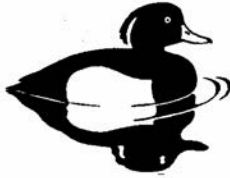


# The Birds of Berkshire

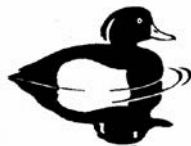


Annual Report  
2013

Published 2016

# 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 2013*

## Contents

	Page
Introduction and acknowledgements . . . . .	4
Submitting records . . . . .	5
Articles	
The Berkshire Bird Index 2012 by Renton Righelato . . . . .	6
Birding Highlights of 2013 by Ken Moore . . . . .	8
Bird Photographs for 2013. . . . .	9
Weather Summary for 2013 by Renton Righelato . . . . .	17
Surveys . . . . .	18
Damselflies & Dragonflies in Berkshire – 2013 Highlights by Mike Turton . . . . .	19
Bird Report for 2013	
Report for 2013 by the Berkshire Records Committee . . . . .	21
2013 Systematic List . . . . .	23
Escapes, feral species and hybrids . . . . .	113
Extreme dates. . . . .	116
County Map. . . . .	118
Contributors to the Systematic List . . . . .	120
County Directory . . . . .	123
Bird-watchers' Code of Behaviour . . . . .	124

Edited by Chris Heard and Renton Righelato

Published in 2015 by

**BERKSHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB**

© Berkshire Ornithological Club

ISBN 978-0-9553497-6-8

Price £7.50

## Introduction

Here is the Berkshire bird report for 2013. Although we have managed to publish four years of reports in the three, we still have a way to go to get really up to date, but I hope that some of the measures we are taking to enhance the recording and reporting process will improve the timeliness of reviewing records and reporting, make records more accessible and add interest to the published reports.

The BOC and NDOC have appointed Richard Burness as the new County Recorder, succeeding Chris Heard. Chris, with his renowned expertise in the field and extensive experience in record adjudication, both locally and nationally, has made an outstanding contribution to ornithology in Berkshire. As well as his work as Recorder and editor of the annual report, he has an impressive record in the field, including finding many new species for the County, including this year's (2013) Bonaparte's Gull. We are grateful for all that he has done and are pleased that he will continue as a member of the BRC.

Richard Burness moved to Berkshire in 1990, has become a well-known observer in both east and west Berkshire and has been contributing to recording and reporting over several years. He is a long-standing WeBS counter, he brought up to date Berkshire's submissions for the Rare Breeding Birds Panel and for many years he has contributed to annual reports as a species accounts writer and more recently, as an editor. As Recorder, he will convene the Berkshire Records Committee (BRC) to advise him on records of unusual species. Richard writes:

*As incoming Recorder, I aim to provide continuity with my predecessors by maintaining the accuracy and scientific integrity of the historical record. My personal objectives are to maximise the input of data, to make the operation of the Recorder and the BRC more transparent and to improve the timeliness of delivery of outputs. The first two can be achieved by providing positive feedback to observers who submit records and ensuring greater openness to encourage those who don't. Improving our timeliness will require a review of requirements, methods and deadlines.*

Everyone can help Richard by ensuring the records database 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 the Recorder at [records@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:records@berksoc.org.uk). See below for submission guidelines.

## 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 and others who have helped in editing the accounts, who are acknowledged at the start of the systematic list. Our thanks also go to Richard Crawford, Ken Moore, 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 wintering Pallas's Warbler at Eversley GPs that stayed on and could be heard singing in Spring.

*Renton Righelato*

## 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 the Recorder: Richard Burness, 20 Burlsdon Way, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 2PH.

Records can be entered on line at [www.berksbirds.co.uk](http://www.berksbirds.co.uk) or sent by email to the Recorder [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 names as used in these reports. Otherwise, please enter the site as the nearest landmark on an OS map and specify the 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:** 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 (page 21).

# THE BERKSHIRE BIRD INDEX 2013

compiled by 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. The data are collected by the BTO, which publishes the regional and national trends. The BTO have provided us with the data for the analysis shown here. Recent reanalysis of historic data by the BTO have resulted in some changes to earlier indices; the new analyses have been used here.

In Berkshire at least 72 squares were covered in the years since 2000, which was chosen last year as the base year for the index (prior to 2012, the base year used had been 1994, though in the period 1994-1999, far fewer BBS squares were surveyed).

The index is a snapshot for the year of the ratio of a year's abundance to the base year: 2000. The index is shown as the range within the 95% confidence limits. However, year on year changes can be large: in addition to actual changes in abundance, weather conditions during surveys, their timing and observer changes *etc* can introduce apparent fluctuations in abundance, hence trends may better be estimated by combining several years of data. So, in addition to the **index**, the average **trend** in abundance is shown, calculated as the slope of the least squares linear regression of the annual indices from 2000 to 2013. Statistically significant results at  $p < 0.05$  are shown in bold.

In general, the Berkshire results reflect the national trends for those species that are sufficiently abundant to calculate statistically valid changes. Species increasing significantly in abundance nationally and in Berkshire over the period 2000 to 2013 include Red Kite, Buzzard, Jackdaw, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Blackcap, Goldfinch, with increases in Whitethroat almost reaching significance at the 95% level. Species in decline nationally and in Berkshire include Lapwing, Cuckoo, Swift, House Martin, Mistle Thrush, Pied Wagtail, Willow Warbler, Starling, Greenfinch, Linnet.

Few species show local trends that differ markedly from the national (*BTO Birdtrends*), though Collared Dove, which is still increasing significantly nationally, shows a highly significant decline in Berkshire. [Other species noted last year as showing trends clearly discrepant with the national trend, in the reanalysed dataset from the BTO do not show significant differences in trends: Stock Dove, Rook Blackbird, Chaffinch (though Rook, Blackbird and Chaffinch do show significant difference in index).]

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 and Sarah Harris at the BTO for providing the Berkshire data and index analysis.

Bold values indicate significant changes in index or trend 2000-2013.  
Black background – significant negative trend;  
Grey background – significant positive trend.

<sup>†</sup> Trends calculated by Excel's LINEST function to annual indices from 2000 to 2013.  $p < 0.05$ , \*; \*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*;  $p < 0.001$ , \*\*\*.

## Trends in commoner species in Berkshire, 2000 - 2013

Species	Trend 2000-2013 %/year <sup>†</sup>	Index 2013/2000 <sup>‡</sup>
Canada Goose	0.18	0.44 - 0.99
Mallard	-1.65	0.71 - 1.22
Red-legged Partridge	2.3	0.73 - 1.7
Pheasant	1.66	1.08 - 1.52
Red Kite	>20***	200 - 2,000
Buzzard	>20***	1.98 - 5.56
Kestrel	1.76	0.98 - 2.31
Moorhen	-1.55	0.67 - 1.25
Lapwing	-2.24	0.51 - 1.12
Stock Dove	5.37	0.63 - 1.76
Woodpigeon	0.31	0.84 - 1.14
Collared Dove	-3.69***	0.51 - 0.88
Cuckoo	-1.11**	0.4 - 0.81
Swift	-4.94*	0.22 - 0.57
Green Woodpecker	-1.85	0.45 - 0.83
Great Spotted Woodpecker	5.25*	1.16 - 1.95
Magpie	0.5	0.63 - 0.96
Jay	-1.86	0.76 - 1.51
Jackdaw	11.25***	1.6 - 2.73
Rook	13.01	2.54 - 6.61
Carrion Crow	-1.5	0.82 - 1.28
Goldcrest	-4.18	0.36 - 0.75
Blue Tit	1.09	1.05 - 1.38
Great Tit	0.91	0.79 - 1.08
Coal Tit	-1.7	0.42 - 1
Skylark	-1.84	0.55 - 0.8
Swallow	2.78	0.6 - 1.15
House Martin	-2.08*	0.36 - 0.67
Long-tailed Tit	-0.96	0.32 - 0.62
Chiffchaff	1.4	1.17 - 1.91
Willow Warbler	-2.81**	0.32 - 0.55
Blackcap	9.47**	1.22 - 1.85
Whitethroat	7.12	1.36 - 2.5
Nuthatch	2.69	0.87 - 1.63
Wren	-1.37	0.65 - 0.87
Starling	-1.75	0.42 - 0.74
Blackbird	-0.83	0.68 - 0.86
Song Thrush	-1.1	0.86 - 1.34
Mistle Thrush	-3.68**	0.5 - 0.99
Robin	0.23	0.83 - 1.06
Duncock	-0.99	0.82 - 1.19
House Sparrow	-2.17	0.83 - 1.49
Pied Wagtail	-5**	0.29 - 0.63
Chaffinch	-1.72	0.58 - 0.76
Greenfinch	-4.93**	0.45 - 0.75
Goldfinch	5.42**	2.12 - 3.87
Linnet	-3.33**	0.31 - 0.61
Yellowhammer	-1.68*	0.45 - 0.7

# BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS OF 2013

by Ken Moore

JANUARY began with both **Buff-bellied Pipits** (firsts for Berkshire in December 2012) still in the county. Continuing with January, a visit from a **Black-throated Diver** on the 13th at Queen Mother Reservoir. Also in January at Queen Mother Reservoir: a fly-through **Hen Harrier** and a 1st winter **Iceland Gull**. However, perhaps the event of the year was the warbler at Eversley Gravel Pits; first identified as a Yellow-browed, photographs revealed the yellow rump of a Pallas's Warbler. Once the rump and crown stripes were seen properly, all agreed it was a **Pallas's Warbler**, another County first.

FEBRUARY's main events did not live up to the highs of January, but were nonetheless noteworthy with two **Whooper Swans** and a single **Pink-footed Goose** in mid Berkshire and small groups of **White-fronted Geese** in the east.

MARCH similar to February: two drake **Garganey** and later in the month four **Marsh Harriers** were recorded. There were three **Avocets** in mid-Berkshire and a **Stone-curlew** on a Colnbrook landfill site. **Oystercatchers** were back and two counts of over 100 **Snipe** in late March must have been wonderful to see.

APRIL produced yet another superb bird - a summer adult **Bonaparte's Gull** - what a fabulous bird. This deserves another thank you to the finder, Chris Heard. A **Dotterel** was found later the same day up on the Downs. A **Red-throated Diver** made a brief visit to Queen Mother Reservoir on the 27th; the first **Montagu's Harrier** of the year flew by Hampstead Norreys; there were two **Ospreys** and, at Dinton Pastures, a **Pied Flycatcher**, together providing a strong supporting April cast.

MAY there were four more brief sightings of the **Red-throated Diver** at Queen Mother Reservoir - Berkshire's first May records of this species. An adult **Long-tailed Skua** at Queen Mother Reservoir stayed for 17 minutes on the 24th - only the eighth County record. Two **Roseate Terns** on the 22nd, also at Queen Mother Reservoir, prompted the thought of annual visits by Roseates.

JUNE **Turtle Doves** were recorded at only three sites in May and June. There was another **Roseate Tern**, again at Queen Mother Reservoir, the highlight of the month.

JULY A **Marsh Harrier** at Moor Green Lakes stayed for approximately two weeks. Four **Common Scoter** were on Main Pit Theale briefly early in the month. Two **Wood Sandpipers** were reported, early returners from way up North?

AUGUST A very noteworthy group of 27 **Stone-curlew** was seen on the Downs (to be followed by 33 in September). In August still, a **Pectoral Sandpiper** arrived at Eton Wick for three days. One of Berkshire's largest **Turnstone** flocks, a total of 21, circled Queen Mother Reservoir three times and flew off west. Brief visits, a **Bonxie** on the 24th and an adult **Sabine's Gull** flying through on the 27th completed Queen Mother Reservoir's August log.

SEPTEMBER looked to be getting into the swing of Autumn. A **Great White Egret** over Lea Farm on the morning of the 5th headed towards the northeast corner, but kept going, never to be seen again. Two **Merlin** kept the annual count ticking over. A single **Curlew Sandpiper** at Queen Mother Reservoir topped the waders. A **Wryneck** was at Greenham Common on the 28th and the following day a **Black Redstart**. Both were preceded by a **Red-backed Shrike** on the 20th, only the seventh in the past 35 years or so. Incredibly, another **Red-backed Shrike** was seen in Colnbrook in east Berkshire two days later.

OCTOBER started off with a possible **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Dinton Pastures on the 6th; it or another was finally seen well on the 17th. A **Mealy Redpoll** was ringed at Padworth Common, a popular site for both Redpolls and ringers alike. On the 19th, a **Great White Egret** flew over Lower Farm GP and at the end of October a **Great Grey Shrike** visited Streatley Warren.

NOVEMBER began with two **Shags** at Queen Mother Reservoir on the 5th and another **Great White Egret**, this one at Heron Lake, Wraybury on the 9th. On the 10th a herd of seven **Whooper Swans** flew over Dinton Pastures

DECEMBER on the 1st an immature **Iceland Gull** was at Queen Mother Reservoir. A possible **Waxwing** reported in the Vicar of Bray's garden would have been the only 'second winter visitor' of this species.

*Bonaparte's Gull Hosehill LNR, Theale, April 26th*

TOP: *with Black-headed Gull, Mike McKee* BOTTOM LEFT: *Chris Heard*

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Mike McKee*





*Mediterranean Gull, Queen Mother Reservoir, Jul 21st, Chris Heard*



*Arctic Tern, Dinton Pastures, Apr 20th Dave Rimes*



*Little Gull, Woolhampton GPs, Oct 12th Marek Walford*



*Kittiwake, Queen Mother Reservoir, Dec 30th, Chris Heard*



*Black-necked Grebe, Woolhampton GPs, Apr 1st, Marek Walford*



*Oystercatchers with chick, Dinton Pastures, Jun 30th, Marek Walford*



*Black-throated Diver, Queen Mother Reservoir, Jan 14th. Mike McKee*



*Whimbrel, Queen Mother Reservoir, Apr 21st, Chris Heard*



*Shag, Queen Mother Reservoir,  
Nov 14th, Dave Rimes*



*Marsh Harrier, Eversley GPs,  
Mar 28th, Dave Rimes*



*Scandinavian Rock Pipit, Queen Mother Reservoir, Mar 11th, Mike McKee*



*Dotterel, Bury Down, Apr 27th, Mike McKee*



*Buff-bellied Pipit, Queen Mother Reservoir, Jan 18th, Mike McKee*



*Pallas's Warbler, Eversley GPs, Jan 12th, Dave Rimes*



*Siberian Chiffchaff, Eton Wick, Feb 1st, Dave Rimes*



*Pallas's Warbler, Eversley GPs, Feb 2nd, Mike McKee*



*Siberian Chiffchaff, Eton Wick, Feb 4th, Mike McKee*





*Yellow-browed Warbler, Dinton Pastures, Oct 17th, Dave Rimes*



*Hawfinch, Coombe, Jan 15th, Dave Rimes*

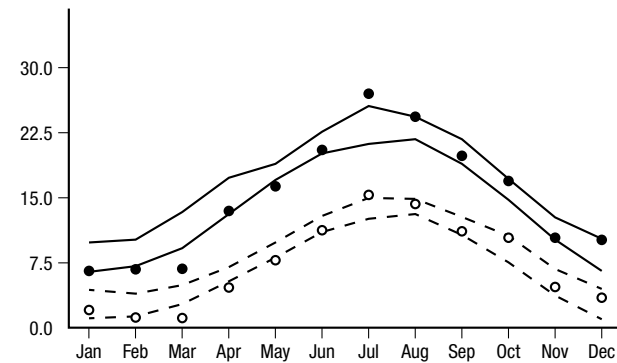


*Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Dinton Pastures, Nov 2nd, Marek Walford*

## WEATHER SUMMARY FOR 2013

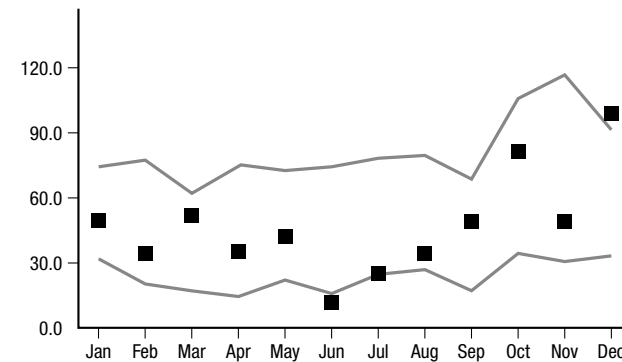
*Renton Righelato*

2013 was another unexceptional year. The figures below are based on data from the Met Office's Heathrow weather station. The pairs of continuous lines represent one standard deviation above and below the averages for the years 2000 to 2014. The symbols represent the data for 2013.



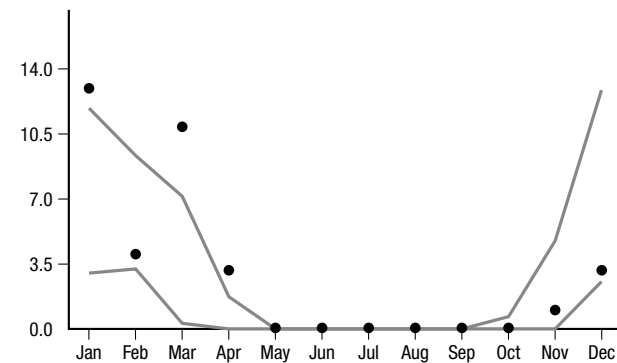
### Temperature

2013 Monthly average maximum (closed circles) and minimum (open circles). The lines indicate the upper and lower 68% confidence limits for the period 2000–14 for the monthly average maxima (continuous lines) and monthly average minima (broken lines). March to May was notably cooler than average.



### Rainfall

Monthly rainfall (mm): grey lines upper and lower 68% confidence limits for 2000–14; squares 2013.



### Cold weather

Days air frost: grey lines upper and lower 68% confidence limits for 2000–14; circles 2013.

January and March were somewhat colder than normal.

## SURVEYS

As well as the surveys organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, the BOC carries out surveys of particular relevance to Berkshire. Two were piloted in 2016 that will continue in 2017 and for which we are seeking volunteers.

### Breeding Water Rails

Water Rails are secretive birds whose breeding status in Berkshire is poorly documented. In the Atlas surveys of 2008-2011, Water Rails were confirmed to have bred in only five tetrads, with probable breeding in a further three. All but one of these sites were in the Kennet valley between Hungerford and Padworth. Given that marsh habitat occurs in 105 tetrads and they were recorded in 84 tetrads in winter, it seems likely that we are considerably underestimating their presence as breeding species. We carried out a pilot breeding survey between late March and early May 2016 using an established method in which surveyors, working in pairs, played a recording of Water Rails “sharming” and listened for a charming response.

Areas of marshy land were covered at four sites: Dinton Pastures, parts of Fobney and Coley Meadows, the River Loddon between Arborfield and Swallowfield and short stretches of the Thames at Streatley and at Lower Basildon. The surveyors were: Neil Bucknell, Jane Campbell, Fraser Cottington, Chris Foster, Adrian Lawson and Renton Righelato. Water Rails responded at all sites, with a total of nine probable territories. Atlas surveys had detected only two “possible” breeding records in the areas covered by the 2016 pilot survey.

The success of the pilot survey leads us to plan more extensive coverage in 2017. We are seeking surveyors to cover other suitable areas, particularly part of the Kennet between Newbury and Hungerford; more of the lower Kennet between Aldermarston Wharf and Reading; more of the Loddon from Arborfield to the Thames. The results will be provided to the Rare Birds Breeding Panel, which has asked for information on Water Rails to improve our understanding of their breeding status nationally.

Please contact me if you would like to help (dawn walks in these marshy areas in Spring can be rewarded with other interesting birds – I saw Garganey, numerous Snipe, Grasshopper Warblers as well as Water Rails).

### Farm Surveys

Last year, the BOC was asked by Des Sussex of Natural England if it could help farmers who were in bird-oriented agri-environment schemes by monitoring their sites for the target species. The aim was to give feedback to encourage farmers’ conservation efforts. We started with monitoring winter feeding plots on five farms, mostly in West Berkshire, in winter 2015/6. On four farms we continued with breeding surveys in spring/summer 2016.

The farmers who invited us were enthusiastic about the schemes they were following and keen to get the results of our monitoring, which were also given to Natural England to help them assess effectiveness.

The winter methodology was simply to observe how many of the target species (skylarks, sparrows, finches and buntings) were using the feed plots or winter stubbles. On two of the farms, it was satisfying to see flocks of 100 and 200 Corn Buntings. The breeding season methodology involved BBS-style transects for the larger farms or, for smaller holdings,

recording the presence and location of all of the target farmland specialist species seen (Grey Partridge, Lapwing, Skylark, Yellow Wagtail, Yellowhammer, Corn Bunting). Since most farmers are interested in birds more generally, in practice, we noted all species seen.

2016 was a trial year and having reviewed the results and got feedback from the farmers, both Natural England and the BOC Conservation Subcommittee are keen to extend this monitoring next year. To do this we need surveyors who can put in two early morning surveys of about two hours in April-June and day time surveys in November/December and again in January/March. Please contact me if you can help.

Renton Righelato (renton.righelato@berksoc.org.uk)

## DAMSELFLIES & DRAGONFLIES IN BERKSHIRE - 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

With April, May and June being the coldest for 50 years, it is no surprise that there was a slow start to the season, with numbers of records well down on previous years. Things picked up with the weather during June and the summer then went with a swing until the second part of September, when both the temperatures and records took a dive.

As a result of the weather **Large Red Damselfly**, normally the first species on the wing, didn’t appear until 30<sup>th</sup> April – the latest first date for several years. In all 16 species were first recorded more than one week later than their previous latest first date, with nine of those species not being recorded until more than a month later.

Records of **Downy Emerald** and **Common Clubtail** were significantly later than normal and numbers were down on recent years. **Common Clubtail** especially appears to have had a very poor year – the second in succession. This species, mainly confined to the Thames in Berkshire, is quite tricky to find, so it is possible that the apparent downturn is a combination of weather conditions, floods and under-recording. Up to seven adults plus 10 exuvia at Goring and three exuvia plus one adult at Caversham were the only May records with another single adult at Goring and three larvae near Pangbourne in June. **Downy Emerald** wasn’t recorded until 6<sup>th</sup> June – six weeks later than the earliest ever date.

**Hairy Dragonfly** peaked in June rather than May. Reports were mainly of ones and twos from Hosehill and the Twyford area, although four were recorded at Thames Valley Park. A new site for the species was at Decoy Heath where one was recorded.

**Common Hawker** struggled again this year with just the one record, at Wildmoor. **Brilliant Emerald**, another species found mainly on heathland in Berkshire, had a very poor year in its normal stronghold around Bracknell with just a single record from Rapley Lake, although it did fare slightly better at Decoy Heath with six records (all single adults) during June and July. In contrast **Small Red Damselfly**, also a heathland specialist, seems to have had a good year with good numbers present at most sites, the most being 50 at Decoy Heath.

After last year’s excitement and hopes that this would become a regular visitor over the border from Surrey, there were no records of **Scarce Chaser** in 2013.

The **Small Red-eyed Damselfly** is a relatively new (2005) arrival in Berkshire and is rarely recorded in the same sort of numbers as the Red-eyed Damselfly. However it appears to be in decline and disappearing from several sites where it has previously been recorded, only being reported from Moatlands, Thames Valley Park, Allsmoor Pond (Bracknell) and two private sites in 2013. As it often occurs in the company of Red-eyed Damselflies and looks very similar, you have to look carefully to differentiate between the two.

**Variable Damselfly** only occurs at two sites in Berkshire – an offshoot of the R. Kennet near Southcote where up to 51 were recorded and Cookham Common (near Maidenhead) which was not visited in 2013.

Probably the two species most often seen are the **Common Blue Damselfly**, which can be seen in large clouds of 1000+ over most lakes in the county, and the **Banded Demoiselle** which is often seen along rivers and streams, although numbers were well down in 2013. On the Kennet & Avon Canal the Banded Demoiselle is often seen in company with the **Beautiful Demoiselle** with up to 60 of the latter species being recorded in 2013. One of the editors of the Atlas of Dragonflies in Britain & Ireland (published 2014) said that the canal held probably the best mixed population of Banded and Beautiful Demoiselles that he has ever seen in one place.

The following species were recorded in 2013:

Emerald Damselfly	Blue-tailed Damselfly	Downy Emerald
Banded Demoiselle	Large Red Damselfly	Brilliant Emerald
Beautiful Demoiselle	Southern Hawker	Broad-bodied Chaser
White-legged Damselfly	Brown Hawker	Four-spotted Chaser
Small Red Damselfly	Common Hawker	Black-tailed Skimmer
Azure Damselfly	Migrant Hawker	Keeled Skimmer
Variable Damselfly	Emperor Dragonfly	Black Darter
Common Blue Damselfly	Hairy Dragonfly	Ruddy Darter
Red-eyed Damselfly	Common Clubtail	Common Darter
Small Red-eyed Damselfly	Golden-ringed Dragonfly	

This report covers the geographical county of Berkshire. More details are given in the annual report and newsletter, available from the email address below or on the Berkshire Dragonflies Facebook group. 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 2013 BY THE BERKSHIRE RECORDS COMMITTEE (BRC)

Committee for 2013: Derek Barker, Chris Heard (Chair), Ken Moore, Robin Dryden, 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:

Category 1 Nationally rare species for which records first have to be accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) and any record of a species new to Berkshire;

Category 2 Locally rare species for which a full description is required (this includes all former BBRC rarities);

Category 3 Locally scarce species (or commoner species seen at an unusual time of year or in exceptional circumstances) for which short supporting notes are required.

### Category 2 species

Bean Goose; Pink-footed Goose; American Wigeon; Green-winged Teal; Lesser Scaup (from 2015), 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 Crane; 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; Olive-backed Pipit (from 2013); Dipper; Bluethroat; Marsh Warbler; Icterine Warbler; Melodious Warbler; Pallas's Warbler; Yellow-browed Warbler; Penduline Tit (from 2015); 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 former national BBRC Rarity species.

### Category 3 species

Bewick's Swan; Whooper Swan (unless feral); White-fronted Goose; Brent Goose; Barnacle Goose (unless feral); Garganey; Scaup; Eider; Long-tailed Duck; Common Scoter; Red-breasted 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 identification 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; Red-backed Shrike; Great Grey Shrike; Raven; Tree Sparrow; Hawfinch; Snow Bunting.

Review of records for 2013: 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 (and we do not include reports from social media). Note that \* indicates that no description was received; 'date' indicates a highly unusual sighting date; and 'count' indicates a highly unusual number. Where descriptions are available but have not been provided, we would welcome them or further supporting information for any of these records.

Pink-footed Goose	Woodley Jan 2	
Bittern	West Berkshire Crematorium Aug 20	*
Great White Egret	Lea Farm GP Oct 19	*
Honey Buzzard	Bury Down Sep 10	*
Black Kite	Lower Farm GP Sep 6	*
Black Kite	Mortimer Oct 9	
Hen Harrier	Bury Down April 10	
Hen Harrier	Combe Aug 11	
Hen Harrier	Bury Down Sep 10	
Goshawk	Inkpen area Aug-Oct	*
Hobby	Hurley Jan 20	(date)
Crane	Shurlock Row Oct 2	
Bar-tailed Godwit	Greenham Common July 28	*
Iceland Gull	Lower Farm GP Jan 19	*
Caspian Gull	Lower Farm GP Feb 4	*
Caspian Gull	Lower Farm GP Nov 29, Dec 3	*
Yellow-browed Warbler	Lower Farm GP Jan 6	*
White Wagtail	Lower Farm GP Jul 19	(date)*
Waxwing	Earley March 11	(count)
Waxwing	Bray Dec 10	*
Common Redpoll	Lower Farm GP Feb 12	*
Hawfinch	Hungerford Mar 6	*

## 2013 SYSTEMATIC LIST

*The species accounts for the 2013 Systematic List were prepared by the account writers shown in the table below. It was edited by a team consisting of Derek Barker, Richard Burness, Robin Dryden, Ken Moore and Renton Righelato.*

Account writer	Species
Renton Righelato	Swans, Geese.
Robert Godden	Ducks
Andy Horscroft	Gamebirds, Divers, Grebes, Gannet to Shag and Herons
Steve Ricks	Birds of Prey
Marek Walford	Waders
Andy Tomczynski	Skuas, Gulls and Terns
Adam Bassett	Pigeons, Ring-necked Parakeet and Cuckoo
Renton Righelato	Nightjar, Owls, Chats and Thrushes, Rails
Mark Whitaker	Swift and Woodpeckers
Pete Gipson	Larks, Swallows, Pipits, Wagtails, Waxwing, Wren and Dunnoek
Richard Crawford	Warblers and Crests
Roger Stansfield	Flycatchers, BeardedTit, Tits, Nuthatch and Treecreeper
Fraser Cottington	Golden Oriole to Starlings
Dick Burness	Sparrows, Finches and Buntings
Ken Moore	Escapes and hybrids

### 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>flw</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*

Common on many of our rivers and lakes, Mute Swans are rarely systematically recorded. The BTO's Wetland Birds Survey, which provides monthly counts for most of the larger water bodies, showed winter totals in January and February and in October to December of only 120 to 160. High counts elsewhere were 121 on the River Thames at Reading on Jan 9th (DF), a maximum of 219 on the Thames at Windsor Promenade on Apr 10th (DF), 37-39 in fields at Beenham with two Whooper Swans during March (MO). For comparison, the winter Berkshire population estimate from Atlas surveys in 2007-11 was 1400 birds. Windsor Promenade also held a notable 234, including four cygnets on Jun 27th (DF).

**Breeding:** Birds were reported on nests from mid-April with the first cygnets seen in mid-May. One adult was seen with a large brood of nine cygnets at Dinton Pastures on Jun 26th (RM). A bird seen at Cookham on May 5th, bearing a ring 12T (BDC), had been ringed in 2005 nearby at Cliveden Reach.

## WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

*A scarce passage and winter visitor, formerly a feral resident (Amber Listed)*

Two Swans seen feeding in brassicas with Mute Swans at Lower Padworth on Feb 17th (DWK) were initially thought to be Bewick's. However, better conditions the next day allowed identification as Whooper Swans in fields at Beenham (PEH, KEM, ABT), where, apart from an excursion to Padworth Lane GP on Feb 19th (CDRH), they stayed feeding with Mute Swans, until Mar 28th (MO). On Nov 10th the Friends of Lavell's Lake bird walk saw a party of seven (three adults and four juveniles) flying low eastwards over Lea Farm landfill (FJC).

## PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

*Scarce winter visitor*

A single bird was at Hosehill Lake on Feb 24th (AVL) and was seen there and in the Sulhampstead area, mostly consorting with Greylags, until Apr 10th (MO); it was suggested to be a first winter, based on untidy flank feathers and smallish wing coverts (CDRH). An escaped individual was at Eton Wick and Dorney Wetlands on May 28th and 29th (DCle, CDRH).

## WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

*Uncommon but regular winter visitor, scarce passage migrant*

Two birds were at Eton Wick on Jan 25th (DJB) and present until Mar 5th (MO). A party of 10 adults and a first winter was at Whiteplace Farm, Cookham from Feb 8th to Mar 2nd (DF, BAJC, BDC, CDRH) and presumably the same party was seen nearby at Summerleaze GPs, Maidenhead, on Mar 5th (CDRH).

## GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

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

Because of the lack of systematic reporting, few sites could be included in the table. Counts of greater than 100 during January-March that are not included in the table were 180 at Cock Marsh (CDRH), 150 at Cookham (BDC), 110 on the Thames at Reading (DF) and 103 at Streatley (NJB). By April, numbers were augmented by new broods and in May 308 Greylags at Windsor Great Park on 26th included 137 goslings from 28 broods (DJB).

The third quarter brought the highest count of the year, with 560 gathered at Horton GPs on Aug 28th (CDRH) and 437 at Windsor Great Park on Sep 8th (DJB). Large flocks remained through the rest of the year at most of the aforementioned sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pingewood GPs	25	116	7	10	-	-	-	103	2	-	-	39
Padworth Lane GP	-	-	60		11	-	-	70	-	192	243	100
Twyford GPs	50	-	-	12	9	40	-	-	97	106	-	38
Theale GPs	2	14	128	23	20	4	70	5	-	-	100	22
Great Meadow Pond,	2	200	232	274	311	305	430	398	437	115	40	350
Woolhampton GPs	2	4	3	6	6	-	16	3	79	110	-	-

## SNOW GOOSE *Chen caerulescens*

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

The single remaining bird at Eversley GPs was reported occasionally between January and December. The only other records were of two white phase birds at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park, on May 5th (DJB) and a blue phase bird with Canada Geese at Woodlands Park Fields, Maidenhead on Sep 18th (DJB).

## CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

*Common and widespread introduced resident*

The table shows the maximum monthly counts at regular count sites for which records were received for at least half of the year. However, flocks of Canada Geese can be found in many other places in the river valleys in the county; some of the larger counts were: 260 at Lower Culham on Jan 20th (SJF, FMF), 249 at Mortimer on Jan 29th (PD), c400 at Eton Wick on Sep 4th (KPD), 614 at Aston on Sep 28th (DJB) and 351 at Remenham on Oct 4th (DF).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GPs	65	27	56	-	-	-	-	-	82	48	15	31
Dinton Pastures	111	72	44	58	-	-	-	-	-	137	90	16
Lea Farm Lake	220	-	-	6	-	-	-	185	-	211	99	60
Eversley GPs	107	126	130	120	45	84	165	495	193	105	113	142
Lower Farm GP	52	75	25	20	12	48	50	70	50	68	122	123
Reading, R Thames	120	97	38	-	-	-	-	-	39	400	195	158
Thatcham GP	49	37	24	49	48	114	148	124	60	87	74	6
Theale	21	87	51	124	53	15	38	20	10	-	14	25
Twyford GPs	55	29	19	30	19	18	-	20	318	178	27	98
Great Meadow Pond	10	93	75	54	65	40	37	53	231	26	-	-
Windsor Promenade	-	-	41	81	60	125	138	318	229	222	147	148
Woolhampton GPs	30	24	20	7	17	14	16	7	40	14	-	1

## BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

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

The feral flock wintering at Eversley GPs dwindled from its January peak of 18 plus two hybrid Barnacle Goose x Snow Goose (JMC) to one on May 11th (RCMu). Birds returned in August with a flock of 22 on 10th (NSi) and up to 16 through the remainder of the year.

Elsewhere two Barnacle Geese were seen at Swallowfield on Apr 2nd (RCMu) and one there on 11th (DJB), one at Theale Main Lake on Oct 3rd (KEM, ABT) and one at Whiteknights Park on Nov 3rd (PG).

## BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

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

The only record of Brent Goose for the year was of a party of four of the dark-bellied race *B. bernicla bernicla* at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 14th (MMc).

## EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

*Common introduced resident in mid and east Berks, more local in the west*

Monthly maxima at regular count sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Thatcham GPs	2	1	–	–	2	6	6	6	1	2	–	2
Lower Farm GP	2	–	1	1	5	2	2	4	5	7	2	3
Dinton Pastures/Lea Farm	24	1	2	7	2	–	2	4	–	2	9	12
Eversley GPs *	47	7	7	8	7	27	32	52	112	31	30	55
Queen Mother Reservoir	1	–	4	1	–	21	26	21	9	13	3	1
Remenham	42	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	16	3	–	27
Theale GPs	19	8	6	5	2	–	2	17	26	1	2	2
Windsor Great Park	4	23	14	16	18	14	11	16	16	19	6	7

\* may include some Hampshire birds

## SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

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

Shelduck were reported from 12 sites in east Berkshire, 13 sites in mid Berkshire and 11 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures CP	–	1	1	1	–	–	–	4	–	–	1	–
Dorney Wetlands	5	10	7	10	11	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Eversley GPs	5	5	6	6	3	4	–	–	–	–	–	1
Great Meadow Pond	2	2	10	12	14	10	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lower Farm GP	–	4	2	2	2	1	1	1	–	1	–	–
Padworth Lane GP	6	8	8	3	2	3	–	–	–	–	–	3
Pingewood GPs	1	–	3	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Queen Mother Reservoir	3	2	2	6	5	14	12	3	1	–	2	–
Slough Sewage Farm	–	–	4	7	18	14	3	–	–	–	–	–
Theale GPs	7	–	–	2	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
Woolhampton GPs	–	2	3	6	2	–	–	–	–	1	–	–
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	3	8	12	13	6	5	1	–	–	1	1	–
<b>Number of birds</b>	3	13	27	31	16	23	10	–	–	1	2	–

The east of the county is the stronghold for this species; a number of sites in close proximity

(Dorney Wetlands, Eton Wick Floods, Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park, Queen Mother Reservoir and Slough Sewage Farm) maintained counts in double figures over several months in the spring and summer. All counts made elsewhere were in single figures.

**First winter:** Numbers gradually increased from the start of the year reaching a peak in April. **Summer:** Shelduck were well-reported in the spring and summer, with 12 – 14 pairs scattered around the county, but there was no evidence of successful breeding. The highest count came from Slough Sewage Farm where 18 were present on May 15th (CDRH).

**Second winter:** The last significant counts before the wholesale departure for the moult in the Wadden Sea were 10 at Eton Wick on Jul 1st (CDRH) and 12 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 2nd (CDRH); the extent of the departure is evident from the summary table. Thereafter there were five brief appearances by single birds at various sites, and the only larger groups involved three at Slough Sewage Farm on Jul 11th (CDRH), a family of four at Dinton Pastures CP on Aug 24th which was only the third August record for the site (FJC) and three juveniles that flew west at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 27th (CDRH). Returning birds started to appear from mid November with a pair at Horton GPs on Oct 17th (CDRH) and two at Queen Mother Reservoir the same day (CDRH), one at Dinton Pastures CP from Nov 26th (PSc), one at Eversley GPs on Dec 29th (NSi) and one at Padworth Lane GPs on Dec 14th increasing to three by the end of the year (KEM *et al.*).

## MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

*Locally common introduced resident*

Mandarin Duck were reported from 28 sites in east Berkshire, 29 sites in mid Berkshire and 9 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GPs	8	17	–	–	–	–	–	12	–	–	–	–
Eversley GPs	9	6	5	5	7	9	11	6	3	–	–	6
Great Meadow Pond	–	–	2	9	2	4	–	21	104	–	–	–
Maiden Erlegh Lake, Reading	14	–	9	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Whiteknights Park Lake	6	6	–	6	11	5	–	–	50	–	–	–
Windsor Great Park <sup>1</sup>	12	–	15	5	–	7	–	1	4	3	–	–
Wraysbury GPs	7	2	4	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	6	11	28	29	21	10	8	5	4	4	1	7
<b>Number of birds</b>	44	56	107	73	43	47	17	13	30	21	1	87

<sup>1</sup> denotes counts made away from Great Meadow Pond

The majority of reports received were of one or two birds. Peak counts were 44 in Prospect Park, Reading on Dec 13th and 20th (AVL), at least 50 at Whiteknights Park Lake, Reading on Sep 18th (PG) and an impressive 104 flushed from the north-west corner of Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on Sep 8th (DJB). **Breeding:** A good number of reports of successful breeding were received with young birds observed at eight sites: two broods at Eversley GPs (MHu *et al.*), at Frogmill, Hurley (FMF, SJF) and at Maidenhead including a female with 16 well-grown ducklings by the tow path on Jun 24th (DF). Single broods were noted at Sunninghill Park (DJB), at Jubilee River (KPD), at Whiteknights Park (PG, LBM, SDay), at Bisham (MTu) and at Woolhampton GPs (WeBS). Pairs were observed at four other sites during the breeding season; nevertheless, owing to the elusive nature of this species the actual number of breeding pairs is likely to be much higher.

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

Wigeon were reported from 13 sites in east Berkshire, 10 sites in mid Berkshire and 9 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GPs	450	354	360	–	–	–	–	11	105	66	98	72
Dinton Pastures CP	170	169	217	28	–	–	8	3	5	50	37	45
Eversley GPs	213	361	95	20	–	–	2	2	20	163	224	227
Great Meadow Pond	8	–	–	–	–	–	1	6	70	10	2	20
Horton GPs	64	120	–	4	–	–	–	–	8	12	–	17
Lower Farm GP	24	100	30	6	–	–	–	5	34	38	43	108
Pingewood GPs	–	–	–	50	–	–	–	–	11	53	–	–
Theale GPs	2	70	125	6	1	1	–	18	100	174	114	182
Twyford GPs	164	260	42	–	–	–	–	–	97	159	234	237
Windsor Great Park	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	–	–	–	–
Woolhampton GPs	10	2	2	5	–	–	1	–	20	16	–	2
Wraysbury GPs	66	4	6	–	–	–	1	2	23	–	–	27
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	7	5	2	3	–	–	–	4	4	5	8	4
<b>Number of birds</b>	170	50	6	24	–	–	–	13	51	23	81	66

**First winter:** Overall numbers in the county reached their peak at the end of January and early February with the maximum count an impressive 450+ at Burghfield GPs on Jan 26th (JA) while Eversley GPs recorded its peak count of 361 on Feb 2nd (JMC). Totals from the WeBS counts exceeded the totals averaged over the preceding decade by at least 20%. Numbers fell away quickly in early March; the last count to exceed 50 was 214 at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Mar 15th (MFW) while the last report was of a drake at Lower Farm GP Newbury on Apr 27th (IW, JL). Several reports of Wigeon away from the main sites concerned birds on flooded fields, with 30 at Speen Moor Plantations, Newbury on Feb 8th (IW, JL, RGS) and seven at Arborfield Flood Meadows on Apr 16th (DJB). **Summer:** Only one bird was present in this period, an injured drake reported from Theale Main Lake between May 1st and Jun 7th (KEM *et al.*). **Second winter:** After a single at Woolhampton GPs on July 8th the first returning flock were eight at Lea Farm Lake on Jul 9th (PSc). Numbers then gradually increased at many sites until a more significant arrival in September with 79 at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on Sep 8th (ABT), and then at the end of the month with 70 at Twyford GPs on Sep 23rd (WeBS), 70 at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on Sep 29th (DJB) and 105 at Burghfield GPs on Sep 29th (JA). The peak counts were 227 at Eversley GPs on Dec 10th (JMC) and 237 at Twyford GPs on Dec 16th (WeBS). There were few records away from the regular sites, but perhaps the most notable were 44 at Eton Wick Floods on Nov 23rd (RN *et al.*) which remained to the end of the year.

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

Gadwall were reported from 18 sites in east Berkshire, 13 sites in mid Berkshire and 25 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GPs	10	16	–	–	–	–	–	8	–	–	–	–
Bray GPs	26	34	2	–	–	–	–	–	2	6	14	37
Burghfield GPs	305	521	109	–	–	–	–	–	60	90	213	252
Dinton Pastures CP	102	59	12	4	2	10	–	1	8	39	59	101
Dorney Wetlands	3	30	–	3	3	5	–	–	9	10	22	–
Eversley GPs	111	86	15	7	7	6	8	4	13	40	44	138
Great Meadow Pond	6	13	3	12	14	9	28	78	112	40	86	55
Harveys Meadow, Hungerford	–	2	4	4	3	8	–	–	–	–	–	2
Horton GPs	202	112	16	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	74
Lower Farm GP	100	200	205	50	13	16	70	64	45	17	34	105
Summerleaze GP	–	30	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	33
Thatcham GPs	1	4	23	8	7	5	4	5	–	1	22	–
Theale GPs	85	51	10	9	6	9	4	50	–	–	60	23
Twyford GPs	140	185	52	2	1	–	–	–	58	72	69	225
Woolhampton GPs	30	22	8	2	–	2	27	15	8	7	6	22
Wraysbury GPs	352	183	52	20	–	–	–	–	7	–	–	268
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	5	9	10	17	13	5	5	1	4	4	6	7
<b>Number of birds</b>	107	141	111	173	46	11	64	8	15	18	39	62

**First winter:** Peak first winter counts, typically recorded in January, were made in February this year. This was due in part to some exceptional numbers at Burghfield GPs where 521 were present on Feb 9th (NJB, WeBS), a figure that continued the trend of steady increase at this site in recent years. Numbers fell away rapidly generally in the first week of March, though at least 75 were still present at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Mar 29th (NC) while Queen Mother Reservoir experienced its highest numbers in early April when between 40 and 52 were present from Apr 1st to Apr 10th (KPD, PEH, PNe). The flood at Eton Wick held 69 on Jan 1st (DJB) and at least 58 on Feb 1st (PEH). **Summer:** Successful breeding was observed at eight sites and is summarised as follows: a brood of 11 ducklings at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Jun 26th (PEH) and broods of five and seven there by Jul 13th (IW, JL); four young on a stream at Thatcham Marsh Jul 27th (IW, JL); a brood of four at Eversley GPs on Jun 21st (NSi) and a separate brood of 10 on Jul 22nd (JMC); broods of 5 and 2 at Theale Main Lake on Jun 24th (RCr); a brood of 8 at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Jun 16th (RM); a count of 28 including a female with a duckling at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on Jul 7th (DJB); a female with one juvenile at Woolhampton GPs on Jul 10th (WeBS); six young at Midgham GP on Aug 4th (JPM). Gadwall were present at 17 other sites during this period, with pairs noted at five sites. **Second winter:** Numbers started to increase in the last third of July with 70 at Lower Farm GP on Jul 20th (IW), and reached a typical peak in December with around 1400 birds in the county primarily at the main sites. Maximum counts were 252 at Burghfield GPs on Dec 15th (WeBS) and 268 at the Wraysbury and Horton GPs complex on Dec 22nd (WeBS).

## TEAL *Anas crecca crecca/nimbia*

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

Teal were reported from 19 sites in east Berkshire, 10 sites in mid Berkshire and 16 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GPs	8	–	32	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	100	8
Bray GPs	1	6	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
Dinton Pastures CP	50	38	65	34	–	–	3	31	42	35	14	101
Dorney Wetlands	150	30	30	2	–	2	–	–	–	15	8	–
Eton Wick Floods	230	176	107	53	1	3	1	22	88	100	86	5
Eversley GPs	56	21	11	9	–	2	9	36	31	33	13	20
Great Meadow Pond	12	12	14	6	–	–	4	22	50	81	19	30
Lower Farm GP	30	100	50	46	2	2	18	22	30	125	76	120
Pingewood GPs	12	13	140	120	–	–	–	1	1	2	–	–
Slough Sewage Farm	–	–	–	1	–	1	2	5	–	–	90	90
Theale GPs	12	4	5	4	–	–	–	3	9	5	2	15
Woolhampton GPs	5	–	67	4	–	1	1	14	12	18	–	4
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	5	11	13	16	–	–	–	4	8	6	9	10
<b>Number of birds</b>	42	185	303	319	–	–	–	8	70	50	46	241

**First winter:** Numbers of Teal rose to a peak in March and quickly fell away in early April. Away from the main sites quoted in the table, numbers started to build from late January on floods by the Sewage Treatment Works at Streatley reaching a peak of 64 on Apr 6th with last two remaining until Apr 21st (NJB). Other sites also held high numbers relatively late in the period: exactly 100 were counted at Borough Marsh, Wargrave on Mar 17th (ABT), 106 were at Arborfield Flood Meadows on Apr 10th (DJB), 49 were in a flooded Thames-side meadow at Frogmill, Hurley on Apr 2nd (FME, SJF) and up to 22 were seen daily at Heywoods Stream Flood, Woodlands Park in late March and early April (DJB). A count of 50 at Home Farm, Kintbury on Feb 14th was also notable (RGS). **Summer:** For the first time in over twenty years, Teal were proven to have successfully bred. Teal have bred in Berkshire sporadically in the past, with the last confirmed occurrences taking place during the 1987 – 89 Atlas. Their habit of nesting in dense vegetation makes it difficult to observe breeding behaviour. However, on Jul 8th seven Teal were observed at Eversley GPs including three large young (NSi). Subsequently a family party of eclipse drake, duck and seven nearly-fledged juveniles were watched there on Jul 21st (CDRH). Over the following two weeks at this site (*i.e.* prior to the influx of returning birds), none of the reports of Teal involved more than two birds, highlighting the ease with which breeding attempts can be overlooked. Elsewhere throughout this period, there were many sightings of two or three Teal at Lower Farm GP, Newbury but only a couple of reports specifically referred to a male and female being present (MO). At Eton Wick up to three drakes were reported between May 12th and Jun 15th (CDRH, KPD) with two additional drakes nearby at Dorney Wetlands on Jun 10th (CDRH). Also at Eton Wick there were two females on Jun 25th (CDRH) and a moulting drake was at Slough SF on Jun 30th (CDRH). A female was watched at Woolhampton GPs on Jun 23rd (WeBS). **Second winter:** Numbers started to rise in the last third of August. Notable counts away from the main sites were 95 at Padworth Lane GP on Dec 15th (RJB) and 70 feeding in water-logged grass at Home Farm, Kintbury on Dec 22nd (RGS).

## MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

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

Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GPs	30	–	–	1	–	–	–	45	–	–	54	–
Dinton Pastures CP	119	43	50	12	–	6	9	–	–	58	57	80
Eversley GPs	52	50	28	24	21	45	86	60	47	57	33	100
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	20	10	7	6	13	23	70	20	28	150	27	25
Great Meadow Pond	11	14	14	32	33	40	53	100	134	29	55	57
Thatcham NDC and GPs	105	71	78	61	38	59	95	119	55	86	101	96
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	23	35	34	63	49	32	23	21	27	24	30	32
<b>Number of birds</b>	436	557	402	555	523	438	274	710	966	625	451	690

During the year, Mallard were reported from around 130 locations. High counts came from the River Thames at Windsor all year, with 185 on Feb 24th (KPD) and 321 on Aug 7th (DF). Elsewhere, 153 were feeding in a stubble field at Englefield on Aug 21st (RCr) and 150 were at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Oct 19th (NC). **Summer:** Breeding was noted at 26 sites, with five broods on Jun 30th at Boulter's Lock, Maidenhead (DF). At Chaddleworth, high groundwater levels allowed three broods to be raised in a field that would normally be dry, with 25 young birds observed on May 19th (GDS).

## PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

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

Pintail were reported from five sites in east Berkshire, ten sites in mid Berkshire and four sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Number of sites</b>	9	4	6	2	–	–	–	1	5	5	6	2
<b>Number of birds</b>	15	7	8	10	–	–	–	1	15	10	6	2

**First winter:** A scattering of records was received representing around 28 birds typically involving one or two birds with a bias towards sites in mid and east Berkshire. The only reports from the west, probably concerning the same pair, came from Padworth Lane GP on Feb 2nd (ABT), Woolhampton GP on Feb 20th (KEM, RGi) and Lower Farm GP, Newbury from Feb 25th to Mar 9th (MO). Elsewhere a pair was at Theale GPs on Jan 15th (AMH) and a drake on Jan 13th (RJB), and 2 drakes and a female were at Burghfield GPs the same day (JA). A pair was present at Sonning Meadows, Sonning on Jan 19th – 20th (MFW, ABT), and this site also hosted the maximum count for this species, five on Apr 3rd increasing to nine on Apr 4th (CDRH). Two drakes were reported from Eversley GPs on Jan 5th (MO) and a drake was there on Feb 1st (JMC). A female was at Eton Wick Jan 24th – 27th (MO). A drake was at Borough Marsh on Mar 19th (RDr, CDRH). Another drake was found at Dinton Pastures CP on Mar 11th (MFW). Wraybury GPs held one on Jan 13th (WeBS) and a pair from Mar 5th to Mar 8th (CDRH), while at Horton GP a female was reported on Jan 25th (JMC), and possibly a different female on dates between Mar 16th and Apr 7th, the latest report for this period (CDRH). **Second winter:** Some 22 birds were reported, with the first concerning an adult female in Windsor



Great Park on Aug 26th (CDRH) and two juveniles there on Sept 8th (DJB). A pair was at Burghfield GPs on Sep 22nd (WeBS). A female or immature was reported from Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale between Sep 9th and 13th (ABT, KEM), and six more females or immatures were watched flying off north from Greenham Common on Sep 28th (CDRH, PEH). Two Pintail flying high south-east over Woosehill, Wokingham on Sep 30th were a surprise addition to an observer's garden list (PBT). In October, two were present at Twyford GPs on Oct 14th (WeBS), and a female that arrived at Lower Farm GP on Oct 2nd (IW, JL) remained until Nov 9th (MO) with an excursion to Thatcham on Oct 5th (BJW). Four Pintail Flew over Dinton Pastures CP on Oct 13th (FJC) and on Oct 18th (DAC). A female was at Hosehill Lake LNR on Nov 8th (KEM), a drake at Burnthouse Lane on Nov 14th (KEM) and a first winter male was found in Green Park, Reading on Nov 14th (SAG). Finally, a female found at Horton GPs on Nov 17th was reported until at least Dec 28th and was possibly the same individual that was seen at Heron Lakes, Wraysbury on Dec 14th (CDRH).

### GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

*Regular passage migrant in small numbers and rare summer visitor, has bred (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

Despite an above-average spring for this species, a poor showing in the autumn meant that 2013 was well below average with just 12 birds noted. **Spring:** The first of the year was a drake on floods near the Sewage Treatment Works at Streatley on Mar 24th, remaining until Apr 2nd (NJB et al.) Another drake was found at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Mar 29th (MFW, NR), and then on Apr 7th a drake was located at Lower Farm GP, Newbury and was reported until Apr 12th (BL, JLS, NC). On Apr 14th one was seen on a seasonal pool off Longwater Road, Finchampstead (BGU) and a pair were seen to fly off from Horton GPs on Apr 15th (CDRH). Two were seen at Searle's Farm Lane GP, Burghfield on Apr 22nd (PDHynes). The final reports concern a drake at Theale Main Lake on May 2nd (AVL, KEM) and another drake the same day at Woolhampton GPs (ABT). **Autumn:** Only two reports were received in this period. One flew in at Lea Farm Lake with two Teal on Aug 16th (PSc) and an eclipse drake was on the island at Summerleaze GPs, Maidenhead on Aug 23rd (CDRH).

### SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

*Locally common passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce in summer though occasionally breeds (Amber Listed)*

Shoveler were reported from 12 sites in east Berkshire, 15 sites in mid Berkshire and 9 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GPs	7	22	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burghfield GPs	3	5	26	-	-	-	-	-	2	27	17	140
Dinton Pastures CP	5	4	2	6	-	2	8	18	21	1	3	8
Dorney Wetlands/ Slough SF	15	17	37	-	3	2	-	3	-	2	8	-
Eversley GPs	26	32	37	42	-	2	1	7	2	38	52	51
Great Meadow Pond	-	2	4	7	2	2	4	26	93	10	3	14
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	30	50	50	40	-	10	8	18	48	63	60	83
Moatlands GPs	-	100	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	40	-	-

Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	5	-	1	-	2
Thatcham NDC and GPs	12	2	4	1	-	-	5	1	11	6	41	4
Theale Main and Hosehill	16	18	129	29	2	5	1	3	10	-	7	14
Twyford GPs	28	51	45	24	-	-	-	-	3	8	9	9
Whiteknights Park Lake	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	67
Woolhampton GPs	6	2	2	4	1	-	-	6	9	22	4	3
Wraysbury GPs	20	21	7	2	-	-	2	16	77	-	-	26
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	4	3	3	8	1	1	1	1	2	-	4	4
<b>Number of birds</b>	66	5	8	51	5	1	1	2	9	-	8	102

**First winter:** There were few significant counts away from the main sites quoted in the table. South Lake, Reading held 42 on Jan 20th (DFI), there were 18 at Padworth Lane GP on Apr 6th (KEM) and up to 19 were at the Arborfield Flood Meadows between Apr 10th and 26th (DJB). **Summer:** There was no evidence of breeding, but reports of pairs in this period came from seven locations, though mostly for short stays. Pairs were at Moatlands GP, Theale on May 17th (KEM), Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on May 10th (KEM), Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park between May 26th and Jun 9th (DJB), Eversley GPs between Jun 7th and 9th (CDW, PBT) and Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Jun 16th (RM). Another pair enjoyed a longer stay at Slough Sewage Farm and Dorney Wetlands between May 10th (KPD) and Jun 23rd (CDRH). However, Lower Farm GP, Newbury held the highest numbers of Shoveler starting with six on Jun 19th (GJS), a maximum of 10 the next day (IW) and thereafter up to eight could be seen throughout the summer. **Second winter:** The table shows a slight peak in numbers in September probably due to passage birds, and then, after a dip, numbers built up again significantly in December. Away from the main sites, a high count of 86 was made at Horton GPs on Dec 21st (CDRH). Seven touched down for just 10 minutes at Eton Wick on Sep 19th (DCle) before flying off. Finally, at Lower Farm GP, a Shoveler was watched fully submerged as it dived for food on Sep 10th (ABT).

### RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

*Scarce visitor of presumed feral origin, has bred*

Red-crested Pochard were present in the county for most of the year; monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Number of sites</b>	3	-	3	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	4	1
<b>Number of birds</b>	7	-	7	8	5	5	2	4	3	1	7	1

**First winter:** Birds that had been present at the end of 2012 remained into 2013 – this included two pairs frequenting Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale and Theale Main Lake until Jan 17th (MO), and a drake at Village Pit, Wraysbury until Jan 23rd (CDRH). A drake was also reported at the BA Pit, Wraysbury on Mar 8th and 9th (CDRH). Reports of a pair at Padworth Lane GP were received for Jan 10th (PEH) and Apr 14th (KEM) while a pair at nearby Woolhampton GPs on Mar 31st (GEW) and at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Apr 1st (MIGW) may have involved the same birds. **Summer:** No evidence was received of successful breeding despite being present throughout the summer. A pair at Woolhampton

GPs on Jun 5th and 6th (GEW, LBM, LRB) may have been the same pair that was present in the area in the winter period. However, the overwhelming majority of records in this period came from the Hosehill Lake LNR and Theale GPs area. A pair was located here on Apr 1st (KEM) and thereafter up to four drakes were reported until Jun 14th (MO). The female was noted on several dates up to Apr 14th (MO), and isolated reports of a pair were received on May 12th (WeBS) and on May 16th on Main Pit Pylon Island (NR). Two immatures were watched at Hosehill Lake on Jul 2nd (KEM). **Second winter:** After an apparent eight week absence, records resumed from Hosehill Lake LNR with three there on Aug 26th (ABT), followed by sightings of up to two drakes and three females in the area until Sep 16th (MO) and an isolated report of a drake on Nov 2nd (KEM). A female was found at Bray GPs on Oct 13th (BDC) and remained until Dec 19th (BDC, CDRH, DJB). Finally, two pairs were by the island on Moatlands GPs, Theale on Nov 5th (RCr) and a drake was at Padworth Lane GP on Nov 10th (KEM, RJB).

## POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

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

Pochard were reported from 16 sites in east Berkshire, 11 sites in mid Berkshire and 6 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GPs	26	–	–	–	–	–	–	10	–	–	8	–
Bray GPs	119	80	29	10	–	–	–	–	6	27	60	139
Burghfield GPs	39	48	51	–	–	–	–	–	4	4	68	115
Dinton Pastures CP	122	77	127	13	–	2	1	–	1	11	10	42
Dorney Wetlands	–	–	25	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	5	–
Eversley GPs	67	77	31	13	–	3	5	–	3	8	10	15
Great Meadow Pond	71	50	38	14	9	12	71	68	130	18	100	140
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	19	30	20	10	10	13	11	12	9	14	19	19
Moatlands GP, Theale	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	10	9	–	–
Thatcham GPs	22	21	24	9	5	11	13	2	1	10	14	12
Theale GPs	30	52	42	2	–	2	4	1	–	5	86	103
Twyford GPs	20	11	11	–	–	–	–	–	2	4	41	24
Woolhampton GPs	20	31	24	12	5	6	12	8	4	12	5	12
Wraysbury GPs	285	63	76	40	–	–	3	13	23	–	26	58
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	5	7	5	2	2	2	5	2	2	2	3	6
<b>Number of birds</b>	42	73	28	7	3	6	15	30	29	3	21	77

**First winter:** The highest counts in this period came from Wraysbury GPs where 285 were counted on Jan 1st (CL) and at Dinton Pastures CP on Mar 13th where 127 were reported from Lavell's Lake and Sandford Lake (FJC, RM, THar). Away from the main sites quoted in the table, counts rarely exceeded three or four, so 27 at Padworth Lane GPs on Jan 27th (SAG), 18 at Sunninghill Park on Feb 3rd (ABT) and 45 at Summerleaze GPs, Maidenhead on Feb 10th (WeBS) were noteworthy. Most of the wintering birds departed in early April. **Summer:** breeding was proven at the same three sites as in 2012 with at least five successful nesting attempts. In Windsor Great Park, a female was found with

seven small ducklings on Jun 5th (CDRH); on Jul 7th this family was still present at the Sewage Treatment Works pools and an additional female with a downy duckling was present on Great Meadow Pond (DJB), along with two full-winged juveniles that had hatched elsewhere and 20 more adults. By Jul 21st, numbers here had built up to 71 including 15 full-winged juveniles (DJB) and three families with just six surviving ducklings between them. A brood of three young chicks was watched at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Jul 3rd, subsequently increasing to four (GJS, JEA). At Thatcham Marsh, a female with seven large ducklings was reported on Jun 30th (SAG). Small numbers were noted at around 11 other sites in this period, but no evidence of breeding was reported. **Second winter:** The table shows that the high numbers of the summer at Great Meadow Pond continued to build through the autumn and winter culminating in the maximum count for the county in the period of 140 on Dec 15th (DJB). Apart from Padworth Lane GPs where numbers had built up to 24 by Sep 9th (KEM), there were virtually no records away from the main sites.

## TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

*Common resident, numbers increasing in winter (Amber Listed)*

Tufted Duck were reported from 24 sites in east Berkshire, 20 sites in mid Berkshire and 15 sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aldermaston GP	–	26	42	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	21
Ascot Heath	–	–	–	6	14	10	2	21	26	16	22	26
Bray GPs	218	368	81	33	–	–	–	–	77	331	234	576
Burghfield GPs	555	414	309	10	–	–	–	–	91	183	450	482
Dinton Pastures CP	121	80	83	15	–	1	17	–	18	47	93	84
Eversley GPs	243	274	258	137	47	120	130	98	75	112	179	144
Great Meadow Pond	27	32	49	39	30	9	23	18	21	26	28	25
Horton GPs	322	245	137	99	2	–	–	–	420	–	–	857
Lower Farm GP	30	50	50	40	20	20	20	30	18	37	27	37
Queen Mother Reservoir	50	35	37	51	–	–	25	95	262	206	70	55
Thatcham NDC	30	63	23	55	25	9	31	11	21	23	33	30
Theale GPs	–	30	29	–	–	4	8	25	–	–	3	20
Theale Main Lake	196	209	165	113	60	–	12	12	–	–	50	–
Twyford GPs	122	192	139	48	10	17	–	–	52	60	86	102
Woolhampton GPs	110	120	60	41	34	47	89	55	32	32	35	41
Wraysbury GPs	637	381	492	395	–	–	–	–	463	–	37	748
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	5	11	9	19	9	5	3	4	4	2	8	11
<b>Number of birds</b>	49	268	151	131	30	30	8	20	26	33	160	253

**First winter:** Peak counts came from Wraysbury and Horton GPs with 976 on Jan 13th (WeBS) and from Burghfield GPs with 555 on Jan 25th (WeBS). On Feb 8th there were 163 at Summerleaze GPs, Maidenhead (BDC). **Summer:** Reports of breeding came from 10 sites involving 26 broods. Of the four or five broods at Eversley GPs, just one was raised on the Moor Green Reserve perhaps due to increased cover on the adjacent New Workings offering better protection from predators (MGLG); also at this site, a female was accompanied by four young on the late date of Sep 2nd (RCMu). A pair with four small ducklings was watched

at Sunningdale (RMH), and 12 other sites reported two or more Tufted Ducks during the breeding season but with no specific mention of breeding attempts. At least 120 ducklings were counted and though many reports logged declining numbers during the season, the three broods totalling 14 on the Sewage Treatment Works pools at Great Meadow Pond fared well and were still intact on Jul 28th (DJB). **Second Winter:** The maximum count for the period related to the Horton and Wraysbury complex where 1585 were counted on Dec 22nd (WeBS). Away from the main sites, the highest counts were 52 at Padworth Lane GPs on Nov 10th (RJB) and 99 at Summerleaze GPs on Dec 15th (WeBS).

### SCAUP *Aythya marila*

*Scarce though annual winter visitor and passage migrant (Red Listed)*

This was another poor year for this species, with just three individuals reported, although two enjoyed extended stays. **First winter:** The female that had been present at Bray GPs since November 2012 remained intermittently until Mar 26th (CDRH *et al.*) The only other records of this species came from Woolhampton GPs where an adult drake was located on Jan 26th and remained until Apr 12th (KEM *et al.*) During this time a female was also reported there on Mar 25th (B. May) and Mar 30th (RJB).

### LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*

*Rare winter visitor*

The bird reported as a female or first winter that had been present at Queen Mother Reservoir since November 2012 remained into 2013 (MO). On Mar 16th CDRH observed it climbing out of the water to pick along the algal line. The bird was last seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 29th by which time it was attaining the summer plumage of a female. The same bird was photographed on Hythe Lagoon, Wraysbury GPs on Mar 30th (CDRH). (The next day it was reported from Staines Res, Surrey.)

### COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

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

This was another good year for this species with 15 birds reported from two localities, including some nine single birds throughout the year at Queen Mother Reservoir. **First winter/Spring:** The year started with a female or first winter at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 26th (ABT), followed by a drake there on Mar 6th (CDRH). On Mar 24th, Theale Main Lake hosted a pair (ABT, AVL, MFW). **Autumn:** Return passage started early with a tight group of three drakes and a duck at Theale Main Lake on Jul 3rd (KEM). An adult female flew through Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 16th (CDRH), and then there were reports of typically brief visits by single drakes on Aug 22nd, Sep 9th and Sep 14th (CDRH), and a female or immature on Oct 15th (ADB). November saw some birds putting in longer appearances at the reservoir with a drake from Nov 15th to Nov 17th (CDRH *et al.*) and a female or immature between Nov 24th and Dec 9th (CDRH *et al.*).

### GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

*Locally common winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

Goldeneye were reported from six sites in east Berkshire, six sites in mid Berkshire and two sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures CP	17	18	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	4
Eversley GPs	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1
Horton GPs	13	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	10
Moatlands GP, Theale	4	9	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	11
Queen Mother Reservoir	3	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Theale GPs	6	4	6	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	5
Wraysbury GPs	53	61	55	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	26
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	1	2	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2
<b>Number of birds</b>	6	6	10	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	12	10

**First winter:** The high numbers at Wraysbury GPs are in line with recent years. The peak count of 61 occurred on Feb 12th (JMC), while a remarkable 57 were still present on Apr 3rd (CDRH). A sighting of a male and a redhead at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on Apr 17th (RJB) was the latest record. **Second winter:** The first returning bird was a female at Hosehill Lake LNR on Oct 7th (BMay, KEM). This preceded a slow arrival with just four more reported in October while the first report from Wraysbury GPs was not until Nov 10th when five were present (CDRH). One at Woolhampton GPs on Oct 19th (ABT) represented the only record from west Berks in this period. Apart from 11 at Wraysbury GPs on Nov 20th (CDRH), counts generally in November were in single figures, and numbers remained relatively low throughout until the end of December when 27 were counted at Wraysbury GPs on Dec 23rd (JMC) with 29 at Wraysbury/Horton GPs on 25th (CDRH).

### SMEW *Mergellus albellus*

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

Smew were reported from three sites in east Berkshire, three sites in mid Berkshire and one site in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eversley GPs	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Theale GPs	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Twyford GPs	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wraysbury GPs	17	7	7	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Number of birds</b>	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**First Winter:** The largest numbers by far were reported at Wraysbury GPs. From January through to early March there were many reports of up to seven birds, but 15-17 reported between Jan 19th and Jan 25th (CDRH, JMC) were notable. Some of the larger numbers related to counts made across several pits suggesting that these higher numbers could have

been present throughout January in the Wraysbury complex. After that up to seven birds were being reported until early March and the final record was of three birds on Apr 6th. The two redheads in the Theale area on on dates between 2nd and 15th January (MO) were probably those recorded in December 2012; there were no further reports from the area until two were seen on Feb 28th. Single redheads were at Eversley GPs on Mar 4th (RFM) and again between Mar 30th and Apr 1st (JMC, NSi), at Dinton Pastures CP on Mar 14th (FJC, JB) and at Twyford GPs on Mar 11th (BJH, MHT, WeBS). Finally, in the west of the county, a long-staying female that was found at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Jan 16th remained until Mar 30th (BJW *et al.*) – this constitutes the first record for west Berks since February 10th 2007. **Second winter:** There was a poor showing in this period with just two birds recorded. The first returning bird was drake moulting out of eclipse plumage found at Wraysbury GPs on the early date of Nov 27th (CDRH) remaining until Dec 8th (MO). The only other report in this period was of a redhead on Theale Main Lake on Dec 31st (RJB).

## RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

*Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant*

This was a poor year with just two sightings, both in the first winter period. On Feb 16th a female was found roosting with the Goosanders on Grove Lake, Eversley GPs (JMC). Then, on Apr 13th, a female was seen to arrive at Queen Mother Reservoir and remain for about 15 minutes (ABT).

## GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

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

Goosander were reported from nine sites in east Berkshire, four sites in mid Berkshire and two sites in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eversley GPs	72	41	23	10	1	–	–	–	–	–	5	29
Moatlands GP, Theale	5	2	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
Padworth Lane GP	3	7	7	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	6
Theale GPs	11	11	11	12	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	10
Wraysbury GPs	15	13	13	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	7
Elsewhere												
<b>Number of sites</b>	2	5	8	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	3
<b>Number of birds</b>	2	10	24	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	10	3

**First winter:** As expected, the highest counts came from Eversley Gravel Pits. Here many birds arrive just before dusk to swell the numbers on Grove Lake. The maximum count was 77 on Jan 19th (JMC), while a count of 52 in the early morning of Jan 30th synchronised with an evening count of 28 at nearby Bramshill (Hampshire) confirmed the presence of 80 along the Blackwater Valley (JMC). Numbers fell away after mid February with the last three reported on Apr 8th (RFM, GDU), although an extremely late bird flew through on May 14th (CRG). Some of the reports from Eversley Gravel Pits related to one or two birds observed on the River Blackwater itself. There was a scattering of reports from the west of the county with a maximum of 10 at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Mar 9th (NC) while the latest concerned a female at the same location on Apr 12th (NC). **Second winter:** the first returning birds were six redheads at Lower Farm GP on Nov 6th (IW) which flew in and fed for about 15 minutes before flying off. Next were two redheads at Padworth Lane GPs on Nov 10th (KEM, RJB),

and a drake and a female at Dinton Pastures CP the next day (SDay). A more widespread arrival was seen from the middle of November, with maxima of 10 at Theale GPs on Dec 24th (KEM) and 29 at the Eversley GPs roost on Dec 27th (RCMu).

## RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

*Scarce and declining visitor due to the continued national cull of this species*

Ruddy Duck continues to hang on in the county despite the recent cull; they were reported from one site in east Berkshire, one site in mid Berkshire and one site in west Berkshire. Monthly maxima are given in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Number of sites</b>	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1
<b>Number of birds</b>	2	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1

At Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park a pair was present on Jan 6th (DJB) and a drake was present from Apr 4th until May 5th (DJB). In the autumn, a female was at Woolhampton GPs on Oct 19th and 21st (MFW, ABT), and then a female was reported on Theale Main Lake on a few dates between Dec 8th and Dec 22nd (MFW, RJB, ABT).

## RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

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

Records for this species were received from 48 locations, with high counts as follows: 153 released birds at Compton Downs on Sep 20th (DJB) and 130 at Walbury Hill, Combe on Oct 20th (PEH). Breeding in the wild was proven at four sites: 10 young with 3 adults at Boxford on May 9th (GDS), 10 young with 1 adult at Inkpen on Jun 7th (LS), 2 young with 2 adults Windsor Great Park Aug 24th (KPD), and a recently hatched juvenile with 2 adults at Kintbury on Apr 8th (JLS). The continuous releasing of birds for shooting ensures a high population of this species in our county.

## GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

*Localised and declining resident (Red Listed)*

This species appears to have been relatively stable in the county in recent years, despite its earlier decline. Records were received from 41 locations, very similar to the two previous years. High counts include: 17 at Bury Down, West Illsley on Oct 11th (ABT), 25 at Englefield on Oct 1st (KEM), with 33 at this site in coveys of 13, 10, 6, and 3 plus a single calling bird on Nov 13th (RCr). Breeding was not reported in 2013, however many birds were recorded during the breeding season. Unusually an adult was flushed at Seven Barrows, Lambourn, on Jul 6th from near a destroyed nest containing broken eggs and the remains of another adult was found nearby, presumably Fox predation (DJB). Some releasing of captive bred birds probably still occurs in the county which helps boost the population.

## QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

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

2013 could be described as a poor Quail year, with records from only three downland locations compared to eight locations in 2012. Six birds were calling in cereal fields at Compton Down on Aug 10th (DJB), one was heard at Roden Down, Compton on Jun 16th

and 19th (ABT, CDRH) respectively, with two birds at this location on Jun 21st (DJB), the maximum count at Wellbottom Down, Lambourn was 3 on Aug 18th (SAG) and two were Sheepprove on Jul 14th (JLS).

### **PHEASANT** *Phasianus colchicus*

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

Records were received from numerous locations throughout our mainly rural county. High counts are from recent releases for shooting, such as the 100+ birds reported post release from nearby rearing pens at Combe Gibbet, Inkpen. Unusual locations for this species to be found in included one in a garden in Fairview Avenue, Earley on Mar 19th (MSFW) and two males were on the Tern island at Eversley GPs on Apr 13th (RCMu).

### **RED-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia stellata*

*Rare winter visitor*

Just one occurrence in 2013 of this rarely to be seen inland Diver species. A winter plumage bird, presumably the individual seen in late 2012 at Queen Mother Reservoir, was observed at the same site on Apr 27th (CDRH). This bird was then reported here on May 11th, 12th and 15th (CDRH). It was then seen again, this time in partial summer plumage, on May 28th (CDRH) but not reported subsequently.

### **BLACK-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia arctica*

*Rare winter visitor*

A single record of this species in 2013. A juvenile was first seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 12th (A J Colshaw and D Howden) and was then observed at this location on many dates (MO) until the last report on Jan 27th (NR). This is the first occurrence in the county since a bird photographed at Twyford in 2009.

### **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER** *Gavia immer*

*Rare winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

It is nice to have a year when all three Diver species were seen in the county. Predictably, records of all three occurred at the same location of Queen Mother Reservoir. A juvenile/first summer was recorded there on Mar 26th until 14.20pm (CDRH, CL). The bird then circled the reservoir and headed in the direction of Staines Reservoir, Surrey, where it had been reported on several occasions prior to this sighting.

### **LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

*Common and widespread resident (Amber Listed)*

This beautiful little species was observed at 46 locations throughout the county with the highest counts as follows: 6 at Barton Court, Kintbury on Oct 18th (JD), 13 Dorney Wetlands on Nov 16th (BDC), 20 at Eversley GPs on Aug 30th with up to 17 there until Oct 15th (JMC), 21 birds at Lower Farm GPs, Newbury on Aug 16th, 22nd and 31st (IW, JL), and finally 13 Thatcham on Aug 31st (BJW). Breeding was proven at nine locations including most of the above sites. Some examples are as follows: Eversley GPs where various broods were observed throughout the breeding season, Lower Farm GPs where 6 small chicks were recorded on Aug 3rd (IW, JL), and Dinton Pastures CP where two adults were noted feeding 5 chicks on May 31st (SDay). Overall the status of this species in the county appears to be in very good shape.

### **GREAT CRESTED GREBE** *Podiceps cristatus*

*Common resident and winter visitor*

A very familiar species in our county, with the abundance of lakes and waterways that we have, not to mention Queen Mother Reservoir. Exceptionally large counts were as follows: 39 at Eversley GPs Sep on 22nd (JMC), 46 birds were recorded at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 29th (PNe), 45 at Woolhampton GPs on Sep 22nd (KGW), 82 birds at Theale Main Lake on Nov 9th (KEM), and finally 43 at Wraysbury GPs on Sep 30th (JMC). It is interesting to note that the majority of the highest counts were recorded in September, presumably an abundance of juveniles post-breeding. Breeding was recorded at many locations throughout the county.

### **SLAVONIAN GREBE** *Podiceps auritus*

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

It is nice to see a return of this lovely small Grebe to our county after an absence in 2012. An adult in winter plumage was first seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 1st (PEH *et al.*). This bird was reported regularly until Jan 17th (LSe). This same individual was then recorded again on Feb 4th (PNe), and was then seen regularly until it was finally reported on Feb 14th (CDRH). Presumably this bird had spent a couple of weeks undiscovered somewhere locally between these dates. Two birds were recorded at Theale Main Lake on Jan 13th (RJB), with just one bird remaining on 15th and 16th until the second returned on Jan 17th (AVL), neither were reported subsequently.

### **BLACK-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps nigricollis*

*Uncommon passage and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

An excellent year for this small Grebe species, with 11 records involving 19 birds. A bird was recorded at Horseshoe Lake, Eversley GPs on Jan 6th and was still present the following day (JMC). Three winter plumage birds were at Theale Main Lake on Mar 24th (DJB) and were seen regularly (MO) until Mar 27th (AVL). On the 28th just one individual remained but was not reported subsequently. Amazingly another three birds all in summer plumage were at Woolhampton GPs from the same date as above, Mar 24th (ABT). This beautiful trio remained until being finally reported on Apr 8th with just one staying a few more days until 14th (KEM). A bird was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 10th (PD), while the same location attracted 4 summer plumage birds on Apr 26th (MMc, DJB). Another singleton was at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 7th (MMc). Another was observed on Jul 20th at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH), then subsequently on Jul 23rd (MMc). An adult in summer plumage was at Windsor Great Park on Jul 28th (DJB), this was the first time the observer had recorded this species at this site. Away from Queen Mother Reservoir a winter plumage adult was at Theale Main Lake on Oct 8th (KEM) with another bird at the same location on Nov 2nd (AVL), this one remaining until the 4th. The final record at this site and of the year involved two birds on Dec 1st (AVL).

### **GANNET** *Morus bassanus*

*Rare but increasing visitor (Amber Listed)*

Just one record of this seabird in the county in 2013, after an absence since one at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jun 8th 2011 (CDRH). A sub-adult 4th year, was on Wraysbury Reservoir, Surrey, before getting airborne and being observed within Berkshire airspace over Poyle on Jul 28th (CDRH). This same individual was observed from Queen Mother Reservoir circling to the North of Wraysbury at a similar time (ABT).

## CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

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

This species continues to feature prominently in the county at many wetland locations. High counts received included: 27 at Ascot Heath on Oct 24th (RJD), 19 at Dinton Pastures CP on Jan 1st (FJC), 100 at Eversley GPs on Dec 1st (NSi) with 90 there on Dec 10th (JMC), at least 62 at Lower Farm Trout Lake, Newbury on Jan 23rd (PEH), 78 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 9th (KPD), at least 80 roosting in the Heronry at Theale Main Lake on Dec 30th (AVL) and 94 at Wraysbury GPs on Sep 30th (JMC). Breeding was reported only at Trout Lake, Lower Farm, though there are known colonies at other sites, much to the chagrin of many of our fishermen.

## SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

*Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant*

Following just one record in 2012, there were 2 or possibly 3 birds in 2013. Two juveniles were discovered at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 5th (CDRH) remaining until Nov 22nd, but were rarely observed together after the 11th. A juvenile was at Old Slade STW and Lake on Nov 18th and again on the 20th (CDRH). This could, of course, have been one of the Queen Mother Reservoir birds relocating for a short period.

## BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

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

An average year again for this secretive species with eight to ten birds reported from 4 locations. Dinton Pastures CP featured strongly again, but the Theale area had its moments this year. **First winter:** 2013 commenced with a record from White Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Jan 2nd (FJC). This bird was reported regularly by many observers and a second was at Lavell's Lake on Jan 22nd and 28th (SDay); at least one individual remained in the area until Mar 13th (RM). There was one bird at Twyford GPs on Mar 3rd (S Clapham). Two birds at Hosehill Lake NR, Theale on Feb 5th (MO) remained until Feb 11th after which just one was observed regularly until it was last reported on Mar 2nd (AVL). A bird at Searles Farm Lane GPs, Burghfield on Mar 3rd (JA) could well have been one of the Theale birds relocating. An individual was at Wigmore Lane GPs, Theale on Jan 2nd (JLe). Eversley GPs hosted a Bittern from Jan 30th (P Kedall) until being finally reported on Mar 13th (NSi). One was also reported from Woolhampton GPs on Feb 5th and Mar 4th (P Bran/BGu). One was at Windsor Great Park on Mar 2nd and 9th (CDRH). **Second winter:** at Dinton Pastures CP a bird seen on Oct 22nd (JBut), Oct 24th (RM) and Oct 30th (FJC), then no more reports until Dec 1st (FJC), with one remaining there until the year's end. One was at Windsor Great Park on Dec 8th (DJB).

## LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

*Locally common resident (Schedule 1)*

This species is now a relatively common sight all year in Berkshire with numbers rising annually. Little Egrets were seen at over fifty sites throughout the county, with highest counts as follows: four at Bagnor on Dec 13th (JL), 12 at Burghfield Bridge on Jan 4th (AVL), 10 at Crookham Common on Aug 23rd (MJD), 9 at Fobney Meadows, Reading on Dec 24th (RRi), 11 at Dinton Pastures CP on Aug 17th (MFW), 7 at Lower Farm GPs, Newnury on Jul 6th (JA), 7 at Eversley GPs on Dec 7th (NSi), 18 at Theale Main Lake on Dec 14th (KEM) and finally 7 roosting at Wraysbury GPs on Nov 26th (CDRH). Breeding was proven at an east Berkshire

site with two juveniles successfully fledged (CDRH). More breeding almost certainly occurs in other locations but observing these areas is very difficult once the leaves are on the trees.

## GREAT WHITE EGRET *Ardea alba*

*Rare but increasing vagrant*

Considering the great rarity of this large Heron in Berkshire until a few years ago, the situation has changed dramatically; it has now been annual since 2009. 2013 saw two or three confirmed records. The first of the year was at Dinton Pastures CP on Sep 5th (FJC), the second at Heron Lake, Wraysbury on Nov 9th, 13th and 16th (CDRH, PKC). One which may have been the Wraysbury bird relocating was reported briefly at Dinton Pastures CP on Nov 21st (GSE).

## GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

*Locally common resident and winter visitor*

A very familiar species in our county, with records covering all areas east to west. High counts received were as follows: 11 at Dinton Pastures CP on Jul 17th (GWils), 21 at Harveys Meadow, Hungerford on May 12th (JSWo), 19 at Twyford GPs in April (WeBS), 10 at Wraysbury GPs on Feb 14th (DGC). Breeding was proven at several sites but the most observed were: at least 5 nests in use at Theale Main Lake on Mar 1st (DJD), several nests in use at Lower Farm on May 17th (JLS), and 6 occupied nests at Donnington Grove, Newbury on Mar 26th (IW). Juveniles were reported from several sites indicating successful breeding.

## RED KITE *Milvus milvus*

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

The number of sightings continues to increase year-on-year for this species, which is easily the most commonly reported of the raptor species, being recorded on all but 35 days of the year. Maximum monthly counts at selected sites are shown in the table below (counts <10 not shown). The highest counts of the year were 50 at Woolley Down on Jan 12th (GDS) and 50 at Warren Row on Mar 1st (DJB).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Aston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	-	-	-
Caversham	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Combe	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	-
Cookham	18	-	15	-	18	14	24	-	16	12	-	-
Englefield	-	17	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	17	-
Hurley/Twyford	-	15	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	12	10	-
Kintbury	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Knowl Hill/ Woodlands Park	20	24	-	15	-	-	14	-	-	31	18	42
Maidenhead	35	18	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pinkneys Green	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-
Remenham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	34	-
South Lake (Bulmershe)	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Streatley	31	-	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sulham	-	-	15	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tilehurst	12	-	13	15	19	24	23	-	-	-	-	-
Wooley Down	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## **MARSH HARRIER** *Circus aeruginosus*

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

At least nine individuals this year, with Eversley GPs particularly well-represented. The first record for the year was of a sub-adult male at Eversley GPs on Mar 25th (PKe). This bird remained in the area for the next few days until at least the 29th. Interestingly, on the 26th, the only day it was absent, a similarly aged bird was seen over Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH) with an adult male also seen on the same day nearby at Horton GP (CDRH). The first of at least two females arrived at Eversley GPs on Jun 6th (CRG). This bird was seen regularly on the GP complex until Jul 14th (MO), the first record of a summering bird since the 19th century. On Aug 8th another adult female, darker than the original bird, was seen at the same site (GDu). One was seen at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on May 8th (IW), with a female or immature high over Theale Main Lake on the 17th (RCr). A female was seen quartering fields at Roden Down, Compton on Jun 21st and what could conceivably be the same female was seen in the same place on Aug 10th (both DJB). An adult female flew over Greenham Common on Jul 2nd (IW, JL) with the final record of the year being of a juvenile seen from Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 28th (CDRH).

## **HEN HARRIER** *Circus cyaneus*

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

A female flew low over Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 27th (NR) with presumably the same bird being seen the same day in the Wraysbury GP area (SLF). A ringtail, probably of this species, was seen briefly at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest on Apr 20th (RCMu). An adult male flew over Jubilee River from Dorney Common on Nov 15th (N Hammat *per* Birdguides) and finally one was seen on Nov 28th at Bury Down, West Ilsley (BGU).

## **MONTAGU'S HARRIER** *Circus pygargus*

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

There were 4 reports this year, not surprisingly, all from the west of the county. The first on Apr 26th (JLe). A ringtail was seen hunting over fields on May 16th (CDRH), with a male being seen a couple of weeks later on the 27th (ABT). Finally, an adult male was seen quartering a pea field on Jun 19th (CDRH).

## **GOSHAWK** *Accipiter gentilis*

*Rare visitor*

A pair was located displaying in an area of suitable breeding habitat in the spring (DJB); a female was seen in the same area several weeks later, but not subsequently. This is the first record of display in Berkshire since 1988. A large nest with fresh greenery was located near to the display site shortly before the birds were seen, although birds were not seen at the nest. The site was left undisturbed until June when it was clear that the Goshawks were no longer present, then the nest was looked for but it could not be found so had probably been illegally removed.

## **SPARROWHAWK** *Accipiter nisus*

*Common and widespread resident*

A typical spread of records this year with almost exactly the same number of reports as last year, being from right across the county and equally spread throughout the year. Records are

almost all of singles or pairs, with only one confirmed record of breeding, this being from the Cemetery Junction, Reading area with two adults and two juveniles being seen (S Mutch). There are lots of records of juvenile birds, once more indicating that breeding is severely under-reported.

## **BUZZARD** *Buteo buteo*

*Common and widespread resident and passage migrant*

Once again, this species is second only to red kite in the number of submitted records, with the number of submissions slightly increased from last year. Counts of six or more were as follows: 6 at Aldermaston on Apr 23rd (KEM), 6 at Pingewood on May 5th (KEM), 10 at Combe on Feb 1st (IW, JL), 7 at Compton Downs on Apr 27th (N Duggan), 10 over Windsor Great Park on Oct 5th (DJB), 6 at East Ilsley floods on May 17th (DJB), 8 at Englefield on Mar 20th (RCr), 6 at Greenham Common on Apr 22nd (IW, JL), 8 at Hermitage on Mar 5th (JBU), 7 over Lea Farm, Dinton Pastures on Oct 15th (RM), 6 at Paley Street, Maidenhead on Apr 8th (SKP), 6 at Silwood Park, Sunninghill on Apr 1st (RJD), 8 following a tractor at Sulham on Mar 28th (TH), 6 at Swallowfield on Apr 2nd (RCMu), 6 soaring over Ufton Court, Burghfield Common on Oct 4th (GJSu), 6 at Welford on Oct 18th (RJCl) and 10 over Woodlands Park, Maidenhead on Jul 4th (DJB). **Breeding:** Breeding was confirmed at two sites in east Berkshire and three sites in west Berkshire with display flight and other nesting activity noted at a further nine locations across the county.

## **OSPREY** *Pandion haliaetus*

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

A fairly typical equal mix of spring and autumn records. The first record of the year was from Woolhampton GP on Apr 6th (J Cooper) with another over Queen Mother Reservoir on the 25th (CDRH). There were also two records in May at either end of the month, the first on the 6th flying west over Compton (JL, IW), with another over Eversley GPs on the 31st (ABT). The same pattern followed for June, with one early in the month on 4th at Eversley GPs (RFM), with another at the same site on the 27th (AA). The first returning adult was seen flying over Cookham on Aug 7th (MM), with another reported at Lea Farm, Dinton Pastures on the 14th (FJC). One was disturbed from the River Kennet at Theale on the 25th (DAMD) which may have lingered in the county for a few days. The same or another was reported a few miles west by the river keepers on the Kennet at Benham Park, Newbury on the 28th, with another report on the 31st nearby at Marsh Benham (JLS). There was a single report in September from Wraysbury on the 14th (RRG), with two in October, the first over Lower Farm, Newbury on the 5th (JL, IW), with another in the Brimpton area on the 26th (GEW).

## **KESTREL** *Falco tinnunculus*

*Common and widespread resident (Amber Listed)*

There were almost 700 reports of this species, slightly up on last year though all but three reports were of counts of three or less. These higher counts were of 5 over Walbury Hill, Combe on Jun 17th (JL, IW), two recently fledged young with adults at Inkpen on Jul 22nd (LS) and 4 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 7th (PNe). Records were widespread, being reported from approximately 145 sites across the county although, as with most raptors, breeding is under-recorded.

## MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

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

Typical early and late year records as follows: a male at Burghfield on Jan 2nd (LGL) with an immature at Englefield on the 10th (PEH, KEM) and another the next day at Cow Down, West Ilsley (PEH). February records comprised a female at Lambourn on the 18th, with another or the same the next day a couple of miles away at East Garston (both CDRH), and another female at Cow Down, West Ilsley on the 25th (CRG). A male was at Whatcombe, Chaddleworth on Mar 17th (GDS) with the final record for the first half of the year being of a female at Compton Downs on Apr 21st (ABT). Turning to the **Autumn/Winter**: a female/immature chased a Mistle Thrush through Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 9th (CDRH). In October there was a female/immature at Eversley GPs on the 11th (RFM) with another of a similar type at Walbury Hill, Combe on the 20th (PEH). A female headed NW through Moatlands GP, Theale on Nov 2nd (DFI) a f/w was seen perched on a post at Cow Down on the 29th (ABT), with probably the same bird seen again on Dec 2nd. A male was at White Waltham Airfield on Dec 3rd (ADB) with another male just west of Brimpton GP on the 6th (GEW), with a female/immature at East Garston Down on the same day (ABT). One, a male was at Roden Down, Compton on the 20th (ABT) and finally another male at Cow Down on the 27th (ABT).

## HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant (Schedule One)

Numbers appear to be stable, though as with last year, the large gatherings of 10+ from a few years ago are few and far between. The first record of the year, a fairly early individual was on Apr 14th at Lea Farm, Dinton Pastures (RRi). Other maximum counts at the regular sites were as follows: 4 at Dinton Pastures on Apr 23rd (SDay), 3 at Dorney on Jun 6th (CDRH), 4 at Gorrick Wood, Wokingham on Aug 21st (RCMu), 4 at Horton GP on Jun 23rd (CDRH), 7 at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Aug 31st (JA), 4 at Moatlands GP, Theale on May 23rd (RCr), 6 at Eversley GPs on May 7th (RFM), at least 6 on Jul 2nd at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH), 6 at Woolhampton GP on Apr 21st (GF, RPr), 6 at Searles Farm Lane, Pingwood on May 2nd (JA), 8 at Theale Main Lake on May 16th (ABT). **Breeding:** Although juvenile birds were seen county-wide in late summer/early autumn confirmed breeding came only from a few sites in east Berkshire and one in mid Berkshire.

## PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

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

The species continues to increase in numbers and range with several long-staying birds and pairs at what are now traditional sites. A pair was present all year on the doomed 3M building in Bracknell, but no evidence of breeding was reported (MO). A pair was present in the Theale area from March through the rest of the year and were regularly viewable on the pylons in the Hosehill Lake and Theale Main Lake area (MO). Young birds were also seen but it is not clear where their nest had been. Another pair was present throughout the year at Queen Mother Reservoir (MO), but nested at Wraysbury Reservoir in Surrey. A pair was present in Reading Town centre from January to April, then only sporadically until October – no evidence of breeding. A pair was present on and off throughout the year at Slough Power Station and

around Slough Industrial Estate, but again, no evidence of breeding. In addition to these there were numerous individual sightings throughout the year from right across the county.

## WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Uncommon winter visitor and a rare summer resident

A similar number of records (224) were received for a similar number of locations as in the previous year: twenty-three sites in the first winter period and sixteen in the second. By the end of the second week in April, there were few records other than from probable breeding sites until late September. Peak counts at the main sites recorded are shown in the table. Other counts above two were of three at Eton Wick on Jan 1st (PEH), three at Theale Main Lake on Jan 13th (RJB) and four on Mar 27th at Englemere Pond Nature Reserve, Bracknell (DJS).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dorney Wetlands / Jubilee River	6	3	2	1	–	–	–	–	1	1	1	2
Freeman's Marsh / Hungerford Marsh	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Thatcham Marsh	1	3	1	1	1	–	1	5	3	1	1	1
Windsor Great Park	4	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	5	4
Woolhampton	1	1	2	2	–	–	–	1	–	1	2	2

**Breeding:** During the period May-July, birds were recorded on several dates but from only two locations: Windsor Great Park and Thatcham Marsh. Breeding was confirmed at Windsor Great Park, with adults and at least one downy young observed on Jul 27th (DJB) and a juvenile of a possible second brood was recorded on Aug 4th (DJB). At Thatcham Marsh, three or four birds, including possible young calling, were observed on Aug 4th and at least five, including some juveniles, on Aug 17th (JL, IW). A single record at Theale Main Lake on Jul 26th (RJB), probably related to a passage bird.

## SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana*

Rare passage migrant

At an undisclosed site on Apr 6th a bird was seen dropping into a bramble patch from which it emerged a few minutes later, showing well (CDRH). This was the first Berkshire record since 2004.

## MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Common and widespread resident in wetland habitats

There are few sites with consistent reporting of Moorhen, a species which is can be quite secretive and is often ignored by observers. For example, the only reports for Dorney Wetlands, a site at which Moorhens are common, were of 20 on Nov 10th (GGM Rowing) and 16th (BDC). In February and March, Donnington Grove, Newbury held the highest counts at 27 and 22 respectively (IW). Other sites for which high numbers were reported were Boxford, with 14 on Jul 3rd and Nov 28th (RJCI) and Freeman's Marsh, Hungerford with 16 on Jan 26th (JL). The table shows monthly maxima for the sites most frequently recorded (blank - not recorded):



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dinton Pastures CP	5	4	7	3	7	–	5	–	10	4	3	3
Eversley GPs	12	17	13	17	14	11	11	12	20	15	14	16
Harvey's Meadow Hungerford	5	6	10	14	4	4	–	–	3	4	6	5
Lower Farm GP	5	5	10	5	5	5	16	20	20	18	19	16
Thatcham Marsh GPs	19	17	13	10	6	7	7	7	10	19	20	21
Theale GPs	5	11	16	2	1	5	–	–	–	–	2	1

**Breeding:** Birds on nests were reported from the fourth week of April and young from the third week of May, with further broods in July and August. Mink predation of a juvenile was reported at Eton Wick in June (CDRH) and was suspected from the remains of a dead bird found in March at Aldermarston GPs (JPM).

## COOT *Fulica atra*

*Common resident and winter visitor to open water*

**Winter:** There is little evidence of recent changes in status of this species. Monthly maxima at the more frequently recorded sites are shown in the table. The annual peak counts were similar to the averages shown in *The Birds of Berkshire* (2nd edition 2013) for the decade to 2010/11. The sum of the January peak counts for the 30 sites for which records were received was 2,417, half of which are accounted for on the nine sites in the table.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfields GPs	236	231	152	–	–	–	–	–	282	317	413	383
Dinton Pastures CP	66	44	36	27	–	–	–	–	–	29	58	120
Eversley GPs	260	204	119	110	43	52	78	81	122	196	160	375
Lower Farm GP	36	100	45	30	16	47	94	174	100	71	52	55
Thatcham Marsh GPs	65	45	27	16	13	20	49	51	59	48	48	45
Theale GPs	533	572	383	140	83	–	–	100	300	–	70	206
Great Meadow Pond	25	37	50	58	54	120	240	310	315	197	135	97
Woolhampton GPs	116	110	87	102	50	92	292	206	288	150	295	351
Wraysbury GPs	547	386	235	178	–	–	–	–	113	–	–	299

**Breeding:** Although Coots' nests and young are readily observed, there is insufficient reporting to draw any conclusions on the abundance or success of breeding birds. Nest building was reported from the first week of April and broods of young birds from the second week of May to the second week of September.

## OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

*Scarce but increasing summer visitor and passage migrant and a scarce winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Burghfield GP	–	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dinton Pastures CP	–	–	3	3	2	4	4	5	–	–	–	–
Dorney Wetlands	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Eversley GP	–	–	6	–	1	1	2	–	–	–	–	–
Pingewood GP	–	–	2	2	–	4	4	–	–	–	–	–
Queen Mother Reservoir	1	–	1	2	1	1	1	–	1	–	–	–
Theale GP	2	2	6	4	5	4	3	3	3	–	–	–
Twyford GP	–	–	2	2	2	3	–	–	–	–	–	–

**First winter:** One was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 15th (ABT, KEM, ADr) but was found dead on 17th (MMc). **Spring:** away from the breeding sites birds were recorded at 11 sites. **Breeding:** There were breeding attempts at Dinton Pastures, Theale GPs and Twyford GPs. Dinton Pastures: two chicks were seen at Sandford Lake on Jun 30th (MFW). Both were still present on Jul 1st (RM) but just one on Jul 5th (RM) and none on Jul 6th (FJC). Predation by Mink was suspected. Theale GPs: two chicks were seen at Main Pit on May 8th (KEM). Both were still present on May 20th (KEM) but just one on May 21st (KEM). The remaining chick fledged successfully. A pair with an unfledged juvenile was seen on Jul 23rd (ABT) and may have been a second brood. Twyford GPs: two chicks were seen at the Loddon Reserve on Jun 1st (SAB) and one juvenile was still present on Jun 22nd (MFW) but not thereafter. **Autumn:** Away from breeding sites birds were recorded at four sites. The last records of the year were one at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 13th (ABT, CDRH) and three at Main Pit, Theale GPs on Sep 14th (MFW).

## AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

*Rare passage migrant (Schedule One and Amber Listed)*

Three records, all in the spring. Two were on flooded fields at Englefield on Mar 9th (ABT, JA). One was at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on Mar 26th (RCr *et al.*) and one was at Main Pit, Theale GPs on Apr 7th (AVL).

## STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus oedicanus*

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

Most records came from traditional sites on the Downs but one was in fields to the west of Brimpton GP for about half an hour on Mar 28th before flying off west (GEW). Another was on the landfill site at Colnbrook on Mar 29th (CDRH). On the Downs, the first birds were seen on Mar 30th (PEH). Birds were reported from three locations between April and June. Although birds were reported as sitting there were no reports of any chicks. The last record was of three calling at dusk on Sep 20th (CDRH).

## 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
Dinton Pastures CP	-	-	-	-	1	2	5	3	-	-	-	-
Eton Wick	-	-	1	3	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
Eversley GP	-	-	-	4	3	3	7	2	-	-	-	-
Fobney Island	-	-	2	7	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	3	1	-	-	-
Padworth Lane GP	-	-	2	2	-	5	1	1	-	-	-	-
Pingewood GP	-	-	7	8	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	1	10	5	2	4	1	-	-	-	-
Woolhampton GPs	-	-	-	3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Spring:** First recorded at Padworth Lane GP on Mar 12th (KEM) and then at a further four sites by the end of the month. Numbers increased during April with peak counts of six at Heywoods Stream Flood, Woodlands Park on Apr 5th (DJB), seven at Fobney Island, Reading on Apr 5th (AVL), eight at Burnthouse Lane GP, Pingewood on Apr 27th (MFW) and ten at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 21st (CDRH). **Summer:** Birds were recorded at 14 sites during May/June. Although there were several reports of displaying birds there were only four records of confirmed breeding. At Woolhampton GPs a nest with four eggs was found on May 2nd (GEW) and three juveniles were seen on May 21st (MHu). At Horton Brook Quarry one was sitting on a nest on May 26th (KPD). At Burnthouse Lane GPs, two half-grown chicks were seen on Jun 8th (TGB). At Bray GPs two pairs raised two chicks each (CDRH). **Autumn:** There was light passage during July with peak counts of five at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on 6th (FJC) and seven at Eversley GP on 22nd (JMC). Small numbers were recorded throughout August. One was at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Sep 2nd (MJD) and a juvenile with a damaged leg was at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on 17th to 19th Sep (ABT, KEM, RCr).

## 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
Eton Wick	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Greenham Common	-	1	6	6	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	-	-	2	3	5	5	3	3	-	-	-	-
Padworth Lane GP	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	1	-	3	-	-	26	2	-	-	-

**Spring:** The first bird was recorded at Greenham Common on Feb 26th (JL). There was light passage between March and May. Most counts were of 1-4 birds but ten were on floods

at East Ilsley on May 17th (DJB). **Summer:** Birds were recorded at nine sites during May but breeding was only confirmed at Greenham Common and Lower Farm GP, Newbury. At Greenham Common two pairs were seen sitting but their breeding success is unknown. At the old gravel workings at Lower Farm GP, a pair raised two chicks. **Autumn:** The first migrant was recorded at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Jul 31st (FJC) and passage continued into September. Most records were of 1-3 birds but an impressive flock of 26 flew west over Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 25th (CDRH). A very tame juvenile tundra type was photographed at Queen Mother Reservoir Aug 29-30th (CDRH). The last record of the year was at Eton Wick on Sep 25th (KPD).

## DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

*Rare passage migrant*

Following a report at Bury Down, West Ilsley on Apr 22nd for which no supporting information has been received, a female was seen there from Apr 26th (CDRH) to Apr 29th (MO). Another flew south to west over Walbury Hill, Combe on May 6th (DJB).

## 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
Borough Marsh, Wargrave	-	400	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dorney Wetlands	160	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-
Eton Wick	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	202	-
Greenham Common	-	-	62	95	-	-	-	-	7	180	250	23
Woodlands Park Fields	300	190	100	220	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	750

**First winter:** Recorded at 22 locations. There were few large counts. The only counts greater than 250 were c.300 at Woodlands Park, Maidenhead on Jan 10th (DJB), 425 at White Waltham Airfield on Jan 14th (CDRH) and c.400 at Borough Marsh, Wargrave on Feb 12th (DJB). There were several large counts during April with 560 at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill on 7th (MSFW), 177 at Woodlands Park on 8th (DJB) and 245 at Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead on 11th (CDRH). The last records of the spring were nine flying north at White Waltham Airfield on Apr 15th (DJB) and four at Greenham Common on the same date (JL). **Second winter:** The first returning bird flew south over Wraysbury on Aug 28th (CDRH). There were no further records until six at Greenham Common on Sep 20th (PD) but numbers didn't really start to increase until October. Again, there were few large counts. The only counts greater than 250 were c.300 at Twyford GPs on Dec 17th (ADB), 350+ at Woodlands Park on Dec 22nd (DJB) with 750 there on Dec 24th and 25th (DJB).

## GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

*Uncommon but regular passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Just one record, a juvenile, at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 24th (ABT).

## LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

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

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Amner's Farm, Pingewood	216	570	200	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	275	401
Borough Marsh, Wargrave	30	300	500	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	197
Dinton Pastures CP	460	116	18	1	9	41	89	–	138	15	70	550
Englefield	9	–	943	48	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

**First winter:** Counts greater than 300 were 460 at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Jan 15th (WeBS), 360 at Eton Wick on Jan 16th (DJB), 500 at Aldworth Downs on Feb 3rd (NJB), 570 at Amner's Farm, Pingewood on Feb 5th (RHS), c.500 at Borough Marsh, Wargrave on Mar 1st (DJB) and 943 at Englefield on Mar 9th (RCr). **Summer:** Evidence of breeding was noted at 23 sites and confirmed at 14 of these. **Second winter:** Counts greater than 300 were 401 at Amner's Farm, Pingewood on Dec 9th (ABT), 550 at Lea Farm Lake on Dec 17th (WeBS), 400+ at Easton Hill on Dec 19th (IW, JL) and 320 at Streatley on Dec 28th (NJB).

## KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

The only record was of one at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 7th (CDRH).

## SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Scarce but regular passage migrant

There were 18 records, comprising 51 individuals with all records coming from Queen Mother Reservoir. **First winter:** One on Jan 21st (CL) and 22nd (MGM, NSlu, PEH). **Spring:** One in mostly winter plumage on Apr 26th (MMC *et al.*), two on May 10th (SRi), one on May 14th (MMc), two summer plumage on May 15th (CDRH, RN), one on May 17th (CDRH), ten on May 22nd (MMc), one on May 23rd (MMc), eight on May 24th (CDRH), two on May 26th (CDRH), four on May 27th (CDRH, MMc), four on May 28th (CDRH). **Autumn:** Nine on Jun 11th (ABT, CDRH), one on Jun 15th (CDRH), adult on Jul 26th (CDRH, MMc), two adults on Jul 29th (CDRH, MMc) and Jul 31st (CDRH). **Second winter:** One in winter plumage on Nov 5th (CDRH) and three on Nov 20th (CDRH).

## PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*

Rare vagrant

A juvenile was present on the floods at Eton Wick from Aug 4th (KPD, RN) to Aug 6th (J Poole).

## CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

Scarce passage migrant

The only record was a juvenile at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 6th (CDRH) and 7th (MO).

## DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

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

Monthly maxima at the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eton Wick	11	–	3	3	2	–	3	5	3	–	2	–
Queen Mother Reservoir	1	–	1	2	4	2	5	1	2	1	13	1
Theale GP	–	–	2	5	1	–	1	–	1	–	–	–

**First winter:** The first record of the year was of 11 birds (including seven flying over) at Eton Wick on Jan 16th (NSlu), one of which lingered to 25th (ADB, DJB, RGi). Birds were recorded at three other sites during January but there were no records in February. **Spring:** Birds were recorded at eight sites in March, eight in April and five in May. Most records were of 1-4 birds but five were at Borough Marsh, Wargrave on Mar 19th (CDRH), nine on the Review Ground, Windsor Great Park on Mar 23rd (KPD), five at Main Pit, Theale GPs on Apr 14th (AVL) and five at East Ilsley on Apr 27th (RN). The last records of the spring were two at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jun 11th (ABT) and one there on Jun 12th (CDRH). **Autumn:** Passage recommenced on Jul 19th with one at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures (RM). Light passage occurred into September. Most records were of 1-4 birds but five were at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 29th (CDRH, MMc) and five were at Eton Wick on Aug 1st (MHu). There were two records of singles in October, both at Queen Mother Reservoir, on 11th (HRN) and 24th (PNe). **Second winter:** A flock of 13 circled Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 20th (CDRH), two were at Eton Wick on Nov 21st (CDRH) with one there on Nov 23rd (RN) and 24th (DAC), two at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Nov 25th (MJD). The last record of the year was one at Queen Mother Reservoir on Dec 4th (CDRH).

## RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor (Red Listed)

Fourteen records: three in the first winter period, two in the spring, and nine in the autumn. **First winter:** One was on the floods at Eton Wick on Jan 16th (DJB *et al.*), one was at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Jan 24th (FJC), with two there on 25th and 26th (MO) and one was on floods at Englefield on Jan 24th (PEH) and 25th (RCo). **Spring:** Three were at Borough Marsh, Wargrave from Feb 20th (CDRH) to Mar 2nd (BAJC). A late spring bird, or early autumn bird, was at Woolhampton GPs on Jun 29th (MIGW). **Autumn:** A non-breeding adult was at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Aug 16th (IW, JL). Three juveniles were at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 23rd (CDRH) with 14 flying NE there on Aug 25th (CDRH). An adult winter plumage bird was at Woolhampton GPs on Aug 28th (KEM). A male was at Everley GP on Sep 1st (RCMu) with a female there on Sep 9th (RFM) and one on Sep 15th (NSi). One was at Eton Wick on Sep 18th (KPD) which remained until 25th (DF, KPD).

## JACK SNIFE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

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

**First winter/spring:** Recorded at ten sites. One was at Lavell's Lake from Feb 13th (RM) to 17th with two birds there on 18th (BAJC) and 19th (ABT, ADB). One was at Borough Marsh, Wargrave on Feb 20th with three there on 28th (CDRH), one at Horton GPs on Mar 3rd (CDRH), one at Ufton Nivet on Mar 31st (RCr), one at Burnthouse Lane GP, Pingewood on Apr 1st (KEM). One was flushed at Horton GPs on Apr 8th (CDRH) and promptly taken by a Sparrowhawk! **Autumn/second winter:** Recorded at five sites. Singles were at Great

Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on Sep 29th (DJB), Everlsey GP on Oct 1st (RFM *et al.*) to 15th (RFM), Greenham Common on Oct 29th (JL) to Dec 10th (IW), Slough SF on Nov 9th (CDRH) and Colnbrook on Dec 9th (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
Borough Marsh, Wargrave	-	112	80	47	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dinton Pastures CP	24	6	7	1	-	-	1	1	5	4	11	15
Dorney Wetlands	40	-	5	8	1	-	-	-	19	14	17	18
Eton Wick	50	22	28	25	-	-	2	6	26	29	17	6
Eversley GP	46	15	10	3	-	-	-	21	20	10	10	12
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	2	2	1	1	-	-	4	7	15	17	22	9
Padworth Lane floods	-	-	16	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pingewood GP	5	1	20	24	-	-	-	-	5	2	6	-
Streatley	23	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	5

**First winter/spring:** Double figure counts were received from 13 sites. The highest counts came from Borough Marsh, Wargrave, where there were 102 on Feb 20th (CDRH) and 112 on Feb 28th (CDRH). Records were widespread during April until the last record of two on Apr 30th (KEM). There was one May record of a single bird at Dorney Wetlands on 21st (CDRH). **Autumn/second winter:** The first returning birds were at Dorney Wetlands on Jul 14th (KPD). Double figure counts were received from five sites. The maxima at sites recording 20+ birds were 21 at Everlsey GP on Aug 27th (JMC), 29 at Eton Wick on Oct 1st (ADB) and 22 at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Nov 6th (IW).

## WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

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

**First winter:** Recorded at 23 sites. Most records were of single birds but two were in Bowdown Woods, Newbury on Jan 29th (MRD), Chaddleworth on Mar 2nd (GDS), Walbury Hill, Combe on Mar 6th (TPo), South Forest, Windsor on Mar 30th (DJB), Brimpton Mill on Mar 31st (GEW); three were at Winterbourne Wood on Mar 26th (JLe) and six were at Gorrick Wood Planatation on Mar 6th (RJG). Bird remains found at Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 28th (CDRH) were thought likely to be a Peregrine kill. **Summer:** Recorded at 24 locations of which 15 recorded roding birds. Maximum counts of roding birds were: one Blacknest, Virginia Water (RJD), one Bucklebury Common (GJS), six Buttersteep, South Ascot (DJB), two Frilsham (RCr), four High Standinghill Woods, Windsor (DJB), one Hut Hill, Swinley Forest (SA), two Knowl Hill (RMH), two Legoland, Windsor (RMH), two Padworth Common (RR), one Roundoak Piece (PH), one Snelmore Common (RRK), two Sunningdale (RMH), three Swinley Brickpits (DJB), four Swinley Park, Swinley Forest (DJB), two Windsor Great Park (RMH). **Second winter:** Recorded at just eight sites. All records were during November and December. Most records were of single birds but two were at Brimpton GPs on Nov 27th and Dec 11th (GEW). One was in Richard Sajdak's garden in Caversham on Nov 11th!

## BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

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

There were 21 records involving 69 birds, reported from 12 locations. **Spring:** Two were at Borough Marsh, Wargrave on Mar 13th (ABT) with ten there on 19th (CDRH). A male was at Fobney Meadow, Reading on Mar 26th and 27th (AVL). One was at Dorney Wetlands/Eton Wick on Apr 10th (KPD, K Kerr) and 11th (BAJC, RGi). Three (two in summer plumage) were at Searle's Farm Lane GPs, Pingewood on Apr 19th (JA). **Autumn:** A good autumn passage began with seven in summer plumage at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Jul 1st (B May), followed by four in summer plumage at Queen Mother Reservoir on 13th (CDRH), one in summer plumage at Lea Farm Lake on 14th (BTB *et al.*), one in summer plumage at Queen Mother Reservoir on 14th (CDRH), nine at Everlsey GP on 21st (NR *et al.*), five in summer plumage at Eton Wick on 24th (KPD *et al.*) and 25th (MO) with three remaining on 26th (CDRH, MMc) and two still present on 27th (KPD, J Poole), then six different summer plumage birds on 29th (CDRH, MMc); one in summer plumage at Lea Farm Lake on 31st (FJC). All of the birds identified to race in July were reported as islandica. In August four were at Dinton Pastures on 3rd (LBM), followed by an adult at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on 3rd (MO) reported as of the continental race limosa (ABT), four at Eversley GP on 3rd (NSi), four at Lea Farm Lake on 3rd (FJC), one at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures on 6th (SDay), and one at Eversley GP on 19th (RCMu). A winter plumage adult was at Woolhampton GPs on Sep 1st (KEM). **Second winter:** Two first-winter birds were at Dorney Wetlands/Eton Wick on 21st and 22nd Nov (CDRH).

## WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

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

Twelve records from four locations. **Spring:** Passage occurred between Apr 14th and May 25th. Most records came from Queen Mother Reservoir as follows: one flying west on Apr 14th (ABT), seven on Apr 21st (CDRH), one on May 3rd (CDRH, MMc, RGi), one on May 6th (CDRH, MMc), two on May 8th (CDRH, MMc), seven flying northwest in groups of four and three on May 14th (CDRH), one flying north on May 20th (CDRH), and one on May 25th (CDRH). Elsewhere, one was heard calling at Colnbrook on Apr 22nd (CDRH), one was at Everlsey GP on May 15th (TCa) and one flew over Searle's Farm Lane GPs, Pingewood on May 18th (JA). **Autumn:** Just one record, a flock of seven that flew in from the east then off southeast at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 25th (CDRH).

## CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

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

**First winter:** One was on the Review Ground, Windsor Great Pak on Jan 26th (CDRH). **Spring:** Birds returned to their breeding grounds during April but migrants were at Englefield on Mar 9th (RCr), Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Mar 9th (JA, NC), Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on Mar 17th (JA), four at Borough Marsh, Wargrave on Mar 23rd (ABT), one at Lower Farm GP on Apr 6th (IW, JL), singles at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 1st (RN) and Apr 15th (CDRH), one at Greenham Common on Apr 21st (JL), and two at Lower Farm GP on Apr 24th (GJS). **Summer:** Birds summered on the Downs at Lambourn and Compton. At Lambourn the first returning birds were seen on Apr 24th when two birds were present (MJD). Up to six birds were seen throughout the summer until the last record of two at Wellbottom Down on Jul 6th (DJB). Although a pair was seen mating on May 16th (CDRH) there was no further evidence of breeding. At Compton the

first returning birds were seen on Apr 2nd when four birds were present (ABT). Four were still present on May 3rd (MFW) but then just 1-2 until the last record of two on Jun 26th (IW, JBu). **Autumn:** One was at Eversley GP on Jul 6th (R Brook), followed by one at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 14th (CDRH), one at Thatcham Marsh on Jul 14th (IW, JL), one at Main Pit, Theale on Jul 14th (RCr), four at Horton Fields on Aug 24th (CDRH), two at Eversley GP on Sep 16th (RAGP), one at Horton GPs on Sep 30th (CDRH) and one at Woolhampton GPs on Oct 3rd (KEM). **Second winter:** One was at Main Pit, Theale on Nov 16th (JBi, KEM, TGB).

## 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
Dinton Pastures CP	-	-	-	2	5	1	1	16	1	-	-	-
Dorney Wetlands	-	-	1	4	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	-
Eversley GP	1	-	-	2	2	1	10	4	2	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	-	-	-	1	3	-	2	2	3	-	-	-
Padworth Lane GP	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	-	2	5	1	15	10	4	-	1	-
Theale GP	-	-	-	3	2	-	1	3	1	-	-	-

**First winter:** Single birds were at Burghfield Bridge, Burghfield on Jan 1st (SRip), Eversley GP on Jan 5th (IDP) and Eton Wick on Feb 16th (BDB). **Spring:** One was seen at Dorney Wetlands on three dates during March and may have been the Eton Wick bird. Passage started properly with one at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 11th (MMc). Thereafter records of 1-3 were widespread, though four were at Dorney Wetlands on 17th (MHu). Records were received from 13 sites during May. Most counts were of 1-4 birds but five were at Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures on May 5th (BJH) and five were at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 5th (CDRH) and 22nd (MMc). **Autumn:** There were four records in June: one at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on 23rd (RM), one at Eversley GP on 25th (RFM), one at Queen Mother Reservoir on 28th (ABT, MMc), and one at Lea Farm Lake on 29th (FJC). Numbers increased throughout July and August before dropping off during September. Double figure counts included 10 at Eversley GP on Jul 20th (PEH), 15 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 28th (CDRH), and 16 at Lavell's Lake on Aug 25th (Les Seward), an unprecedented number for this site. There were no records during October. **Second winter:** One was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 17th (KPD) and one was at Welford on Dec 10th (RJCl).

## 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
Dorney Wetlands	1	-	1	1	-	-	3	-	1	1	-	-
Eton Wick	2	1	1	1	-	-	1	3	5	2	1	-
Eversley GP	1	1	1	1	-	2	11	11	5	3	1	1
Horton Fields (to be dug for gravel extraction)	-	2	3	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Lower Farm GP, Newbury	1	1	2	2	-	-	1	6	4	2	-	-
Padworth Lane GP	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	10	2	2	1	1
Pingewood GP	1	1	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	4	1	2	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	3
Slough Sewage Farm	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	4	-	-	1	-

**First winter:** Records were widespread during January-February. Most were of 1-3 birds but four were at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 17th (PNe, RR). **Spring:** Records of 1-3 birds were widespread during March-April. The only May record was one at Sandford lake, Dinton Pastures on 5th (DJBa, LBM). **Autumn:** Passage resumed on Jun 20th with one at Eversley GP (BMA). Records were soon widespread and passage continued into October. Most counts were of 1-5 birds but 11 were at Eversley GP on Jul 22nd and Aug 6th (JMC) and ten were at Padworth Lane GP on Aug 25th (KEM). **Second winter:** Records of 1-3 birds were received from regular wintering sites during November and December.

## GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

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

28 records from 18 locations. **Spring:** The first record of the year was at Fobney Meadows, Reading on Apr 16th (JLe), followed by one at Eversley GP on Apr 25th (NSi), one at Woolhampton GPs on Apr 26th (CF), two at Burnthouse Lane GP, Pingewood on Apr 28th (RJB), one at Whatcombe on Apr 28th (GDS), one at Greenahm Common on Apr 30th (SDi), one at Main Pit, Theale on May 2nd (AVL *et al.*), one at Crookham Common on May 3rd (IW, JL), one at Eton Wick on May 3rd (KPD), two at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 6th (CDRH), one at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures on May 7th (MO), and two at Eversley GP on Jun 1st (NSi). **Autumn:** An early bird was at Eversley GP on Jul 7th (MO) before passage peaked during August, starting with two at Eversley GP on Aug 4th (RCo). This was followed by one at Eton Wick on 8th (DJB), one at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on 8th (BTB), juvenile at Horton GPs on 14th (CDRH), juvenile at Eversley GP on 20th (MO) and 21st (GDu), one at Queen Mother Reservoir on 21st (CDRH), one at Brimpton GP on 23rd (JPM), one at Horton Fields on 24th and 25th (CDRH), one at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on 26th (SAG), two at Eversley GP on 26th (RFM), four over Woodley on 26th (FJC), and one at Lower Farm GP on 31st (JL) to Sep 4th (RSJ). In September two were heard flying over a misty Woodlands Park, Maidenhead on 5th (DJB) and one flew over Cold Harbour, Know Hill on 22nd (MSFW).

## WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

*Scarce passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Five records, all in the autumn. One was at Eversley GP on Jul 20th (MO). A juvenile was at Slough SF from Jul 29th to Aug 1st (CDRH *et al.*). A juvenile was at Crookham Common on Aug 3rd (ABT *et al.*). One was at Eversley GP on Aug 10th (NSi) and one was at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Aug 12th (IW).

## REDSHANK *Tringa tetanus*

*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
Borough Marsh, Wargrave	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Crookham Common	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dinton Pastures CP	-	-	2	2	2	3	2	-	-	1	-	-
Dorney Wetlands	-	-	4	7	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eton Wick	-	-	2	4	1	6	2	-	-	-	-	-
Padworth Lane floods	-	-	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Padworth Lane GP	-	-	4	4	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	2	3	-	-	2	1	4	-	1	-
Theale GP	-	-	3	3	4	2	-	-	-	1	-	-

**First winter:** There were no January records and only one record in February, at Horton Fields on the 16th (CDRH). **Spring:** Passage occurred between March and May. Most records were of 1-5 birds but eight were at Padworth Lane Floods on Mar 29th and Apr 3rd (KEM) and seven were at Dorney Wetlands on Apr 10th (K Kerr). **Summer:** Breeding was confirmed at Dorney Wetlands and Eton Wick. Two well-grown chicks were seen at Dorney Wetlands on Jun 11th (CDRH) and three small chicks were seen on the floods at Eton Wick on Jun 4th (CDRH). **Autumn:** Passage was light with just four sites recording birds during July. In August there was one at Queen Mother Reservoir on 4th (CDRH, PNe). Four were at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 7th (DNTR). Singles were at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Oct 1st (CMc), Main Pit, Theale on Oct 14th (KEM), and Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Oct 25th (RM). **Second winter:** Singles were at Lower Farm GP on Nov 3rd (RSJ) and Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 13th (MMc).

## TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

*Scarce passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Ten records, two in the spring and eight in the autumn. **Spring:** One was heard calling but not seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 17th (CDRH) and three flew straight through on the 20th (MMc). **Autumn:** Apart from an adult at Slough SF on Jul 30th (CDRH), all records came from Queen Mother Reservoir as follows: one on Jul 19th (CDRH), adult on Jul 30th (CDRH) and 31st (CDRH, MMc), adult on Aug 3rd (MO), one on Aug 5th (MMc), a flock of nine, comprising a worn adult and eight juveniles on Aug 24th (CDRH, ABT), 21 including one flock of 20 on Aug 25th (CDRH), and one on Sep 12th (Rgi).

## LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus*

*Very rare vagrant*

The first ever spring record of this species was seen on May 24th at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). It flew in from the southwest at 18:05hrs landing on the water near the pier. Record photographs were obtained by the observer before the bird was flushed by a yacht at 18:22hrs, flying off into rain. This was the eighth record for Berkshire.

## GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*

*Rare vagrant*

The only record this year was a brief appearance (4-5 minutes) of a juvenile at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 24th. (CDRH). It flew in from the northeast, landing on the water briefly, before flying off south at 18:40hrs. This was the tenth Berkshire record for this species, comprising of a total of eleven birds. (Note: this is a correction to the totals quoted in the 2011 bird report for this species).

## SABINE'S GULL *Xema sabini*

*Rare vagrant*

On Aug 27th an adult (or a first summer retaining a partial hood) flew over Queen Mother Reservoir from the northeast without descending to join the gull-roost and continued southeast into the distance (CDRH).

## KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

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

**Spring:** There were three spring records, all of single adults. On Mar 9th an adult joined bathing gulls in Windsor Great Park at 13:02hrs, departing northeast at 13:15hrs (CDRH). On Mar 16th, after heavy rain, an adult was found on the water at Theale Main Lake at 09:40hrs (ABT). It subsequently flew around the lake several times before departing at 10:00hrs. On May 30th an adult was seen circling over Queen Mother Reservoir before flying east at 09:52hrs (CDRH). **Second winter:** There was one further record for the year, of an adult bird seen for 15 minutes and photographed, on Dec 30th at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH).

## BONAPARTE'S GULL *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

*Very rare vagrant*

On Apr 26th an adult in full summer plumage was found on Theale Main Gravel Pit at 15:20hrs and watched intermittently for 10 minutes between hail showers before flying off (CDRH). Fortunately, the observer relocated the bird at the nearby Hosehill Lake Local Nature Reserve, Theale at 16:20hrs, providing many birdwatchers the opportunity to see it as it associated with the Black-headed Gull colony. The last recorded time of its presence at Hosehill LNR was 16:45hrs after which it departed with Black-headed Gulls. This sighting has been accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee (*Brit.Birds* 107:607) and represents the first county record of this species. Photographs page 9.

## **BLACK-HEADED GULL** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

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

**First winter:** This species was reported from 75 sites across the county during this period. The highest count was 4500 at flooded fields at Englefield on Feb 18th (PEH). Three thousand birds were counted at Theale Gravel Pits on Jan 20th (GDS) and Feb 18th (PNE). On Jan 19th 1800 birds were at Moatlands Gravel Pit, Theale (SAG). Approximately, 1000 birds were on flooded fields at St Nicholas Farm, Hurst on Jan 25th (SJF, FMF). About 1000 birds were at Felix Farm, Binfield on Jan 28th (DJB). Counts of over 500 or more were recorded from: Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale, Sandford Lane, Hurst, Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures CP and Summerleaze GPs, Maidenhead. There were further counts of between 100 and 500 birds from 11 sites. A bird with a metal BTO ring on the River Thames at Datchet on Jan 19th was ringed at Pitsea landfill site, Essex, on March 10th 2012 by the North Thames Gull Group (KPD). At the same location on Jan 20th a ringed bird was identified as having been ringed at Hosehill LNR, Theale in 2009 (KPD). Another BTO ringed bird, ringed as a nestling at Bedfont Lakes, Greater London on Jun 17th 2010 and first seen at Datchet on the River Thames on September 25th 2011, was seen again this reporting year on Feb 2nd and 23rd, then again on Mar 10th (KPD). On Feb 2nd a bird ringed at Riga, Latvia on April 2nd 2012, but hatched in 2010, was found at Datchet 1704km from its ringing site (KPD). This was the first sighting of this bird at Datchet in 2013, having been seen previously five times between the end of October and December 2012. It was subsequently seen again at Datchet on Feb 17th and Mar 10th, 17th and 24th. On Feb 3rd, an adult Swedish ringed bird was found on Barry Island on the River Thames, Windsor (KPD). It had been ringed at Pildammsparken, Malmo, Skane, Sweden on March 19th 2008, a distance of 1006 km from its recovery. On Feb 24th on the River Thames at Windsor, a bird ringed at Helchteren, Limburg, Belgium on June 15th 2008 as a pullus was found (KPD); a distance from the ringing site of 422km. **Spring/Summer:** During this period records were received from 58 sites. During March 1000 birds were at a Bucklebury pig farm on Mar 27th (DFL). The only other count of 1000 birds was at Englefield on Mar 28th (RCr). Five hundred birds were at the Review Ground, Windsor Great Park on Mar 17th (KPD). Twelve sites held between 100 and 500 birds during March. On Mar 28th a leucistic adult was present at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). The highest count for April was 360 birds following a plough at Wickham's Farm, Lower Padworth on Apr 19th (PEH). At Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale, 250 were present on Apr 22nd (TGB). Earlier in April 178 were at Wraysbury and Horton GPs on Apr 2nd (JMC). On Apr 13th a bird ringed at Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures CP on June 26th 2011 was seen at the Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands (KPD). **Breeding:** Records of breeding were submitted from Eversley GPs, Lavell's Lake and Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures, Hosehill LNR, Theale, and Wraysbury GP. The largest colony was at Hosehill LNR where 300 birds were counted on Jun 2nd (TGB). On Jun 21st 250 plus were counted including 152 chicks or juveniles (DJB). In comparison only 2 chicks at Eversley GPs, 1 chick at Lavell's Lake, 19 chicks at Lea Farm GP and 2 chicks at Wraysbury GP were recorded. The large number of birds present at Hosehill LNR, Theale during the summer provided opportunities to read ring numbers of birds ringed as part of the Berkshire Ringing Project. Rings of 36 birds were recorded, two of which were recorded twice. Three ring records also came from Lavell's lake, Dinton Pastures. One of the Hosehill LNR birds ringed in 2009 was reported on the River Thames at Datchet on Aug 14th (KPD). A bird ringed at Lea farm GP, Dinton Pastures on Jun 26th 2011 was seen at Dorney wetlands on Apr 13th (KPD). Post breeding numbers began to build up in July and August but regular counts were only undertaken at Lower farm GP,

Newbury and Eversley GPs. July's peak count at Lower Farm GP, Newbury was 90 on Jul 24th (IW) and 67 at Eversley GPs on Jul 15th (RFM). During August the counts for the respective sites were 276 on Aug 16th (PEH) and 330 on Aug 22nd (NSi). **Autumn/Second winter:** During September, counts taken over 14 days from a garden in Twyford produced a peak count of 1653 on Sep 19th (PA). Thousand plus counts were recorded at the polo pitch at Smiths Lawn, Windsor, on Oct 20th (DJB) and at Lower farm, Newbury on Nov 13th (GJS). There were counts of 467 at Summerleaze GP, Maidenhead on Oct 13th (WeBS), 600 at Twyford on Oct 10th (NA) and 458 at Home Park, Windsor, on Oct 19th (KPD). There were a further 34 counts across the county of over 100 birds during this period and 220 counts below a 100. The bird ringed at Bedfont Lakes, last seen at Datchet on Mar 30th during the first winter period, returned to Datchet and was seen on Sep 2nd and 28th (KPD). The bird ringed at Pitsea, last seen at Datchet on Mar 10th, returned and was seen on Sep 10th (KPD). The bird ringed at Hosehill LNR, reported on Aug 14th was seen again at Datchet on 6 occasions from Oct 19th to Dec 14th (KPD), this being its fourth winter at Datchet. Other interesting sightings at Datchet were: the Swedish bird ringed at Pildammsparken, Malmo, Skane, on March 19th 2008, seen during the first winter on Feb 3rd, returned in this second winter and was seen on Nov 11th (KPD); a Polish bird ringed on June 7th 2012 at Zbiornik, Przykona, Radczynyn, Turek, (seen previously on Feb 3rd) was seen on Dec 12th at Datchet on the River Thames and on three other occasions during this second winter period (KPD): A Finnish bird ringed at Kuusamo, Oulo on July 5th 2012 as a chick was seen at Datchet on Dec 28th (KPD).

## **LITTLE GULL** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

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

This species was recorded on only eight days in the year with a total of seven birds. **Spring:** The first record was of two winter adults at Theale Main Lake on the Mar 24th that stayed to the following day, possibly due to the very cold easterly wind at the time (MO). The next sighting was of an adult on Apr 15th at 16:15hrs, again at Theale Main Lake (KEM). On Apr 18th an adult was found at Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures (FJC). The next sighting was two months later when a first summer bird was found at Queen Mother Reservoir in the evening of Jun 18th (CDRH). **Autumn:** A single adult was found at Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures on Sep 26th (MFW). The last record of the year was of a first winter bird at Woolhampton GP on Oct 12th (MFW *et al.*) which stayed until the following morning.

## **MEDITERRANEAN GULL** *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

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

This species was recorded in every month of the year, except September, at a total of 24 sites. There was a breeding attempt with a Black-headed Gull. **First Winter:** On Jan 1st a winter adult was seen on flooded fields at Bisham (CDRH). The following day, Jan 2nd, a winter adult was then seen on fields at Furze Platt, Maidenhead (MJF). On Jan 5th a first winter flew over Lodden Drive, Charvil (CDRH). In the same area an adult winter was seen on the Borough Marsh floods Wargrave on Jan 7th and 9th (CDRH). On Jan 2nd, two adult winter birds were seen at Queen Mother Reservoir, one in the early afternoon that flew off, and another that joined the roost, these being noted as different by the extent of their hood markings (CDRH). Possibly one of these birds was seen the following day, Jan 14th, at Queen Mother Reservoir (RDr), and it or another, at Eton Wick flood on Jan 15th (CDRH). A first winter bird then appeared at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 19th (DJB, MMc). On

Jan 22nd a winter plumaged adult was seen at Colnbrook West Lake, and another adult with differing plumage pattern was seen in the Queen Mother Reservoir roost the following day, January 23rd (CDRH). In west Berkshire a winter plumaged adult was found at Lower Farm GP, Newbury, on Jan 23rd (NC). The first winter bird seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 19th was possibly the same bird as that seen at Barry Island, Windsor on Feb 3rd (KPD, ABT). In mid Berkshire a winter plumage adult was found at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures CP among a large flock of Black-headed Gulls on Feb 13th (D Barnes, RM). On Feb 14th a full winter adult was at Windsor Great Park, and a summer plumaged adult was at the Queen Mother Reservoir roost (CDRH). On Feb 18th an adult was found on a flood at Englefield (PEH, PNe). On the same day, Feb 18th, a winter plumaged adult and a first winter were in the roost at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). A first winter was at Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures, on Feb 23rd (MFW) and presumably the same bird the following day (LS). At the same location an adult was then present on Feb 25th (SDay) and it or another at Queen Mother Reservoir (MMc). On Feb 26th a summer plumaged adult was at Theale Main Lake at 16:28hrs before flying to Moatland GP (CDRH). On Feb 27th a second winter bird flew across the BA Lake at Wraysbury GPs (CDRH). **Spring:** March was a particularly productive month for sightings with birds being seen on 19 days. Most were in the east of the county with sightings at Queen Mother Reservoir on ten days, with Eton Wick flood/Dorney wetlands seven days and Colnbrook four days. Birds were also seen at Slough STW, Windsor Great Park, Winkfield and Wraysbury GPs. In mid-Berkshire birds were present at Hosehill LNR/Theale Main Lake on five days and on one day at Borough Marsh, Wargrave. Not all records submitted provided an indication of the bird's age. However, an estimate of the minimum number birds in east Berkshire was determined to be 12 (CDRH), comprising of two first winter, two second winter and eight adults with varying degrees of hood completion. The maximum number together was four birds at Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 28th (CDRH) with an adult, an advanced winter, and a vocal pair of summer plumaged adults joining the roost. This pair was also seen the following day at Queen Mother Reservoir, then at Colnbrook on Mar 30th (CDRH). At Theale Main Lake three birds (an adult and two first winter) were present in the roost on Mar 26th (KS, KEM). On Mar 30th at Hosehill LNR there were two birds, an unringed adult and a second summer (KEM), at the same time as a ringed adult was present on Theale Main Lake (RHS). The four different birds at Hosehill LNR/Theale Main Lake complex along with the birds seen in east Berkshire indicate that there were possibly at least 16 different birds in the county during March. In contrast to March, April sightings occurred only on the first eight days. On Apr 1st two adults were on Eton Wick flood (DAC) and three birds at Theale Main Lake (AVL) presumably two of which, an adult and a second summer, were at Hosehill lake LNR, Theale the same day (KEM). Two birds were also seen at Hosehill LNR, Theale, on Apr 2nd (RCr). On Apr 3rd a first winter was at Colnbrook (CDRH), two summer adults at Drift Road, Maidenhead (CDRH), a first winter on Eton Wick flood (PNe, DJB) and two birds on the Hosehill LNR island (EN). The latter two birds were still present the following day, Apr 4th (RCo), whilst two birds (adult summer and first winter) were at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). On Apr 5th an adult was seen to fly over the M4 at Langley (PBT). A first winter was seen at Eton Wick flood on Apr 6th (KPD). The Hosehill LNR adult pair were seen again on Apr 7th (JRe) and the second summer bird on the same day at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). A second summer was at Hosehill LNR on Apr 8th (RCW, KEM). The next sighting did not occur until May 3rd when a bird flew over Eversley GPs calling (NSi). Over a week later, on May 9th a second summer was seen at Hosehill lake LNR, Theale (KEM). On the same day an adult was also sighted there (AVL). The second

summer bird was then seen on most days on the Hosehill Lake LNR island until May 29th (MO). The bird was seen to be paired with a Black-headed Gull, to display and exchange incubation and to be sitting on a nest. There was no evidence submitted of successful breeding. **Summer:** The only record for June was that of a first summer bird fly catching below the weir on Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands on Jun 10th (CDRH). Another second summer, assumed to be different to the June bird, joined Black-headed Gulls catching chafers, at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 5th (CDRH). The following day, Jul 6th, a summer plumage adult was seen at Hosehill LNR, Theale (MFW). Possibly this bird was at Eton Wick flood on Jul 8th appearing daily until Jul 14th (CDRH). On Jul 14th two birds (juvenile and second summer) were also seen at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). The Eton Wick flood summer plumage adult, which was beginning to moult its hood feathers, was seen again on Jul 16th, 20th and 24th (CDRH), and seen to be Polish ringed. On Jul 17th the highest single count for the county was seen at Queen Mother Reservoir with seven birds (three summer plumage adults, a first summer and three juveniles) (CDRH). The highest previous single count was of five birds together at the same location on July 5th 2011. On Jul 18th a second winter was at Colnbrook (CDRH), on Jul 19th a juvenile at Slough STW (CDRH) and on July 20th and 21st a different juvenile and a full summer plumage adult at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). Also on Jul 21st a second summer flew into New Diggings, Eversley GPs (NR, ABT, GR). On Jul 29th a juvenile was at Colnbrook then Horton GP (CDRH). On Aug 1st an adult was in the Queen Mother Reservoir roost (CDRH). On Aug 4th a juvenile was at Eton Wick flood (MFW) and on Aug 5th a juvenile over the pier at Queen Mother Reservoir and then two juveniles at the same location on Aug 7th (CDRH). A juvenile was at Colnbrook on Aug 8th and 20th (CDRH). On Aug 12th a second winter was at Horton Fields (CDRH). On Aug 15th an adult was in the Queen Mother Reservoir roost (CDRH). In west Berkshire the only summer sighting was of a juvenile hawking over the Trout Lake at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Aug 16th (CDRH). The last summer sightings were of three birds (winter plumage adult and two juveniles) in the Queen Mother Reservoir roost on Aug 27th (CDRH). **Autumn/ Second winter:** There were no further records until late October when a first winter was seen at Cippenham playing fields, Slough on Oct 22nd (CDRH). The first records in November were of two winter plumage adults in the Queen Mother Reservoir roost on Nov 8th (CDRH). A first winter was found at Theale Main Lake on Nov 10th (MFW). A first winter was also seen fly-catching over the River Thames, in central Reading on Nov 13th (DNTR). On Nov 16th, 17th 20th, 21st, 25th a winter plumage adult was in the Queen Mother Reservoir roost (CDRH). A different adult was in the roost, with a second winter bird, on Nov 27th and 29th (CDRH). An adult bearing a red ring was on Eton Wick flood on Nov 24th (DAC) and Nov 25th (K Kerr). This adult was also seen on the Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands on Nov 30th with another adult and a second winter bird (DAC). The "red-ringed" adult, with white lettering of "PKY8" on the ring, was also seen on the Jubilee River on Dec 6th (KPD). The remaining December records were all from Queen Mother Reservoir, with a single adult on Dec 10th, 15th, 30th (CDRH) and 12th (MMc), two adults on Dec 22nd and 30th (CDRH) and a first winter on Dec 26th and 31st (CDRH).

## COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

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

Records were received from 52 locations, with the majority from Eversley GPs, Dinton Pastures, Lower farm GP, Newbury, Windsor Great Park, Queen Mother Reservoir and Theale Main Lake. Nineteen counts were greater than 100 birds, 81 counts were between



10 and 100, and 266 counts were below 10 birds. The highest counts were during the winter months. **First winter:** The highest count of the year was of about 1000 birds on the polo pitch, Smith's Lawn, Windsor Great Park on Jan 6th (DJB). On Jan 20th there were over 600 birds at Lower Farm GP, Newbury and 300 at the same location on Jan 23rd (NC). Three hundred birds were also seen at Felix Farm, Binfield on Jan 28th (DJB). 138 birds were counted at Rosehill, Hurley on Jan 13th (SJF, FMF). A minimum of 120 birds were at Moatlands GP, Theale on Jan 19th (SAG) and 120 at Streatley on Jan 20th (NJB). Counts were much reduced in February with the highest being a 100 plus at Lower Farm, Newbury on Feb 24th (NC). Ninety birds were following the plough at Englefield on Feb 18th (PEH). **Spring:** During March 250 were at the Review Ground, Windsor Great Park on 17th (KPD), 180 at Old Windsor on the 12th (PEH), 119 at Sunningdale on the 9th (RMH) and 50 at Strand Water, Maidenhead on the 29th (BDC). The peak count in April was 81 on Apr 2nd at Wraysbury and Horton GPs (JMC). Sixty-six were still present at the Review Ground, Windsor Great Park on Apr 12th (KPD). In mid Berkshire the highest count was of 30 non adult birds moving west over Theale Main Lake on Apr 14th (RJB). The only record for May was of a first winter bird over Queen Mother reservoir on May 3rd (CDRH). **Summer:** The only records for June were a first summer at the Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands on Jun 4th and again on the 9th, and 20th (CDRH), and then two birds (an adult and a first summer) at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jun 30th (CDRH). During July birds were seen daily at Queen Mother Reservoir with a maximum of seven (five first winter and two adults) on Jul 8th (CDRH). Records of predominately single birds continued throughout July and August. The exception being of 40 (mostly adults) at Queen mother reservoir on Aug 1st (CDRH) and 22 at Horton GPs on Aug 5th (CDRH). **Autumn/Second winter:** Numbers were still very low during September with records of single birds on six days, mostly in east Berkshire, apart from 25 at Cannon Court Farm, Maidenhead on Sep 16th (BDC). Numbers continued to be low with counts between one and three, on 18 days in October, except for seven at Eversley GPs on Oct 17th (JMC), 20 in Windsor Great Park on Oct 17th (HWE) and 200 at what appears to be a favoured location, Smith's Lawn polo pitch, Windsor Great Park on Oct 20th (DJB). Numbers began to increase in November with counts reported on 20 days with the highest count of 200 being at the Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on Nov 24th (DJB). On Nov 7th 72 birds were on Smith's Lawn polo pitch, Windsor Great Park (HWE), 90 at Furze Platt, Maidenhead on Nov 15th (PNe) and a maximum count of 26 for the month at Ascot Heath on Nov 19th (RJD). Counts were higher during December at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park with 200 on the 1st, 450 on the 8th and 400 on the 15th (DJB). These birds continued to use Smith's Lawn polo pitch with over 250 present there on Dec 8th (DJB). A count of 124 birds was recorded at Moatlands GP, Theale on Dec 9th (RCr). Regular counts at the New Diggings, Eversley GPs produced a maximum count of 30 on Dec 13th (RFM).

## LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

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

There were 716 records for this species from 83 locations for all twelve months of the year, with a strong bias towards mid and west Berkshire. There were 14 counts exceeding 1000 birds and 34 between 100 and 1000. All the high counts were in the first three months and the last three months of the year. Most counts were recorded in the Newbury area and Eversley GPs. There were no breeding records. **First winter:** There were numerous sightings of small groups of birds flying over west Berks, presumably moving between feeding areas on the Downs and roosting areas around Newbury. Over 50 birds were around the pig farm at Easton Hill on

Jan 17th (IW, JL) and over a 1000 birds near the Bucklebury pig farm on Jan 12th (ABT). There were 500 plus birds in the Lower Farm GP roost, Newbury, on Jan 20th and 23rd (NC). The largest roost was at Theale Main Lake with 2500 plus birds (and 600 plus on the adjacent Moatlands GP) on Jan 19th (SAG) and Jan 20th (GDS). Two ringed birds were noted amongst a flock of 390 on floods north of the A4 at Theale Gravel Pit Cottages on Jan 25th (PEH). The highest Moor Green GP count was 51 on Jan 5th (RCMu). Numbers dropped significantly in February with a maximum count of 300 at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Feb 4th (NC) and 300 on Theale Main Lake on Feb 18th (PNe). On Feb 18th 160 birds were on flooded fields at Englefield (PEH). **Spring/Summer:** Counts were very low in March probably because no roost counts were received, although birds were still to be found at the pig farms with 100 plus at Easton Hill on Mar 12th (IW) and 1000 at Bucklebury on Mar 27th (DFLong). The highest count for April was 12 birds over Greenham Common on Apr 15th (JL). The highest count for May was 12 on May 25th and 27th on the River Thames at Maidenhead (CDRH). Counts were predominately of one or two birds in Berkshire during June but the highest count was eight adults at Wellbottom Down, Lambourn on Jun 30th (PEH). In the same area 15 birds were seen at Sheepdrove Farm, Lambourn on Jul 14th (JLS). Signs of returning birds, were evident from the 59 present at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Jul 19th (MIGW). Birds flying to the roost were noted on Aug 13th with 56 flying southeast over Woodspeen (IW, JL). Maximum count was of 180 birds in the roost at Eversley GPs on Aug 26th and 31st (NSi). **Autumn/Second winter:** September saw significant numbers returning to the county. On Sep 2nd 750 birds were counted flying east over Yew Tree House, Kintbury between 19:00 and 20:00 presumably going to roost (JLS). On Compton Downs, 912 birds were counted in fields on Sep 20th (DJB). The roost at Eversley GPs built up to 595 on Sep 23rd (RCMu). In comparison, the roost count at Theale Main Lake was low with 112 on Oct 3rd (KEM). An interesting count from the southwest of the county was that of 170 at Inkpen on Oct 7th (RHar). One hundred and fifty birds were at Padworth common on Oct 24th (TGB). The roost at Theale Main Lake had built up by the end of the month with 1800 birds on Oct 29th (KEM). Likewise, the roost at Lower Farm GP, Newbury built up to 1400 birds on Oct 30th (GJS). The Lower Farm roost built up further to 3000 on Nov 11th (GJS) and 2500 on Nov 19th (RSJ). Further roost counts were recorded in December but none exceed the November counts. Of interest was the observation that the 450 birds counted at Theale Main Lake on Dec 1st were mainly adults (RJB).

## HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

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

There were 235 records from 53 locations. Only nine records exceeded a count of 100 birds, with most counts being of small numbers. Over 75 percent of the records were five birds or less. Although recently fledged juveniles were seen in Berkshire, there was no direct evidence of breeding at any particular location in the county. **First winter:** On Jan 1st 38 birds were seen at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill (PNe). A group of 16 birds were in the roost at, Eversley GPs on Jan 9th (JMC). Sixteen were also seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 26th (PNe). Twelve birds were at South Lake, Reading on Jan 23rd (LGL). The Eversley GPs roost rose to 21 on Feb 2nd (JMC). On Febr 3rd 100 birds were at Decoy Heath NR, Aldermaston (CHy) and then 150 at Knowl Hill on Feb 4th (PNe). **Spring/Summer:** Very few birds were seen in March except for 12 at Maidenhead Weir on Mar 27th (DF). Most counts for April came from east Berkshire with the most significant count being 100 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 10th (PNe). Thirty eight birds were at Oakley Green, Windsor, on Apr 3rd (PNe). Twelve adults were seen flying low over the town centre of Slough on Apr 4th (DF) and then three adults calling loudly

over Bracknell town centre on Apr 11th (DF). A gathering of 38 immature birds was seen on the Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands on Apr 26th (DJB). Another group of 20 birds, mostly immature, were on the East Ilsley floods on May 17th (DJB). A leucistic individual was noted at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 14th (DJB). In June, Queen Mother Reservoir provided the highest count of 240 birds, adults and immature, on Jun 18th (CDRH) with a further 80 immatures by Wood Lane weir, Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands on the same day (CDRH). A leucistic third year bird was present at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 2nd and 5th (CDRH). On Jul 7th 125 birds were seen on Smith's Lawn, Windsor Great Park (DJB). The Queen Mother Reservoir flock of 200 birds included two recently fledged juveniles on Jul 12th (CDRH). The highest counts for August were also at Queen Mother Reservoir but with the lower counts of 60 on Aug 4th and 50 on Aug 8th (PNe). Up to two adults and two juveniles were seen on several dates throughout August at the New Diggings, Eversley GPs (RFM). **Autumn/Second winter:** The highest count of the year occurred at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill with a gathering of 1300 birds on Sep 3rd and then 1200 (one with a red ring) on Sep 17th (DJB). On Sep 16th 150 were counted at Cannon Court Farm, Maidenhead (BDC). On Sep 23rd 46 birds were at Remenham Hill (DF). From this time on, there were very low numbers of birds noted with the exception of 154 on Oct 3rd at Beenham's Heath, Shurlock Row on ploughed land (PEH) and 50 birds present at Twyford on Dec 29th (SAB). No counts of birds in the Queen Mother reservoir roost were submitted for this period.

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

On Apr 4th two summer plumage adults of this race were noted at Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). A first-winter bird was also at Queen Mother Reservoir on Dec 12th (CDRH).

### **YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis***

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

There were 90 records from 16 locations for this species which was seen in every month of the year. However, over 80% of the records were of five or less birds. The peak numbers were during the summer months of July and August. **First winter/Spring:** During January birds were seen several times at Queen Mother Reservoir, Eversley GPs, Lower Farm GP, Newbury, and Theale Main Lake. Away from these locations two birds were seen at Bucklebury on Jan 12th (ABT). The highest counts were of three birds at Theale Main Lake on Jan 12th and 22nd (KEM) and at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 23rd (CDRH). During February birds were only seen at Lower Farm, Newbury with one on Feb 4th and 2 on Feb 12th (NC) and one was in the Theale Main Lake gull roost on Feb 26th (CDRH). All records for March were from Queen Mother Reservoir with one or two birds on five days. One on Mar 3rd, 2 on the 6th, one on the 18th (CL) with 2 on the 27th and 28th (CDRH). Only three records occurred in April, all from Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 4th, 11th, 19th (CDRH). A bird, presumed the same, was seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 22nd and then at Horton GPs on May 27th (CDRH). **Summer:** On Jun 10th and again on 11th and 12th the first returning adult to Queen Mother Reservoir was seen (CDRH). Five birds (two adults and three second summers) were present at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jun 17th and 18th (CDRH). More birds began to appear at several sites during July with a high proportion being adults. The maximum count was 20 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 16th (CDRH) which included the first juvenile. Another juvenile appeared on the same day at Lower Farm GP, Newbury (NC). The peak count for the year of 30 birds was recorded at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 27th (CDRH). [Editor's note: a significant summer record omitted for 2012 was of 15 adults at Smiths Lawn, Windsor Great Park, on Jul 29th (DJB), the largest party recorded in Berkshire away from the Queen Mother Reservoir area.]

**Autumn/Second winter:** Numbers tailed off during the autumn with September reports only from Lower Farm GP, Newbury, with one bird on Sep 11th (GJS), and Coldharbour, Knowl Hill, with four birds on Sep 3rd and 3 birds on the 17th (DJB). Single birds were seen at Eversley GPs on Oct 15th (JMC) and 30th (RFM). Most records for November came from the Theale GPs with a maximum month's count of 5 at Moatlands GP on Nov 23rd and 4 on Nov 12th (ABT). Three birds were at Theale Main Lake on Nov 7th (KEM) and 3 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 11th and 25th (CDRH). Two adults were seen on the Lambourn Downs at Old Warren (Park Farm Down) on Nov 14th (ABT) and one adult at Ascot Heath on Nov 18th and 19th (RJD). Presumably the same adult remained at Ascot Heath in December with sightings there on the Dec 4th, 7th and 18th (RDale). The highest count for December was seven birds at Moatlands GP, Theale, on Dec 4th (ABT). Five birds were present in the Theale Main Lake roost on Dec 14th (CDRH).

### **CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans***

*Scarce autumn/winter visitor*

Fourteen records were submitted from six locations. Up to eleven different birds were identified during the year. The majority of records were from a single observer, though one may speculate that greater confidence in identification of this species may lead to records from more observers in the future. **First winter:** A first winter bird was seen in a pre-roost gathering on Cock Marsh on Jan 2nd (CDRH). This bird had also been seen here on Dec 31st 2012 and photographed at Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire, on Nov 23rd. Another first winter was found on flooded fields at Charvil on Jan 5th (CDRH). An adult was found in the Theale Main Lake roost on Feb 26th and was initially determined to be a Yellow-legged Gull until the primary pattern was observed whilst preening (CDRH). An adult was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 1st (CDRH) and then possibly the same bird on Mar 3rd (CL). The last bird seen in this period was a third winter bird at Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 25th and then again on Apr 4th (CDRH). **Second winter:** a first summer bird was at Queen Mother Reservoir between Jul 16th and 18th (CDRH). This bird had worn upperparts and was half way through primary moult. The next sighting was not until November when a second winter was in the roost at Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 16th (CDRH). An adult was in the Moatlands GP, Theale roost on Nov 23rd (ABT) and another adult at the Queen Mother Reservoir on Nov 25th (CDRH). The last sighting of the year was of a first winter in the Queen Mother Reservoir roost on Dec 22nd (CDRH).

### **ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides***

*Rare winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

A total of three different birds were recorded during the year. The first Queen Mother Reservoir record was a first winter on Jan 13th (CDRH). A bird, presumed to be the same, was again seen in the roost between Feb 16th and 18th (CDRH) and observed to be moulting into first summer plumage. An adult was located in the roost on Mar 5th (CDRH), and probably the same Mar 6th (CL), and was last seen on Mar 13th (CDRH). The only record in the second winter period was of a first winter seen for a few minutes on the water at the reservoir on Dec 1st before flying off east (CDRH).

### **GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus***

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

A total of 55 records were received for the year from 15 locations with birds present in every month except July. Highest counts were in November and December. Eight birds were

present at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 5th (ABT). Thereafter only one or two birds were recorded at any time until early November. Most records come from Lower Farm GP, Newbury, Theale Main Lake and Queen Mother Reservoir. On Nov 6th 15 birds were at Queen Mother Reservoir (ABT), with the number rising to 16 on Nov 18th of which 14 were adults (DJB). On Dec 24th there were 33 birds at Queen Mother Reservoir, of which 31 were adults (CDRH), then 56 on Dec 26th of which 53 were adults (CDRH). Presumably these birds were visiting the Knowl Hill landfill to feed as there were 44 (41 adults) there on Dec 31st (CDRH). The table summarises maximum monthly counts.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Queen Mother Reservoir	8	1	nc	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	16	56
Theale GPs	nc	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	1
Elsewhere												
No of sites	0	1	4	4	1	0	0	0	1	3	4	1
No of Birds reported	0	1	5	5	1	0	0	0	1	3	4	44

nc – no count

## LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons*

*Scarce passage migrant*

There was only one record for the year, this being a bird seen for an hour from 07:20hrs feeding along the edge of Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 28th (CDRH).

## BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

*Uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

This was a very poor year compared with the numbers seen on passage in recent years, with only seven birds recorded. On May 8th one bird was seen at Theale Main Lake (KEM). Another single bird appeared at Theale Main Lake on May 12th (RJB). On May 15th a bird was found at Lower Farm GP, Newbury and was still present the following day (BL *et al.*). Records are scarce for the month of June so two adults at Theale Main Lake on Jun 9th was a notable late spring record (KEM). Return passage comprised of a juvenile at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 23rd (CDRH) and another juvenile at Theale Main Lake from Sep 16th to 18th (RJB *et al.*). The latter individual was seen being chased by a Peregrine for about 10 minutes on the 18th (CMc) with the Peregrine eventually retreating to the pylon.

## SANDWICH TERN *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

*Uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

Historically this species is recorded more frequently during autumn passage, but the converse was true this year and in much lower numbers than average. There was an early record of an individual flying low and east over Queen Mother Reservoir on Mar 25th (CDRH). A bird flew northeast over Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 13th (CDRH, ABT). Another bird was at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 27th (CDRH, MMc). During May, a bird flew straight through at Theale Main Lake on May 12th (AVL) then another individual flew low, calling loudly, over Hosehill LNR, Theale on May 25th (KEM, AVL). The only record for the return passage was of two birds, an adult and a juvenile, circling over Queen Mother Reservoir on Jul 18th (CDRH).

## COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

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

There were 502 records from 63 sites with breeding attempted at nine. **Spring:** The first record for the year was at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures on Apr 11th (MFW, SDay). Thereafter, records were submitted for every day of April except Apr 22nd. The first for Queen Mother Reservoir was on Apr 13th (ABT, CDRH), then at Theale Main Lake on Apr 15th (KEM, RHS), Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands on Apr 18th (WMO), Woolhampton GPs on Apr 19th (PEH), Newbury Nature Discovery Centre on Apr 20th (GJS), Eversley GPs on Apr 21st (TGB), Summerleaze GP, Maidenhead on Apr 23rd (CDRH) and Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Apr 24th (DJB, GJS). The highest count for April was six at three locations: Theale Main Lake on Apr 18th (KEM), Jubilee River, Dorney Wetlands on Apr 24th (GJS) and Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures on Apr 30th (RM). Numbers remained low in early May, then seven were at Theale Main Lake on May 5th (KEM), 12 at Maiden Erleigh Lake, Reading on May 7th (CF), 20 at Summerleaze GP, Maidenhead on May 8th (CDRH), 15 at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 12th (CDRH) then over 70 at Dinton Pastures Lakes on May 13th (RM). Numbers built up to 11 at Thatcham Discovery Centre by May 30th (GJS). Sixteen were seen at Horton GPs on May 30th (CDRH). **Breeding:** Evidence of breeding attempts in May were submitted for Lavell's Lake, Lea Farm Lake and Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures; Summerleaze GP, Maidenhead; Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre and Padworth Lane GP, and in June, at Eversley GPs and Land's End GP, Twyford. During July a pair appeared to be attempting to breed on a small island at Lower Farm GP, Newbury on Jul 13th (IW, JL). On Jul 21st 2 fledged juveniles from a nest on the Queen Mother Reservoir pier building roof were seen with 2 adults (CDRH). At Lea Farm GP 22 chicks were ringed on Jul 6th (TGB). On Lavell's Lake six "young" were seen with ten adults on Jul 9th (JLS) and on Sandford Lake a juvenile on Aug 17th (MFW). At Summerleaze GP, Maidenhead at least ten birds were seen sitting on nests on Jun 10th (CDRH), whilst 25 adults were present on Jun 23rd (CDRH) and on July 12th over 15 juveniles, several of which were just fledged, were sitting on the tern raft (CDRH). Unfortunately, although four adults were seen sitting on nests on the raft at Thatcham Discovery Centre on Jun 6th (MIGW), then 5 on Jun 11th (GJS), no terns were present on the raft on Jun 18th (GJS). At Padworth Lane GP, a bird was "sitting" on an island on Jun 13th (KEM), a pair was seen copulating on Jun 29th (SAG), and then 2 pairs were seen on Jul 4th (KEM), but by Jul 29th none were seen sitting on nests and had presumably failed. On Jun 25th three were present at Lodden BBOWT NR, Twyford GP but no further details were submitted (WeBS). At Eversley GPs a pair was observed displaying and nest building on a tern raft on Jun 6th (RFM) and a chick seen with the adults on Jul 13th (RCMu). Then on Jul 23rd 2 well grown juveniles were seen with the adults (RCMu). A chick was reported on Aug 1st (RCMu), then there were 2 adults with one juvenile on Aug 19th (RCMu) and then with two juveniles on Aug 24th ((JMC). On Jun 18th at Land's End GP, Twyford at least two occupied nests were observed but no subsequent records were received (SAB). At Lower Farm GP, Newbury a bird appeared to be sitting on the tern raft on Jun 22nd (IW, JL), then a pair was seen to be attempting to breed on a small island on Jul 13th (IW, JL) and an "immature" was observed on Aug 24th (IW, JL). Away from breeding areas the largest count during the summer months was 30 birds feeding over the Jubilee River, Maidenhead on Jun 28th (ABT). Seventeen were around the BA Pits, Wraysbury GPs on Jul 2nd (CDRH). Forty-one birds were present at Dinton Pastures CP on Jul 17th (GWiLs). **Autumn:** A flock 42 birds (including 15 juveniles), probably migrants, rested on a sand bar at Horton GPs on Aug 23rd (CDRH). Another group of 16 birds flew southwest over Wraysbury on Aug 24th (CDRH). The last record of the year was of a single bird at Eversley GPs on Sep 8th (NSi).

## ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii*

*Rare vagrant*

For the third consecutive year Roseate Tern was seen at Queen Mother Reservoir. On May 22nd at 11:00hrs two birds were seen associating with three Common Terns in the southeast corner before moving to the centre, then flying off northeast at 11:22hrs (CDRH). On Jun 10th a single bird flew in from the east at 12:15hrs before departing northeast with a Common Tern (CDRH). A Roseate Tern had been seen earlier departing northwest from Staines Reservoir, Surrey, at 11:40hrs.

## ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

*Uncommon passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

A total of 45 birds were seen on passage with the majority in late April, predominately at two sites. **Spring:** The first of the year at Theale Main Lake on Apr 14th was one seen flying west (RJB). The highest count for the year was of eight birds at Hosehill LNR, Theale in the late afternoon of Apr 16th (ABT). On Apr 17th a single bird was sat on the island amongst gulls at Hosehill LNR, Theale (RCr) and three were at Queen Mother Reservoir (MMc). Two birds were at Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Apr 18th (FJC) and at least four birds at Hosehill LNR, Theale GPs although there may have been as many as eight birds (RCo, KEM), then on Apr 19th a single bird was seen sat on a boat at Moatlands GP, Theale (RCr) and then four at Theale Main Lake on the same day (PNe, PEH). A single bird was seen briefly at Hosehill LNR, Theale on Apr 20th (DNTR). An apparently exhausted bird was seen at Wraysbury GPs on Apr 21st (CDRH) settling on the water for at least 35 minutes. It was still present the following two days. Three birds were seen sat on a buoy at Theale Main Lake on Apr 26th (AVL). On Apr 30th two birds were at Queen Mother Reservoir (MMc). Records for May comprised one on May 8th (AVL), one bird on May 12th (RJB) and one again on May 14th (WeBS) all at Theale Main Lake. On Jun 12th a second-summer at Horton GPs was feeding with 12 Common Terns at 14:00hrs for eighteen minutes before flying off east with four Common Terns (CDRH). Second summer birds occur in mid-summer. Previously second summers have been seen at Summerleaze GP, Maidenhead on May 22nd 2011 and Queen Mother reservoir July 20th 2007. **Autumn:** The first return passage birds were one at Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures on Aug 24th (FJC) and a juvenile at Queen Mother Reservoir on the same day (ABT). Two juveniles were seen separately at different times at Queen Mother Reservoir the next day, Aug 25th (CDRH). The last bird of the year was, again, at Queen Mother Reservoir, on Oct 2nd (DJB) where it circled the reservoir before being lost to view.

## ROCK DOVE / FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia*

*Abundant urban resident*

**First winter:** Under-recorded, with the only large count being 240 birds at Cookham Rise on Jan 17th (BDC). **Breeding:** Again under-recorded, the only breeding record was of 65 birds, including 15 nests and at least 35 young under the A4 bridge at Maidenhead Ditch on Jun 13th (DJB). **Autumn/Second winter:** Some sizeable post-breeding flocks were seen, often feeding on stubble fields: 353 at Eton Wick on Aug 25th (KPD), 146 at Runnymede on Aug 26th (NST) and at least 600 at Woodlands Park fields, Maidenhead on Sep 18th (DJB).

## STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

*Common resident and winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

**First winter:** Quite widely reported, but generally in single figures and often from gardens. A garden high count of eight birds was noted at Mill Ride, Ascot on Jan 20th (SDA). Larger flocks were 12 at Englefield on Feb 18th (PEH), 70 at Remenham on Mar 1st (DJB), rising to 200 on Mar 12th (CDRH), 20 at Dukes lane, Windsor Great Park on Mar 2nd (DJB), 42 at Englefield on Mar 9th (RCr) and 10 at Wokingham on Mar 24th (AHarr) **Breeding:** Evidence of breeding was reported from 25 sites across the west, mid and east of the county. Singing birds were noted in suitable breeding habitat from Apr 2nd with two at Fobney Island and two at Fobney Meadows, Reading (JLe). Further birds were seen at traditional sites: at Silwood Park, Sunninghill, six were singing on Apr 23rd and ten were singing on May 27th (RJD) at Greenham Common (JL, IW). On Apr 22nd in the Windsor Forest/Great Park area there were up to six pairs (DJB) and a further nine singing birds were recorded between Apr 28th and Jun 3rd (DJB) and Swinley Park, Swinley Forest where four pairs and six singing birds were seen on Jun 1st (DJB). From late June, some large flocks started to appear in Windsor Great Park: 200 on Smith's Lawn on the 23rd (RJD). **Autumn/Second winter:** No further large flocks were noted until September when the largest flocks of the year were seen: 450 at Woodlands Park fields, Maidenhead on the 18th (DJB) and 512 at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill on the 21st (DJB). In October the highest counts were 92 at Beenham's Heath on the 3rd (PEH), 53 at Woodlands Park fields on the 20th (DJB), 50 in Wilderness Wood, Windsor Great Park on the 20th (DJB) and 69 at Remenham Hill on the 30th (ABT). Numbers continued to fall away in November and December, the largest flock in the period was 70 birds at Eversley GPs on Nov 3rd (NSi).

## WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

*Abundant resident and winter visitor*

**First winter:** Widely reported across the county, with many three figure counts. The largest flocks in the period were 1500 at White Waltham Airfield on Jan 21st (PNe), 1000 at Compton Downs on Feb 2nd (DJB), 500 south over Hungerford on Feb 19th (RGS), 750 at Remenham on Mar 1st (DJB), 700 at Dukes Lane, Windsor Great Park on Mar 2nd (DJB), 500 at Warfield on Mar 27th (LRB) and 600 at Switchback Road, Maidenhead on Mar 29th (BDC). **Breeding:** Numbers tailed off from April through to June, with most counts in only single or double figures. Breeding is under-recorded, with very few records showing evidence of breeding. **Autumn/Second winter:** No large flocks were reported until September when 450, including many juveniles, were seen at Cannon Court Farm, Maidenhead on the 16th (BDC). The first of the large Autumn movements appeared in late October. Regular watching at Ascot Heath produced 1,500 south on the 29th and 8,264 south on the 30th (RJD). November saw the largest flocks of the year moving south or south southwest in the early morning, 20,000 from 07:15 to 08:15 between Windsor Castle and Queen Mother Reservoir on the 8th (DJB), 6110 over Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on the 10th (DJB) and a site and county record count of 21,830 over Ascot Heath on the 13th (RJD). 1,434 were seen in a fifteen minute period over Woose Hill, Wokingham on the 15th (PBT). By late November, the large flocks reported were likely to be over-wintering birds. There were 4,000 at Great Meadow Pond on Nov 24th (DJB), though this was down to 1,000 birds by Dec 1st (DJB), back up to 4,000 by Dec 8th (DJB) and down to 1,000 again on Dec 15th (DJB), indicating some local movement. 3,000 were seen flying northeast over Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead on Dec 6th (ANS).

2,000 flying south or southwest over Queen Mother Reservoir on the morning of Dec 24th were thought to be birds leaving local roost sites (CDRH) and 900 towering above Cranbourne Chase, Windsor Great Park on Dec 31st had possibly been flushed by a raptor (CDRH).

## COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

*Common resident*

This species continues to be widely reported across the county in small numbers, but is under-reported. **First winter:** A pair was seen nest building at Woodlands Park, Maidenhead on Jan 4th (DJB) and another was in courtship display at Cookham on Jan 22nd (BDC). The peak count was 16 birds at Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead on Feb 3rd (PNe) and 13 at Eton Wick on Feb 5th (RMH). **Breeding:** Under-reported, with just two sites noting breeding. At Lundy Lane, Reading, mating was seen on Apr 7th and nest building on Apr 20th (SAG). At Frogmill, Hurley, a pair fledged four young on Aug 17th (SJF, FMF). **Autumn/Second winter:** No large flocks were seen, peak counts being 12 at Wilson Road, Reading on Sep 5th (SAG), 22 at Westley Mill, Hawthorn Hill on Oct 6th (MSFW), the highest count of the year, and 15 at Pinkneys Green on Dec 18th (PNe). [Editor's note: The breeding season abundance of Collared Doves, as measured by the Berkshire Bird Index, continues to show a marked decline in Berkshire, contrary to the national trend (little change 2000-2013). See page 6.]

## TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

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

**Summer/breeding:** The first returning birds were seen on Apr 22nd at Aldermaston GPs (JPM) and Apr 23rd and Apr 27th at Brimpton GPs (JPM). It is possible that these two records relate to the same bird. A pair went on to breed at Aldermaston GPs, the only proven breeding in the county this year, and was last seen on Aug 27th (JPM). Brief song heard at Brimpton GPs on Jul 22nd and Jul 29th is thought to possibly relate to birds from Aldermaston GPs (JPM). A single bird was at Woolhampton GPs on May 1st (RCo) and two birds were at Searle's Farm Lane GPs briefly on May 2nd (JA). A male returned to Nuptown on May 17th (MSFW) and was reported singing on many days there and at Chawridge Bank BBOWT reserve until Jun 15th (RPa, CHB, CDRH). A pair was photographed in a garden at Winkfield Row on Jun 22nd (D Crump). A male was heard singing at Fifield on Jun 30th (L Francis). At Hodcott Down, West Ilsley, a singing male in display flight was seen on Jul 7th (ABT), two birds, possibly changing at a nest, were seen Aug 3rd (ABT) and a bird in display flight was seen again on Aug 6th (ABT). **Autumn:** A bird flew south over Crookham Common on Aug 12th (ABT) and an adult flew north and then northwest over Queen Mother Reservoir on the morning of Aug 25th (CDRH).

## RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

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

Having spread westwards into mid Berks, especially along the Thames Valley, this species is now reported regularly as far west as the east of Reading. It still remains a rare bird in west Berkshire. The table below shows the monthly site status based on the records received.

Number of sites	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
W Berks	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M Berks	4	0	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	3	5	2
E Berks	19	14	7	16	15	8	8	13	14	12	16	13

**First winter:** The highest counts in the east of the county were 103 flying west at dawn at Dorney Wetlands on Jan 1st (DJB), 63 flying west at Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead on the morning of Jan 4th (LJF) and 200 in trees at Slough Sewage Farm on Jan 10th (PEH). The highest count in mid Berkshire was six at Aston on Jan 10th (DF). **Spring/summer:** The peak counts in the east were 306 over Sutherland Grange, Windsor on Jul 9th (MG), 350 northeast over Eton Wick on Jul 30th (CDRH) and 100 at the Cippenham, Slough roost on Aug 1st (DLC). The highest counts in mid Berkshire came from Twyford, with 25 birds seen on Jul 4th and 21st (SPA). In west Berks, the only two records of the year were one over west at Thatcham on Apr 4th (RRK) and one at Greenham Common on May 7th (JL). Breeding was under-recorded as no records were received of breeding activity or juveniles. The predominantly yellow leucistic bird noted in December 2012 at Eton Wick was seen again at Dorney Wetlands, on May 17th, where it was paired with a normal coloured mate (CDRH). **Autumn/Second winter:** Unusually, the highest counts of the year were of feeding birds rather than roosts. In the east, 160 flew northeast over Dorney Wetlands on Oct 17th (WS), 200 were feeding in beech trees at Blacknest, Virginia Watert on Oct 30th (RJD) and at Windsor Great Park, birds were attracted to feed on crab apples and vines, with 112 on Oct 6th, 478 on Oct 20th and 170 on Oct 27th (DJB). In mid Berks, the only double figure count was of 32 birds at Remenham on Nov 5th (PEH).

## CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

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

Reported from 94 sites, which is more or less the same as 2012, with a similar minimum number of birds. The table shows the monthly status based on records received:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of occupied sites	0	0	0	40	60	38	2	5	0	0	0	0
Minimum number of birds	0	0	0	50	81	47	2	5	0	0	0	0

**Spring:** The first birds of the year were on Apr 14th, when one was at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst (PJC) and one was at Stanford Dingley (JLe). Birds were then seen at Woolhampton GPs on Apr 15th (GEW, MGU), with three new birds on Apr 18th at Charvil (NE), Dorney Wetlands (WMO) and Harveys Meadow, Hungerford (JSWo), with widespread records thereafter. Most April/May records relate to one to two birds, but higher concentrations were seen at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest, with 5 on May 6th (DAC) and 3 on several other dates; 4 at Woolhampton GPs on Apr 25th (JBU, IW) and 3 on May 3rd (GEW), 3 at Thatcham Marsh on May 6th (DJB) and 3 at Boxford on Apr 24th (RJCl). Birds were still being reported widely until the middle of June, but fell away sharply as birds stopped singing and calling and/or left the county. There are only three June records after 16th. **Breeding:** This is under-recorded, as several sites reported both males and females being present during the breeding season, but there were no reports of juveniles. **Autumn:** An adult was seen flying at Sandford Farm, Woodley on Jul 7th (FJC), with an unaged bird at Thatcham on Jul 17th (MJD). A juvenile was at Aldworth Downs on Aug 7th (LPe), but there is no way of telling whether this was locally bred or not. Another unaged bird was at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest on Aug 7th (CMc). One was ringed at Brimpton GPs on Aug 8th (JPM), with another at Greenham Common on Aug 13th (IW, JL). The last bird of the year was at Finchampstead allotments on Aug 16th (RCMu).

## BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

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

Two hundred and fifty records of this popular species were received from 88 1km squares (% of squares): 42 (7%) in west Berkshire, 21 (6%) in mid Berkshire and 23 (5%) in east Berkshire. This was similar to the previous year (west 44, mid 21, east 14 1km squares). As usual, most reports were of single birds hunting and single birds or pairs at nest boxes. One bird was found dead on the M4 at Frilsham on Apr 17th (RCr) and the remains of a long dead bird were found at Colnbrook on Mar 29th (CDRH). **Breeding:** It was a dreadful breeding year: there were no young fledged from any of the 119 boxes in west Berkshire monitored by the Pang Valley Barn Owl Section of the West Berkshire Countryside Society (JD): see table. One adult and one pullus were ringed elsewhere (TGB). The poor season may have been in part due to a relatively cold preceding winter lasting through to March, with 38 days of air frost recorded at Heathrow Airport, Greater London between November and March.

Table: Barn Owl breeding success in boxes monitored by the Pang Valley Barn Owl Group

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013
Boxes monitored	91	111	123	119
Boxes successful	10	18	27	0
Chicks fledged	29	54	72	0
Average brood	2.9	3.0	2.7	0

## LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

*Widespread and locally common resident*

Records were received from 42 1 km squares (% of squares): 11 (2%) in west Berkshire, 8 (3%) in mid Berkshire and 23 (5%) in east Berkshire; this was similar to the previous year (west 11, mid 10, east 28). Reports, which were spread evenly through the year, were usually of single birds, sometimes pairs, often seen at roost or nest holes or birds heard calling at night. In January and February, a Little Owl occupied a hole in an Oak tree previously used by nesting Barn Owls at Padworth Lane GP (KEM). One Little Owl, calling on the roof of his house at Woodlands Park, Maidenhead, woke the observer at 04:00 on Dec 2nd (DJB). The only records of more than two birds, other than nestlings, were of three at Windsor Great Park on Apr 29th, four (two adults and two young) on Aug 2nd and three on Sep 9th (all RMH) and three at Legoland, Windsor on Jul 2nd (RMH). A bird was found dead at Ascot Heath on Mar 28th (SA). **Breeding:** Although Little Owls are widespread, particularly in the east of Berkshire, breeding confirmation was low, with evidence of young reported for only five sites: Eversley GPs, Whiteknights Park Reading, Cookham, Legoland, Windsor and Windsor Great Park. Little Owls make less use of boxes than Barn Owls and there were no reports of successful breeding in the 12 boxes monitored by the Pang Valley Barn Owl Group (JD pers. comm.).

## TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

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

Tawny Owls were recorded in 83 1km squares (% of squares), 25 (4%) in west Berkshire, 20 (6%) in mid Berkshire and 38 (9%) in east Berkshire. Most reports were of birds calling at night, often two, three or four heard "singing" at the same time. Single birds and pairs were often reported at nest or roosting holes. Although a nocturnal species, Tawny Owls are sometimes seen or heard in the middle of the day: two males and a juvenile were heard in

Windsor Great Park on Jul 19th (DJB). Unusually, apart from the preceding record of a juvenile in Windsor Great Park, there were no reports of nestlings or fledged birds.

## LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

*Rare resident and scarce winter visitor*

There were no Long-eared Owl reports other than winter reports from a known nesting area in west Berkshire.

## SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

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

**First winter:** At the main wintering area around Cow Down, West Ilsley, few Short-eared Owls were seen in January and February, the highest count being two on Jan 1st (CWFO); three were recorded there on Mar 2nd (ABT) and the last record of the winter was on Apr 11th (ABT). Single birds were recorded elsewhere: on the Aldworth Downs on Jan 12th (LPe) and Mar 3rd (NJB), Lambourn Downs on Jan 2nd (PEH) and Feb 19th (CDRH); at Woolley Down on Jan 12th and at Farnborough on Feb 28th (both GDS). On Mar 6th one was seen circling over Newbury shadowed by crows (AEDH). In the Combe area one was seen on Mar 23rd (RHar) and one at Walbury Hill on Mar 29th (RGS). The last record was on Apr 2nd at Compton Downs (ABT). **Second winter:** The highest count at Cow Down was four on Nov 29th (ABT). The only records elsewhere were of one at East Garston Down on Nov 17th (ABT).

Three records involving four birds in May in west Berkshire which could be late passage birds or relate to potential breeding birds, will not be detailed.

## NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

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

The first record of the year was of a bird calling at Roundoak Piece, Padworth on May 3rd (PH) and by the end of May singing males were noted at many of the breeding sites in the table. A total of 75 churring males were recorded, an increase on 2012 (55). The last records for the year were, as usual, in late August: two at Sunninghill Park on Aug 20th (DJB) and a large chick found dying on Greenham Common on Aug 28th (JL).

Site	Churring males	Observers
Bucklebury Common	3	RP, GJS, RF
Greenham Common	7	PEH
Nalder Plantation	1	JLS
Padworth Common	3	RRe
Roundoak Piece	2	SAG
Snelsmore Common	2	GDS, MUT
Gorrick Wood	3	PKe
Viking Fields, Wokingham	1	D Tolan
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	38	PJC, CG, DJS
Swinley Park	1	DJB, MJF, LJF
Swinley Brick Pits	2	DJB
Buttersteep, South Ascot	6	DJB
Sunninghill Park	3	DJB
Wellington College Heath	2	DJS
South Forest, Windsor Forest	1	DJB

## SWIFT *Apus apus*

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

**Spring:** The first Swift of the year was seen over the River Thames at Cookham on Apr 14th (BDC). The first count over 200 was slightly earlier than 2012 on Apr 28th at Searle's Farm Lane GP (JA). The largest May counts were far higher than the previous year with Queen Mother Reservoir and Theale Main Lake both providing gatherings of over 500 birds. The former doing so on May 15th (DJB), when the observer considered this count to be conservative with possibly twice this number present over the whole reservoir bowl, and the latter on May 17th (RCr). The importance of aquatic sites for providing the species' insect diet is evidenced by all the 100+ counts this year, except some pre-migration gatherings, coming from, or close to, such locations. **Summer:** the difficulty of obtaining firm proof of breeding beyond birds entering or leaving suspected nest sites coupled with the relatively unattractive urban environments they tend to favour makes such evidence very sparse. Reports of birds returning to regular territories and screaming aerial parties later on provided strong circumstantial evidence of breeding having taken place. One observer (SAG) provided reports of birds using the eaves of houses in Reading at three locations: one at Beecham Road on May 23rd, four together in Wilson Road on Jun 8th and three in Brook Gardens on Jun 16th. Other reports of behaviour indicating probable breeding came from Crowthorne (PJC), Wokingham (AHarr), Thatcham (MIGW) and Finchampstead (RCMu). Widespread declines in this species may warrant increased attention from observers to try to locate breeding sites, especially outside Reading. With one notable exception maximum counts were at a similar level to the same period last year with the highest being 500 at Eversley GPs on June 23rd (TGB). The end of July from 23rd to 31st produced a string of high counts from fields at Woodlands Park, Maidenhead which peaked at 1,100 on the 29th (all DJB). The birds appeared to be attracted by large numbers of flying insects to fuel their migration. **Autumn:** As usual, numbers fell away during August with only one recorded sighting after that, a bird at Donnington, Newbury on Sep 14th (ARo) which was seen circling with House Martins.

## KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

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

Birds were recorded from slightly fewer locations this year, 111, and as some of these are in adjacent grid squares, could represent some duplication in terms of individuals. Again the geographical spread was county-wide wherever suitable habitat occurs. The table below shows the monthly status based on the records received. Please note that records from the same grid square in the same month are treated as duplicates.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of Sites	17	20	23	27	18	26	21	24	36	34	36	30
Min Number of birds	19	24	26	34	21	31	25	30	47	52	40	38

The following list has tried to avoid duplication and includes still waters close to the rivers listed:

River	No. of Sites
River Blackwater	7
River Colne	2
The Cut	4
The Emmbrook	3

River Enbourne	3
Jubilee River	6
River Kennet	35
River Lambourn	7
River Loddon*	4
River Pang	3
River Thames	23
York Stream	2
Other Sites	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>

All records from Dinton Pastures are considered as one site.

Nearly all records were of one to three birds. The highest count was five at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford on Oct 20th (JSWo). This count was identical to last year by the same observer and from the same site.

**Breeding:** 16 pairs were detected during the breeding season (March – July) with three additional instances of courtship display and also two reports of birds near nest sites which included a female seen on Mar 2nd at Moor Green Lake, Eversley GPs with mud on its bill from excavating (RCMu). There were three confirmed breeding records: a bird was seen taking fish to a nest hole at Horton GPs on May 30th (CDRH), a juvenile was ringed at Aldermaston GPs on Jul 1st (JPM), a fledgling was calling to be fed near Boxford Mill on Aug 4th (GDS); additionally, a first year male was ringed at Thatcham Marsh on Sep 15th (IW, JL) and a first year female was ringed at Kintbury Cress Beds on Nov 19th (RGS).

## HOOPOE *Upupa epops*

*Scarce passage migrant*

Two reports of single birds seen between virtually identical dates at locations less than two miles apart, undoubtedly refer to the same individual. One was seen on private land to the northeast of Stanford Dingley from Oct 10th to 18th by several observers (BDC) and, in the same period, one was at Bradfield on Oct 17th (CMar) and also seen here the previous week (*per* JLe).

## WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*

*Scarce passage migrant, formerly bred (Red Listed)*

One record this year during the early autumn migration period. A bird was at Greenham Common immediately south of the control tower on Sep 28th was seen for 30 minutes and photographed (RGI).

## GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

*Common resident (Amber Listed)*

Records came 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. High counts were greater than in 2012, the largest being nine at the new Jennett's Park CP, Bracknell on Sep 8th which included juveniles (MHu). The highest total not including juveniles was seven at Sunningdale on Jul 30th (RMH), sixes were recorded as follows; Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 19th (PNe), Burghfield GPs on Apr 21st (RCr), High Standinghill Woods, Windsor Forest on Apr 30th (DJB) and Greenham Common on Aug 4th (RJPY). **Breeding:** there

were twenty-two records, seven more than 2012. All but three of these were fledged juveniles. Two active nests were located at Silwood Park, Sunninghill on May 10th (RJD) and a female with a brood patch was ringed at Ascot Heath on May 6th (RJD). Ringing: apart from the aforementioned female, a male was ringed at Greenham Common on Oct 30th (IW, JL), singles were ringed at Silwood Park on Nov 8th and 15th (RJD). Two more were ringed at Ascot Heath on Nov 11th and a single there on Dec 7th (RJD).

## **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos major*

*Common and increasing resident*

This is our most common and widespread 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, some involving breeding evidence, include eight at Hermitage on Jan 6th (JBU), seven, including four drumming, at Silwood Park, Sunninghill on Apr 24th (RJD) and 10 including two nests with young there on May 27th (RJD). Eight, including a pair at a nest with young, in Swinley Park on Jun 1st (DJB), eight, including two pairs with fledged young, visiting feeders at Blacknest near Virginia Water on Jun 2nd (RJD), seven, including one at a nest with chicks, and six others at South Forest, Windsor Forest on Jun 3rd (DJB) and eight at Swinley Park on Jul 19th (DJB). These counts were similar to 2012. **Breeding:** at least 35 pairs were confirmed to have bred at 30 sites, though breeding undoubtedly occurred at a number of other locations (the records received indicated up to 150 pairs at 88 sites during the breeding season which include those mentioned above). The confirmed pair figures were very similar to the previous year though the potential numbers were substantially up, a possible indication of the species' ongoing success. This year there was only one site that recorded more than two breeding pairs (down from three in 2012), three pairs were feeding young at three nest holes near the lake at Whiteknights Park, Reading on May 31st (PG) the same number as the previous year.

## **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos minor*

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

Sadly, this species' decline continues with records from only 15 locations, half that of 2011; six in west Berkshire, seven in mid Berkshire and two in east Berkshire. By far the biggest decrease was in the east with no records at all from the former stronghold in and around Windsor Great Park (perhaps connected with competition for nest sites from species such as the ever-increasing parakeets); the previous year five birds were recorded here. Of these sites, six recorded the species on only one occasion which could point to wandering birds. Only four sites definitely recorded more than one bird (Brimpton GPs; Caesar's Camp, Swinley Forest; Lavell's Lake Dinton Pastures CP and Searle's Farm Lane GPs, Burghfield). **Breeding:** There was one record of confirmed breeding with a juvenile ringed at Brimpton GPs on Sep 11th (JPM) after no such evidence the previous two years. **January – March:** The first record in this period was one in a garden at Holyport on Jan 2nd (B Humm). This was followed by a female at Caesar's Camp, Swinley Forest on Jan 9th (MHu) with two birds being found there the following day (BJH) and two further sightings of singles, one stated as a female, the day after that (Stuart Boreham, MHu, BAJC). One was at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures on Feb 13th (DJBa, RM) and a bird was calling at Kintbury Cress Beds on Feb 20th (RGS). The same day one was at Paice's Wood, Wasing (P Bran) and again two days later when it was seen heading to roost (PEH, RCo) and a female was seen at Searle's Farm Lane GPs, Burghfield on Mar 10th (JA). **April – June:** One was found at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Apr 7th (THar) with three records of singles from Frogmill, Hurley on Apr 14th, 20th and May 8th (SJF, FMF) which was presumably the

same bird. Encouragingly a male was found at Searle's Farm Lane GPs, Burghfield on Apr 24th to go with the earlier reported female (JA). One was at Donnington Castle, Newbury on May 6th (JCh), two at Snelmore Common CP on May 8th (JL), one at Greenham Common on May 11th (JL) and a bird was heard at Kintbury Cress Beds on May 23rd (RGS, IW) which was probably the same one that was found in February. There was no real evidence of breeding being attempted (drumming, displaying, hole excavating etc.) during this period unlike previous years. **July – September:** A bird was heard calling near Heath Pond, Finchampstead on Jul 3rd (RCMu) with a male on silt beds at Brimpton GPs on Sep 6th and the aforementioned juvenile there on Sep 11th (JPM). A pair was seen on a telegraph pole at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Sep 15th (LSe per FJC). **October – December:** Though this year was generally poorer in terms of records than the previous one the final period was significantly better as is often the case with the loss of leaves. A female was seen feeding in an oak tree at Hurst on Oct 5th and also at the same spot the previous week (NE). A male was at Sandford Lake, Dinton Pastures, sometimes at a roost site, on a number of dates in November as follows; 3rd (ABT), 4th making new nest hole (CDRH, PSc), 5th (RCW, AA, R Sajdak), 7th (B May), 8th (AMc), 10th (MFW), 12th (RFM, G Duffus) and 13th (GSE). A bird was heard at Kintbury Cress Beds on Nov 10th and 19th and Dec 22nd (all RGS) which is probably the same one as encountered earlier in the year. One was at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures on Nov 27th (LSe per FJC) and finally one was at Loddon BBOWT Reserve, Twyford GPs on Dec 19th (R C W Davies).

## **WOODLARK** *Lullula arborea*

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

A good effort was made to study this localised species in the Greenham Common and Swinley Forest areas, which contributed to the discovery of about 36 territories in Berkshire, much the same as in the past few years and far fewer than the county population estimate of 160 pairs as derived from the recent atlas survey<sup>1</sup>. No reports were received for Snelmore Common or Bucklebury Common this year. **First winter:** Woodlarks largely vacate their breeding haunts in winter and the first was encountered at Greenham Common on Jan 31st, where one in brief song (JL, IW). Two were in song there on Feb 14th (JL) and a probable pair seen on Feb 26th (JL). A pair was found at nearby Kenton's Wood, Crookham, on Feb 24th (KGW). Six were present in and around the Wishmoor, Swinley Forest area on Feb 15th, five of which were singing (DJB). One was located the same day at Decoy Heath, Aldermaston (DJB), and another the following day at Sunningdale (RMH). **Spring/Summer:** reports came from the following 15 localities (west to east). West Woodhay Down: one Jun 17th (IW). Greenham/Crookham Common: many reports of songsters were received, with a maximum of four singing on Apr 1st (IW); the records suggest at least five territories were occupied and two pairs were confirmed breeding; Eight on May 29th included a family party of five and nine on Jun 5th a family party of seven (JL); four on Jun 18th involved two territories and included a female carrying food to a nest and the ringing of a male (JL, IW); of six on Jul 2nd at least four were juveniles (JL, IW). Brimpton Gravel Pits: two were grounded on Jun 26th (JPM). Paices Wood, Wasing: two on May 19th included one singing, and one was again singing on Jun 11th (JLe). Padworth Common: one singing on May 2nd and one Jul 7th (TGB). At nearby Roundoak Piece, one was in brief song on May 21st (PH). Ufton Nervet: three, two singing, on Mar 31st (RCr) and two singing on Jul 7th (RCr; PH). Swinley Forest Special Protection Area (Crowley *et al.*, 2012, *The Birds of Berkshire 2012*, 9-16): seven territories in Crowthorne Woods between A3095, B3348 and Devil's Highway (CRG, DJS): two territories in Crowthorne Woods between RMA Heathland and Nine Mile Ride (CRG): four territories in MOD Heathland (PJC), including two territories at



Wishmoor Bottom (DJB *et al.*); and eight territories in Sandhurst Royal Military Academy (PJC). One flew south over Woodlands Park, Maidenhead on Jul 22nd (DJB). There were three territories at South Ascot (DJB), and one was heard at the Berkshire Golf Club, Ascot on Mar 21st (BAJC). **Autumn:** Unusually, there were no reports from the Swinley Forest area and, excepting one at Ufton Nervet on Sep 3rd (PH), the many records all concerned Greenham/Crookham Common. The highest count was ten on Sep 22nd (AVL), followed by eight two days later (RJPY). The last records for the year were provided by a party of six flying over SW on Oct 24th (JL, IW) and one in brief song on Nov 12th (JL, IW).

<sup>1</sup>[*Editor's note:* the annual surveys and casual observations cover fewer than half of the 34 tetrads found to be occupied in the 2007-11 national atlas surveys, which showed Berkshire to have 5.2% of the national abundance of Woodlark, equating to 160 pairs based on the Avian Population Estimates Panel's estimate of the national population of 3,100 pairs (Berkshire Atlas, 2013). However, the atlas estimates may be biased by the high abundance in heathland tetrads along Berkshire's border with Hampshire and Surrey, resulting in an overestimate of the territories within Berkshire, accounting for some of the difference between the atlas estimates and annual survey counts.]

## SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

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

It was estimated that this common species had 9,800 breeding territories in Berkshire in the Atlas surveys of 2008-11 (*The Birds of Berkshire*, 2013), although the Berkshire Bird Index shows a small downward trend (page 6). **First winter:** An unremarkable period involved about 27 localities in west Berkshire, eight localities in mid Berkshire and 16 localities in east Berkshire. Flocks were relatively small and only one exceeded 100: c120 on snow-covered fields N of Summerleaze Gravel Pit, Maidenhead on Jan 21st (CDRH). The next highest was 70 at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill on Jan 1st (PNe). Little movement was noted. Small numbers started singing from Jan 31st, with "many" of 50 in song at Englefield on Mar 31st (RCr) and over 15 in song at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill on Mar 9th (DJB). **Spring/Summer:** It was reported from about 39 localities in west Berkshire, ten localities in mid Berkshire and 27 localities in east Berkshire, with many birds singing, indicating breeding territories. Four counts of over 20 were received: 41 along The Ridgeway at Compton (35 singing and three pairs, two in courtship display) on May 17th (DJB); 26 singing and one feeding young at Cold Harbour on May 18th (DJB); 47, including 35 singing, at Compton Downs on Jun 21st (DJB); and 21 at Walbury Hill on Jul 19th (IW). The only other confirmations of breeding involved one carrying nest material at Walbury Hill on May 6th (DJB), and four carrying food at Brimpton on Jul 21st (GEW). **Autumn/Second winter:** An undistinguished period involved about 19 localities in west Berkshire, ten localities in mid Berkshire and 15 localities in east Berkshire. Numbers in August and September remained low, with only two counts above ten: 23 at Eton Wick on Sep 18th (RMH) and over ten at Cold Harbour on Sep 21st (DJB). Flocks occurred from October, though only one reached 100, which was at Old Warren, Lambourn on Nov 14th (ABT). Flocks of 59 were found at Eton Wick on Oct 1st (RMH), over 50 at Woodlands Park Fields, Maidenhead on Oct 16th and over 70 on Dec 25th (DJB), over 80 at Englefield on Nov 19th (RCr), 60 at Sulham on Dec 26th and 30th (JLe) and 50 at Compton Downs on Dec 27th (ABT). The normal movements were observed from Oct 5th, when five flew over Lower Farm Gravel Pit, Newbury (JL, IW). Parties were generally of up to ten birds and were reported moving in several different directions until Nov 19th. Higher counts included a total of 50 which flew west over Combe Gibbet on Oct 9th (IW) and a total of 15 which flew south over Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures on Oct 30th (FJC).

## SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

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

Numbers on both passages dipped below average. **Spring:** The median arrival date of this species between 2000–2009 was Mar 10th (Righelato, 2014, *The Birds of Berkshire* 2011, 6-11) and arrival this year was normal. Seven at Lower Farm Gravel Pit, Newbury on Mar 9th (MO) were shortly followed by three at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on Mar 10th (PNe) and two at Twyford Gravel Pits on Mar 11th (MHT). Over a week passed before the next small wave arrived, with five at Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Mar 20th (G Burfoot), two at Lower Farm Gravel Pit also Mar 24th (GJS), two at Dinton Pastures on Mar 21st (PSc), three at Theale Main Lake also Mar 21st (KEM), five at Twyford GPs on Mar 22nd (EN), four at Woolhampton Gravel Pit also Mar 22nd (GEW), three at Sulhamstead Lock on Mar 24th (SAG), and two Theale Main Lake the same day (AVL). The final report for March was on 29th, when there were two over Walbury Hill (RGS). April produced small numbers of up to 15 until Apr 10th, when 80+ at Woolhampton GP (NR), 15 at Eversley Gravel Pits (GD, RFM) and 24 at Henley Farm, Chaddleworth (GDS). Passage peaked in the third week, with the highest counts of 150 at Woolhampton GP on Apr 14th (KGW), 100+ at Lower Farm GP on Apr 16th (NC), and 350+ at Woolhampton GP in rain on Apr 19th (PEH). Apart from 120 at Lower Farm GP on Apr 27th (JLS), no other counts on spring passage exceeded 70. **Breeding:** Birds in or near nest-holes were reported from nine sites, involving 99+ holes: Woodspeen 74 holes, of which 49 completely excavated, on May 17th and 120+ birds on Jul 16th (JL, IW); Bagnor; Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale; Newtown; Reading (one hole) (ABT); Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures (where one of this year's birds was found dead inside the nesting wall on Apr 4th) (FJC); Eversley GPs (12 holes) (RCM); Marsh Meadow, Cookham (six holes) (BDC) and Blackpott's Viaduct Jubilee River (three holes) (DJB). At Eversley GPs, RCM discovered that two holes had been predated on Jul 9th, then one hole was dug out on Jul 13th and another on Jul 25th. Although the number of holes is down on recent years, this may reflect incomplete reporting. **Autumn:** Numbers of local or migrant birds were unusually depressed in August, with only one count above 50, which was 61 at Lower Farm GP on Aug 16th (JL). Rather poor passage continued in September, with the majority of counts falling below 25 and only three passing 100, all for Theale Main Lake: 130 on Sep 7th (RCr), 120 on Sep 16th (RJB) and 100+ the following day (RCW). Passage abruptly ended on the early date of Sep 19th, marked by a single bird at Queen Mother Reservoir (DJB).

## SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

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

A light spring passage surged in May and good numbers passed through in September, including probably over 2,000 birds on Sep 22nd. **Spring:** The first Swallow of the year appeared on Mar 20th at Borough Marsh, Wargrave (ABT), near its median arrival date of Mar 22nd for the years 2000-9 (Righelato, 2014, *The Birds of Berkshire* 2011, 6-11). There followed a trickle of arrivals: one Lea Farm Lake, Dinton Pastures on Mar 23rd (MFW), one Pangbourne on Mar 27th (R Stewart), two Wraysbury Gravel Pits on Apr 3rd (CDRH); then four reports for Apr 9th, two Fobney Island, Reading (RRi) and two Harveys Meadow, Hungerford (JSWo); 15 Lower Farm Gravel Pit, Newbury (RCo) and three Theale Main Lake (AVL). Numbers stayed comparatively low for the rest of April, with many appearing to fly straight through, and only two counts above 35 were received: 100 at The Wilderness, Kintbury on Apr 27th and 28th (RHAr; JLS) and 50+ at Eversley Gravel Pits on Apr 27th (J Dixon). However, much heavier passage appeared between May 9th and 17th, later than

normal. The highest counts consisted of c 250 at Woolhampton Gravel Pits on May 9th (KEM), 150 at Theale Main Lake the same day (RCr), 100+ at Eversley GPs on May 10th (NSi), c200 at Bucklebury on May 11th (BL), a notable count for a locality that is not a large waterbody, 100+ at Thatcham Marsh on May 14th (GJS) and 100+ at Theale Main Lake the same day (RCr), 150 at Dinton Pastures on May 15th (FJC) and 150 at Eversley GPs the same day (JMC) and a rough estimate of 1,000 in a feeding frenzy at Eversley GPs on May 17th (MHu). A week later there were 100+ at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 24th (DJB), a high number for this late date, after which numbers tailed off. **Summer/Breeding:** Although it was estimated that Berkshire held 2,700 breeding territories in 2009 (The Birds of Berkshire Atlas, 2013), indications of breeding were only reported from Hell Corner Farm, Inkpen; between Hamstead Lock and Benham Lock, K and A Canal, Brimpton, Compton Downs, Heywood Farm, Woodland Park, Wokingham STW and Eversley GPs. High summer counts included 50 at Harveys Meadow, Hungerford on Jun 15th and 16th (JSWo) and 100 at Eversley GPs on Jun 23rd (R Brook). **Autumn:** Signs of passage emerged at the start of August. There were 33+ moving east over Greenham Common on Aug 1st (JL, IW) and a pre-roost gathering of 80 at Eversley GPs the same day (JMC). The next day saw gatherings of 36 at North Heath (IW) and 24 at Old Windsor (RMH) and on Aug 3rd 28+ seemed to move south over Lower Farm GP (JL, IW). Many counts of 20-70 were made in August; notable were 100 at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures on Aug 17th (FJC) and 77 at Lower Farm GP on Aug 24th (JL). High though not exceptional numbers featured through much of September, with a sudden peak on Sep 6th of 300+ at Eversley GPs (RFM) and 100+ at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale (AVL). Another sudden peak occurred on Sep 22nd: 1,000+ moved high S over Woosehill, Wokingham throughout the day (EN), 300 were gathered on wires near Boxford (GDS), all of which were gone the next day, 200+ were at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures (RM), 100 flew over Twyford (SPA), 100 were at Hyde Farm, Pinkneys Green (PNe), 91 were at or over Ascot Heath (RJD) and 120 were at Greenham Common (C Young), which increased to 150-200 on Sep 23rd (DJB). Including smaller counts elsewhere, at least 1971 Swallows were observed on Sep 22nd. Additionally, on Sep 23rd, well over 100 (probably 300+) passed steadily SE over Swinley Forest (DJB). Over 300 birds were reported on Oct 1st, including 200+ in small parties over Bury Down, West Illsey (DJB). After counts of up to 60 were made between Oct 2nd and 5th, they fell to one to eight, mainly in the first half of the month. The final two reports were of one at Burghfield Bridge, Burghfield on Oct 29th (TGB) and two singles over Lavell's Lake on Oct 30th (FJC), a typical last date.

## HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum*

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

Paradoxically, spring passage began exceptionally early but was probably delayed, while autumn passage ended early. **Spring:** The start of passage was remarkable in two respects. One at Lea Farm Lake Dinton Pastures on Mar 10th (FJC) was the earliest arrival ever in Berkshire, beating the previous record by three days. (A provisional record for 14th March 2009 included in The Birds of Berkshire, 2013 was not accepted by the Berkshire Records Committee.) Oddly, the next birds were not detected until a whole month later, on Apr 10th, when four were seen at Harveys Meadow Hungerford (JSWo), two at Woolhampton Gravel Pits (NR) and two at Eversley Gravel Pits (GD, RFM). This date is very late by recent standards, for in the years 2000-9, the median arrival date was 26th March. Numbers remained modest (1-40) in April, apart from eight counts of 50-60 and 300 at Searle's Farm Lane GP, Burghfield on Apr 28th (JA). May normally produces higher numbers and

this year was no exception, but an approximate count of 800 at Eversley GPs on May 30th (RFM) was one of the highest ever, and 600+ at Theale Main Lake on May 14th (RCr) was also very high. In conclusion, spring passage in 2013 was probably delayed. **Breeding:** Since 1994, the House Martin has lost a third of its breeding birds (in Berkshire) and has declined by a quarter to a half since 2000 (Berkshire Bird Index 2013). It remains common, if under-reported. There were at least 15 nests on the Foliejon Estate, Woodlands Park in June (DJB). Breeding was also reported from Greenham Common (probable), East Garston Down, Frogmill (Hurley), Holyport, and Ascot Heath. BDC noted an absence of breeding in the Cookham villages. **Autumn:** Passage counts were lower than normal, especially in August. Counts were higher in the first week of September and began tailing off after Sep 20th. The largest counts were 300+ Sheepdrove, Lambourn Downs on Sep 3rd (JLe), 300+ Theale Main Lake on Sep 15th (KEM), 450+ at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 16th and 750+ there on 19th (both DJB). There was a gap in the records after Oct 4th until the final departure on the early date of Oct 13th, when four were at Theale Main Lake (AVL).

## TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

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

Unlike the Woodlark, which can inhabit similar breeding areas, this summer visitor continues to decline. **Spring:** Birds in April returned to breeding haunts during mid April: six+ singing at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on Apr 14th (PJC), one Wishmoor Bottom on Apr 15th (PNe), two Bucklebury Common on Apr 21st (RF), four Snelmore Common Apr 23rd (JL, IW), and one singing Walbury Hill Apr 24th (DJB). **Breeding:** A total of 42 territories (at least the presence of a singing male) were found as presented below, down from 74 in 2005 and 56 in 2011. Breeding was apparently only confirmed at South Ascot.

Locality	No. territories	Observers	Notes
Walbury Hill	1	DJB	2 birds
West Woodhay Down	1	JL, IW	1 bird
Snelmore Common	4	JL, IW <i>et al.</i>	
Greenham Common	2	JL, MJM, IW	Crookham, Sandleford Heath
Bucklebury Common	1	MO	2 birds
Crowthorne Woods	3	DJS	Thames Basin Heath survey
MoD Heathland RMA Sandhurst	5	PJC	Thames Basin Heath survey
Sandhurst RMA	14	PJC	Thames Basin Heath survey
Wishmoor Bottom/Cross	3	DJB <i>et al.</i>	6 birds
Swinley Park	1	DJB	Pair
South Ascot, including Buttersteep	7	DJB; RJD	6 birds + 2 juveniles

**Autumn:** Likely passage birds included one flying south at Silwood Park, Sunninghill on Aug 19th (RJD), one at Spencers Wood on Aug 27th (NR), two at Greenham Common on Sep 2nd (IW), two at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest on the same day (DJB), one with Meadow Pipits at Greenham Common on Sep 23rd (DJB) and lastly one over Greenham Common towards Newbury on Oct 6th (PEH), which is on the late side.

## MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

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

This proved to be a disappointing year. Evidence of breeding only came from three localities, none of which were on the Berkshire Downs, where this declining species was once common. Outside the breeding season, numbers were depressed. **First winter:** This was a quiet period. Numbers were below normal, with little movement and no influxes and with just two counts above 35: 42 at Walbury Hill on Mar 15th (IW) and 50 at Dorney Wetlands on Mar 23rd (RN). **Spring:** At Lower Farm Gravel Pit, Newbury a maximum of 80 was recorded on Apr 1st (SWhit) and 40+ were still there on Apr 11th (NC, IW). At Fobney Island, Reading 50 were counted on Apr 9th (RRi). A steady passage of small flocks heading NW over Queen Mother Reservoir was witnessed on Apr 12th (CDRH). Otherwise no more than 25 were reported in April and May and most counts fell below ten. **Breeding:** Evidence of breeding was confined to three localities in the southwest of the county: Walbury Hill (song and juveniles seen), Inkpen Hill (display), and Greenham Common (three+ singing and adult carrying food). **Second winter:** Passage took place from September, being most evident at downland sites: there were 30 at Bury Down, West Ilsley on Sep 11th (ABT), 110+ in sheep fields at Walbury Hill on Sep 13th (DJB) and 50 north of Streatley on Sep 14th (NJB). Visible migration was reported up to Nov 1st, usually in a direction between south and west, the maximum being 32 (7 heading NE, 25 heading W) over Eversley Gravel Pits on Oct 11th (RFM). Numbers were rather thin on the ground, just one further count reaching 100, which were present at Jealott's Hill on Nov 9th (KCr). After the main migration period, somewhat fewer birds were reported in December and only one count above 30: 47 at Ascot Heath on Dec 18th (RJD).

## ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

*Scarce passage migrant and occasional winter visitor*

There were similar numbers of records to 2011 and 2012. Apart from a bird at Theale Main Lake on Mar 24th (DJB), all fell in the later part of autumn at Queen Mother Reservoir: two on Sep 30th (DJB, CDRH), two (perhaps six) on Oct 11th (HRN), one on Nov 6th (ABT), two Nov 16th to 18th with three on 17th (KPD, CDRH), one Nov 24th and Nov 25th (BAJC, CDRH), and one Nov 30th (DJB).

## ROCK PIPIT (*littoralis*) *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Two Scandinavian Rock Pipits were seen at Queen Mother Reservoir between the typical dates of Mar 6th and Mar 28th (PNe) represented the eighth record for Berkshire. The ninth record was present at Theale Main Lake on Mar 25th and Mar 26th (ABT *et al.*).

## WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

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

The three records this year were all at Queen Mother Reservoir. One was seen on Apr 9th (MO), one put in appearances between Nov 7th and 24th (CDRH *et al.*) and another was seen on Dec 3rd (CDRH, MMc) and remained until Dec 17th (CDRH). This low number is typical of recent years; it was much more frequent in the last century.

## BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT *Anthus rubescens*

*Very rare vagrant*

The two birds found at Queen Mother Reservoir on Dec 13th and 26th 2012, respectively, by the same observer, MMc, reappeared together on Jan 9th (M Leech *per* MMc). Both relocated to Horton Gravel Pits on Jan 12th (CDRH) and alternated between these sites, often daily. They were last seen together at Queen Mother Reservoir on Jan 22nd (NS) with the original bird remaining there until Jan 25th (ADB). This was the first record for Berkshire.

## YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

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

With the notable exception of over 100 in April at Great Shefford, this was another poor year. **Spring:** The earliest sightings consisted of one at Cow Lane, Reading on Apr 9th (ABT), then one near Peacock Lane, Bracknell on Apr 10th (MHu) and one at Queen Mother Reservoir the same day (PD, PNe). These are two weeks later than the normal arrival time for this century. Low numbers (one to four) continued throughout April, except for 15 at Great Shefford on 24th Apr, which included an aberrant with pale primrose underparts and light grey upperparts with no more than a greenish tinge (CDRH), and a remarkable (though not exceptional) 120 at the same site on Apr 26th, which still exceeded 100 on May 1st (CDRH). Apart from 17+ in this area on May 2nd (RGi) and c12 on May 7th (CDRH), counts in May were mostly of one to three, the highest being six. But for the soaring numbers at Great Shefford, spring passage would have been assessed as rather light, showing the significance of wide observer coverage. An amusing observation concerned one at Englefield on Apr 29th which entered a flooded pot-hole on the road to bathe (RHS). **Breeding:** Suggestions of breeding were limited to nine localities, similar to the previous year. On the Lambourn Downs there were single pairs near Weathercock Hill on Jun 1st (MJT) and at Upper Lambourn on Jun 1st (MJT) and 9th (MFW). There were two at Kite Hill, Chaddleworth on Jun 25th (GDS). At Farnborough a juvenile was seen on Jul 8th (GJS). At Bury Down, West Ilsley there was a pair on May 16th (CDRH). At Hackney Bottom, Hampstead Norreys there was a pair on May 16th (CDRH). At the Ridgeway Compton, a male was singing, plus a pair, on May 17th (DJB). At Queen Mother Reservoir there were two pairs May 11th to 14th, with one female gathering nest material and mating observed (DJB, CDRH). At Horton Fields there was a pair with four juveniles on Aug 24th and 25th (CDRH). **Autumn:** An under-strength passage was recorded at about 20 localities. A few singles appeared at Queen Mother Reservoir from Jul 25th (ABT), and numbers held below ten at all localities throughout August. This continued in September, with only four counts reaching more than ten: these were 21 at Starveall Farm, Farnborough on Sep 4th (ABT), 15 at Eton Wick on Sep 5th (WAS), 13 at Sonning Meadows, Sonning on Sep 14th and 39 there on Sep 17th (ABT). Numbers petered out in the final week to the last two sightings made on Sep 30th: one at Cannon Court Farm, Maidenhead (BDC) and one at Queen Mother Reservoir (DJB). This last date is somewhat on the early side.

## YELLOW WAGTAIL (*flava*) *Motacilla flava flava*

*Scarce passage migrant*

A male Blue-headed Wagtail stayed in the large Yellow Wagtail flock at Great Shefford from Apr 26th to May 7th, when it was joined by a female (CDRH).

## GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

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

This species was reported from about 107 localities, a considerable recovery from the 38 localities in 2012, though not back to the 126 reported in 2009. There were 30 in west Berkshire, 41 in mid Berkshire and 36 in east Berkshire. As usual, most records concerned one to five birds, with just a handful exceeding this: seven were counted between Kintbury and Newbury on Jun 16th (MJD), a family party of six at Wokingham Sewage Treatment Works on Jun 27th (DJB), six juveniles at Streatley Sewage Treatment Works on Sep 8th and 21st (NJB) and seven at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 12th (RGi). An unusual movement was of three plus two singles heading SW over Combe Gibbet on Oct 9th (IW). **Breeding:** This was confirmed at 15 localities: Kintbury, Hamstead Lock to Dreweats Lock, Marsh Benham, Bull's Lock, Speen Moor Plantations near Newbury, Thatcham, Woolhampton Gravel Pits, Brimpton Mill, Streatley STW, the Oracle at Reading, Dinton Pastures, Wokingham STW, Eversley Gravel Pits, Boulters Lock at Maidenhead and Wraysbury.

## WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba alba*

*Uncommon passage migrant*

An unprecedented spring passage produced 56+ birds, surpassing the previous record of 40+ in 2011. On the other hand, autumn passage was one of the poorest recently. **Spring:** Passage was reported nearly daily between Mar 27th and May 3rd, and then twice to May 28th, at 13 sites (west to east): Great Shefford; three males, three females on Apr 24th and 26th, down to one male and two females on May 1st (CDRH). Lower Farm Gravel Pit, Newbury: one on Apr 3rd (NC), two on Apr 11th (NC), and two on Apr 16th (NC, PEH). Floods between East Ilsley and Compton: one on Apr 29th (RRi). New Pit, Brimpton Road: one female on Apr 14th (KEM). Padworth Lane Gravel Pit: one on Apr 5th (PEH). Padworth Lane floods: one male on Apr 11th-12th (KEM). Burnthouse Lane Gravel Pits, Pingwood GPs: one male on Apr 19th (PEH), one female on Apr 25th (AVL, KEM), one on Apr 27th-28th (RJB, PD, KEM), one male on Apr 30th and May 1st (PEH, KEM), and one on May 3rd (RJB). Borough Marsh: one female on Mar 30th (DJB), two on Apr 6th (ABT) and one Apr 15th (ABT). Dinton Pastures: two on Apr 18th (FJC). Ascot Heath: one female on Apr 1st. Queen Mother Reservoir: about 25 birds, including one male on Mar 27th-29th (DJB, CDRH; PEH), one male on Apr 9th (CDRH, PEH); four males on Apr 12th (CDRH), two males and one female on Apr 13th, still one male on 14th (CDRH), three on Apr 16th (MMc), one female on Apr 17th (CDRH, B May), two males on Apr 19th (CDRH, PNe), two (one male) Apr 22nd-23rd (CDRH, MMc), two on Apr 25th (NSlu), three (one male, two females on 28th) Apr 27th-28th (CDRH, PEH), one male on May 3rd (PEH), one female on May 15th (DJB) and one f/s male on May 28th (CDRH). Wraysbury Gravel Pit: one male on Apr 20th (CHaz). Colnbrook: single males on Apr 4th, Apr 11th and Apr 23rd (all CDRH). **Autumn:** A poor showing of just three birds, at two sites where it was not seen in the spring. One at Amner's Farm, Pingewood on Sep 26th (KEM, RHS), then singles at Eversley GPs on Sep 30th (PKe) and Oct 17th (RFM).

## PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

*Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor*

Numbers were rather low. **First winter:** High counts were considerably down, despite increased reporting via Bird Track, and only two managed to climb above 40: there were 150 roosting at the Wash Water retail park Newbury on Jan 11th (TPo) and 140+ at Ham Island Sewage Farm, Old Windsor on Jan 21st (RMH). DRT watched a bird in his Whitley garden

feeding on chopped apples and sunflower hearts Feb 22nd-25th, his first in about 15 years. **Spring/Summer:** Counts remained modest, with only one above 30, which was 31 at Queen Mother Reservoir on May 3rd (PEH). Breeding was no doubt widespread but only confirmed at Inkpen, Lower Farm Gravel Pit, Newbury, Compton Downs, Green Park Reading, Dinton Pastures, Eversley Gravel Pits, and Ascot Heath. **Autumn/Second winter:** Numbers were probably lower than normal and no large roosts were reported. Gatherings over 50 consisted of c50 roosting at Eversley GP on Aug 19th (RCMu), 65 at Ascot Heath on Aug 25th, up to 78 on Sep 5th and 83 on Oct 9th (RJD), c 100 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Sep 19th (DJB) and 110 on Nov 19th (RRi), 50+ at Junction 11, M4 Reading on Sep 19th (G Finch per RM), and 75+ on waterlogged fields at Woodlands Park, Maidenhead on Dec 25th (DJB).

## WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

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

The invasion which began in November 2012 carried into this year until the last ten stragglers were reported in Emmer Green on Apr 14th (AMc). Only one flock topped 80, which consisted of 150+ in Earley on Mar 11th (RAd). There was probably an influx of returning birds in the second week of March followed by a fall-off after the last week (see table). Records were strongly biased to mid and east Berkshire.

	Jan		Feb				Mar				Apr			
	1-7	8-15	16-23	24-31	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	1-7	8-15	16-23	24-31	1-7	8-15
No. sites	5	8	9	8	5	5	7	4	5	12	8	4	6	4
No. birds	194	186	189	186	185	53	148	61	129	249	119	53	66	57

The treatment of the numerous reports follows that of other recent invasions. At the first level, the localities are presented in order based on the date of their first record in 2013. Records under each locality are presented in the order of the first report, the highest count(s) and the last report. Some records received via Birdguides have been omitted because they lacked sufficient details. **First winter: Bracknell:** 56 roaming the Wickery Copse/Peacock Lane area on Jan 1st (DAMD, MHu, MJo); still 47 here on Jan 24th (MHu). 70 at an unspecified place, perhaps here, on Jan 2nd (BGU). Last report was 20 on Apr 11th (BGU). **Caversham/Emmer Green:** up to 23 at Buckingham Drive, Emmer Green on Jan 1st (TGB, ABT, MFW), with 24 there on Jan 5th (DAB) and Jan 9th (CMc). 35 opposite the White Horse on Jan 24th (DJW). The highest counts for Caversham were 20 at Caversham Bridge on Feb 21st (ABT) and 20 in Lower Caversham on Mar 2nd (P Chatfield). Last report was five at Emmer Green on Mar 8th (DJW). **Dorney Wetlands:** 37 on Jan 1st (RCW) rose to 65 on Jan 16th (CDRH, MMc), then no more than four. Last report was four on Mar 17th (BGU). **Sunninghill:** 11 at Silwood Park on Jan 2nd (BGU) and 38 on Jan 7th (BGU). **Maidenhead:** 12 Napier Road on Jan 3rd (SMe). Similar numbers were reported through January, the highest being 19 in Clarefield Road on Jan 29th (MJF), then no more until the final report of ten over Maidenhead Golf Course on Mar 22nd (BCR). **Cookham:** Two on Jan 11th (A Blair). **Winnersh:** 20 on Jan 12th (BGU). Highest counts were 50+ on Feb 6th (RJH) and 59 near Sainsbury's on Mar 1st (PEH). Last report was three at Winnersh Triangle on Mar 3rd (RAd). **Braywick Park:** Eight on Jan 13th (BDC). **Lower Basildon:** One on Jan 13th (BGU). **Arborfield:** 51 on Jan 15th (ADB), falling to 15 on Jan 22nd (NR). **Upper Basildon:** Four on Jan 16th (BGU). **Eton Wick:** One on Jan 17th (LSe). **Woodley:** 15 at Woodlands Avenue on Jan 21st (JCLa). **Pinkneys Green:** 13 on Jan 24th (PNe). **Wraysbury Gravel Pits:** One on Jan 26th (J Marchant). **Reading:** 15

over Green Road on Jan 27th (RTS). 25 at Woolacombe Drive on Feb 6th (M Parry). 20+ in Barnsdale Road Feb 10th-12th (HWh). Last report was ten (site unspecified) on Apr 14th (BGu). **Wokingham:** 15 on Jan 27th (BGu). Then no reports until 25+ at Woosehill on Mar 20th (EN) and 35 in Gipsy Lane on Mar 23rd (NP). **Windsor Great Park:** 22 on Feb 1st (D Combes). **Slough:** 20+ at Kennedy Park on Jan 10th (BJH). 74 at Montem sports centre on Feb 6th (CL). Last report was 25 near Maplin's car park on Feb 24th-25th (JHo). **Eton:** Two on Feb 8th (BGu). **Earley:** 11 at Whiteknights Park on Feb 10th (DFI, PG), up to 25 on Feb 17th (RRi). Last report was 21 at Hillside Road on Mar 31st (AM). **Hermitage:** 25 on Feb 20th (JBU). **Twyford:** Two on Feb 20th (SPA). **Inkpen:** 40 at Lower Green on Feb 21st, and 20 on Apr 7th (RHar). **Burghfield Common:** Six on Feb 27th (V Brown). **Pingewood Gravel Pits:** Three on Mar 1st (BGu). **Sandhurst:** Eight on Mar 1st (MSK) followed by 35 on Mar 2nd (GDu). Last report was 15+ on Mar 7th (RAD). **Knowl Hill:** Three on Mar 9th (ADB) and Mar 11th (BGu). **Winkfield:** Eight on Mar 9th (BGu). **Cranbourne:** 40 at Lovel Hill on Mar 13th and at "peanut roundabout" on Mar 17th (CDRH). **Mill Meadows:** (S of Henley-on-Thames) three on Mar 14th (M Fraser-Jones). **Newbury:** 12 on Mar 14th (NChe). **Ascot:** 17 at North Ascot on Mar 16th (BGu). **Keep Hatch:** 18 on Mar 24th (P Dawson, RD). **Maidenhead Thicket:** 12 on Mar 25th (CDRH). **Thatcham:** Two on Mar 31st (ADen) and Apr 1st (RRK, GJS, GT), ten on Apr 2nd (AEDH, GJS), 12 on Apr 3rd (PEH). **Queen Mother Reservoir:** Eight on Apr 1st (RN), nine on Apr 5th (MMc) and 12 on Apr 8th (MMc). **Warfield:** Four on Apr 3rd (DJWe). **Sunningdale:** Six on Apr 7th (RMH). **Kiln Green:** 15 on Apr 9th (CDRH).

## WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

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

Although a large number of records are now received for this species, one of the commonest in Berkshire, there was little of note this year. The highest counts were made at the following sites (west to east). Barton Court, Kintbury: 32 on Apr 21st and 27 on Jun 6th (JLS); The Wilderness, Kintbury: 20 Apr on 27th (RHar); Welford: 21 on May 3rd (RJCl); Hamstead Lock to Benham Lock: 22 on Jul 4th (JL, IW); Boxford: 27 on Apr 23rd, 23 on Jul 3rd, and 23 on Nov 24th (RJCl); Lower Farm Gravel Pit, Newbury: 25 on Jun 4th (RSJ); and Silwood Park, Sunninghill: 41, with 38 singing, on May 27th (RJD).

## DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

*Common resident (Amber Listed)*

As with the Wren, numerous records are now received of this common species but this year produced little of interest. The highest counts were reported from Ascot Heath, where the following were the maximum counts made in each month between April and December (RJD).

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
14	12	11	8	9	7	19	9	13

## ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

*Abundant resident*

We received 1288 records of this abundant species, almost 50% higher than for 2012. Records were fairly evenly spread through the year, somewhat fewer in the late summer months when Robins are less inclined to sing. Where observers provided consistent reporting of their sites through the year, peak counts were usually in October – early December. The highest count reported was of 87, including 83 singing birds, in the 100 hectare Silwood

Park, Sunninghill on May 27th (RJD), a density five to ten times higher than the average abundance measured for Berkshire in the 2007-11 atlas surveys. The first report of young birds was of a pair feeding young in a nest at Sunderland Mews, Windsor on Apr 22nd (M Manistry); then fledged young were noted at Ascot Heath on May 20th (RJD).

## NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*

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

The first arrival was at Theale Main Lake on Apr 12th (NR). By Apr 19th birds were singing in the Theale area, at Searles Farm Lane, Dinton Pastures and Greenham Common, followed by reports from eight other sites in the Kennet Valley through to Hungerford. The only Spring reports outside these areas were, presumably passing birds in Reading, at Southcote Road on Apr 16th (SuW) and at High Wood on Apr 24th (JCLa). Singing birds were recorded at fourteen sites, five fewer than in 2012 and three fewer than in 2011. There were no records for Hampstead Marshall, Enborne, Thatcham Marsh, Coltrop, Bottom Lane, Theale and Moatlands Taxi Pit. A site with records this year that was not included in the 2012 table was Lower Denford. A bird caught at Brimpton GPs on Jun 18th had been originally ringed at Tilshead, Wiltshire on May 15th 2010 (JPM). The only record in east Berkshire was of a first winter bird caught and ringed on Aug 17th at Wraybury GPs (Carl Roach). The last record of the year was of a report of a bird heard on Greenham Common on Sep 5th (IW, JL).

Site	Earliest site record			Maximum territorial birds		
Lower Denford	1	May 19th	RG, IS, IW	1?	May 19th	RG, IS, IW
The Wilderness, Kintbury	1	May 4th	JLS	1?	May 4th – Jun 1st	MO
Marsh Benham	1	Apr 26th	JLS	3?	Apr 30th	IW
Hampstead-Dreweats Locks KandA Canal	3	Apr 30th	IW	3	Apr 30th	IW
Greenham Common	1	Apr 14th	PEH	4	May 3rd	IW, JL
Brimpton GPs	1	Apr 16th	JPM	3	Jun 6th	GEW
Aldermarston GP	1	Apr 19th	JPM	2	Apr 25th	JPM
Woolhampton GP	1	Apr 24th	GEW	2	May 3rd	GEW
Sulhamstead	2	May 18th	SAG			
Burghfield GPs	5	Apr 16th	RCr	18?	Apr 22nd	JA
Moatlands GP	2	Apr 16th	RCr	3	Apr 26th	PH
Theale Main Lake	1	Apr 12th	NR	11	Apr 21st	AVL
Hosehill Lake	1	Apr 15th	AVL	3?	Apr 22nd	TGB
Dinton Pastures	1	Apr 16th	RSajdak	2	Apr 21st – Jun 14th	MO

? indicates that song was not noted in the record as submitted, although it is likely that detection was by song.

## BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

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

There were no winter records of Black Redstart in 2013. **Spring:** The first report was of a female at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 28th (CDRH). The only other record, other than at Reading town centre, was of a bird seen at the Vehicle Test Centre, Hambridge Lane Newbury on May 4th (NC). **Breeding:** At the regular breeding site in Reading, at least one male was present from May 6th to Jul 2nd (MO). Two birds were seen on May 10th (ABT), however, there were no reports confirming breeding. Elsewhere a male was seen crouched and fanning its tail at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on May 30th (ABT). **Autumn:** On Sep

29th one was seen at Greenham Common (DJR), a first year male which remained until Oct 5th (NDOC).

## REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

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

**Spring:** The first arrival reported was a male at Greenham Common on Apr 10th (RM). On Apr 15th a male and female were at Pingewood GPs (MHu), and single males at Fobney Meadows, Reading (AVL), North Ascot Sewage Treatment Works (ABT) and at Colnbrook (CDRH). The next day a male and female were at Woolhampton GPs (KEM) and a bird (sex not reported) at Lower Farm, Newbury (PEH). From then until May 7th at least fourteen birds were reported at eleven sites across the county outside their east Berkshire breeding area: Wraybury GPs, Dorney Wetlands, Finchampstead, Dinton Pastures, Clayfield Copse, Ufton Nervet, Wasing, Greenham Common, Aldworth, Inkpen Hill and Walbury Hill. During the period up to Apr 20th two thirds of the reports (9/13) were of males; from Apr 21st to May 7th almost all (8/9) were females. **Breeding:** Redstarts were reported in Swinley Forest from Apr 19th, when three males were seen (MHu). The highest count was nine: two pairs, four singing males and a calling bird between Wishmoor and Devil's Highway on Apr 25th (DJB). A pair was seen attending a nest in Swinley Forest on Jun 27th (PEH) and a pair was feeding young in a nest in a fallen Beech in South Forest, Windsor Forest on Jun 3rd (DJB). Although there was no evidence of breeding noted, there have again been June reports of birds in the West Woodhay area (Jun 16th, S A Boswell) and the Sheepdrove area, Lambourn on Jun 21st (K Brannan). **Autumn:** Away from the breeding areas, passage birds were noted from Jul 17th at Brimpton GPs (JPM) and then probably at least 25 birds at twelve other sites: the Walbury Hill/Inkpen Hill area, Lower Farm, Greenham/Crookham Common, Woolhampton GPs, Dinton Pastures, Wargrave, Ascot Heath, Hawthorn Hill, Newell Green, Warfield, Dorney Wetlands, Winkfield, Wraybury GPs. The Car Park field at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures has been notable in having Redstarts present on at least fourteen days between Aug 22nd and Sep 10th with three on Aug 29th - 31st (MO). The last record was of a first winter male, trapped and ringed at Ascot Heath on Oct 5th (RJD).

## WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

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

**Spring:** The bulk of records were in the last week of April and first week of May, a little earlier than in 2012. The last record of the Spring passage was on May 23rd at Sheepdrove, Lambourn (AEDH). Although only around half of records reported the birds' sex, the data are suggestive of males arriving earlier than females.

Week	Apr 17-23	Apr 24-30	May 1-7	May 8-14	May 15-21
Birds	5-6 (2m, 1f)	17-18 (5m, 4f)	9-10 (3m, 4f)	2 (1f)	1 (1f)
Sites	3	10	7	2	1

Weekly totals may include birds continuing from the prior week. The numbers of birds whose sex was reported are given in parentheses.

**Autumn:** A fairly typical passage began on Aug 8th with a bird at Walbury Hill (IW). Birds were recorded at 18 sites across the county, the highest count being seven at Walbury Hill on Aug 27th (RJCI), followed elsewhere by four on Compton Downs on Aug 10th (DJB) and four on Greenham Common on Sep 21st (LSe, JLS). The last bird was recorded on Oct 9th, a male at Jennets Park in Bracknell (MHu).

Week	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
Birds	5	6	15-16	19-31	7-8	9-10	5	2	2
Sites	2	3	8	10	6	6	2	1	2

Weekly totals may include birds continuing from the prior week. The numbers of birds whose sex was reported are given in parentheses.

## STONECHAT *Saxicola torquatus*

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

Overall a similar pattern to that of recent years. **First winter:** Records were sparse other than for Eversley GPs, at which three birds wintered (MO). Single birds were reported in January at Borough Marsh, Wargrave (ABT), Cow Down, West Illsley (RCW) and Broadmoor Farm, Crowthorne (PJC). In February two were at Sunningdale (RMH) and single birds at Horton Fields (CDRH) and Caesar's Camp, Swinley Forest (BAJC). Records of passage birds were at Barton Court, Kintbury on Mar 17th (JD), Park View Farm Bracknell on Mar 27th (MHu). **Breeding:** In March and April most records were from the breeding areas of Greenham/Crookham Common, where there were 7-10 territories (NDOC), the east Berkshire part of the Thames Basin Heaths, where there were six territories (PJC, DJS) and Eversley GPs with one territory (MO). Family parties were reported from all three areas in June and July. **Second winter:** Numbers fell sharply on the heathland breeding areas in November, when most of the birds were located on farmland or wetland, including at Remenham (ABT), Engelfield (RCr), Fobney Meadows, Reading (AA), Colnbrook (CDRH), Purley (NJB) and Slough Sewage Farm (KPD).

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kennet Valley	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	-
Eversley GPs	3	3	2	2	1	1	5	4	7	3	2	4
Berkshire Downs	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-
E Berkshire Heaths	3	3	4	3	4	4	7	4	9	5	-	2
Greenham Common	-	-	7	9	8	4	6	5	12	10	2	1
Elsewhere:birds (sites)	1 (1)	1 (1)	-	-	1 (1)	-	-	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	6 (5)	3 (2)
Total	8	7	12	11	6	8	18	14	31	20	14	10

## WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

*Common passage migrant (Amber Listed)*

**Spring:** A fairly typical passage, starting with a male at Crookham Common on the rather late date of Mar 21st (IW) and peaking in the second half of April. The highest count was 15 at Queen Mother Reservoir on Apr 25th (MMc). At Compton Downs there were at least 12 on Apr 29th (RHS) and 10 at Colnbrook on Apr 15th (CDRH). The observer noted that the six males in the group at Colnbrook were quite variable but two had extensive peachy colouration on underside and some brownish on the mantle. However, they were not especially upright so maybe of Icelandic or Scandinavian origin. Passage slowed in May, with only one bird recorded in the last week of the month, thought to have been of the Greenland race (see below). A very late male at Queen Mother Reservoir on June 16th was seen to have a damaged leg (CDRH). **Autumn:** The return passage was somewhat lighter than usual. The first were on Aug 1st when six were seen at Curr Copse, Kintbury (R J Markham) and one was at Queen Mother Reservoir. The highest counts were seven at Queen Mother Reservoir on Aug 29th (CDRH) and eight at Greenham Common on Sep

23rd (IW). Stragglers towards the end of October included a bird on the road outside the observer's house in Tilehurst on the 18th (RCo) and the last record of the year was of four at Queen Mother Reservoir on the 28th (ABT). The table gives an estimate of the minimum numbers of birds involved in the records from the sites specified.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Queen Mother Reservoir	-	-	3	29	4	1	-	7	2	6	-	-
Gravel pits	-	-	2	15	3	-	1	3	10	3	-	-
Berkshire Downs	-	-	1	29	6	-	-	3	2	-	-	-
Walbury/Inkpen Hill	-	-	-	18	4	-	-	7	3	-	-	-
E Berkshire Heaths	-	-	-	4	12	-	-	2	2	-	-	-
Greenham Common	-	-	4	27	9	-	-	4	21	3	-	-
Elsewhere	-	-	11 (7)	72 (24)	9 (8)	-	-	13 (6)	12 (8)	-	-	-
Totals	-	-	21	184	47	1	1	39	52	12	6	-

The table gives an estimate of the minimum number of Wheatears passing through in the month: calculated as the sum of the day to day increases observed at each site.

### GREENLAND WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoea*

Three birds at Greenham Common on May 15th were considered to be Greenland/fenno-scandian type (JL). A male thought to be of the Greenland race because of its pink colouration, strikingly white supercilium and upright stance was seen at Queen Mother Reservoir on the typically late dates of May 19th and 25th (ABT).

### RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

*Scarce passage migrant (Red Listed)*

There were only a few records, all in Spring, in what was a rather poor year for Ring Ouzels in the county. A single male was found on Inkpen Hill on Apr 6th (DJR), joined by a second the next day (GT) and by a further two males on Apr 8th (RHS), all of whom stayed to Apr 10th (CDRH). A male was reported in Bracknell on Apr 14th (MHu) and another bird was seen at Pangbourne on Apr 15th (V Ambrose). The last bird of the Spring was a female, again at Inkpen Hill, on May 2nd (JBU, IW).

### BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

*Abundant resident and winter visitor*

This widespread and abundant species generated nearly 1,500 records, with a peak in April-May but otherwise evenly spread through the year. Many observers regularly report Blackbird records for their "patches" through Birdtrack, which helps the BTO to monitor the species status between the national atlas survey periods. The main survey data for commoner breeding species comes from the national Breeding Bird Survey, from which Berkshire trends have been calculated: these show no significant trend over the period 2000-2013 (page 6). Here we report some of the more exceptional records. **Winter:** Most (8/10) of the high counts (>25) were in the winter periods when Blackbirds often form small parties, numbers may be augmented by winter visitors and suitable feeding areas may be more limited. For example, there were 30 at Lower Green, Inkpen, on Jan 20th (RHar), 30 at Waltham St Lawrence on Nov 24th (PNe), 29 at Welford on Dec 20th (RJCl). Twenty-six birds were feeding on food provided in a Maidenhead garden on Jan 18th (BCr) and 24 were observed feeding together on stubble at Enbourne on Jan 16th (RJCl). **Breeding:** The highest count recorded in the year was of 43, including 21 singing birds, in the 100 hectares of Silwood

Park, Sunninghill on May 27th (RJD). This is four times the average density across Berkshire as measured in the 2007-11 Atlas surveys. A similarly high density in the park was observed for Robins (v.s.). The earliest nest-building reported was on Mar 7th at Tilehurst (TH) and the first fledged birds on Apr 14th at North Ascot (SA). In North Ascot, nest and fledged bird predation by Magpies was reported by RJD. A pair was seen feeding a second brood in a new nest in a Thatcham garden on May 25th (IJK).

### FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

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

**First winter:** The numbers of Fieldfares reported in January rose sharply from the 903 in the previous December, probably driven by hard weather. Flock sizes were typically 30-300, the largest being in March and April when 450 were at Woodlands Park Fields, Maidenhead on Mar 18th - 19th (DJB), 500 at Grazeley on Apr 6th (RCr) and 500 at West Woodhay on the same day (DJR). The last departing flocks were reported on Apr 17th: 45 at Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead (ANS) and 12 in Windsor Great Park (KPD). **Second winter:** The first arrivals seen were three birds flying south with two Redwings at Langley on Oct 9th (PBT), followed by many reports from across the county in the week from 14th Oct, often of small parties flying west or south. In November and December, flocks were typically nomadic and the increase in numbers reported in December may be as much a response to weather changes as an indication of changes in the population size. The largest numbers were in December, with about 900 at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill on 17th (ADB), 650 at Woodlands Park Fields on Christmas Day (DJB) and 500 on Compton Downs on 27th (ABT).

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4540	4555	3336	5378	-	-	-	-	-	449	4468	6304
(76)	(48)	(52)	(65)						(24)	(56)	(63)

### SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

*Common resident and winter visitor (Red Listed)*

That cold mornings are brightened by the Song Thrush is evidenced by the large number of reports of them singing in January. This otherwise unobtrusive bird sings in most months and, where regular site records were provided, numbers of territories appear fairly constant through the year: at Ascot Heath there were three to five singing between April and December (RJD), at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park one to two birds (DJB), at Greenham Common one to three birds (JL, IW). At some sites territories were quite dense: on Apr 11th eleven singing birds were counted in about half of the Dinton Pastures Country Park (PJC), on Apr 21st 16 were singing at Burghfield GPs (RCr) and at Silwood Park, Sunninghill, ten were singing on May 27th (RJD). The earliest reported young birds were fledglings at Brimpton on Apr 28th (GEW) and the last at Frogmill, Hurley, on Aug 10th (FMF, SJF). Autumn movements were reported at Woose Hill, Wokingham with parties of two (northwest) and three (southwest) birds flying high on Sep 30th (PBT) and parties of seven (east) and three (southwest) flying over Ascot Heath on Oct 8th (RJD).

### REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

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

**First winter:** The relatively low numbers of Redwing recorded in December 2012 (932) continued in January and February 2013, followed by a considerable rise in March. The highest counts were 500+ at Moor Copse, Tidmarsh on Mar 24th (LS) and at least 400

at Fobney Meadows, Reading on Mar 23rd (AVL). In April, a month in which the total recorded is typically less than 100, large numbers of Redwing continued to be recorded in the first two weeks of the month, after which they left quickly, the last record being a single bird at Windsor Great Park on Apr 17th (KPD). **Second winter:** As usual, the first birds returned at the end of September, with four flying over Finchampstead on Sep 28th (RCMu) followed in the next two days by records at Ascot Heath (RJD), Enbourne (RJCI), Lower Farm, Newbury (LS) and Sunninghill (RJD). October brought large numbers of records of parties, many noted as flying over between northwest and southwest. On Oct 11th 280 were counted flying over Woose Hill, Wokingham (PBT) and 250 over Dinton Pastures (FJC). The largest feeding flocks were 600 on Dec 25th at Woodlands Park Fields, Maidenhead (DJB) and 400+ feasting on Rowan berries in Windsor Great Park (CDRH).

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1515	1604	3531	3248	-	-	-	-	19 (5)	3456	4432	5020
(56)	(45)	(53)	(72)						(44)	(64)	(64)

## MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

*Common though declining resident (Red Listed)*

Most records, which were fairly evenly spread through the year, were of one or two birds, often reported singing. One of the first was of a single bird trying to chase a flock of 24 Waxwings off its Rowan berries on Jan 5th, without success (RM)! The largest winter flock was 23 at Windsor Great Park on Feb 24th (DJB). **Breeding:** Mistle Thrushes are early breeders, the first fledged young being reported at Prospect Park, Reading on Apr 22nd (AVL) and birds were noted at Charvil still collecting food on Jun 13th (RM). **Post-breeding:** Flocks were noted from July, the largest being at Brimpton, where a flock feeding on rape stubble numbered 20 on Sep 4th and grew to 46 by Sep 28th (GEW). In Windsor Great Park there were 28 on Aug 25th (DJB) and a flock of 28 was at Lower Green, Inkpen on Oct 4th (RHar).

## CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

*Locally common resident (Schedule One)*

Reported from 44 sites during the year, exactly the same as in the previous year, and from more or less identical sites. Being a species restricted to damp scrub and reedbeds this may suggest that most suitable locations are now occupied. Dorney Wetlands has emerged as an important location for this species with up to ten singing males reported throughout the year (DJB *et al.*) whilst more traditional sites such as Thatcham Marsh and Woolhampton GP provided counts of eight (DJB) and seven (GEW) singing males respectively, with nine reported from Thatcham Marsh Oct 3rd (IW). Most sites provided counts of 1-4 singing birds but five were at Burghfield GPs (JEA) and also at The Wilderness, Kintbury (RHar, JLS). Breeding was proved at eight sites: at Thatcham Marsh a female with a brood patch was ringed May 4th and a juvenile ringed Jul 6th (JL, IW), a recently-fledged juvenile was seen at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park Jun 6th (DJB), an adult with food was at Burghfield GPs Jun 2nd and subsequently juveniles were seen there (JEA), four juveniles were at Woolhampton GP Jul 20th (JPM), two recently-fledged young were in Roundmoor Ditch, Dorney Wetlands Jul 27th (DJB), two fledgelings were at Old Slade STW Aug 10th (CDRH), an adult and juvenile were at Midgham GP Aug 11th (JPM) and finally a juvenile was ringed at Kintbury Cress Beds Aug 14th (RGS, IW).

## GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

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

A similar picture to last year with 10 spring records and two in autumn, all single birds. Spring passage commenced with one Eton Wick Apr 15th (MJF) closely followed by birds at Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford on 17th and 30th (JSWo), Freeman's Marsh, Hungerford on 19th (JLS, JSWo), Slough SF on 24th (DAC), Dinton Pastures on 25th (MFW), Rack Marsh, Bagnor on 26th (SAB), West Meadows, Marsh Benham also on 26th (JLS), 30th and May 22nd (IW), one along the K and A canal between Dreweat's Lock and Hamstead Marshall Apr 30th and May 22nd (IW), Colebrook Lake, Eversley GPs May 3rd-9th (MO) and Speen Moor May 5th (AEDH). A juvenile ringed at Thatcham Marsh Jul 27th (JL, IW) is assumed to be an early autumn migrant as none were reported at this site previously, and the only other record was a juvenile ringed at Ascot Heath Sep 21st (RJD).

## SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant*

**Spring:** Sedge Warblers arrived much later than last year with the first bird not appearing until Apr 12th when one was at Dorney Wetlands (DJB). This was soon followed by singles at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park on 14th (DJB), Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on 15th (AVL), then on 16th one was at Dinton Pastures (RM), two were at Burghfield GPs (RCr) and three were at Burghfield Mill GP (RCr) and also Woolhampton GP (KEM). After this date birds were reported from many wetland sites across the county with the last few days of April producing peak counts as migrants poured in; 11 were at Dorney Wetlands on 26th (DJB) with 30 singing by 29th (DJB), 12 were at The Wilderness, Kintbury on 27th (RHar), 10 were singing at Dinton Pastures on 28th (MJM), 11 were along the K and A canal between Hamstead Lock and Dreweat's Lock on 30th (IW) and also 11 were at Marsh Benham the same day (IW). The highest count at Thatcham Marsh came on May 6th when 16 were present (DJB). **Breeding:** although widely reported during the summer months the only confirmed breeding records came from Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures where one was carrying food Jun 11th (SDay), Thatcham Marsh where a number of juveniles were ringed from Jul 6th onwards (IW, JL), Eversley GPs where an adult with four juveniles were present Jul 17th (RFM) and Bagnor where a family party was seen Jul 23rd (SAB) but presumably breeding took place at many other sites. **Autumn:** Most birds had departed by the end of August but a few stragglers occurred in September including six at Thatcham Marsh on 8th and two on 15th (IW, JL), otherwise singles were at Bracknell on 3rd (found dead, JFo), Hosehill Lake LNR on 6th (AVL), Woolhampton GP on 13th (JPM), Great Meadow Pond on 15th (DJB), Padworth Lane GP on 22nd (ABT) and finally Eton Wick on 23rd (DCLe) and 27th (RJB).

## REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

*Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant*

**Spring:** The first singing birds were reported from Dorney Wetlands on Apr 13th (BDC) and 14th (KCr) with six on 17th (MHu). Other early arrivals appeared at Burghfield Mill GP on 16th (RCr), Woolhampton GP the same day (KEM), and Theale Main Lake (PNe), Eversley GPs (NSi, RFM) and three at Burghfield GPs (JEA) all on 19th. Over the next few days birds appeared at 10 other sites and by the end of April were widespread and numerous with highest counts being 30 singing at Dorney Wetlands Apr 29th (DJB), 20 Thatcham Marsh May 12th (JL) rising to 24 Jun 2nd (IW, JL), and up to 20 singing at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park in May and June (DJB). **Breeding:** Breeding was reported from Hosehill Lake LNR (AVL), Great Meadow Pond (DJB), Lower Farm GP, Newbury (NC), Dorney Wetlands (DJB)



and Thatcham Marsh where 25 on Jun 24th included juveniles with many juveniles ringed there in July and August (IW, JL). **Autumn:** Double-figure counts came from Woolhampton GP where 12 were present Jul 3rd (JL) and 11 juveniles ringed Aug 20th (JPM), Thatcham Marsh with 30 Jul 6th (JL, IW), Great Meadow Pond with 30 Jul 14th (DJB) and Marsh Benham where 11 were present Aug 31st (JLS). Records from the latter half of September consist of a juvenile ringed at Ascot Heath on 21st (RJD), three at Woolhampton GP also on 21st (JPM), four at Great Meadow Pond on 22nd (DJB), five at Thatcham Marsh also on 22nd (IW, JL), singles Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures (FJC), Harvey's Meadow, Hungerford (JSWo) and Eton Wick (KPD) on 24th, and finally one Midgham GP on 28th (JPM).

## **BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla*

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

**First winter:** At least 107 individuals were reported from 57 locations, chiefly, but not exclusively, from gardens, with a distinct easterly bias within the county. Most records were of 1-3 birds but up to four were reported from gardens in Bullbrook, Bracknell (RJB), Earley (RHS), Maidenhead (SMM) and Southcote (AVL), up to five were in Twyford (SPA) and Woodlands Park, Maidenhead (DJB) gardens, and up to six were using a Caversham garden (TGB). Many wintering individuals remained in observers' gardens until the third week of April, and one observer had birds appearing in April and not before; these are likely to be departing wintering birds rather than newly-arrived spring migrants. **Spring/summer:** Determining the first spring and summer visitors becomes more difficult each year, particularly with the propensity for some wintering individuals to delay their departure, and even burst into song and become territorial. However, it would not be unreasonable to assume that where good numbers were reported in early April that any seen at these sites in the days before are likely to be the forerunners of the spring passage movement; one at Burghfield GPs Mar 29th (RCr, CMc) would fit the bill nicely, particularly as six were present Apr 10th (RHS) and other early contenders were at Swinley Park, Swinley Forest Apr 6th (DJB) and Welford Apr 7th (RJCl). After three at Theale GPs on Apr 12th (PEH) good numbers began arriving the following day with one at Streatley (NJB), two at Woolhampton GP (BJW), five at Thatcham Marsh (BJW) and 12 at Eversley GPs (TGB), with 12 at Theale Main Lake on 14th (RJB). The Burghfield GPs population had increased to 51 singing males on Apr 16th and 58 on 21st (RCr) with many other sites reporting double-figure counts during this period. In fact, during the summer, counts of 10-20 came from no less than 25 locations across the county, with 23 at Woodspeen Apr 26th (JL) and 21 at Thatcham Marsh on May 6th (DJB) where during September 50 were present on 1st, 35 on 8th and 25 on 22nd, and 104 were ringed (IW, JL). Specific breeding activity was reported from Aldermaston GP, Brimpton GP, Caversham, Frogmill, Hurley, Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park, Greenham Common, Marsh Benham, Kintbury, Eversley GPs, Silwood Park, Sunninghill, Thatcham Marsh and Wokingham STW, though is likely to have taken place at many other sites. **Second winter:** Most of the summer visitors had departed by the first week of October, though individuals were reported sporadically throughout the rest of the month and into November. This species then started to appear in gardens from the second week of November and up to the end of the year 34 birds were present at 26 locations.

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

*Common summer visitor and passage migrant*

One at Hosehill Lake Apr 18th (DJW) was the first returning spring migrant closely followed by singles at Burnthouse Lane GP, Pingewood (RCo), Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures (MPr), Eversley GP (NSi) and Inkpen (RHar) all on 20th, with two Wraysbury

GPs the same day (CHaz). Singles at Woolhampton GP (RPr), Burghfield GPs (ABT) and Dorney Wetlands (DAC) followed on 21st, with two at Theale Main Lake also on 21st (AVL). Numbers gradually increased after this date and reports came from 71 locations across the county, although most records were of only 1-5 birds. Higher counts consist of six Ascot Heath May 20th and seven there Aug 6th (RJD), seven Charvil May 12th (MHT), and seven Eversley GPs May 2nd and Jun 26th (RFM) with 12 there May 12th (TGB). Specific breeding records came from Greenham Common where juveniles were ringed Jun 25th and 30th and also Aug 1st (IW, JL). Three juveniles were ringed at Ascot Heath on Jul 6th (RJD), two juveniles were at Eversley GPs Jul 17th and 25th (RFM), adults carrying food were at Fobney Meadows, Reading Jun 21st (JLe) and Moatlands GP, Theale Jul 13th (RCr), and a family party was present at Theale Main Lake Jun 30th (ABT). Most birds had departed by the end of August but a few lingered into September, these consisting of two ringed Thatcham Marsh on 1st (IW, JL) and singles at Brimpton GP on 2nd (JPM), Harvey's Meadow, Newbury on 3rd (JSWo), Midgham GP on 10th (JPM), Wraysbury GPs on 13th (SKP), Ascot Heath on 15th (RJD), Snelsmore CP on 16th (BJW) and finally Enborne Bridge, Newbury on 18th (AEDH).

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

*Thinly but widely distributed summer visitor and passage migrant*

Reported from 53 sites this year, slightly more than 2012, with first birds appearing Apr 19th at Woolhampton GP (PEH) and Prospect Park, Reading (ABT). These were soon followed by singles at Burnthouse Lane GP, Pingewood (RJB), Lea Farm GP, Dinton Pastures (MJM) and Wraysbury GPs (CL) on 20th and Burghfield GPs (RCr, CMc) and Dorney Wetlands (DAC) on 21st. Widely but thinly distributed throughout the summer, with most records referring to one or two singing birds, exceptions being three Wraysbury GPs Apr 25th (CDRH), three Dorney Wetlands Apr 28th (RN), three Clapton Jun 4th (JL) and three also at Theale Main Lake Jul 6th (AVL). Only two confirmed breeding reports were submitted; a pair carrying food at Theale Main Lake Jun 11th and 14th (AVL) and a juvenile ringed at Woolhampton GP Jul 12th which was re-trapped almost a month later on Aug 10th (JPM), though a juvenile at Prospect Park Aug 12th (ABT) may also have fledged locally. There were six September records concerning seven birds: two at Wargrave on 5th (ABT), then singles at Dorney Wetlands on 7th (DAC), Sonning Meadows, Reading, on 8th (ABT), Queen Mother Reservoir on 12th (RGI), Dinton Pastures on 18th (GW) and Enborne Bridge, Newbury also on 18th (AEDH), but a late bird was at Wraysbury GPs Oct 1st (CL).

## **WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis*

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

One at Lower Farm GP Apr 11th (NC) preceded others at Burnthouse Lane GP, Pingewood (MHu), Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale (AVL) and Wraysbury GPs (CDRH) all on 15th, and Fobney Island (GDS), Eversley GPs (TCa), Woolhampton GP (KEM) and Dinton Pastures (RM) all on 16th. Numbers increased rapidly from this date onwards and subsequently this species was reported from 132 locations across the county wherever suitable scrubby habitat could be found, in both lowland and upland areas. The Ridgeway around Compton appeared to be a particularly favoured site with 32 reported there May 17th (DJB), 13 Jun 21st (DJB), 17 Jun 26th (JBU, IW) and 42 Aug 10th (DJB). Other double-figure counts consist of 10 at Boxford Aug 1st (RJCl), 10 Streatley May 6th (MHu), 10+ Walbury Hill Aug 8th (JBU, IW), 11 Drift Road, Windsor Jun 29th (RMH), 11 Marsh Benham Jun 19th (RJCl), 14 Chaddleworth Jul 5th (RJCl), 17 Ascot Heath May 1st, Jun 27th and Jul 18th (RJD), 19 Clapton Apr 30th (JL) and 20 Eversley GPs May

12th with 12 Jun 23rd and 14 Jul 21st (TGB). Breeding records came from Ascot Heath, Dinton Pastures, Greenham Common, Hosehill Lake LNR, K and A canal between Hamstead and Benham, Maiden's Green, Sandford Farm Dinton Pastures, Whiteknights Park, Reading and Wokingham STW. Reported from 17 sites in September, most records were of one or two birds, but five were at Bury Down, West Illsley on 11th (ABT), with one Coldharbour, Knowl Hill (DJB) and two Greenham Common (MJD) on 30th vying for last date until one at Hare Hatch, Ruscombe Oct 4th (MSFW) brought up the rear.

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

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

Numbers appear to be similar, or perhaps slightly down on 2012 with no more than three reported from Greenham Common throughout the year (MO) and up to six at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest (DJB) where an adult with two juveniles were seen Jun 10th (RCW) and a recently-fledged juvenile was noted Jul 21st (CDRH). Elsewhere, singles were at Crookham Common Mar 23rd (KClay) and Aug 15th (IW) with an adult and two juveniles present Aug 11th (ABT), one was at Sunningdale Feb 16th with five there Jul 16th (RMH), and one was at Wildmoor Heath Dec 11th (DJS).

### **PALLAS'S WARBLER** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

*Very rare vagrant*

One at Eversley GPs from Jan 3rd to Apr 18th (IDP *et al.*) was the first record for Berkshire. Although initially identified as a Yellow-browed Warbler, a photograph by David Rimes (page 14), showing the yellow rump, which is often difficult to see in the field, enabled the correct identification to be established. The prolonged stay enabled many birdwatchers to get good views of this delightful species. Most of its time was spent along the River Blackwater and it was even heard in full song during the latter part of its stay.

### **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

*Rare vagrant*

Two records this year; one at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures Oct 5th (DNTR) was possibly the same bird seen Oct 18th (FJC), and one at Greenham Common Oct 7th (IW, JL) was caught and ringed the following day by the same observers and deemed to be a 1st-year bird. The second consecutive year this species has been reported and these records constitute the sixth and seventh records for Berkshire.

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

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

The situation regarding the status of this species as a visitor to Berkshire remains critical with just two, possibly three spring records: singing birds were noted at Ambarrow Court, Little Sandhurst (DJS) and Eversley GPs (NSi) both on Apr 24th but not subsequently, and one was reported from Moor Copse, Tidmarsh on Apr 28th (A Bourne).

### **CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita*

*Common summer visitor and scarce but increasing winter visitor*

**January/February:** One or two were reported from 15 sites with higher numbers as follows; four Ham SF, Old Windsor Jan 21st (RMH), four Wraybury GPs Jan 27th (SLF) and up to

an incredible 11 at Eton Wick (CDRH *et al.*) during the first two months of the year. **Spring/summer:** With so many present during February it's difficult to differentiate first returning spring migrants from overwintering individuals but birds singing at sites in early March where none had been reported previously consist of singles at Bottom Lane, Theale GPs on 1st (RJB), Binfield on 2nd (MJB) and K and A canal, Hungerford on 4th (JBu). Other early March records came from Dorney Wetlands on 5th (DJB) and Padworth Lane GP on 8th (KEM), but on 10th singing birds were at Freeman's Marsh, Hungerford (RGS), Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park (DJB), Theale Main Lake (RJB) and Whitley (DRT). It was evident that birds were slow to arrive and the expected deluge didn't materialise until the last week of March, with some observers not connecting with this species until April. Eventually the masses arrived and during the summer months counts of 10-20 came from 27 locations, with higher counts consisting of 34 singing at Burghfield GPs Apr 16th and 27 there Apr 21st (RCr), 25 Eversley GPs Oct 6th (TGB), 23 Boxford Apr 23rd (RJCl) and 21 ringed at Brimpton GPs Aug 30th and 28 ringed Sep 11th (JPM). Despite being common and widespread across the county very few breeding records were received, only from Brimpton (three sites), Burghfield GPs, Hosehill Lake LNR, Great Meadow Pond, Greenham Common, Swallowfield Park, Thatcham Marsh, White Waltham STW and Woodspeen. Autumn migration continued throughout October with a few stragglers into the first week of November, but from mid-month numbers began to increase again as wintering individuals took up territories. **November/December:** one or two were reported from 13 locations, with three at Woolhampton GP Nov 7th (MJD), three at Sandhurst STW regularly during November (DJS), three at Wraybury GPs Nov 18th (CDRH), three at Streatley STW Dec 26th (NJB) and up to eight at Eton Wick from Nov 16th to Dec 6th (MO).

### **CHIFFCHAFF** (*tristis*) *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

*Very scarce winter visitor*

Individuals considered to be of this race were reported by many observers from Eton Wick between Jan 1st and Apr 6th, where three were present Jan 15th – 16th (CDRH *et al.*).

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

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

An exceptionally early arrival was reported from Eversley GPs on Mar 17th (NSi), two weeks earlier than one at Theale Main Lake on Apr 1st (KEM), with the next one not until almost a week later at Clewer Park, Windsor Apr 7th (J Cockman). Others trickling in behind consisted of singles at Barton Court, Kintbury on 8th (JD), Summerlease GP, Maidenhead on 9th (BAJC), Lower Farm GP, Newbury (GJSt), Harvey's Meadow, Newbury (JSWo) and Burghfield GPs (RHS) on 10th, and Wokingham STW (DJB) on 11th with two at Brimpton (GEW) also on 11th. The trickle turned into a flood during the third week of April as spring passage began in earnest: a count of 37 singing males at Burghfield GPs Apr 16th was exceptional and included many passing through as only 14 were present five days later on 21st (RCr). Apart from 10 in Prospect Park, Reading Apr 19th (ABT) and 12 at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest Apr 25th (DJB) all spring/early summer records consisted of 1-9 birds and were reported from 118 sites. Few breeding records were submitted: apart from an adult with a fledgling at Brimpton Jul 10th (GEW) and juveniles at Prospect Park, Reading Aug 8th (ABT) and Compton Aug 10th (DJB) which could have been passage birds, the only positive records came from ringing sites such as Brimpton GP (JPM), Greenham Common and Thatcham Marsh (IW, JL). Peak autumn passage occurred late July and August, good numbers being recorded at Greenham Common with 11 on Jul 16th, 15 on

26th, 13 on Aug 1st, 20 on 6th, 10 on 13th and 15 on Aug 22nd (IW, JL). Elsewhere, 10 were at Brimpton Aug 10th (JPM) and passage continued into September when this species was reported from 20 sites, with late birds at Bucklebury Ford on 22nd (DJR), Burghfield GPs on 29th (JA), Cookham Dean on 30th (SR) and Wraysbury GPs Oct 1st (CL).

### **GOLDCREST** *Regulus regulus*

*Common, locally abundant resident and winter visitor*

Widely reported with single-figure counts coming from 146 sites, most records being of 1-5 birds. Double-figure counts were as follows: 10-15 Eversley GPs Jan 14th to Mar 9th (MO), 10 regularly at Blacknest, Virginia Water throughout November (RJD), 11 at Snelsmore CP Dec 7th (IW), 12 singing Swinley Park, Swinley Forest May 7th with 15 on Jul 19th (DJB), 15 Cranbourne Chase, Windsor Jun 6th (DJB) and 21 South Forest, Windsor May 16th with 13 on Jun 3rd and 20 Oct 5th (DJB). Breeding records came from Greenham Common where juveniles were noted on several dates in June and July (IW, JL), and juveniles were also at Little Sandhurst Jun 10th (DJS) and Thatcham Jun 20th (GJSt), and possibly two pairs bred at Hell Corner Farm, Inkpen (LS).

### **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)*

An increase in records this year in both summer and winter periods, perhaps suggesting an expanding local population. **First winter:** Singles were reported from Whiteknights Park, Reading from Jan 11th to Mar 19th (MO), Eton Wick Feb 1st (BDC) and Eversley GPs Feb 13th (LRB). **Spring/summer:** After one at Allen's Field, Ascot Mar 18th (BDC), singles were at Swinley Forest Apr 15th (ABT), Ashampstead Common Apr 20th (CWFo) and Maidenhead Thicket, Maidenhead Apr 25th where two were present on 27th (BDC). Two were at Ufton Wood, Beenham Apr 27th (MFW) whilst singles were at Silwood Park, Sunninghill on May 1st, 3rd, 9th and Jun 17th (RJD), Cheapside May 2nd and 27th (RJD), Finchampstead Ridges May 5th and Jun 8th with two May 12th (RCMu), Chavey Down May 7th (DJB), Blacknest, Virginia Water May 12th (DJB) and Jun 5th (RJD). Three were singing at Inkpen May 18th (RRi), two were at Frilsham Jun 8th (RCr) and one was at Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead Jun 16th (J Baker). A partial survey in East Berkshire carried out by DJB revealed only 39 territories but this total may reflect the effects of a cold spring and a lack of later visits. **Autumn/second winter:** Singles were at Marsh Benham Aug 31st (JLS), Greenham Common Sep 20th (JL) and 23rd (IW, JL), South Forest, Windsor Great Park Oct 5th (DJB), South Ascot Oct 28th (DAC), Warren Row Oct 30th (ABT), The Wilderness, Kintbury Nov 10th (LBM), Whiteknights Park also Nov 10th with two Dec 2nd (CFo), one at Wraysbury GPs Nov 11th (CDRH) and finally a pair at Blacknest Dec 16th (RJD).

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

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

Reported at 46 sites, the same number as for 2012. The table shows the monthly adult numbers at these locations, with the number of juveniles seen in brackets.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Number of sites	0	14	14	11	20	7
Number of birds	0	17	23 (3)	23 (6)	32 (5)	12

**Spring:** The first record of the year was one singing in the car park of The Bull PH, Streatley on May 6th (DJB). It was interesting to note that the regular site of Swallowfield Church had six reports from different people in mid May, of up to two singing birds, but no subsequent reports for the rest of the summer of any sightings or young. **Breeding:** No young were reported in May again this year but June produced several reports at six sites with confirmed breeding and juveniles seen being fed. The maximum number of birds was nine, including juveniles recorded at The Holies, Streatley on Aug 21st (ABT). **Autumn:** Five were at Sonning Meadows, SE of Thames Drive with one juvenile being fed in a family group on Sep 8th (ABT). Sep 22nd was a popular day at Greenham Common, Newbury with two birds being reported by five different observers.

### **PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

*Scarce and declining passage migrant and very rare summer visitor (Amber Listed)*

There were three records this year. The first was of a female at Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures CP on Apr 19th (BTB). A male was reported to have been seen at Eversley GPs on Apr 27th (C D Taylor). The third report was a female or moulted male seen well at The Holies, Streatley Aug 17th (M J Mitchell) but no sign the next day (RGi).

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

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

A male was reported in reeds near the picnic benches at Dorney Wetlands, Jubilee River at 19:00 on May 5th but very flighty (A Cooper).

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

*Common and widespread resident*

Recorded at 155 sites across the county, which was an increase from the previous few years. Nesting was recorded at 13 of these sites with the first juveniles appearing at Ascot Heath on Jun 1st (RJD) and Thatcham Marsh on Jun 2nd (IW, JL). Four juveniles were trapped and ringed at Ascot Heath on Jul 13th (RJD). High counts, all of 22, were at Maidenhead Thicket on Mar 14th, Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead on Dec 19th and Wraysbury GPs on Feb 5th (all PNe), with 25 at Eversley GPs on Jan 13th (TGB). The maximum number for the year was also at Eversley GPs with a count of approx. 50 on Jan 14th (BDC). 31 birds were at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest in two flocks of 15 and 16 on Oct 18th (DJB) and up to 35 were at Thatcham Marsh on Oct 3rd (IW). Ringing took place at six sites with a minimum of 29 birds ringed. Retrapped birds included a 2010 ringed individual at Snelsmore Common Country Park on Mar 20th (JL).

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

*Abundant resident*

A widespread species in both rural and urban areas. A regular visitor to garden feeders throughout the year, often in double figure numbers. One was seen to enter the back of a street light along Bader Way, above Mortimer's Meadow, Dinton Pastures CP on May 21st A tiny hole about eight metres up (RM). About 220 nest boxes were occupied at Silwood Park, Sunninghill, although many had failed, most still had incubating adults and some were feeding young on May 27th (RJD). Five juveniles apparently fledged from the 'Leaflet Box' nest at Eversley GPs again this year, while an adult was seen feeding young near Colnbrook Hide, Eversley GPs on Jun 23rd (R Brook). Of the six regular ringing sites across the county the recorded results were 268 birds ringed and 146 retrapped birds processed. High counts at any

one site; 44 were recorded at Waltham St. Lawrence on Nov 24th (PNe), 48 at Maidenhead Thicket, Maidenhead on Mar 14th (PNe) and 50 at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on Feb 2nd (TGB). The highest count however was 68, again at Maidenhead Thicket on Dec 26th (PNe).

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

*Abundant resident*

Still a widespread species throughout the county. On a garden feeder at Maidenhead Thicket, Maidenhead an adult was seen feeding fat from a fat ball to a fledgling on May 31st (GRF) while four juveniles were being introduced to the peanut and fat feeders by an adult in a Calcot, Reading garden on Jun 2nd (CMc). Ringing sessions at five sites resulted in 87 birds ringed with 68 retrapped. Nine juveniles were ringed in one day at Greenham Common on Aug 28th (IW, JL) and a retrapped male at Kintbury Cress Beds on Jun 4th was at least ten years of age (RGS). High number counts were each of 30 at Padworth Common, Padworth on Nov 17th and at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale on Feb 2nd (both TGB) but the highest was 65 in Maidenhead thicket on Dec 26th (PNe).

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

*Common and locally abundant resident*

Recorded across the county at all times of the year wherever pines or coniferous trees occur. Very often heard calling or singing. Evidence of breeding was recorded at several sites including Greenham Common, Newbury on Apr 21st (IW, JL) and Silwood Park Sunninghill on Apr 24th (RJD). One juvenile was ringed at Greenham Common, Newbury on Jul 2nd and three were seen there on Jul 10th (both IW, JL). Two juveniles were seen at Kintbury Cress Beds, Kintbury on Aug 14th (RGS, IW). Ringing at four sites processed 44 new birds and 34 were retrapped, while a recapture at Snelsmore Common CP, Newbury on Feb 20th was a 2008 ringed bird. High counts were of flocks of 20, including juveniles, at Swinley Park, Bracknell on Jul 19th (DJB) and again 20 at Snelsmore Common CP on Dec 22nd (JL). The highest count was of 22 at Swinley Park, Bracknell on May 7th consisting of one pair and twenty singing birds (DJB).

### **COAL TIT (ater)** *Periparus ater ater*

Two Continental Coal Tits, an adult and a first winter, were caught and ringed at Padworth Common, Padworth on Jan 25th (TGB). A comment from the ringer mentioned that 'the male in particular was very pale underneath and totally lacked olive tones on its mantle'. The same two birds were retrapped on Feb 17th and again seen on Mar 24th (TGB).

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

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

The stronghold for this species is still the far west of the county, being the Combe Wood and Walbury Hill areas at Combe. Reported from here throughout the year with a family party of nine on Jun 23rd at Combe Wood (IW, JL). A bird was reported singing and calling at Moor Copse on Apr 18th (GDS). Several "probable" reports came from sites in west Berkshire, but are not included here.

### **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 at 66 different sites, with the vast majority again in the western part of the county; eight in mid Berkshire and just two in eastern 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 Berks*	51	58	58	63	29	19(2)	32	20	23	22	40	44
East Berks	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total (min)	51	59	58	64	29	21(2)	32	20	23	22	40	44

\*west of easting SU70

A colour-ringed bird was seen at Combe Wood, Combe on Jan 3rd (RGi). Details were given as green above white on its right leg and a pale green ring on its left leg, which was possibly a corroded metal ring. The only young reported were two seen at Upper Bucklebury on Jun 20th (BL). One bird retrapped at Greenham Common, Newbury on Nov 20th was first ringed in 2010 (IW, JL). The highest count was 15 at Combe Wood, Combe on Mar 30th (JLS).

### **NUTHATCH** *Sitta europaea*

*Common and widespread woodland resident*

Sightings were recorded from 123 sites across the county and young were reported from six of these. At High Standinghill Woods, Windsor Forest only three were seen on Jun 4th. A comment from the observer said that numbers were much reduced over all of the forest, with a speculation that the species may have been a victim of the long winter and very cold spring (DJB). The highest count was 13 at Combe on Dec 28th (RHar).

### **TREECREEPER** *Certhia familiaris*

*Common resident*

Reports were received from 97 sites again this year. Breeding was confirmed from eight locations with 16 young seen. A juvenile was seen following an adult from tree to tree, occasionally being fed along the way at Virginia Water, Windsor Great Park on May 16th (K Kerr). Ringing took place at five sites with eight birds processed. The highest count for this species was 12 at Cranbourne Chase, Windsor Forest, with two families seen both of at least four birds plus three others heard singing on Jun 6th (DJB).

### **GOLDEN ORIOLE** *Oriolus oriolus*

*Rare passage migrant*

A female or first-year male Jul 2nd flew from the vicinity of Wraysbury Station at tree-top height and alongside railway line towards Heron Lake area, then headed SE towards Staines Moor, Surrey at 1.08pm (CDRH). This is the ninth record since 1950.

### **RED-BACKED SHRIKE** *Lanius collurio*

*Rare passage migrant, former breeder*

One at Greenham Common Sep 20th (MJD *et al.*). Juvenile or female but aging and sexing this bird proved difficult. Seen daily around the fireplane until 24th (MO).

## **GREAT GREY SHRIKE** *Lanius excubitor*

*Scarce winter visitor*

Just one record on Oct 31st watched for 15 minutes at Streatley Warren (LPe).

## **JAY** *Garrulus glandarius*

*Common resident*

As with 2012, there were no significant counts reported across the County, mostly just 1-4 birds. **First winter:** Five on Feb 16th at Mill Ride, Ascot (SA), five on Mar 7th Queen Mother Reservoir (NSlu), five on Mar 21st at Burghfield GPs (RCr), five on 31st at Spencers Wood (GBro). **Spring/Summer:** Five on Apr 7th in Bracknell (DAMD), 5 on 15th at Moor Copse, Tidmarsh (MHT), 10 on 19th at High Wood, Reading (MHT), 5 on May 1st Raymill Island, Maidenhead (DF), 5 on 3rd at Warren Copse, Binfield (MHT), 5 on 5th at Finchampstead Ridges (RCMu), 5 on Jul 19th on Drift Road, Maidenhead (RMH). **Autumn/Second winter:** Six on Sep 18th at Dinton Pastures (GWils), 7 on 2nd at Welford (RJCI), 6 on Oct 5th at Rosehill, Purley (SJF and FMF), 5 also 5th at Thatcham (BJW), 5 at Dinton Pastures 10th (PEH), 6 on 17th at Windsor Great Park (HWE), 5 on 19th November at Bagnor (JL), 5 on 22nd at Moor Copse, Tidmarsh (MHT), 7 on 24th Waltham St Lawrence (PNe), 5 at Boxford 25th, 7 on Nov 28th at Woodspeen, Newbury (JL), 9 on Dec 26th at Maidenhead Thicket, Maidenhead (PNe). With just one record of double figure counts and the same pattern of influxes in the autumn, the species remains significantly under reported. As it does during the breeding season, when it becomes more secretive.

## **MAGPIE** *Pica pica*

*Abundant breeding resident*

Eton Wick appears to be the new consistent high count location with 43 on Jan 1st, 42 still Feb 5th, 52 on Mar 3rd, 58 on Oct 1st and 39 on Dec 28th h (all RMH). Other counts of any size included 20 on Jan 2nd at Maiden Erleigh Lake, Reading (CWFo), 29 on 7th at Warren Farm, Bill Hill (AHarr), 22 there on Feb 17th, 27 on Jan 19th at Summerleaze GP, Maidenhead (BDC), 32 on Jan 24th at Cliveden View, Furze Platt, Maidenhead (BDC), 22 on Feb 25th at Paices Wood, Wasing (JLe), 23 on Mar 2nd at Elephant Lake - Wigmore Lane GP, Theale (KEM), 14 on Apr 8th Greenham Common (JL), 17 on 10th Queen Mother Reservoir (PNe), 17 on Apr 28th at Burghfield Mill GP (JLe), 57 on Nov 10th at Thames Valley Park (DFI), Reading (which was the largest count in the County) (DFI), 21 on Dec 24th at Laurel Park, Lower Early (ABO).

## **JACKDAW** *Corvus monedula*

*Abundant breeding resident*

Widespread across the county, larger counts were: 400 on Jan 1st at Ockwells Park, Maidenhead (BDC), 300 on Feb 2nd Windsor Great Park (HWE) and again on Oct 17th, 600 Feb 12th at Combe Hill, Combe (T Powell), 250 on Mar 2nd at Elephant Lake - Wigmore Lane GP, Theale (KEM), 500+ on Mar 12th at Easton Hill, Hungerford (IW), 200 on Jul 28th at Paices Wood, Wasing (TGB), 380+ on Aug 2nd at Old Windsor (RMH), 200+ on 13th at Woodspeen, Newbury (IW, JL), 200+ Aug 22nd at Arlington Grange, Curridge (IW), 5000 coming into roost at Ashampstead on Dec 1st (the largest count of the year) (NJB) and 300 on 20th at Remenham Lane, Aston (BDC).

## **ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus*

*Abundant breeding resident especially in rural Berkshire*

Larger counts are noted here: 150+ on Jan 1st Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill (PNe), 200+ on Jan 10th at Borough Marsh, Wargrave (RCW), 200 on 26th at Sheepdrove, Lambourn (JLS), 250 on 31st at Cutbush Lane, Lower Earley (CWFo), 250 on Feb 20th at Lower Padworth (GJS), 200 on 23rd at Combe Hill (TPo), a massive 1,800 on Jun 8th at Bucklebury pig farm (RCr), 150 Aug 22nd at Arlington Grange, Curridge (IW), 200 on Nov 2nd at The Wilderness, Kintbury (JLS), 200 on Dec 20th at Remenham Lane, Aston (BDC).

**Breeding:** Counts in rookeries produced a total of over 400 nests throughout the county, all but 25 in mid or west Berkshire.

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

*Abundant breeding resident*

Only counts of any size were 100 on Feb 23rd at Combe (TPo), 152 North Ascot on Mar 24th (RJD), 170 Hyde Farm, Maidenhead on Sep 30th (BDC). All other records were of counts below 100 and despite a widespread distribution, very few actual breeding records were actually reported.

## **RAVEN** *Corvus corax*

*Scarce but ever increasing visitor, now breeding in several locations*

As in 2012, records were again received from over 60 locations, as always the majority in west Berkshire. The stronghold remains around the Combe and Walbury Hills, where the post-breeding population reached 45-50 on Aug 10th (DJB). The rest of the year the count can vary between 10 and 25. While no other site competes in numbers, multiple birds are being seen in various locations: 4 at Farley Hill, Finchampstead Nov 13th (DJB), 4 Greenham Common Oct 8th (JL), 5 on May 1st at Hell Corner Farm, Inkpen (LS), 4 over Lea Farm landfill, Dinton Pastures, Aug 10th (FJC), 4 at Eversley GPs Sep 1st (RCMu), 7 on Dec 26th at Spray Road, Inkpen (RHar), 4 West Meadows, Marsh Benham May 31st (IW) and 6 Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest Feb 15th (DJB). With ones and twos widespread across the county, it appears that this species could turn up anywhere, at any time. **Breeding:** Breeding was confirmed at three sites: 1 pair attending chicks Combe area Apr 10th (CDRH); nesting in private woodland near Snelsmore Common (IW) and 1 pair with young heard in Windsor Forest in April/May (DJB). It is likely that breeding also occurred at several other sites across the county.

## **STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris*

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

High counts this year involved 250 Aldworth downs on Feb 3rd (NJB), 500+ there on Mar 3rd (NJB), 4,000 on Mar 21st in Newbury (AEDH), with 10,000 there on 25th. 500 on Mar 27th at Lower Farm, Newbury (GJS), 400 on April 4th Backnell (DF Long) and 750+ on Aug 16th at Queen Mother Reservoir (DJB). Passage does occur: 400 East on Sep 8th at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park (DJB), plus 600 roosting there on Nov 17th (DJB). 800 at Amner's Farm, Theale on Sep 28th (KEM). Further passage at Ascot Heath on nine dates between Oct 19th and Nov 16th produced a maximum movement West of 310+ on Nov 1st and 500+ on 13th (RJD). 500+ on Nov 1st at Streatley Warren (ABT), 400 on Nov 8th at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures (SPD), 1,000 on Nov 30th at Theale Main Lake (AVL). As always flocks of 30-200 noted across the county. Breeding was reported from many (usually urban) localities.

## HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

*Common but declining resident (Red Listed)*

Reported from nearly a hundred locations from Eton Wick and Datchet in the east to Freeman's Marsh, Hungerford in the west. The increase in records submitted reflects, perhaps, an increasing awareness by observers of the continuing decline of this once abundant species. The greater number of records came from suburban, garden and farmland habitats rather than the large metropolitan centres of the county. Notable counts: The flock resident at Lower Green, Inkpen, peaked at 40 on Feb 21st (RHar), 31 at Ashridge Manor Farm, Wokingham, on Apr 21st (AHar), a flock at Eton Wick (noticeably absent during the summer) peaked at 50 on Aug 7th (DCle) and there were 40 around allotments in Tilehurst on Aug 23rd (JLe). **Breeding:** Few records received: a female was seen collecting food at Silwood Park, Sunninghill, on May 27th (RJD), a juvenile was in a garden at Twyford on May 27th and 28th (SPA), a male feeding a juvenile at Calcot on Jun 3rd (CMc) and 9 juveniles were feeding in a garden at Frogmill, Hurley, on June 19th (FMF, SJF).

## CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

*Abundant resident and winter visitor*

A ubiquitous species present county-wide in all suitable habitats but, despite the large number of records received, still under-recorded and there were very few reports of breeding activity despite the 2011 census showing confirmed breeding in 82% of the county's tetrads. It moves into gardens and congregates in larger flocks in agricultural areas in the winter. The highest numbers occurred during January and early February. **First winter:** Flocks greater than 50; 100+ at Bucklebury on Jan 12th (ABT), 200 by the A4 at Englefield on Jan 14th (KEM), 200 at Englefield on Jan 20th (ABT), a flock present at Remenham between Jan 31st and Mar 14th peaked at 400-500 on Feb 1st (DJB), 50 at Sulhamstead on Feb 3rd (KEM), 50+ at Mount Hill, Bagnor, on Feb 27th (JL, IW) and 60 in Dukes Lane, Windsor, on Mar 2nd (DJB). **Breeding:** A pair reported to have bred at Hell Corner Farm, Inkpen (LS), a pair observed mating at Fobney Island, Reading on Mar 17th (P D Hynes), a female with a brood patch was trapped and ringed at Ascot Heath on May 25th (RJD), a family party of 4 were at Sutherland Grange, Windsor on May 31st (BDC) and 4 young birds were seen in a garden at Mill Ride, Ascot, on Jun 24th (SA). In addition, singing birds were reported from twelve locations. **Autumn passage:** Once again October/November passage was noted at Ascot Heath; 2 west on Oct 8th, 14 west on Oct 9th, 2 west on Oct 24th, 56 west on Oct 29th 30 west on Oct 30th 28 west on Nov 1st and 35 west on Nov 13th (all RJD). **Second winter:** Present in much lower numbers than in the first winter period; 50+ around Virginia Water on Nov 24th (RJD), 40 on Padworth Common on Dec 20th (TGB) and a flock at Blacknest, Virginia Water between Nov 24th and Dec 29th peaking at 100 on Dec 29th (RJD) were the only significant counts.

## BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

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

A poor year for this species being reported from only forty-six locations and in small numbers, mainly with Chaffinches. An increasing number of records refer to birds around garden feeders. **First winter:** Reported from twenty-four locations with the only double-figure count being of 10+ in a large flock of Chaffinches at Remenham on Feb 1st (DJB). **April/May:** Lingered into April at twelve locations with a presumed sick bird being seen up to May 17th in Bracknell (JCoo). **Second winter:** Reported from sixteen locations with the first of the autumn being a calling bird in flight over Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great

Park, on Oct 6th (DJB). Thereafter the only double-figure counts of the period were a flock at Wishmoor Cross, Swinley Forest, which peaked at 30 on Nov 15th (CDRH) and 20 with Chaffinches at Aldworth on Dec 17th (CDRH).

## GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*

*Common and widespread resident and winter visitor*

Reported throughout the year at over one hundred locations throughout the county in all suitable habitats, but there were noticeably fewer records from the forested areas of south and southeast Berkshire. A common sight in gardens; indeed it was recorded at garden feeders in Twyford in every month of the year (SAB, SPA). The days of winter flocks of hundreds of birds seem to be past, the highest count this year being 70 in a mixed flock with Goldfinches and Linnets at Brimpton on Aug 27th (GEW). In addition, other notable flocks were; 40+ at Lower Farm, Newbury, on Jan 20th (NC), 45+ at the same location on Feb 3rd (NC), 36 (including 4 family parties) Ascot Heath on Jun 27th (RJD) and 40 at Cookham Lock, Cookham, on Nov 13th (DCle). **Breeding:** A pair were reported to have bred at Hell Corner Farm, Inkpen, (LS), 2 juveniles were seen at Ascot Heath on May 20th, with a further seven juveniles being trapped and ringed there during July (RJD), a newly fledged juvenile was at Mill Ride, Ascot, on Jun 3rd (SA), a pair were nest building at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park, on Jun 9th (DJB), juveniles were reported at Greenham Common on Jun 19th (JL, IW) and 3 juveniles were at Eversley GPs on Aug 14th (RFM). In addition, singing or displaying birds were reported from 10 locations. **Autumn passage:** Small numbers were seen flying south over Ascot Heath on three dates during October (RJD).

## GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

*Abundant and widespread resident*

Abundant, widespread and instantly recognisable It is not surprising that records came from well over one hundred and sixty locations and all suitable habitats, although there were, perhaps, fewer reports from the barer downland in the northwest of the county. The BTO Bird Atlas 2007 – 2011 tells us that the UK's Goldfinch breeding population increased during 1995 – 2010 by 91%, accompanied by a range expansion of 10% and that this increase is directly attributable to the provision of specialist feeds in domestic gardens. This is reflected in the number of reports received of birds around feeders, indeed they were recorded in every month of the year in one Twyford garden (SPA, SAB). Winter flocks were larger during the second period, especially during September and November, probably swelled by the year's crop of juveniles. **First winter:** Forty at Brimpton GPs on Jan 11th (JPM), a roost in Thame-side Laurel in Reading between Jan 21st and Feb 11th peaked at 75 on Jan 21st (DAMD), 50+ at Woodlands Park, Maidenhead on Jan 27th (DJB), 50 at Sulhamstead on Feb 3rd (KEM), 40 flying south over Bracknell on Feb 14th (DAMD), 40 at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest, on Feb 15th (DJB), a flock at Lower Green, Inkpen, between Jan 10th and Mar 18th peaked at 50 on Feb 21st (RHar), 50 went to roost at Sonning Meadows, Reading on Feb 28th (CDRH), 200 at Field Farm GP, Theale, on Mar 3rd and 80 there on Apr 9th (KEM). **Breeding:** At least 2 pairs bred at Hell Corner Farm, Inkpen, (LS), 2 juveniles being fed by adults at Mill Ride, Ascot, on Jun 6th (SA), juvenile in a garden at Caversham Heights, Reading, on Jun 7th (TGB), a flock including juveniles at Canon Court Farm, Maidenhead, on Jun 30th (BDC), a juvenile at Maidenhead Court, Maidenhead, on Jul 1st (DF), several juveniles in Speen Moor Plantation, Newbury, on Jul 8th (JL/IW), juveniles at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park, on Jul 14th and Jul 21st (DJB) and a nest with 2 unfledged young in Lundy Lane, Reading, on Jul 20th (SAG).

**Autumn passage:** At Ascot Heath single figure numbers were observed moving south on three dates in October. **Second winter:** 80 at Horton GPs on Aug 4th (CDRH), 80 at Englefield on Sep 7th with 86 there on Sep 18th (RCr), 150 at Walbury Hill, Combe, on Sep 13th (DJB), 150 at Lowbury Hill, Compton, on Sep 23rd (ABT), 60 at Greenham Common on Sep 25th (RM), 60 at Walbury Hill, Combe, on Oct 4th (DJB), 75+ at Queen Mother Reservoir on Oct 25th (DJB), 100 at Eversley GPs, on Oct 28th (RFM), 80 at Searle's Farm Lane, Burghfield GPs, on Nov 27th (CMc) and 65 at Queen Mother Reservoir between Dec 15th and Dec 20th (CDRH).

## **SISKIN** *Spinus spinus*

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

Once again this bird, regarded primarily as a winter visitor, was reported in every month of the year, but for the third successive year there was just one August record. The species was present in all suitable habitats county-wide but absent from the downland to the north and northwest of the county. It is also becoming a common site in gardens, taking advantage of the availability of high quality seed in feeders. Indeed, in one domestic garden in Caversham Heights, Reading, a flock recorded between Jan 15th and Apr 28th peaked at 30 on several dates (TGB). The maximum winter counts came from January and February during the first winter period. **First winter:** Flocks numbering 50 or greater: 50 at Grove Lake, Eversley GPs, on Jan 10th (BJH), nearby, there was 100 at Horshoe Lake on the same date (JMC), 50 at Wraysbury on Jan 12th (RCT), 60 at White Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures CP, on Jan 14th (RM), 50+ at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures CP, on Jan 17th (ABT), 60 in Alders at Detford Mill, Hungerford, on Jan 20th (RGS), the winter flock at Greenham Common between Jan 6th and Apr 29th peaked at 60 on Feb 3rd (PEH), 100+, in Alders, at Freeman's Marsh, Hungerford, on Feb 7th (JBU, IW), 252 at Speen Moor Plantation, Newbury, on Feb 8th (JL, RGS, IW), 50 at Grove Lake, Eversley GP, on Feb 10th (JMC) and 50 at Padworth Lane GP on Feb 12th (KEM). May to August: Reported from 8 sites in May, 6 sites in June, and 4 sites in July. The single August record was of a pair seen regularly on feeders at Blacknest between Aug 1st and Aug 31st (RJD). **Breeding:** No evidence of confirmed breeding was submitted but 2 juveniles were on garden feeders in Nursery Lane, North Ascot, on May 29th (RJD), a juvenile was seen in flight over Beaulieu Close, Datchet, on Jun 14th (SLF) and there were 2 newly fledged young at Ashmore Green, Cold Ash, on Jun 20th (RF). **Second winter:** Fewer large flocks reported than in the first winter period. Flocks of 50 or greater: a flock in Alders around Eversley GPs, between Oct 5th and Dec 29th peaked at 120 on Feb 14th and 15th (RCMu) and there were 60 at Horton GPs on Dec 25th (CDRH). **Autumn passage:** There was evidence of a light movement (single figures) during October and November at 8 sites on 10 dates.

## **LINNET** *Carduelis cannabina*

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

Reported from 90 – 100 locations throughout the county, slightly fewer than the previous year, and remaining less abundant in east, south and southeast Berkshire. Present in suitable habitats (farmland, heaths and other open areas) during the summer. In the autumn and winter the largest flocks were recorded in stubble fields, on prepared game strips and on the scrubby downland to the northwest. Numbers were greater in the second winter period, perhaps swelled by this year's juveniles. **First winter:** Flocks numbering 50 or greater: birds present on Bury Down/Cow Down, West Illsley peaked at 100 on Jan 3rd (DJB), 100+ at Remenham on Jan 10th (ABT), 50 going to roost at White Waltham SF on Jan 14th with 70 there on Jan 15th (DJB) and 60 at Sheepdrove, Lambourn Downs, on Jan 26th (JLS).

**April, May and June:** Double-figure flocks lingered through April, May and June at 14 sites (the June flocks swelled, perhaps, by early bred juveniles). Notably: 32 along the KandA Canal between Hampstead Lock and Irish Hill on Apr 3rd (JBU, IW), 32 on the same date at Morewood, Kintbury (IW), 54 at Grazely on Apr 6th (RCr), 30 on Bury Down/Cow Down on Apr 10th (RM), 30 at Englefield on Apr 12th (PEH) and 30 at Crookham Common on Jun 9th (RGI). **Breeding:** Two pairs were nest-building at Ascot Heath on May 1st with three fledged juveniles there on Jun 10th (RJD), a flock with at least one family party at Greenham Common on Jun 14th and thereafter "many" juveniles seen through June and July (JL, IW), 3 – 4 juveniles at Brimpton on Jul 21st (GEW), 24 juveniles were ringed at Brimpton GPs on Jul 22nd (JPM) with 24 – 25 juveniles seen there on Aug 1st (JPM) and a family party with 4 juveniles at Compton Downs, Compton, on Aug 10th (DJB). **Autumn passage:** Single-figure counts of potential migrants came from 3 locations on 6 dates between August and November. **Second winter:** Flocks numbering greater than 50: The flock at Crookham Common between Aug 4th and Aug 30th reached 60+ on Aug 30th (IW), 120+ on stubble at Cold Harbour, Knowl Hill, on Sep 21st (DJB), a flock at Greenham Common between Aug 1st and Nov 26th reached 60 on Sep 22nd and 24th (MO), a flock at Compton Downs, Compton, between Aug 10th and Oct 1st peaked at 100 on Oct 1st (DJB, ABT), a flock in Woodlands Park Fields, Maidenhead between Sep 5th and Oct 24th reached 120 on Oct 14th, 180 on Oct 15th, 300 on Oct 16th and 110 on Oct 24th (all DJB), 240 at Englefield on Nov 19th (RCr), 50 at Sindlesham on Nov 20th and Dec 11th (PJC) and the flock at Walbury Hill, Combe, between Aug 8th and Dec 11th peaked at 60+ on Dec 11th (JBU, IW).

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

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

Present in the expected areas during the winter months but numbers down on the previous year, reflecting the low numbers reported in the second winter period of 2012. Winter aggregations were in forests, on heaths and commons and in trees around open water, rivers and canals. Another species that is also increasingly being seen on garden feeders. Not present during July, August and September and the single June record refers to an apparently sick female in a Bracknell garden on Jun 1st (JCoo). The high counts in April suggest that the winter flocks were augmented by migrants. **First winter:** Significant counts: 20 at Padworth Lane GP on Jan 9th (KEM), 20 at Caesar's Camp, Swinley Forest, on Jan 11th (MHu), numbers at Greenham Common between Jan 6th and Apr 29th peaked at 35 on Feb 3rd (JL), 20 at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest, on Mar 19th (CDRH), birds on feeders in a Bracknell garden between Jan 8th and Jun 1st peaked between 50-100 in mid-April and included a bird ringed on Padworth Common in 2011 (JCoo), 30 on Padworth Common on Apr 24th (TGB) and 28 between Wishmoor Bottom and Lower Star Point, Swinley Forest, on Apr 25th (DJB). **Second winter:** Significant counts: 30 on Padworth Common on Oct 19th (TGB), numbers on Ascot Heath between Oct 19th and Dec 29th peaked at 41 on Nov 18th (RJD), 40 in Windsor Great Park on Dec 12th (CDRH), 30 at Loddon BBOWT Reserve, Twyford GPs, on Dec 17th (ADB), the flock at Moor Green Lake, Eversley GPs, between Nov 1st and Dec 27th peaked at 36 on Dec 18th (RFM) and there were 20 at Padworth Lane GP on Dec 30th (KEM).

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

*Rare winter visitor*

Another good year for this uncommon species: up to fifteen birds were reported from eight separate locations. Eleven of the reports refer to birds identified in the hand, highlighting the difficulties observers face when trying to identify this tricky species in the field. **First winter:**

1–2 at Padworth Lane GP on Jan 9th (KEM). **Second winter:** Two ringed at Padworth Common on Oct 19th (TGB), 1 ringed at Brimpton GPs on Nov 12th (JPM), 1 ringed at Greenham Common on Nov 15th (JL), 7 were ringed at Ascot Heath between Nov 16th and Dec 29th but more may have been present (RJD), 1 in Windsor Great Park on Dec 12th (CDRH) and 1 at Loddon BBOWT Reserve, Twyford GPs, on Dec 17th (ADB).

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

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

Reported from around 15 locations, the great majority of which are typical forest habitat or their surrounds. Present throughout the year but only one record in June and three in July. Little evidence of any irruptions and no reports of breeding activity, although a female and five immatures were together in Windsor Great Park on Aug 21st (HWE). The higher counts are reported here; in addition, small numbers were recorded, often as flyovers, at several other locations. **First winter:** Reported from just twelve sites. Maximum counts occurred in April, numbers swelled, perhaps, by the juveniles of this early breeder: 28 at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on Apr 14th (PJC), present at Caesar's Camp, Swinley Forest, between Jan 11th and Apr 19th with the peak at 20 on Apr 1st (MO), reported from Roundoak Piece, Padworth, between Jan 13th and Apr 27th with 30 on Apr 22nd (PH) and the numbers at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest, between Mar 3rd and Apr 27th peaked at 20 on Apr 27th (MIAN). **May, June and July:** Still present in forested areas during the summer; notable counts: c30 in Crowthorne Woods, Swinley Forest, on May 4th (DJS), 30 at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest, on May 6th (DAC) and 24 at Roundoak Piece, Padworth, on May 21st (PH). **Autumn passage:** Single-figure counts were noted over Ascot Heath and Blacknest, Virginia Water on 5 dates between Aug 9th and Oct 11th (RJD). **Second winter:** Reported from just 12 locations: 36 at Wishmoor Bottom, Swinley Forest, on Sep 23rd (DJB) and 25 in Crowthorne Woods, Swinley Forest, on Dec 8th (DJS) were the only counts of note.

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

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

Reported from one hundred and thirty-eight locations county-wide. Reports have increased over the past three years indicating at least a stable, if not increasing, population. Found in all suitable habitats including the wooded downland in the south but even on the barer downs in the northwest, it can be found in the hedgerows along The Ridgeway. Reports are often of paired birds or juveniles and, given their generally sedentary nature, this would indicate a reasonable breeding population. Thinly spread, and not a gregarious bird, so any double-figure counts are of note: 11 at Welford on Mar 4th, 11 at Stanmore on Apr 24th and 10 at Boxford on Nov 24th (all RJCL). **Breeding:** 2 adults feeding 3 juveniles at Easthampstead Park, Bracknell, on May 2nd (BDC), a male carrying food at Lower Farm, Newbury, on May 30th (GJS), a male feeding at least one juvenile at Hamstead Park, Newbury on Jul 6th (DJB), a female feeding a juvenile in an Arborfield garden on Jul 19th (THar), 2 juveniles at Thatcham Marsh from Jul 27th with 2 ringed there on Sep 8th (JL, IW), a possible family party at Hosehill Lake LNR, Theale, on Aug 1st (JLe), a family party at Combe Gibbet, Combe, on Aug 10th (JL, IW), 2 juveniles at Midgeham GPs on Aug 11th (JPM), 2 juveniles at Kintbury Cress Beds, Kintbury, on Aug 14th (RGS, IW), a family party at Wildmoor Heath BBOWT, Crowthorne, on Aug 17th (DJS), 2 juveniles at Cock Marsh on Aug 28th (DJB) and 3 juveniles at Walbury Hill, Combe, on Oct 1st (DJB).

### **HAWFINCH** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

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

Reported from only two locations but present in increased numbers throughout the first winter period and early spring at the most reliable location around Combe. **First winter:** Seen on twelve dates between Jan 1st (KEM, RHS) and Apr 1st at Combe Church, Combe Hill or Combe Wood with the maximum count being 7 on Jan 13th (MO). **Second winter:** one at Combe Church on Dec 14th (ABT).

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

*Rare winter visitor (Amber Listed)*

A single record of one at Woodlands Park Fields, Maidenhead on Nov 21st (DJB) represents a poorer year than of late for this delightful visitor.

### **YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citronella*

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

Reported from about ninety locations, much the same as the previous two years. The distribution has a north, west, southwest and central bias with the bird apparently absent from areas east of Maidenhead and south of Bracknell. Winter flocks tend to gather on the downs, particularly in the northwest around Lambourn. **First winter:** 40 at Sheepdrove, Lambourn, on Jan 26th (JLS), a flock at East Garston between Jan 4th and Mar 25th peaked at 40 on Feb 18th (JD), 45 on Lambourn Downs on Feb 19th (CDRH), 100+ at Eastbury Grange, Lambourn, on Feb 24th (ABT) and 32 at Leckhampstead on Feb 25th (RJCL). **Breeding:** Among 26 seen on the Ridgeway at Compton on May 17th were 13 males (some singing), 3 pairs and a bird gathering nest material (DJB), a male and a female carrying food at Brimpton on Jun 8th (GEW), at Compton Downs on Jun 21st a count of 22 included 11 singing males, several juveniles and an adult carrying food (DJB) and an adult seen carrying food at Wigmoreash Pond, Inkpen, on Aug 25th (SAG). In addition, the distinctive song was heard at 16 other locations. **Second winter:** 50 at Old Warren, Lambourn Downs, on Nov 14th (ABT), 30+ at Remenham on Dec 1st and 50 there on Dec 17th (both ABT).

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

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

Reported from ninety-four locations, an increase from last year's low and back up to 2011 levels. Most records came from the expected habitats around stretches of water but it was also present in some forested areas, downland, and cultivated fields, especially outside of the breeding season. There were reports from nine domestic gardens, mainly in mid and west Berkshire. **First winter:** Twenty (probably roosting) at Roundmoor Ditch, Dorney Wetlands, on Jan 1st (DJB), a flock in a hedge at Remenham between Jan 1st and Mar 15th peaked at 100 on Jan 13th (MO), 25 at Eton Wick on Jan 17th (LSe), 30+ at Crowthorne Woods, Swinley Forest, in recently planted grass on Jan 19th (PJC), 20 in a Southcote, Reading, garden on Jan 20th and Mar 23rd (AVL) and 15+ at Grove Lake, Eversley GPs, roosting in a reed bed on Feb 17th (JMC). **Spring/summer:** present at 60 sites, mostly in suitable nesting habitat. **Breeding:** a female carrying food at Strand Water, Cookham, on May 16th (BDC), a pair with 1 juvenile at Eversley GPs, on June 2nd (PJC), 2 adults feeding 2 juveniles at Lavell's Lake, Dinton Pastures CP, on Jul 4th (RM) and 2 juveniles at Great Meadow Pond, Windsor Great Park, on Jul 21st (DJB). In addition singing birds were reported from a further 10 sites. **Second winter:** Eleven ringed at Brimpton GPs on



Sep 12th (JPM), 15 at Greenham Common on Oct 31st (MJD), 20 (16 of which were ringed) at Woolhampton GPs on Dec 9th (JPM) and the flock in a hedge at Remenham between Nov 1st and Dec 22nd peaked at 75 on Dec 14th (DJB).

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

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

Present throughout the year in the northwest of the county in reasonable numbers, with the larger winter flocks congregating in the Compton and Lambourn areas. Sadly, there were just two reports outside of this population: - two at Combe on Mar 9th (RHar) and two in a hedge near the Golf Club at Waltham St. Lawrence on Mar 24th (SKP). The latter is the sole record from an area where the species previously bred. **First winter:** Up to 17 at Cow Down, West Illsley between Jan 1st and Mar 2nd (MO), 19 at Bury Down, West Illsley on Jan 2nd (RJB), 100+ around Pheasant feeders at Aldworth Down on Jan 16th (LPe), 35 at Sheepdrove, Lambourn, on Jan 26th (JLS), 56 at Compton Downs, Compton, on Feb 2nd (DJB), 70+ at Lambourn Downs on Feb 19th (CDRH) and 150 at Eastbury Grange, Lambourn, on Feb 24th (ABT) with just 2 there on Mar 12th (IW). **Breeding:** The only report of nesting activity was of one carrying nest material at Farnborough on Jul 8th (GJS). However, birds singing during the spring period were noted at six sites, all in the downs. **Second winter:** The flock at Cow Down peaked at 50+ on Nov 8th (ABT), 63 on The Ridgeway near Compton on Nov 22nd (DJB), and 110 at East Garston Down on Nov 25th (ABT). The flock at Bury Down, West Illsley, peaked at 45 on Dec 3rd (CDRH) and there were 75 on Compton Down, Compton, on Dec 27th (ABT).

## **ESCAPES, FERAL SPECIES AND HYBRIDS**

### **ESCAPES**

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

The first recorded birds of the year were on Jan 17th with two at Thames Valley Park on the Thames (RDr), whilst a single was at Summerleaze GP on Jan 21st (CDRH) for a couple of days. On 25th Jan another single was at Caversham Lock (DAMD). March had three multiple records, three on Mar 3rd at Kennetmouth (RDr), then on the 10th four also at Kennetmouth (PG) whilst Mar 13th there were three at Fobney Island (RRI, DRT). May 6th and 7th two at Black Swan Lake, Dinton Pastures (SDay). The second half of the year started at Moatlands GP with a single bird which, apart from a quick visit to Berry's Lane GP on Sep 18th, was seen on Aug 11th (RCr, MFW) and 31st, Sep 18th and 28th and lastly in Nov on 5th and 7th. Nov 12th two near Caversham Lock (RCW) whilst the last sighting of the year was on 1st Dec near Sonning Lock (RCW).

#### **Black-bellied Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna arborea*

A single bird was reported on the Thames at Streatley, S.E. of the sewage works on Aug 12th to 14th (PEH).

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

One was seen on Mar 3rd at West Woodhay (LS).

#### **Ross's Goose** *Anser rossii*

May 3rd two flying over Windsor Great Park (CDRH).

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

These sightings of Bar-headed Goose may mostly be related to one bird. At the beginning of the year, singles were at Cockmarsh on Jan 2nd (CDRH), Feb 19th - 20th and 21st Cookham (CDRH) and finally at White Place Farm, Cookham on Feb 19th (BDC). North of Streatley on Mar 10th, two birds were present whilst on Mar 24th only one bird was present (NJB). Probably it was these two birds that were at Lower Basildon on Mar 17th (NJB), but only one on Apr 5th (PEH). On Apr 14th a single was at Theale Main Lake (RJB). Another single was at Widbrook Common from Jun 1st for 5 days (CDRH). It or another, was at Summerleaze GP from Jun 7th until Jun 30th, with two records on Jul 12th and Aug 13th. On Aug 26th at Theale Main Lake one was present (ABT). Sept 9th - 12th another single was at Rowney Predator Lake, Woolhampton (KEM) with probably the same bird at Hosehill LNR on Sep 18th and 25th (KEM, LSe).

#### **Hawaiian Goose** *Branta sandvicensis*

Just a single Nene on Mar 10th at Great Meadow Pond (DJB).

#### **Red-breasted Goose** *Anser ruficollis*

Two were at Burghfield GPs (BU3) on Mar 3rd (JEA).

#### **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

July 2nd was noteworthy for the only record of the year at Eton Wick Floods (DJB).

#### **Cape Shelduck** *Tadorna cana*

Just one recorded on Jan 5th at Lower Farm GP (JL, IW)

### **Muscovy Duck** *Cairina scutulata*

Three records during January: Jan 11th four at Thatcham Marsh (TPo), one on the Thames at Maidenhead on Jan 22nd (CWren), and on Jan 26th three at Thatcham Marsh (MIGW). Then on Mar 1st four again at Thatcham Marsh (RJPY) and three on Apr 27th (MFW). On Oct 3rd two were at Drift Road (RMH) and in December, two were at Thatcham Marsh on 26th (KTA).

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

Just a single drake lingers on at Maiden Erleigh Lake, Reading, but was only reported in the January to March period (CF, PG, LGL, RHS).

### **Golden Pheasant** *Chrysolophus pictus*

The bird (first seen on Dec 9th 2012) was seen only on Jan 1st in 2013, by the bird table in Gordon Wilson's garden in Brimpton village.

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

A single only in West Meadows, Marsh Benham on Apr 21st (JLS).

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

Three individual records: Apr 29th Windsor Great Park (RMH), Apr 30th Clapton (SU 3869) (JL) and Jul 19th (RMH).

## **HYBRIDS**

### **Canada Goose × Barnacle Goose**

A single sighting at Eton Wick on Oct 5th (BDC)

### **Snow Goose × Barnacle Goose**

Single record at Eversley GP on Jan 14th (CDRH), with a further hybrid **barnacle × ?**

### **Bar-Headed Goose × Greylag**

The very long staying Greylag hybrid-extensive white forehead, still present in April and May at Windsor Great Park. A similar bird was at Winkfield later in the year on Dec 20th.

### **Canada Goose × Greylag Goose**

Two on Dec 13th at Theale Main Lake (CDRH).

### **Tadorna hybrids**

Jan 9th at Padworth Lane GP (KEM) - **Ruddy Shelduck × Common Shelduck**; this bird, or another similar-but described as a 'presumed' **Common Shelduck × Ruddy Shelduck**-was at Windsor Great Park on May 19th (KPD). On May 22nd a hybrid (**Common Shelduck × Australian Shelduck**) probably the same as that present in May 2012 (CDRH). On Jun 4th two hybrids circled overhead at Eton Wick. The same day a single hybrid was at Slough Sewage Farm staying until Jun 11th (CDRH). On Jun 18th there were two birds (a pair) at Slough Sewage Farm (CDRH). The drake was probably the same as that in May 2012, the -female was probably same as that at Ankerwyke in Nov 2012. They stayed until Jun 23rd. On Jun 24th a pair of hybrids were seen flying over Queen Mother Reservoir (CDRH). On Jul 3rd two hybrids appeared at Theale Main Lake (KEM), seemingly a female Cape Shelduck and a 'nearly' drake Australian Shelduck. From Aug 6th to Sep 1st, the 'nearly' drake Australian Shelduck was at Theale Main Lake.

### **Aythya hybrids**

### **American Wigeon × Wigeon**

First seen at Lea Farm on May 15th (MFW, FJC) until last seen on May 23rd (MFW).

### **Tufted Duck × Ring-Necked Duck**

First seen at Bray GP on Jan 7th and last reported on Jan 17th (CDRH). This was possibly same as bird seen in second half of year Dec 11th - 23rd (CDRH). Dec 22nd and Dec 31st drake at Moatlands GP (MFW).

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

Feb 26th at Theale Main Lake, a drake (CDRH). Aug 24th at Padworth Lane GP, a drake (KEM).

### **Ferruginous Duck type (Paget's Pochard) –**

### **Ferruginous Duck × Pochard)**

Feb 27th a drake at Bray GP (CDRH). A drake at Wraysbury GPs Mar 2nd to Mar 31st and Apr 2nd (CDRH, JMC). Oct 28th a drake at Eversley GPs on Grove Lake (RFM). Nov 17th - 18th a drake at Heron Lakes, Wraysbury (CDRH). Nov 29th, Dec 1st, 4th a female Heron Lakes. Wraysbury (all CDRH). Dec 4th a drake Heron Lakes, Wraysbury (CDRH). Dec 6th a female at Dorney Wetlands (CDRH). Dec 13th a drake at Moatlands GP (CDRH). Dec 22nd a drake at Horseshoe Lake, Eversley GPs (JBak).

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

Apr 21st a drake at Hosehill LNR (KEM).

There were two sightings of Aythya hybrids not attributed to any parentages: Mar 9th a drake at Lower Farm GP (NC) and Mar 25th a drake at Grove Lake, Eversley GPs (JMC).

## Extreme Dates of Winter and Summer Migrants

### WINTER

DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
Species	Location	Date	Observer	Location	Date	Observer
Pintail	Horton GPs	April 7	CDRH	Windsor Great Park	Aug 26	CDRH
Scaup	Woolhampton GPs	April 12	KEM			
Goldeneye	Theale GPs	April 17	RJB	Theale GPs	Oct 7	KEM
Smew	Wraysbury GPs	April 6	CDRH	Wraysbury GPs	Nov 27	CDRH
Goosander	Eversley GPs	May 14	CRG	Lower Farm	Nov 6	IW
Bittern	Dinton Pastures CP	April 6	RAGP	Dinton Pastures CP	Oct 22	JBut
Merlin	Compton Downs	April 21	ABT	Queen Mother Reservoir	Sep 9	CDRH
Golden Plover	Greenham Common/ White Waltham	April 15	JL/DJB	Wraysbury GPs	Aug 28	CDRH
Jack Snipe	Horton GPs	Apr 8	CDRH	Windsor Great Park	Sep 29	DJB
Snipe	Pingewood GPs/ Hosehill Lake	Apr 28	RJB/KEM	Eton Wick	Jul 14	KPD
Short-eared Owl	Cow Down	Apr 11	ABT	East Garston Down	Nov 17	ABT
Rock Pipit	Queen Mother Reservoir	Mar 28	PNe	Queen Mother Reservoir	Sep 30	DJB
Water Pipit	Queen Mother Reservoir	Apr 29	CDRH	Queen Mother Reservoir	Nov 7	CDRH, MMcK
Waxwing	Emmer Green	Apr 14	AMc			
Fieldfare	Windsor Great Park/ Pinkney's Green	Apr 17	KPD/ANS	Langley	Oct 9	PBT
Redwing	Windsor Great Park	Apr 17	KPD	Finchampstead	Sep 28	RCMu
Brambling	Bracknell	Apr 29 <sup>1</sup>	JCoo	Windsor Great Park	Oct 6	DJB
Lesser Redpoll	Bracknell	Jun 1 <sup>2</sup>	JCoo	Woolhampton GPs	Oct 17	PEH

#### Notes

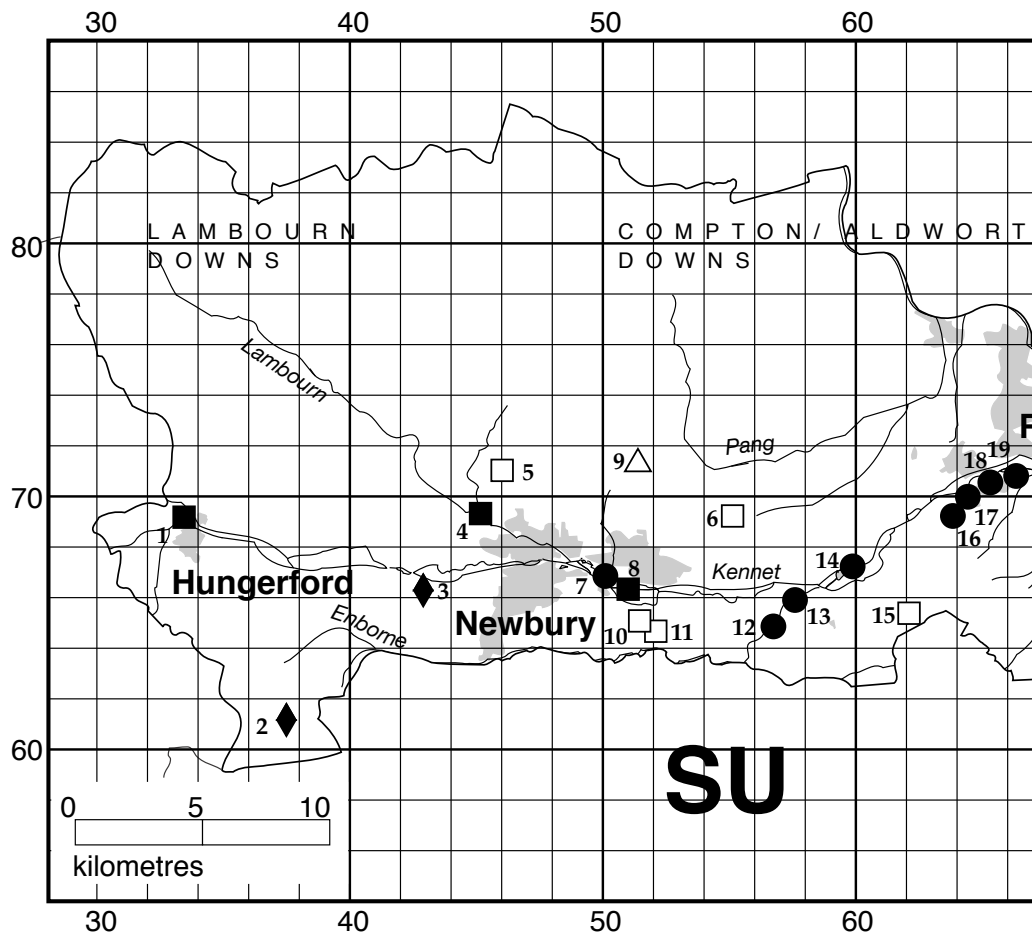
- 1 Two birds were present on Apr 29; one was later seen by the same observer on May 17 but considered to be ill  
 2 Numerous records in late May to Jun 1 in east Berkshire could relate to summering individuals.

### SUMMER

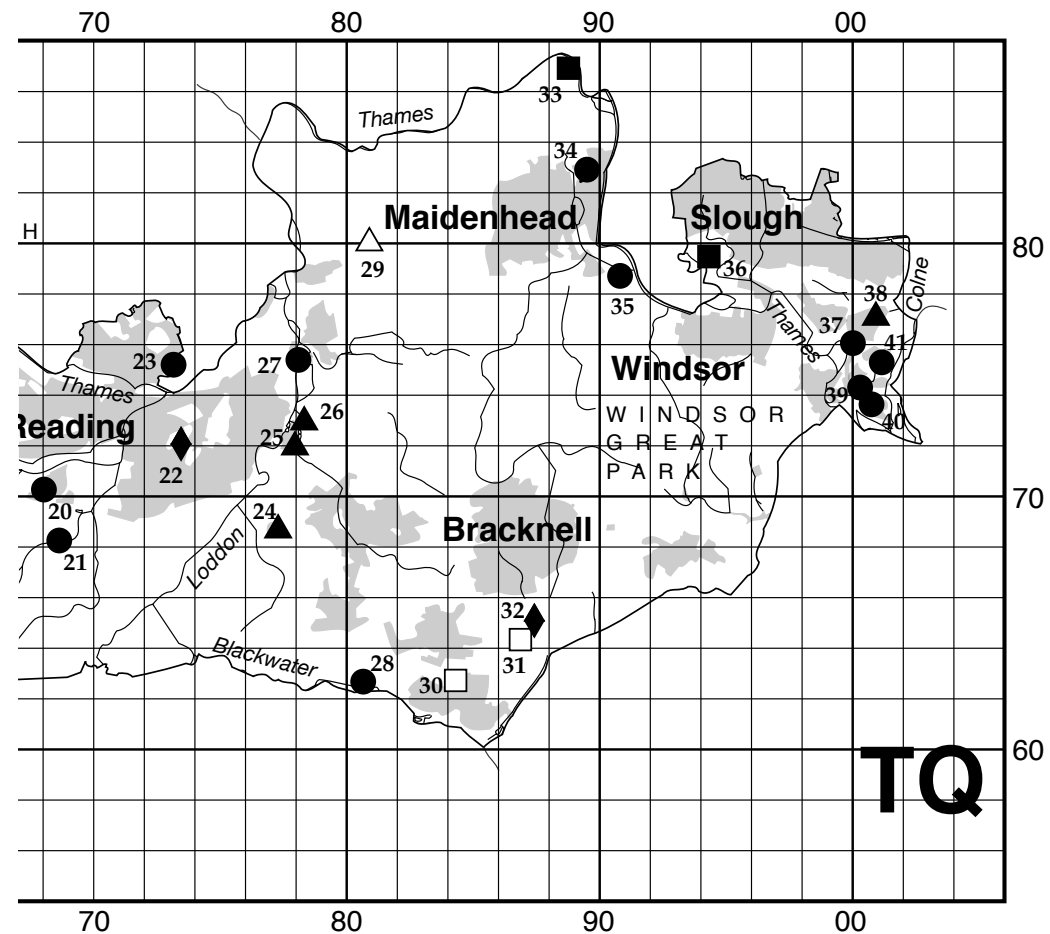
ARRIVAL				DEPARTURE		
Species	Location	Date	Observer	Location	Date	Observer
Garganey	Streatley	Mar 28	NJB	Summerleaze GPs	Aug 23	CDRH
Quail	Roden Downs	Jun 16	ABT	Wellbotton Down	Aug 18	SAG
Osprey	Woolhampton GPs	Apr 6	JCoo	Brimpton Mil	Oct 26	GEW
Hobby	Lea Farm Lake	Apr 14	RRi	Eversley GPs	Oct 4	RAnG
Stone-curlew	Brimpton GPs	Mar 28	GEW	Berkshire Downs	Sep 20	CDRH
Little Ringed Plover	Padworth Lane GP	Mar 12	KEM	Hosehill Lake	Sep 19 <sup>3</sup>	KEM
Ringed Plover	Greenham Common	Feb 26	JL	Eton Wick	Sep 25	KPD
Common Tern	Dinton Pastures	Apr 11	Sday, MFW	Eversley GPs	Sep 8	NSi
Turtle Dove	Aldermarston GPs	Apr 22	JPM	Aldermarston GPs	Aug 27	JPM
Cuckoo	Sandhurst/Stanford Dingley	Apr 14	PJC/JLe	Finchampstead	Aug 16	RCMu
Nightjar	Padworth	May 3	PH	Sunninghill Park	Aug 20 <sup>4</sup>	DJB
Swift	Cookham	Apr 14	BDC	Donnington	Sep 14	ARo
Sand Martin	Lower Farm	Mar 9	MO	Queen Mother Reservoir	Sep 19	DJB
Swallow	Borough Marsh	Mar 20	ABT	Dinton Pastures	Oct 30	FJC
House Martin	Dinton Pastures	Mar 10	FJC	Theale GPs	Oct 13	AVL
Tree Pipit	Sandhurst	Apr 14	PJC	Greenham Common	Oct 6	PEH
Yellow Wagtail	Lambourne Downs	Feb 9	MFW	Maidenhead/Queen Mother Reservoir	Sep 30	BDC/DJB
Nightingale	Theale GPs	Apr 12	NR	Greenham Common	Sep 5	JL, IW
Redstart	Greenham Common	Apr 10	RM	Ascot Heath	Oct 5	RJD
Whinchat	Dorney Wetlands	Apr 17	MHu	Bracknell	Oct 9	MHu
Wheatear	Crookham Common	Mar 21	IW	Queen Mother Reservoir	Oct 28	ABT
Ring Ouzel	Coombe Gibbet	Apr 6	DJR			
Grasshopper Warbler	Eton Wick	Apr 15	MJF	Ascot Heath	Sep 21	RJD
Sedge Warbler	Dorney Wetlands	Apr 12	DJB	Eton Wick	Sep 27	RJB
Reed Warbler	Dorney Wetlands	Apr 14	BDC	Midgham GP	Sep 28	JPM
Garden Warbler	Hosehill Lake	Apr 18	DJW	Newbury	Sep 18	AEDH
Lesser Whitethroat	Reading/Woolhampton GPs	Apr 19	ABT/PEH	Wraysbury GPs	Oct 1	CL
Whitethroat	Lower Farm	Apr 11	NC	Coldharbour/Greenham Common	Sep 30	DJB/MJD
Willow Warbler	Eversley GPs	Mar 17	NSi	Wraysbury GPs	Oct 1	CL
Spotted Flycatcher	Streatley	May 6	DJB	Caversham	Sep 25	RSaj

#### Notes

- 3 Late-staying injured bird  
 4 A dying chick was at Padworth on Aug 28 (JL).



- |               |   |               |  |
|---------------|---|---------------|--|
| 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                             | 27 SU 783 757 | Twyford Gravel Pits  |
| 7 SU 502 665  | Thatcham/Muddy Lane/Lower Farm GPs            | 28 SU 807 625 | Moor Green Lakes (Eversley Gravel Pits)                          |
| 8 SU 505 665  | Thatcham Marsh                                | 29 SU 807 800 | Bowsey Hill  |
| 9 SU 515 715  | Fence Wood                                    | 30 SU 842 625 | Wildmoor Heath (aka Edgebarrow Heath)                            |
| 10 SU 500 646 | Greenham Common                               | 31 SU 877 630 | Swinley Forest (Wishmoor area)                                   |
| 11 SU 526 643 | Crookham Common                               | 32 SU 875 655 | Swinley Forest, Crowthorne Woods (Caesar's Camp and The Lookout) |
| 12 SU 568 652 | Brimpton Gravel Pits                          | 33 SU 885 870 | Cockmarsh  |
| 13 SU 570 660 | Woolhampton Gravel Pits                       | 34 SU 895 825 | Summerleaze Gravel Pits  |
| 14 SU 596 668 | Aldermaston Gravel Pits                       | 35 SU 908 788 | Bray Gravel Pits   |
| 15 SU 620 648 | Padworth Common                               | 36 SU 935 795 | Dorney Wetlands, Slough Sewage Farm and Jubilee River            |
| 16 SU 697 648 | Hosehill Lake                                 | 37 TQ 000 760 | Datchet Common Gravel Pits                                       |
| 17 SU 635 703 | Theale Gravel Pits (Wigmore Lane area)        | 38 TQ 008 770 | Queen Mother Reservoir   |
| 18 SU 655 705 | Theale Gravel Pits (Theale Main)              | 39 TQ 005 745 | and 010 735  |
| 19 SU 665 707 | Theale Gravel Pits (Moatlands and Field Farm) | 39 TQ 005 745 | Wraysbury Gravel Pits, (Sunnymeads)                              |
| 20 SU 680 705 | Burghfield Gravel Pits (Searles Farm)         | 40 TQ 010 735 | Wraysbury Gravel Pits (Village Pit)                              |
| 21 SU 688 685 | Pingewood Gravel Pits (Burnthouse Lane)       | 41 TQ 010 755 | 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

Records were received from the following observers in 2013

Abbott S D.....SA	Briggs C A.....CAB	Davies R C W.....RD	Frankum R.....RF	Howarth-Booth C.....CHB	Lux T.....BL
Absolom A.....AA	Bright-Thomas P.....PBT	Dawson R.....RD	Fraser-Jones M.....RFug	Hughes D.....DMac	Lyle B.....BL
Adam N.....NA	Brook R.....SAD	Day S.....SDay	Freeman S.....RFug	Hughes M.....LBM	Mackenzie D.....DMac
Adam P.....PA	Brown A.....GBro	Dear M J.....MJD	Fuge R.....DF	Humm B.....PHu	Mackenzie-Dodds D A.....AM
Adam S P.....SPA	Brown G.....SAB	Deasy J.....JDea	Fuller D.....DF	Humphrey P.....MHu	Male A.....AM
Addison R.....RAAd	Brown S A.....WB	Deayton R.....RDDea	Furley C.....JG	Hunt M.....PEH	Manisty M.....LBM
Ahlgren L.....TOA	Brown V.....JBU	Dellow J.....ADen	Fussey G.....CRG	Hutchins P E.....AHut	Mann L B.....LBM
Alexander T O.....TOA	Brown W.....JBU	Denness A.....ADen	Gaines P.....LGL	Hutchison A.....CHy	Marchant J H.....NM
Allen C.....CAI	Buchanan J.....DBuc	Dewey S.....SDi	Garner-Langham L.....TGi	Hyde C.....MIAn	Markham R J.....CMar
Ambrose V.....JA	Buckel F C.....NJB	Dimond S.....NDdo	Gent C R.....DLG	Hynes P D.....RSJ	Marriner N.....RM
Andrews J E.....RANg	Bucknell N J.....TBu	Dixon J.....DAMD	Gifford D L.....RGI	I'Anson M.....Sfen	Marshall R.....SKM
Angus R.....RANg	Bunce T.....CBur	Dodds D A M.....DD	Gilham R.....PG	Jacobs R S.....PJe	Marshall S K.....JPM
Anstis R.....BMA	Burness R J.....RJB	Dormer M R.....RJD	Gipson P.....RJD	Jepson P.....ACJ	Martin J P.....DM
Archer B M.....CArm	Butcher J R.....DBu	Dowling D.....RJD	Gleave D J.....ACJ	Jinks R.....BJ	Massie D.....DM
Armstrong C.....JAt	Butler D.....JBut	Downer C J.....RJD	Godden R J.....JGo	Johnson A C.....CJ	May B.....Mayfield D
Atkinson J.....OEMB	Bysh P.....PBy	Drew M.....RJD	Goodchild J.....JG	Jones B.....CJ	Mayfield D.....MCCarthy J S
Badziak O E M.....OEMB	Callister T.....TCA	Drewitt E J A.....PD	Goodey J.....PGO	Jones C.....CJo	MCCarthy J S.....MGM
Bailey L.....JBak	Carpenter B R.....BRC	Driver P W.....PDR	Goriup P.....MG	Jones Christine.....KJo	MCCarthy M G.....MGM
Baines S.....JBak	Carpenter D.....DGC	Dryburgh P.....KPD	Gostling M H.....MJo	Jones K.....MJo	McEwan C.....CMc
Baker J.....JBak	Carr D G.....DAC	Duncan K P.....MJo	Graham A.....SJo	Jones M.....MJo	McEwan D D.....DMc
Baker R L.....JBak	Carter D A.....DAC	Dunning P.....MJo	Gray T.....SJo	Jones R J.....MJo	McEwan F G.....FGM
Baker T.....JBam	Chatfield P.....ACH	East D.....MJo	Greene M.....TJon	Jones S.....MJo	McGinnety F G.....MGM
Ball T G.....TGB	Cheeseman A.....NCh	Edwards N.....MJo	Griffin M A.....IJo	Jones T.....IJo	McKee M J.....AMc
Bamford P.....PBA	Chester N.....JCh	Edwards P J.....MJo	Grimshaw S.....DMG	Joyce I.....MJo	McKee M J.....MGM
Bampfield M.....RBam	Chivers J L.....NCh	Eldridge T.....MGu	Grist D M.....MGU	Julian D.....MMe	McMahon A.....AMc
Bampfield R.....RBam	Chown P K.....NCh	Elkin J.....MM	Gurr M.....MGu	Keel R R.....MM	McQuaid M.....MM
Barber L J.....DJB	Churchyard T.....HWE	Emery I.....MMe	Hale J.....RRK	Keil I J.....SMe	Meads S.....MMe
Barker D J.....DJB	Clapham S.....RJCi	Evans H W.....HWE	Hale J A.....IJK	Kelson D W.....NMe	Melia N.....NMe
Barker K.....SRJB	Claridge R J.....BAJC	Everett F.....RJM	Halsey R.....DWK	Kennington P.....RFM	Milligan R F.....RFM
Barker M J.....SRJB	Clark B A J.....FCC	Everitt S.....RJM	Hammatt N.....PK	Mills D J.....DJMi	Mills J.....JMi
Barker S R J.....SRJB	Clark F C.....JMC	Fairley M.....RJM	Harden T.....GKe	Mitchell J E.....JEM	Mitchell M J.....MJM
Barnes D J.....DJBa	Clark J M.....PCLa	Farnell G.....RJM	Hardie R J.....RJM	Mitchell M J.....MJM	Moor Green Lakes Report.....MGLR
Barnes L.....ADB	Clarke P.....MCFa	Farnsworth S J & F M.....SJM	Hardy R.....RJM	Kerr K.....MMK	MGLR.....KEM
Bassett A D.....GSBa	Cleal D.....DCle	Farrall M C.....CFa	Harris B.....AHarr	Kettell M.....MMK	Moore K E.....KEM
Batho G S.....GSBa	Cleere N.....NC	Farrall G R.....GRF	Harrison A.....JH	Kimber G.....GJK	Moore R C.....RCM
Beaney V R.....VRB	Clews B D.....BDC	Fellowes M.....MFel	Haseler J.....DCK	King G J.....DCK	Morgan W.....WMO
Bedwell G.....DBe	Clews H M.....HMC	Ferguson J.....IFe	Hastings D.....PKn	Knight P.....PKn	Morris W.....Moss L J
Beever D.....DBe	Coadwell D.....IFe	Fewtrell-Smith I.....IFe	Hatton W A.....SKU	Kujawa S.....SKU	Moss L J.....Muddell S L
Beglow B.....BB	Cockman J.....LJF	Finch L J.....LJF	Hawtree J N.....CL	Kettell M M.....MMK	Muddell S L.....RCMu
Berryman A.....ABE	Collins C J.....MJF	Finch M J.....MJF	Haydon R M.....CHaz	Kimber G.....GJK	Mutch S.....EN
Beswick N W.....BDC	Collins R.....RCo	Firth T.....TFi	Hazell C.....KHe	King G J.....GJK	Napper E.....EN
Birkett J.....HMC	Combes D.....JCOO	Fisher S L.....SLF	Head K.....KHe	Knight D C.....DCK	NDOC.....NDOC
Birkett J.....HMC	Cooper J.....JCOO	Flack D.....DFI	Heard C D R.....CDRH	Knight P.....PKn	Needs J.....JNe
Bishop J.....JBi	Cooper S.....FJC	Flannagan A W.....DFI	Heathcoat M.....TH	Kujawa S.....SKU	Ness R.....RN
Blackmore D.....DBI	Cottingham F J.....FJC	Forstar V.....MHE	Hemmett T.....TH	Lamsdell C.....CL	Netley H R.....HRN
Blair A.....ABO	Cowles Rev. R.....FJC	Forster L.....LFO	Hemmett T.....TH	Langridge J C.....JCLa	Newbound P J.....PNe
Bland D.....PBOU	Crathorne B.....BCr	Forster V.....VFO	Hemmett T.....TH	Langton K.....KL	Nicholls B.....BN
Blandford D.....LRB	Crawford R.....RCr	Fostekeew K.....KF	Hewitt J.....JHew	Larkins S.....SLa	Nicholls J.....JOB
Blundell L R.....LRB	Creed K.....KCr	Foster C.....CF	Hickman A E D.....AEDH	Latham M J.....PLe	Oblein J C.....JOB
Bolton A.....PBOU	Crouch J.....JCr	Foster C W.....CWFo	Hickman P.....PH	Lawson A V.....AVL	Oldcorn I.....PJO
Bones E.....PBOU	Crowley P J.....PJC	Foster J.....JFos	Hines M.....PLe	Leach G.....AVL	Osborne B A.....IDP
Booth A.....ABO	Crutch M.....PJC	Foulds P.....JFos	Hodge T N.....PLe	Leather G E.....AVL	Palmer K J.....IDP
Boswell S A.....PBOU	Cuff M J.....PJC	Fowler T.....JFos	Holland D.....DHoll	Legg J.....JL	Paris M.....IDP
Boulton P.....PBOU	Cumming D A.....RJD	Francis J.....JFr	Holland D.....DHoll	Lerpiniere J.....JL	
Bourne A.....PBOU	Dale R J.....RJD	Francis L.....JFr	Hollands B J.....BJH	Lerpiniere R J.....RJM	
Bowers C.....PBOU			Hook J.....JHo	Lewis P.....PLe	
Boyd D A.....DAB			Horscroft A M.....AMH	Lillie L.....AEL	
Boyland B R.....BRB			Horsley C.....CHo	Little A E.....AEL	
Brannan K.....PBRan			Hotchkis B.....BHHot	Lloyd-Parry John.....JLP	
Brant P.....PBRan			Housley D J.....DJHo	Loader G.....PJP	
Briggs B D.....BDB				Lomas P J.....PJP	
				Long D F.....DL0	
				Lowther D.....DL0	

Parker P J		Rymer A.....	AR	Thornton G.....	GT
Parker S J		Saffery M J		Todd A H	
Parr K.....	KPar	Sandford K		Tolan D	
Parsons R.....	RPa	Sanger C M		Tomczynski A B.....	ABT
Payne D E E.....	DEEP	Saunders I.....	IS	Toms M P	
Peck R.....	RP	Scarlett L.....	ISc	Trollen C.....	CTr
Pemble L.....	LPem	Scholey G D.....	GDS	Trout N S	
Percival N.....	NP	Scott E.....	ES	Tubb K I.....	KIT
Peters L.....	LPe	Scott S.....	SSc	Tucker K.....	KTu
Philpott M G.....	MGPh	Scudamore P.....	PSc	Tucker M.....	MTu
Platt M S.....	MSP	Seward L.....	LSe	Turner A M	
Pocket G		Seward M		Turner D R.....	DRT
Pond M		Seymour K		Turner G	
Poole J		Shannon J		Turner R M	
Pottinger D.....	DPo	Sharp A L H.....	ALHS	Turton M H.....	MHT
Poulter B.....	BPO	Sheridan J B.....	JBS	Uttley B.....	BU
Pounds M		Silver N.....	NSi	Vallas J C.....	JCV
Powell T.....	TPo	Sketch P A		Vaughan J	
Price M.....	MPr	Sklar M.....	MSk	Walford M F.....	MFW
Price P		Sluman N.....	NSlu	Walker B J.....	BJW
Price R.....	RPr	Smallwood J.....	JSm	Warwick T.....	TWarw
Price R A G.....	RAGP	Smart S.....	SSm	Watson M I G.....	MIGW
Pritchard D M		Smith M J.....	MJS	Watts R C.....	RCW
Proddow S K.....	SKP	Smith R G.....	RGS	Westmacott J.....	JWe
Pyrah R J.....	RJPy	Smith T.....	TSm	Weston D J.....	DJWe
Ramm S		Smith W.....	WS	Weston I L G.....	IW
Rampton N.....	NR	Southam M		Wetland Bird Survey.....	WeBS
Randall G.....	GR	Spiers D		Whitaker M S F.....	MSFW
Ratcliffe D B		Spray H		Whitall H.....	HWh
Rawlings N D		Stacey W A.....	WAS	White D J.....	DJW
Reedman R.....	RR	Stachnicki I A.....	IAS	White K G.....	KGW
Reeve B.....	BR	Stansfield R H.....	RHS	White S.....	SuW
Reid J.....	JRe	Stansfield R T.....	RTS	White Sa.....	SWhit
Reynolds D J.....	DJR	Stares A		Whitehead G	
Rhodes S		Staves L.....	LS	Whitney M.....	MWh
Ricks S.....	SRI	Stevens P J.....	PJSt	Why M	
Rider S C		Stewart G J.....	GJS	Wilczur J	
Ridley M J		Stockwell J R.....	JRSto	Wildish M F.....	MFWi
Righelato R.....	RRi	Stow A N.....	ANS	Williams C D	
Rimes D N T.....	DNTR	Sumner G J.....	GJSu	Williams G.....	GWil
Rippington S.....	SRip	Sussex D J.....	DJS	Williams P A.....	PAWi
Risely K		Sutton P.....	PSu	Williams R.....	RWi
Rivoire J R.....	JRR	Swallow J L.....	JLS	Williamson C S	
Roach C		Sweetland T.....	TS	Willis A	
Roberts A.....	ARo	Taylor A.....	ATa	Wilson E	
Robson C.....	CR	Taylor C D.....	CDT	Wilson G.....	GWils
Rolfe M D.....	MDR	Taylor D.....	DT	Wilson G E.....	GEW
Rose J.....	JRos	Taylor K.....	KTa	Wilson R D.....	RDW
Rostron G		Taylor M J.....	MJT	Woodham J S.....	JSWo
Rowing C G M		Theobald R C.....	RCT	Wren C	
Runnacles S.....	SR	Thomson S.....	STho	Wright P.....	PWr
Runnymede Ringing Group RRG		Thorn L.....	LTh	Young C A	

## County Directory

### COUNTY BIRD RECORDER

Richard Burness, 20 Bursledon Way,  
Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 2PH.  
Email: [records@berksoc.org.uk](mailto:records@berksoc.org.uk)

### 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 946 3125

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@mggl.org.uk](mailto:dave.bishop@mggl.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.

