *et al.*). Overall, 2011 was a reasonable year for this species in Berkshire.

## BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

*Uncommon passage and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

ust 3 records in 2011 involving 7 individuals; strangely, only spring records occurred, though these included some displaying males. A full summer plumage bird was at QMR on Mar 23 (CDRH). Three birds (2 summer plumage, 1 winter plumage) arrived at Woolhampton GPs on Mar 17 (NC *et al.*); the 2 summer plumage birds remained until Mar 25, whilst the other individual stayed until Mar 28. A second record of 3 birds (possibly involving some or all of the Woolhampton birds), occurred at Moatlands GP, Theale where 2 summer plumage birds and 1 in partial summer plumage were present on Mar 28 (AMH). The multiple occurrences involved a lot of displaying and chasing around by the males.

## MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*

*Very rare vagrant*

A good year for this seabird that is rare inland. The species averages approximately 1 record in 10 years, so 2 in the same year are exceptional (although two separate birds were recorded at QMR by CDRH in 2007). A bird was photographed late in the afternoon at a private pit in Horton on Sept 7 (CDRH). This was followed by a second bird at QMR on Sept 17 again CDRH, it was observed for most of the day by many observers until last reported at 18.50pm.

## LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

*Rare vagrant*

An amazing record of this lovely little seabird, a sighting that many thought might be a hoax because of the date. The bird was found at Theale Main GP at mid-morning on Apr 1 (BU) but could not be identified by the finder immediately because of the distance involved. It was later confirmed as this species and remained for the rest of the day (MO), at times being harassed by Gulls but apparently healthy and actively feeding. This is the first record since December 2006 when a bird was at QMR.

**Recorder's Comment:** an interesting plumage feature of this bird was the indistinct pale tips to the primary coverts - perhaps produced by bleaching/wear - which created an upperwing effect similar to the pale primary shafts that can be seen on some of its Indo-Pacific relatives (such as Swinhoe's and Matsudaira's Petrels).

## GANNET *Morus bassanus*

*Rare but increasing visitor (Amber Listed)*

Just one record in 2011; an adult-type bird found initially on the water at QMR which then circled the reservoir several times before drifting off SE at 07.55 on Jun 18 (CDRH). This is the fifth consecutive year that this species has been recorded in Berkshire.

## CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

*Common winter visitor, uncommon but increasing in summer; the continental race P. c. sinensis now breeds*

The monthly maxima from the most recorded sightings were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GPs	6	11	30	100	14	25	12	23	26	4	6	–
Eversley GPs	67	16	50	14	–	–	7	10	3	20	33	52
Lower Farm GPs	50	20	17	15	6	14	20	32	11	40	19	58

The highest counts were: 85 birds at Colne Mere, Wraybury on Dec 9 (WEBs) and 100 birds at Aldermaston GPs Apr 4 (JPM). Some high counts at QMR include: 250 on Oct 25 (ABT), 337 on Oct 31 (PEH) and 216 on Nov 12 (DJB). Breeding was confirmed from 2 sites in Mid Berkshire with a minimum of 23 nests at one sight and a minimum of 3 nests at the other, with chicks observed at both sites.

## SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

*Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant*

With an absence of this species in 2010 it was nice to see a return with 2 records involving 4 birds. Three juveniles were found at QMR on Sept 17-18 (CDRH), with 2 then present

until 30th (CDRH *et al.*) and 1 remaining until Oct 1 (CDRH). Another juvenile was seen at QMR on 4 dates between Dec 3 and Dec 22 (CDRH).

### **BITTERN** *Botaurus stellaris*

*Scarce but increasing winter visitor (Schedule One and Red Listed)*

Another good year for this species following on from a record year in 2010. Birds were recorded at least 12 sites, and involved at least 15 birds. The first winter period produced: a bird at Benham Park on Mar 23 seen by the river keeper G Allen (per JLS), 1 at Bradfield college pond Jan 18 (ASM), 1 at Brimpton GPs on Jan 20 (JPM) and also on Jan 27 (KEM). Dinton Pastures CP produced its usual array of records including up to 3 birds from Jan 1 until Mar 23 (MO) and Jubilee River/Dorney Wetlands also produced up to 3 birds between Jan 6 (RDr) and Mar 12 (KPD *et al.*). There was 1 at Eversley GPs on Jan 5 (IDP) and on Jan 31 (JMC) and 1 at Hosehill Lake, Theale on Jan 21 per (TABCG), 1 at Woolhampton GPs from Jan 13 (NC) until Feb 9 (KEM/NC *et al.*), and finally 1 at Wraysbury GPs Feb 8 (JMC). The second winter period produced records of singles from: Dinton Pastures CP from Oct 17 (SDay) until the year's end (MO), at Dorney Wetlands/ Jubilee River Nov 20 (CDRH) and at Windsor Great Park on Dec 25 (DJB), which was a fine Christmas present, and at Woolhampton GPs on Nov 22 (PBrant).

### **LITTLE EGRET** *Egretta garzetta*

*Uncommon but increasing visitor (Amber Listed)*

Records were received from 56 locations throughout the county and it was recorded in all months. The monthly maxima at the most recorded sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures CP	4	2	2	4	1	2	–	1	1	1	2	3
Dorney Wetlands	–	1	1	1	–	1	1	–	–	–	1	1
Eversley GPs	3	2	3	2	–	1	1	–	–	–	1	1
Great Shefford	10	7	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	3
Lower Farm GPs	–	2	2	7	2	5	1	2	3	4	4	3
Pingewood GPs	–	1	3	5	2	2	10	5	1	2	–	1

High counts were recorded at the following other sites: 7 at Bagnor on Jan 8 (JL), 9 at Berry's Lane, Burghfield on Jul 3 and 4 (RCr), 6 at Bucklebury on Jan 1 (TCu), 9 at Kennet Meadows on Jan 8 (AVL), 9 at Burghfield Bridge on Jan 8 (JA) and 9 at Welford on Feb 5 (FGM). Breeding was confirmed in East Berkshire, with at least 2 pairs producing 8 to 10 fledged juveniles by Jun 6 (CDRH).

### **GREAT WHITE EGRET** *Ardea alba*

*Rare but increasing vagrant*

The bird first seen in December 2010 at Great Shefford continued its stay into 2011, being observed from Jan 1 (AMH) until the final report on Jan 11 (RMB).

### **GREY HERON** *Ardea cinerea*

*Locally common resident and winter visitor*

The highest counts for this species throughout the county were as follows: 7 at Berry's Lane, Burghfield on Jul 1 (KEM), 6 at Dinton Pastures CP on Mar 1 (RMB, with 8 at the same site on Aug 10 (GWils). High counts at Harveys Meadow, Hungerford were: 12 on Feb 14,

12 on May 18, 10 on Jul 23 and 8 in Dec (JSWo). At Lower Farm GPs 9 birds were recorded on Jun 4 (RM), 10 at the same site on Jul 20 (IW) and 10+ on various dates in Aug (MO) with 7 on Sep 24 (IW). 16 were recorded in the roost at Searles Farm Lane GP on Feb 12 (WEBs) and 12 on Mar 13 (WEBs). In the East of the County, 13 at Horton GPs on Dec 9 and 15 at Wraysbury GPs on Feb 15 were noteworthy. Breeding was confirmed at 6 sites where the highest count of juveniles was at Aldermaston GP with 9+ birds recorded on Apr 17 (JPM). The 2007–2011 Atlas survey found breeding confirmed in 35 tetrads, an almost 100% increase since the 1987–89 survey.

### **GLOSSY IBIS** *Plegadis falcinellus*

*Very rare vagrant*

With an absence of this species in the county between 1916 and 2010, 2011 surprisingly produced 3 birds. The individual first recorded at Freemans Marsh in Dec 2010 continued its stay from Jan 1 (AMH) until the final sighting on Jan 9; record accepted by BBRC (see Brit.Birds 105: 565 where it is assumed to be the same bird as that at Dungeness, Kent from Jan 10). A second bird was seen by a few observers at Lea Farm Scrape on May (LRB; IDP); record accepted by BBRC (see Brit.Birds 106:585 where it is presumed same as the bird later the same day at Dorney Lake, Bucks). Finally, a first-winter was found Horton fields pit on Oct 22 (CDRH), and was then viewed (from nearby Arthur Jacob NR) for most of the day (MO). It was last seen in the Horton area on Oct 25 (CDRH). Record accepted by BBRC (Brit.Birds 105: 565).

### **HONEY-BUZZARD** *Pernis apivorus*

*Rare summer migrant*

An unusual record involved a rufous morph individual which flew over the Jubilee River (at Dorney Wetlands) on Jun 9 before heading off North-West (CDRH). In the autumn a dark morph flew NW over Thrift Wood, near Maidenhead on Sep 16 (DJB).

### **RED KITE** *Milvus milvus*

*Common re-introduced resident (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

Once again by far the most observed of the raptor species with a total of 1250 submissions from right across the county; the species was recorded on all but 10 days of the year. The largest gatherings are recorded below, but it worth noting that the number of observations from the Wooley Down area (normally providing the most significant counts) has reduced this year because of the main observer having other commitments (GDS). As ever the activity and visibility of birds was influenced by weather conditions. **Breeding:** evidence of breeding (nest building, sitting adults and adults feeding fledglings) was provided for eight locations. The success of the reintroduction scheme can be measured by the fact that the 2007–11 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 67 tetrads, whereas the 1987–89 survey found none.

Maximum double-figure counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Maidenhead	14	–	–	–	28	35	31	25	23	–	40	–
West Ilsley area	15	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Remenham/Aston area	42	–	16	–	–	–	–	–	–	17	–	–
Woolley Down	43	25	15	–	–	–	–	–	–	62	59	69
Windsor	13	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	10	–



Englefield	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Twyford	-	11	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	10	-	-
Cookham	-	52	48	-	50	-	-	-	31	21	21	-
Woodley area	-	-	20	14	12	12	15	-	-	-	-	-
Burchett's Green	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tilehurst	-	-	-	15	15	18	-	-	-	20	-	-
Summerleaze	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Furze Platt	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cold Harbour	-	-	-	-	-	10	14	-	-	10	-	-
White Waltham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	11	-	-
Brightwalton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	-
Inkpen/Combe area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	11	-
Compton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	-	-
Dinton Pastures area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-
Goring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	-

## MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

*Scarce but increasing passage migrant (Schedule One and Amber List)*

A slight increase in numbers from the last few years, starting with January 1 when a juvenile flew through QMR (CDRH). There were then two records for April: a female over Greenham Common on the 7th (AEDH) and another female flew NE over QMR in the early morning of the 30th (CDRH). A female was at Eversley GP on May 12 (BMA, MGLR) and probably the same bird was seen a couple of weeks later, on the 26th, at Arborfield (CCL). In June an immature male flew West over the S bank of QMR on June 24 (CDRH), then one flew over Thatcham Marsh on Aug 6 (RGS, IW), with another or the same a few miles to the East at Englefield on the 10th (JPM). A juvenile was present in the West Ilsley area from Sep 1 to 3 (ABT, KEM). There were two reports on Sep 16; one flew East over QMR (CDRH), with another first seen over the Woodley Area (FJC) and subsequently over Lavell's Lake (RM). The only October record was of one flying over Cockpole Green towards Shiplake on the 1st (JS). On Nov 19 a second calendar year male was at Horton GP (CDRH); it flew off South and was subsequently seen regularly at Gt Meadow Pond, Windsor Gt Park, where it overwintered (CDRH, DJB), but it did make a brief reappearance at Horton GP on Christmas Eve! (CDRH).

**Recorder's comment:** Marsh Harrier occurrences have been steadily increasing in recent years (in line with increases in the national population), but 2011 was the year that they really changed their temporal pattern. The sighting at the start of the year was the first January record since one (shot, at Kintbury) in 1875. The June record was unusual, though not exceptional, but the last record of the year constitutes the first recorded over-wintering in Berkshire!

## HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor (Schedule One and Red Listed)*

**First winter:** at least one ringtail-type bird was present in the West Ilsley area (MO), first seen on Jan 9 (PEH), it was seen on and off until at least Jan 29 (GDS). Another or the same was at Lambourn on Feb 3 (CDRH) with another sighting at Hungerford Marsh on the 6th (RGS). What was potentially the January ringtail was seen over East Ilsley on Feb 19 (GDS). **/Second winter:** records started with a ringtail on Oct 3 over West Woodhay (IW), an adult

female over Wishmoor Bottom on the 24th (PEH), a ringtail hunting over Lambourn on the 28th which was potentially the same bird as seen in the area on Nov 1 (both CDRH). One flew over Dinton Pastures on Nov 3 (RM) and another over Woolley Down on Nov 27 (GDS). Finally what were presumably 2 different ringtails were present throughout the latter half of December, one at West Ilsley on the 16th (PBran) and 21st (CDRH) and another at Wellbottom Down on the 21st (CDRH) and 22nd (KEM) and another at Lambourn on the 20th and 22nd (CDRH).

## MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus*

*Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

As in other recent years, there were a few West Berkshire sightings of this rare harrier including a male on Apr 24 (MFW) and a female on Jul 1 (CDRH). Additionally, a ringtail at Roden Downs, Compton on Aug 20 (DJB) may have been the same as the juvenile seen at Cow Down, West Ilsley on Aug 31 and Sep 1 (ABT) and again on Sep 3 (KEM) and Sep 5 (RGilham).

## SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

*Common and widespread resident*

Birds were typically widespread this year, with over 550 submitted records spread fairly consistently across the whole county. As in previous years breeding is badly underreported with only 5 confirmed pairs successfully rearing young. An adult was seen feeding 3 young in the grounds of Reading University (JCl), an adult with recently fledged young at Crowthorne (DJS), there were at least 2 juveniles together at Joel Park, Wokingham (PJ). A bird was seen carrying food into a nest site near Catmore (GDS) and fledglings were calling in a tree near East Garston (GDS). The 2007-2011 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 71 tetrads biased towards the south and east.

## BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

*Common and widespread resident and passage migrant*

Another excellent year for this raptor which is still increasing in numbers year-on-year with nearly a 1000 reports received. Doubtless this is primarily due to ease of seeing soaring birds. Two-thirds of the records are from west of Reading, but the species spread from west to east over the last 20 years is now complete. There were double-figure counts of soaring birds from several areas; 12 over Burchett's Green on Apr 2 (BDC) with 10 over Sunninghill on the 3rd (RJD) and 10 over Summerleaze on the 6th (BDC). There were also 10 over Great Meadow Pond, Windsor on May 1 (DJB), 11 over Cold Harbour on Jul 30 (DJB), 10 over Lea Farm on Aug 15 and 24 (RM) and another 14, also on the 24th, over Combe (DJB). Finally in August, there were 11 over Lavell's Lake on the 31st (FJC). There were 12 over Lavell's Lake on Sep 14 (FJC) and what was probably part of the same group nearby at Whistley Green (MHu). Finally, there were 14 over Walbury Hill on Nov 17 (JBU, IW). **Breeding:** evidence of breeding was submitted from over 30 sites and the 2007-11 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 133 tetrads, an astonishing increase since the 1987-89 survey which found Common Buzzard to be breeding in only 3 tetrads.

## ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*

*Rare winter visitor*

A Juvenile which had been present in the Berkshire Downs area, but primarily in Oxon, was seen to come into Berkshire on Mar 17 in the area of Warren Farm and then, later that day, flew S over Thurle Down on Mar 17 (CDRH).

## OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

*Scarce but increasing passage migrant (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

A typical number of records this year, with the majority of sightings in the spring. There were two records on Mar 26; the first, an immature bird, flew into Pingewood GPs from the SE and remained for around 25 minutes before heading off North (RHS). The second, at Moor Green Lakes, flew in over Colnbrook Lake North before flying off over the new workings (DNTR). One was reported in the Theale GP/Pingewood area on Mar 26 and another or the same on the 29th (BGU). One reported on the 30th at The Wilderness, Kintbury (per JLS) was possibly the bird seen the next day at Hampstead Marshall (RHar). One was at Lea Farm GP heading SW on Mar 31 (RRi), with another NNE over QMR on Apr 2 (CDRH). A bird at Lower Farm on Apr 5 actually landed on the ground before being driven off by a carrion crow and flying off West (NC). One was reported over Calcot on Apr 21 (BGU), with two more April records being one over Woodley on the 23rd (AR) and another the next day over Southcote (AVL). A bird first seen over Datchet on May 1 (BGU) was presumably the same as seen over Great Meadow Pond, Windsor (DJB) and subsequently QMR (MMc, ABT). Another flew NE over QMR on May 9 (MMc), with one being reported over Hungerford Marsh on 16th (RF). One flew over Lower Farm from the NE on Jun 2 (NC, DJB) and possibly the same bird was seen nearby at Benham Valence the next day (DJBa). Late summer/early autumn records were of one flying E over Lower Farm on Aug 20 (IW, JL) with another there on the 28th (MJD, ABT, SAG). One was reported over the trout farm at Hungerford on Sep 5 (RDW) and finally one, probably a juvenile, over QMR on the 7th (CDRH).

## KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

*Common and widespread resident (Amber Listed)*

Once again what was once the most recorded of the birds of prey is relegated to 3rd place. The species is well spread across the county and still managed to be recorded on over 500 occasions, though there is clearly a downward trend in numbers. Unsurprisingly all but a couple of the records are of singles or twos, the rest being made up of two family groups. Most unusual was a group of 7 at Combe, including 3 juveniles on Aug 12 (DJB). There was also a male plus 3 juveniles at Lower Farm at the end of June (NC, IW). **Breeding:** the 2007-2011 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 115 tetrads evenly spread throughout the county with an expected absence in the urban centres.

## MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

*Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant which has increased in recent years (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

A fairly normal year numerically speaking started with a female on Jan 1 at West Ilsley (RCW), which was presumably the same bird which remained in the area until at least the 28th (MO). Another was at Remenham on the on the 4th (ANS) and a female was at Lambourn on Feb 3 (CDRH) with another on the same day at Charvil (DNTR). There were possibly 2 birds present in the Brimpton/Woolhampton area on Mar 7 one identified as a female (GEW) and another as a male (JRe, ABT). What was probably an immature male flew across the road at Bury Down just before dusk on Mar 17 (CDRH). In the autumn a female was seen at West Ilsley on Aug 31 (ABT), with another female over Dinton Pastures on Sep 20 (FJC, TAG). Another record for the Lambourn area was of another female or immature on Sep 28 (CDRH). There were two together (a female/immature and a first winter at West Ilsley on Nov 5 (ABT), with possibly the same birds reported there the 10th (RGi) and 13th (MFW). One was reported at Avington, Kintbury on Nov 7 (NChe) and another flew through Lavell's Lake on the 25th (NC). There were two reports in December, both females.

The first at Bury Down, West Ilsley on the 21st (KEM, RHS) and finally one over the church at Great Shefford on the 31st (PBT).

## HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

*Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant (Schedule One)*

There were over 400 documented records this year, most of these of course being of one or two birds. There are, however, generally some more significant gatherings at traditional sites. 7 at Woolhampton GP on Apr 24 (NC, KEM, MFW), 8 at Dorney on May 14 (Abe), 7 at Wraysbury on May 21 (CDRH) and 11 at Horton GP on Jun 11 (CDRH). **Breeding:** some evidence of breeding was found at 9-10 sites. The 2007-2011 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 24 tetrads, a threefold increase since the 1987-89 survey.

## PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

*Uncommon but increasing visitor which bred in the county for the first time in 2010 (Schedule One)*

A typical year with several long-staying individuals at what are now traditional sites. A pair was present throughout the year on the 3M building in Bracknell (MO) and although copulation was observed on Mar 3 (MBoy), there are no submitted records of juveniles. Another pair was present throughout the year in the Hosehill/Theale GP area, often visible on one of the pylons (MO). One or two birds were present from the start of the year on the Western Tower opposite the railway station in Reading Town Centre, but disappeared in the middle of April (MO). They (or another pair) returned mid-way through September and remained for the rest of the year. One or two birds were reported most months of the year (though not present daily) at QMR, where favoured prey were Feral Pigeons and Ring-necked Parakeets; a drake Shoveler avoided capture on Nov 17th by diving underwater (CDRH). A bird that turned up in June at Moor Green Lakes was subsequently seen on and off for the rest of the year and was seen with another bird on a couple of occasions. Birds were also regularly reported from Pingewood GPs, Colnbrook, Horton, the Lavell's Lake/Lea Farm/Dinton area, Lower Farm and Wraysbury.

## WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

*Uncommon winter visitor and a rare summer resident*

Water Rail was recorded at 41 locations, both West and Mid Berkshire having near equal counts, followed by E. Berkshire.

The table below gives the number of Water Rail heard/seen at the more regular sites.:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dorney Wetlands/ Jubilee River	14	6	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	3
Freemans/Hungerford Marsh	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
Thatcham Marsh	-	-	4	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	1
Windsor Great Park	4	2	2	1	1	-	-	1	2	4	3	3
Woolhampton GP (Rowney Predator)	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	1

Breeding may have occurred at Thatcham Marsh, with a fledged young bird calling in late June (IW: JL). It should be noted that last years count of 12 at Dorney Wetlands equalled the highest count for Berkshire, so the count for this year of 14 on Jan 1 is a new Berkshire record.

## MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Common and widespread resident in wetland habitats

The monthly maxima at the regularly counted sites follow:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures CP	14	7	4	3	4	–	2	6	9	–	16	15
Eversley GPs	20	10	2	2	–	–	13	7	17	12	18	22
Harveys Meadow, Hungerford	–	4	6	6	6	6	12	4	8	6	10	10
Lower Farm GP	8	6	5	5	7	8	10	10	12	17	18	17
Theale GPs	6	7	7	–	–	1	5	2	11	13	23	16

There was just one other count in excess of 20:34 at Whiteknights Park on Jan 28 (PG).

**Breeding:** 26 pairs were recorded with 113 young, although final fledging numbers would be expected to be much lower.

## COOT *Fulica atra*

Common resident and winter visitor to open water

Coots prefer larger water-bodies, where they invariably outnumber their smaller relatives.

The monthly maxima at the main sites follow;

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GPs	345	260	171	–	–	–	–	–	138	246	320	266
Dinton Pastures CP	190	133	66	40	34	–	–	70	–	72	178	274
Lower Farm GP	73	83	80	66	20	30	50	56	20	21	21	32
Summerleaze GP	226	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	138	45	66
Thatcham Marsh/GPs	116	99	59	2	26	28	55	51	45	61	76	79
Windsor Great Park	60	70	107	66	96	160	240	210	79	84	86	77
Woolhampton GPs	77	98	63	86	46	133	37	150	214	275	–	164

There were no high counts other than those above.

## GREAT BUSTARD *Otis tarda*

Former resident, now strays from reintroduction project (with 2 recent records).

One flew NE over QMR (viewed from Horton GP) on Nov 17th (CDRH). This was presumably from the reintroduction scheme in Wiltshire, although the circumstances of the sighting mean that can never be proven. At the time of the sighting, this would have been the furthest East that any of the reintroductions had been recorded. But they have subsequently been tracked as far as Essex and Suffolk. Whatever the origins, a most impressive sight cleaving the air above QMR!

## OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Uncommon but increasing passage migrant and a scarce winter visitor (Amber Listed)

**First winter:** singles were at Lower Farm GP on Feb 7 (RHS, PEH) and Horton GP on Feb 20 (CDRH). **Spring:** at Queen Mother Reservoir two were present on Mar 22 (CDRH, MMc); 2 flew NE on Apr 16 (CDRH); 2 on May 1 (ABT, CDRH, MMc); 1 flew E on May 3 (MMc) and there was 1 on May 4 (MMc). Elsewhere, singles were at Dorney Wetlands on Apr 23 (BJH), May 4 (CCH) and May 29 (WMO); at Eversley GP on Mar 28 (BMA) and May 26 (BMA, DJS); at Summerleaze GP on May 4 (CDRH) and Jun 6 (CDRH); at Lower Farm GP from May 23 (NC) to May 27 (NC) and at Woolhampton GP on Jun 16 (KEM).

**Breeding:** for the second consecutive year two pairs nested in Berkshire. At Theale GP a single bird was at Moatlands on Feb 13 (MFW) before moving to Main Pit the following day where it was joined by another bird on Feb 25 (RJB). Four newly hatched birds were seen on May 4 (MFW) but on May 18 only 3 were left (TGB) and on May 21 only two were surviving (MFW). The two remaining chicks fledged successfully and the family were seen at many of the Theale lakes before the last record of two at Berry's Lane GP on Aug 27 (MFW). There was the occasional extra bird seen and four birds were seen on three dates. At Twyford GP a single bird was at the Loddon Reserve on Mar 4 (MHT) and was joined by another on Mar 14 (B Crathorne). Three newly hatched chicks were seen on May 20 (MFW). There were still 3 chicks on Jun 5 (MFW) but only 2 on Jun 18 (RNM) and there were no further records of any juveniles. The adults continued to be seen around Twyford and Dinton Pastures until the last record on Jul 23 (MFW) when one was at the Loddon Reserve. **Autumn:** singles were at Queen Mother Reservoir from Jul 23 (CDRH) to Jul 27 (MMc); on Aug 15 (MMc) and Aug 23 (MMc) and at Lower Farm GP from Aug 5 (IW, NC) to Aug 13 (IW, JL, SAG).

## AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Rare passage migrant (Schedule One and Amber Listed)

There were three records, one in the first winter period and two in the spring. **First winter:** one was at Theale Main Pit on Feb 14 (AMH). **Spring:** two were at Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 5 (MO) and one was on the East Fen, Eversley GP on Apr 6 (BMA).

## STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus oedicnemus*

Scarce and localised summer visitor, very rare away from breeding grounds (Schedule One and Amber Listed)

All records came from the traditional sites on the Downs. One was heard calling on the early date of Mar 18 (PBT) and seen the following day across the border in Oxfordshire. Counts of 1-2 were recorded throughout the summer. The only record of confirmed breeding was of a pair with two juveniles on May 14 (ABT). In the autumn 5 were seen on Sep 8 (CDRH) and the last record of the year was 1 on Sep 10 (MFW).

## LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant (Schedule One)

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	-	-	4	2	2	5	3	-	-	-	-	-
Berry's Lane GP, Burghfield	-	-	-	-	-	22	15	-	-	-	-	-
Brimpton GPs	-	-	2	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pingewood GPs	-	-	4	8	5	4	-	2	-	-	-	-
Crookham Common	-	-	3	2	4	4	2	-	-	-	-	-
Eversley GP	-	-	5	8	9	9	5	1	-	-	-	-
Field Farm GPs, Theale	-	-	8	3	1	-	15	-	-	-	-	-
Greenham Common	-	-	3	6	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures CP	-	-	1	3	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	-	-	2	3	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	-
Padworth Lane GP	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	2	2	1	2	5	1	-	-	-	-
Summerleaze GP	-	-	-	-	4	4	6	-	-	-	-	-
Woolhampton GPs	-	-	1	3	3	4	1	-	-	-	-	-

**Spring:** first recorded at Field Farm on Mar 9 (BU) and at 11 other sites by the end of the month. Summer: recorded at 16 sites during May/June with breeding attempted at 7 of these. At Aldermaston GP a pair was present with 3 newly hatched chicks on Jun 15 (JPM), two of which fledged successfully. At Bray GP a pair was reported as nesting in May (CDRH). At Pingewood GPs a pair had 2 juveniles on Jun 3 (ABT). At Crookham Common a juvenile was seen on Jun 24 (IW, JL). At Eversley GP a pair was seen with 3 juveniles on May 21 (BMA), all of which fledged successfully. Two pairs attempted to nest at Greenham Common, one of which was seen with 2 juveniles on May 24 (JL) but the other nest was deserted on Jun 13 (JL). A pair attempted to nest at Hosehill Lake but the nest was deserted on Jun 20 (KEM). **Autumn:** peak counts occurred during late June and included an impressive 22 (including 16 juveniles) at Berry's Lane GP on Jun 29 (RCr). Birds were more widespread during July but only Berry's Lane GP produced counts greater than five with a peak of 15 on Jul 1 (KEM). Only 5 sites held birds during August and passage came to an abrupt and early end on Aug 20 with an adult at Horton GP (CDRH).

## RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Declining summer visitor, uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Berry's Lane GP, Burghfield	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	-	-
Greenham Common	-	2	3	3	4	6	5	2	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	-	-	-	2	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-
Moor Green Lakes	-	-	-	1	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	4	2	6	1	-

**Spring:** the first returning bird was seen at Greenham Common on Feb 17 (NC). Most counts were of 1-4 birds but 5 were at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 7 (MMc), 9 at Eversley GP on May 14 (MGLR) and 11 at Summerleaze GP on May 30-31 (CDRH). Summer: birds were recorded at 7 sites during May but breeding was only confirmed at Greenham/Crookham Common. Two juveniles were ringed at Crookham Pools on Jul 23 (JL). Two pairs were sitting on nests at Greenham Common in early May. Four chicks were ringed on Jul 9 (IW, JL), 3 of which fledged successfully. One bird was still sitting on Jul 14 (JL) but the outcome of that nest is not known. **Autumn:** the first migrants were an adult and a juvenile at Berry's Lane GP on Jun 29 (RCr). Excluding breeding birds most counts were of 1-3 birds but 4 were at Berry's Lane GP on Jul 10 (MFW), 4 at Lower Farm GP on Jul 19 (NC), 4 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 23 (MMc) and 6 there on Oct 6 (CDRH). The last record of the year was one flying N at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 13 (CDRH).

## ARCTIC RINGED PLOVER (*tundrae* - types)

A singles of this Scandinavian/Arctic form was at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 24 and 25 (CDRH). Four were at Summerleaze GP on May 28 and 29 (CDRH), rising to 11 on May 30 and 31, with 6 remaining until Jun 1 (all CDRH).

## GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Locally common winter visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bury Down West Ilsley	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	800	2	10
Dorney Wetlands	270	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	200
Greenham Common	31	70	212	53	-	-	-	-	-	120	7	50
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	2	14	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	200	-
Remenham Hill	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-
Woodlands Park Fields	140	250	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	-

**First winter:** recorded from 21 locations. Counts were generally low; the only counts to exceed 300 were: 300 at Bray GP on Feb 23 (CDRH), 380 at Lands End, Farnborough on Feb 25 (GDS) and 400 at Woodlands Park on Mar 18 (DJB). A flock of about 50 lingered

into April at Greenham Common until the last record of one bird on Apr 30 (IW, JL). **Second winter:** recorded at 34 locations and in larger numbers than during the first winter period. The first record of returning birds was of 18 at Lowbury Hill on Sep 8 (CDRH) but there were no further records until Oct 1 when 6 were at Greenham Common (ABT), after which records became more widespread. Counts greater than 300 were: 800+ at Bury Down on Oct 28 (CDRH) and 492 at Hawthorn Hill on Oct 30 (DJB).

## GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

*Uncommon but regular passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

There were seven records, 5 in the spring and 2 in the autumn. **Spring:** At Queen Mother Reservoir 2 in partial summer plumage flew NE with 12 Bar-tailed Godwits on Apr 29 (CDRH), another 2 in partial summer plumage flew NE with 7 Bar-tailed Godwits on May 1 (CDRH) and 1 flew over on May 7 (MMc). **Autumn:** at Theale Main Pit a juvenile circled twice then flew off W on Aug 26 (KEM) and 1 was at Lower Farm GP on Sep 28 (NC).

## LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

*Locally common summer resident, common winter visitor and passage migrant (Red Listed)*

**First winter:** counts were very low; the only counts to exceed 300 were: 400 at Lea Farm GP on Jan 14 (FJC), 300 at Dorney Wetlands on Jan 18 (DJB), 300 at Bucklebury on Jan 19 (B Lyle), 300 near M4 junction 11 on Jan 26 (DJS) and 520+ at Amner's Farm, PIngewood on Feb 2 (KEM). **Summer:** Evidence of breeding was noted at 20 sites and confirmed at 11 of these. The 2007-2011 atlas survey showed breeding confirmed in 124 Tetrads, a reduction of 22% from the previous survey. **Second winter:** counts were again very low with the only counts exceeding 300 being: 400 at Streatley Warren on Nov 24 (ABT), c.450 at Amner's Farm, Pingewood on Dec 28 (KEM) and 570 there on Dec 30 (RJB).

## KNOT *Calidris canutus*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor*

Two juveniles were at Queen Mother Reservoir from Aug 15 to Aug 19 (MMc *et al.*) with one remaining till Aug 20 (CDRH, MFW, NC). Another juvenile was at Lower Farm GP on Sep 15 (R Collins, CDRH). One flew in from the E then off NE at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 5 (CDRH).

## SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

*Scarce but regular passage migrant*

There were fourteen records, comprising 46 individuals, including an impressive passage of 33 birds through Queen Mother Reservoir in May. **Spring:** one moulting bird with head and breast still in winter plumage was at Horton GP on May 7 (CDRH). Eight (in mostly fresh greyish plumage) were together on the shingle bar at Horton GP on the morning of May 30 (CDRH) with one remaining the following day. All other records came from Queen Mother Reservoir as follows: 1 acquiring summer plumage on May 7 (ABT, CDRH, MMc); a maximum of 5 on May 18 (MO) in fresh summer plumage; 1 in summer plumage on May 22 (CDRH); a different, less advanced summer plumage bird, on May 23 (CDRH, MMc); 2 summer plumage on May 26 (CDRH, MMc) and May 27 (MMc); 11 on May 29 (CDRH) including 2 rufus birds present all day and a flock of 8 which flew in from the N, landed briefly and then flew off NW; 12 on May 30 (CDRH) including 8 which flew through without landing (a flock of 4 flew in from the NE, circled then flew off SE; later another flock of 4 flew in from the N, circled then flew off NW) and 4 on the shore in the evening (CDRH,

MMc) which were still present the following day (CDRH, MMc). **Autumn:** all records were at Queen Mother Reservoir as follows: 1 on Jul 18 (MMc); 1 adult on Aug 16 (CDRH); 1 adult on Aug 24 (PBT) and 1 adult on Aug 27 (ABT, CDRH). **Second winter:** 1 winter plumage at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 4 (CDRH).

## LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

*Scarce passage migrant, principally in autumn*

A juvenile was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 26 (CDRH).

## PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*

*Rare vagrant*

A juvenile was on the pools at Crookham Common from Sep 13 (RGI) to Sep 16 (GJS). Remarkably, despite not being seen in between, it was seen again on Sep 24 (MFW *et al.*) and Sep 25 (MRWS).

## PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*

*Very rare vagrant*

One was found at Queen Mother Reservoir at 9am on Nov 8 (CDRH). It was still present late morning but was briefly attacked by a Peregrine and not seen subsequently. This is the fifth county record and the first since 2006 when one was also found by CDRH on Dec 26.

## DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

*Fairly common passage migrant, uncommon winter visitor (Red Listed)*

Monthly maxima at the main site were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	1	1	7	-	2	3	16	1	2	1

**First winter:** one was at Lower Farm GP on Jan 14 (NC) and 2 were there on Jan 22 (AMH, KEM, NC, RHS). **Spring:** singles were found at 6 sites during March with 2 at Eversley GP on Mar 22 (BMA). Seven sites hosted singles during April before passage increased during May. Most records were of 1-3 birds but 7 were at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 30 (CDRH) with 3 there on May 31 (CDRH). Passage tailed off during June with 1 at Eversley GP on Jun 1 (BMA), 1 at Crookham Common from Jun 13 to Jun 15 (IW, JL) and finally, one of the Greenland arctica race at Greenham Common on Jun 16 (CDRH). **Autumn:** passage recommenced on Jul 12 with 1 at QMR (CDRH). Passage was light through August and September apart from a flock of 15 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 17 (CDRH). There were three records during October: singles at Queen Mother Reservoir on Oct 6 (ABT), Crookham Common on Oct 9 (MFW) and Queen Mother Reservoir on Oct 25 (CDRH). **Second winter:** there were 6 records at 2 sites during November. The last of the year was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Dec 19 (CDRH).

## RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

*Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor (Red Listed)*

There were ten records, 1 in spring, 8 in autumn and 1 in the second winter period. **Spring:** a summer plumage male in pasture adjacent to Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on Apr 16 (CDRH). **Autumn:** 3 at Borough Marsh on Aug 20 and Aug 21 (ABT) and a

different individual there on Aug 23 (ABT); a juvenile at Lea Farm GP on Aug 20 (BTB *et al.*); 2 (male and female) at Crookham Common on Aug 27 (ABT, MFW); a juvenile at Slough SF on Aug 27 (CDRH, RN); 3 juveniles briefly at Lea Farm GP before flying off SW on Aug 30 (FJC); a juvenile male at Crookham Common on Sep 15 (CDRH) and 1 at Theale Main Pit on Sep 18 (ABT). **Second winter:** two (male and female) at Hosehill Lake on Nov 3 (KEM)

## JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

*Uncommon and localised winter visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** recorded at five sites. All records are as follows: 1 found dead at Bray GP on Jan 2 (DJB) could have been a victim of a Sparrowhawk; 2 at Horton GP on Jan 21 (CDRH); 1 at Pingewood GPs on Jan 22 (MFW); 1 at Dorney Wetlands on Jan 22 (ABT) and 1 at Lavell's Lake on Feb 21 (IDP). **Spring:** 1 at Horton GP on Mar 16 (CDRH) and 1 at Pingewood GPs on Mar 22 (ABT). **Autumn:** 1 at Horton GP on Oct 13, with 2 there Oct 26, 1 on Nov 2 and 2 on Nov 20 (all CDRH); 1 at Lavell's Lake on Nov 24 (ABT) and Nov 30 (FJC). **Second winter:** recorded at just two sites. One was at Lavell's Lake from Dec 4 (Doug Kelson) to Dec 30 (FJC) with 2 birds seen on 5 dates. The only other record was of 1 at Horton GP on Dec 24 (CDRH).

## SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

*Common but declining winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce in summer and no longer breeds (Amber Listed)*

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pingewood GPs	4	2	53	5	3	–	–	1	–	2	35	22
Dorney Wetlands	17	5	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	7	–	–
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	4	15	18	3	2	–	–	8	3	8	4	4
Woolhampton GP	10	–	16	1	–	–	–	1	3	9	1	–

**First winter/spring:** double figure counts were received from seven sites. However, the only significant counts came from Pingewood GPs where there was 53+ on Mar 13 (ABT) and 32 on Mar 31 (ABT). Birds were widespread during April and were still being recorded at 7 sites during early May with one lingering at Lower Farm GP to May 18 (NC). **Autumn/Second winter:** the first returning bird was at Berry's Lane GP, Burghfield on Jul 24 (MFW). By September birds were widespread but numbers were generally fairly low. Only three sites recorded double figure counts. As in the first winter period the highest counts came from Pingewood GPs where there were 35 on Nov 19 (KEM) and 22 on Dec 18 (ABT). In addition 30+ were on the flood meadows at Rosekilm Lane, Reading on Dec 21 (AVL).

## WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

*Localised resident in small numbers, winter visitors more widespread (Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** recorded at 29 sites. Most records were of one or two birds but there were 3 at Frogmill, Hurley on Jan 2 (SJF, FMF) and 4 at Eversley GP on Jan 24 (RGI). **Summer:** recorded at 27 locations of which 17 reported roding birds. Maximum counts of roding birds were as follows: 1 at Dark Hole Ride, Windsor Forest (BAJC), 1 at Greenham Common

(PEH), 2 at Roundoak Piece (PWD), 1 at Wildmoor Heath (DJS), 1 at Speen Moor Plantation (SAG), 3 at Crowthorne Woods (CRG, DJS), 1 at Mill Pond, Swinley Forest (DJS), 1 at Padworth Common (TGB), 3 at High Standinghill Woods (DJB), 1 at Hut Hill, Swinley Forest (SA), 1 at Nalder Plantation, Wickham Heath (SAG), 1 at Bracknell STW (CRG, DJS), 2 at Bucklebury Common (GJS), 2 at Snelmore Common (GDS), 1 at Caesar's Camp (DJS), 4 at Sandhurst Royal Military Academy (PJC) and 2 at South Forest, Windsor (DJB). **Second winter:** recorded at 16 sites. The majority were in Nov and Dec with three records in October but none in August and September. One was flushed at the feet of Chris Heard at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 11. The difficulties in proving breeding of this enigmatic bird are shown by the fact that the 2007-2011 Atlas survey confirmed breeding in only one tetrad.

## BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

*Scarce passage migrant (Schedule One and Red Listed)*

There were 17 records involving 26 birds reported from 12 locations. **Spring:** a summer plumage nominate bird was at Lower Farm GP on Mar 19 (ABT, JCh, NC); a summer plumage *islandica* at Field Farm on Mar 27 (JA, KEM) and Mar 28 (MFW) and 1 at Lower Farm GP on Apr 28 (MO) and Apr 29 (IW, NC). **Autumn:** two early returning birds were at Pingewood GPs on Jun 19 (KEM) and another summer plumage bird was at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures on Jun 28 (Steve Day *et al.*). There was a good run of records during the autumn as follows: 1 moulting adult nominate *limosa* at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 2 (CDRH); 2 summer plumage at Hosehill Lake on Jul 7 (RCr); 3 adults at Eversley GP on Jul 9 (BMA); 1 summer plumage at Hosehill Lake on Jul 11 (RCr); 1 adult at Lea Farm GP on Jul 15 (AR); 1 at Berry's Lane GP on Jul 17 (MFW) and Jul 21 (RCr); 4 juveniles at Slough SF on Aug 27 (RN); 2 W over Theale Main Pit on Aug 27 (MFW); 2 juveniles at Hosehill Lake on Sep 4 (ABT, KEM); a juvenile at Slough SF on Sep 12 (ABT); 1 at Dorney Wetlands on Sep 18 (W Morgan) and 1 at Theale Main Pit on Sep 18 (ABT).

**Recorders comment:** the adult at QMR on Jul 2nd was suspected of being a nominate *limosa* and when the record shots were passed to Dutch expert Arnoud B van den Berg he commented that "the pictures are consistent with *L l limosa* as I know them from July in Holland. I showed the pics to Nils (van Duivendijk) who agreed, and he suggested birds like this may often be females". Interestingly, an exceptional flock of 17 nominate *limosas* was recorded at Rainham Marshes RSPB reserve on the very similar date of Jul 3rd 2013.

## BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

*Scarce passage migrant*

There were eight records, all in the spring. Apr 29 saw a widespread arrival of Bar-tailed Godwits across the south-east. At Queen Mother Reservoir one circled over several times at 6:02am before flying off NE. An hour later, at 7:04am, a flock of 12 (plus 2 Grey Plover) flew NE and in the evening one flew WNW at 8:00pm (all CDRH). The following day a summer plumage male and a female flew over heading NE (CDRH) and another was seen flying east (MMc). This good passage continued into May. On the 1st four partial summer plumage birds were resting on the shingle bar at Horton GP before flying off ENE at 7:35am (CDRH). At Queen Mother Reservoir 3 summer plumage males flew over NE at 5:33am (CDRH). In the evening a total of 40 birds passed through, comprising c.33 NE at 7:07pm and another 7 NE (with 2 Grey Plover) at 8:06pm (CDRH). The last record was a female at Lea Farm Lake on May 7 (FJC) which flew in from the NW, circled low over the lake but then flew off high ESE.

## WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

*Uncommon passage migrant (Schedule One and Red Listed)*

It was a good year with 23 records from 8 locations. **Spring:** passage began on Apr 22 with 2 at Eversley GP (BMA *et al.*) and 1 circling Queen Mother Reservoir before flying off NNE (CDRH). Two were at Greenham Common on Apr 29 (ABT) and 2 were at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 30 (CDRH *et al.*). Passage peaked during May. On the 1st one was at Eversley GP (BMA) and 3 were at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH *et al.*). There was a concentration of records between May 4 and May 10 as follows: 1 NE at Eversley GP on 4th (BMA); 1 at Lower Farm GP on 5th (NC); 1 at Eversley GP on 5th (MGLR); 2 at Queen Mother Reservoir on 5th (MMc), 2 over Emmer Green on 6th (HRN); 1 at Eversley GP on 6th (BMA); 1 at Queen Mother Reservoir on 6th (CDRH); 1 E at Theale Main Pit on 7th (RJB); 1 at Eversley GP on 8th (BMA) and 1 NE at Queen Mother Reservoir on 10th (MMc). **Autumn:** the first returning passage birds were recorded on Jul 18 when 1 flew low over Hosehill Lake (RCr) and 1 flew S at Queen Mother Reservoir (MMc). However, there were no further records until Aug 13 when at Queen Mother Reservoir 3 flew SW followed by another 2 flying S an hour later (CDRH). One flew over Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 15 (KEM) and 1 was on the ground there on Aug 26 (DJB); 1 flew SSW at Horton GP on Aug 27 (CDRH) and finally, 3 circled Lavell's Lake on Aug 30 (FJC) then flew off SW.

## CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

*Uncommon to scarce passage migrant and winter visitor also a summer visitor in small numbers (Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** two were in fields at Hurst on Jan 3 (FJC, MFW, RJB) before relocating to Lea Farm landfill on Jan 13 (DJW) where they remained until Jan 26 (BAJC). In addition 2 flew over Eversley GP on Jan 6 (D Moden); 3 were at Borough Marsh from Jan 12 (CDRH) to Jan 21 (MFW); 3 were at Eversley GP on Feb 22 (MGLR) and 2 at Eastbury on Feb 28 (JD). **Spring:** birds returned to their breeding grounds during March. Away from breeding sites migrants were recorded at Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 8 (MMc), Mar 23 (CDRH) and Apr 14 (MMc); 2 were at Woolhampton GP on Mar 13 (BJH) and one was heard there on Apr 20 (KEM); there was 1 at Hurst Green GP on Apr 14 (ADB); 1 was at Lower Farm GP on Mar 30 (NC) and there was 1 at Brimpton GP on May 6 (JPM). Summer: birds summered on the Downs at Lambourn and Compton. At Lambourn the first returned birds were seen on Mar 20 when 5 birds were present (NC). Birds were seen in the area into June with a peak count of 7 on Apr 12 (KEM) and Apr 18 (MJD). The last record was of 3 on Jun 9 (KEM). At Compton the first bird was seen on Mar 17 (ABT) and 1-2 birds were recorded during April and May until the last record of 2 on May 6 (ABT). There was no evidence of breeding at either of these sites. Elsewhere, one was at Woolley Down on Mar 29 (GDS), 2 were at Welford Military Base on Apr 9 (R J Claridge) and 1 was at Farnborough Down on May 2 (GDS). **Autumn:** singles flew over Queen Mother Reservoir on Jun 18 and Jun 22 (CDRH) and over Lavell's Lake on Oct 6 (RCr). **Second winter:** one flew over Horton GP on Nov 9 (CDRH).

## COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

*Common passage migrant, scarce in summer and winter; has bred*

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pingewood GPs	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	3	2	-	-	-
Eversley GPs	-	1	1	3	4	1	6	3	2	-	-	-
Horton GPs	-	-	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale	-	-	-	2	3	1	1	3	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	-	-	-	5	5	1	2	4	2	1	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	-	3	13	1	10	12	6	4	-	-
Rowney Predator Lake, Woolhampton GPs	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Slough Sewage Farm	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	-	-	-	-
Summerleaze GP	-	-	-	2	2	-	2	3	1	-	-	-
Theale Main GP, Theale	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	4	-	-	-	-

**First winter:** 1 was at Lea Farm GP on Jan 23 (FJC) and 1 was at Eversley GP on Feb 16 and 18 (MGLR). **Spring:** apart from 2 early records at Eversley GP on Mar 16 (MGLR) and Lavell's Lake on Mar 28 (S King) passage began in April with one at Bray GP on 2nd (CDRH). Counts of 1-5 were received from a further 13 sites by the end of the month. Records were received from 12 sites during May. Most counts were of 1-5 birds but 13 were at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 1 (CDRH). **Autumn:** the first returning bird was at Eversley GP on Jun 13 (GDu). There were June records from another 6 sites. Numbers built up throughout July, peaking in August and dropping off through September. The only site to record double figure counts was Queen Mother Reservoir with a peak of 12 on Aug 4 and 5 (CDRH). There were 3 October records: 2 at Queen Mother Reservoir on 1st (CDRH), 4 at Queen Mother Reservoir on 2nd (MFW) and 1 at Lower Farm GP from Oct 8 until Oct 15 (IW, JL, NC). **Second winter:** there were no records during the second winter period.

## GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

*Locally common passage migrant and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	2	-	1	-	-	3	4	5	2	3	-	-
Berry's Lane GP, Burghfield	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	2	2	-	-
Pingewood GPs	1	-	2	2	3	2	3	6	1	1	1	2
Eversley GP	1	2	2	2	1	1	5	5	4	3	1	1
Horton GPs	2	5	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-
Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures CP	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	5	2	3	3	1
New Pit, Brimpton Road	-	-	2	2	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	1
Slough Sewage Farm	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	6	2	-	1	-
Woolhampton GP	-	-	1	2	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-

**First winter:** records were widespread during Jan and Feb. Most records were of 1-2 birds but 3 were regularly seen at Horton GP with 5 there on Feb 9 (CDRH). **Spring:** records were widespread but in small numbers during March and April. The largest count of the spring was of 3 at Pingewood GPs on May 1 (MFW). Singles were recorded at another 5 sites during early May until the last record of 1 at Lower Farm GP on May 5 (IW, NC). **Autumn:** passage resumed with 1 at Slough SF on Jun 3 (CDRH). Birds were recorded at another 6 sites during June. Numbers increased during July and peaked during August. Most counts were of 1-5 birds but 6 were at the new workings on Brimpton Road on Jul 30 (MFW); 6 at Slough SF on Aug 1 (CDRH) and 6 at Pingewood GPs on Aug 9 (MFW). Counts decreased thereafter but birds remained widespread during September and October. **Second winter:** birds were recorded at 15 sites during Nov and Dec. The only count to exceed 2 was 3 at Lower Farm GP on Nov 12 (MFW).

### SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

*Very scarce passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

A juvenile was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 9 (CDRH).

### GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

*Uncommon passage migrant, rare in winter (Schedule One)*

Records were received from 15 locations. **Spring:** the first record of the year was at Pingewood GPs on Apr 16 (JRe, KEM) followed by 1 at Eversley GP on Apr 20 (RJG), 1 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 29 (MMc) and 1 at Pingewood GPs on Apr 30 (MO). Passage peaked during May when birds were recorded at 9 locations. Most counts were of 1-2 but 3 were at Eversley GP on May 1 (BMA). One at Eversley GP on Jun 5 and 7 (MGLR) was probably a late spring migrant. **Autumn:** the first returning bird was seen at Berry's Lane GP on Jul 16 (PBT). There were 3 records during July and passage peaked during August when there were 8 records. Most records were of 1-2 birds but 3 were at Borough Marsh on Aug 20 (ABT). There were four records in September before a late bird at Eversley GP on Oct 26 (ABT).

### WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

*Scarce passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

There were six records, two in the spring and four in the autumn. **Spring:** singles were at Lower Farm GP on May 3 (MJD *et al.*) and Theale Main Pit also on May 3 (KEM *et al.*). **Autumn:** singles were at Crookham Common on Jun 27 (JL); Berry's Lane GP, Burghfield from Jul 10 (MFW *et al.*) to Jul 12 (Birdguides). One was at Lea Farm GP from Aug 6 (BTB *et al.*) to Aug 10 and was joined by another on Aug 11, with both birds present until Aug 14 and one remaining on Aug 15 and 16 (RNM).

### REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

*Common passage migrant, scarce in summer and winter, has bred (Amber Listed)*

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Crookham Common	-	-	2	-	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eversley GP	-	2	5	7	6	5	2	-	-	-	-	-
Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale	-	-	3	4	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures CP	-	-	2	2	2	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
Loddon BBOWT Reserve	-	-	4	5	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	-	-	4	5	3	2	1	-	1	-	-	-
Padworth Lane GP	-	1	6	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2	-	-	-	-
Theale Main GP, Theale	-	-	1	3	2	3	-	-	-	1	-	-
Woolhampton GP	-	1	2	2	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-

**First winter:** there were no January records but birds were recorded at 5 sites during February. **Spring:** passage was widespread between March and May. Most records were of 1-5 birds but 6 were at Padworth Lane GP on Mar 20 (MFW) and 7 were at Eversley GP on Apr 26 (BMA). **Breeding:** breeding was confirmed at 2 sites. At Hosehill Lake an adult was seen with 4 small chicks on May 21 (RCr). Three of these were still present on Jun 5 (H Whitall) but only 2 on Jun 15 and 20 (KEM). A pair with 1 chick was seen at Woolhampton GP on May 28 (MFW). **Autumn:** most summering birds had moved on by the end of June and there was only a light passage during July and August. The only counts to exceed 2 were 4 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 12 (CDRH) and 3 at Aldermaston GP on Jul 16 (JPM). The only September record was of 1 at Lower Farm GP on 7th (IW). In October 1 was at Fobney Island on 8th (AVL) and on the same day 1 was on floating weed in the middle of Theale Main Pit (KEM, MFW). **Second winter:** there were no records during the second winter period.

### TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

*Scarce passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

There were eleven records, 3 in spring and 8 in autumn. All records came from Queen Mother Reservoir. **Spring:** 1 on May 7 (MMc *et al.*); 1 on May 8 circled the reservoir but didn't land (CDRH); 1 on May 18 (MMC *et al.*) and on May 19 (CDRH). **Autumn:** summer plumage adult from Jul 19 to Jul 21 (CDRH *et al.*); summer plumage adult from Jul 29 to Aug 1 (CDRH *et al.*); summer plumage adult on Aug 4 (CDRH *et al.*), 1 on Aug 6 (Birdguides); 1 on Aug 8 (CDRH), 1 on Aug 13 (MMc); 1 juvenile on Aug 23 (MMc) and an adult on Aug 25 (ABT, MMc).

### GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius*

*Rare vagrant*

A first-winter was at Queen Mother Reservoir from Sep 12 (CDRH *et al.*) to Sep 15 (CDRH).



## ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*

*Rare vagrant, principally in autumn*

A single record of a light-morph adult flying high NE over QMR, late morning, on May 25 (CDRH). A typical fly over sighting (only 2 have ever lingered, plus one taken into care) this was the 22nd record for Berkshire but only the third ever in Spring.

## GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*

*Rare vagrant*

**Autumn:** a single record at Theale Main GP, of an unaged bird on the evening of Sep 13 (MFW). The bird was feeding on a dead Lesser Black-backed Gull, and was seen to depart high W at dusk. This was the 11th record for Berkshire.

## KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

**Autumn:** with no spring records, the first occurrence of the year was of 2 juveniles at Theale Main GP early on the afternoon of Sep 25 (MFW *et al.*) coinciding with a flock of over 50 Black Terns; later visitors had to settle for 2 first-winter Little Gulls instead. At QMR, an adult (regrowing the outermost primaries) flew past NE at close range on Nov 4 (CDRH), and another adult (distinguished by complete primaries) passed NE through the roost late on Nov 11 (CDRH). **Second winter:** a weather-driven adult rested on the raft at QMR in the morning of Dec 14 (CDRH).

**Recorders Comment:** the September sighting is, perhaps unexpectedly, highly unusual. September is actually the least likely month in which to see a Berkshire Kittiwake (see *The Birds of Berkshire*, 2013) and the only other sighting during the last 40 years was, also at Theale GP, on September 10th 1991. At QMR - undoubtedly the county's premier site for this species - there has never been a September record.

## BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

*Abundant winter visitor and passage migrant which now breeds in increasing numbers (Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** the year opened with 500 on ice at Trout Lake, Lower Farm, on Jan 1 although they moved E to roost (SAG). Counts at Lower Farm GP reached 900 at dusk on Jan 16 (SAG), and 800 on Feb 9 (NC), with the highest count of 1275 occurring on Feb 22 (PEH). The next highest counts were 735 at Theale Main GP on Jan 15 (RJB), 410 at Dinton Pastures CP on Jan 16 (WEBs), rising to 600 by Mar 1 (RMB), 350 at Pingewood GPs on Feb 25 (RJB), 343 at Eton on Feb 27 (RMH), 300 at Sole Common on Jan 3 (JL), 300 at Summerleaze GP on Jan 16 (WEBs) and 300 on a freshly ploughed field at Maidenhead on Feb 18 (BDC). A bird colour-ringed as 2X23 was present on the Thames at Datchet from Feb 18 to Mar 12 (KPD), and a bird at Lavell's Lake on Mar 15 was ringed at Sosrovaya Polyana, Russia in Jun 2010 (ADB). **Spring/Summer:** at QMR a flock of 300 mostly first summer birds were aerial-feeding on flies on Jun 3, and the first juvenile of the year was recorded at Horton GPs on Jun 17 (both CDRH). A Spanish colour-ringed bird (N176 on yellow) was seen at Datchet on May 11 (KEM). There were plenty of juveniles to be seen by July but few observations to correlate them with local origin. The only reports of nesting activity were: young on a raft reported on May 10 at Hosehill Lake LNR (KEM); 2 nests at Eversley GPs on May 18 (BMA); 2 chicks in a box on Lavell's Lake on May 25 (AR); 4 recently hatched young on rafts at Lea Farm GP on Jun 1 (RM); 2 pairs attempted to nest at Wraysbury GP but probably failed (CDRH); 1 pair attempted to nest at Summerleaze GP (first record at this site) from May 18 onwards (CDRH). **Autumn/Second winter:** by Jul 31 there were counts of 100

at lower Farm GP (NC) and 150 at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor (DJB). High counts in this period were 500 at Smith's Lawn, Windsor on Oct 9 (DJB), 738 passing overhead at Twyford on Sep 22 (PA), over 1000 at Knowl Hill on Oct 1 (DJB), and WEBs counts of 850 on Nov 27 and 1250 on Dec 27 at Dinton Pastures CP (WEBs); 16 other sites had counts of 100 or more. Ringed individuals were again observed multiple times on the Thames at Datchet, one colour-ringed individual (white P904 on black) remaining for a week from Oct 16, and another UK-ringed individual (BTO EX51513) remaining for 4 weeks from Oct 2 (both KPD). One of several garden records involved 10 birds taking fat pellets at Twyford on Dec 17 (SPA).

## LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

A good spring with 16 records of at least 45 birds, with a more typical autumn of 6 reports of 12 birds. **Spring:** the first record of the year was of 2 adults moulting into summer plumage at Theale Main GP on Mar 29 (KEM). At the same site 1 adult was present on Apr 1 (RJB), with 2 adults and 2 first summers present on Apr 2 (KEM) and a single adult present on Apr 3 and Apr 5 (ABT). At QMR, there were 9 (8 adults and 1 first summer) on Apr 9 (CDRH), with 2 adults on Apr 10, 6 adults in the early morning on Apr 25 and another flock of 6 adults on Apr 29 (all CDRH). Further records in the Theale area were of 1 first summer at Hosehill on Apr 28 (KEM), followed by 5 adults at Moatlands GP at midday on Apr 30 (RCr), which were present until the evening (ABT). This was followed by limited passage in May of 1 first summer at Theale Main GP on May 1 (RRI) and the same or another on May 4 (KEM); whilst there was 1 adult at Woolhampton GP on May 2 (KEM, RJG). In E Berkshire, there was a single first summer at QMR in the early morning of May 7, which departed to the west and may have been the bird seen through the morning at Slough SF (CDRH) and later at Jubilee River (CDRH *et al.*), whilst 2 first summers were reported at QMR later on same date (KEM). The final spring records were on late dates at QMR, with 1 first summer on Jun 3 and another on 27 Jun (both CDRH). **Autumn/Second winter:** the first autumn record was of a juvenile or first winter at QMR on Sep 17 (DJB), still present the following day (RCW), and 1 first winter on Sep 26 (CDRH). Daily records of 2 juveniles or first winters initially on Theale Main GP on Sep 25, and presumed to be the same 2 lingering to Sep 30 (MFW *et al.*). Flocks of 3 (2 adults and 1 first winter) and 4 (2 adults and 2 first winters) were seen at QMR on Nov 7 (CDRH), with the final record of the year a single first winter at Theale Main GP on Dec 30 (MFW).

## MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

*Scarce but increasing passage migrant and winter visitor, less frequent in summer (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

There was a spate of mid-summer records but none further West than the Theale area. At least 39 separate birds are estimated, with at least 5 overwintering from 2010 at QMR. **First winter:** at QMR 3 adults remained from Nov 2010, with one or two recorded on multiple dates from Jan 1 with one nearby at Colnbrook on Jan 11 (CDRH *et al.*). On Jan 20 2 adults were joined in the roost by a first winter and a second winter (CDRH), but singles of both ages had also been present in late 2010. Two or more adults from this group and the first winter are presumed to have been the birds seen regularly at QMR until late Mar. **Spring/Summer:** the first sites away from QMR to record this species in 2011 were Bray GP with 1 first winter on Feb 2 and a new adult at Windsor Great Park on Feb 12 (both CDRH). Away from East Berkshire, there was a first winter in the roost at Moatlands GP on Feb 20 (PBT) and presumably the same again on Feb 27 (MFW); whilst 2 adults on Mar 6 were probably early passage birds (MFW). Although overwintering birds remained present at QMR, 1 adult summer heading NE on Mar 19 may have been a different bird on passage

(CDRH). A pair of adult summer birds passed NE at QMR on Apr 25 (CDRH) and another pair remained on the island at Lea Farm GP from early morning on Apr 27 (KIT) departing in the afternoon (Abe). There were no May records but an advanced first summer was at QMR on Jun 2 (CDRH). Two were reported from Theale Main GP on Jun 14 (BGU) but a longer sequence of records at QMR and nearby locations began with 4 (1 second summer, 2 in adults together plus another adult flew E) on Jun 27 (CDRH). Five, including the first 2 juveniles of the year (together with 1 adult, 1 second summer and 1 first summer) were at QMR on Jul 4, (CDRH), whilst another juvenile was at Hosehill Lake on Jul 7 (LMo). Autumn/**Second winter**: an adult winter and a new recently-fledged juvenile were aerial-feeding at QMR on Aug 1 (CDRH) and 1 juvenile was surface-feeding at QMR on Aug 18 (CDRH). A further moulting juvenile was at Lea Farm GP on Sep 8 (ADB) and what may have been the same bird was at Borough Marsh on Sep 10 (DJB), with the same or another in the roost at Moatlands GP on Sep 20 (MFW). Two first winters were at QMR on Sep 29, with 1 first winter in the roost on Oct 8 with what was probably a different bird following the plough in fields at Horton on Oct 13 (all CDRH). Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures held 1 first winter on Oct 20 (FJC) and 1 adult was seen overhead nearby at Dinton Pastures on Nov 3 (FJC). An adult winter was in the roost at QMR on Nov 4, with 1 first winter the following evening (both CDRH), while a first winter was present pre-roost at Theale Main GP on Nov 10 (KEM). Single adult winter birds were seen on several dates at QMR from Nov 25 until Dec 27 (CDRH *et al.*), when a new first winter was also present (CDRH), with a different adult winter at Summerleaze GP on Dec 26 (CDRH), while Dinton Pastures continued a good year for this species with a second winter on Dec 26 and 27 (RRi *et al.*).

## COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

*Common winter visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Recorded in all months of the year, with a bias in distribution to the East of the county and massively under-recorded in the peak months. **First winter**: an early high count of 100 came at Great Meadow Pond on Jan 2 (DJB), followed by high counts for the period of 220 at Burchett's Green on Jan 17 (PNe), 246 (with more still arriving) coming to roost at Moatlands GP on Feb 20 (PBT) and at Great Meadow Pond 300 on Jan 16 and 450 on Feb 6 (DJB). There were 30 on a freshly ploughed field at Maidenhead on Feb 18 (BDC). Away from East Berkshire, the only other 3-figure counts were of 125 at Eversley GPs on Jan 26 (BMA), and further West at least 30 at Lower Farm GP on Feb 5 (NC) and 30 on Bury Down on Jan 11 (RMB). **Spring/Summer**: there were perhaps rather more records in April and May than usual: 1 at Lower Farm GP on Apr 2 (IW, JL); 1 immature at Great Meadow Pond on Apr 10 (DJB), a first winter at Hosehill Lake LNR Apr 13 and at Theale Main GP on Apr 14, and the same or another at Hosehill Lake LNR again on May 1 (all KEM); a first summer at Lea Farm GP from Apr 22 to 30 (RHS; FJC; PBT) and again on May 7 (DJB); an injured adult at QMR from May 1 until found dead on Jun 2 (CDRH); up to 4 first summer and 1 second summer at QMR in May and Jun (CDRH). Autumn/**Second winter**: from the end of Jun records mounted in East Berkshire, with 1 adult and 3 first summers at QMR on Jul 4 (CDRH), 1 adult at Great Meadow Pond on Jul 10 (DJB), 5 adults and 1 first winter at Smith's Lawn on Jul 17 (DJB), 9 (mostly adult birds) at QMR on Jul 22 (CDRH), and 14 and 12 at Great Meadow Pond and Smith's Lawn respectively on Aug 7 (DJB). There were only singles from mid-Berkshire at Eversley GPs on Jul 15, Aug 3 (both RFM) and Aug 10 (BMA), at Lea Farm GP on Aug 5 (RM) and at Lavell's Lake on Sep 30 (SDay). In East Berkshire counts at Smith's Lawn grew from 80 on Oct 9, to 100 on Oct 30 and 300 on Nov 13, with 200 at Great Meadow Pond on the same date (all DJB), with similar counts in the area through to the end of the year. In mid Berkshire there were 60 at Eversley GPs on Nov 18 (RFM), and on the Downs 57 were at Lowbury Hill on Dec 27 (DJB).

## LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

*Common passage migrant and winter visitor, increasing in summer and now breeding (Amber Listed)*

Present in all months of the year, with high roost counts in the West of the county in the winter and autumn periods. No records of breeding were received. **First winter**: an early large count of 2000 was made in fields at Sole Common on Jan 3 (JL) but the highest count of the period was 2800 at Theale Main GP on Jan 18 (RCr). Several other sites had three-figure counts, including 300 at Easton on Jan 24 (JL) and 100 in the roost at Eversley GPs on Jan 17 (JMC). At Lower Farm GP, the species was present in large numbers, with four-figure winter roost counts on several dates, peaking at 1986 on Jan 22 (PEH), with 290 still on Mar 11 (RGI, PEH). At Moatlands GP there were 900 in the roost on Feb 20 (PBT), but no other counts were recorded from roost sites in mid and East Berkshire. **Spring/Summer**: low numbers continued through spring at Lower Farm GP, with 11 on May 30 (NC) rising to 51 by Jun 26 (SAG). No information was received on breeding, although adults were present at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor on May 15 (DJB), at Lower Farm GP on May 17 (NC), and there were 2 adults at Theale Main GP on Jun 1 and 14 (KEM). The 2007-2011 Atlas survey confirmed breeding in 5 tetrads with birds taking advantage of roof tops in urban areas. Autumn/**Second winter**: at QMR, the first juvenile (just fledged, so presumably local) was with 22 adults on Jul 5 (CDRH). The first large counts of the autumn came from farmland flocks, with 200 at Knowl Hill on Aug 13 (DJB) and 200 at Inkpen on Aug 15 (IW), with an even higher count of 2500 at Bury Down on Aug 24, and similarly 2210 at Compton Downs on Sep 9 (both DJB). Roost counts included 2000 at Theale Main GP on Nov 7 (KEM) and 1200 at Wigmore Lane GP on Nov 27 and 1100 on Dec 18 (both MRWS). At Lower Farm GP there was continuous presence, reaching three figures with 105 on Aug 28 (NC), 500 by Oct 15 (SAG), and peaking at an estimated 5000 on Nov 16 (GJS), with 1863 still on Dec 30 (PEH).

## HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

*Common winter visitor and passage migrant and increasing summer resident which now breeds (Red Listed)*

**First winter**: low counts at more than 25 sites across the county, with a peak count of 30 at Easton on Jan 24 (JL). The only roost counts were at Eversley GPs, where there were 3 on Jan 11 (JMC). **Spring/Summer**: there were 27 at Lower Farm GP on Apr 3 (NC, PEH) and 10 at Whiteknights Park on May 8 (DFI), with scattered records at 10 other sites. There was no firm indication of breeding, but pair behaviour included 2 adults acting territorially on rooftops in Wokingham on Mar 12 (PBT) and a pair engaging in courtship behaviour at Maiden Erleigh Lake on Apr 27 (LBM). Autumn/**Second winter**: The first juvenile of the year was at QMR on Jul 14 (CDRH), with 2 at Summerleaze GP on Jul 28 (CDRH), 2 at Eversley GP on Aug 2 (RFM), 2 juveniles at Wokingham and 3 at QMR on Aug 31 (both PBT). The first large autumn flock was of 144 at Summerleaze GP on Jul 23 (DJB) and 196 on Jul 28 (CDRH) and 500 there on Aug 13 and higher counts at Knowl Hill of 710 on Aug 6, 1400 on Aug 13 and 2000 on Aug 20 (all DJB). The only comparable count of the period was of 900 at QMR on Sep 10 (DJB). The only roost count reported was of 44 at Eversley GP on Oct 9 (JMC). Large flocks remained in mid-Berkshire with 2000 at Knowl Hill on Nov 5, whilst the only other flock reported was 200 at Easton on Dec 27 (JL).

## HERRING GULL (*argentatus*) *Larus argentatus argentatus*

**First winter**: at least 2 adults with very restricted black in the primaries (*thayeri*-type), and a similar type first winter on Mar 1 (both CDRH). **Autumn**: an early adult was at Colnbrook from Aug 7 to 16 (CDRH).

## YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

*Uncommon but increasing autumn passage migrant, a few winter (Amber Listed)*

Recorded in all months of the year at 25 sites across the county, with the usual mid- to late-summer build-up, particularly in the East of the county. First winter/**Spring**: the first record of the year was of 5 in the roost at Eversley GPs on Jan 2 (JMC), with a single adult at Pingewood GPs on Jan 8 (KEM) and at Theale Main GP on Jan 21 (ABT). Lower Farm GP hosted individuals from across the age spectrum, with a third winter on Jan 7, first winter from Jan 14, adult from Jan 17 and second winter from Feb 3, with another on Feb 5 and 6 (all NC). Counts were low at QMR and adjacent sites, with the highest being 3 adults on Jan 5 (KEM), an adult and second winter on Feb 2, an adult and third winter on Mar 1 (both CDRH) and 2 adults on Mar 9 (NC). At the same location there was 1 adult on Mar 22 (CDRH), 2 second summers on Mar 28, 1 second summer on Apr 1, and a near-adult nearby at Horton GPs on Apr 20 (all CDRH). There were no others in this period apart from late records of a first summer at QMR from Apr 22 to 29, and perhaps the same at Summerleaze GP on May 7 (both CDRH), and 1 at Dinton Pastures CP on May 25 (GWils). **Autumn/Second winter**: there were an adult and second summer with an influx of gulls feeding on flying ants at QMR on Jun 2 (CDRH), followed by 2 adults in moult on Jun 22, with numbers climbing to 10 by the end of Jun, and reaching 57 on Horton Fields and at least 10 on QMR at the same time on Jul 20 (CDRH). The first juvenile was seen on Jul 12 and the highest count was of 5 juveniles on Aug 15 (CDRH). The peak count of 70 (mostly adults) was at QMR on Aug 13, with 51 counted at Colnbrook on the same date (both CDRH). There were no double figure counts after 11 on Sep 20 and no count greater than 2 adults and 1 first winter in the remainder of the year (all CDRH). Lower Farm GP had small numbers of adults and immatures from late Jul but with no more than 3 from 18 Nov (DJB; NC). Flocks of mostly adults at Smith's Lawn, Windsor Great Park gave counts rising from 6 on Jul 10 to 22 on Aug 14 (DJB), with the only other double-figure counts being at Eversley GPs where there were 25 on Oct 1 and 16 on Oct 9 (both JMC). Away from water, there was 1 adult on a playing field in Earley on Jul 25 (MSFW), an adult at Knowl Hill on Aug 6 and 13 (both DJB), an adult at Woodlands Park on Aug 30 (DJB), 2 adults at Knollend Down Sep 9 (DJB) and 6 at Easton on Dec 22 (CDRH).

## CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans*

*Scarce autumn/winter visitor*

2011 was fairly typical of recent years, with 15 individuals being recorded at 10 sites across the county. First winter/**Spring**: the first record of the year was 1 first winter at Lower Farm GP on Jan 12 and 14 (NC; PEH). There was a different bird at the same site, a third winter, on Feb 7 (NCC; KEM). At QMR, a second winter from Jan 15 to 29 was the bird present from the end of 2010 (CDRH), with a new first winter on Jan 29, and again on Mar 7 and 28 (CDRH). **Autumn/Second winter**: at QMR: an adult summer from Jul 26 to 27 was the earliest autumn adult, (CDRH); a second summer moulting to third winter seen on Aug 16 (CDRH), and also at Colnbrook, was thought to be the same as a second winter last seen on Jan 29 and was recorded on several dates until Sep 3 (MO), and again on Oct 2 (CDRH). A fresh second winter was first seen at Langley on Sep 16, and then at QMR on several dates to Dec 18 (CDRH). A new third winter individual was seen at Wraysbury GP on Oct 29 (CDRH). Finally, a new first winter was seen on Dec 30 (CDRH), giving a total of five birds at QMR and adjacent sites over the autumn. Away from East Berkshire, there was a first winter at Woolhampton GP on Oct 28 (KEM), a second winter at Lower Farm GP on Oct 29 (NC), and an adult and first winter at the Moatlands GP roost on Dec 9 (MFW), while a near-adult third or fourth winter was seen at Bucklebury on Dec 20 and an adult was seen at Knowl Hill on Dec 26 (both CDRH).

## ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*

*Rare winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

**First winter**: a second winter remained regular at QMR from 2010 (CDRH) and was seen on multiple dates from Jan 3 (CDRH) until Mar 8 (MMc); it was also seen regularly in Bucks, from where it wandered across to Cock Marsh on Mar 17 (ADB). There was also a further spring record of 1 f/w at Lower Farm GP on Mar 29 (IW). A first or second winter was reported in the roost at Colebrook Lake, Eversley GPs on Jan 17 (JMC), although it was too dark to age the bird with certainty; the QMR bird was not recorded on this date, but was present again on Jan 20 (CDRH). **Second winter**: a first winter was seen at QMR on Dec 27 and 30 (CDRH).

## GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*

*Rare but annual winter visitor*

**Second winter**: a first winter was identified from photographs taken by Linda Garner-Graham (MFW) at South Lake, Earley on Dec 10, and was re-located heading towards the lake and returned there on Dec 13 (FJC *et al.*). The bird visited the lake regularly until late morning on Dec 15 and was seen and photographed by many (MO).

## GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

*Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

There were records from 16 sites, with only one 3-figure count of this always-impressive species. First winter/**Spring**: the highest count of the year, 140 (almost all adults) was at QMR on Jan 2 (CDRH). In the spring months, 2 adults were present there on Apr 19, 2 first summers on May 31, and a single first summer at the same site on Jun 3 (all CDRH); also 2 subadults at Horton GPs on Apr 20 (CDRH). There were records from only 4 other sites with singles at Lea Farm GP and Theale Main GP on various dates (MO), 2 adults on several occasions at Lower Farm GP (NC; IW, JL) and a first winter and second winter together in the roost at Moatlands GP on Feb 20 (PBT). **Autumn/Second winter**: at QMR, the first juvenile was on Aug 14, with numbers rising to 8 on Sep 9 (CDRH). Numbers peaked at the end of the year, with 33 (32 adults and 1 juvenile) on Dec 19, 94 there (inc. 87 adults) and 7 at Horton GPs on Dec 26 and 48 at Colnbrook on Dec 27 (all CDRH). Away from East Berkshire waters, there were small numbers at 5 sites, including 1 or 2 adults regularly at Lower Farm GP (MO) but the only higher counts were 5 adults on Nov 5 at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill (DJB) and 26 (24 adults, 2 juvs) in the same area on Dec 23 (CDRH), with the only other multiple count being 3 adults at Lea Farm GP on Dec 27 (WEBs).

## LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons*

*Scarce passage migrant*

Three typically brief spring records, an above-average year for the species. **Spring**: one was found in the early morning at Theale Main GP on May 6 (MFW) before heading W in mid-morning. Another was found at QMR on May 7 (MMc *et al.*), with a third at the same site and found by the same observer on May 13 (MMc); each of the three sightings afforded only a short time window before moving on.

## **BLACK TERN** *Chlidonias niger*

*Uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

A total of 23 records involving 107 individuals which included a large autumn flock of 56 (which compares to similar flocks of 54 on Aug 6 2009 at QMR and 50-100 there on 1 Sep 1998, but perhaps the largest since up to 167 at QMR on Aug 19 1992). **Spring:** the first record of the year was of 2 at Whiteknights Lake on Apr 22 (BGu), followed by 3 at QMR on Apr 23 (CDRH), 1 early morning there on May 2 (ABT; MMC) and presumably another at roost (CDRH), 2 there on May 3-5 (all MMC) and 2 hawking over Horton GPs on May 3 (CDRH). Records at Theale Main GP began with 1 on Apr 26 (ABT), then 1 on May 1 (RRi), 7 on May 2 (RHS; PEH) and 1 on May 4 (KEM). Additional spring sightings were 2 at Eversley GPs (BMA; MGM), and 7 together at Twyford GPs (CDRH, CA Lelliott), both on May 3. **Autumn:** at QMR: 1 juvenile on Aug 18, which departed in a mixed tern flock, and an adult present on the same date (both CDRH). 1 juvenile on Aug 23 (MMC), 1 juvenile heading S on Aug 28 (MMC; CDRH), and 4 on Sep 17 (ABT; KEM). At Theale GPs: 2 adults on Aug 5 (KEM), 1- 2 juveniles from Aug 25 (KEM) to Aug 29 (KEM) with 3 on Aug 27 (BGu). There was 1 on Sep 2 (BGu), 2 on Sep 6 (RCr) then daily records mid-month peaking at 4 on Sep 17 and 18 (RN; MFW) with at least 1 juvenile remaining until Sep 22 (MFW). This was thoroughly exceeded by a flock totalling 56 found on the afternoon of Sep 25 (MFW). This is the largest flock in Berkshire since the 50-100 at QMR on Sep 1 1998.

## **SANDWICH TERN** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

*Uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

A typical year, with seven records involving 14 birds. The first record of the year was of 1 adult briefly at QMR on Jun 1 and then later at a tern colony on Horton GPs (CDRH). The remaining records were all after midsummer, beginning with 2 adults at Colebrook Lake, Eversley GPs on Jul 10 (BMA). There was 1 at QMR on Aug 2 staying until just before midday (MMC), and an adult and juvenile at the same site on Aug 18 (MMC). Further records came with 3 at QMR early morning on Sep 9 before heading SW (ABT), followed by 3 winter plumage adults resting on buoys on Sep 28 (CDRH). There were 2 juveniles/first winters at Theale Main GP on Sep 30, one begging for food from the other (KEM), before the final record of the year of 1 first winter also at Theale Main GP on Oct 6 (MFW).

## **COMMON TERN** *Sterna hirundo*

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

At least 51 pairs were recorded and at least 32 chicks hatched. West Berkshire: records from 13 sites, although breeding only at 2. Lower Farm had its first passage from Apr 9 (NC), and interest was taken in the tern raft from Apr 16 (ABT) numbers peaked at 13 on May 7 (SAG). There were no details of breeding numbers but at least 2 chicks were on the raft on Jul 7 (MIGW). At Thatcham Marsh: birds were present from Apr 15 (JL), and in greater numbers from May 1 (IW, JL). An estimated 8 pairs were sitting on Jun 4 with at least 4 chicks still present on Jul 24 (IW, JL). Mid Berkshire: Reported from 16 sites and breeding at in small numbers at 5 sites. In the Theale area: present from Apr 10 (ABT) to the last record of a first winter on Oct 9 (MFW). Theale Main GP had a spring peak count of 12 on Jun 15 (KEM) with an autumn maximum of 30 on Aug 4 (KEM; ABT), but there was no recorded breeding. Moatlands GP had a peak count of 19 on May 3 (ABT) but again no breeding activity was reported. At Hosehill Lake the rafts were dominated by Black-headed Gulls but one pair nested and managed to raise 3 chicks by Jul 4, with 4 adults present on the same

day (KEM). At Eversley GPs: present from Apr 12 (RHS) with peak counts of 22 on May 16, with an estimated 10-12 nests (BMA) but there was no confirmed breeding success. At Dinton Pastures: one over on Apr 10 (FJC), then present from Apr 17 (RM). At Lea Farm: 34 on May 26 (FJC), with 50 on the island on May 4 (PBT). There were 11 birds sitting on one raft on May 23 (FJC) with at least 7 chicks present on Aug 23 (DJB). Birds nested on a raft on Lavell's Lake with 12 present, including 3 chicks, on Jun 8 (AR) with 2 chicks fledging by Jul 9 (AR). At Sandford Lake: at least 3 pairs sitting and an adult returning with food on Jun 12 (RM), the last record being 1 adult and 1 juvenile on Sep 15 (RM). At Twyford GPs: peak numbers of 8 at Loddon BBOWT reserve with at least 2 sitting on Jun 8 and an adult bringing food on Jun 18 (RM). 3 adults and 5 juveniles were present on the spit at Hurst Green GP on Sep 8 (ADB) and the last record was on Sep 19 (WEBs). East Berkshire: records from 9 locations but breeding at only 1 site. At Jubilee River: only small numbers of visiting birds, peaking at 4 on May 31 (RM). At Horton GPs: 45 birds present on May 28 with 13 birds sitting on Jun 8, hatching at least 13 chicks (CDRH). Despite rising water levels there were still 10 present on Jul 2 (CDRH). QMR had both the (joint) earliest and latest records of the year, with its first bird on Apr 9, a peak count of 30 on Jun 30 (both CDRH), and at least 15 still present on Sep 17 (KEM), all passage or visitors from other local sites.

## **ROSEATE TERN** *Sterna dougallii*

*Rare vagrant*

The only record of this usually coastal tern was the first in the county since Sep 1984, but the long wait was compensated by a long stay. An adult was found at QMR in the early morning on May 9 (MMC) and was seen daily at the reservoir until May 13 (MMC) It was also seen at Slough Weir, Jubilee River from May 11 (RMH), a broken tail streamer confirming it as the same bird. On the final day of its stay, May 13, the bird made excursions upstream to Manor Farm weir, Jubilee River from midday and was seen heading upstream into Bucks in the early evening (KPD). This is the fifth Berkshire record. For photographs of this bird see page 21.

## **ARCTIC TERN** *Sterna paradisaea*

*Uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

A spread of records across 7 months and 7 sites, with 11 records of at least 19 birds in spring and 10 records of at least 19 birds in autumn but numbers were generally low with no group larger than 4 recorded. **Spring:** the first record of the year was at Theale Main GP on Apr 30 (RCr), with one on May 1 at Lower Farm GP (NC). Singles at Theale Main GP on May 2 (RJB), Burghfield Mill on May 3 (ABT), 2 at Theale GP on May 4 (KEM) with 1 at Woolhampton GP on the same date (HWh). Early records at QMR comprised 4 E with Black Terns on May 4 (MMC) and 1 being harassed by Common Terns on May 5 (CDRH), followed by 1 at QMR on May 22, 4 (3 adults, 1 second summer) on May 29 and 1 adult there on Jun 3 (all CDRH). Also another second summer was at Summerleaze GP on May 22 (CDRH). **Autumn:** records from QMR comprised 1 adult on Jul 24 (CDRH), 1 juvenile on Aug 18 (CDRH), 1 juvenile on Aug 23 (MMC), 1 with a Sandwich Tern Sep 9 (ABT), 4 on Sep 17 (ABT), 1 juvenile on Sep 18 (CDRH) and a very late first winter on Nov 7 (CDRH), the latest ever Berkshire record. Theale Main GP also contributed strongly with 2 adults through on Aug 16, 2 adults and 2 juveniles heading SW on Aug 21 (both KEM). There was then an almost unbroken run of records from Aug 23 (KEM, MFW) to Sep 11 (KEM) with an initial 2 juveniles present, joined by a third on Aug 27 (MFW) with just one remaining after Sep 3.

## ROCK DOVE / FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia*

*Abundant urban resident*

There were very high counts of 600 at Long Lane, Cookham on Sep 25 (BDC) and 440 at Littlewick Green on Oct 14 (PNe), the next largest being 65 at Newbury Wharf on Nov 26 (SAG). No breeding records were received, although birds were observed at several sites over the summer. The 2007-2011 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 45 tetrads concentrated, almost exclusively, in the urban areas of East Berkshire. At QMR, single birds were observed in the water beneath the central tower Nov 17 and Dec 9 (CDRH), presumably as a response to or result of a Peregrine attack.

## STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

*Common resident and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** quite widely reported but mainly in single figures. Larger flocks were reported from the east of the county, with 200 at Dukes Lane, Windsor on Jan 29 (DJB), 50 at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor on Feb 6 increasing to 650 on Mar 13 (DJB), 65 at St Leonard's, Windsor on Feb 17 (BDC), 78 at Sonning Meadows on Mar 12 (ABT) and 79 at Switchback Road, Maidenhead on Mar 12 (BDC). **Spring/Summer:** no sizeable flocks were reported, but small numbers were present at many sites. Evidence of breeding was fairly widespread, with pairs and nesting behaviour noted in West, Mid and East Berkshire. The higher concentrations of breeding birds were once again reported in the East of the county, where Windsor Great Park and Swinley Park held around 20 pairs. Late breeding was again confirmed at Eversley GP, where there were still 3 active nests on Oct 2 (TGB). Autumn/**Second winter:** the first large count of the autumn was 120 over in 3 flocks at Shottesbrooke on Aug 31 (CDRH), followed by 300 at Cold Harbour on Sep 5 (CDRH), whilst 100 at Woodlands park on Sep 19 (DJB) was the only other large count in Sep. The only other 3 figure counts of the period were all in Oct, with 400 at Drift Rd, Maidenhead on Oct 5 (CDRH), 100 at Horton Fields on Oct 7 (DJB), 800 at Fifield on Oct 9 (DJB), 150 at Winkfield Plain on Oct 19 (CDRH), 178 at Aldermaston on Oct 29 (KEM) and 100 at Windsor Great Park on Oct 30 (DJB).

## WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

*Abundant resident and winter visitor*

**First winter:** only 3 locations recorded counts of 500 or more, all within the same week of February, 600 at Combe Wood, Combe on Feb 6 (JLS), 1200 at Spray Road, Inkpen on Feb 8 (RHar) and 600 at Hyde Farm, Pinkneys Green on Feb 12 (PNe). **Second winter:** 500 or more were reported from 15 locations, with some significant counts found by regular watching at some sites. Passage was generally seen in the first couple of hours of daylight and first noticed in mid Oct when 700 flew S over Ascot Heath on Oct 19 (RJD). The same site had flocks flying SSE of 2289 on Oct 21, 1429 on Oct 23, 2714 on Oct 24, 2252 on Oct 25 and then a huge passage of 18800 over SE on Nov 2 (all RJD). During the same period, 737 flew W over Swinley Forest on Oct 21 (DJB), 1453 flew SSE over Fifield on Oct 22 (RJD), 1045 were at Windsor Great Park on Oct 23 (DJB), with 2281 over S at the same site on Oct 30 (DJB). 1000 also flew S over Datchet on Oct 30 (KPD) and 850 flew over Moose Hill, Wokingham on Nov 2 (PBT). Passage was seen at QMR on several dates in Nov, with 3600 S on Nov 6, 2100 S and 1600 NE on Nov 18, 1800 W on Nov 25 (all CDRH) and 1900 S on Nov 27 (PEH). All the large counts in Dec came from Windsor Great Pk. part from 4500 seen flying E from roosts on Dec 4, counts indicated a resident wintering flock of 1000-1500, with 1500 on Dec 4, 1000 on Dec 18 and 1500 on Dec 25 (all DJB). Nesting activity of this ubiquitous bird is under-reported but the 2007-2011 Atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in over 300 tetrads.

## COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

*Common resident*

This species continues to remain common and widespread throughout the county, so is probably under recorded. Most reports were of counts less than 10. Higher counts were 22 at North Heath on Jan 3 (IW), 25 at Dorney Wetlands on Feb 22 (BDC), 21 at Hungerford on Sep 10 (PBy), 60 at Padworth on Sep 26 (GJSu), 48 at West Ilsley on Nov 5 (SAG) and 16 at Long Lane, Cookham on Dec 27 (BDC). In addition, the same garden in Twyford recorded birds throughout the year, with peaks of 10 in May and Sep, 15 in Oct, 16 in Nov and 11 in Dec (SPA). Breeding was under-recorded but records of mating behaviour and juveniles were submitted from East, Mid and West areas of the county.

## TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

*Now an uncommon and extremely local summer visitor which continues to decline (Red Listed)*

Records were received from just 13 locations. Of these, only 6 were recorded on more than 1 day and only 3 had evidence of breeding, although 2 other sites had birds present for a period during the breeding season. The first spring records were on Apr 19 when single birds were at Brimpton (JPM) and Woolhampton (PEH). Birds were then recorded regularly at 5 sites across the county. At Aldermaston, a bird was heard singing on Apr 22 and on several dates in Apr and May (JPM). Breeding was confirmed when 2 juveniles were seen on Jul 12 and 16 (JPM) and a singing adult was last heard on Jul 15 (JPM). At Brimpton, a single singing bird was heard on several dates in Apr (MO), with a pair on May 1 (RCr) and a single on Jun 10 (KEM). Breeding was confirmed when 3 adults and 2 juveniles were seen on Aug 7 (GEW). Close by, at the regular site at Woolhampton GP, a single bird was noted on many dates from Apr 19 to Aug 20 (MO), with 2 birds only noted on 2 dates, Apr 29 (ABT) and Aug 17 (KEM). Fortunately, the latter date included a juvenile bird, as evidence of successful breeding. At Holyport, a singing bird was first heard on Jun 14 (SKP) and then on several dates in Jun and Jul (MO), it was last seen on Aug 3 (SKP), but there was no evidence of breeding. At Nuptown, a bird was first seen on May 27 (MSFW) and then on several dates in May and Jun (MO). 2 birds were seen on May 31 (MSFW) and Jun 6 (MHu), with the last record of a single on Jun 28 (MHu), but there was no evidence of breeding. Other records received relate to presumed passage birds, 1 flushed at Sandhurst RMA on Apr 30 (PJC), 1 singing at Bottom Lane, Sulhamstead on May 7 (RJB), 1 at Dorney Wetlands on May 11 (CDRH), 1 at Cannon Court Farm, Maidenhead on May 28 (CCH), 1 singing at Southcote Meadows on May 25 (AVL) and 1 singing at Maidens Green, Winkfield on Jun 30 (BAJC), which was probably the bird from nearby Nuptown, and a bird was seen in a garden at Fifield from Jul 2 to Jul 9 (JFr). The last record of the year was of a single bird at Woolhampton GP on Aug 20 (GEW).

## RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

*Common resident in the east of the county, uncommon elsewhere*

The continued westward spread of this species, especially along the Thames Valley, has now made it a fairly common resident as far west as the east of Reading, however it is still a rare visitor further west. The monthly site status based on records received is shown in the table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites in W Berks	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No. of sites in M Berks	6	3	3	7	4	4	1	4	8	9	5	3
No. of sites in E Berks	13	13	5	9	4	4	6	4	10	14	7	10

**First winter:** probably under recorded in the East of the county, where it is fairly common. The only high counts were 98 W at Dorney Wetlands on Jan 1 (DJB) and 80 W at QMR on Feb 12 (KEM). The highest Mid Berkshire count during the period was 14 at Twyford GP on Jan 30 (RM). The only record from the West for the whole year was 1 at Woolhampton GP on Jan 1 (KEM, CBur) **Spring/Summer:** although widely reported throughout Mid and East Berkshire during the period, there were few counts that exceeded 10 birds. 34 flew NW at Wraysbury GP on Apr 9 (RJD) and there were 14 at the same site on May 7 when 1 was taken by a Peregrine (RJD) and 20 at Maidenhead Court on Jun 18 (DF). There were a few high counts during July in the East, with 30 at Cookham on Jul 12 (BDC), 40 at Cookham Rise on Jul 18 (MG), 26 at Maidenhead Court on Jul 20 (DF) and 50 in Maidenhead on Jul 24 (MG). The only evidence of breeding that was reported was of a juvenile sitting on the window ledge of a house in Ascot on Apr 27 (SA) and a pair with a juvenile at Windsor Great Park on Aug 28 (DJB). The 2007-2011 Atlas surveyed showed confirmed breeding in 34 Tetrads, all in the east of the county. Autumn/**Second winter:** the first big flock of the autumn was 80 near Slough SF on Aug 19 (PBT) then 62 at Pinkneys Green on Sep 11 (MJF, LJF). In Oct counts over 50 were; 60 at Maidenhead on Oct 1 and 94 at Windsor Race Course on Oct 23 (BDC). The first large roosting flocks weren't recorded until Dec, when there were 300 at Slough SF on Dec 3 (BDC), 500 at Cippenham on Dec 4 (PJS). The only other count over 50 was 64 at Dorney Wetlands on Dec 29 (RGI).

## CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

*Locally common though declining summer visitor (Red Listed)*

Records were received from 125 locations throughout the county, continuing the higher than usual total, partially due to the ongoing BTO Bird Atlas. The table shows the monthly status based on records received:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of occupied sites	-	-	-	75	76	27	1	2	1	-	-	-
Min. number of birds	-	-	-	91	102	38	2	2	1	-	-	-

**Spring:** arrival was early, with 1 singing at Cookham on Apr 2 (PKn), 1 at Swinley Forest on Apr 6 (HRN), at 3 other locations on Apr 8 and widespread thereafter. Most Apr/May reports involved 1-2 birds; however 3 were noted at Lea Farm GP on Apr 20 (FJC), Thatcham Marsh on May 1 and May 14 (IW, JL), Moatlands GP, Theale on May 5 (HWh), Woolhampton GP on May 8 (KEM), Lower Green, Inkpen on May 10 (RHar) and Swinley Park on May 16 (DJB), with 5 at Boxford on May 30 and 4 there on May 31 (ADow). Although still widespread in early June, records soon dwindled as birds stopped singing and calling and/or left the county. From Jun 15 to the months end records were only received from 10 sites. **Breeding:** was only noted at one site this year, although breeding activity is probably under recorded because of the parasitic nature of the bird. 4 juveniles were seen at Windsor Great Park, the first was on May 29, followed by 2 more on Jun 19 and a fourth on Jul 10 (all DJB). **Autumn:** Birds were noted at 2 sites in Aug: at Woolhampton GP on Aug 4 (TBu) and a juvenile at Dinton Pastures CP on Aug 31 (RM).

## BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

*Uncommon but widespread resident (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

Records were received from 74 sites, 42 in West Berkshire, 13 in Mid Berkshire and 19 in East Berkshire. The great majority of sightings outside the breeding season were of single birds or occasionally 2 together, including a pair displaying at Walbury Hill on Jan 17 (TPo). **Breeding:** most breeding information comes from West Berkshire, where the Pang Valley

Barn Owl Group monitors over 100 boxes. In 2011, 54 chicks were believed to have fledged from the 111 boxes inspected, almost twice the number of chicks (29) from 91 boxes in 2010. Atlas records of confirmed breeding in 2011 came from 29 sites, 17 in West Berkshire, 8 in Mid Berkshire and 4 in East Berkshire. There are few breeding records from East Berkshire in most years but an adult and 2 or 3 young were seen at Legoland, Windsor on Aug 5 (RMH), as in 2010, and there were records of confirmed breeding from SU88B (SJF), Jealott's Hill (RCMu) and Hurst (BTO Ringing Scheme).

## LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

*Widespread and locally common resident*

Records were received from 65 locations, 20 in West Berkshire, 14 in Mid Berkshire and 31 in East Berkshire. Higher counts (including juveniles) were 4 at Warfield on Jun 27 (PB-T), 5 at Standlake Park, Twyford on Jul 10 (BDC) and at least 5 on Aug 5 at Legoland, Windsor (RMH). Two birds were observed being attacked by 6 Magpies on Jan 19 (DJB). **Breeding:** records submitted to the county database included evidence of confirmed breeding at only 8 sites; however Atlas records for 2011 show confirmed breeding at 4 sites in W Berkshire, 2 in Mid Berkshire and at 12 sites in E Berkshire, with possible or probable breeding recorded at a further 49 sites.

## TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

*Widespread resident, common in suitable habitat including some urban areas*

Tawny Owls are widespread across Berkshire in both rural and urban woodland. In 2011, records were received from 104 1km squares (116 sites):45 in West Berkshire, 27 in Mid Berkshire, 32 in East Berkshire. Most records were of 1 or 2 birds, the highest counts being 4 males calling in the Lea Farm/Lavell's Lake area on Feb 24 (RRi), 7 birds at Lower Green, Inkpen on Nov 6 (RHar) and two pairs at Great Meadow Pond before dawn on Dec 25 (DJB). **Breeding:** the Atlas dataset records confirmed breeding across the county in 2011 at 35 locations, many observers reporting one to three young begging for food. Birds were singing at a further 23 sites. Although most activity reported was at dusk, dawn or night-time, there were several reports of singing during the middle of the day. Three Jays were observed mobbing a Tawny Owl, with one striking it, in Windsor Forest on June 3 (DJB).

## LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

*Rare resident and scarce winter visitor*

There were several reports from March to June of birds on the Berkshire Downs, close to a site at which breeding is regularly recorded on the Oxfordshire side of the county boundary. In 2011, three adults and downy young were observed on both sides of the border in May and June, possibly from two broods. Elsewhere 2 recently-fledged juvs, accompanied by 2 adults, were observed at a regular breeding location Jul 1 (CDRH) and the usual roost-site held 10 birds in Jan, with 7 still present mid-Feb, and 8 birds again in Dec; at another site nearby 2 birds were roosting in gorse Mar 4 (all CDRH).

## SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

*Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** the 2010/2011 winter was an average one, with almost all records from the Cow Down/Bury Down area near West Ilsley. The highest monthly counts were 7 on Jan 23 (MFW), 6 on Feb 12 (MRWS) and 4 on Mar 13 (Birdguides). The last record of the Spring was one on Mar 19 (IDP). Elsewhere the only record was a bird at Dorney Wetlands

on Jan 8 (DJB). **Breeding:** no summer records were received. **Second winter:** whilst the majority of records were for the Cow Down/Bury Down area, there were reports from four other downland sites and ten sites away from the downs, in the Kennet valley and in East Berkshire. The first record of the autumn was of a bird at Long Lane, Cookham on Oct 2 (BDC). This was followed by one at Lands End, Farnborough on Oct 3 (GDS) and single birds at Lower Mount Farm, Cookham on Oct 9 (MBri), Greenham Common on Oct 14 (JL, IW), Queen Mother Reservoir on Oct 16 and 20 (CDRH), Hurley on Oct 26 (CDRH), Thatcham Marsh on Oct 30 (IW; JL) and QMR on Oct 31 (CDRH). One was at Washmore Hill on Nov 1 (CDRH), 2 birds were at Woolley Down on Nov 5 (GDS), one at the New Diggings at Eversley on Nov 17 (RFM) and at Dorney Wetlands single birds were seen on Oct 3 (KHo), Oct 30 (KPD) and on Nov 5 (WAS, RN). At Brimpton single birds were seen on Nov 1 and 23 and on Dec 8 (all GEW). At the Cow Down wintering site near West Ilsley, the first record was of 5 birds on Oct 23 (PJe), rising to 8 on Oct 28 (CDRH). The highest November count was 6 on the 1st (ABT) and in December 5 on the 4th (Jle). At Lambourn a single bird was seen on Oct 28 and 5 on Nov 23 but just 2 on Dec 20 (all CDRH).

## NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

*Regular summer visitor in small but fairly stable numbers in suitable habitat (Red Listed)*

Records were received from a disappointing 10 locations (19 in 2010), 4 in W Berkshire, 2 in M Berkshire and 4 in E Berkshire. The Swinley Forest SPA is regarded here as 1 site. The table below shows the minimum number of birds reported from all sites; numbers in brackets are known churring birds.

Site	Number of birds	Observers	Site	Number of birds	Observers
Bucklebury Common	4	GJS, BL	Roundoak Piece	6 (3)	PG, PD, MJT
Gorrick Wood	5 (4)	ABT	Snelsmore Common	2 (2)	RRi
Greenham Common	4 (3)	SAG	Swinley Brickpits	2 (2)	PM
Nalder Plantation	1 (1)	JLS, SAG	Swinley Forest SPA	48 (48)	PJC,DJS,CRG
Padworth Common	4 (2)	TGB, RM	Wildmoor Heath	3 (3)	DJS

The first of the year was seen and heard at Padworth Common on Apr 23 (KTu) and is the earliest arrival date since Apr 22 1975 when 2 were reported from Windsor Forest. This record was followed by 1 churring at Sandford, Greenham Common on Apr 29 (PEH). The next record came from Roundoak Piece on May 5 (RCr) and by the months end most of the above mentioned sites had been occupied. Usually it is only in survey years that a full picture of this species status in the county is revealed and although a the total of at least 68 churring birds is down on the 2010 total, thorough survey work by PJC, DJS and CRG within the Swinley Forest SPA has shown a small increase in numbers compared to the 2010 totals! **Breeding:** although it is probable that Nightjars bred or attempted to breed at all the 2011 sites, the only evidence pointing to successful breeding came from Roundoak Piece where of a total of possibly 9 birds in the area on Aug 4 (PG), 3 were perched on posts and may have been young! The last record of the year was of 2 birds in Swinley Forest SPA on Aug 22 (DJS).

## SWIFT *Apus apus*

*Common though declining passage migrant and summer visitor (Amber Listed)*

**Spring:** the first of the year was one flying over FJC's garden in Woodley Airfield on Apr 20. However, numbers built more slowly and less markedly than in 2010 and there were no counts over 100 until May 22 when at least this number were seen at Lower Farm GP (NC). The highest counts in May were 300 on May 27 and May 28 at Theale GPs (both RCr). Other sites holding 100+ in May were Hosehill Lake and Summerleaze GP. Summer: screaming aerial parties provided strong suggestions of breeding having taken place in built up areas, but finding hard evidence of precise locations was, as usual, very difficult. The only exception was DAMD's videos of birds nesting in his roof in Reading from April 23 to August 1. Counts were significantly higher in this period than last year with over 600 at Cold Harbour on Jun 17 (DJB) and over 500 at Theale GPs on July 17 (RCr). Flocks of over 100 were recorded on eleven additional occasions. **Autumn:** number fell away during August with a trickle into September. However, the latest bird by over 40 days was one over EN's garden in Wooshill on November 1!

## KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

*Common but thinly distributed resident (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

This year showed an increase in records despite a severe winter at the start. This is possibly the result of increased observer effort in the final year of the Bird Atlas. Records were received from 138 locations throughout the county. The table below shows the monthly status based on the records received:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	19	20	30	24	28	23	31	30	37	42	29	27
Min. number of birds	22	29	35	44	37	33	46	43	48	51	39	32

The lower numbers reported in the colder months could point to migration (to the ice-free coast?) or mortality. The following list has tried to avoid duplication and includes still waters close to the rivers listed:

River	No. of Sites	River	No. of Sites
River Blackwater	5	River Loddon	10
River Colne	1	River Pang	1
The Cut	4	Strand Water	2
The Emmbrook	1	River Thames	17
River Enbourne	1	York Stream	3
Jubilee River	4	Other Sites	20
River Kennet	30		
River Lambourn	2		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

Most records were if 1-3 birds. Higher counts not involving juveniles were 4 Thatcham GPs February 12 (WEBs/TPo) and 5 at The Odney Club, Cookham, April 25 (DA). Breeding was confirmed at 17 sites involving 17 pairs, though nest sites tend to be inconspicuous and inaccessible so this is likely to underestimate the population. This total is again higher than last year.

## GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

*Common resident (Amber Listed)*

Records come from throughout the county with the exception of the more open downland and the centres of some urban areas due to the lack of suitable breeding habitat. Greenham Common provided the lion's share of high counts with 6 on April 5 (JL), 8 on April 25 (PEM) and 9+ on September 1 (IW). The only other site to provide a large count was Silwood Park with 8 on September 2 (RD). **Breeding:** Atlas surveys, completed in 2011, confirmed breeding in 158 of the 394 Berkshire tetrads. Ringing: only one report of a juvenile ringed at Greenham Common on August 19 (IW, JL) there was also a report of a bird captured on September 28 from the same site by the same observers.

## GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

*Common and increasing resident*

This is the most common woodpecker which breeds throughout the county with the exception of some of the higher ground and a few urban areas which lack suitable breeding habitat. High counts include 15 at Swinley Park on April 9 (DJB), 15 at South Forest on May 17 (DJB), 10 at Whiteknights Park on May 17 (PG) and 11 at Swallowfield on June 6 (CCI). **Breeding:** Atlas surveys, completed in 2011, confirmed breeding in 274 of the 394 Berkshire tetrads. At one site, Whiteknights Park, at least 5 nest holes with young were located on May 17 (PG).

## LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

*Scarce resident, whose numbers continue to decline (Red Listed)*

A very similar geographical spread of records to last year from 30 locations; 11 in West Berkshire, 9 in Mid Berkshire and 10 in East Berkshire. Some of these sites are not very far apart and could relate to the same birds in view of their scarcity. Of these sites, 20 recorded the species on only one occasion which could point to wandering birds. Only six sites recorded more than one bird. January – March: the first record in this period was 1 at Moor Green Lakes on February 1 (TCa). An immature male was seen accompanying a female Gt. Spotted Woodpecker at Ankerwycke Farm on February 9 and was occasionally displaying to it! (CDRH). There were one or two at Kintbury Cress Beds on February 11th, 17th, 27th etc. (RGS), 1 at the R.M.A. Range Broadmoor on February 27 (PJC), 1 calling at Wraysbury GPs on March 5 (MSW), a female was at Paices Wood on March 6 (TGB), with a pair there on March 12 (ABT). 2 were calling at Denford Mill on March 8 (RGS), 1 drumming at Hell Corner, Inkpen on March 17 (LS), 1 male at Cleeve Court, Streatley on March 20 (NJB) and 1 male seen and heard at Padworth Com. the same day (MFW). 1 at Bagnor on March 25 (RJCl) a pair at Lavell's Lake March 27 to 29 (MFW *et al.*) and finally 1 heard calling from a small copse at Southcote on March 31 (RCr). April – June: April 1 produced records from three locations. 2 were calling at Frilsham (RCr), 1 at Lower Green, Inkpen (also on April 5) (RHar) and 1 at Moss End (LRB). A female at Caesar's Camp on April 5 (MSk) was replaced by a singing male the following day (HRN), hopefully they paired up. 1 was at Swinley Forest on April 6 (TS) which could have been the same as either of the aforementioned. A pair with a male drumming and displaying was at Prospect Park on April 8 (JA). A male drumming and seen at Lavell's Lake on April 13 (RM). There was 1 at Searle's Farm Lane GP on May 8 (RRi). A male was calling at Cranbourne Chase on June 8 (DJB) and finally 1 was in a garden at Craven Road, Newbury on June 26 (AEDH). July – September: only two records in this period. 1 reported as seen drumming in Hayley Green Wood, Warfield, on July 27 and several occasions before (per MSFW) and 1 at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures on September 26 (FLC). There were no confirmed breeding records at all this year. October – December:

two records on October 2 – 1 calling at Thatcham Marsh (IW, JL) and 1 calling from a Finchampstead garden (RCMu), then a female at Crowthorne Woods on October 4 (CRG). Another female was at Moss End on October 8 and again on the following day (LRB). 1 at Greenham Common on October 20 (IW, JL), 1 calling at Clayfield Copse on November 30 (JLe), 1 at Lower Farm GP on December 17 (IW, JL), a male at Whistley Green on December 20 (JDC), 1 calling at Paices Wood on December 21 (JLe), 1 at Cleeve Court, Streatley on December 24 (NJB), 1 at Moor Green Lakes on December 25 (KL) and finally a male at Dinton Pastures on December 26 (SDay).

## WOODLARK *Lullula arborea*

*Locally common summer visitor in areas of suitable habitat, uncommon in winter (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

It was estimated in 2006 (perhaps optimistically) that Berkshire held as many as 160 pairs, making up about 5% of the British population. Despite the ongoing surveys of this species and Tetrad Survey in 2011, only 36+ territories were found, a similar total to 2010. It was reported from 16 locations, mainly across the south of the county. Jan/Feb: the earliest report came from Greenham Common, where there were 3 on Jan 25 (JL), followed by singles regularly in Feb and 5 on Feb 12, which included 4 in song (NC). Four further sites yielded records: 1 singing in Swinley Forest on Feb 11 (DJB) and 1 singing on Feb 25 (DLoy), 1 at Ashampstead Common on Feb 12 (JLe), 1 singing at Decoy Heath on Feb 24 (JLe), and 1 the same day at Wildmoor Heath (DJS). Mar/Jun: song was heard or better evidence of breeding was obtained from 12 areas (west to east): Hungerford Newtown, 1 territory (LS); Snelmore Common, 1 territory (JL; IW); Greenham Common, 7+ territories and 1-2 pairs confirmed breeding, including a nest with 4 eggs on Apr 8 (JL; IW); Upper Bucklebury, 1 territory (BL *et al.*); Bucklebury Common, 1 territory (NDOC); Woolhampton GP, 1 territory with a pair (MRWS); Paices Wood, 1 territory (TGB); Decoy Heath, 1-3 territories (JLe); Padworth Common, 1 territory (JLe; MFW); Ufton Nervet, 1+ territory (PH); Swinley Forest SPA, 18+ territories (PJC *et al.*), including 2 pairs at Wishmoor Bottom, 1 confirmed breeding (DJB); and South Ascot, 2 territories with 2 pairs (DJB). Jul/Sep: reports primarily concerned Greenham Common, where there were up to 17 on Aug 27 (SAG) and still 10 on Sep 7 (MRWS), and 2-3 singing on Sep 28 (LS). The only other reports were 1 over N at Lower Farm GP on Sep 3 (IW), and 1+ at Wishmoor Bottom on Sep 29 (BAJC). Oct/Dec: song was regularly noted in Oct; the majority of reports were for Greenham Common, with 1-3 being reported until 1+ on Nov 25 (JL), which provided the last record for the year. Elsewhere, a migrant flew S over Spencers Wood on Oct 2 (NR), 2 were at Ufton Nervet on Oct 14 (PH), 3 were in the Lower Star Post area of Swinley Forest on Oct 21 (DJB), 2 flew S at Wishmoor Bottom on Oct 24 (PEH), 1 was in song there on Oct 29 (RCMu).

## SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

*Common but declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor (Red Listed)*

Although the recent Atlas survey shows a reduction in range of this songster in Berkshire, it remains common throughout the year in many open areas. **First winter:** it was reported widely from 30 locations in Jan-Feb, chiefly in small numbers; the only counts of 50+ were 66 at West Ilsley on Jan 9 (PEH), 100+ at Mortimer Station on Jan 28 (DJB), 50 at Pangfield Farm, Stanford Dingley on Jan 30 (JLe), and 100+ between Starveall and Blewbury Down on Feb 12 (DJB). An interesting record away from the open areas concerned 4 in the middle of a housing development at Jennetts Park, Bracknell on Jan 26 (BDC). Few movements were observed, the largest being 26 heading S over a Woodlands Park garden on Jan 23 (DJB). Song was first noted on Jan 19 at Bury Down (WB). **Spring/Summer:** reports



came from 57 locations between Mar-Jul. Counts exceeding 20 involved 50+ at Ashridge Farm, Wokingham on Mar 4 (DJB), 24 at Cold Harbour on Mar 25 (DJB), 21 at Row Down, Lambourn on Apr 9 and 40 there on Jun 19 (J Burnett), 30 heard singing along The Ridgeway between Streatley and West Ilsley on Apr 26 (PEH; RGi), 21 at Leckhamsstead on May 8 and May 21 (RJCL), 26 between Starveall and Blewbury Down on May 12 (DJB), and 30+ at Cold Harbour on Jun 17 including many singing (DJB). **Breeding:** was no doubt widespread but only confirmed at 6 locations. Autumn/**Second winter:** it was reported from 43 locations, with many small movements occurring between mid-Sep and mid-Nov, especially to the SW, S or SE. On Oct 12 at West Woodhay Down a total of 32 passed over SW as weather cleared (IW). Large flocks (over 100) were considerably smaller on those recorded in Oct and Dec 2010, and restricted to Oct: 100 at Woodlands Park on Oct 3 and 12 (DJB), 150+ including several singing at Cold Harbour on Oct 15 (DJB) and 120 at Englefield on Oct 23 (RCr). Just 7 reports were received for Dec, with no sign of any influx, such as that in Dec 2010.

## **SAND MARTIN** *Riparia riparia*

*Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Notable counts made on spring and autumn passage contrasted with a disappointing number of breeding reports. **Spring:** an earlier than average arrival involved 6 (GJS) and 8 (KEM) at Woolhampton GP on Mar 9, though it has occurred exceptionally in late Feb. The 67 reports in Mar mostly concerned small numbers at lakes and gravel pits, with higher counts later in the month of 30+ at Woolhampton GP on Mar 23 (RM), 40+ there on Mar 27 (NC), and c20 at Summerleaze GP on Mar 30 (BAJC). Passage culminated in the first half of Apr, when there were peaks at particular sites of 130 at QMR on Apr 2 (CDRH), 100+ at Theale Main GP on Apr 5 (BU), a very high 500+ at Woolhampton GP on Apr 5 (PEH), 160+ at Lower Farm GP (NC) and 150 at Dinton Pastures on Apr 14 (FJC). Numbers tailed off after mid-Apr, the highest counts being c50 at Lower Farm GP on Apr 16 (JL; IW) and 50+ there on May 30 (NC). **Breeding:** activity was only reported from 5 sites, compared with 11 in 2010. At Woodspeen there were 15 at a 7-to-9 hole colony in a spoil heap on May 25 (JL). At Thatcham NDC 15 were flying around and entering a large nesting box on Apr 23, where earlier 14 were present on Apr 9 (MIGW). At Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures 6 were active around the block on May 13 (DLoy). There were 6 occupied nests in the Thames bank at Cookham on May 30 (BDC), where earlier 25 were present on May 14 (BR). At the Blackpott's Viaduct, Eton 4+ pipes were still in use and a party of 18-20 included juveniles on Jun 13 (DJB). No reports were received for Hosehill Lake. **Autumn:** the first large flock was 150+ at Lower Farm GP on Jul 6 (IW), increasing to 200+ on Jul 17 (NC), then down until 200+ on Aug 28 (NC). Similar large flocks were only recorded at Theale Main GP, where there were 150 on Jul 18 (RCr), 250 on Sep 6 and 8 (KEM), and a very high 500 on Sep 14 (RCr). After this date passage dwindled abruptly with only one count above 10, until the last singles were seen on the typical date of Oct 6 at both Dorney Wetlands (CDRH) and Eversley GPs (JEW).

## **SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica*

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

An early, light passage in spring was followed by an undistinguished summer and a modest autumn passage. **Spring:** between 1974 and 2010 the earliest arrival date was Mar 13, but this year 3 arrived at Kintbury a day earlier on Mar 12 (KPar), followed by 1 at Woolhampton GP on Mar 17 (AMH), then 1-8 at 17 sites between Mar 20-31. Numbers in Apr-May were unusually low, with only 2 counts of 30+, in contrast to flocks of hundreds in recent years: 30+ at Woolhampton GP on Apr 5 (NC) and 39 along The Ridgeway between Streatley and

West Ilsley on Apr 26 (PEH; RGi). **Breeding:** this species is widespread away from very wooded and urban areas though evidence of breeding only came from 9+ sites: Hell Corner, Inkpen (LS), Shaw Dene House, Newbury, where 12+ were nesting in a stable block (IW), Wokingham STW (DJB), Eversley GP (BMA), Paley Street (BAJC), Woodlands Park (DJB), Heywood Farm, Woodlands Park (DJB), Rapley Farm, Swinley Forest (DJB), and Mezel Hill barns, Great Meadow Pond (DJB); juveniles seen in early Jul at Brimpton (GEW) and Padworth (GJSu) may have been raised locally. **Autumn:** among about 180 reports for Aug-Nov, only 10 counts exceeded 100, and only 4 exceeded 200, which were: 300+ in constant southward passage over Compton Downs on Sep 9 (DJB); a constant movement of groups of 200-300+ moving SE over Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures which probably amounted to well over 1,000 on Sep 16 (FJC); 200+ over south, flying very low against strong winds and low cloud, at Combe Gibbet on Sep 25 (IW); and 2 groups of around 100 moving slowly SE over Lavell's Lake on Sep 27 (FJC). Although passage was generally southward, a single flock of 67, mostly juveniles, was observed flying NE into a light breeze over Wooshill Wokingham on Aug 31 (PBT). In Oct, several groups of 20-30 spread across the county between Oct 3-5 dropped to small numbers (1-6) thereafter until the last stragglers of 2 at Upper Culham Park, Remenham on Oct 28 (PBT), 1 at Bury Down on Oct 28 (CDRH), and the latest ever sighting for Dinton Pastures of 1 there on Nov 5 (FJC).

## **HOUSE MARTIN** *Delichon urbicum*

*Locally common summer visitor and common passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

As with the Swallow, passage in spring was light and evidence of breeding was in short supply. **Spring:** the first arrival was 1 at Woolhampton GP on Mar 23 (TGB *et al.*), a typical date for recent years, followed by 2 at Langley on Mar 24 (PBT) and c15 over Reading Station on Mar 25 (MJS). Passage remained remarkably light through Apr and May, with no count above 12 until 20 over Park Lane, Charvil on May 13 (DLoy) and 20 at Cookham on May 14 (BR); the highest count in the rest of May was only 30 at Great Meadow Pond on May 29 (DJB). **Breeding:** although common in Berkshire, the only reports relating to nesting were 6 collecting mud at Hampstead Norreys on Jun 4 (DJR), 6 nests in use at Shefford Mill House near Brimpton on Jun 5 (GEW), 4 flying to eaves S of West Ilsley on Jun 10 (GDS), several nests at Bagnor on Jun 14 (GDS), many locally reared juveniles at Woodlands Park on Jul 7 (DJB), breeding on buildings at Primrose Hill to the NW of Great Meadow Pond on Jul 10 (DJB), and several nests in the vicinity of Boundary Rd, Newbury on Jul 22 (SAG). **Autumn:** passage began to gain momentum in Aug, when there were 5 counts of 100+: 120 at Great Meadow Pond on Aug 7 (DJB), 150+ at Woodlands Park on Aug 14 (DJB), 300 at QMR on Aug 16 (CDRH), 120+ at Theale Main Pit on Aug 18 (RGi), and 200+ at Lower Farm GP on Aug 28 (NC). Passage reached its height between Sep 6 and 21, when counts over 100 were regular, passing 300 on 4 occasions: 300 at Theale Main Pit on Sep 6 increasing to 700 on Sep 7 (RCr), 500 at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures on Sep 16 (FJC), and c400 at Cockpole Green on Sep 21 (CDRH). After the final count over 100 of 165+ drifting S over Lower Farm on Sep 24 (IW), numbers fell to no more than 50. Oct produced counts of 1-45 from 16 sites, the latest departure being 1 at Lower Farm GP on Oct 14 (NC), an early last date.

## **RICHARD'S PIPIT** *Anthus richardi*

*Rare vagrant*

One was flushed, calling twice, in a stubble field on private land at Cookham on Nov 12 (CDRH). Unfortunately an organised shoot scared off all the birds in the vicinity and searches on subsequent days failed to relocate it. This is only the sixth record for Berkshire, all but one falling between Sep and Nov.

## TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

*Locally common but declining summer visitor, uncommon passage migrant (Red Listed)*

It was estimated that 340 pairs bred in 2009, chiefly on heathland in the south east of Berkshire (The Birds of Berkshire, 2013), although the reports of breeding received for 2009 do not begin to reflect such a high figure. In 2011, 56 territories were located, with breeding being confirmed in 2 of them. **Spring:** the first arrivals turned up in breeding territories, specifically single songsters at Upper Star Post, Swinley Forest on Mar 28 (HRN) and Wildmoor Heath on Mar 29 (MSk), a normal arrival time. It can be difficult to distinguish early breeding arrivals from migrants but there appeared to be a light passage of migrants involving 5 at West Woodhay Down on Apr 6 (NC), 2 flying N over Greenham Common on Apr 7 (AEDH) and 2 at Gorrick Wood Plantation on Apr 7 (DMo), 1 at Walbury Hill on Apr 9 (ABT) and 1 East over Woodhay Down on Apr 9 (RGi), 1 flying S at Padworth Common on Apr 24 (PEH), 1 at Ashampstead on May 1 (JLe) and 1 at Brimpton GP on May 6 (JPM). **Breeding:** probably involved 56 territories at 10 sites (as treated here), a slight increase on 2010; breeding was probably widespread though only confirmed twice. There were 2 territories at West Woodhay Down (IW) where 2 juveniles were seen on Aug 2 (CDRH); 6 territories on Snelsmoor Common (IW *et al.*); 5 territories on Bucklebury Common (RCr); 1 territory at Gorrick Wood Plantation (EN); 2 territories at Wildmoor Heath (DJS); 10 territories in Swinley Forest (MOD Heathland), with 1 carrying food (PJC); 18 territories in Swinley Forest (Sandhurst Royal Military Academy) (PJC); 2 territories at Swinley Forest (Caesar's Camp) (MMK; RM); 5 territories at Swinley Forest (Lower Star Post/Wishmoor Bottom) (DJB); and 5 territories at South Ascot (DJB). No songsters were reported from Padworth Common, where previously present. **Autumn:** records from Aug consisted of 1 with 2 juveniles at West Woodhay Down on Aug 2 (CDRH), 2 there on Aug 7 (IW), 3 in Swinley Forest on Aug 22 (DJB), 10 at Combe Hill on Aug 24 (DJB), 1 over to S Ascot Heath on Aug 30 (RJD) and 1 at Greenham Common the same day (RJPy), 1 at QMR on Sep 9 was flushed from long grass and flew off NW (CDRH), 1 over Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures on Sep 13 (TOA), and lastly 1 at QMR on Sep 21, which called while on the ground and flew off SW (CDRH).

## MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

*Common passage migrant and winter visitor, locally common summer resident (Amber Listed)*

Dismayingly, indications of breeding were appreciably down this year for this declining species, whose breeding is now mostly confined to the Downs and Greenham Common. **First winter:** this was a quiet period with no influxes and little movement. Most reports concerned 1-35 birds at 27 locations, higher counts being 50+ at Brimpton GPs on Mar 8 (KEM), c60 at QMR on Mar 25 (RDr), and 72 at Standen Manor, Hungerford on Mar 27 (JBW). There were 8 perched on power lines N of Freemans Marsh on Jan 1 (SAG) and 3 were captured at a feeder at Greenham Common on Jan 9 (IW;JL). Passage was only noted on Mar 18 when 12+ flew N/NW over Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures (FJC). **Spring/Summer:** it was reported from only 12 locations between Apr-Aug, with most information pertaining to Greenham Com, where a parent was seen carrying food on May 17 (JL) and 5 chicks were ringed on Jul 25 (JL). The only other indications of breeding came from East Garston Down, where there was a fledgling with 2 adults on Jun 25 (GDS), and 1 encountered singing along The Ridgeway between Streatley and West Ilsley on Apr 26, out of only 4 seen in total (PEH; RGi). Also of note were 10+ at Ascot Heath on Apr 5 (RJD) and 9 at Welford Military Base on Apr 9 (RJCl). **Autumn/Second winter:** passage first appeared as a small wave on Sep 9, when there were 18 at Colnbrook (CDRH), 5 over Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures (FJC), and 2 at Englefield, the first of the autumn there (RCr). Rather small numbers (1-46) followed

until 100+ at Remenham Hill on Sep 18 (ABT) and 50 over Wooshill Wokingham the same day (PBT), building up to 137 at Ascot Heath on Sep 21 (RJD) and 200 at Remenham Hill the same day (CDRH), with 200 at Cockpole Green on Sep 27 (CDRH). Numbers declined in Oct, when there were many reports of 1-50+ but only 1 higher count: 100 at Englefield on Oct 23 (RCr). Similarly in Nov, counts did not exceed 40, apart from 73 at QMR on Nov 12 (DJB). Ten came into the roost at Padworth Common on Nov 12 (TGB). Dec was uneventful with observations from 12 locations, the highest counts being 23 at Eversley GPs on Dec 5 (RFM) and 30 at Denford Mill, Hungerford on Dec 10 (JLS).

## ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

*Scarce passage migrant and occasional winter visitor*

The 6 records constituted a poor showing, in keeping with the recent downward trend, and were biased to QMR. **Spring:** after a gap of 2 years with none in spring, 3 appeared: 1 at QMR on Mar 5 (MFW *et al.*), 1 at New Pit, Brimpton Rd on Apr 30 (KEM), and 1 of the Scandinavian littoralis race in breeding plumage at QMR on May 5-6 (CDRH; MMc), the latest Spring record ever and the first to be recorded in May. **Autumn:** just 3 records, all at QMR: 1 on Sep 30 (ABT), 1 on Oct 20 (CDRH) and 2 together on Oct 27 (CDRH).

## WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

Much scarcer in recent years than 2 decades ago, there were only two sightings: 1 in summer plumage at Pingewood GP on May 5 (NR *et al.*), the latest spring record ever, and 2 at QMR on Oct 23 (CDRH).

## YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

*Common but declining passage migrant uncommon and local summer resident (Red Listed)*

There was an improvement in the evidence of breeding submitted for this summer visitor, which nests predominantly on arable land in the north west of the county. **Spring:** the earliest sighting was of 2 m at Englefield on Apr 6 (KEM; RHS), increasing to 7 males the day after (RCr), a normal arrival time. There then occurred a widespread sprinkling of just 1-2 at 16 sites until 13 (8males, 5females) at Greenham Common on Apr 18 (CDRH), followed by 1-5 at 17 sites to the end of Apr, with most reports of overflying birds relating to them flying N or NE. Three at Shottesbrooke on Apr 18 included a pair apparently visiting a nest site in oilseed rape (RRi). Numbers in May remained low at 1-3, apart from 6 in oilseed rape at Great Shefford on May 1 (DJS), and involved 18 sites. **Summer/Breeding:** evidence from presence in breeding habitat to confirmed breeding came from 17 sites, breeding being confirmed in 13 of them (west to east): a family of 5 at Parkfarm Down, Lambourn on Jul 19 (ABT); 4 juveniles at Wellbottom Down on Jul 22 and 29 (RGi); 2 juveniles at Crow Down, Lambourn on Jun 26 (ABT); a probable family of 5 at Sheepdrove Farm, Lambourn on Jul 29 (DJS); 2 juveniles at South Fawley on Jun 25 (ABT); an adult carrying food at Farnborough Down on Jun 28 (GDS); a pair at Old Street near Farnborough on Jun 17 (GDS); an adult carrying food near Spray Wood, Brightwalton on Jun 19 (GDS); a male carrying food at Brightwalton Common on Jul 17 (GDS); an adult carrying food at North Heath on Jul 22 (IW); 1 pair at Bury Down on Jul 14 (RM); 1 carrying food at Starveall Barn nr West Ilsley on Jun 13 (GDS); 2 pairs carrying food near East Ilsley on Jun 26 (GDS); 1 singing at Compton Downs on May 18 (ABT); 2-3 juveniles at Englefield on Jul 11 (RCr); a female carrying food at Waltham St Lawrence on Jun 27 (PBT); 1 pair hatched 2 broods at Woodlands Park Jun-Jul (DJB); see also the Shottesbrooke record above. **Autumn:** passage became evident from Aug 3, when 1 flew NE over Greenham Common (PEH; RGi), and

was observed at 30 sites. It was considerably lighter than in 2009 and 2010, involving many reports of 1-9 birds until Aug 27, when a single loose flock of 25+ flew S over Greenham Common (NC) and 10 were seen at Colnbrooke (CDRH). There were 8 counts of 10+ in the next 3 weeks: 19 (2 on ground, 17 over) at QMR on Aug 28 (CDRH), 13 at Lower Farm GP the same day (MJD; NC), 15 at Greenham Common on Aug 31 (RGI) decreasing to 11 on Sep 1 (IW), a single flock of 11 on Sep 2 at Wooshill Wokingham (PBT), 11+ at Starveall Aldworth on Sep 9 (DJB), 23 at Sonning Meadows on Sep 16 (ABT) and 18 at Borough Marsh on Sep 17 (ABT). Thereafter in Sep counts dropped to 1-8. Oct produced a respectable 5 records: 1 at Theale Main GP on Oct 1 (MFW), 1 at Dorney Wetlands on Oct 2 (RM), 1 at QMR on Oct 8 (MFW), 3 at Woolhampton GP on Oct 9 (KEM), and 1 at Ascot Heath on Oct 19 (RJD).

## GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

*Locally common resident and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

The Grey Wagtail usually nests near flowing water in river valleys but ventures more widely outside the breeding season and was reported from 86 locations spread across the county. The great majority of reports concerned 1-3 birds and counts of 5+ were limited to Wokingham STW, where there were 5+ on Mar 8, 5 on Jul 22 (incl. 3 juveniles), and 6+ on Aug 30 and Sep 16 (DJB), and at Denford Mill, where there were 5 on Dec 10 (JLS). Two summer records of note were a juvenile catching and eating a small fish in the R Enborne, Brimpton on Jul 31 (GEW) and a first appearance of 1 at Mill Ride Golf Course, Ascot on Jul 2 (SA). **Breeding:** was reported from 13 sites: Aldermaston GP (JPM), Arborfield (PBT), Binfield (MSFW), Dinton Pastures (SPar; SPA), Farley Hill (RCMu), Lower Farm GP (NC), Maidenhead (BAJC), Maidenhead STW (BDC), Eversley GPs (RM *et al.*), Speen Moor Plantations (SAG), White Waltham SF (DJB), Wokingham STW (DJB), and Woolhampton GP (KEM). The 2007-2011 atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 77 tetrads, a slight increase on the previous survey in 1987-9.

## WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

**Spring:** the highest ever passage involved a remarkable 40+ birds between Mar 24 and May 5 at 9 localities and peaked on Apr 6-7: 1 male at QMR on Mar 24 (RRi), 1 at Colnbrook on Mar 29 was an apparent male showing a slightly darker shade of ash-grey on mantle, rump and lesser coverts than usual and was perhaps an intergrade (CDRH), 2+ males at QMR on Apr 2 (CDRH), 1 male there on Apr 3 (RRi), 2 (male and female) there on Apr 4 (CDRH), 1 first summer male there on Apr 5 (CDRH), 1 adult male at Colnbrook on Apr 6 (CDRH), a noteworthy 10 males at QMR on Apr 6 (CDRH), 5+ males at Englefield on Apr 6 (KEM), 6 males there on Apr 7 (RCr), 1 there on Apr 9 (CBur), 3 at QMR on Apr 9 (CDRH), 2 at Eversley GPs on Apr 12 (BMA), 1 at Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures on Apr 14 (ADB), 5 males at QMR on Apr 14 (CDRH), 1 there on Apr 16 (MMc), 1 female at Great Meadow Pond on Apr 17 (DJB), 1 male at QMR on Apr 18 (CDRH), 1 first summer female (with very distinctive completely grey crown and nape) on Compton Downs on Apr 19 (CDRH), 1 male at Bray GP on Apr 26 (DJB), 1 first summer male at Lower Farm GP on Apr 28 (KEM *et al.*), 1 there on Apr 29-30 (IW *et al.*), and 1 first summer male at QMR on May 5 (CDRH). **Autumn:** passage was dominated by sightings at QMR: 1 first winter on Sep 17, 5 (adult male, adult female, 3 first winters) on Sep 18, 3 (2 adult males, 1 first winter) on Sep 20, and 1 male with a foot deformity on Sep 21-22 (all CDRH, 1 on Sep 26 also seen by ABT). It occurred at 2 further sites: 2 at Eversley GPs on Sep 26 and 1 there on Oct 3 (RFM; GDU), and 1 first winter at Colnbrook on Oct 19 and 23 (CDRH).

## PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

*Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor*

This species is common in Berkshire, utilising a wide range of habitats, including in urban areas, though seldom woodland. **First winter:** was typical of recent winters, with high counts consisting of c150 at Wokingham STW on Jan 19 and 31 (DJB), 100 roosting around Waitrose, Tilehurst on Jan 22 (ABT), 90+ (roost?) at Kennet Centre, Newbury on Feb 20 (SAG), and 82 at Old Windsor on Feb 22 (RMH). **Breeding:** was likely widespread and confirmed at 15 sites: Eversley GPs (PBT; RM), Dinton Pastures (RM), Wokingham (AHarr), Wokingham STW where there were at least 3 broods (DJB), White Waltham SF (DJB), Lower Farm GP (IW; JL), Summerlease GP (DJB), Great Meadow Pond (DJB), Horton GP where a "pair bred in a working - crane in daily use!" (CDRH), Hell Corner, Inkpen (LS), Twyford GP (RM), Woodspeen (IW; JL), Remenham (DJB), North Heath (IW), and Woodlands Park (DJB). **Autumn/Second winter:** the communal roosts numbering thousands which were reported 3-4 decades ago are no longer being encountered. Probable or definite roosting involved 7 at Lower Farm GP on Aug 9 (PEH), at the town centre Reading on Aug 16 (MJS), 36 at Ascot Heath on Aug 20 (RJD), 70 at Thames Valley Bus Park on Oct 11 (HWh), and 30+ at Maidenhead Station on Nov 23 (DF). Other gatherings (over 40) comprised c100 in trees, at Wokingham on Sep 27 (VFO), 100+ at Reading Services M4 westbound on Dec 4 (KEM), 65 passing over Queens Rd, Newbury on Oct 9 (SAG), and 60 at Sonning Meadows on Oct 30 (ABT).

## WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

*Irregular winter visitor in varying numbers, locally common in eruption years*

The major irruption which first appeared in Berkshire on Nov 6 2010 gathered strength in 2011 and just topped 1,000 birds at the beginning of Feb; it then waned until the last flock of 16 was noted at Twyford on Apr 26 (LFO; VFO). Nevertheless, this peak did not approach the highest ever 2,500 birds reported in Feb 2005. In contrast, there were no records for the late autumn or second winter period. Numerous reports for the first winter and spring period came from 56 locations/areas throughout the county and are summarised on a weekly basis in the table, although it excludes some reports from Birdguides because they lacked sufficient details.

	Jan 1-7	Jan 8-14	Jan 15-21	Jan 22-28	Jan 29-Feb 4	Feb 5-11	Feb 12-18	Feb 19-25	Feb 26-Mar 4
No. of sites	11	11	15	10	16	11	11	7	11
Min. no. birds	228	753	656	534	1057	431	309	294	747

	Mar 5-11	Mar 12-18	Mar 19-Mar 25	Mar 26-Apr 1	Apr 2-8	Apr 9-15	Apr 16-23	Apr 24-30
No. of sites	11	11	13	17	8	9	2	3
Min. no. birds	382	379	333	457	406	123	53	41

What follows is a summary of the first winter and spring reports. To be consistent with the 2005 and 2010 reports, the localities are presented in order based on the date of their first record in 2011, subsuming all their records of note. In view of the very large number of reports received and constraints on space, records for each locality are presented in order the first report, highest count(s) and last report in a succinct form.

**Reading:** reports spanned Jan 1 to Apr 25. In the Earley area, the first report was also the highest: 90 at Whiteknights Park on Jan 14 (AA) and still 53 in Carshalton Way on Mar 27 (RRI) and lastly 15 at Whiteknights Park on Apr 23 (PG). In east Reading, 6+ at Cemetery Junction on Jan 2 (DNTR), a highest count of c100 at Hamilton Rd on Apr 8 (RRI) and a last report of 5 in Kings Rd on Apr 25 (JCLa). In central Reading, a first report of 28 in Katesgrove Lane on Jan 1 (AVL), a maximum of 172+ in Richfield Ave on Jan 10 (AVL), and the last report was perhaps 40 (exact site not specified) on Apr 23 (BGU). The Caversham area began with 7 at Caversham on Jan 9 (MRWS), a highest count of 45 in Buckingham Drive, Emmer Green on Feb 6 (AMH) and a final sighting of 10 at View Island on Apr 24 (OEMB). In Tilehurst, firstly 50 in City Rd on Jan 21 (RCO), with a maximum of 136 at Bath Rd/Hogarth Ave on Mar 2 (RCR) and a last report of 20 in Prospect Park on Apr 10 (AVL). Records for Calcot commenced with 25 on Jan 4 (E Demetriades per MSFW), peaked at 75 on Jan 16 (BGU) and ended with 15 on Mar 4 (RCO). **Woodley:** flocks present from Jan 1 when there were 10 in Comet Way (FJC; RM) and 50+ nearby on Jan 21 (GSE per FJC), reaching a maximum of 80 on Butts Hill Rd on Mar 2 (RRI). The last report was of 21 at Highwood on Mar 17 (DFI). **Wokingham:** many reports commencing with 13 in Marks Rd on Jan 1 (DJB) and 50 not far away at Finchampstead Rd on Jan 6 (LRB). Counts exceeding 30 consisted of 31 in Barkham Rd on Jan 22 (PBT), 30+ at Wooshill on Jan 24 (PBT), 40 on Jan 27 (DGran), 35 on Feb 3 (BGU), 120 at Priest Ave on Feb 4 (NP), c120 at Wokingham STW on Mar 7 (DJB), 40+ at Caroline Drive/Arthur Rd on Mar 15 (EN), 40 at Wooshill on Mar 17 (EN), and 30+ there on Mar 18 (EN). The last report was of 9 in Riverside Walk, Wooshill on Apr 14 (EN). **Old Windsor:** 15 on Jan 1 and 12 on Mar 23 (both SK). **Hungerford:** it was reported daily for about a week starting with 6 on Jan 1 (MGU) through to 41 on Jan 5 (BGU) until finally 28 on Jan 8 (DJR). **Eton Wick:** 12 on Jan 2 (BGU). **Maidenhead:** the few reports in Jan included 5 at North Town on Jan 3 (BAJC), 8 at the fire station on Jan 6 (TOA), 10 by the A4 at Maidenhead Thicket on Jan 29 (CDRH) and c10 along the A404, half a mile to S of the A4 junction on Jan 29, increasing to c15 on Feb 15 (MSW). Also first seen in Jan were c60 at Cox Green on Jan 27 (DJW) where later there were 25 on Mar 24 rising to 78 on Mar 27 and 47 on Mar 28 (all SG). Turning to Feb, 38 at Newlands School on Feb 6 (SMe) where subsequently there were 50 on Mar 3 (GRF), down to 41 on Mar 9 (MSW), and 18 at nearby at Napier Rd on Apr 5 (SMe). Fifteen at Queensway on Feb 7 increased to 75 on Mar 30, then fell away to 10 by Apr 4 (all BR). There were 14 in an unspecified garden on Feb 14 (SMe), 30 in York Rd on Feb 15 (DNTR) and 30 in Allenby Rd the same day (BCr), where there were later 47 on Mar 11 (HWE). Thirteen at Norden Rd on Feb 16 (PNe) rose to 20 on Feb 20 (PCla). In Mar came 90 at Oaken Grove on Mar 16 (MJF) and 25 in Belmont Rd on Mar 18 (PMar); 3 at Shoppenhangars Rd on Mar 23 (SKP) reduced to 2 on Mar 26 (DJB), while there were 30 on the same day close to the nearby golf course (BCr); then 17 at Stafferton Way on Mar 24 (SBro; SKP) and 10 at the Pond House pub, A4 on Mar 29 (DNTR). Finally there were c7 at Forlease Rd on Apr 15 (DNTR). **Newbury:** reports began with 7 near Northcroft Leisure Centre on Jan 4 (AEDH) and reached a maximum of 70 in St George's Ave on Feb 2 (AEDH), with the last observation near the W Berkshire Council offices on Apr 8 (RRC). **Bracknell:** the first of many reports was of 3 near Morrisons at The Peel Centre area on Jan 7 (KIT). Large flocks were roaming the Worlds End Hill/Forest Park/Birch Hill area in Jan, building up from 20 at Cannon Hill on Jan 10 (EN), 8 in Birch Hill Rd on Jan 12 (VFe) and 80 near Sainsbury's on the Bagshot Rd the same day (JCo), through 130+ near Sainsbury's on Jan 13 (VFe) and 170+ there on Jan 14 (DLo), to a maximum of 200+ there on Jan 17 (RJB), dipping to 160+ on Jan 19 (BDC), then 140 transiently in Birch Hill Rd on Jan 20 (JCo); some of the Bagshot Rd flock likely splintered to Forest Park, where there were 40 on Jan 15 (SA) and 33 on Jan 18 (TS). Most of these birds quickly moved on, as there were only 40+ near Sainsbury's on Jan 20 (MK), and on finding 1 at Worlds End Hill on Feb 8, TS

commented "first one I have seen in the local area for a couple of weeks". At Worlds End Hill, numbers reached a maximum of 44 on Feb 13, falling to 18 when last seen on Apr 4 (both TS). The Bagshot Rd flock perhaps moved to the A329 Berkshire Way/Mill Lane roundabout, where there were 150+ on Jan 31 (DJB). Elsewhere, records of note included c150-200 at the junction of Longshot Lane/Downmill Rd on Jan 19 (RD), which may have moved nearby to Homebase, Wokingham Rd, where there was just 1 on Jan 21 (MJT) but 100 on Jan 22 (TS) and 12 on Jan 25 (MJT); there were 20 by the railway line at the end of Longshot Lane on Jan 24 (RD) and 75-100 on the northern side of the A329(M) on the edge of this industrial estate on Feb 4 (RAd), while nearby to the south there were 30 in the Fujitsu car park, Lovelace Rd on Feb 7 (ISc) and 10 in Wykery Copse on Feb 16-17 (SMu). At Great Hollands there were 7 by the Shopping Centre on Jan 24 (TR) and 120+ near the A3095 roundabout on Jan 31 (RAd). At Priestwood a flock of 20 was encountered on Feb 3 and 7 (DLoy). **Winnersh:** 21+ on Jan 7 (RCr), rising to the maximum of 100 on Jan 8 (PJC), still 80 on Feb 2 (DJB), until the last report of 18 on Mar 31 (PBT). **Freeman's Marsh:** 7 on Jan 8 (GDS). **Dorney W:** 7 on Jan 9 (ABT). **Barkham:** 1 on Jan 10 (BDC), 40 on Jan 15 (KGI) and 7 on Apr 10 (KGI). **Crowthorne:** 70 on Jan 10 (PJC), 30+ on Jan 13 (CRG), 15 over Wellington College on Feb 8 (DMo) and c100 on Feb 19 (CRG). **Greenham Common:** 1 on Jan 10 (NC). **Thatcham:** 81 on Jan 10 (BGU) decreasing to 40 on 16 Jan (BGU), then no more reports until 1 on Mar 29 (PEe). **Ascot:** 50 in High St on Jan 15 (SA) and c10 at Ascot Tennis Club on Apr 25 (MMc). **Warfield:** 25 on Jan 15 (LRB) increased to c300 (counted to 253 before dispersing) in trees around pond in Field Park on Feb 1 (DJWE) before the last sighting of 19 on Mar 26 (RJo). **Wraybury GP:** 1 on 16 Jan MHu. **Slough:** 25 at Cippenham on Jan 18 (PJon) and 35 in Buckingham Ave the same day (DJB) then a long gap until 30 on Mar 26 at Salt Hill Drive (JHo) and 74 there on Mar 30 (CWa). **Twyford:** 1 at Hare Hatch on Jan 18 (CDRH); 10 at Charvil on Feb 3 (MHT) increased to 20 on Feb 4 (ABT) and 28 on Feb 24 (MCa); 8 at Twyford on Mar 28 (SPA) were followed by 2 on Apr 14 (KF) then 16 on Apr 26 (LFO; VFO). **Swinley Forest:** 1 at Broadmoor Bottom on Jan 19 (BDC); 4 over SE at Caesar's Camp on Jan 29 (PEH) were likely from Bracknell; 1 flew out of conifers just S of Caesar's Camp on Feb 2 (PEH); lastly 2 at an unspecified site on Mar 27 (MMc). **Windsor Great Park:** 14 at Virginia Water on Jan 20 (CDRH) and 11 there on Feb 8 (MMc). **Bagnor:** 9+ on Jan 24 (JL) and 20 on Feb 6 (GT). **Binfield:** 3 on Jan 24 (MJT). **Windsor:** 18 on Jan 27 (BGU), 15 on Feb 16 (MMc), and 5 on Mar 12 (SK). **Datchet/QMR:** 26 on Jan 28 at Datchet (CDRH), followed by 114 there on Mar 2 which included 40 the same day at QMR (MMc). 64 at QMR on Mar 4 (KPD) decreasing to c40 on Mar 7 and 3 on Mar 23 (both MMc). **Winkfield Row:** 30 on Jan 28 and 78 on Apr 8 (JBut). **Horton:** 78 were feeding on rotting rosehips at Arthur Jacob LNR on Feb 2 (CDRH); 35 at Horton GP on Mar 5 (MFW). **Greenham:** 35 on Feb 2 (JL). **Spencers Wood:** 20 on Feb 3 (RWel). **Beech Hill:** 54 on Feb 4 (BU). **Colnbrook:** c50 on Feb 4 (CDRH). **Finchampstead:** c80 on Feb 6 and on 17 Feb 12 (both RCMu). **Sunninghill:** c60 at Silwood Park on Feb 7 dropping to c40 on Feb 9 (RJD) with the last sighting of 12 on Mar 31 (HH). Nearby there were c50 at Harewood on Mar 20 (DJB) and 3 at Sunninghill Park on Mar 11 (DJB). **Shepherd Meadows:** c130 flying NW over the junction of A30/A321/A331 on Feb 8 entered Berkshire (RAd). **Cranbourne:** 30 on Feb 12 (CDRH). **Pinkneys Green:** 13 on Feb 16 (PNe), followed by 3 reports in Mar: 70 on Mar 16 (PNe), 10 on Mar 22 (MJF) and 19 on Mar 29 (LJF; MJF). **Burghfield Com:** 50+ on Feb 17 (BU). **Theale GPs:** 10 on Feb 17 (JLe), 40 on Mar 13 (BGU) and 15 on Mar 20 (AVL). **Arborfield:** 12 on Feb 25 (PBu). **Ashampstead:** 10 on Feb 26 (MRWS). **Sandhurst:** yielded four records, decreasing from 50+ on Feb 26 (LS) to 14 just inside the county on Mar 29 (RAd). **Moss End:** 40 on Feb 27 and 1 on Apr 13 (LRB). **Dinton Pastures:** 102+ on Mar 3 (NC; KEM) decreasing to a last sighting of 8 on Apr 16 (PBT). **Theale:** 1 on Mar 8 (RCr). **Cookham:** 30 at Cookham Dean on Mar 11 (BDC; ASL), 30 on Mar 21 at Cookham

(BDC) and 30 at Marsh Meadow on Mar 28 (BDC). **Paices Wood, Wasing:** 11 on Mar 12 (MFW). **Burghfield GP:** 40 on Mar 13 (JA). **Sunnymeads:** 27 on Mar 16 (MSW) and 15 on Mar 22 (CDRH). **Holyport/Bray GP:** 6 at Holyport on Mar 21 (BUp) were probably the 6 reported at Bray GP the same day (BGu), and had increased to 24 on the Ascot Rd by Mar 28 (BUp). **Wargrave:** 50 on Mar 27 (RSW) and 40 at Borough Marsh on Mar 28 (MFW). **Waltham St Lawrence:** 4 on Mar 29 (BR). **Hurley:** 70 on Hurley Lock island on Apr 2 (CDRH), 58 of which were also seen by BDC. **Brimpton:** 44 on Apr 3 (GACJ). **Woolhampton GP:** 10+, perhaps many more on Apr 10 (RRi).

## DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

*Rare vagrant primarily in winter*

The bird discovered on the R Lambourn at Welford on Dec 23 2010 (DJR *et al.*) continued to draw many listers and other visitors into Jan, although it disappointed some in not showing. Only the second Berkshire record in over 20 years, it was often watched in the late afternoon coming into roost until the last reported sighting on Jan 30 (RJo).

## WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

*Abundant resident, local numbers may be affected by adverse winter weather*

This is reckoned to be the commonest bird in Berkshire (along with the Woodpigeon), having an estimated population of 76,000 territories in 2009 (The Birds of Berkshire, 2013). Because of this it is under-recorded, although it continues to be ringed at Thatcham Marsh (IW; JL), where studies have been conducted since the 1960s. High counts of 20+ were received for 6 locations: Burghfield GP, where there were 32 singing on Mar 22, 42 singing on Apr 3, and 61 singing on Apr 21 (RCr); Dinton Pastures, where there were 34 (33 singing) on Apr 22 (RJD); Boxford, where there were 24 on Mar 26 (RJCl); Welford, where there were on 22 Apr 24 (RJCl); Frogmill Spinney, Hurley, where there were 21 on Jul 19 (PNe); and Eversley GPs, where there were 20 (16 singing) on Apr 20 (RJD). One was feeding around the house at Hell Corner, Inkpen on Apr 5 (LS)!

## DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

*Common though possibly declining resident (Amber Listed)*

The Dunnock is common throughout Berkshire. It is often overlooked by observers not concerned with such activities as garden watches, survey work and ringing, and as a result the information received can be rather limited, as it is this year. Counts exceeding 10 were: 25+ at Greenham Common on Mar 28 (JL), 21 at Great Shefford STW on Sep 18 and Oct 1 (JLS), 16 at Pinkneys Green on Feb 16 (PNe), 15 at Denford Mill, Hungerford on Oct 15 (JLS), 13 at Old Windsor on Oct 29 (RMH), 12 (6 singing) at Wraysbury Scrub on Apr 9 (RJD) and 11 singing at Burghfield GP on Mar 22 (RCr).

## ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

*Abundant resident*

The Birds of Berkshire Atlas and Avifauna published in 2013, which was based on surveys over the period 2007-11, showed Robins to be one of the most abundant birds in the county, recorded in all tetrads and with a breeding population estimated at approximately 70,000 territories (an average of 44 per square km). In most years relatively few records are received for common species such as the Robin and the annual report cannot provide a comprehensive analysis of their status. Nonetheless, it is notable that reports submitted for Robins show that in suitable habitat their density can be high: 57 singing birds were counted

at Burghfield GPs on March 22 (RCr), 46 were recorded at Pinkney's Green on February 16 (PNe) and 33 were singing on Ascot Heath on Sept 27 (RJD).

## NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*

*Uncommon and local summer visitor, rarely encountered on passage (Amber Listed)*

Records were received from 19 locations, six of which are in or near the Theale gravel pits complex and all, with the exception of Greenham Common and Wildmoor Heath, are along the Kennet valley between Kintbury and Reading. The table lists the first record for each of the locations and the highest count of singing birds; where song was not noted for a site, the maximum count is given.

	Earliest site record			Maximum territorial birds		
Burghfield GPs	(1)	April 3	RCr	(17)	April 21	RCr
Brimpton GPs	(1)	April 5	JPM	(2)	April 7	RCr
Greenham Common	1	April 5	JL	(5)	April 25	PEH
Moatlands GP, Theale	(1)	April 7	RCr	(2)	April 7	AMH
Theale Main GP, Theale	(1)	April 7	KEM	(4)	April 17	RJB
Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale	1	April 12	MFW	(10)	April 23	DAMD
Moatlands Taxi Pit, Theale	(1)	April 16	KEM	(1)	April 16	KEM
Hérons Nest, Theale	(1)	April 27	MHT	(1)	April 27	MHT
Golf Course, Theale	(1)	April 28	WB	(1)	April 28	WB
Aldermaston GP	(1)	April 17	JPM	(2)	April 25	JPM
Dinton Pastures CP	(2)	April 17	MJM	(5)	April 22	RJD
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	(1)	April 22	NC	(1)	April 22	NC
Sheffield Bottom	(1)	April 22	PH	(1)	April 22	PH
The Wilderness, Kintbury	1	April 23	RHar	1	April 23	RHar
Hamstead-Dreweats Locks, Kennet and Avon canal	(1)	April 26	IW	(1)	April 26	IW
Woolhampton GP	(1)	May 5	RF	3	May 5	RF
Wildmoor Heath	1	June 8	MHT			

( ) indicates birds noted as singing

**Spring:** all records were at or near known breeding sites. The first arrivals were in the first week of April and the maximum numbers of territorial birds occurred in the third and fourth weeks of the month. **Breeding:** the total of the possible territorial birds recorded was 59, though as no systematic Nightingale survey was carried out, this is probably an underestimate of their overall abundance in Berkshire. Surveys in 1999 and 2012 recorded 111 and 166 respectively. The presence of croaking birds in June and July was noted at Aldermarston GP (JPM), Brimpton GP (RCr, JPM) and Theale (RCr). An adult and 3 young were seen along the Kennet and Avon canal, between Hamstead and Dreweats Locks on July 15 (IW) and an adult and young birds were seen at Theale Main GP on July 23 (RCr). **Autumn:** the only record away from known breeding locations was of a bird at West Meadows, Marsh Benham on July 31 (JLS). On August 10 a juvenile was caught and ringed at Greenham Common (IW, JL), the last record of the year.

## BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

*Scarce passage migrant and rare summer visitor (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

A disappointing year, with no evidence of breeding and few migrants reported. **Spring:** a male was heard briefly singing in Reading town centre on April 17 (RRi), but none were located there later. The only other spring record was of a male at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 30 (CDRH). **Autumn:** an immature was reported at Spencers Wood on Oct 30 (NR); one was at Eversley GPs on Nov 15 (RFM); a female/immature was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 16 (CDRH) with possibly two female/immature birds there on Nov 26 (DJB, CDRH) and with another there on Nov 26 (CDRH *et al.*).

## REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

*Localised summer visitor and uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

**Spring:** the first week of April brought arrivals at three sites: males at Coombe on April 2 (NR), Wraysbury on April 6 (CDRH) and Wishmoor Bottom on April 7 (MHu), where 6 males were singing the next day (DJB). Birds were recorded at 5 other sites: a female at West Woodhay Down on April 10 (SAG, MJT), a female at Clayfield Copse, Reading on April 12 (ABT), 2 singing in South Forest, Windsor Forest on April 21 (DJB), a male singing at the Royal Military Academy grounds Sandhurst on April 24 (PJC) and a male at Greenham Common on May 4 (JL). **Summer:** in the main breeding area, Swinley Forest, 9 singing males and a pair were located on May 13 (DJB). In South Forest, Windsor, 2 singing birds were located on May 9 and a pair was feeding young on June 3 (DJB). A pair with a recent fledgling was found at Sheepdrove Farm, Lambourn on July 2 (ABT), but records around these locations in July could relate to post-breeding dispersal (which commences from the end of June). **Autumn:** records away from the breeding areas in July were: a male at Upper Lambourn on July 1 (CDRH), a juvenile in the Brightwalton Common area on July 5 (GDS), a juvenile with a roving tit flock at Silwood Park on July 16 (RJD), a male at North Heath on July 22 (IW), 3 birds, including 2 adult males, at Summertons Down, Coombe on July 28 and a male at Warren Down, Lambourn, on July 30 (ABT). **Passage birds** were recorded from 9 locations during August and September: at West Woodhay Down, a male on Aug 2 (CDRH) and a 1st winter male and female on Aug 22 (IW), at Lough Down, Sreatley, a juvenile on Aug 6 and a moulting male on Aug 14 (both ABT), at Wigmoreash Pond, a female/immature on Aug 15 (IW) and a male on Aug 29 (SAG), at Greenham Common, 2 birds were seen on Aug 21 (NC) and a first year male was trapped and ringed (JL), 3 birds were together there on Aug 24 (NC) and one was last seen on Aug 29 (NC), at Lower Farm GP, one on Aug 23 (IW), at Brimpton GP, a juvenile caught and ringed on Aug 24 (JPM), at Lavell's Lake, one on Aug 29 (GR) and again on Sept 2 (RM), at Wraysbury GP, a first winter male on Sept 2 (CDRH), at Midgham GP, a juvenile male ringed on Sept 9 (JPM) and at Walbury Hill, a first winter male on Sept 23 (DJB). There was a male at Lavell's Lake on Sept 14 (FJC) and a male there on Sept 27 (FJC) was the last record of the year.

## WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

*Uncommon and declining passage migrant which formally bred (Amber Listed)*

**Spring:** birds were reported from 8 locations, starting with a male at Wargrave Marsh on April 21 (CDRH), followed by a bird in Windsor Great Park the next day (MHu) and a male on Aldworth downs on May 1 (RJG). May 8 brought records at Dorney Wetlands (CDRH), Englefield (RCW), Greenham Common (SNP) and Lower Farm (RHS). The last spring passage bird was a female at Lambourn on May 19 (CDRH). **Autumn:** a male and female together on July 13 at Lambourn (ABT) and a juvenile at Brightwalton on July 17 (GDS)

may have been early passage birds. Thereafter passage was similar to 2010, with up to 60 birds observed at 22 locations across the county: 8 in West Berkshire, 3 in Mid Berkshire and 11 in East Berkshire. The table shows the weekly records during the main autumn migration period. The last record was of a bird at Lea Farm, Dinton Pastures on Oct 9 (FJC).

	Jul 25-31	Aug 1-7	Aug 8-14	Aug 15-21	Aug 22-28	Aug 29 -Sep 4	Sep 5-11	Sep 12-18	Sep 19-25	Sep 26- Oct 2	Oct 3-9
Sites	1	-	-	2	6	3	7	7	7	2	1
Birds	1	-	-	3	6	7	16	10	14	2	1

## STONECHAT *Saxicola torquatus*

*Locally common summer resident, uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor*

Records were received from 24 locations (treating Swinley Forest and Greenham/Crookham Common as single sites), 8 in West Berkshire, 7 in mid Berkshire and 9 in East Berkshire. The minimum numbers of birds reported each month are shown in the table. However, as coverage of sites varied greatly from month to month, these are not a good indication of temporal or spatial distribution, which can be seen for the year 2007-11 in The Birds of Berkshire Atlas. **First winter:** during January and February, 22 records, probably representing 12 birds were received. Half of the total was in the Kennet valley between Woolhampton and Reading, particularly on the Kennet Meadows. **Breeding:** in March numbers built up in the usual breeding areas, the heaths of East Berkshire and Greenham Common. On the East Berkshire heaths, at Wishmoor Bottom, there were at least 7 pairs (DJWe, DJB), a pair with young at Wildmoor Heath, (DJS) with 14 territories at the Royal Military Academy and on the MoD heathland. At Greenham Common, the maximum number of birds reported in March was 14 (JL), though it is not clear how many pairs may have bred. A single bird was seen at Kintbury cress beds on April 12 (RGS) and a pair was seen at Bury Down on June 26 (MJT), but no evidence of breeding was reported. Away from the breeding sites, dispersing or passage birds were seen at Woodlands Park Fields on July 14 (DJB), at Mayridge Farm, Englefield on Aug 10 (KEM), at Horton on Sept 18 (CDRH), at Ascot Heath on Sept 21 (RJD), 2 at Ufton Nervet on Sept 23 (PH), 1 at Walbury Hill on Sept 23, a male at Wraysbury on Oct 12 and a female there on Oct 21 (CDRH). A male was at Dorney Wetlands on Oct 31 (DJB). **Second winter:** the number of birds at Greenham Common, one of the few sites to be consistently monitored, fell steeply from the October peak to 3 or 4 during November and December. Similarly, there were few birds remaining on the East Berkshire heaths. At Dorney Wetlands a female/immature was present on Nov 20 (CDRH) and on the downland, 3 males and a female were at Lambourn on Nov 23 (CDRH).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kennet Valley	1	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Eversley GPs	2	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	4	2	2	-
Berkshire Downs	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	3	-	-
E Berkshire heaths	-	1	6	18T	7T	20	4	31	-	3	3	-
Greenham/Crookham Common	-	2	14	5	14	7	10	11	12	16	3	4
Elsewhere	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	2	1	-

T reported as territories

## WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

*Common passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Records came from 70 locations that are grouped in the table below estimating the minimum number of birds passing through in each month. **Spring:** a larger than normal passage, started at Queen Mother Reservoir on March 9 (MMc). Numbers rose quickly to 20 at Greenham Common (NC) and 11 at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH) on April 6, with the highest counts being 23 at Greenham Common on April 7, 21 at Queen Mother Reservoir on April 15 (CDRH) and 17 at Inkpen Hill on April 13 (MMc). Passage fell sharply in May and the latest records were on April 17, with 2 at Greenham Common (JL) and one on farmland at Leckampstead (DJS). **Autumn:** passage began with 3 birds at Greenham Common (JL) and one at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH) on July 30. The return migration was spread over three months, peaking in September and involving a similar range of sites. The peak number of birds present at any one time was lower than in Spring; counts of 10 and above were: 14 at Greenham Common on August 30 (RJPY), 10 there on Sept 7 (MRWS) and 13 on Sept 24 (NC). 13 were present on Compton Downs on Sept 9 (DJB) and 12 at Remenham Hill on Sept 21 (CDRH). In October the highest count was 6, at Queen Mother Reservoir on Oct 4 and 13, including a bird possibly of the race *O. o. leucorhoa* on the latter date (CDRH), which stayed on into November and was last seen on Nov 27 (CDRH).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	7	41	2	-	1	19	13	12	1	-
Gravel Pits	-	-	3	16	4	-	-	5	8	1	-	-
Berkshire Downs	-	-	1	73	2	-	-	10	25	4	-	-
E Berkshire heaths	-	-	2	16	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Greenham Common	-	-	3	40	3	-	3	29	38	4	-	-
Elsewhere	-	-	2	56	4	-	-	4	37	6	-	-
<b>Number of birds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>

## GREENLAND WHEATEAR (*leucorhoa*) *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*

*Scarce passage migrant, probably overlooked*

Small numbers of birds resembling the Greenland race *O. o. leucorhoa* are recorded passing through Berkshire during both migration periods most years. **Spring:** at Queen Mother Reservoir on April 11 there were 3 males (CDRH), a male was at Drift Road, Maidenhead on April 16 (CDRH) and a female at Aldermarston on May 1 (RCr). **Autumn:** there were two records: an adult male at Colnbrook on Sep 9 (CDRH) and 2 birds at Queen mother Reservoir on Oct 4-5 (CDRH). These records are included in the Wheatear table above.

## RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

*Scarce passage migrant (Red Listed)*

As usual the majority of records of this increasingly scarce migrant were in April, on the steep slopes of the hills to the south of Inkpen. **Spring:** two males were first seen on Walbury Hill on April 11 (ABT, MFW) and were joined by a female the next day (KEM). Probably the same three birds were reported in the area by many observers up to April 20 (SA). Other spring records were of a female at Crookham Common on April 18 (CDRH) and May 4 (AEDH) and one (sex not reported) at Dorney Wetlands on April 21 (WMo). **Autumn:** there were two records: a female at Cannon Court Farm, Maidenhead on Sept 16 (MJF) and a bird on Crookham common on Sept 26 (IW).

## BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

*Abundant resident and winter visitor*

In most years relatively few records are received for common species such as the Blackbird and the annual report cannot provide a comprehensive analysis of their status. The atlas surveys of 2007-11 provided an opportunity to rectify this and The Birds of Berkshire Atlas and Avifauna, published in 2013, showed Blackbirds to be one of the most abundant birds in the county, recorded in all tetrads and with a breeding population estimated at approximately 48,000 pairs (an average of 30 per square km). All counts of 20 or more birds were in the winter months, the highest being 35 that were seen in a 15 minute period at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford on Nov 8 (JSWo).

## FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

*Common winter visitor and passage migrant, has bred (Schedule One and Red Listed)*

Fieldfares were common and widespread throughout the county in both winter periods. They are probably under-reported, especially the smaller flocks, and the mobility of flocks further confounds estimation of numbers. However, the table, which gives the sum of the birds reported each day of the month, gives some idea of the status within the county. Records came from 133 sites and flocks of 100 or more were reported from 35.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	53	31	26	3	-	-	-	1	1	35	42	42
Number of birds	3036	2146	1626	49	-	-	-	12	1	1409	5223	3553

**First winter:** flocks of 100 or more Fieldfare were reported on 25 occasions from 18 sites across the county. The largest flock, numbering at least 400, was at Brimpton on Jan 9 (GEW); 250 were at Padworth on Jan 30 (GDS), 250 at Frilsham on Feb 24 and flocks of 100-200 birds were frequently reported on Downs sites and in the east of Berkshire during January and February. The last record was of 15 birds flying over Ascot Heath on Apr 19 (RJD). **Second winter:** the first arrival was of 3 birds at Eversley GPs on Oct 5 (MGLR). Numbers built up rapidly in late October, with substantial passage noted over Ascot Heath on the 21st when 339 were counted moving SW in 110 minutes (RJD). There were 27 records of 100 or more birds from 21 sites. The largest count of the year was 1500 at Bury Down on Nov 13 (KEM). Other high counts were 250 at Remenham Hill on Nov 17 (CDRH), 300 near Brimpton GPs on Nov 18 (GEW), 300 at Dorney Wetlands on Dec 2 (BDC) and at least 238 feeding in a hedge on the Ridgeway at Compton on Dec 27 (DJB).

## SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

*Common resident and winter visitor (Red Listed)*

As for many abundant species, in most years relatively few records are received for Song Thrushes and the annual report cannot provide a comprehensive analysis of their status. The atlas surveys of 2007-11 provided an opportunity to rectify this and The Birds of Berkshire Atlas and Avifauna, published in 2013, showed the Song Thrush population to be around one quarter of that of the Blackbird. It was recorded in all 99.5% of tetrads and confirmed to have bred in 241 of the 394 tetrads. Although scarcer than Blackbirds in most places, in suitable habitat they can be abundant: 21 birds were at Lands End GP on Feb 3 (MHT), at Burghfield GPs 13 singing birds were counted on April 3 (RCr) and 14 birds, including a juvenile, were counted in Swinley Park on May 16 (DJB).

## REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

*Common winter visitor and passage migrant, very rare in summer (Schedule One and Red Listed)*

Although widespread throughout both winter periods, numbers were similar to those of the Fieldfare with flocks of 100 or more being reported from 21 locations. Although reported from 140 locations throughout the county, many small groups go un-reported and so the table below, which gives the sum of counts for each site on each day recorded, can only be looked upon as an estimate of the relative monthly status of Redwings.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sites	55	41	31	1	-	-	-	-	1	46	37	35
Birds	3600	1705	1341	9	-	-	-	-	1	1664	1193	1164

**First winter:** in January and February flocks of over 100 were reported from 14 rural and urban grassland locations, the larger flocks being: 1000 on Jan 4 near Burghfield (AVL), 220 on Jan 15 at Lower Farm (SAG), 200 at Eversley GPs on Jan 24 (RFM) and 200 at Charvil on Jan 27 (RDr). **Second winter:** the largest count reported was of 200 flying south over Upper Bucklebury on Oct 30 (BL) and a south-west passage over Ascot Heath of about 100 birds was noted between 07:30 and 09:00 on Oct 23 and 24 and on Nov 2 (RJD). Later, 150 were seen at Bury Down on Nov 13 (KEM) and at least 100 at Caversham Heights on Dec 21 (TGB).

## MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

*Common though declining resident (Amber Listed)*

In the atlas surveys of 2007-11 Mistle Thrushes were recorded in 93% of tetrads but were confirmed to have bred in only 47%, one third fewer than in the atlas surveys of 1987-9. Most records received are of 1 or 2 birds, though post-breeding gatherings can be much larger: 18 on Jun 11 at Forest Lodge, Windsor Great Park (DJB), 29 at Great Meadow Pond on July 31 (DJB), 14 at West Woodhay Down on Aug 7 (IW), 23 over Padworth on Aug 8 (GJSu), 15 at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford on Aug 10 and 25 there on Nov 8 (both JSWo), 17 over the A308 at Braywick on Aug 29 (CDRH) and 25 on Smith's Lawn, Great Windsor Park on Sep 18 (DJB).

## CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

*Locally common resident (Schedule One)*

Reported from 34 sites this year; 18 in W. Berkshire, 12 in mid-Berkshire and 4 in E. Berkshire, the majority of records came from the period Mar-Oct although birds could be located in every month of the year. Highest counts were up to 11 singing at Thatcham Marsh (MO), up to six at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford (JSW), up to six at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor (DJB), five singing at Dinton Pastures during April and May (MO), five also at Dorney Wetlands during spring and summer (MO) and four at Woolhampton GP most of the year but five ringed in October (JPM). Confirmation of breeding came from Aldermaston GP where a juvenile was ringed on Jun 20 (JPM), at Great Meadow Pond three juveniles were being fed on Jun 12 and more juveniles were seen again in July and August and food carrying was observed (DJB), a recently-fledged juvenile was ringed at Hosehill Lake on Jul 10 (TGB) and a juvenile was ringed at Thatcham Marsh on Aug 6 (IW,JL). An adult caught at Great Meadow Pond had been ringed as a juvenile there in 2010 (DJB).

## GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

*Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant which has declined in recent years (Red Listed)*

First arrivals were during the second week of April when one was at Thatcham Marsh on 10th (IW,JL) followed by singles at Eversley GP on 12th (BMA,MGLR) and Aldermaston GP on 14th (JPM). One at Hungerford Marsh on Apr 16 (ABT) remained all summer and was last reported Jul 22 (MO), with two noted on May 1 (NR) and Jun 3 (MJD). Elsewhere, singles were at Denford Mill on Apr 22 (RGS) and Linear Park, Calcot the same day (CMc) which was also reported on 23rd (AL,MFW), at Wraysbury GP on May 4 (SK) and at Donnington on May 25 (ARo), two were at Welford on Apr 24 (RJCl) and two at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford on Apr 23 were also present in May and June with one on Jul 23 and two again on Aug 21 (JSW). At Thatcham Marsh singles were present on Apr 26 and 29th and May 8 (MO) with a juvenile ringed there on Jul 3 (IW,JL), presumably the product of a successful breeding attempt. The only true autumn migrant encountered was one at Horton GP on Sep 19 (CDRH).

## SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant*

**Spring:** first returning birds were found at Burghfield Mill (RCr) and Dorney Wetlands (WMO) on Apr 3, followed by singles at Bray GP (MJ,BDF,BDC), Hungerford Marsh (RF), Woolhampton GP (KEM) and Wraysbury GP (CDRH) on 6th. By mid-April birds could be found at 10 other sites and numbers quickly built up at some; six singing at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford on Apr 9 and 10 there on Apr 23 (JSW), eight caught at Thatcham Marsh on Apr 10 and 20 singing there on May 5 (IW,JL), 20 at Dorney Wetlands on Apr 13 (RMH), 12 at Marsh Benham on Apr 16 (JLS) and 14 singing at Burghfield GPs on Apr 21 (RCr) and at Dinton Pastures on Apr 22 (RJD). **Summer:** common and widespread, being reported from 34 locations, mostly wetland sites. Breeding was confirmed at Thatcham Marsh where adults carrying food and with juveniles were seen on Jun 2 and 13 juveniles were caught and ringed there on Jul 3 (IW,JL), at Lavell's Lake where adults were feeding young on Jun 14 (RM), at Woolhampton GP where two juveniles were ringed on Jul 1 (JPM) and a family party was seen on Aug 7 (KEM) and at Woodspeen where two juveniles were ringed on Jul 12 (IW,JL), but breeding is likely to have taken place at many other sites as the 2007-2011 atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in 34 tetrads. **Autumn:** birds were on the move in August and although no noticeable peak in numbers was recorded, autumn migration manifested itself in the form of individuals appearing at non-wetland sites, for example, six in a maize crop at Englefield on Aug 20 (RCr) with smaller numbers other days. Migration continued into September with records coming from 10 locations, the later ones being singles at Thatcham Marsh (IW) and Colnbrook (CDRH) on 18th, at Midgham GP on 22nd (JPM), at Borough Marsh on 24th (ABT) and a juvenile ringed at Woolhampton GP on Oct 2 (JPM).

## REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

*Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant*

Reported from 43 locations this year with early arrivals appearing at Burghfield Mill on Apr 8 (JA), Great Meadow Pond, Windsor (three) (DJB), Woolhampton GP (KEM) and Thatcham Marsh (IW,JL) all on 10th, Lower Farm on 11th (NC) and Hosehill Lake (HWh) and Green Park (two) (NR) on 12th. By mid-April most suitable reedbed sites held singing birds. At Horton GP one 'mead warbler type' songster incorporated extensive mimicry (including 5 seconds of Greenfinch calls !) on May 1-2 (CDRH). Double-figure counts consist of 43 singing at Dorney Wetlands on Apr 24 (BDC) and 30 on Apr 29 (DJB), 22



singing at Great Meadow Pond on Apr 24 (DJB), up to 34 at Thatcham Marsh during late spring/summer (IW,JL), 15 at Woolhampton GP on May 5 (RF), 12 at the Wilderness on Jul 3 (JLS) and 10 at Midgham GP on Aug 21 (JPM). With the addition of juveniles, numbers at Great Meadow Pond increased to 31 on Jun 26, 40 on Jul 3 and 52 on Jul 10 (DJB). Other positive breeding records came from Woodspeen, Eversley GP, Jealotts Hill, Dinton Pastures, Bracknell Mill Pond, Sheepdrove, Thames Valley Park and Thatcham Marsh, but presumably took place at many other sites as the 2007-2011 atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in 52 tetrads (an increase on the previous survey in 1987-89).

Autumn passage took place throughout August and into September with birds located at six sites during the latter month; six ringed at Midgham GP on 3rd (JPM), three at Great Meadow Pond on 4th, one on 11th and 18th then three on 25th (DJB), seven ringed at Thatcham Marsh on 4th and six on 18th (IW,JL), one at Lower Farm GP on 7th (IW), one at Hosehill Lake on 10th (MFW) and two at Woolhampton GP on 16th with one on 23rd (JPM0). Late birds were at Hosehill Lake on Oct 1 (MFW) and in a Caversham garden also on 1st (TGB), with the final honour going to a juvenile ringed at Woolhampton GP on Oct 2 (JPM).

## **BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla*

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant, uncommon (but increasing?) in winter*

**First winter:** reported from 53 locations during Jan/mid-March involving 87 birds with a distinct easterly bias within the county. Most records were from gardens and were of one or two birds, with higher numbers consisting of three in a Bracknell garden (RJB) and at Skinners Green (TPo), up to four in a Southcote garden (AL) and also in a Woodlands Park garden (DJB), and up to five in a Maidenhead garden (BCr).

**Spring/Summer:** with birds still being reported from gardens throughout March and into early April the now annual difficulty arises to determine the first true summer migrants. Birds appearing at non-wintering sites during mid-March could all be contenders for first summer arrival, though a male at Wokingham STW on 7th (DJB) might be considered a little early and females at Hosehill Lake on 13th (TGB) and Dinton Pastures on 15th (RM) could be wandering wintering individuals as in general males arrive before the females, therefore birds at Lower Earley on Mar 16 (DJM), Woolhampton GP on 19th (BJW) and Langley on 21st (PBT) may take the title. Singles were at Thames Valley Park (RDrr) and Twyford GP, (ADB) on 22nd and two at Burghfield GPs the same day increased to 11 on 25th (RCr) – all singing males – and heralded a mass influx of incoming birds during the last week of March. This species was widespread and abundant during the summer with counts of 10-30 coming from 26 sites and even higher numbers as follows:- 53 at Burghfield GPs on Apr 3 and 69 on Apr 21 (RCr), 50 at Dinton Pastures on Apr 22 (RJD), 40 singing in Swinley Park on May 5 and 33 on May 16 (DJB), 35 at Wraysbury Scrub on May 7 (RJD) and 35 also at Windsor Forest on May 17 (DJB). Breeding was confirmed at 19 sites but presumably took place at many more. The 2007-2011 atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in 273 tetrads with perhaps as many as 15,000 territories.

**Autumn/Second winter:** main passage took place during Aug-Oct and was particularly heavy at the end of the third week of August when 20 were ringed at Aldermaston GP on 20th (JPM), 20+ were at Midgham GP on 21st (JPM) and 40 were at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford also on 21st (JSW). With records coming from 14 sites throughout October there appeared to be no distinct cut-off between autumn migrants and winter visitors. In Nov/Dec 16 birds were reported from 12 sites, evenly distributed across the county, most sightings being of single birds, the exceptions being two in a Cookham garden on Nov 23 (BDC) and three in a Caversham garden on Dec 24 (TGB).

## **GARDEN WARBLER** *Sylvia borin*

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant*

An early bird was reported from Eversley GP on Apr 11 (MGLR) followed by one at Dinton Pastures on 16th (MFW), three at Greenham Common on 17th (IW,JL), one at Crookham Common on 18th (CDRH) and singles at Bracknell (DLog), Brimpton GP (JPM), Old Windsor (RMH) and Woolhampton GP (PEH) all on 19th. Widespread after this date with higher numbers being six at Eversley GPs on Apr 20 (RJD), six at Dinton Pastures on Apr 22 (MFW), eight at Snelsmore Common on Apr 22 (IW,JL), 10 at Greenham Common on Apr 25 (PEH) with eight there on May 5 (JL), nine at Wraysbury Scrub on May 7th (RJD) and six at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford on Jun 13 (JLS). Breeding records came from Binfield, Woolhampton, Farnborough, Dinton Pastures and Catmore, but generally few records were submitted from mid-summer onwards. Breeding density is much lower than the previous species and breeding was confirmed in only 59 tetrads during the 2007-2011 atlas period. In September one was at Lavell's Lake (ABe) and three were at Greenham Common (IW,JL) on 1st, two were ringed at Midgham GP on 3rd (JPM), one was at Thatcham Marsh on 4th (IW,JL), a surprising six were at Harvey's Meadow on 17th (JLS) and finally the last one was ringed at Kintbury Cress Beds on 21st (RGS).

## **LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia curruca*

*Thinly but widely distributed summer visitor and passage migrant*

Arrived mid-April with the first report being of one at Fobney Lock on 15th (NR) closely followed by singles at Dinton Pastures on 16th (MFW), Hampstead Norreys (JLe) and Thatcham Marsh (IW,JL) on 17th, Jealotts Hill (RCMu) and Pingewood GPs (RHS) on 19th and Lower Farm GP (NC) and Freemans Marsh (RHS,NC) on 20th. One or two were reported from 72 sites throughout the summer with five at Wraysbury Scrub on May 7 (RJD) four at Dorney Wetlands on Apr 29 (RN) and three at Donnington Castle on May 1 (JCh). Breeding records came from six sites; one with food at Compton on May 20 (ABT), two carrying food at Lower Farm GP on May 26 (IW), a family party of five at Greenham Common on Jun 10 (JL), an adult with two juveniles at Great Meadow Pond on Jul 3 (DJB), a pair with two young at East Illsley on Jul 10 (DAS) and two juveniles at Liddiards Green also on Jul 10 (GDS). Autumn passage occurred in Aug/Sep, highest totals being three at Lower Farm on Aug 15 (NC) and eight at Wraysbury Scrub on Aug 19 (CDRH). Singles were located at eight sites in September; Brimpton GP, Coldharbour, Queen Mother Reservoir, Lavell's Lake, Marsh Benham, Dorney Wetlands, Greenham Common and Midgham GP, with two at Wraysbury GP on 2nd (CDRH) and two also at Lavell's Lake on 19th (PBT) and 21st (FJC), the last date.

## **WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis*

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Arrived much earlier this year and in good numbers too! First were two at Purley on Apr 3 (MJS) then one at Eversley GP on Apr 6 (JML,MGLR), a pair at Englefield also on 6th, the female of which was nest building! (RCr), one at Dorney Wetlands (ADB), Jealotts Hill (RCMu) and East Shefford (IW) on 7th, one Southcote Meadows (AL) and Pingewood GP (RJB) on 8th, and by the 9th one was at Lavell's Lake (MJM), three were at Brightwalton (GDS) and 10 were at Wraysbury GP (RJD). By mid-month territories had been taken up at many sites across the county. During the summer counts of 10-20 came from 19 locations with higher numbers as follows:- 53 singing at Wraysbury GP on May 7 (RJD), 21 at Coldharbour on June 10 (DJB), 29 at Greenham Common on Apr 25 (PEH) and 30 there during August

(IW,JL), 26 at Compton on Aug 12 (DJB), and this species was found to be abundant on the Downs with counts of 43 singing males along the Ridgeway between Streatley and West Illsley on Apr 26 (PEH) and 38 between Starveall and Blewbury Down on May 12 (DJB). Breeding was confirmed at 16 sites from all parts of the county. Autumn passage birds were reported from 10 locations in September, mostly in the first week, with late birds at Midgham GP on 9th (JPM), three at Compton also on 9th (DJB), two at Cow Down on 10th (MFW) and 18th (ABT) (the last date), and two at Greenham Common on 11th (MJD).

## **DARTFORD WARBLER** *Sylvia undata*

*Localised resident in small numbers, rare away from breeding habitat (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

This species has suffered severe losses during the last two winters, particularly in the east of the county, and now Greenham and Crookham Commons have become the main sites for Dartford warblers. The following were reported:-

**Wishmoor:** 1-3 present between Feb 11 and Dec 1 (MO) with a pair and one singing on May 13 (DJB) and a pair with a juvenile on Jun 26 (RCW).

**Caesar's Camp:** singles on Jun 29 (JWS), Nov 10 (MK) and 30th (WAN)

**Wildmoor Heath:** one carrying food on May 4 (DJS).

**Greenham Common:** one between Jan 2 and Feb 8 (MO) and up to three from Mar 13 to Dec 28 (MO) with six on Mar 19 and Mar 28 (IW,JL), four on Sep 1 (IW), five (inc. four singing) on Oct 1 (ABT), five on Oct 11 (IW) and four on Oct 23 (IW).

**Crookham Common:** one on June 22 (PEH), an adult with a juvenile on Jul 20 (RRe), two on Aug 20 (IW,JL) and Aug 22 (RGi), four on Sep 27 (MHu) and one on Oct 25 (RGi) and Nov 19 (PEH).

## **WOOD WARBLER** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

*Formerly an uncommon summer visitor, now an increasingly rare passage migrant (Red Listed)*

This species is just about hanging on to its status as a passage migrant in Berkshire with two records; one ringed at Wraysbury Scrub on Apr 30 (RRG per CDRH).

## **CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita*

*Common summer visitor and scarce but increasing winter visitor*

**Jan/Feb:** one or two were reported from Arborfield, Dorney Wetlands, Eversley GPs, Thatcham, Maidenhead, Sandhurst STW, Southcote Lock, Theale Main Pit, Welford and Wokingham STW. **Spring/Summer:** contenders for first returning spring migrants were located on Mar 7 at Horton GP (CDRH), Wokingham STW (DJB) and Dorney Wetlands (two) (BAJC), closely followed by birds at Eversley GPs on 8th (GDu), Woolhampton GP on 9th (NC,KEM) and White Waltham (DJB) and Braywick Park (SKP) on 10th. Thereafter birds arrived on a broad front across the county during the next few days, most sites hosting one or two, with five at Burghfield GPs (JA), four at Woolhampton GP (KEM) and eight at Theale Main Pit (RJB) all on 13th. During the summer months double-figure counts were received from 29 sites with the highest being 20 at Welford on Apr 9 (RJCl), 20 at Wraysbury Scrub also Apr 9 (RJD) with 23 there on Aug 29 and 20+ on Sep 26 (RJD), 20 at Marsh Benham on Apr 21 (JLS), 20 at Upper Bucklebury on Jun 8 (RCr), 23 at Greenham Common on Aug 30 (IW,JL) and 28 singing at Burghfield GPs on Mar 22 plus 42 on Apr 3 (RCr). Breeding records came from only 10 sites but would surely have occurred at many more as breeding was confirmed in 210 tetrads during the 2007-2011 atlas survey. Good numbers were encountered in autumn and passage continued well into October. Nov/Dec: singles at Brimpton GP on Nov

1 (JPM) and at Woolhampton GP on Nov 3 (KEM) are likely to be late autumn migrants, as may be one at Eversley GPs on 7th (MGLR), but from mid-month onwards one or two were found at Denford Mill, Lavell's Lake, Wraysbury GP, Harvey's Meadow, Sandhurst STW, Kennet Meadows, Horton GP and Dorney Wetlands, with three at Dinton Pastures on Nov 15 (RMB) and three at Wraysbury Lake on Dec 9 (CDRH), which included one greyish bird (probably *P. c. abietinus* but too high in trees to be certain).

## **WILLOW WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

*Common and widespread passage migrant and common though declining summer visitor (Amber Listed)*

Reported from 93 locations in 2011, down from 108 in 2010. First arrivals appeared from Mar 23 when one was at Hungerford Marsh (JBri) followed by two at Woolhampton GP on 25th (RF) and singles at Moatlands GP (JA), Lower Farm GP (NC,PEH), Windsor Great Park RMH), Whiteknights Park (PG) and Thatcham Marsh (two) (IW,JL) all on 27th. Before the end of March birds also appeared at Boxford Common, Bray GP, Eversley GPs and Lavell's Lake. During spring/early summer double-figure counts consisted of 10 singing at Burghfield GPs on Apr 3 (RCr), 10 at Greenham Common on Apr 5 (JL) with 19 there on Apr 25 (PEH) and 17 on May 5 (JL), 13 at Swinley Forest on Apr 8 (DJB) and 10 at Padworth Common on Apr 10 (TGB). Reasonable numbers could be found on the Ridgeway as illustrated by 12 singing between Streatley and West Illsley on Apr 28 (PEH) and 10 between Starveall and Blewbury on May 12 (DJB). Breeding records came from Swinley Forest, Catmore, Lower Farm GP, Inkpen, Hermitage and Bagnor. The 2007-2011 atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in 60 tetrads, a considerable reduction on the previous survey. Autumn passage would appear to have started in late July and continued into September, the highest counts being 10 at Combe Hill on Jul 28 (IW) and 10 also at Lower Farm GP on Aug 28 (NC). Last birds were four at Compton on Sep 9 (DJB), one at Aldermaston on GP Sep 13 (JPM), one ringed at Brimpton GP on Sep 14 (JPM) and a late bird at Lower Farm GP on Sep 27 (NC).

## **GOLDCREST** *Regulus regulus*

*Common, locally abundant resident and winter visitor*

The severe weather of recent winters does not seem to have affected this species too badly as it was widely reported across the county from 132 locations with many records coming from gardens, the majority of reports being of 1-5 birds. Survey work by DJB in East Berkshire revealed 15 singing at Swinley Forest on Apr 8 and 43 there on May 13, 44 singing at South Forest, Windsor on Apr 21 and 32 on May 17, 15 singing at High Standinghill Wood, Windsor on Apr 22 and Jun 20, 20 singing at Cranbourne Chase, Windsor Forest on Apr 25 and 30 on Jun 8, 26 singing at South Ascot on Apr 30, and finally 55 singing at Swinley Park on May 16 and 44 on May 31. Away from East Berkshire 30 were at Boxford Common on Dec 2 (JL), at least 12 were at Thatcham Marsh on Nov 16 (IW), 12 were caught and ringed at Greenham Common on Oct 28 (IW,JL) with 10 there on Dec 4 (JLe), 11 were ringed at Padworth Common on Oct 22 (TGB) with 10 at Combe Hill on Jul 28 (IW) which were a mix of adults and juveniles. In addition, 6-9 birds were reported from Eversley GPs, Crookham Common, Aldermaston GP, Hyde Farm, Sunninghill Park, Walbury Hill and Harvey's Meadow, with breeding noted at Brightwalton Common, Wooshill, Inkpen, Cranbourne Chase, Woolhampton GP, West End, Swinley Forest, Windsor Forest, Swinley Park, Arlington Business Park, Theale and Valley Gardens, Windsor.

## **FIRECREST** *Regulus ignicapilla*

*A scarce visitor to Berkshire in all seasons, also a locally common summer visitor to suitable woodlands throughout the county (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** two were reported from Welford on Jan 3 (BGu) and one was at Lavell's Lake between Jan 14 (FJC) and Mar 28 (MO). **Spring/Summer:** one at Whiteknights Park Mar 23 (HWh) was presumably a passage migrant whilst one at Fence Wood, Hermitage on Mar 26 (ABT) could be considered a summer visitor with as many as six singing at this site on June 2 (DJB). Elsewhere, three were singing at Frilsham on Apr 8 (RCr), one was at High Standinghill Wood, Windsor Forest on Apr 23 (CDRH), one was singing at Roundoak Piece on May 14 with possibly a second bird nearby (RRi), singles were at Mortimer on Jun 19 (MSFW) and Woodland St Mary on Jul 2 (JBU), and a breeding record came from Westridge Green where a pair was feeding three juveniles on Jun 12 (PBT), but once again the bulk of records came from East Berkshire where DJB's intensive survey work revealed 69 territories in seven woodland blocks, with confirmation of breeding obtained from six pairs. **Autumn:** passage birds were at Marsh Benham on Aug 19 (JLS), Greenham Common on Aug 30 (IW,JL) and Oct 25 (IW), Hermitage on Sep 14 (JBU), Great Shefford STW on Sep 18 (JLS) and a juvenile ringed at Aldermaston GP on Oct 10 (JPM).

## **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa striata*

*Widespread but thinly distributed summer visitor and passage migrant which has declined in recent years (Red Listed)*

Records were received from 60 sites this year, a slight increase over recent years. The table shows the monthly adult numbers at these sites, with juveniles seen in brackets.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Number of sites	–	21	14	16	12	6	–
Number of birds	–	34 (4)	17 (3)	23 (16)	20 (15)	7	–

**Spring:** there was a very early report of 1 at Thatcham Marsh on May 5 (IW). Throughout May and Jun birds were returning to many traditional sites and were often heard singing, with juveniles seen at over 20 sites by the end of the season. **Breeding:** started early this year with young seen at Sulham Wood on May 30 (ACla) and Swinley Park on May 31 (DJB). It was seen at the regular site for the last three years, in the garden of Victoria Cottage in Grove Lane, Winkfield Row on May 14 (SA) but there were no reports of young later. A site at Temple had a nest with 3 fully feathered chicks - which fledged on Jul 14 and the family party were still present on Aug 11 (CDRH). Grazeley Churchyard had 2 adults and 4 juveniles on Jul 22 (RCr). **Autumn:** an adult and 2 juveniles were at Great Meadow Pond on Jul 31 (DJB) and at Sulhamstead there were at least 4 birds present including an adult feeding a juvenile on the ground on Aug 26 (PH). Late single individual sightings were at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Sep 27 (FJC) and Greenham Common (W) on Sep 28 (IW, JL).

## **BEARDED TIT** *Panurus biarmicus*

*Very scarce winter visitor and very rare summer visitor that has bred (Amber Listed)*

Up to 6 birds were seen at two sites. The Dorney Wetlands birds from 2010 remained with a male and a female showing well at times (MO), usually between the west bridge and the weir. They were last seen going to roost at 5.45 pm on Feb 24 going to roost (CDRH). 3 birds were reported from Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Oct 21 (Birdguides), but there was no further sign by dusk (the first record for the Country Park! ....) however on Nov 9 a male

was seen in the same area (RM) which was trapped and ringed on Nov 15 (Tim Alexander via FJC). It remained in the vicinity (MO) and was last reported on Dec 9 (GSE via FJC).

## **LONG-TAILED TIT** *Aegithalos caudatus*

*Common and widespread resident*

The first breeding record of the year was of a pair nest building on Mar 6 at Padworth (BDC), at least a week earlier than recent years. Young were seen throughout the spring and summer wherever there was suitable habitat. The 2007-2011 atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 331 tetrads, an increase of over 15% on the last survey in 1987-89. High counts were 35 at Main Pit, Theale GP's on Feb 12 (RJB), 39 at Walbury Hill on Oct 23 (SAG) and 32 at Hyde Farm, near Maidenhead on Dec 31 (PNe). (A species commonly seen on garden feeders especially during the winter.)

## **BLUE TIT** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

*Abundant resident*

Another very common and regular visitor to garden feeders. The atlas survey found the species present in every tetrad, with confirmed breeding in 98% of them. Nest building was noted in a transformer box on a power pole in North Ascot on Apr 5 with 11 juveniles fledging on May 21 (RJD). Counts of 30 in 5 family parties were noted at both Great Meadow Pond on Jun 6 and South Forest, Windsor on Jun 11 (both DJB). Ringing produced high counts of 145 pulli at Greenham Common on May 15 (JL) and 104 at Mount Hill, Bagnor on May 17 (JL).

## **GREAT TIT** *Parus major*

*Abundant resident*

Another abundant species with breeding confirmed in 96% of all tetrads. Highest count was of 119 pulli ringed at Snelsmore Common CP on May 11 (IW, JL). 9 family parties involving at least 85 birds were at Cranbourne Chase, Windsor Forest on Jun 8, 60 birds in multiple family groups at High Standinghill Woods, Windsor and similarly at Swinley Forest and South Forest, Windsor in early Jun (all DJB).

## **COAL TIT** *Periparus ater*

*Common and locally abundant resident*

Again this year the highest counts were from the extensive conifer forests in the east of the county. 11 family parties involving at least 90 birds were at Cranbourne Chase on Jun 8 with similar counts at South Forest, Windsor and Swinley Park, where there were 37 on May 5 with 36 singing and 1 carrying food (all DJB). Another species that has shown an increase in confirmed breeding since the last atlas in 1987-89. Other sightings were at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures CP throughout the year, where it is a scarce bird (FJC *et al.*). Small numbers of pulli were ringed at both Snelsmore Common CP and Greenham Common (IW, JL).

## **WILLOW TIT** *Poecile montanus*

*Uncommon and declining resident, now confined to W Berkshire (Red Listed)*

Records from 12 sites. Still holding on in Combe Wood, Walbury Hill and Boxford Common from where most of the reports come this year. The number of tetrads where breeding was confirmed in the 2007-2011 atlas survey shows a fall of 90% since 1967. Records were: 1 at North Standen House, Hungerford on Jan 3 (JBW) and 1-2 seen at Harveys Meadow,

Hungerford in Feb and Mar (JSWo). Several reports from Combe Wood between Jan and Jul of between 1-4 birds, with 4+ adults with juveniles on Jul 11 (IW), 1 in Combe on Jan 12 (NC), 1 at Walbury Hill on Jan 29 with 2 singing there on Apr 9 (ABT), 5 on Sheepless Hill on Feb 25 (JLS), 1 half a mile west of Combe Gibbet on Apr 12 (KEM) and 1 at Wigmoreash Pond on Aug 15 (IW). Further north: 1 captured at Boxford Common on Mar 16 (IW, JL), 1 at The Wilderness, Kintbury on Jun 25 (JLS) and 2 at Boxford on Nov 14 (RJCl). The largest count was of at least 5 on Aug 8 at Combe Wood where a group of 3 were in a hedgerow, 1 seen in the woodlands with a yellow ring on its right leg and others calling (CDRH). Away from this area the only other reports were of 1 calling at Frilsham on Jan 9 (RCr) and another calling at Thatcham Marsh on Jul 3 (IW, JL).

## MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris*

*A locally common resident in West Berkshire and an uncommon resident in Mid and East Berkshire where the national decline has been more pronounced (Red Listed)*

Recorded from 62 sites. 38 in West Berkshire, 18 in Mid Berkshire and 6 in East Berkshire. The table shows the monthly status of adults throughout the county based on records received, with juveniles in brackets.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
West Berkshire birds	22	21	18	13	6 (3)	11 (9)	15 (11)	22	8	16	16	13
Mid Berkshire birds	8	12	6	2	4	6 (1)	2 (2)	2	1	2	2	4
East Berkshire birds	1	-	4	-	1	12 (6)	1	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Total (minimum)</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>

West Berkshire: this part of the county continues to host the majority of this species. Records of 5 or more were received from no less than 9 sites throughout the year, but the main numbers were of 1-2 birds seen. 6 on Sheepless Hill, Combe on Feb 25 (JLS), a family party of 6 at Stanmore on Jun 10 (IW), a further 6 at The Wilderness, Kintbury on Jul 17 (JLS) and yet another 6 on Combe Hill on Jul 28 (IW). Breeding was recorded at 9 sites. The highest count came from Combe Wood on Jul 11 of 7 consisting of both adult and juveniles (IW). Mid Berkshire: breeding was confirmed or suspected at 4 sites this year. At Burnt Hill on May 5 and Tidmarsh on May 27 adults were seen carrying food (RCr), but at Brimpton GP on Jun 6 there was a family party (KEM). At Burnt Hill 4 in a family group were last observed on Jul 5 (RCr). The highest count was 3 pairs in Moor Copse, Tidmarsh on Feb 1 (AVL). East Berkshire: at last breeding was confirmed for this part of the county, at High Standinghill Woods, Windsor when on Jun 1 at least 12 birds were seen including 1 pair with 4 juveniles, 1 pair with 1+ juveniles, 1+ juvenile at another location and another pair (DJB). The other 5 sites, from where records were received, only attracted 1-2 birds.

## NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

*Common and widespread woodland resident*

Records from 127 locations right across the county and 30 confirmed nesting sites were reported. **Breeding:** the 2007-2011 showed the species to be breeding county-wide apart from the bare downland in the northwest and heavily built up urban centres. 10 birds, a family group of 7, plus 3 singles, in Vicarage Wood, Tilehurst on Jun 14 (RCr), 13 on Welford Military Base on Apr 9 (RJCl), 14 pulli ringed at Snelmore Common CP on May 11 (IW,

JL) and 13 in South Forest, Windsor on Jun 3, including 5+ juveniles from 3 family parties (DJB). But the highest count was of 23 on Cranbourne Chase with family parties of 5, 4, 4 and 6 birds plus 4 singles on Jun 8 (DJB).

## TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

*Common resident*

Recorded at 113 different sites with breeding noted at 17 although the 2007-2011 atlas shows breeding confirmed in 149 tetrads. Highest counts continue to come from the southeast of the county. 28+ were found at High Standinghill Woods, Windsor including juveniles from 5 broods and 2 pairs feeding young on Jun 1 (DJB). Also 23 at Cranbourne Chase on Jun 8 included 3 family parties and a further 4 singing (DJB). Ringing records came from the Brimpton/Crookham Common area with 8 birds ringed (JPM). A juvenile was even caught and ringed in the very uncommon location of a Caversham Heights back garden on Jul 26 (TGB).

## GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*

*Scarce winter visitor*

A welcome increase on recent years with 3 individuals reported, all in the second winter period. The first was reported from Nov 1 (CDRH), ranging between Bury Down and Cow Down, West Ilsley, and staying until 15th (MO). Then on Nov 17 a bird was found at Moor Green Lakes, Eversley GP (GJD; RFM), staying until at least the 23rd (MJF). Finally a bird at Slough Sewage Farm on Dec 3 (RN, KPD) stayed until 27th (DAC *et al.*). The possibility that all 3 birds could all be the same individual, gradually moving East, cannot not be ruled out.

## JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

*Common resident*

**First winter:** a count of note was 8 on Jan 11, at Lower Green, Inkpen (RHar), **Spring/Summer:** 11 at Wraybury GPs on Apr 9 (RJD), also on the 9th, 7 at Welford Military Base (RJCl), 8 at Berry's Lane GP, Burghfield GPs on Jul 19 (RCr). Autumn/**Second winter:** 8 at Boxford on Nov 14 (RJCl). As with most years more are reported in the autumn as they leave woodland habitats to forage for acorns, so become more obvious, that said, the many reports of 1-4 across the county do not give this impression and the species remains mostly under reported at this time and during the breeding season with the 2007-2011 atlas survey finding breeding confirmed in 141 tetrads.

## MAGPIE *Pica pica*

*Abundant breeding resident*

Fewer high counts this year, the best counts involved 18 on Jan 14 at Dorney Wetlands (FTr), 23 there on Oct 22 (KPD), 27 at Loddon Drive, Charvil on Jan 27 (RDr), 10 at Datchet on Jan 30 (SLF), 22 at Pinkneys Green Feb 16 (PNe), 13 at Newell Green on Feb 27 (MSFW), 11 at Dinton Pastures on Mar 1 (RMB), 44 at Greenham on Oct 14 (JBU and IW), 11 at Combe Gibbet on Nov 17 (JBU and IW), 25 at Fobney Meadows on Dec 13 (JLe), 15 at Long Lane, Cookham on Dec 27 (BDC), 12 on Maidenhead Tip on Nov 7 (DF), 52 roosting at Slough Sewage Farm on Dec 3 (BDC) and 21 at Wokingham Dec 2 (AHarr). Familiarity with this ubiquitous bird leads to few breeding records being submitted (5 only) but the 2007-2011 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 282 tetrads, a slight decrease since 1987-89.

## **JACKDAW** *Corvus monedula*

*Abundant breeding resident*

Counts of note: 300 at Welford on Jan 16 (RJCI), 250 at Datchet on Jan 29 (SLF), 450 went to roost at Padworth Lane on Jan 24 (RCr), 200 in Combe Wood on Feb 2 (JLS), 194 in Switchback Rd, Maidenhead on Mar 12 (BDC), 1000 at Great Meadow Pond on Mar 13 (DJB), 500 at Winkfield on May 5 (RJD), 700 roosting in Thrift Woods, on Jul 26 (DJB), 300 at Cheapside, Ascot on Aug 27 (RJD), 150 resident in North Ascot from July through to December (RJD) and 500-750 at Lea Farm G.P. landfill, which is an average winter roost (FJC). Activity associated with nesting/breeding was reported from only 11 locations, however the 2007-2011 Atlas survey found confirmed breeding in 283 tetrads (an increase). Single birds resembling the “Nordic” type were recorded in Windsor Great Park on May 11 and Dec 21 (CDRHH).

## **ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus*

*Abundant breeding resident especially in rural Berkshire*

Highest counts: 160 at Welford on Jan 3 and 120 there on Apr 24 (RJCI) where 100-200 were present between January and April (RJCI), 400 on Bury Down on Jan 11 (RMB), 268 at Lambourn Woodlands on Jan 23, with 150 there on Apr 25 (JWB), 100 at Thatcham on Feb 19 (IJK), 140 at Boxford on Mar 19 (RJCI), 750 at Nuptown on May 24 (MJF and BDC), 377 at Aldworth on Sep 9 (DJB) and 220 at Hermitage on Dec 6 and 20 (JBU). Breeding was confirmed in 211 tetrads by the 2007-2011 Atlas survey and a rough count of rookeries between 2005-2007 produced totals of 56 in West Berkshire, 40 in Mid-Berkshire and 27 in East Berkshire (The Birds of Berkshire, 2013).

## **CARRION CROW** *Corvus corone*

*Abundant breeding resident*

Again few records of note this year, high counts involved 240 at Colnbrook on Apr 15 (CDRH), 141 in Switchback Road, Maidenhead on Mar 12, (BDC) and 100+ at Lea Farm G.P. on landfill on May 15 (RNM), all other records were of counts below 100 and, despite a widespread distribution, very few breeding records were reported although the 2007-2011 atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in 302 tetrads.

## **RAVEN** *Corvus corax*

*Scarce but increasing visitor, now breeds*

Records were received from over 70 locations, the majority in West Berkshire, but 10+ in mid Berkshire and 14 in the East. The main stronghold remains around Combe in an area from Combe Wood east to Combe and Walbury Hills. Jan/Feb: as with 2010, most records involved 1-2 birds usually seen in flight but at Remenham on Jan 4 there were 3 (MSFW) with 4 there on the 9th (NC), a record of note. The highest counts were 12 at Walbury Hill on Jan 2 (MFW) and 11 at Combe on Feb 19 (RHar). Mar/Aug: proving breeding is never easy and there are certainly 3-4 sites around the winter stronghold, but breeding was confirmed with juveniles seen at 2 East Berkshire sites on May 18 and 29 (DJB). Breeding may be suspected, or likely, at several more sites, with 3-4 birds seen during April at Inkpen (RHar), singles consistently seen at Snelmore (JL) and increasing reports from Inkpen, Fawley, Boxford, Greenham and Woolhampton. With others at Sunninghill Park, Ascot Heath and Windsor Great Park, it seems we can expect many more pairs in suitable habitat across the county, as well as greater winter numbers. Sep/Dec: similar records to 2010, near double figures in the SW, but away from there, records of 1 or 2 birds came in from over 16

locations, but again few in mid Berkshire. Autumn high counts away from the far SW were; 4 at West Ilsley on Sep 9 (DJB), 3 at Woolhampton on Oct 1 (KEM), 3 over Greenham Common on Oct 14 (NC) and a winter roost at Lambourn, with 8 on Oct 28 (CDRH), which increased to 25 on Nov 1 (CDRH).

## **STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris*

*Common resident and winter visitor, formally abundant (Red Listed)*

High counts this year involved 1000 at Whitley, Reading on Jan 20 (DAMD), 1000 at Cold Harbour on Oct 7 (DJB), 700 at Jubilee River on Oct 9 (BDC), 1000 on Compton Downs on Nov 5 (ABT) and 2500 at Bury Down on Nov 13 (KEM). Flocks of 100-400 were noted at more than 10 other locations across the county. Breeding was reported from many (usually urban) localities, with the breeding population being less dense in the northwest of the county.

## **HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

*Common but declining resident (Red Listed)*

Despite increased reporting (over 50 observers submitting records from over 60 locations) few significantly large flocks were noted and anecdotal comments point to a continuing decline in what was once the commonest garden bird. There was a significant lack of records from the east and southeast of the county which may just be a reflection on the suitability of habitat. 15 records from 11 separate locations were received of flocks numbering greater than 20 birds. Of note: 35 near Newbury on May 8 (SAG), 30 in a Woodlands Park garden on May 20 (DJB), 80+ at Heywood Farm Woodlands Park on Jul 11 (DJB), 100+ at the same location on Jul 21 (DJB) and 39 at Wellbottom Down on Jul 22 (RGI). **Breeding:** at least 10 nests were found in cottages around Shottsbrooke Farm on March 25 (DJB) and an adult pair was seen feeding a juvenile in a Wokingham garden on Jun 2 (AHarr). In addition juvenile birds were reported to be present in several of the summer and autumn flocks. The 2007-2011 atlas survey showed breeding to be confirmed in 306 tetrads.

## **TREE SPARROW** *Passer montanus*

*Formally a not uncommon resident, now a rare visitor (Red Listed)*

Reported from just 3 locations this year which is a slight improvement on 2010's solitary record. The flock at Remenham, first seen in December 2010, remained into the new year and were reported in varying numbers up until Jan 30 (MO) peaking at 17 on Jan 12 (CDRH) and 8 on the Syngenta site at Jealotts Hill on Feb 1 (RCMu) with 4 at the same location on Feb 17 (RPa).

## **CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs*

*Abundant resident and winter visitor*

Present county-wide in all suitable habitats although there were fewer records from the Downs to the north. **First winter:** highest counts - 150+ at Remenham on Jan 3 (DJB), 50 at the same location on Jan 4 (BDC), 150 at Bucklebury on Jan 14 (BL), 100 at Easton Hill on Jan 24 (JL), 100 at West Woodhay House on Jan 25 (KEM), 100 at Mortimor Station on Jan 28 (DJB) and 64 at Frilsham on Feb 20 (RCr). **Breeding:** evidence of breeding was reported from 5 locations with singing birds noted at a further 5. Although the 2007-2011 atlas survey showed confirmed breeding in 82% of the county's tetrads. **Autumn passage:** a westerly movement was evident in late October - 7 over Ascot Heath on Oct 19 (RJD), 11 over Lavell's Lake on the same date (FJC), 19 over Lavell's Lake on Oct 20 (FJC), 116 over Ascot Heath on Oct 21

(RJD) and 17 over Fifield on Oct 22 (RJD). **Second winter:** highest counts – 50 at Quarry Wood Cookham on Oct 19 (BDC), 60 at Remenham on Dec 19 (PEH), 150 at Long Lane Cookham on Dec 27 (BDC) and 50 at Aldermaston on Dec 29 (KEM).

## **BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla*

*Winter visitor and passage migrant in varying numbers (Schedule One)*

There were fewer records than in recent years with 273 reports from nearly 70 locations of which 24 were gardens. The majority of the reports fell within the first winter and spring periods, with flocks of 20+ noted at 12 sites and with a noticeable influx occurring during late March and early April. There were no significant records during the autumn/second winter period, the highest count being 3! **First winter:** 40 at Woolley Down on Jan 3 (GDS), 30 at West Woodhay House on Jan 25 (KEM), a flock in a Brightwalton Common garden peaked at 56 on Jan 29 (GDS) and numbers in a Twyford garden increased to 25 on Mar 17 (SPA). **Spring:** 20 at Roundoak Piece on Mar 26 (NC), 27 at Standen Manor Hungerford on Mar 27 (JBW), a flock present in Nursery Lane North Ascot between April 4 and April 18 peaked at 30 (RJD), 50 at Eversley GP (with perhaps another 20 at Moor Green) on April 5 (BMA, RFM), 50 on MOD heathland on April 7 (PJC), numbers in Swinley Forest (first reported on Mar 25) increased to 124 on April 8 (DJB et. al), there were 100+ in Swinley Park on April 9 (DJB), 100 at Wishmoor Bottom on April 13 with 20 there on April 15 (MHu) and 30 at Moor Green Lake on April 18 (MGLR).

## **GREENFINCH** *Chloris chloris*

*Common and widespread resident and winter visitor*

A species that is probably under-reported but appears to be still present in moderately increased numbers throughout the county in a variety of habitats: the exception being the downland to the northwest from where few reports were received. There were only 7 records of flocks numbering greater than 20 birds. Significant counts: 45 at Lower Farm GP on Jan 15 (SAG), 75 at the same location on Jan 29 (SAG), 27 at Welford on Jan 29 (MFW), 30 on Ascot Heath on Oct 25 (RJD) and 70+ there on Nov 2 (RJD). **Autumn passage:** a light passage was noted over Ascot Heath with 6 west on Oct 19 and 23 south on Oct 21 (RJD). **Breeding:** two pairs present all year at Hell Corner Inkpen were considered to have bred (LS), there were 2 juveniles in a Twyford garden on May 17 (SPA), 2 juveniles at Woose Hill on May 19 (PBT), 4 juveniles in a Woodlands Park garden on May 20 (DJB) and a pair with juveniles at Skinners Green on Jul 11 (TPo). In addition singing males were observed from a number of locations. The 2007-2011 atlas survey shows confirmed breeding in 243 tetrads. Fatality: a bird found dead under garden feeders in Strand Lane Cookham on Feb 25 appeared to be a victim of Trichomonosis (JRol).

## **GOLDFINCH** *Carduelis carduelis*

*Common and widespread resident*

Widespread throughout the county in every month of the year in open country, suburban areas and even the largest towns. Large flocks were more prevalent during the second winter than the first, their numbers swelled by juvenile birds. **First winter/Spring:** there were reports of only 4 flocks numbering 50 birds or more - 50 at Bury Down on Jan 1 (RCW), 70 in Green Park Reading on Jan 10 (BDC), 150 at Woolhampton on Feb 2 (RGi) and 60 at Waltham St. Lawrence on Mar 10 (SKP). **May/June/July:** reported from 33 widely spread locations, mainly in single figures, with the first significant flock of the autumn being 100+ at Fobney Meadows on Jul 23 (PG). **Breeding:** Few breeding records were received but the 2007-2011 atlas survey has confirmed breeding in a greatly increased number of tetrads

(over 100% up from the last survey). “2 to 3 pairs” bred at Hell Corner Inkpen (LS), in addition juvenile birds were reported present in summer and autumn flocks from 12 locations including 6 gardens. **Autumn/Second winter:** in contrast to the first winter there were 17 reports of flocks numbering greater than 50 birds: the largest flocks – 91 at Great Meadow Windsor Great Park on Aug 7 (DJB), 92 (mainly juveniles) at Englefield on Sep 11 (RCr), 80 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 10 (CDRH) and 150 at Harvey’s Meadow Hungerford on Nov 18 (JSWo).

## **SISKIN** *Spinus spinus*

*Common passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce in summer*

Recorded in every month of the year (although there was only 1 report for August) in all suitable habitats, including many gardens, with the larger winter flocks favouring forest areas and waterside Alders. Counts were higher during the first winter than the second. **First winter:** flocks numbering greater than 50 birds were present in 21 locations; the largest flocks – 100 at Sandford Lake Dinton Pastures on Jan 1 (FJC), a flock at Enbourne increased to 100 on Jan 4 (PNe), 100 in Moor Copse on Jan 15 (JLe), 130 near Newbury on Jan 16 (SAG), 100 in Roundoak Piece on Jan 28 (NC), 150-200 at Lavell’s Lake on Feb 10 (FJC), 220 along the river Blackwater at Eversley GPs on Feb 18 (JMC), 110 at Wraysbury GPs on Feb 19 (CDRH) and 100 at Twyford GPs on March 2 (DJB). **April/May/June/July:** flocks dispersed during the spring, although 20 lingered at Caesar’s Camp into April (MSk), with mainly single figure counts reported from 18 locations including gardens and parks. No breeding records were received but juvenile birds were noted from May onwards. **Autumn/Second winter:** flocks numbering greater than 50 birds were present in 14 locations: the first flock of the autumn was 170 at Wishmoor Bottom on Oct 24 (PEH); thereafter the highest counts were - 150 at Harvey’s Meadow Hungerford on Nov 18 (JSWo), 100 at Barton Court Kintbury on Dec 8 (JD), 160 at Hamstead Park on Dec 16 (SAG), 100 at Colebrook Eversley GPs on Dec 17 (TGB) and 50-100 in Paices Wood on Dec 19 (TGB). **Autumn passage:** the only evidence of any movement was 2 southwest over Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 11 and 7 south over the same location on Sep 16 (CDRH), 7 west over Ascot Heath on Oct 19 and 7 southwest over there on Oct 21 (RJD).

## **LINNET** *Carduelis cannabina*

*Locally common though declining resident, more common on passage and in winter (Red Listed)*

Linnets were reported from 100 locations, 30% fewer than the previous year, but hopefully this is just a consequence of under-reporting. There were noticeably few records from the southeast of the county confirming the findings of the atlas surveys. As is to be expected most of the largest winter flocks were on open farmland and downland and it is much less a bird of parks and gardens than other finches. **First winter:** flocks numbering greater than 50 birds were reported from 10 locations; the highest counts – 220 at West Woodhay on Jan 2 (SAG), 200 at Remenham on Jan 3 (DJB), 80 at Farnborough on Jan 6 (GDS), 200 at Englefield on Jan 18 (RCr), 100 on Coppington Down on Jan 23 (J Burnett), 110 at Englefield on Feb 3 (RCr), 150 on Lowbury Hill on Feb 12 (DJB), 100 at Cannon Court Farm Maidenhead on Feb 17 (BDC) and 150 at Aldermaston on Apr 5 (KEM). **May/June/July:** present throughout the summer in suitable breeding habitat and reported in small numbers from 17 locations in May, 14 in June and 12 in July. The first large flock of the autumn was 100 at Knowl Hill on July 30 (DJB). **Breeding:** few reports of breeding activity were received but the 2007-2011 atlas survey shows breeding confirmed in 118 tetrads, with a northwest bias. There was a pair with nesting material at Crookham Common on Apr 12 (JPM) and a female seen carrying nesting material at Woodlands Park Fields on July 22

(DJB). In addition singing birds were noted at a further 5 sites and juveniles reported from 4 locations. **Autumn/Second winter:** flocks numbering greater than 50 birds were reported from 14 locations; the highest counts – 100 at Queen Mother reservoir on Aug 13 (CDRH), 150 at Compton on Aug 27 (DJB), 200 at Bury Down on Aug 29 (MFW), 275 at Lower Green Inkpen on Oct 15 (RHar), 200 near Junction 14 of the M4 on Dec1 (DJS), 100 on Woolley Down on Dec18 (GDS), 140 at Freeman's Marsh on Dec 22 (PEH) and 100 at Aldermaston on Dec 29 (KEM).

### **LESSER REDPOLL** *Acanthis cabaret*

*Locally common passage migrant and winter visitor, formally a sporadic breeder (Red Listed)*

Although reported from fewer locations than 2010 (78 as opposed to 97) the birds appeared to be present in greater numbers. There were well –watched established flocks during both winters at Eversley GPs, Greenham Common, Inkpen, Padworth Common, Snelsmore Common and in Swinley Forest. In addition, reports of smaller groups and single birds were reported from a variety of locations, including gardens, but not unexpectedly the bird was absent from the bare downland to the north and south. There was circumstantial evidence pointing to breeding at one site. **First winter/Spring:** flocks numbering greater than 50 birds were reported from 11 locations; the highest counts – the flock at Greenham Common (attracted by the Niger seed feeders) between Jan 2 and Apr 7 (MO) peaked at 80 on Jan 2 (JL, IW), the flock at Eversley GP between Jan 15 and Apr 17 (MO) peaked at 60 on Jan 15 (BMA), 100 at Caesar's Camp on Jan 18 (PJC), 50 at Horseshoe Lake Eversley GPs on Jan 21 (BMA), the flock at Padworth Common between Jan 2 and Apr 10 (MO) peaked at 100 on Jan 22 (TGB), 50 at Hermitage on Feb 2 (JBU), 120 at Wishmoor Bottom on Feb 14 (CDRH), 100+ in Swinley Forest on Mar 25 (DJS), 80 in South Forest Windsor Forest on Mar 26 (DJB), 50 at Wishmoor Bottom on Apr 7 (MHu), 50 on the same date reported from MOD heathland (PJC), 460 in Swinley Forest on Apr 8 (DJB), 80 at Swinley Park on Apr 9 (DJB) and 100 at Wishmoor Bottom on Apr 13 (MHu). Summer: there were 3 May records, 1 for June but none for July. At Lower Farm GP there were 2 on May 2 (NC), 4 there on May 3 (MJD), 3 there on May 4 (NC) and 2 there on June 5 (NC). **Breeding:** a pair was observed copulating at Lower Farm GP on Apr 15 (NC) and a juvenile seen at the same location on Aug 3 (the first record of the autumn) (Sri). Singing birds were reported from 4 other locations during March and April. **Autumn passage:** 3 west over Lavell's Lake on Oct 7 (FJC), 3 west over the same location on Oct 19 (FJC), 9 west over Ascot Heath on Oct 19 (RJD), 17 southwest over Ascot Heath on Oct 21 (RJD) and 4 west over Fifield on Oct 22 (RJD). **Second winter:** flocks numbering greater than 50 birds were reported from 4 locations – the Greenham Common flock present between Sep 29 and Dec 18 (JL, JPM, IW) peaked at 28 on Oct 23 (JPM), the flock at Eversley GP between Sep 30 and Nov 24 (MO) peaked at 80 on Nov 1 (RFM), 54 at Great Meadow Windsor Great Park on Nov 13 (DJB), 68 in a Bracknell garden on Dec 18 (JCoo) and the flock on Padworth Common between Oct 22 and Dec 31 peaked at 50 on Dec 31 (TGB).

### **MEALY REDPOLL** *Acanthis flammea*

*Rare winter visitor*

A record year! At least 23 birds were reported from 6 locations, the most in one year since the species was first recorded (then as a subspecies) in 1936. Although increased observer awareness has contributed to this increase there does seem to have been a genuine influx during the first winter period. **First winter:** a male at Eversley GPs on Jan 2 (BMA), at least 9 were ringed at the Greenham Common feeders between Jan 2 and Mar 29 (JL, IW), 3 were trapped and ringed on Padworth Common between Jan 2 and Feb 27 (TGB), a male

at Wishmoor Cross on Feb 14 (CDRH), 1 at Lavell's Lake on Mar 8 (TOA), 1 at Wishmoor Cross on Mar 13 (RCW) and 1 at Swinley Brick Pits on Mar 23 (CDRH). **Second winter:** 4 at Greenham Common on Oct 30, the earliest Berkshire record, (JPM) and 3 trapped and ringed on Padworth Common on Dec 31 (TGB).

### **COMMON CROSSBILL** *Loxia curvirostra*

*Regular (irruptive) visitor in variable numbers (depending on cone crop), occasionally breeds (Schedule One)*

Reported from 27 locations; the established flocks favouring the typical Crossbill habitats offered by Crowthorne Woods, Swinley Forest and Roundoak Piece. Many more birds were present during the second winter period suggesting a late autumn influx. **First winter/Spring:** only single figure groups reported which is perhaps a reflection of the pre-breeding flock dispersal although very few birds seemed to have been in the county during this period. 4 over Hermitage on Feb 24 (RCr), 1 in Ufton woods Beenham on Mar 6 (MFW), reported in small numbers in Roundoak Piece on various dates between Jan 28 and May 15 peaking at 7 on Mar 9 (MO), 1 in Ufton Nernet woods on Mar 19 (ABT), up to 6 in Swinley Forest between Mar 23 and May 11 (CDRH, HRN, PBT), 1 in Swinley Park on May 16 and 3 there on May 31 (DJB). **Breeding:** no breeding reports were received. June/July/August/September: a single June record of 6 at Wishmoor Bottom on Jun 6 (DJB), 5 at South Forest Windsor Forest on Jul 9 (DJB), 6 over North Ascot on Jul 23 (RJD), 2 at Greenham Common on Aug 30 (RJPy), 5 at Heath Lake Crowthorne on 25 Sep and 5 at Caesars Camp on Sep 29 (BAJC). **Autumn/Second winter:** reported from 23 locations. Flocks numbering greater than 20 or more birds were noted at 5 sites – 25 in Crowthorne Woods on Oct 2 (DJS) and 20 there on Oct 7 (BO), 30 in Swinley Forest on Oct 11 (DLo), 20 at Wishmoor Bottom on Oct 21 (DJB) and 20 there on Oct 24 (PEH), 30 in Swinley Forest on Oct 24 (DLo), 51 at Wishmoor Bottom on Nov 7 (MHu), 30 in Swinley Forest on Nov 12 (ABe), 32 at Caesars Camp on Nov 30 (WAN), 23 in Swinley Forest on Dec 27 (SAG) and 28 at Padworth on Dec28 (GJSu). **Autumn passage:** evidence of light Oct and Nov passage – 1 north over Moose Hill on Oct 15 (PBT), 6 south over Ascot Heath on Oct 19 (RJD), 4 south over Sunninghill on Oct 22 (RJD), 1 south over Finchampstead Ridges on Oct 29 (FJC) and 5 south over Moose Hill on Nov 2 (PBT).

### **BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

*Uncommon resident, long term decline appears to have stabilised (Amber Listed)*

Present in small numbers and in suitable habitats at just over 100 locations, a decrease of 30% on the previous year. Most records refer to sites in central and western Berkshire with few reports from the east and southeast of the county. Notable records – 16 on seed in an Upper Bucklebury garden on Jan 3 (NC) which is the highest count since 2000, a flock at Boxford Common which peaked at 8 on Jul 13 (IW, JL), a flock at West Woodhay Down which peaked at 10 on Aug 2 (CDRH) and 7+ at Greenham Common on Nov 28 (IW). **Breeding:** a pair was seen carrying food to a nest near Catmore on May 21 (GDS) and a singing male was reported at Hell Corner Inkpen on Apr 22 (LS). In addition juvenile birds were reported from no fewer than 17 locations. The 2007-2011 atlas survey shows confirmed breeding in 90 tetrads, with a south and southwesterly bias.

## **HAWFINCH** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

*Scarce visitor, formally an uncommon resident (Red Listed)*

At least 6 birds were reported from 5 locations, an improvement on the previous year's 2 records. No winter sightings were reported from the area near the Hampshire boundary at Combe which has been productive in recent years, and it probable that the birds in the Welford area would have gone unnoticed were not observers drawn to the site by the Dipper! There were none recorded during the second winter. 2 at Welford on Jan 1 (SRI), 1 at the same location on Jan 25 (NC), 1 at Welford Park on Jan 29 (ABT) and 1 in Hornbeams in Windsor Great Park (a former stronghold) on Feb 9 (CDRH).

## **SNOW BUNTING** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

*Rare winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

2 female or 1st winter birds were found at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 6, 1 of which flew off high to the northeast (CDRH). The remaining bird was well-watched up until Dec 24 at what has become a regular site (MO). This is the 7th record since 2000.

## **YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

*Locally common but declining resident and winter visitor (Red Listed)*

290 records received from 80 locations, a considerable reduction from the previous year. There was a total absence of records from the southeast of the county and just one from the northeast (a single bird at Queen Mother Reservoir). First winter/**Spring**: flocks numbering 20 or more birds were reported from 9 locations, all in central or western Berkshire apart from that reported from Arborfield; 20 at Chaddleworth on Jan 3 (JL), 40 at Arborfield on Jan 14 (DJS), 67 on Bury Down on Jan 25 (RJB), 33 at Boxford on Jan 29 (ABT), 60 on Bury Down on Feb 12 (MFW), 40 at Stitchens Green on Feb 14 (JLe), 20 at Walbury Hill on Feb 16 (JD), 20 at Eastbury on Feb 28 and again on Mar 10 (JD), 60 on Farnborough Down on Mar 20 (GDS), 24 at Leckhampstead on Mar 2 with 22 still there on May 8 (RJCl).

**Breeding**: evidence of breeding came from 8 locations, the furthest east being Knowl Hill (DJB). In addition singing birds were reported from at least 24 sites; unsurprising given the familiarity of the song! The 2007-2011 atlas showed confirmed breeding in a much reduced 105 tetrads, with a northwesterly bias. **Autumn/Second winter**: the first notable flock of the autumn was 16 on Combe Hill on Aug 24 (DJB), thereafter there were flocks numbering greater than 20 birds at 6 locations; 20 at Walbury Hill on Oct 3 TPo, 20 at Combe on Oct 5 (JD), 40 on Cow Down on Nov 5 (RM), 35 on Bury Down on Nov 13 (KEM), 20 at Lower Green Inkpen on Nov 14 (RHar) and 22 at Long Lane Cookham on Dec 27 (BDC).

## **REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

*Locally common resident and winter visitor, population showing signs of stabilising after long term decline (Amber Listed)*

Over 500 records were received from 95 locations; approximately the same level of reporting as the previous year although there were fewer winter records from domestic gardens. As is to be expected the majority of the reports come from typical habitats around the mature gravel pits, lakes and waterways of the county but birds were also observed summering and breeding in arable crops. **First winter**: notable numbers – 30 + at Dorney Wetlands on Jan 1 (DJB), a flock at Remenham peaked at 30 also on Jan 1 (CDRH) and there were 40 at Manor Farm Crookham on Mar 4 (JL). Late **Spring/Summer**: Reported from over 50 locations in suitable habitat with singing males noted at 24 of these sites. **Breeding**: there was evidence of breeding at Great Meadow Windsor Great Park, Summerleaze GP,

Thatcham Marsh, Thames Valley Park, Aldermaston GP, Dorney Wetlands, the Englefield estate, Woodspeen and Donnington Grove. **Autumn passage**: 3 west over Ascot Heath on Oct 19 (RJD), 3 southwest over the same location on Oct 21 (RJD) and 1 south over Wishmoor Bottom on Oct 24 (PEH), **Second winter**: a flock commuting between game cover and a maize field on the Englefield estate between Jun 30 and Oct 23 peaked at 53 on Aug 20 (RCr) and 100+ were flushed by beaters at Remenham on Nov 5 (DJB).

## **CORN BUNTING** *Emberiza calandra*

*Locally common resident on the downs of NW Berkshire, seriously declining elsewhere in the county (Red Listed)*

Very few breeding records submitted and now no evidence of breeding away from what has become the species Berkshire heartland in the downland to the north and northwest of the M4 corridor. The peak counts of the Bury Down/Cow Down flock during both winters must represent almost the entire Berkshire Ridgeway population. Northwest Berkshire: recorded year round in the downland north of the M4 between Aldworth in the east and the Lambourn Downs to the west. **First winter**: notable flocks – 50 at Chaddleworth on Jan 3 (JL), 25+ on Aldworth Downs on Jan 9 (NC), the Bury Down/Cow Down flock (present between Jan 1 and Apr 16) peaked at 300 on Feb 20 (MRWS) and there were 61 at Starveall Aldworth on Mar 29 (MFW). A colour-ringed bird was noted in the Bury Down flock on Feb 12 (MFW). **Breeding**: an adult seen feeding a fledgling near West Ilsley on Jul 9 (GDS) and an adult also feeding a fledgling north of East Ilsley on Jul 10 (GDS). In addition singing birds were reported from another 11 locations. **Second winter**: notable flocks – 46 on Compton Downs on Aug 9 (ABT), the Bury Down/Cow Down flock (which began gathering on Jun 26) peaked at a massive 400 on Sep 22 (RM), 90 on Lambourn Downs on Oct 28 (CDRH) and 42 on Lowbury Hill on Dec 27 (DJB). South and East Berkshire: the only reports of birds away from the main centre of population were:- a singing male at Knowl Hill between Mar 21 and Jun 17 (DJB, MFW, MSFW), 1-2 singing males at White Waltham airport between Mar 25 and Apr 28 (DJB, PBT), 4 at Standen Manor Hungerford on Mar 27 (JBW), 1 at Pangbourne on Apr 11 (KCow), 2 singing at Shottesbrooke on Apr 18 (RRi), a singing male at Jealotts Hill on Apr 30 (KCr), 1 singing at Castle Royle GC on Jun 9 (MSFW), 2 in flight at Pingewood GPs on Aug 25 (PEH), 4 roosting in clover at Cockpole Green on Oct 25 (CDRH) and 1 at Winterbourne on Nov 3 (DJS). **Breeding**: no evidenced of breeding was submitted but singing birds were noted at 5 locations including sites where birds have bred in previous years.



## ESCAPES and FERAL SPECIES

### **Chinese (Swan) Goose** *Anser cygnoides*

At Horton GP 1 was reported on Mar 5 (MFW) and at Hungerford a pair was on Freeman's Marsh from May 6 to Aug 8 (RGS)

### **Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

In West Berkshire 1 was again on the lake at West Woodhay House on Jan 19 (LS) and Feb 11 (RF), with possibly the same bird at Barton Court in Kintbury on Mar 18 (JD). In mid-Berkshire 1 was at Hosehill Lake, Theale on Jan 4 (AVL). In East Berkshire 1 was at Horton GP on Mar 11, then nearby at Wraybury GP on Mar 19 and at QMR on April 29 (all CDRH). The long-stayer in the Maidenhead area was at White Place, Cookham during February (BAJC, JLP, BDC), and then again on Dec 22 (JLP), but mostly at Summerlease GP: from Mar 2 to May 30 and again July 28 to Aug 30 (CDRH *et al.*). Presumably the same bird was present at Dorney Wetlands on Aug 28 (BDC). Note that this species has never been confirmed as breeding in a wild state in Berkshire.

### **Ross's Goose** *Chen rossii*

One was at White Place Farm, Cookham on Feb 22 (BDC)

### **Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

At Thatcham 1 was present from Jan 16 (WeBBS) to April 17 (SAG). In Reading there were 1-2 on the Kennet and Avon Canal in Feb and March (SAG), with 2 pairs at the Kennet mouth on Mar 9 (RDr) and 3 pairs there on Sep 26 (JCLa). Nearby a pair was seen with 4 cygnets on the R.Thames by View Island on June 30 and still present there Dec 7 (RDr). At Theale 1 was on the main pit from April 22 (KEM, ABT) to Aug 22 (MFW), then nearby on Moatlands GP from Aug 27 to the end of the year (MFW)

### **Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

At Welford at least 4 birds (incl imms) on Jan 5 (BDC), with 3 juvs noted there on May 8 (MFW)

### **Ringed Teal** *Callonetta leucophrys*

In Windsor Great Park a female was on Great Meadow Pond on Feb 12 (CDRH).

### **Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa*

*Localised introduced resident*

In Reading the two bachelor drakes were again at Maiden Erleigh Lake from Jan 16 (PG) to April 30 (LBM). One of these drakes was then nearby in Whitenights Park from Jan 28, with both drakes there May 7 (PG), and 1-2 drakes again there during Oct-Dec (PG *et al.*). No females have been reported in the *Berkshire Bird Reports* since 2006 but "a brood" was reported from Berkshire in 2011 according to 'Non-native breeding birds in the UK, 2009-2011' (*Brit.Birds*: 107; 133).

### **Helmeted Guineafowl** *Numida meleagris*

At Great Shefford 10 domesticated birds on Sep 1 (JLS)

### **Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus*

In Windsor Great Park 1 was near the Copper Horse on April 7 (RMH) and a male was calling from woodland on the SE side of Greenham on June 22 (PEH)

### **Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus*

A ringed escapee from Marwell Zoo was at Lower Farm GP on April 28 -29 (ABT, KEM *et al.*) and then on floods at Streatley on Mar 30 (SL)

### **Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One was mobbed by other raptors as it circled over White Place Farm, Cookham on Mar 12 (BDC); one was again seen there on Sep 27 (JLP)

### **Crested Caracara** *Caracara cheriway*

At Donnington one was present on April 4-5, at least (IW)

## HYBRIDS

### **Canada Goose × Greylag hybrid**

In Windsor Great Park 1 was present with Greylag Geese on Jan 2 - 4 (CDRH), then again Aug 7 (DJB). Another was at Horton GP on April 5 and nearby at Wraybury Gravel Pits on May 1, with 2 at Horton GP on Aug 20 (all CDRH). At Pingewood 1 was at Burnthouse Lane on Aug 14 (MFW) and, finally, 1 was at Winkfield on Dec 25 (CDRH)

### **Emperor Goose × Snow Goose**

One was at Moor Green Lakes, Eversley GP on April 22 (MFW).

### **Barnacle × Greylag Goose**

One was with Greylags at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on Jan 2 -4 (CDRH).

### **Bar-headed Goose × Greylag Goose hybrid**

In Windsor Great Park the long-staying 'white-fronted' hybrid was still present on Jan 2 -4 (CDRH) and then regularly during the remainder of the year (DJB). The same bird was also at White Place, White Waltham on Sept 19 (DJB), while others of this type were at Horton GP on Mar 5 (MFW) and at Winkfield on Dec 29 (DJB).

### **Ruddy Shelduck hybrid**

At QMR a juvenile hybrid (thought to be crossed with either Australian or Paradise Shelduck) flew off SE on July 23 (CDRH); it was then photographed later the same day at Staines Reservoir (Rob Innes per CDRH)

## **Aythya hybrids**

*As in previous years, these are listed by the species they most resemble rather than by the presumed parentage (since this is often speculative; but the probable parents are included in parenthesis).*

### **Scaup-type hybrid (Scaup × Tufted Duck)**

The returning drake at Woolhampton GP was seen up to Mar 8th (CDRH, NC) and then again on Dec 17th-21st (NC). A drake was subsequently seen at Burghfield GPs on Searles Farm GP on Dec 24th -29th (RGi), with an earlier report (no sex given) at Theale Main pit on Sep 21st and Nov 3rd-9th (KEM).

### **Lesser Scaup-type (Tufted Duck × Pochard)**

At Horton GP there was a drake on Jan 13th-21st, and again Feb 2nd, with possibly the same drake at Wraysbury GP on Feb 13th (all CDRH). At Bray GP the 'subtler' drake (of 2 previous regulars) was seen again from Jan 15th to Feb 14th (CDRH, DJB). A pair were reported on the R.Loddon at DPCP on Feb 9th (DLoy) and a drake was at Searles Farm, Burghfield GP on Feb 12th (NJB), Feb 16th (RDr) and Mar 5th (MFW) and possibly the same drake was at Theale Main pit on May 6th and Hosehill Lake on May 7th (KEM). At Lower Farm GP a drake was reported from April 10th (MFW) to 13th (NC) and again on Dec 31st (JL, IW, RGS). At Wraysbury GP a drake on Heron Lakes Nov 6th-8th (CDRH), was also seen on the village pit Nov 19th (CDRH). A drake at Dorney Wetlands on Dec 3rd (CDRH) was probably the same returning bird that was seen subsequently at Bray GP on Dec 29th (CDRH). Unspecified drakes, probably involving this type, were reported at Loddon NR on Jan 3rd (MFW), Hosehill Lake on Jan 15th, and Woolhampton GP from Jan to March (all KEM).

### **Tufted Duck type (Pochard × Tufted Duck)**

At Wraysbury GP there was a drake (presumed to be the returning bird) on the BA pit Mar 11th (CDRH). At Theale a drake was reported on Moatlands GP Dec 8th (MFW).

### **Redhead type (Pochard × Ferruginous Duck)**

At Wraysbury GP a drake was at the Heron Lakes complex from Feb 19th to 27th (CDRH). At Wraysbury GP a displaying drake revealed its white chin spot- nicely demonstrating the Ferruginous Duck component in its parentage - on Mar 13th (CDRH).

### **Ferruginous Duck type (Ferruginous Duck × Pochard)**

At Horton GP a drake was at Kingsmead basin on Jan 13th (CDRH) and at Eversley GPs a returning drake 'Paget's Pochard' type was present again on Jan 31st (JMC). A drake was at Loddon Bridge, Reading from Mar 5th (RM, MFW) to Mar 12th (JCLa) and, nearby, a drake - said to be different from the Loddon Bridge bird - was on Sandford Lake at DPCP on April 8th (IDP, MFW). One was at Padworth GP on Oct 15th (MFW) and at Wraysbury GP a drake (presumed to be the returning bird from Nov 2006 and 2008) was on the village pit Dec 11th - 29th (CDRH). No females were reported this year.

### **Red-crested Pochard × Pochard**

At Wraysbury GP a drake was on the village pit on Nov 25th-26th and Dec 1st-19th (CDRH).

### **Falcon hybrid**

A large falcon, possibly a 'Saker type', was by the R.Thames opposite Cliveden on Mar 25th (BDC) and another falcon hybrid was noted attacking a Cormorant at Lower Farm on Sept 9th (RA, NC).

## **Report on Berkshire Bird Ringing in 2011**

*Tim Ball*

A total of over 24,000 birds of 95 species were ringed in the County during 2011. This total comes from the national figures collated by the BTO and includes all birds ringed in the county including those ringed by ringers based outside the county. A few birds (mostly scarcer raptors) ringed at confidential locations are likely to have been omitted from the totals by the BTO.

Table 1 demonstrates that 2011 was a very good year for ringing in Berkshire which resulted in nearly 2,000 more birds being ringed than in 2010 and the variety at 95 species was 3 more than were ringed in 2010. The species with between year changes of more than 100 between the 2011 and 2010 or between 2010 and 2009 are listed in Table 2.

Species highlights include Little Egret, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Great Grey Shrike and Wood Warbler – singles of all four species being ringed.

**Table 2: Changes between 2011, 2010 and 2009 (>100 birds between one pair of years)**

Species	Difference between year Totals		Species	Difference between year Totals	
	2010 to 2009	2011 to 2010		2010 to 2009	2011 to 2010
Dunnoek	-92	+135	Long-tailed Tit	-105	+62
Reed Warbler	+259	-126	Blue Tit	+1437	+17
Blackcap	+209	+377	Great Tit	-411	-130
Garden Warbler	+138	-15	Greenfinch	-116	+178
Whitethroat	+148	+218	Goldfinch	+272	+146
Chiffchaff	+282	+197	Siskin	-184	+168
Willow Warbler	+106	-69	Lesser Redpoll	+94	+462
Goldcrest	+129	+119			

Most species which had improved ringing totals in 2010 also had improved totals in 2011. The contrasts were Reed, Garden and Willow Warblers which had falling numbers after their improvements in 2010. Dunnoek, Long-tailed Tit, Greenfinch and Siskin all improved by similar numbers to which they had fallen between 2009 and 2010. Great Tit numbers continued to fall and there was a substantial increase in Lesser Redpoll numbers.

The BTO runs two major national ringing projects gathering detailed information on survival and productivity:

The Constant Effort Sites (CES) scheme is a standardised ringing programme where ringers operate the same nets in the same locations over the same time period at regular intervals through the breeding season. The Scheme provides valuable trend information on abundance of adults and juveniles, productivity and survival rates for about 25 species of passerine.

The Retrapping Adults for Survival (RAS) project gathers survival data for individual species by recording as many of the breeding adults in study populations as possible each year either by retrapping metal ringed birds or by re-sighting colour ringed birds.

In addition there are a growing number of colour marking projects where birds are marked with colour rings or wing tags and these allow birds to be identified by non-ringers and provide much more information on movements and survival.

**Table 1: Birds ringed during 2011**

Species	Pullis	FG	Total
Mute Swan	–	52	52
Greylag Goose	–	4	4
Canada Goose	–	8	8
Egyptian Goose	–	3	3
Mandarin Duck	–	12	12
Mallard	–	11	11
Little Egret	–	1	1
Great Crested Grebe	–	1	1
Red Kite	3	5	8
Sparrowhawk	–	18	18
Buzzard	–	1	1
Kestrel	21	3	24
Moorhen	–	16	16
Coot	–	1	1
Little Ringed Plover	8	–	8
Ringed Plover	7	–	7
Lapwing	24	–	24
Black-headed Gull	191	2	193
Lesser Black-backed Gull	–	2	2
Common Tern	12	–	12
Stock Dove	35	2	37
Woodpigeon	4	33	37
Collared Dove	–	10	10
Ring-necked Parakeet	–	1	1
Barn Owl	90	5	95
Little Owl	3	1	4
Tawny Owl	4	3	7
Nightjar	8	3	11
Swift	–	3	3
Kingfisher	–	37	37
Green W'pecker	–	21	21
Great Spotted W'pecker	–	124	124
Lesser Spotted W'pecker	–	1	1
Great Grey Shrike	–	1	1
Magpie	–	13	13
Jay	–	32	32
Jackdaw	27	67	94
Rook	–	7	7
Goldcrest	–	340	340
Firecrest	–	8	8
Blue Tit	3,002	3823	6,825
Great Tit	1,301	1883	3,184
Coal Tit	18	178	196
Willow Tit	22	13	35
Marsh Tit	4	71	75
Bearded Tit	–	1	1
Woodlark	5	1	6
Sand Martin	–	6	6
Swallow	106	15	121

Pullis = chicks, FG = Full grown

Species	Pullis	FG	Total
House Martin	11	27	38
Cetti's Warbler	–	61	61
Long-tailed Tit	–	572	572
Wood Warbler	–	1	1
Chiffchaff	10	1295	1,305
Willow Warbler	–	215	215
Blackcap	1	1824	1,825
Garden Warbler	–	286	286
Lesser Whitethroat	–	40	40
Whitethroat	–	683	683
Grasshopper Warbler	–	6	6
Sedge Warbler	2	296	298
Reed Warbler	9	621	630
Nuthatch	56	74	130
Treecreeper	–	110	110
Wren	–	395	395
Starling	1	76	77
Blackbird	5	416	421
Fieldfare	–	6	6
Song Thrush	5	111	116
Redwing	–	34	34
Mistle Thrush	–	2	2
Spotted Flycatcher	–	1	1
Robin	27	591	618
Nightingale	–	12	12
Redstart	–	3	3
Whinchat	–	1	1
Stonechat	–	3	3
Dunnock	5	573	578
House Sparrow	4	149	153
Tree Sparrow	–	2	2
Grey Wagtail	–	8	8
Pied/White Wagtail	–	9	9
Meadow Pipit	5	179	184
Chaffinch	4	542	546
Brambling	–	12	12
Greenfinch	1	533	534
Goldfinch	–	1050	1,050
Siskin	–	192	192
Linnet	2	80	82
Lesser Redpoll	–	577	577
Common Redpoll	–	15	15
Bullfinch	–	140	140
Yellowhammer	–	74	74
Reed Bunting	–	317	317
Corn Bunting	–	5	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,043</b>	<b>19,062</b>	<b>24,105</b>
<b>Species</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>95</b>

In 2011 there were still four CES projects operating in Berkshire – Thatcham (started 1992), Wraybury (started 1993), Lavell's Lake (1987-96 and restarted in 2010) and Kintbury (started in 2007). The Reading and Basingstoke Ringing Black-headed Gull colour ringing project, which started in 2009, was registered as a RAS project in 2010. A Willow and Marsh Tit colour ringing project was started in 2009 at a confidential location in the county – the Marsh Tit part of the project only ran until 2010.

**Berkshire Ringing Recoveries highlights for 2011**

Canada Goose			
5218216	Adult	30-06-2003	Horseshoe Lake, Sandhurst
	Alive (colour rings read)	10-01-2011	Moorgreen Reservoir, Nottinghamshire 190km N 7y 6m 11d
This was the third longest movement in the UK in 2011.			

Egyptian Goose			
1431431	First-year	23-06-2010	Lower Basildon
	Alive (ring read in field)	05-07-2011	Petworth, Sussex 68km SSE 1y 0m 12d

Hobby			
EX40519	Nestling	20-08-2010	Eynsham, Oxfordshire
	Freshly dead (bird of prey)	04-09-2011	Newbury, Berkshire 45km S 1y 0m 15d

Moorhen			
FP38563	Juvenile	21-07-2003	Lower Basildon
	Freshly dead (cat)	22-02-2011	Lower Basildon 0km 7y 7m 1d
A fairly old bird - the UK longevity record for this species is: 11 years 3 months 20 days set in 1963.			

Black-headed Gull			
EX30279	Nestling	04-06-2011	Hosehill Lake
	Alive (colour rings seen)	01-11-2011	Curragh Beach, Ardmore, Waterford, Eire 460km W 0y 4m 28d
EX30260	Nestling	04-06-2011	Hosehill Lake
	Alive (colour rings seen)	05-07-2011	Clonea Beach, Dungarvan, Waterford, Eire 453km W 0y 1m 1d
EX30129	Nestling	07-06-2010	Hosehill Lake
	Alive (colour rings seen)	20-09-2011	Sandymount Strand, Dublin, Eire 408km WNW 1y 3m 13d
EX30310	Nestling	11-06-2011	Hosehill Lake
	Alive (colour rings seen)	17-07-2011	Vazon Beach, Guernsey, Channel Islands 243km SSW 0y 1m 6d
EX30196	Nestling	12-06-2010	Hosehill Lake
	Alive (colour rings seen)	16-08-2011	Larmor-Baden, Morbihan, France 446km SSW 1y 2m 4d
ST261425	First-year	22-07-2007	Espoo, Uusimaa, Finland
	Alive (ring read in field)	23-12-2010	Caversham Bridge, Caversham 1,859km WSW 3y 5m 1d

FS73015	Nestling	07-06-2011	Oye Plage, Le Platier, Pas-de-Calais, France
	Alive (colour rings seen)	27-07-2011	Lea Farm Gravel Pit, Hurst 208km WNW 0y 1m 20d
PS18285	Nestling	10-06-2010	Sosnovaya Polyana, Sankt-Peterburg, Leningrad, Russia
	Alive (colour rings seen)	15-03-2011	Dinton Pastures, Hurst, 2,149km WSW 0y 9m 5d
	Alive (colour marks seen)	07-05-2011	Hosehill Lake 2,162km WSW 0y 10m 27d
4109405	First-year	02-01-2011	Gomecello Rubbish Dump, Salamanca, Spain
	Alive (colour rings seen)	11-05-2011	Hosehill Lake 1,207km NNE 0y 4m 9d

A selection showing where some of Berkshire bred birds go and where some of our winter visitors come from.

<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>			
FP86820	First-year	20-10-2007	near Hempsted, Gloucester, Gloucestershire
	Alive (colour marks seen)	13-04-2008	la Cueva, Valdes, Oviedo, Spain 974km SSW 0y 5m 24d
	Alive (colour marks seen)	08-02-2009	Colmenar Viejo, Madrid, Spain 1,251km S 1y 3m 19d
	Alive (colour marks seen)	05-01-2010	Colmenar Viejo, Madrid, Spain 1,251km S 2y 2m 16d
	Alive (colour marks seen)	30-07-2010	Tice's Meadow, Badshot Lea, Surrey 128km SE 2y 9m 10d
	Alive (colour marks seen)	24-12-2010	Saint-Vaast-La-Hougue, Manche, France 263km SSE 3y 2m 4d
	Alive (colour marks seen)	04-03-2011	Moor Green Lakes 114km ESE 3y 4m 12d
N006727	Nestling	04-07-2008	Amrum, Odde, Nordfriesische Inseln, Germany
	Alive (colour rings seen)	26-12-2011	Newbury 745km WSW 3y 5m 22d

<b>Common Tern</b>			
ST06002	Nestling	26-06-2011	Lea Farm Gravel Pit, Hurst
	Alive (colour rings seen)	27-08-2011	Titchfield Haven, Hampshire 75km SSW 0y 2m 1d

Presumably it stopped briefly on the coast before moving much further south.

<b>Great Tit</b>			
L594039	First-year Female	08-03-2011	Lower Basildon
	Caught by ringer	25-03-2011	Sandwich Bay Estate, Kent 176km E 0y 0m 17d

A fast and long distance movement for a species like this!

<b>Woodlark</b>			
TE41912	Nestling	22-05-2011	Tweseldown Hill, Hampshire
	Alive (colour rings seen)	20-10-2011	Wishmoor Bottom 11km NNE 0y 4m 28d

<b>Long-tailed Tit</b>			
ATT148	Juvenile	06-07-2010	Dinton Pastures, Hurst
	Freshly dead (in net or cage)	08-02-2011	Alchester Lanes End, Birmingham 130km NNW 0y 7m 2d

Very few Long-tailed Tits move over 100km so this is a very unusual individual.

<b>Chiffchaff</b>			
CNY700	First-year	08-10-2011	Eccles-on-Sea, Norfolk
	Caught by ringer	15-10-2011	Wraysbury 209km SW 0y 0m 7d

DHP031	First-year	09-09-2010	Sandwich Bay Estate, Kent
	Caught by ringer	03-04-2011	The Wilderness, near Kintbury 197km W 0y 6m 25d
CNB574	First-year	10-10-2009	Wraysbury Gravel Pits
	Caught by ringer	26-03-2011	Newport, Shropshire 192km NW 1y 5m 16d
CHB739	First-year	27-09-2011	Landguard Point, Felixstowe, Suffolk
	Caught by ringer	30-09-2011	Brimpton Gravel Pit 183km WSW 0y 0m 3d
DXP589	Juvenile	16-08-2011	Midgham
	Caught by ringer	30-09-2011	Pett Level, Sussex 143km ESE 0y 1m 14d

A variety of illustrations of migration routes to and from Berkshire – quite a lot of our passerine migrants migrate through Kent and Sussex, presumably so they can cross the Channel where it is narrower.

<b>Willow Warbler</b>			
DNB823	First-year Female	28-08-2010	Great Livermere, Suffolk
	Caught by ringer	20-08-2011	Wraysbury Gravel Pits 130km SW 0y 11m 23d

<b>Blackcap</b>			
Y117861	First-year Male	24-08-2011	Boxford Common
	Caught by ringer	18-09-2011	Cauldwell Hall Farm, Hollesley, Suffolk 206km ENE 0y 0m 25d
L887756	Full-grown Female	03-09-2011	Lower Basildon
	Caught by ringer	14-09-2011	Pett Level, Sussex 141km ESE 0y 0m 11d
L398057	First-year Male	30-09-2010	Pett Level, Sussex
	Caught by ringer	19-04-2011	Brimpton Gravel Pit 140km WNW 0y 6m 20d
L325080	First-year Male	28-08-2010	The Wilderness, near Kintbury
	Caught by ringer	12-09-2010	Beachy Head, Sussex 139km ESE 0y 0m 15d
Y020712	Juvenile Male	31-07-2011	Moor Green Lakes
	Caught by ringer	18-09-2011	Pett Level, Sussex 117km ESE 0y 1m 18d
L309373	Juvenile Female	07-06-2011	Dinton Pastures, Hurst
	Caught by ringer	23-09-2011	Dunes de Slack, Wimereux, Pas-de-Calais, France 189km ESE 0y 3m 16d

Another migrant which often passes through SE England.

<b>Garden Warbler</b>			
R952041	Full-grown Female	30-04-2005	Dinton Pastures, Hurst
	Caught by ringer	18-06-2005	Wraysbury Gravel Pits 24km E 0y 1m 19d
	Caught by ringer	03-05-2008	Wraysbury Gravel Pits 24km E 3y 0m 3d
	Caught by ringer	07-05-2011	Wraysbury Gravel Pits 24km E 6y 0m 7d
Y020480	Juvenile	26-06-2011	Moor Green Lakes
	Caught by ringer	26-07-2011	Dinton Pastures, Hurst 10km NNW 0y 1m 0d

<b>Sedge Warbler</b>			
X535428	First-year	12-07-2009	The Wilderness, near Kintbury
	Caught by ringer	31-07-2009	Trunvel, Treogat, Finistere, France 444km SSW 0y 0m 19d

L911835	First-year	23-07-2011	Great Shefford, Berkshire
	Caught by ringer	06-08-2011	Noyant, Soulaire-Et-Bourg, Maine-et-Loire, France 441km S 0y 0m 14d
5634272	Adult	08-08-2009	Les Barthes-De-Quartier-Bas, Villefranque, Pyrenees-Atlantiques, France
	Caught by ringer	25-04-2010	West Meadows, near Bradford's Farm 884km N 0y 8m 17d
6039682	First-year Male	05-08-2009	Tour Aux Moutons, Donges, Loire-Atlantique, France
	Caught by ringer	14-05-2011	Thatcham Marsh 458km N 1y 9m 9d
N758361	Full-grown	26-03-2010	Manecorro, Parque Nacional de Donana, Huelva, Spain
	Caught by ringer	03-05-2010	West Meadows, near Bradford's Farm 1,642km NNE 0y 1m 7d

A large number of foreign exchanges for a single report – unfortunately some of the foreign ringing schemes can be a bit slow about supplying details.

#### Reed Warbler

L912509	Adult	14-05-2011	Thatcham Marsh, Thatcham
	Caught by ringer	10-07-2011	Brook Vale, Liverpool, Merseyside 258km NNW 0y 1m 26d
X053170	Juvenile	26-07-2008	Thatcham Marsh, Thatcham
	Caught by ringer	10-08-2009	Les Barthes-De-Quartier-Bas, Villefranque, Pyrenees-Atlantiques, France 884km S 1y 0m 15d
L912621	Juvenile	03-07-2011	Thatcham Marsh, Thatcham
	Caught by ringer	10-08-2011	Jaizubia, Hondarribia, Guipuzcoa, Spain 896km S 0y 1m 7d
1N77092	First-year Male	18-08-2010	Crebrones Del Rio, Leon, Spain
	Caught by ringer	31-05-2011	Dinton Pastures, Hurst 1,087km NNE 0y 9m 13d

Another good number of foreign exchanges for a single report.

#### Blackbird

LB53796	Adult Male	29-01-2011	Kintbury Farm, Kintbury
	Dead (bird of prey)	27-06-2011	Forestry of Smilde, Geeuwenbrug Drente, The Netherlands, 559km ENE 0y 4m 29d

#### Meadow Pipit

L166658	First-year	12-09-2010	Spurn Head, Humberside
	Caught by ringer	27-09-2011	Wraysbury 240km SSW 1y 0m 15d

#### Goldfinch

X441292	First-year Male	16-11-2008	Crookham, near Thatcham
	Caught by ringer	17-03-2011	Higher Thrushgill, Lancashire 311km NNW 2y 4m 1d
R623918	Full-grown Female	16-09-2011	West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside
	Caught by ringer	25-10-2011	Caversham Heights, Reading 255km SE 0y 1m 9d

Goldfinches are a classic partial migrant and a proportion of Berkshire's winter birds come from elsewhere.

#### Siskin

X564810	Adult Female	05-05-2010	Clochachan, near Buckie, Grampian Region
	Dead	20-03-2011	Kintbury, 700km S 0y 10m 15d
V232414	First-year Female	08-04-2009	Blairgorm, Highland Region
	Caught by ringer	06-03-2011	Greenham Common 671km SSE 1y 10m 26d
L834407	First-year Female	07-03-2011	Aldermaston Gravel Pit
	Caught by ringer	03-04-2011	Thetford, Norfolk 171km NE 0y 0m 27d

Siskins clearly travel large distances around the UK.

#### Lesser Redpoll

L002834	First-year Male	26-09-2010	Easter Inch Moss, Blackburn, Lothian
	Caught by ringer	27-02-2011	Padworth Common 526km SSE 0y 5m 1d
L306741	First-year	17-09-2010	Fell Cottages, Slaley, Northumberland
	Caught by ringer	02-01-2011	Padworth Common 398km S 0y 3m 16d
L625024	First-year	07-10-2010	Greystoke Forest, Cumbria
	Caught by ringer	22-01-2011	Padworth Common 389km SSE 0y 3m 15d
L912383	First-year Male	06-04-2011	Greenham Common
	Caught by ringer	20-10-2011	Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn, Cheshire 240km NNW 0y 6m 14d
L020689	First-year	30-10-2010	Whixall and Fenn's Mosses, Shropshire
	Caught by ringer	23-01-2011	Greenham Common 199km SSE 0y 2m 24d

The large number of Lesser Redpolls caught in 2011 included a good number that had been ringed elsewhere in the UK.

These ringing totals and recovery details are taken from Robinson, R.A. & Clark, J.A. (2012) The Online Ringing Report: Bird ringing in Britain & Ireland in 2010 BTO, Thetford (<http://www.bto.org/ringing-report>, created on 17-November-2012).

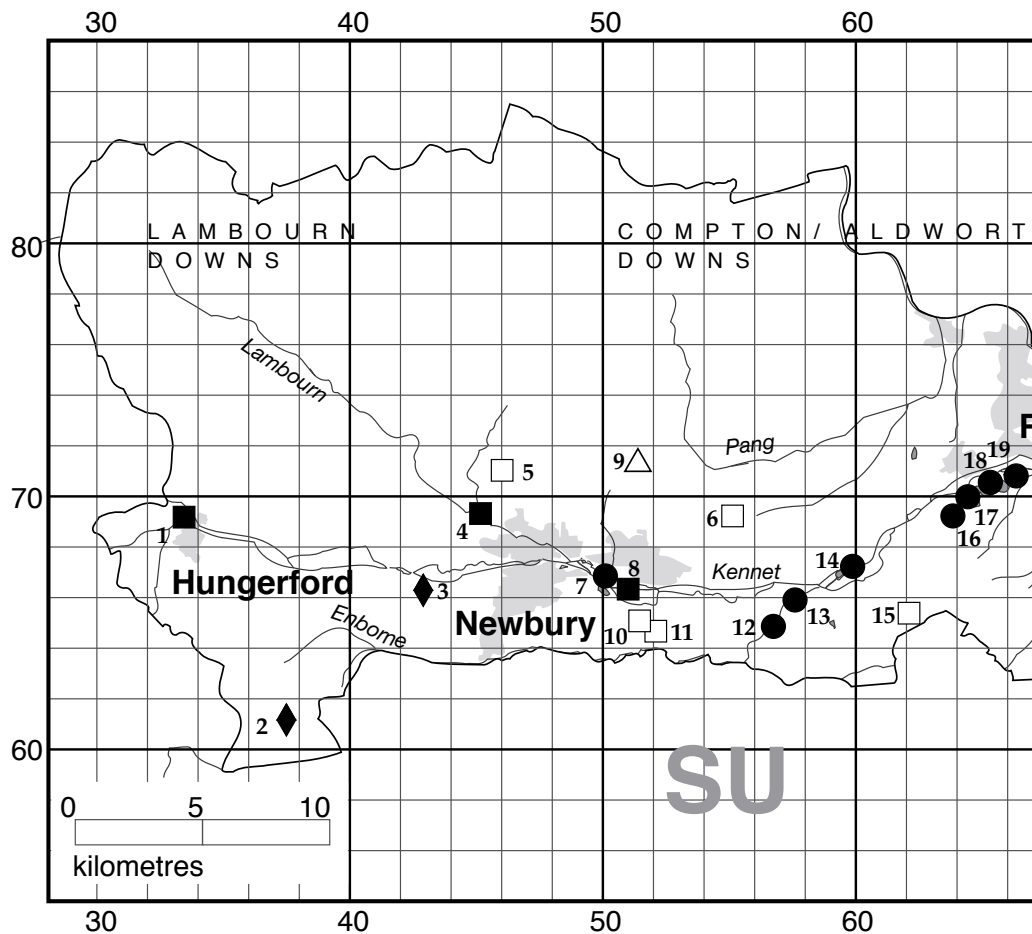
## Extreme Dates of Winter and Summer Migrants

### WINTER

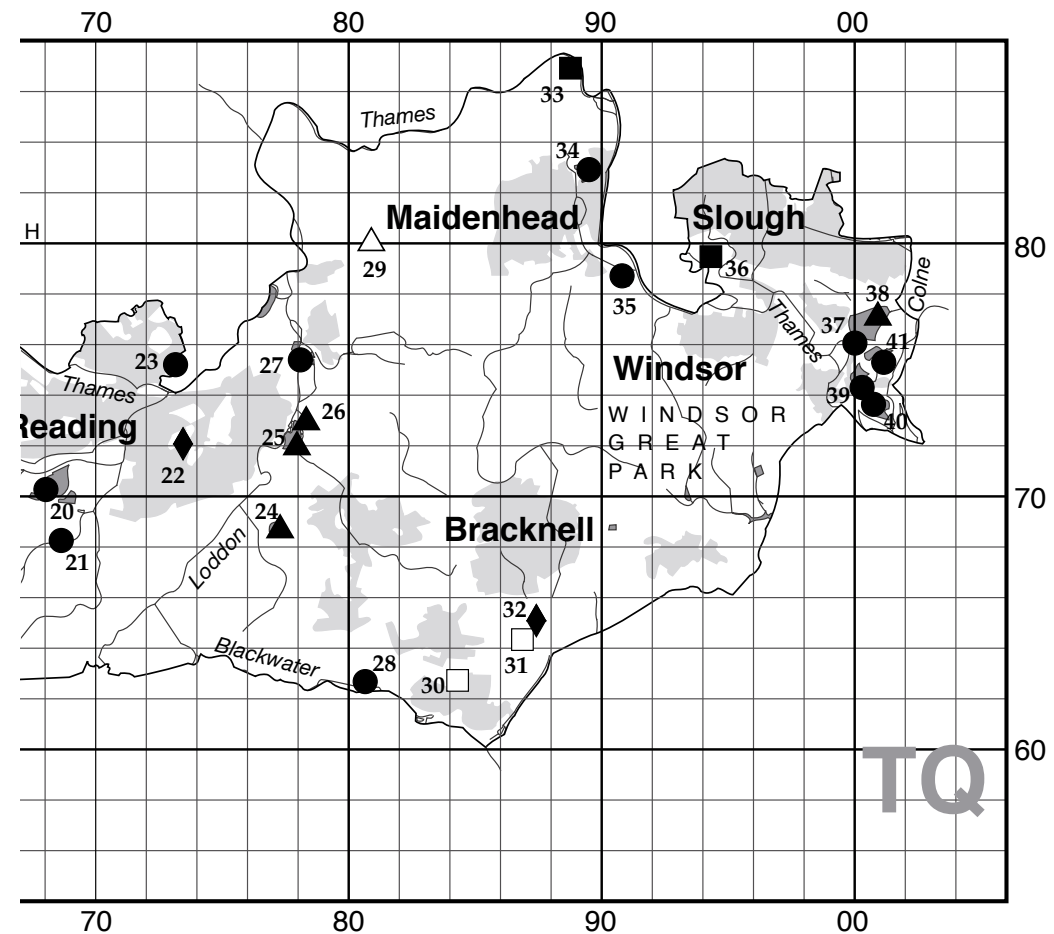
Species	DEPARTURE			ARRIVAL		
	Location	Date	Observer	Location	Date	Observer
Pintail	Hosehill/Padworth GP	Apr 16	AVL/MFW	Hurst Green GP	Oct 2	IDP; AR
Scaup	Horton GPs	Mar 14	CDRH	Theale GPs	Oct 31	KEM
Goldeneye	Hosehill LNR	Apr 19	CDRH	Wraysbury GPs	Oct 7	CDRH
Smew	Wraysbury GPs	Mar 17	JMC	Wraysbury GPs	Nov 13	CDRH
Goosander	Old Slade Lake	Mar 27	CDRH	Eversley GPs	Nov 10	MGLR
Bittern	The Wilderness, Kintbury	Mar 27	J Colley per JLS	Lavell's Lake	Oct 17	Sday
Merlin	Bury Down	Mar 17	CDRH	West Ilsley	Aug 31	ABT
Golden Plover	Greenham Common	Apr 30	IW; JL	Lowbury Hill	Sep 8	CDRH
Jack Snipe	Pingewood GPs	Mar 22	ABT	Horton GPs	Oct 13	CDRH
Snipe	Lower Farm	May 18	NC	Berry's Lane GP	Jul 24	MFW
Short-eared Owl	Bury Down	Mar 19	IDP	Long Lane, Cookham	Oct 2	BDC <i>et al.</i>
Rock Pipit	Queen Mother Reservoir	May 6	MMCK	Queen Mother Reservoir	Sep 30	ABT
Water Pipit	Pingewood GPs	May 5	NR	Queen Mother Reservoir	Oct 23	CDRH
Waxwing	Broad Hinton, Twyford	Apr 26	LFo; Vfo			
Fieldfare	Ascot Heath	Apr 19	RJD	Eversley GPs	Oct 5	MGLR
Redwing	Ascot Heath	Apr 19	RJD	Woose Hill	Sep 29	PB-T
Brambling	Twyford	May 1	SPA	Wraysbury GPs	Oct 12	CDRH
Lesser Redpoll	Lower Farm	May 4	NC	Greenham Common	Sep 22	JL

### SUMMER

Species	ARRIVAL				DEPARTURE		
	Location	Date	Observer	Location	Date	Observer	
Garganey	Old Windsor	May 18	SK	Hurst Green GP	Oct 2	IDP; AR	
Quail	Bury Down	May 18	ABT	Bury Down	Sep 10	MFW	
Osprey	Pingewood GPs	Mar 13	RHS	Queen Mother Reservoir	Sep 7	CDRH	
Hobby	Thatcham Marsh	Apr 10	RRK	Eversley GPs	Oct 14	RFM	
Stone Curlew	Aldworth Downs	Mar 18	PB-T	Compton Downs	Sep 10	MFW	
Little Ringed Plover	Field Farm, Burghfield	Mar 9	BU	Horton GPs	Aug 20	CDRH	
Ringed Plover	Greenham Common	Feb 17	NC	Queen Mother Reservoir	Nov 13	CDRH	
Common Tern	Lower Farm	Apr 9	NC	Theale GPs	Oct 9	MFW	
Turtle Dove	Woolhampton/ Bampton GPs	Apr 19	JPM/PEH	Woolhampton GPs	Aug 20	GEW	
Cuckoo	Swinley Forest	Apr 6	HRN	Dinton Pasures	Aug 31	RM	
Nightjar	Padworth Common	Apr 23	Ktu	Crowthorne Woods	Aug 22	DJS	
Swift	Woodley	Apr 20	FJC	Woose Hill	Nov 1	EN	
Sand Martin	Woolhampton GPs	Mar 9	KEM	Dorney Wetlands/ Eversley GPs	Oct 6	CDRH/ JEW	
Swallow	Kintbury	Mar 12	KPa	Lea Farm	Nov 5	FJC	
House Martin	Woolhampton GPs	Mar 23	TGB et al	Lower Farm GP	Oct 14	NC	
Tree Pipit	Swinley Forest	Mar 28	HRN	Queen Mother Reservoir	Sep 21	CDRH	
Yellow Wagtail	Engelfield	Apr 6	RHS	Ascot Heath	Oct 19	RJD	
Nightingale	Burghfield GPs	Apr 3	RCr	Greeham Common	Aug 10	JL	
Redstart	Combe	Apr 2	NR	Lavell's Lake	Sep 27	FJC	
Whinchat	Wargrave Marsh	Apr 23	CDRH	Lea Farm	Oct 9	FJC	
Wheatear	Queen Mother Reservoir	Mar 9	MMcK	Queen Mother Reservoir	Nov 27	CDRH, PEH <i>et al.</i>	
Ring Ouzel	Inkpen Hill	Apr 11	MFW	Crookham Common	Sep 26	IW	
Grasshopper Warbler	Thatcham Marsh	Apr 10	JL; IW	Horton	Sep 18	CDRH	
Sedge Warbler	Burghfield GPs/Dorney Wetlands	Apr 3	RCr/WMo	Woolhampton GPs	Oct 2	JPM	
Reed Warbler	Burghfield Mill	Apr 8	JEA	Woolhampton GPs	Oct 2	JPM	
Garden Warbler	Eversley GPs	Apr 11	MGLR	Kintbury Cress Beds	Sep 21	RGS	
Lesser Whitethroat	Fobney Lock	Apr 15	NRa	Lavell's Lake	Sep 21	FJC	
Whitethroat	Purley	Apr 3	MJS	Cow Down	Sep 18	ABT	
Willow Warbler	Hungerford Marsh	Mar 23	JBRI	Lower Farm GP	Sep 27	NC	
Spotted Flycatcher	Thatcham Marsh	May 5	IW	Greenham Common	Sep 28	JL; IW	



- |               |   |               |  |
|---------------|---|---------------|--|
| 1 SU 333 686  | Freeman's Marsh                               | 23 SU 735 745 | Caversham Lakes/Henley Road GP – Oxon                            |
| 2 SU 375 616  | Walbury Hill/Combe Wood                       | 24 SU 773 685 | Bearwood Lake  |
| 3 SU 428 662  | Hamstead Park                                 | 25 SU 780 725 | Dinton Pastures CP Country Park                                  |
| 4 SU 452 694  | Bagnor Cress Beds                             | 26 SU 783 730 | Lavell's Lake  |
| 5 SU 460 710  | Snelsmore Common                              | 27 SU 783 757 | and 785 750  |
| 6 SU 555 690  | Bucklebury Common                             | 28 SU 807 625 | Twyford Gravel Pits  |
| 7 SU 502 665  | Thatcham/Muddy Lane/Lower Farm GPs            | 29 SU 807 800 | Moor Green Lakes (Eversley Gravel Pits)                          |
| 8 SU 505 665  | Thatcham Marsh                                | 30 SU 842 625 | Bowsey Hill  |
| 9 SU 515 715  | Fence Wood                                    | 31 SU 877 630 | Wildmoor Heath (aka Edgebarrow Heath)                            |
| 10 SU 500 646 | Greenham Common                               | 32 SU 875 655 | Swinley Forest (Wishmoor area)                                   |
| 11 SU 526 643 | Crookham Common                               | 33 SU 885 870 | Swinley Forest, Crowthorne Woods (Caesar's Camp and The Lookout) |
| 12 SU 568 652 | Brimpton Gravel Pits                          | 34 SU 895 825 | Cockmarsh  |
| 13 SU 570 660 | Woolhampton Gravel Pits                       | 35 SU 908 788 | Summerleaze Gravel Pits  |
| 14 SU 596 668 | Aldermaston Gravel Pits                       | 36 SU 935 795 | Bray Gravel Pits   |
| 15 SU 620 648 | Padworth Common                               | 37 TQ 000 760 | Dorney Wetlands, Slough Sewage Farm and Jubilee River            |
| 16 SU 697 648 | Hosehill Lake                                 | 38 TQ 008 770 | Datchet Common Gravel Pits                                       |
| 17 SU 635 703 | Theale Gravel Pits (Wigmore Lane area)        | 39 TQ 005 745 | Queen Mother Reservoir   |
| 18 SU 655 705 | Theale Gravel Pits (Theale Main)              | 40 TQ 010 735 | and 010 735  |
| 19 SU 665 707 | Theale Gravel Pits (Moatlands and Field Farm) | 41 TQ 010 755 | Wraysbury Gravel Pits (Sunnymeads)                               |
| 20 SU 680 705 | Burghfield Gravel Pits (Searles Farm)         |               | Wraysbury Gravel Pits (Village Pit)                              |
| 21 SU 688 685 | Pingewood Gravel Pits (Burnthouse Lane)       |               | Horton Gravel Pits   |
| 22 SU 735 720 | Whiteknights Park                             |               |  |



The main areas for birdwatching in Berkshire are the river valleys of the Kennet, Lambourn, Loddon, Blackwater and the Thames, the areas of downland around Walbury Hill, Lambourn, Compton and Aldworth and the forests and heathlands in the south and east of the county.

This map shows the general area of the Lambourn, Compton and Aldworth Downs and Windsor Great Park but includes most other frequently mentioned sites visited regularly by birdwatchers. For further detailed site information try [www.berksbirds.co.uk](http://www.berksbirds.co.uk) or [www.birdsofberkshire.co.uk](http://www.birdsofberkshire.co.uk) where maps and site descriptions can often be found. Sites on this map have been given a number, a map reference (approximate centre) and one of the following symbols:

- |                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| ● Gravel Pits              | ▲ Lakes and Reservoirs  |
| □ Commons and Heaths       | △ Downland and Parkland |
| ■ Marshes and Sewage Farms | ◆ Woodland              |

Please note that inclusion of a site does not guarantee free or safe access.

# CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Absolom, A ..... AA  
 Absolom, J ..... JAb  
 Adam, N ..... NA  
 Adam, P ..... PA  
 Adam, S P ..... SPA  
 Addison, R ..... RAd  
 Adnams, R ..... RA  
 Agombar, D ..... DA  
 Alexander, T O ..... TOA  
 Allen, C ..... CAI  
 Andrews, J E ..... JA  
 Povey, R ..... RPo  
 Angus, R ..... RAng  
 Apperley, J ..... JAp  
 Archer, B M ..... BMA  
 Armstrong, C ..... CArm  
 Ashton, P ..... PAs  
 Badziak, O E M ..... OEMB  
 Baker, J ..... JBak  
 Ball, T G ..... TGB  
 Barker, D J ..... DJB  
 Barker, S R J ..... SRJB  
 Barnes, D J ..... DJBa  
 Bassett, A D ..... ADB  
 Bassett, D C ..... DCB  
 Beeson, P ..... PBee  
 Beaver, D ..... DBe  
 Beglow, B ..... BB  
 Bennett, G D ..... GDBe  
 Berryman, A ..... ABe  
 Birdguides, ..... BGU  
 Blackmore, D ..... DBI  
 Blundell, L R ..... LRB  
 Booth, A ..... ABo  
 Boreham, S ..... SBor  
 Borwick, R M ..... RMB  
 Boulton, P ..... PBou  
 Bowler, D ..... DBow  
 Boyd, D A ..... DAB  
 Boydell, M ..... MBo  
 Boyland, B R ..... BRB  
 Brant, P ..... PBr  
 Briggs, B D ..... BDB  
 Briggs, C A ..... CAB  
 Bright-Thomas, P ..... PBT  
 Broddow, S ..... SBro  
 Brown, G ..... GBro  
 Brown, M ..... MB  
 Brown, M ..... MBr  
 Brown, S A ..... SAB  
 Brown, W ..... WB  
 Bryant, M J ..... MJBr  
 Buchanan, J ..... JBu  
 Bucknell, N J ..... NJB  
 Budd, P A ..... PAB  
 Bunce, T ..... TBU  
 Burch, C ..... CBur  
 Burden, P ..... PBu  
 Burfoot, G D ..... GDB  
 Burness, R J ..... RJB  
 Burnett, J ..... 0  
 Butler, D ..... DBu  
 Butler, J ..... JBut  
 Bysh, P ..... PBy  
 Callam, D F ..... DFC  
 Callister, T ..... TCa  
 Capewell, R R ..... RRC  
 Carley, T ..... TCar  
 Carpenter, B R ..... BRC  
 Carr, D G ..... DGC  
 Carter, D A ..... DAC  
 Carter, M ..... MCA  
 Chester, N ..... NCh  
 Chivers, J L ..... JCh  
 Clacey, C ..... CCl  
 Claridge, R J ..... RJCl  
 Clark, B A J ..... BAJC  
 Clark, F C ..... FCC  
 Clark, H ..... HCl  
 Clark, J M ..... JMC  
 Clarke, P ..... PCla  
 Claybourn, A ..... ACla  
 Cleal, D ..... DCle  
 Cleere, N ..... NC  
 Hutchins, P E ..... PEH  
 Clews, B D ..... BDC  
 Cload, D ..... DClo  
 Cohen, P A ..... PCo  
 Collins, R ..... RCo  
 Cooper, A ..... ACo  
 Cooper, J ..... JCo  
 Cottingham, F J ..... FJC  
 Cowley, K ..... KCow  
 Cox, J D ..... JDC  
 Crathorne, B ..... BCr  
 Crawford, D ..... DCra  
 Crawford, R ..... RCra  
 Creed, K ..... KCr  
 Cronin, A ..... ACro  
 Cropper, P M ..... PMC  
 Crowley, P J ..... PJC  
 Culley, T ..... TCu  
 Curtis, R ..... RCu  
 Dale, R J ..... RJD  
 Dawson, R ..... RD  
 Day, S ..... SDay  
 Dear, M J ..... MJD  
 Deasy, J ..... JDea  
 Deayton, R ..... RDea  
 Dellman, K ..... KDell  
 Dellow, J ..... JD  
 Dickenson, S ..... SDic  
 Dickinson, B ..... BDi  
 Dimond, S ..... SDi  
 Dodd, N ..... NDo  
 Dodds, D A M ..... DAMD  
 Dodington, C ..... CD  
 Dormer, M R ..... MRD  
 Downes, A ..... ADow  
 Drazin, J ..... JDr  
 Driver, P W ..... PD  
 Dryden, R ..... RDR  
 Duffus/Milligan, G/R F ..... 0  
 Duncan, K P ..... KPD  
 East, D ..... DEa  
 East, T A ..... TAE  
 Eeles, P ..... PEe  
 Emmett, G ..... 0  
 Evans, H W ..... HWE  
 Evans, T ..... TEv  
 Farnell, G ..... GF  
 Farnsworth, F M ..... FMF  
 Farnsworth, S J ..... SJF  
 Farrall, M C ..... MCFa  
 Farrell, C ..... CFa  
 Farrell, G R ..... GRF  
 Feltham, C ..... CFel  
 Fewtrell-Smith, I ..... IFe  
 Finch, G ..... 0  
 Finch, L J ..... LJF  
 Finch, M J ..... MJF  
 Firth, T ..... TFi  
 Fisher, B ..... BFis  
 Fisher, S L ..... SLF  
 Flack, D ..... DFl  
 Flower, C H ..... CHF  
 Foote, S ..... SFo  
 Forster, L ..... LFo  
 Forster, V ..... VFo  
 Fostekeew, K ..... KF  
 Foster, C ..... CF  
 Foster, C W ..... CWFo  
 Foster, G ..... GFo  
 Foulds, P R ..... PRF  
 Francis, J ..... JFr  
 Frankum, R ..... RF  
 Fry, D ..... DFr  
 Fuge, R ..... RFug  
 Fuller, D ..... DF  
 Gaines, P ..... PGai  
 Gardner, C ..... 0  
 Garner-Langham, L ..... LGL  
 Gasson, P ..... PGa  
 Gent, C R ..... CRG  
 Gibson, T ..... TGi  
 Gilham, R ..... RGi  
 Gipson, P ..... PG  
 Girling, K ..... KGi  
 Glover, D R ..... DRG  
 Godden, R J ..... RJG  
 Godwin, N J ..... NJG  
 Goodchild, J ..... JGo  
 Goodey, J ..... JG  
 Goodship, H M ..... HMG  
 Gore, A ..... 0  
 Gostling, M H ..... MG  
 Gott, C ..... CGo  
 Graham, S A ..... SAG  
 Grandorge, D ..... DGR  
 Griffin, M A ..... MAG  
 Grimshaw, S ..... SG  
 Grist, D M ..... DMG  
 Gurr, M ..... MGu

Hallett, M ..... MHal  
 Hardie, R J ..... RHJ  
 Hardy, R ..... RHar  
 Harris, J C ..... JCHar  
 Harrison, A ..... AHarr  
 Haseler, J ..... JH  
 Haworth-Booth, C N ..... CNHB  
 Hawtree, J N ..... JNH  
 Haydon, R M ..... RMH  
 Hayward, M ..... MHayw  
 Hayward, T ..... THa  
 Hazell, C ..... CHaz  
 Head, K ..... KHe  
 Healey, M ..... MHea  
 Heard, C D R ..... CDRH  
 Hearne, P J ..... PH  
 Hemmings, M ..... MHe  
 Heritage, J ..... JHe  
 Hewitt, J ..... JHew  
 Hewitt, R ..... RHe  
 Hickman, A E D ..... AEDH  
 Hickman, P ..... PH  
 Hipperson, H ..... HH  
 Hoare, K ..... KHoa  
 Hobley, D R ..... DRH  
 Hodgkin, R ..... RHod  
 Hollands, B J ..... BJH  
 Holt, K ..... KHol  
 Hook, J ..... JHo  
 Horscroft, A M ..... AMH  
 Hotchkis, B ..... BHot  
 Housley, D J ..... DJHo  
 Howarth-Booth, C ..... CHB  
 Hudson, D ..... DHud  
 Hughes, J ..... JHug  
 Humphrey, C C ..... CCH  
 Humphrey, P ..... PHu  
 Hunt, M ..... MHu  
 Huntley, M ..... MHun  
 Hutchins, P E ..... PEH  
 Hutchison, A ..... AHut  
 Hyde, C ..... CHy  
 I'Anson, M ..... MIAn  
 Ireland, M ..... MI  
 Jackson, A ..... AJac  
 Jackson, S ..... SJac  
 Jacobs, M ..... MJa  
 Jefferson, V ..... VJe  
 Jenkins, B J ..... BJJ  
 Jennings, S ..... SJen  
 Jepson, P ..... PJe  
 John, G A C ..... GACJ  
 Johns, P ..... PJ  
 Jones, B ..... BJ  
 Jones, C ..... CJ  
 Jones, Christine ..... CJo  
 Jones, K ..... KJo  
 Jones, P ..... PJon  
 Jones, R ..... RJo  
 Jones, S ..... SJo  
 Josey, R ..... RJos  
 Joyce, I ..... IJo

Keel, R R ..... RRR  
 Keene, R ..... RK  
 Keil, I J ..... IJK  
 Kendall, P ..... PKe  
 Kernahan, G ..... GKe  
 Kettell, M M ..... MMK  
 Kimber, G ..... GK  
 King, G J ..... GJK  
 King, S ..... SK  
 Kintbury Wildlife Group KWG  
 Kirby, M ..... MKir  
 Knight, D C ..... DCK  
 Knight, G ..... GK  
 Knight, P ..... PKn  
 Laker, M ..... MLA  
 Lamsdell, C ..... CL  
 Langley, G B ..... GBL  
 Langridge, J C ..... JCLa  
 Langton, K ..... KL  
 Langton, L ..... LL  
 Lawson, A V ..... AVL  
 Legg, J ..... JL  
 Leonard, C ..... CL  
 Lerpiniere, J ..... JLe  
 Lewis, P ..... PLe  
 Lloyd, D ..... DLoy  
 Lloyd-Parry, John ..... JLP  
 Long, C ..... CLo  
 Lowther, D ..... DLo  
 Lunt, S ..... SL  
 Lyle, B ..... BL  
 Lyle, R ..... RLy  
 Mackenzie, D ..... DMac  
 Male, A ..... AM  
 Mann, L B ..... LBM  
 Mannion, P ..... PM  
 Marchant, R H ..... RHM  
 Marriner, N ..... NM  
 Marrs, P ..... PMar  
 Marsh, R ..... RM  
 Marshall, D ..... DMa  
 Marshall, S K ..... SKM  
 Martin, J P ..... JPM  
 Massie, D ..... DM  
 McCarthy, M G ..... MGM  
 McCartney, B & R ..... BMc RMc  
 McEwan, C ..... CMc  
 McGinney, F G ..... FGM  
 McKee, M J ..... MMc  
 McMahon, A ..... AMc  
 McNeil, N M ..... NMc  
 McNeill, J M ..... JMcN  
 Meade, P ..... PMe  
 Meads, S ..... SMe  
 Melia, N ..... NMe  
 Mepstead-Payne, M ..... MMPa  
 Milligan, R F ..... RFM  
 Mills, D J ..... DJMi  
 Mitchell, J E ..... JEM  
 Mitchell, M J ..... MJM  
 Moden, D ..... DMO  
 Moor Green Lakes Report .....

MGLR  
 Moore, K E ..... KEM  
 Morgan, W ..... WMo  
 Mountjoy, L ..... LMo  
 Muddell, S ..... SMu  
 Murfit, R C ..... RCMu  
 Napper, E ..... EN  
 Nash, D ..... DNas  
 Nash, D P ..... DPN  
 Newbury District Ornithological Club ..... NDOC  
 Needs, J ..... JNe  
 Ness, R ..... RN  
 Netley, H R ..... HRN  
 Newbould, P J ..... PNe  
 Nicoll, W A ..... WAN  
 Noble, R ..... RNob  
 Oldcorn, I ..... 0  
 Orr, P J ..... PJO  
 Osborne, B ..... BO  
 Paine, I D ..... IDP  
 Pang Valley Barn Owl Group. 0  
 Parker, S ..... SPAr  
 Parr, K ..... KPar  
 Parsons, R ..... RPa  
 Pash, S T ..... STP  
 Pavey, B N ..... BP  
 Payne, D E E ..... DEEP  
 Percival, N ..... NP  
 Percival, S G ..... SGP  
 Pope, W ..... WP  
 Pottinger, D ..... DPo  
 Poulter, B ..... BPO  
 Powell, T ..... TPo  
 Price, M ..... MPr  
 Price, R A G ..... RAGP  
 Price, R ..... RPr  
 Priest, S N ..... SNP  
 Proddow, E ..... EP  
 Proddow, S K ..... SKP  
 Pyrah, R J ..... RJPy  
 Rampton, N ..... NR  
 Randall, G ..... GR  
 Redding, P ..... PRe  
 Reedman, R ..... RR  
 Reeve, B ..... BR  
 Reid, J ..... JRe  
 Revell, A ..... ARev  
 Reynolds, D J ..... DJR  
 Ricks, S ..... SRi  
 Rigelato, R ..... RRi  
 Rimes, D N T ..... DNTR  
 Rippington, S ..... SRip  
 Rivoire, J R ..... JRR  
 Rix, J B ..... JBRi  
 Roberts, A ..... ARo  
 Robson, C ..... CR  
 Rogers, T ..... TR  
 Rohl, A ..... ARoh  
 Rolfe, M D ..... MDR  
 Roll, J ..... JRol  
 Rose, C ..... CRO



Rose, J.....JRos  
 Rowing, G.....GRo  
 Runnacles, S.....SR  
 Rymer, A.....AR  
 SandercocK, B.....BSa  
 Saunders, I.....IS  
 Saunders, P.....PSa  
 Sayers, C M.....CMS  
 Scarlett, I.....ISc  
 Scholey, G D.....GDS  
 Scott, S.....SSc  
 Sell, M RW.....MRWS  
 Sell, M.....MSe  
 Seward, L.....LSe  
 Sharp, A L H.....ALHS  
 Sharp, J.....JSha  
 Shea, K M.....KMS  
 Sheridan, J B.....JBS  
 Shino, Y.....YS  
 Simpkin, D.....DSi  
 Simpson, P J.....PJS  
 Skinner, A.....ASki  
 Sklar, M.....MSk  
 Slater, A.....ASl  
 Slobodian, J.....JSI  
 Smallridge, D.....DSm  
 Smith, A.....ASm  
 Smith, M J.....MJS  
 Smith, R G.....RGS  
 Smith, W.....WS  
 Stacey, W A.....WAS  
 Stachnicki, I A.....IAS  
 Stansfield, R H.....RHS  
 Stansfield, R T.....RTS  
 Staves, G.....GSt  
 Staves, L.....LS  
 Stevens, P J.....PJSt

Stevens, T.....TSt  
 Stewart, G J.....GJS  
 Stow, A N.....ANS  
 Stratton, J.....JStr  
 Strong, T H.....THS  
 Stuttard, M.....MSt  
 Suckling, N.....NSu  
 Sumner, G J.....GJSu  
 Sussex, D J.....DJS  
 Sutton, P.....PSu  
 Swallow, J L.....JLS  
 Sweetland, T.....TS  
 Swift, M.....MSwi  
 Sydenham, A.....ASy  
 Talbot, R.....RTa  
 Taylor, C D.....CDT  
 Taylor, D.....DT  
 Taylor, M J.....MJT  
 Theale Area Bird Conservation  
 Group.....TABR  
 Theobald, R C.....RCT  
 Thomas, B.....BTh  
 Thomson, S.....STho  
 Thorn, L.....LTh  
 Thornton, G.....GT  
 Tomczynski, A B.....ABT  
 Towner, P.....PTow  
 Traynor, I F.....IFT  
 Try, F.....FT  
 Tubb, K I.....KIT  
 Tucker, K.....KTu  
 Turton, M H.....MHT  
 Twyford, I.....IT  
 Upton, B.....BUp  
 Uttley, B.....BU  
 Waite, C.....CWa  
 Waite, S.....SWai

Walford, M F.....MFW  
 Walker, B J.....BJW  
 Wallen, M S.....MSW  
 Wardell, J B.....JBW  
 Ward-Smith, J.....JW-S  
 Warren, J E.....JEW  
 Warren, R S.....RSW  
 Warwick, T.....TWarw  
 Waters, M.....MWate  
 Watson, M I G.....MIGW  
 Watts, R C.....RCW  
 Weeks, S.....SW  
 Weeratunge, S.....SWee  
 Wellenkamp, R.....RWel  
 Wells, T J.....TJW  
 Westmacott, J.....JWe  
 Weston, D J.....DJWe  
 Weston, I L G.....IW  
 Whitaker, M S F.....MSFW  
 Whitall, H.....HW  
 White, D J.....DJW  
 White, K G.....KGW  
 Whitney, M.....MWh  
 Wilcockson, J.....JWilc  
 Wetlands Bird Survey .... WEBs  
 Wilding, J.....JW  
 Wildish, M F.....MFWi  
 Williams, P A.....PAWi  
 Williams, R.....RWi  
 Wilson, G E.....GEW  
 Wilson, G.....GWils  
 Wilson, R D.....RDW  
 Winter, P D.....PDW  
 Woodham, J S.....JSWo  
 Wright, P.....PW  
 Young, G T.....GT  
 Young, R.....RY

## County Directory

### COUNTY RECORDER

Chris Heard, 3, Waterside Lodge, Ray Mead Road,  
 Maidenhead, Berks SL6 8NP.  
 Telephone 01628 633828.

### BERKSHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

[www.berksoc.org.uk](http://www.berksoc.org.uk)

*A Club for birdwatchers throughout Berkshire, with indoor and outdoor meetings, surveys and publications, including Birds of Berkshire annual reports – see page 2 for details. Collects bird records for the county and is responsible for the county database and administers 'The Birds of Berkshire Conservation Fund'. Registered Charity number 1011776*

Secretary, Sally Wearing, 9 Deans Farm, The Causeway, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5JZ

Telephone 0118 969 4197

Email: [berksocsecretary@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:berksocsecretary@berksoc.org.uk)

### NEWBURY DISTRICT ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

[www.ndoc.org.uk](http://www.ndoc.org.uk)

*A Club for birdwatchers in the Newbury area with a recording area of 10 miles radius of the town. Offers indoor and outdoor meetings, surveys and publications.*

Membership Secretary, Karen Eggleton,  
 4 Thornfield, Headley, Thatcham, Berks,  
 RG19 8AQ

Telephone 01635 269566

Email: [info1@ndoc.org.uk](mailto:info1@ndoc.org.uk)

### BIRDS OF BERKSHIRE CONSERVATION FUND

*Charitable Fund managed for the benefit of Berkshire's birds.*

Enquiries and applications to: Renton Righelato

Telephone 0787 981 2564

Email: [renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk)

[www.berksbirds.co.uk](http://www.berksbirds.co.uk)

*An independent website devoted to offering a free resource to birdwatchers in Berkshire and providing news, photographs and records of birds with additional optional information services.*

### BRITISH TRUST FOR ORNITHOLOGY (BTO)

Joint local representatives for BTO matters including organising surveys: Ken and Sarah White, Yonder Cottage, Ashford Hill, Thatcham, Berks, RG19 8AX.

Telephone 01635 268442

Email: [btoberks.ken.sarah@googlemail.com](mailto:btoberks.ken.sarah@googlemail.com)

### FRIENDS OF LAVELL'S LAKE

*Conservation volunteers managing Lavell's Lake local nature reserve near Dinton Pastures Country Park, Wokingham. Bird walks, work parties, occasional meetings and newsletters.*

Chairman Fraser Cottington at  
[Fraser.cottington@ntlworld.com](mailto:Fraser.cottington@ntlworld.com) or see  
[www.foll.org.uk](http://www.foll.org.uk)

### MOOR GREEN LAKES GROUP

*Conservation volunteers who manage Moor Green Lakes Nature Reserve near Eversley. Work parties, newsletters, an annual report and access to bird hides.*

Membership Secretary: David Bishop, 7 Ambarrow Crescent, Little Sandhurst, Berks, GU47 8JA

Email: [dave.bishop@mglg.org.uk](mailto:dave.bishop@mglg.org.uk)

### THEALE AREA BIRD CONSERVATION GROUP

*A local Club devoted to the conservation of birds in the Theale area, west of Reading. Indoor and outdoor meetings, annual bird race and survey work.*

[www.freewebs.com/tabcg/](http://www.freewebs.com/tabcg/)

Cath McEwan, Secretary,

Email: [Catherine@cmcewan.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Catherine@cmcewan.fsnet.co.uk)

### LOCAL RSPB GROUPS

*Groups promote and represent the RSPB in the local community. Activities include indoor and outdoor meetings and fund raising events.*

Further details from the RSPB [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk) or directly from:

East Berks Local Group

[www.eastberksrspb.org.uk/](http://www.eastberksrspb.org.uk/)

Reading Local Group

[www.reading-rspb.org.uk/](http://www.reading-rspb.org.uk/)

Wokingham and Bracknell Local Group

[www.wbrspb.btinternet.co.uk/](http://www.wbrspb.btinternet.co.uk/)

## The bird-watching code

(from the RSPB's code at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/advice/watchingbirds/code/index.aspx>, with modifications)

### The interests of the bird come first.

Birds respond to people in many ways, depending on the species, location and time of year. Disturbance can keep birds from their nests, leaving chicks hungry or enabling predators to take eggs or young. During cold weather or when migrants have just made a long flight, repeatedly flushing birds can mean they use up vital energy that they need for feeding. Intentional or reckless disturbance of some species at or near the nest is illegal in Britain.

Whether your particular interest is photography, ringing, sound-recording or birdwatching, remember that the interests of the bird must always come first.

- Avoid going too close to birds or disturbing their habitats – if a bird flies away or makes repeated alarm calls, you are too close. And if it leaves, you won't get a good view.
- Stay on roads and paths where they exist and avoid disturbing habitat used by birds.
- Think about your fieldcraft. Disturbance is not just about going too close – a flock of wading birds on the foreshore can be disturbed from a mile away if you stand on the seawall.
- Repeatedly playing a recording of birdsong or calls to encourage a bird to respond can divert a territorial bird from other important duties, such as feeding its young. Never use playback to attract a species during its breeding season, even if it isn't a normal breeder in the area as this could prevent potential colonisation.

### Know the rules for visiting the countryside, and follow them.

Respect the wishes of local residents and landowners, and don't enter private land without permission unless it is open for public access on foot. Follow the codes on access and the countryside for the place you're walking in.

Irresponsible behaviour may cause a land manager to deny access to others (eg for necessary survey work). It may also disturb the bird or give birdwatching bad coverage in the media.

Legislation provides access for walkers to open country in Britain, and includes measures to protect wildlife. In England and Wales, access is to land mapped as mountain, moor, heath and down, and to registered common land. However, local restrictions may be in force, so follow the Countryside Code and plan your visit. In England, the Countryside Code and maps showing areas for public access are at [www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk).

### Know the law

In England, Scotland and Wales, it is a criminal offence to disturb, intentionally or recklessly, at or near the nest, a species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. Disturbance could include playback of songs and calls. The courts can impose fines of up to

£5,000 and/or a prison sentence of up to six months for each offence. In Scotland, disturbance of Capercaillie and Ruffs at leks is also an offence.

The government can, for particular reasons such as scientific study, issue licences to individuals that permit limited disturbance, including monitoring of nests and ringing.

It is a criminal offence to destroy or damage, intentionally or recklessly, a special interest feature of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or to disturb the wildlife for which the site was notified. In England, Wales, a fine of up to £20,000 may be imposed by the Magistrates' Court, or an unlimited fine by the Crown Court. In Scotland, the maximum fine on summary conviction is £40,000, or an unlimited fine on conviction on indictment.

If you witness anyone who you suspect may be illegally disturbing or destroying wildlife or habitat, phone the police immediately (ideally, with a six-figure map reference) and report it to the RSPB.

### If you discover a rare bird, please bear the following in mind:

Consider the potential impact of spreading the news and make an effort to inform the landowner (or, on a nature reserve, the warden) first. Think about whether the site can cope with a large number of visitors and whether sensitive species might be at risk, such as breeding terns, flocks of wading birds or rare plants.

On private land, always talk to the landowner first. With a little planning, access can often be arranged.

Rare breeding birds are at risk from egg-collectors and some birds of prey from persecution. If you discover a rare breeding species under any circumstances report it to the County Recorder (for Berkshire: email [records@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:records@berksoc.org.uk)) as a matter of urgency or the RSPB if it's outside the county. The County Recorder will consider telling the landowner of the bird's presence and legal obligations in most cases, and this will help ensure that the nest is not disturbed accidentally.

- If you have the opportunity to see a rare bird, enjoy it, but don't let your enthusiasm override common sense. In addition to the guidelines above:
- If you go to see a rare bird, park sensibly, follow instructions and consider making a donation if requested.
- Don't get too close for a photograph – you'll earn the wrath of everyone else if you flush the bird out of sight.
- Be patient if the viewing is limited, talk quietly and give others a chance to see the bird too.
- Do not enter private areas without permission.
- Birds should never be flushed in important wildlife habitats or where there are other nesting or roosting birds nearby. Birds should not be flushed more frequently than every two hours nor within two hours of sunrise or sunset, so that the bird has chance to feed and rest. At any time in the breeding season flushing rare visitors can be very disruptive to other species that are breeding in the area and so shouldn't be done.

