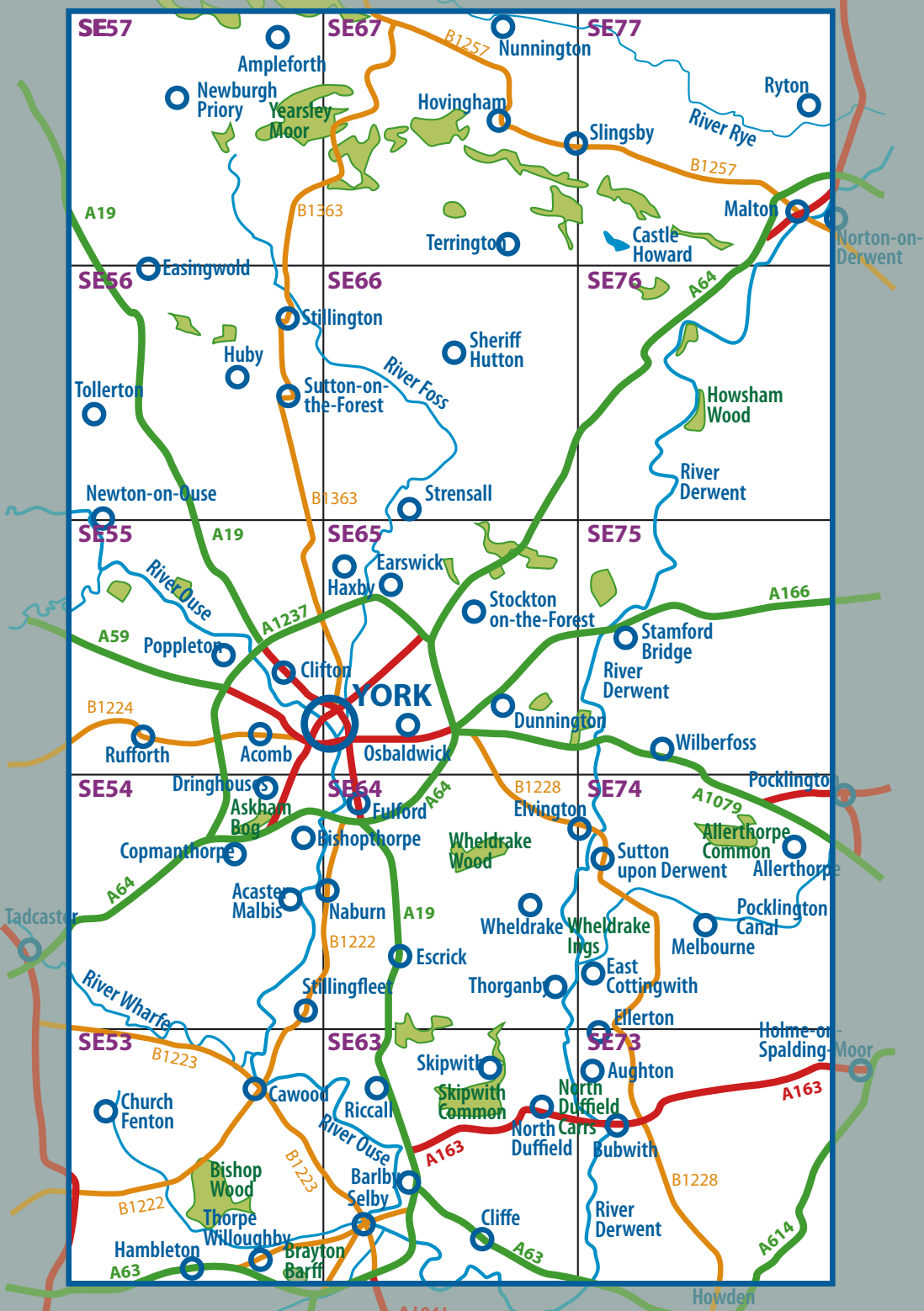




Report 2013



YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB REPORT 2013

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|---------------------|---|
| Front Cover: | Great White Egret at Wheldrake Ings <i>Nigel Stewart</i> |
| Inside Back Cover: | Turtle Doves at Whenby <i>Andrew Chapman</i> Wood Lark, Strensall Common <i>Nigel Stewart</i> |
| Outside Back Cover: | Bewick's Swan, North Duffield <i>Mark Coates</i> Whooper Swans with Black Swan at North Duffield Carrs <i>Mark Coates</i> |

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York Ornithological Club

This report has been compiled by members of the York Ornithological Club (YOC) with records submitted by members and others who are active in watching an area of some 580 square miles around York. The area covers wetlands (the Lower Derwent Valley), deciduous woodland (Hambleton and Howardian Hills), coniferous woodland (Yearsley and Ampleforth), lakes (Castle Howard and Heslington East) and the large agricultural areas of the vales of York and Pickering.

The Club has a membership of about 80 and normally meets on the first Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at St Olave's Church Hall, off Marygate, York for a full programme of talks and discussions, and for the informal exchange of information. In addition, excursions are arranged to areas of ornithological interest, both within and outside the recording area and with more local visits on selected summer evenings. See the club's website at www.yorkbirding.org.uk for full details of club activities.

Editorial

The Lower Derwent Valley is highly regarded in respect of its significance for the bird life of the York area and this report benefits again from the on-going efforts of Natural England staff in the provision of comprehensive WeBS counts and the annual Rare Breeding Bird Panel report for the Lower Derwent. In addition, Craig Ralston (Senior Reserve Manager) has provided an introduction to the colour-ringing programmes in the valley. Ian Andrews, who has made many bird-ringing trips to Allerthorpe Common, provides an introduction to the birds of this under-watched site while David Tate has compiled the first Ringing Report for many years covering the York area. We also have, at last, an account of the first Yellow-browed Warbler for the York area, found by Jono Leadley in 1996 but never documented until now, plus Phil Bone's annual report on Allerthorpe Gravel Pits.

For this issue of the report it has been agreed that the taxonomic order of species in the Classified List will conform to The British List: *A Checklist of Birds of Britain* (8th edition) as published by the BOU in January 2013. The revisions again result in changes to the order of species, particularly with regard to passerines; changes to the order of non-passerines are much fewer but note that terns now precede gulls.

Acknowledgements

For this report the team of Assistant Editors has been expanded to bring greater birding expertise into the editorial team while reducing the work-load on each individual. We have also revised the whole process of producing the annual report and, overall, I believe these changes will help to improve the quality and accuracy of the Classified List, particularly with regard to the rarer and more difficult-to-identify species. In this issue the Classified List was edited by the following individuals:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Jane Chapman | swans & geese |
| Ollie Metcalf | ducks |
| Peter Watson | game birds, divers, herons, egrets, storks & grebes |
| Jack Ashton-Booth | raptors (ex. owls) |
| Rob Chapman | crakes, rails, Moorhen, Coot & Common Crane |
| Jono Leadley | waders |
| Chris Gomersall | skuas, terns and gulls |
| Peter Reed | doves, pigeons, owls, woodpeckers & shrikes |
| Julia Lawson | crows, tits and larks |
| Paul Doherty | martins, swallows & warblers |
| Nigel Stewart | waxwings to thrushes, flycatchers, chats & wheatears |
| Duncan Bye | sparrows, wagtails & pipits and finches & buntings |

I would also like to thank Andy Walker, Recorder, who did much to help in verifying records of scarcer species, plus Jono Leadley and Rob and Jane Chapman who assisted in checking the whole report and highlighting those issues I had failed to spot myself. Andy also edited the Highlights for 2013 based on the monthly summaries he had prepared for the YOC website. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ian Andrews, Phil Bone, Jono Leadley, Craig Ralston and David Tate for their contributions. Thanks are also due to Jack Ashton-Booth, Jonathan Pomroy and Jan Wilczur for their artwork which does much to improve the report's visual appeal, and to Andrew Chapman, Jane Chapman, Mark Coates, Robert Dawson, Chris Gomersall, Paul Reed, Peter Richman, Nigel Stewart and Terry Weston for their photos which illustrate this report.

Mike Williams
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HIGHLIGHTS OF 2013

Weather in 2013

Compared to 2012 the year 2013 was a very dry one with, approximately, just 55% of the precipitation experienced in 2012. The driest month of the year, April with just 5.0mm, was followed by the second wettest, May with 75.1mm, with October the wettest at 79.8mm. Despite the overall dryness, the LDV was very extensively flooded from January to March, following the exceedingly wet November and December of the previous year, but then began to dry out rapidly in April and May. In contrast, lack of standing water was a notable feature of the LDV and other areas towards the end of the year.

The first three months were characterised by some pronounced cold spells and overnight frost was frequent and sometimes severe. March was the coldest for over 50 years, and the cold weather continued into April and May resulting in a noticeably late spring. This had a high impact both on the arrival of spring migrants and on the breeding success of some species.

July was the outstanding summer month with a long spell of hot, sunny weather but both June and August, though quite warm, were often cloudy. For the rest of the year temperatures were mostly on the mild side and it remained relatively dry apart from a wet October. December brought very changeable weather indeed with a notable east-coast storm surge on 6th December which even travelled up the Humber Estuary and River Ouse at least as far as Selby.

January 2013

The month started with a **Marsh Harrier**, juvenile **Glaucous Gull** and adult **Yellow-legged Gull** at NDC all on the 1st. A single **Waxwing** in Bubwith village was present between the 2nd and 3rd while two **Bewick's Swans** were at NDC on the 3rd (and were present in the area on and off throughout the month). Also on the 3rd a probable '**Dark-breasted**' **Barn Owl** was at Thornton Ellers. A single **Red Kite** flew past Canal Head, Pocklington on the 4th and a 1st-winter **Yellow-legged Gull** was present at Rufforth Tip on the 5th. During the Michael Clegg Memorial Bird Race on the 6th several good birds were found including ring-tail **Hen Harrier** and three **Stonechats** at Strensall Common, **Mealy Redpoll**, **Jack Snipe** and **Green Sandpiper** at Heslington East, and **Scaup** at CHL. Several skeins of **Pink-footed Geese** totalling 1,662 birds were noted flying northwest through the LDV during the week.

A juvenile **Glaucous Gull** was at NDC on the 9th with a male **Merlin** and 1st-winter **Caspian Gull** at Rufforth Tip on the 10th, and a different 1st-winter **Caspian Gull** and a 2nd-winter **Iceland Gull** present there on the 12th. On the 13th there were several records of **Waxwing** across the recording area and four **European White-fronted Geese** were near Aughton. On the 17th a **Hawfinch** was found at Ampleforth, with a drake **Green-winged Teal** and male **Hen Harrier** both at NDC on this date. Further **Waxwing** flocks were reported from several locations.

A herd of 109 **Whooper Swans** and the two **Bewick's Swans** were present at North Duffield on the 21st and a 1st-winter **Iceland Gull** flew in to Wheldrake Ings to roost. A single **White-fronted Goose** was reported at Ellerton on the 23rd. On the 25th four **Tundra Bean Geese** briefly visited Bank Island, while the fourth **Caspian Gull** of the month, a 2nd-winter (along with a 3rd-winter **Iceland Gull**) were near Rufforth Tip. Two **Tundra Bean Geese** flew through NDC on the 27th. Also on this date there were two drake **Scaup** at Wheldrake Ings, two adult **White-fronted Geese** at Thornton Ings, and a **Knot** at Heslington East. The final day of the month saw a 1st-winter **Caspian Gull** at Rufforth Tip and a **Merlin** at NDC.

February 2013

Dedicated to the memory of Russell Slack, for whom the Lower Derwent Valley was 'his patch' and who died during the month.

Two **Tundra Bean Geese** were at Ellerton on the 1st and the **Hawfinch** was still showing well at Ampleforth on the 1st and 2nd (and again briefly on the 8th). A 1st-winter **Caspian**, and 1st-winter and adult **Yellow-legged Gulls** were present at Poppleton on the 5th. Three **Iceland Gulls** (1st-winter, 2nd-winter and adult) and a 1st-winter **Glaucous Gull** were present at Poppleton and Wheldrake on the 8th and 9th. Two **Tundra Bean Geese** were present at Bubwith Ings on the 9th with two **Egyptian Geese** at North Duffield the same day. On the 10th, five **European White-fronted Geese** and the two **Bewick's Swans** were present at North Duffield, with a single **Pink-footed Goose** at Ellerton, and a single **Barnacle Goose** at Thorganby.

There was a movement of geese through the weekend of 16th–17th with 14 **White-fronted Geese** at Thorganby, and flocks of 11, 53 and 15 **Barnacle Geese** north over NDC – the flock of 53 was seen flying south at Spurn Point the previous day before 'U-turning' and presumably flying up the River Humber before coming north through the LDV. Presumably the same group of **Barnacle Geese** (c.60+) were

observed flying northwest over Rufforth Tip on the 18th and another 1st-winter **Caspian Gull** was photographed there (next to one of two 1st-winter **Iceland Gulls**) on the 20th.

On the 26th a ring-tail **Hen Harrier** was reported again at Strensall Common, a very elusive bird assuming it was the same one which was seen there on 6th of January! A flock of 17 **Pink-footed Geese** was tracked flying north across York city centre on the 27th and an adult male **Hen Harrier** was at Bubwith Ings and North Duffield Ings on the 28th. **Waxwings** were again present in several areas around the city but generally in much lower numbers than the previous couple of weeks, with 40 present in Strensall on the final day of the month.

March 2013

The month started off mildly, with the feel of spring, but quickly turned into the second-coldest March on record. Fifty **Waxwings** were at Clifton Moor on the 1st with a 1st-winter **Glaucous Gull** and adult **Yellow-legged Gull** at Upper Poppleton on the 2nd. The two **Bewick's Swans** were still present at Bubwith Ings (with 83 **Whooper Swans**) on the same date, while five (two adults and three juvenile) **White-fronted Geese** flew over Wheldrake Ings and six **Pink-footed Geese** flew in to roost there. On the 3rd, a female **Common Scoter** was at CHL. On the 14th a pair of **Stonechats** was near Church Bridge, Melbourne and the first **Little Ringed Plover** of spring arrived back in the recording area.

On the 16th a pair of **Mandarin** was recorded at CHL and on the 17th two **Scaup** were present at NDC with 60 **Whooper Swans**. On the 18th two **Avocets** were found at Heslington East, with one also at Thorganby, and there was added interest in the LDV in the form of six **Common Scoters** (five drakes and one duck) at Bank Island, and an adult **Kittiwake** and juvenile **Glaucous Gull** at Wheldrake Ings.

On the 18th/19th and also the 25th a 1st-winter **Kittiwake** was at Wheldrake Ings and an adult **Mediterranean Gull** was present at Bank Island on the 26th. The highlight of the final week of March was two **Common Cranes** that flew over Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 27th. Late March produced two passage **Hen Harrier** records with a ring-tail seen near Askham Bryan on the 28th and another ring-tail through East Cottingwith on the 29th. Also on the 29th a **Red Kite** flew through NDC, with another through Allerthorpe on the same date, while on the 30th another **Red Kite** flew over Canal Head at Pocklington. The month ended with an **Osprey** at Wheldrake on the 30th.

April 2013

A **Jack Snipe** was recorded at North Duffield on the 2nd, an **Osprey** was reported over Bank Island on the 3rd, and the seven **Pink-footed Geese** reported in March remained at Wheldrake Ings till at least the 4th. Also on the 4th three **White Wagtails** were at Heslington East. Two **Sandwich Terns** were reported roosting with a flock of **Black-headed Gulls** near Hemingbrough on the 5th. A pair of **Egyptian Geese** with four goslings at East Cottingwith on the 6th was the first confirmed breeding record in the York Area. An adult male **Hen Harrier** flew over Heslington East on the 12th when a single **Arctic Tern** was also present. The 13th saw the first **Greenshanks** of the year, when two flew over Allerthorpe Common, and the first **Garganey** of the year with a showy drake at Bank Island, though the most impressive record of the day concerned a dark-phase **Arctic Skua** that flew south over Bootham, York! An **Osprey** flew north over Heslington East in the evening of the 14th; also on that date a drake **Garganey** and three **Whooper Swans** were at NDC.

Two **Avocets** were at NDC briefly on the evening of the 16th when a **Red Kite** flew over. Additionally, there were an impressive 58 **Wheatears** recorded in the wider Heslington area on this date. On the 17th a **Common Sandpiper** was present, a 1st-winter **Little Gull** flew through and the first **Whimbrel** was heard over Wheldrake. On the 18th seven passage **Little Ringed Plovers** were on a flooded field near Skipwith, four **Arctic Terns** and one **Common Tern** were present at Heslington East along with at least 17 **Wheatears**. On the 19th there was one **Common Redstart** at Bank Island (with another at Rawcliffe on the same date) and 30+ **Wheatears** at Heslington East (with a good scattering of 20+ **Wheatears** in the south of the LDV); and a female **Marsh Harrier** flew over Oulston Reservoir.

The 21st saw another **Osprey** over the York recording area, when one flew over Crockey Hill and was later observed over York racecourse. In addition, a **Short-eared Owl** was observed hunting near Kennythorpe. On the 22nd two **Common Cranes** flew into NDC where they spent the day, a **Redstart** was reported there and a **Barnacle Goose** flew through. A **Greenshank** was present at Bank Island on the 24th, with four **Garganey** and a **Hobby** at Wheldrake. A male **Whinchat** was in North Duffield village on the 25th and 27th. A ring-tail **Hen Harrier** was watched at NDC on the evening of the 26th, when over 100 **Yellow Wagtails** were present, with similar numbers on the 27th; the wagtail flock also contained two **Blue-headed Wagtails** and two **Channel Wagtails**. The 27th also saw a single **White Wagtail** at Bank

Island, with four in a field near Skipwith and a **Spotted Flycatcher** at Moorlands Wood. There were 24 **Wheatears** at Heslington East on the 28th, with one at NDC, where a staggering 216 **Yellow Wagtails** were recorded; there were also over 50 **Yellow Wagtails** at Wheldrake on this date. **Hobbies** were observed over Bank Island on the 28th and at Church Fenton on the 30th, with an **Osprey** reported north over Nether Poppleton on the latter date.

May 2013

A very showy (and vocal) male **Wood Warbler** was at Strensall Common on the 1st and 2nd. Also on the 2nd two **Grasshopper Warblers** were reeling near Melbourne, and a flock of 57 **Pink-footed Geese** dropped into Bank Island. A **Wood Sandpiper** was on private land within the LDV early in the month and later at Wheldrake Ings on the 7th. On the 4th male **Blue-headed Wagtails** were at Thornton Ellers (with a different bird present on the 5th) and at Heslington East on the 5th. Several **Blue-headed Wagtails** were found at NDC early in the month and a **Water Pipit** was present at North Duffield on the 6th and 7th.

A stunning adult **Little Gull** dropped in at Heslington East on the 11th, with two **Wood Sandpipers** at Thornton Ellers the same day. On the 13th two **Whimbrel** flew over Heslington East and an **Osprey** flew north over Elvington, while a male **Whinchat** was at Bank Island briefly; in addition, a **Bar-tailed Godwit** was reported over Thornton while another **Osprey** was reported from Wheldrake Ings on the 14th. A **Turnstone** was at North Duffield on the 15th with a **Black Tern** reported from Bank Island on the afternoon of the same day. During the evening of the 16th a **Short-eared Owl** flew through NDC.

The 17th was a day of raptor watching in the LDV, with the local Natural England team recording a ring-tail **Hen Harrier** that flew through Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island, and an **Osprey** through NDC. From the 27th **Turtle Doves** showed well at Acaster Selby and a drake **Mandarin** was at Wheldrake. An adult female **Common Scoter** was present at Heslington East on the 28th.

June 2013

An **Osprey** was present at Castle Howard on the 2nd and a male **Black Redstart** was present in York city centre on the 3rd; it was in view for just a couple of hours for three lucky observers. On the 6th a pair of **Avocets** was present at Bank Island. The first **Quail** of the year was found near Heslington East on the 13th, there was a female **Mandarin** at Wheldrake on the 15th and a late **Wood Sandpiper** was at Bank Island on the 16th

briefly before flying north. Another **Quail** was found on the 24th, this time at Poppleton, and was present till at least the end of the month. Also on the 24th, the female **Mandarin**, in heavy wing-moult, was trapped and ringed at Wheldrake. On the final evening of the month the **Black Redstart** was re-discovered in the centre of York.

July 2013

The male **Black Redstart** was still present on the 1st of July in York and was in the same general area until at least the middle of the month. The Poppleton **Quail** was still singing on the 5th and was present until late in the month when it was seen in flight. On the 11th a **Little Egret** dropped into Heslington East where it remained for the rest of the month, with others observed at Dringhouses on the 12th and by the River Wharfe near Tadcaster (just within the recording area) on the 13th. Other birds were recorded frequently at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings during the month. On the 15th a **Great White Egret** was reported from Bank Island although not seen again in July.

Wader passage started mid-month with 29 **Black-tailed Godwits** at Heslington East on the 13th, while a **Goosander** and **Spotted Flycatcher** were present at Ulleskelf the same day. On the 15th a smart adult **Mediterranean Gull** was following a tractor near Stillingfleet Bridge and a **Turtle Dove** was still present at Acaster Selby (and there until the end of the month). A **Red Kite** was seen foraging near North Duffield village on the 26th, with two **Little Egrets** and three **Common Sandpipers** present at Heslington East on the same date. In the evening of the 27th two **Wood Sandpipers** were at Skipwith Common, plus at least three **Green Sandpipers** at Wheldrake Ings on the 28th, and there was a new **Wood Sandpiper** at Heslington East on the 31st.

August 2013

A **Wood Sandpiper** was present at Heslington East until at least the 4th. The **Black Redstart** was again present in York city centre on the 1st. On the 2nd, seven **Green Sandpipers** and a **Black-tailed Godwit** were at a newly lowered Pool at Wheldrake Ings, with **Garganey** also present. A **Great White Egret** was found fishing at the Pool at Wheldrake Ings early on the 14th (with a **Little Egret** also at the site) and was present until at least the 22nd. An **Osprey** flew north over Wheldrake Ings on the 19th and, interestingly, one had been observed heading northwest over Sunk Island on the River Humber earlier in the day, possibly the same bird.

On the 25th there was an arrival of **Common Sandpipers** into the recording area with at least 25 birds from just three sites: 16 at Heslington East, five at Castle Howard and four at Bubwith. Bank Holiday Monday (26th) threw up a surprise in the form of a **Wryneck** which was trapped and ringed at Bootham Stray, York but unfortunately the bird was not relocated after its release.

September 2013

A juvenile **Cuckoo** was on Skipwith Common, seven female-type **Mandarins** were at CHL and an immature **Marsh Harrier** was at Wheldrake Ings, all on the 1st. On the 3rd a juvenile **Little Gull** was reported briefly at noon from Heslington East. From the 4th until the end of the month a sizeable flock of **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** was in the area between South Duffield, Barlby and Riccall (e.g. 820 birds, mainly all adults, recorded on the 4th) with approximately 20 **Yellow-legged Gulls** present.

Almost two weeks after its last appearance the **Great White Egret** reappeared at Wheldrake Ings on the 7th while eight **Whinchats** were at Wheldrake Ings on the 8th. On the 12th 33 **Yellow-legged Gulls** were near Riccall, with two **Common Scoters** present at CHL the same day. On the 18th the first **Pink-footed Geese** of the autumn were observed when approximately 200 birds flew south over Ampleforth. The final records of note in September were of six **Mandarins** present at CHL on the 27th and a **Hobby** between North and South Duffield on the 30th.

October 2013

The first **Redwings** of the autumn arrived at several locations on the 2nd, and the same day four **Hawfinches** were in Askham Richard. Four **Whooper Swans** which flew south at Newton upon Derwent were the first of the autumn. The first **Brambling** of the autumn was at Bank Island on the 5th. Early-morning of the 6th saw three skeins of **Pink-footed Geese** over North Duffield, 155 northeast, 95 southeast and 120 southeast, with a female/immature **Common Scoter** and four **Mandarin** at CHL. However, in the afternoon, a **Yellow-browed Warbler** was discovered at Bank Island, and it was then present on and off until at least to the 15th. On the 8th a **Richard's Pipit** flew south over Milford Common and the **Great White Egret** reappeared at Wheldrake Ings where there was also a **Cetti's Warbler**. The morning of the 10th saw northern gales and the first real push of winter thrushes, with the following **Redwing** counts reported (all west): 2,500+ Bank

Island, 1,000+ Pocklington, 300 Bishopthorpe and 88 North Duffield. The first **Fieldfares** of the autumn were also recorded (all west): 350 Bank Island and 100+ Pocklington. In amongst the thrush movement 17 **Bramblings** were recorded flying west and an **Osprey** flew south, both sightings at Bank Island.

After a few days of severe winds early in the month there were over 1,000 **Gannet** and 100 **Great Skuas** observed flying up the River Humber; unsurprisingly many **Gannets** ended up inland, including one (a juvenile) which flew northeast over North Duffield village on the 11th. On the 12th juvenile **Gannets** were picked up (and taken to the coast) at North Duffield and near Castle Howard; other **Gannets** were observed around the periphery of the recording area and it is likely several other birds flew through but remained undetected. Two **Mediterranean Gulls** (an adult and a 1st-winter) flew east over Hemingbrough at dusk on the 12th. On the 16th a juvenile ring-tail **Harrier** was present at Wheldrake Ings. Interestingly, news emerged mid-month on Twitter of a satellite tagged **Taiga Bean Goose** that moved through the York recording area between the 10th and 16th October before returning to its traditional wintering site on the Slamannan Plateau (Scotland). It spent some time in the Poppleton area but alas remained undetected! It is unknown if it was travelling on its own or with other Taigas. A **Firecrest** was recorded at Skipwith Common on the 20th but not seen again.

November 2013

On the 4th 70 **Pink-footed Geese** and five **Whooper Swans** flew north over Wheldrake Ings, while a juvenile **Gannet** flew NNW over Milford Common early morning on the 7th. Come the 16th there was a pair of adult **Scaup** and six **Pink-footed Geese** at CHL. A 4th-winter **Iceland Gull** spent five minutes at Heslington East on the 18th, very early in the local context and possibly the forbearer of a good winter for white-winged gulls. There were also ten **Jack Snipe** present at this location on the same date. Two **Firecrests** were at Redhouse Wood near Moor Monkton between the 17th and 25th but were only recorded together on the 23rd.

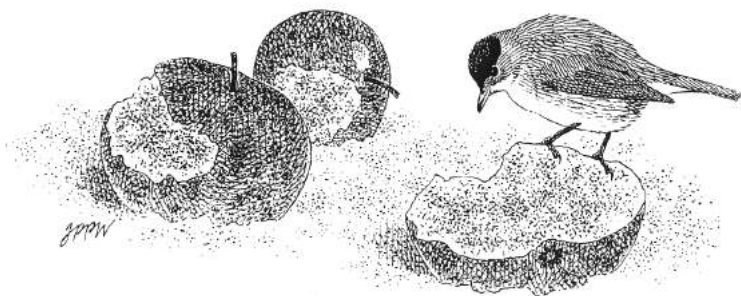
On the 19th a **Woodcock** was at Clifton Backies and there were 70 **Whooper Swans** at North Duffield. An adult **Mediterranean Gull** was present at Heslington East on the 21st while 155 **Pink-footed Geese** flew over North Duffield village on the 24th. An adult male **Merlin** was at Poppleton on the 25th, with an over-wintering **Chiffchaff** along Newlands Lane, Poppleton on the same date. Nearby, off Burlands Avenue, a 1st-winter **Iceland Gull** was present on the 26th, while at Redhouse Wood

there were two **Mealy Redpolls**. On the 28th a juvenile **Marsh Harrier** flew north over North Duffield village. Back at Newlands Lane a 1st-winter **Glaucous Gull** was found on the 28th. Continuing the theme of over-wintering warblers, a female **Blackcap** was in a Heslington garden on the final day of the month.

December 2013

December started with a 2nd-winter **Glaucous Gull** on Rufforth Airfield but this was just the start of some great gull activity over the coming weeks. On the 4th a 2nd-winter **Caspian Gull**, three **Glaucous Gulls** (two juveniles and a 2nd-winter) and a 2nd-winter **Iceland Gull** were all recorded in this area. The same Heslington garden that had been visited by a female **Blackcap** at the end of November was visited again on the 6th but this time by a male. On the 7th, two 1st-winter **Iceland Gulls** were in the Rufforth area – considered different to the other 1st-winter birds seen previously in that area this winter. On the 8th an **Iceland Gull** was reported over Heslington and a female **Scaup** remained at CHL. Another **Blackcap** (female) was in a Bootham garden on the 9th.

On the 15th a 1st-winter and a possible 2nd-winter **Caspian Gull** were in the Rufforth area, along with two **Iceland Gulls** (1st-winter and 2nd-winter) and two **Glaucous Gulls** (also 1st-winter and 2nd-winter). A 1st-winter **Caspian Gull** near Askham Richard on the 18th was considered different to the 1st-winter bird seen on the 15th, while also on the 18th at least two 1st-winter **Iceland Gulls** and a 1st-winter **Glaucous Gull** were recorded. The same day two 'Greenland' **White-fronted Geese** were reported from Bank Island. The 19th brought another report of a **Blackcap**, this time a male in an Osbaldwick garden. On the 28th five **Pink-footed Geese** were at Wheldrake Ings and 34 **Whooper Swans** were at NDC, with 12 at Aughton Ings. Interestingly, on the 30th, a noteworthy flock of 25 **Bullfinches** was in Bishopthorpe.



Classified List

The sequence and scientific nomenclature follow that of the British List maintained by the British Ornithologists' Union. The list as revised by BOU in January 2013 is the version which is used in this report. The following abbreviations are used throughout:

| | |
|-------|---|
| BBRC | British Birds Rarities Committee |
| BBS | Breeding Bird Survey (BTO) |
| CHL | Castle Howard Lake |
| GP | Gravel Pit(s) |
| JRTNR | Joseph Rowntree Trust Nature Reserve, New Earswick |
| LDV | Lower Derwent Valley |
| NDC | North Duffield Carrs |
| NE | Natural England (formerly English Nature) |
| NR | Nature Reserve |
| RBBP | Rare Breeding Bird Panel (national committee) |
| SHBR | Sand Hutton Bird Report (from SHL) |
| SHL | Sand Hutton Laboratory (formerly the Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton) now part of 'FERA', the Food and Environment Research Agency. |
| WBBS | Waterways Breeding Bird Survey (BTO) |
| WeBS | Wetlands Bird Survey (BTO) |
| WWT | Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust |
| WTW | Water Treatment Works |
| YNU | Yorkshire Naturalists' Union |
| YOC | York Ornithological Club |
| YWT | Yorkshire Wildlife Trust |

The following nature reserves appear as sites in the report (as well as those listed above):

- Calley Heath NR (Barmby Moor)
- Cornfield NR (Rawcliffe Ings)
- Fireman's Leap (part of the JRTNRs)
- Hassacarr NR (Dunnington)
- Huntington School NR (part of the JRTNRs)
- Sessions NR (part of the JRTNRs)

The new Heslington East campus of York University is referred to simply as 'Heslington East' throughout this report, while the original campus site is now referred to as 'Heslington West'.

Where appropriate, WeBS counts are included under individual species. WeBS counts in the Lower Derwent Valley are normally conducted in the winter months when seasonal flooding attracts wildfowl. Months when counts are made will vary from year to year depending on conditions. Note that WeBS counts reflect numbers on a specific date and do not necessarily indicate maximum numbers at any location.

WeBS counts at CHL are conducted every month but only data for January–April and September–December are normally included in the tables in this report unless the species is present throughout the year. In these tables a ‘-’ indicates that no count was made; zero counts are shown as ‘0’. Any other noteworthy counts are referred to in the text. Dates for WeBS counts in 2013 are shown below (for the LDV, data from 9th January is used for the tables in this report).

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CHL | 12th | 9th | 10th | 13th | 12th | 23rd | 20th | 25th | 17th | 13th | 10th | 15th |
| LDV | 9th/24th | 21st | 7th | 2nd | - | - | - | - | 17th | 14th | 14th | 11th |

The annual Michael Clegg Memorial Bird Race took place on 6th January with two teams from the YOC area. In the Classified List the event is referred to simply as the ‘Bird Race’; the winning team in the York area recorded an amazing 98 species on the day beating the previous year’s record of 90 species.

For detailed information on the breeding of scarce and rare birds in the LDV refer to the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (RBBP) report on page 95.

Records submitted to BirdGuides are included in the report and marked as such where appropriate, but we do not have details of the individual observer(s) and these records remain unverified. They are included for completeness as it is clear that many birders (local or from further afield) visit the Lower Derwent Valley in particular without otherwise submitting records.

This report also uses records from within the YOC area submitted to BirdTrack and in this case we do know the observers’ names. However, the very large majority of BirdTrack records relate to the commoner species and these normally just merit a summary anyway.

The systematic list also includes those species recorded in at least three of the previous ten years even if they were not recorded in 2013. The information given for these shows the year last recorded.

Records judged to be introductions/escapes are listed in Appendix A while hybrids are listed in Appendix B. Appendix C includes reports of scarce or rare species whose identity could not be confirmed (description not received or insufficient to confirm identity).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Most records were from the strongholds of CHL and the LDV, alongside a number of birds using Heslington East, with breeding reported from several sites in the region. In the first winter period, counts of 115 on 10th January and 136 on the 17th were recorded in the Aughton/Ellerton area. Numbers increased during February in the LDV to a record for the valley of 217 on the 22nd. On 7th March there were 172 still present, with 76 of these at Thorganby, and up to 150 birds remaining through the month. At CHL, the peak count was 41 on 12th January.

Nesting was recorded at Bishopthorpe, CHL, Newburgh Priory lake, NDC, the Pocklington Canal and Wheldrake lngs. The first cygnets were seen on 28th May at NDC. Breeding success in the LDV was poor, apart from the pair on the Pocklington Canal (seven cygnets). Three broods, comprising up to 15 juveniles, were recorded several times at CHL from 27th July to the end of October. A family party with seven young was seen in the centre of York on the River Foss on 12th and 20th August, moving to the River Ouse in October. Two adults with one cygnet were reported at Newburgh Priory lake on 27th November.

Post breeding, at Heslington East a maximum count of 26 was recorded on 18th November, while numbers built up at CHL to more than 60 birds, with a peak count of 71 on 18th December. In the LDV, the peak count was in December when 91 birds were present throughout the valley.

Monthly WeBS counts for Mute Swan

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 41 | 35 | 27 | 20 | 23 | 34 | 35 | 48 | 33 | 60 | 68 | 68 |
| LDV | 115 | 93 | 172 | 128 | - | - | - | - | 46 | 53 | 0 | 85 |

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant

In contrast to the previous year, all records were from the first winter period. The three birds at NDC in late December 2012 remained in the area from 1st to 5th January (LDV blog *et al.*), reducing to two birds (including one ringed in the Netherlands in 2007) from the 6th. These stayed right through to 2nd March, mainly at NDC and in the Aughton/Ellerton area. On 13th February, three birds were reported at Derwent Cottage Farm, North Duffield (LDV blog). The last reported sighting was one at NDC on 18th March (BirdTrack).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A minimum of 532 birds used or moved through the LDV during the first winter period and spring passage, in line with previous years and representing about 6–7% of the UK wintering population. Individuals and smaller groups

from the resident wintering herd (comprising about 110 birds) moved around the southern end of the valley throughout January to March, feeding at various locations including Aughton/Ellerton Ings, Bubwith Ings, Derwent Cottage Farm and NDC. During spring passage in March, large movements included 125 flying north over the LDV on the 4th and 200 flying northeast on the 18th, later seen over York. Three lingering individuals were at NDC in April, reducing to one in May last seen on the 13th.

Returning birds were first seen in October with six at Norton-on-Derwent on the 4th, three flying south over North Duffield on the 10th, ten at CHL on the 24th, and others reported across the region. The first local birds were four which arrived at NDC on 24th October, increasing to 33 in the LDV by the 30th. By early November 44 birds were in the LDV, increasing to 70 by the 18th. The percentage of young birds (about 22%) indicated a successful breeding season.

Monthly WeBS counts for Whooper Swan

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| LDV | 109 | 99 | 111 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 70 | 70 |

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Scarce winter visitor

Compared with the single bird seen last year, 2013 was a good year for records of this species with several birds showing well. All records were from the first winter period. Four Bean Geese of the Tundra race *rossicus* alighted briefly on ice at Bank Island before flying off northeast on 25th January (CR per AW). Two days later, on the 27th, two birds were sighted flying WNW low over NDC (AW). In February, two of the Tundra race were photographed at Ellerton Ings on the 1st (RT), with two seen flying off north from Bubwith Ings on the 9th (DB & JO). A total of seven birds (Tundra race) stayed in the refuge area at Wheldrake Ings from 13th to 16th March, with a single bird flying from the north into Bank Island on the 20th (LDV blog).

An interesting autumn record came from a satellite-tracked bird of the Taiga race *fabilis* which spent the period from 10th to 16th October in the recording area, including time near Poppleton. It was otherwise undetected so it is not known if it was accompanied by other birds before it departed for its traditional wintering site on the Slamannan Plateau in Scotland.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

As last year, there were many reports of skeins flying over the region, alongside reports of small groups on the ground and long-staying singles in the LDV during the spring. On 2nd May, a flock of 57 birds roosted overnight at Bank Island after which a lone bird lingered at Wheldrake Ings

with possibly one at CHL on 1st June being the last of the wintering birds. Returning birds were first reported over Osbaldwick on 26th August.

Notable counts (150 and more) were:

- 4th January, Strensall Common – c.200 flying west
- 5th January, LDV – 690 in several skeins
- 6th January, Askham Richard – c.150 flying west, with 800 in several skeins over the LDV the same day
- 7th January, Knavesmire – 200 over high, heading northwest
- 18th September, Ampleforth – 200 flying south
- 21st September, NDC – 237 flying north
- 6th October, LDV – 630 over
- 18th October, LDV – 400 over
- 21st October, LDV – 230 over
- 24th November, Poppleton – 150 over, with 155 flying southeast over North Duffield the same day

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Scarce winter visitor

Records from the first winter period were more numerous, and all were of the European race *albifrons*, but with only two birds in the second winter period, both relating to the Greenland race *flavirostris*. The first four birds of the year arrived at NDC on 13th January, with one (in a flock of Greylags *Anser anser*) seen on the 23rd at Ellerton Ings and two on the 27th at Thornton Ings. Five were present at NDC from 10th to 12th February before relocating to Ellerton Ings from the 13th to the 15th, and they were seen here again on the 21st. The maximum count was of 14 birds at Thorganby Ings on 17th February. A family party, consisting of two adults and three juveniles, was at Wheldrake Ings from 1st to 3rd March.

In the second winter period, two birds of the Greenland race *flavirostris* were reported at Bank Island on 12th December (LDV blog) and again on the 18th (BirdGuides).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Resident feral breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Large numbers were recorded in the LDV in January and December, but other counts in the valley were down on 2012, possibly because of the much drier conditions experienced through the rest of the year. Peak counts were recorded at CHL post breeding, while Heslington East saw a record count of 420 in September. Individual site counts of 200 or more (on 36 occasions at 12 different sites, compared with ten such counts in 2012) were:

- 4th January, Ellerton – 750, with 718 present on the 9th
- 24th January, Wheldrake Ings – 499
- 24th January, Melbourne and Thornton Ings – 643
- 9th February, CHL – 290

7th March, NDC – 378
 16th June, CHL – 270, with 458 recorded on the 23rd
 29th July, Heslington East – 204
 7th August, Heslington East – 243, with further counts of 205 on the 16th, 350 (minimum) on the 18th and 294 on the 27th
 17th August, Wheldrake Ings – 345
 15th September, CHL – 250, with the peak count for the year of 520 on the 17th
 27th September, Heslington East – 420
 Early October, Skipwith – c.300 roosting and Pocklington Canal area – c.300
 11th October, Allerthorpe GP – 204
 13th October, CHL – 280
 14th October, Wheldrake Ings – 234
 2nd November, Bank Island – 225, up to 320 on the 3rd and 300 on the 14th
 10th November, CHL – 412, with 240 on 12th and c.200 reported on the 27th
 13th November, Nunnington – 226, with 220 on the 21st
 14th November, Allerthorpe GP – 205
 9th December, Bank Island – 1,110, with 1,347 there on the 12th
 11th December, Wheldrake Ings – 211 and 500 on the 28th
 29th December, Newburgh Priory – 215

Monthly WeBS counts for Greylag Goose

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| CHL | 115 | 290 | 4 | 18 | 17 | 458 | 78 | 0 | 520 | 280 | 412 | 4 |
| LDV | 1,433 | 242 | 389 | 11 | - | - | - | - | 598 | 756 | 578 | 1,323 |

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Resident feral breeder and winter visitor

Seen throughout the year, numerous records were received from across the recording area (in common with Greylag Geese *Anser anser*). Peak counts in the LDV were in the second winter period, but at CHL numbers fluctuated more, with significant numbers present from June to September. Individual site counts of 150 or more were:

9th January, Bubwith Ings – 180
 24th January, Melbourne and Thornton Ings – 222
 9th February, CHL – 212
 16th June, CHL – 190, with a count of 185 on the 23rd
 20th July, CHL – 222
 17th September, CHL – 303
 17th September, Wheldrake Ings – 150
 14th October, Wheldrake Ings – 187

10th November, CHL – 159

14th November, Wheldrake Ings – 211

11th December, Bank Island – 211, with 200 present there on the 23rd

Monthly WeBS counts for Canada Goose

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 69 | 212 | 5 | 44 | 66 | 185 | 222 | 100 | 303 | 8 | 159 | 13 |
| LDV | 340 | 81 | 73 | 8 | - | - | - | - | 300 | 400 | 332 | 360 |

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Occasional winter visitor and feral wanderer

In contrast to most years, February saw a large movement of birds through the LDV, with many also moving along the Yorkshire coast around the same time. However, the scattering of single records (below) may still relate to wanderers from the feral flocks in York and not be part of this wild influx.

A single flew south over Thorganby Ings with Canada Geese *Branta canadensis* on 10th February. At least 68 and possibly up to 79 birds in two or three flocks (the largest numbering 53) were recorded at Ellerton Ings on 17th February. The flock of 53 birds may have been the same as a flock of 53 seen flying south then U-turning at Spurn Point earlier in the day. The following day, 60 birds were seen flying northwest over Rufforth. A single bird flew south over NDC on 22nd March with another single through on 22nd April.

Other singles were reported in November at CHL on the 12th and at Nunington on the 13th and 21st, with one on 29th December at Newburgh Priory lake.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

There were no records in 2013, though recorded in the area in six of the past ten years, including 2012.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Feral breeder and occasional visitor

This year there was confirmed breeding for the first time by at least one pair of birds in the LDV, with another family seen in September as well. This perhaps indicates that the small resident population in the LDV is becoming more established. In the first winter period a pair of birds was regularly seen at locations in the LDV, becoming more elusive in March. A pair with up to four young was seen on 6th April at Storwood (Pocklington Canal). Other sightings came from East Cottingham on 22nd, 23rd and 26th April and 5th May, and two seen at NDC the day after.

After no reports over the summer, five birds (two adults and three juveniles) flew in to roost at Wheldrake Ings on 14th September. Three other birds (two adults and a juvenile) were also present at Wheldrake Ings from

18th September to the end of the month, being joined by a family of five (presumably those seen earlier in the month) on the 26th.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Migrant breeder and early passage migrant, particularly in spring

As usual the majority of records came from the LDV, where they were recorded throughout the year, except July–September. Numbers built throughout January and February, with monthly high counts at individual sites of 85 at Ellerton Ings on 25th January, and 90 at Thorganby Ings on 10th February. After that numbers decreased, with only 40 birds present at Thorganby Ings on 1st April. Breeding was confirmed in the LDV, where they bred successfully at several locations including Thorganby Ings where seven broods produced 39 birds.

Monthly WeBS counts for Common Shelduck

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| LDV | 108 | 112 | 35 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 20 |

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Scarce resident breeder

Likely to have bred at two or three locations in the area this year. A pair was reported at CHL from January onwards and observed copulating on 12th April; the sighting of seven ‘female-types’ there on 1st September seems likely to involve their offspring. A pair was seen holding territory at Huttons Ambo by the River Derwent and were thought to be breeding. Three birds were at Red House on 12th April, and a single male was present at Wheldrake Ings on 27th May with a female, in full wing moult, trapped and ringed there on 24th June, remaining until 9th July.

Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Regular winter visitor, spring passage migrant and resident breeder in small numbers

As would be expected, the largest counts came from the LDV, with no counts over 100 from anywhere outside of the LDV and CHL, although small numbers were recorded in suitable habitat throughout the area. There were six possible and two probable breeding pairs in the LDV present in May and June, but no young were observed to confirm breeding (see RBBP report page 95). The January WeBS count from the LDV represents 2.4% of the British wintering population of this species (using the BTO counts 2004/2005–2008/2009 of 440,000 wintering individuals – Musgrove *et al.* 2011). The first autumn birds were a few (uncounted) at Wheldrake Ings on 10th August.

Away from CHL and the LDV mostly small numbers were recorded at various locations as follows (peak year counts): Bishopthorpe (7), Crambeck

(1), Cliffe/Hemingbrough (1), Heslington East (3), Newburgh Priory lake (13), Rawcliffe Lake (1) and Redhouse, Moor Monkton (3). In October a maximum of 500 birds was recorded at Skipwith Common on 5th October but with reduced numbers thereafter and into November.

Monthly WeBS counts for Common Wigeon

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|--------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| CHL | 819 | 328 | 80 | 9 | 81 | 172 | 158 | 478 |
| LDV | 10,628 | 4,297 | 6,359 | 2,593 | 20 | 661 | 2,227 | 4,086 |

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

Vagrant

Not seen in 2013; last recorded in 2010.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

A species that, unusually for wildfowl in the area, occurs in larger numbers at CHL than in the LDV, and again the highest winter counts were from there. There were no notable counts away from these two locations, but birds were recorded in small numbers across the area. Gadwall bred successfully at Castle Howard with four broods present on 16th June; in the LDV, there were 13–71 pairs (see RBBP page 95). There were no breeding records elsewhere within the area, but given the national increase in breeding records it is highly likely that this species, which can be extremely elusive in the breeding season, is overlooked and breeding more widely. Pairs were reported in the breeding season at Skipwith Common and Strensall Common, but there was no evidence of breeding.

Monthly WeBS counts for Gadwall

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 114 | 139 | 35 | 29 | 62 | 79 | 70 | 84 |
| LDV | 0 | 36 | 53 | 2 | 16 | 17 | 10 | 6 |

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Winter visitor and resident breeder

The second most common wintering wildfowl after Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*, occurring in the largest numbers within the LDV, with a maximum count of more than 7,000 throughout the LDV on 31st January, and numbers remaining high into March. The January WeBS count from the LDV represents 3.3% of the British wintering population of this species (using the BTO counts 2004/2005–2008/2009 of 210,000 wintering individuals – Musgrove *et al.* 2011). The last potentially ‘wintering’ birds were ten at Bank Island on 16th June.

Despite almost certainly breeding in several locations within the area, no confirmed breeding records were received, although birds in double figures were present at Bank Island throughout the summer.

The first passage of autumn was a flock of 20 in the LDV on 1st August building to over 100 by the 24th and increasing in numbers thereafter. The only counts of 100 birds or more from outside of CHL or the LDV came from Newburgh Priory lake which regularly held between 100–150 birds in the second winter period.

Monthly WeBS counts for Eurasian Teal

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| CHL | 52 | 139 | 21 | 20 | 0 | 47 | 147 | 253 |
| LDV | 5,992 | 4,605 | 4,999 | 3,646 | 543 | 751 | 1,441 | 3,079 |

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

Rare visitor

A single record of a drake seen on the river at NDC on 17th January (AW) likely referred to this species, but was flushed before a hybrid or aberrant Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca* could be fully ruled out (last accepted record 2011).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Winter visitor and resident breeder

The most widespread of the ducks recorded in the area, and the commonest breeder. Apart from the LDV (see table overleaf) birds were reported from many wetland sites with maximum counts in the first half of the year as follows: Allerthorpe GP (45); Heslington East (50); Hull Road Park, York (20); Hassacarr NR (2); Huntington, York (20); Newburgh Priory lake (32); Newhay (30); SHL (23); Skipwith Common (21) and Stamford Bridge (20).

In the breeding season Natural England reported approximately 500 pairs in the LDV as a whole. Detailed evidence of breeding came from Bank Island (up to ten broods, 37 juveniles) and CHL (13 broods, 51 juveniles) but actual numbers may be less than quoted because of multiple sightings and potential duplication. Four broods were reported at SHL, fewer than in former years, while just one brood was noted at Skipwith Common with eggs at another nest predated.

In the second half of the year numbers in the LDV increased substantially as shown by the WeBS counts. Peak counts at individual sites were 600 at Wheldrake Ings on 14th September and 2,500 at Thorganby Ings on 28th November. Away from the LDV maximum counts in this period at individual sites were: Allerthorpe GP (60); CHL (250); Elvington (250); Heslington East (103); Hull Road Park, York (80); Newburgh Priory lake (252); Rowntree Park, York (66) and Stamford Bridge (12).

Monthly WeBS counts for Mallard

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| CHL | 283 | 109 | 80 | 88 | 51 | 126 | 464 | 182 | 131 | 135 | 122 | 209 |
| LDV | 406 | 491 | 306 | 120 | - | - | - | - | 1,017 | 1,521 | 2,034 | 3,059 |

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Winter visitor and scarce breeder

A common wintering duck in the LDV, but scarce elsewhere. The first winter period saw the largest concentration of Pintail at Seavy Carr (240 on 15th February) and the Melbourne area of the LDV, resulting from the large areas of shallow flooding. The only record outside the LDV was of an immature drake at Heslington East on 15th April. Within the LDV, three pairs were present in late April with two pairs remaining until mid-May and a single pair remaining into early June, but there was no evidence of breeding (see RBBP report page 95). In the autumn birds started to re-appear in the LDV from early September onwards.

Monthly WeBS counts for Pintail

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| LDV | 134 | 38 | 474 | 159 | | 0 | 3 | 3 | 17 |

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Scarce migrant breeder

The first returning bird was recorded at Wheldrake Ings on 12th April. Birds were regularly seen at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings throughout the summer, with a single sighting on 5th May at East Cottingwith. The Natural England team recorded up to six drakes and two females in April throughout the LDV, with five drakes and two females still present into May, before this typically elusive species became less obvious during the breeding season (see RBBP report page 95). The final record of the year was of a juvenile in the LDV on 21st September.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Winter visitor and resident breeder in small numbers

A poor year for this species although likely to be under-recorded. The maximum count was of approximately 100 birds between Bubwith bridge and East Cottingwith on 3rd April. A pair was present at Heslington East in April, and three birds were present at Church Ings, Acaster Malbis on 30th December, with another two birds present at Bishopthorpe Ings on the same date. In the LDV there were ten proven breeding pairs, with 47 young seen (see RBBP report page 95). This represents between 1.4–10% of the UK breeding populations – Musgrove *et al.* 2011.

Monthly WeBS counts for Shoveler

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| LDV | 2 | 39 | 41 | 92 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 6 |

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Vagrant although escapes from wildfowl collections are more likely

No records in 2013, despite becoming increasingly regular in the surrounding region. Last recorded 2012.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Winter visitor and breeder in small numbers

A poor year, with only light flooding in the autumn and second winter period rendering the LDV unattractive for this species. The numbers in the first winter period were improved by heavy flooding in the LDV and a good-sized flock formed, predominantly at NDC (peak count 251). The only other site in the area with regular sightings was Heslington East, which held single figure counts throughout the year, except mid-summer. There were no reports of breeding pairs.

Monthly WeBS counts for Common Pochard

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 24 | 50 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| LDV | 86 | 125 | 286 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Winter visitor and breeder in small numbers

Widespread through the area in both winter periods at CHL and in the LDV. The only other site with three-figure counts was Heslington East, where numbers increased through September to reach 110 by the 30th, before decreasing again. In addition to the LDV (with several broods noted), breeding also occurred at Allerthorpe GP with three pairs, CHL with four pairs, and single pairs on the Pocklington Canal and at Skipwith Common.

Monthly WeBS counts for Tufted Duck

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 114 | 151 | 69 | 73 | 39 | 0 | 10 | 44 | 40 | 42 | 42 | 28 |
| LDV | 243 | 432 | 743 | 111 | - | - | - | - | 11 | 13 | 0 | 3 |

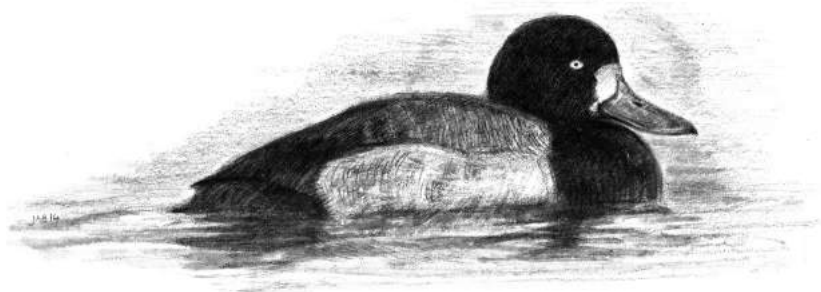
Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

Winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers

Another very good year for this species following on from 2012. The first winter period saw the continued presence of the female Scaup at CHL to at

least 19th April, during which time it was joined by a drake on 1st January and a second female on 16th March. The first Scaup of the year in the LDV was a female at Bank Island on 9th January which relocated to Wheldrake Ings. This began an amazing run of records throughout the first winter period, with rarely a day Scaup wasn't recorded in the LDV. With the constant movement of wildfowl throughout the valley, and the added confusion of at least two 'scaup'-like *Aythya* hybrids at NDC, it is impossible to quantify exactly how many birds were involved, but certainly at least five individuals were roaming the valley involving three drakes and two females. The easiest birds to see were two immature drakes frequenting Wheldrake Ings from 27th January to 17th March when they moved to NDC before becoming very mobile. Both female birds seemed to move continually around the valley. By April the Scaup had begun to leave, with the last female being reported at NDC on 5th April, while three males were still present until 15th April but only one by the last report on 18th April.

Amazingly the second winter period saw more Scaup at CHL with a pair present on 16th November, then another or the same female from 22nd November until the year end.



Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Very scarce winter visitor

A good year with four different records of a sea duck always worth looking for during times of passage after a spell of poor visibility or bad weather. The first of the year was a female/1st-winter type at CHL (AW) from 3rd–10th March, followed shortly after by five drakes and a female at Bank Island but only for the afternoon of 18th March (CR & AC). The good spring run continued with a female at Heslington East on 28th and 29th May (JN, JLe).

The only autumn record was of two female/immature birds at CHL on 12th September (OM & CG). One of the birds had departed by 15th September, but the second, which appeared to be in poor health, lingered until 20th October.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A quiet year for this species which typically favours deeper water. Outside of the LDV and CHL, one or two birds were present at Heslington East in January and February, and a single bird was at Redhouse Reservoir on 29th March. A single female was seen at Bank Island, CHL and Heslington East between 13th and 16th April. The first returning bird of the autumn was an unseasonal bird at Heslington East on 3rd August followed by one at CHL on the 23rd and again on the 29th.

Monthly WeBS counts for Common Goldeneye

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 19 | 11 | 24 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 16 |
| LDV | 21 | 24 | 43 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Scarce winter visitor

Not recorded in 2013; last recorded 2012.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Very scarce winter visitor

No records this year; last seen in 2011.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant

A widespread winter visitor usually in low numbers. The peak count for the year was of 56 at Redhouse Reservoir on 20th January, coinciding with a cold snap freezing shallower water bodies. Double-figure counts from elsewhere included ten at Middlethorpe Ings on 6th January, 19 at Heslington West on 13th January, 12 at Dringhouses Pond on 27th January, 20 at Poppleton on 5th March and 16 at Elvington on 9th March before numbers started to drop off, with the last spring record near Stamford Bridge on 20th April. Sightings of single birds occurred from mid-July onwards but numbers remained low and no double-figure counts were received in the second winter period. Records in December of nine birds at the Lower Fish Pond, Yearsley, eight birds at Kirkby Wharfe and three birds at Bishopthorpe Ings were noteworthy for the unusual locations.

Monthly WeBS counts for Goosander

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 23 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| LDV | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Formerly resident breeder in small numbers but now an increasingly scarce visitor following national cull

Two at CHL on 17th September may become the last record of this duck for the York area, since the species has been nearly eradicated nationwide. This is the first record for the recording area since 2009.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Summer visitor which breeds in good years

With only three singing males in LDV it was considered a poor year by the LDV NE team.

The first was a single bird at Church Bridge on the Pocklington Canal on 17th May. This was followed by one at Elvington on 11th June, with one down Low Lane, Heslington East on the 13th and one at Wheldrake Ings on the 15th. On 24th June a bird was calling at the Ouse Moor area near Poppleton and was then seen and heard regularly up to at least 22nd July.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Resident breeder and released to shoot

Single figure numbers were reported widely from suitable areas throughout the recording area.

The only double-figure counts came from Postern Lane, Storwood with ten on 5th May and, in autumn, 30 at Fulford Golf Course on 5th October, 15 at Milford Common on the 9th, 25 at Hollins Grove Farm, Easingwold on the 25th, 12 at Allerthorpe GP on 9th November, ten at Melbourne on the 10th and 20 at Bank Island on 28th December.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder

Scarcer than the previous species and in smaller numbers, usually one or two, reported from some 28 different sites (maximum counts given): Allerthorpe GP (1), Bank Island (2), Bubwith (2), Dunnington Common (1), Elvington (9), Flaxton (7), Fryton Moor (2), Hagg Bridge (1), Hagg Wood, Dunnington (6), Hassacarr NR (2), Heslington, York (14), Heslington East (1), Heslington Tillmire (2), Langwith Stray, York (6), NDC (2), Milford Common (4), Poppleton (2), Red House (2), Scagglethorpe (5), Skipwith (1 pair), South Duffield (1 pair), Storwood (4), Strensall Common (2), Sutton upon Derwent (2), Thornton Ellers (4), Welburn (2), Wheldrake Ings (7) and Yearsley (2).

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder and released to shoot

Common and regularly encountered in suitable habitat throughout the year with higher counts in autumn after birds are released for shooting. Double figures included 16 at Bank Island on 6th April, with 19 on 26th September

and 48 on 5th October. Elsewhere there were 60 at Hollins Grove Farm, Easingwold on 24th October and 20 at Red House Wood on 23rd November.

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Scarce autumn visitor on passage

There were just a few records in October and November following storms that forced birds into South and West Yorkshire. On 5th October a single was picked up at Barmby on the Marsh (LDV blog). Then on the 11th another bird flew up the LDV (LDV blog), probably the same bird that was seen that day flying from South Duffield then north over North Duffield (AW). Another bird picked up at NDC on 12th was ringed and returned to the coast while another was taken into care at Wressle on the 14th (both LDV blog).

On 7th November a low-flying juvenile was sighted at Milford Common heading NNW (PD).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Passage and winter visitor; recently established resident breeder

CHL remains the main site for this species with birds present throughout the year. Numbers built up through the first winter period from 23 on 5th January peaking at a minimum of 67 birds in May when at least 25 nests were occupied. Numbers then fell after June but started to build again from October with 51 on 23rd November.

In the LDV double-figure counts increased from 14 at Bank Island on 6th January to 25 in the colony at Wheldrake Ings on 4th April, one pair successfully breeding after none had done so in 2012. Other counts in double figures were 14 at Cawood on 8th December, 14 flying northwest over Hull Road, York on 20th September and 20 at Redhouse Reservoir on 22nd July. Elsewhere counts in single figures were reported from 14 locations.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Very scarce, mostly winter visitor

Not recorded in 2013 after records in 2006–2010 and 2012.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Scarce visitor, has bred

Most sightings were from April to mid-August with one in September and two in October. Numbers of birds were down from the previous year possibly due to the harsh winter conditions early in the year.

The first record was a bird by the Pocklington Canal (Melbourne) on 4th April which could have been the same bird that was at Wheldrake Ings from the 10th to 19th. Singles were then seen regularly at Wheldrake Ings or Bank Island until early October but with two birds on 1st and 18th July and on 11th August. The last record for the LDV was a single at Bank Island on

4th October. The birds in the LDV were occasionally seen in the heronry and cormorant colony but there were no other signs of breeding. Heslington East produced several records with three flying over southwest on 4th May followed by several records of single birds from 25th May to 18th August including two on 4th May and a juvenile on 23rd July.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Rare vagrant

Only the fourth record for the LDV (and the YOC area as a whole), one was found in a ditch near Thorganby Ings on 20th March (LDV blog) before flying off on the 21st towards Ellerton. Another single was at Bank Island on 15th July (LDV blog).

From 14th August a single bird visited Wheldrake Ings daily (LDV blog *et al.*) until the 22nd, usually from around 07:00 to 10:00 before flying off SSE and could be the bird seen at Southfield Reservoir (out of area near Goole) on the 23rd. A bird returned on the 26th and 27th and then again on 7th September and 8th October. In the latter period a single was also seen at Allerthorpe GP on 30th September and 2nd October. It is likely that one wandering individual accounts for all the summer and autumn records, while the March bird may have been a different individual.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder

Birds were recorded in suitable habitats throughout the area with a maximum of 39 adults at the LDV heronry on 16th April and 27 at Elvington on 26th August.

Breeding was recorded from three sites with three nests at Bishop Wood, two at CHL and 34 at the LDV heronry. From the latter site figures suggest some recovery from two harsh winters with broods/clutches of four and one brood of five well grown young. Several birds here were ringed and fitted with yellow colour-rings carrying black two-digit numbers.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Scarce vagrant, but free flying birds from the Harewood Estate near Leeds have occurred in recent years.

Not recorded in 2013 after records in 2005–2008, 2010 and 2011.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Resident breeder, more widespread in winter

Many records of this species throughout the year with breeding confirmed at Allerthorpe GP, CHL, Heslington East and the LDV. Maximum numbers recorded were eight at Allerthorpe GP, six at CHL, 14 at Heslington East, seven along the Pocklington Canal and six at Wheldrake Ings.

Scarce & rare birds in 2013



From top, left to right:

Further images of the Great White Egret at Wheldrake Ings, August
Photos: Robert Dawson (left) and Jane Chapman (right)

Little Egret chased by Moorhen at Wheldrake Ings, August
Photo: Terry Weston

1st-winter Caspian Gull, Rufforth Airfield, February
Photo: Chris Gomersall

Hobby at Askham Bog, June
Photo: Mark Coates



Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder and passage visitor

Frequent at suitable lakes throughout the year.

Successful breeding was reported from Allerthorpe GP (two pairs, five young), Allerthorpe Lakeland Park (two pairs, one of which laid an egg), Heslington West (two pairs, two young) and Rawcliffe Lake (one pair, three young).

Nesting was thought to have been attempted at NDC and Wheldrake Ings but there were no reports that birds bred after displaying. A bird arrived at Heslington East on 21st March and thereafter birds were reported here most months including a fully grown immature, possibly from Heslington West, on 29th July.

Over-wintering birds, usually one or two but occasionally three, were noted at CHL, Heslington West, NDC, Rawcliffe Lake and Wheldrake Ings.

Monthly WeBS counts for Great Crested Grebe

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 5 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| LDV | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | - | - | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Very scarce winter visitor

Not recorded in 2013 after records in 2004, 2009 and 2010.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Former summer visitor and scarce breeder, now predominantly a passage visitor

Three in winter plumage were at NDC on 19th March (LDV blog), an early return date, followed by singles there on 29th March and 13th April.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Irregular but increasing visitor from reintroduction schemes

With the continual national range expansion, boosted by migrant birds passing through the area, it will come as no surprise that 2013 was yet another very good year for this species with over 80 sightings through every month of the year. The peak period for observations occurred in April and into May, mainly referring to roving birds at the onset of sexual maturity and sub-adults being displaced from strongholds to the east and west of the York area. This would explain the record run of sightings in the LDV with singles seen at Thorganby on 1st April, Wheldrake Ings on 2nd/3rd of April, NDC on 3rd April with two around the Wheldrake/Bank Island area on 4th April. On the same date another or possibly the same bird was seen between Thorganby and Skipwith, followed by one north of Elvington on 15th April which then flew northwest over

Heslington East into York, and a single over Thicket Priory (Thorganby) on the same date. A single was over Aughton Church on 16th April with another in the Canal Head area (Pocklington) on 21st/22nd of April.

Regular sightings were also observed during the summer months from a handful of locations and could allude to birds occupying possible breeding territories. Autumn got off to slow start with just a single sighting in September involving a bird north over Poppleton on 23rd September. Subsequently birds were recorded almost weekly throughout October including two circling to the north of Milford Common on the 5th. Two birds were also recorded on 19th November over Hob Moor, York with a bird east over SHL and one over West Bank Park, York the same day that may relate to the same individuals. By the end of the year sightings mirrored the falling temperature with just a single bird in December seen on the 9th.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Passage migrant and rare breeder, now also scarce winter visitor

Another good year for this species with birds seen in every month. Those that frequented the LDV during the end of 2012 continued to over-winter with numerous reports of 'cream-crowns' throughout January, and three reported in the valley on the 22nd, as well as the notable sighting of a bird hunting Teal *Anas crecca* at Bubwith on the 23rd. A single 'cream-crown' seen at Skipwith Common on 2nd of January (with two there on 22nd February) most likely refers to individuals on foraging excursions, as do the majority of sightings throughout March in the LDV. With the onset of spring new birds appeared in the LDV in April with adult females being identified and males making an appearance. Sightings throughout the latter part of spring and summer would suggest two pairs bred in the LDV with the first juveniles seen in August. Sightings away from the LDV involved singles over Oulston Reservoir on 19th April, at Ryther on 3rd June, and at Full Sutton on 15th August. Unfortunately the large communal roost that took place at NDC in 2012 did not materialise but 'cream-crowns' once again lingered up to the year's end in the LDV.



Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus***Mostly a very scarce winter visitor**

Birds were seen every month between January and May but there were then no further sightings. A male was seen just east of Canal Head, Pocklington on 3rd January (LDV blog) shortly followed, on the 6th, by a 1st-winter female at Strensall Common, a great addition to the species list of the two York-based Bird Race teams who independently saw this bird (TJ *et al.*, PD *et al.*). A sub-adult male was seen in the Aughton/NDC area on 17th January (AW) and may refer to the male seen earlier in the month. At Strensall Common it was presumably the same female seen again at the back end of February (BirdGuides) as was, similarly, the male around Bubwith bridge on the 28th (CG *et al.*). A ringtail over fields near Askham Bryan on 28th March (RD) was most likely the same bird seen the following day heading south through East Cottingwith (LDV blog). A male seen flying north over the Heslington West university campus by RSPB staff on 12th April was a cracking record. This was followed by ringtails at both NDC on 26th April (OM/CG) that flew north up the LDV only to return to roost at Bubwith Ings, and at Bank Island/Wheldrake Ings area on 17th May (AP).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis***Passage visitor and rare breeder**

Five records of this shy accipiter were received this year with the majority of sightings relating to hunting birds rather than displaying birds, despite very favourable breeding habitat in the north of the area. A female hunting Teal *Anas crecca* at Wheldrake Ings on 16th February (LDV blog) was followed by another duck hunter, a first summer female, seen over the balancing pond at SHL on 4th February (PB) which represents the first site record there. A male was sighted at Yearsley Moor area on 19th April (DB) with two sightings of a female at Skipwith Common on 3rd May (DT) and a probable again on 4th May (AW), undoubtedly the same individual. It was this bird that was presumably responsible for the remains of Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*, Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus* and male Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* left on a plucking post! The only autumn record was a bird observed at Low Hutton on 15th August (BirdTrack).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***Resident breeder and passage migrant**

Very prevalent in the York Area due to the opportunistic nature of the species and its ability to utilise open country, woodland and the urban environment. The abundance of this species can be truly appreciated on a sunny spring day from any given vantage point around the city with displaying pairs peppering the York skyline. The resourceful nature of this species was illustrated on 15th September when an individual was seen carrying a House Martin *Delichon urbicum* over CHL.

Breeding was confirmed at Hassacarr NR where a female was feeding two young on 7th July, Allerthorpe GP where at least two fledged young were calling for food on 3rd August, Askham Bog where a female was observed with two young and three juveniles were seen perched in a tree there on 14th August.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Passage migrant and common resident breeder

A species now living up to its name, being recorded throughout the area in all months of the year. Due to the broad-front nature of this species' migration and sub-adult dispersal it is hard to differentiate between movements of local birds and individuals on passage but lone 1st-summer birds (2nd-calendar birds) and 2nd-summer (3rd-calendar birds) seem to be quite evident in spring. Birds are increasingly more common around the city centre as are multiple sightings of soaring birds, sometimes nearing double figures. A healthy day count of 17 birds observed in the LDV on 17th February shows just how valuable the valley is to this species throughout the year. Although hovering is well documented in this species the population around Castle Howard seem to really utilise this hunting strategy, most likely resulting from the upward deflection of the wind from the more hilly countryside north of York.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Regular passage migrant

Another great year for this species with the vanguard of north-bound migrants first sighted on 30th March heading over Wheldrake Ings. Others (or the same) were observed over Bank Island on 2nd and 3rd April (CR). Further singles in April were observed north over Heslington East on the 14th (TJ), north over Askham Bog on the 18th (PW), north over Crockey Hill on the 21st (OM & CG) – later sighted heading northwest over the race course (DW) – and one following the River Ouse through Nether Poppleton on the 30th (BirdGuides). May was equally rewarding with sightings of singles west over Ampleforth on the morning of the 4th (BirdGuides), Elvington on the 13th (DW & AW), Wheldrake Ings on the 14th (BirdGuides) and Canal Head (Pocklington) on the 17th (LDV blog). A bird circling low over CHL before drifting west on 2nd of June (IB) was more than likely a non-breeding bird.

Late summer passage commenced at Wheldrake Ings with a bird north on the afternoon of 19th August (BirdTrack). A refuelling bird spent a two-day stay around CHL on 23rd and 24th August (RCo) before eventually drifting south and a late bird was seen flying south over Bank Island on the morning of 10th October (LDV blog).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***Resident breeder**

Fortunately, despite an alarming national decline in numbers, this species is still commonly encountered throughout the recording area. Conditions in the spring, which included the second coldest March in the UK since 1910, made survival difficult and some Kestrels resorted to atypical hunting methods. On 24th March an individual was seen repeatedly to alight on winter stubble amongst c.100 Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*, c.120 Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* and a couple of Redwings *Turdus iliacus* and engage in the feeding frenzy in search of invertebrates lasting nearly 30 minutes (DH).

Despite the hardships faced prior to nesting there is some evidence to show that breeding densities remained comparatively high though productivity was somewhat below average. For example, six pairs bred in the parishes of Skipwith and Riccall (DT) giving a breeding density of 29pr/100km² which compares favourably with Andrew Village's authoritative, though pre agri-environmental schemes data, of 32pr/100km² on grassland; 19 on mixed farmland and 12 on intensive arable (Village, A. 2010). Four of the nest sites were visited and each contained three young. The presence of a partially eaten adult Skylark *Alauda arvensis* at one site suggests that small mammal prey continued to be scarce.

Merlin *Falco columbarius***Passage migrant and winter visitor**

Recorded in eight months, from January to May and from October to December with no sightings in between. The first of the year was on 10th January at Rufforth Tip where it was more than likely taking advantage of the site's healthy Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* population, remaining until the 15th. A single was present at Heslington on the 25th and an immature female was chasing Skylarks *Alauda arvensis* at NDC on the 31st. Further sightings came from Thornton Ings on 5th February and Milford Common, a male, on 31st March. A small powerful raptor low east over Holgate (York) on 16th April was deemed to be this species and ties in nicely with an observation from Bank Island the following day. The last of the spring sightings was at NDC on 2nd May before the first of the autumn migrants was detected at Redhouse on 26th October. This immature male was sighted again almost a month later on 25th November and was followed by singles in December from Melbourne, NDC and Pocklington.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo***Passage migrant; scarce and localised breeder**

A species that is frequently associated with the area's water bodies with the greater proportion of records coming from the LDV. Two sightings on 17th April, from Bishopthorpe and Heslington East, were the first of the year. May is the best month to see this species with north-bound passage peaking

and local breeders not yet incubating and 2013 was no exception. Records came mostly from the LDV but also Elvington, Hassacarr NR, Heslington East and West and Strensall Common. Following the wet summer of 2012 and the unsettled weather in spring 2013, affecting numbers of insects on which this species traditionally feeds, it is not surprising how many sightings at the back end of summer involved individuals in pursuit of House Martins *Delichon urbicum* and Swallows *Hirundo rustica* which vastly outweighed any other prey item. An exceptionally late bird seen at Thorganby Ings on 9th November is unsurprisingly the latest York area record.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Winter and passage visitor; scarce breeder

Recorded throughout every month of the year with reports increasing during the winter months. The species penchant for wildfowl usually dictates its movements and naturally the bulk of records stem from the LDV where multiple birds regularly winter. One was seen sitting on the corpse of a Wigeon *Anas penelope* at NDC on 25th January with another flying off with a Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* there on 5th April. The first juvenile bird of the autumn was noted at Wheldrake Ings on 31st August.

Sightings were not all confined to rural areas with birds of all ages seen over York city centre on two dates in each of February, June and August. In recent years this species has become a real urban convert and a bird roosting on York Minster from 29th November onwards would suggest this artificial cliff face was used as a winter haunt.

Other specific records, mostly single bird sightings, came from: Aughton Ings, Bank Island, CHL, East Cottingwith Ings, Ellerton Ings, Haxby, Heslington East, Melbourne, Milford Common, Poppleton, Red House, Rufforth, Scagglethorpe, Skipwith Common, South Duffield and Thorganby Ings.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Resident breeder and winter/passage visitor

Records came from the LDV (notably Wheldrake Ings) and Skipwith Common throughout the year, with breeding evidence from both these sites (see also the RBBP report on page 95).

Five were at Wheldrake Ings (car park area) on 23rd January and four at Wheldrake Ings on 15th April with five again on the 17th. Six were singing at Wheldrake Ings during May and five throughout June. Juveniles were reported from there on 21st July (one), 14th August (one), 3rd September (three) and on the 11th (one) when three adults were also noted. Two pairs were successful at Skipwith Common with reports of juveniles during August.

Four were recorded at Wheldrake Ings on 8th October while eight were recorded in the LDV WeBS counts in both September and October, with four recorded in November. Elsewhere, one was reported at CHL on 11th November.

Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana***Very scarce passage migrant and breeder**

This was a poor year compared to 2012 with only three records. A singing male was heard at Wheldrake Ings on 6th May and again on the 8th (CR per LDV blog). Another male was recorded at NDC on 19th June (LDV blog). See also the RBBP report on page 95.

Corncrake *Crex crex***Very scarce summer migrant and irregular breeder**

Following a blank year in 2012, a male was singing at Wheldrake Ings on 17th May (DT per AW). See also the RBBP report on page 95.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***Common resident and winter visitor**

Records came from much of the region and throughout the year but higher counts were more common in the second half of the year. Breeding was confirmed at CHL, Bank Island, Hassacarr NR, Heslington East, Londesborough Lodge Farm (Scoreby), Rawcliffe Lake, Skipwith Common and Wheldrake Ings. An interesting record came from Hassacarr NR on 24th May of a bird catching and eating a Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* (TW). It is assumed that this species was not counted in the WeBS surveys in the LDV in November and December, though this was a very dry period for the LDV with little or no flooding.

WeBS counts were down at both CHL and the LDV this year, although they were consistently in double figures at the former site. Other counts above 20 were recorded as follows: 21 at CHL on 7th April; 60 there on 23rd August; 44 on 15th September; 50 on 6th October; 23 on 23rd November and 23 at Church Bridge, Melbourne on 28th December.

Monthly WeBS counts for Moorhen

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 22 | 15 | 16 | 26 | 17 | 21 | 20 | 31 | 25 | 28 | 36 | 41 |
| LDV | 4 | 1 | 10 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 178 | 100 | - | - |

Coot *Fulica atra***Common resident and winter visitor**

The species is commonly encountered on suitable areas of open water. However, there were very few records after August in the recording area as a whole and none came from the LDV during the second winter period, though it is possible that this species was not counted in WeBS surveys of the LDV at this time (see also comments under Moorhen above). Breeding was confirmed at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park, Bank Island, Bishopthorpe Palace grounds, CHL and Wheldrake Ings. WeBS counts were down at both CHL and the LDV this year.

In addition to the counts in the WeBS table below, counts in excess of 100 were recorded as follows:

22nd January, Wheldrake Ings – 108

24th January, LDV – 157

21st February, LDV – 180

15th April, LDV – 210

25th August, CHL – 110

12th September, CHL – 106

Monthly WeBS counts for Coot

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| CHL | 182 | 154 | 114 | 37 | 44 | 68 | 141 | 178 | 121 | 45 | 82 | 32 |
| LDV | 5 | 98 | 165 | 75 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

WeBS counts in the LDV for September to December do not record any numbers for Coot and it is assumed this species was not counted on these dates.

Common Crane *Grus grus*

Scarce wanderer and occasional breeder

There were fewer records of Common Crane during 2013 than in 2012. Two were seen flying east over Hassacarr NR on 27th March (TW). A pair was seen at NDC (OM & CG) on 22nd April and at Aughton later that day (CG & MW). Thereafter single birds only were reported from Skipwith Common on 1st May and Canal Head (Pocklington) on 13th August. See also the RBBP report on page 95 for further details.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Rare but increasing visitor

A reasonable series of records reflecting the species' increasing breeding population to the east of the York area on the Humber and at North Cave Wetlands. On 18th March two were present at Heslington East and one at Thorganby Ings, with the latter bird still present the next day. Another pair paid a visit to NDC on 16th April and then a late pair was noted at Bank Island on 6th June.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Passage migrant and scarce breeder

An increase in sightings away from the LDV this year, with records of one to four birds from 21 sites and an increased number of breeding pairs.

Reflecting the cold spring, the first returning birds were the latest for 20 years, with the first pair at Wheldrake Ings on 15th February, followed by pairs at the same site and at Ellerton the next day. As a contrast, in 2012, the first arrivals were on 8th January. Away from the LDV, February migrants were noted over Bishopthorpe Road (York), Everingham, Heslington East and Redhouse Reservoir. In March and April birds were recorded at nine sites outside the LDV.

Numbers thereafter increased in the LDV to a maximum of 30 on 8th March. Notable maximum counts outside of the LDV were 14 at Heslington East on 24th March and six at the Heslington Tillmire on 19th April. Fifteen pairs nested in the LDV, mostly on arable land and up to five pairs were present at Heslington East, though it seems only three pairs bred successfully. Elsewhere, pairs were present in the breeding season at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park (pair with one well-grown young seen), Castle Howard, Foggathorpe, Sherburn in Elmet, Strensall Common and Sutton-on-the-Forest.

During July and August, passage birds were noted from a small number of sites, with migrating birds heard calling over Wheldrake Ings at night. Three at Heslington East on 29th August were the last of the year.

European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Good numbers were noted in the first winter period and during autumn passage. Very few birds were recorded in January, with no three-figure counts reported. Numbers built up during February, with all the large counts coming from the LDV. In the first half of the month, a total of 400 at Bubwith Ings on the 15th was the largest count. Thereafter, numbers increased with a maximum of 1,840 in the area by the 22nd. The highest count from a single site was 600 at North Duffield (Derwent Cottage Farm) on the 15th and the same number from Bubwith bridge on the 21st. Numbers continued to rise in March, with the LDV holding 2,500 birds on the 8th, and a flock of 2,000 at Thorganby Ings on the 19th. Very few were reported away from the LDV during these three months, with 21 at Castle Howard on 31st March the only count of note.

April passage brought flocks to a wider area, with ten over Blossom Street, York on the 14th, 14 south over Milford Common the next day and 200 at Flaxton on the 20th. In the LDV, 300 were present near North Duffield mid-month, increasing to 550 on the 19th, but decreasing rapidly to 35 by the 22nd. Smaller numbers were seen elsewhere in the valley during this period, with the last three-figure count being 142 over Wheldrake Ings on the 25th. A single heading north over North Duffield on 13th May was the last of the spring.

Autumn passage began in late June, with three flying south over Bank Island on the 24th. Small numbers passed through the LDV during July and August, with the first notable flock being 50 at Wheldrake Ings on 29th August. Birds appeared in greater numbers and across a wider area during September with the largest counts being 490 at North Duffield on 23rd, 250 near Elvington on the 14th and 200 at both Barby and Skipwith Common on the 12th. New flocks were detected during October, with 400 at Wheldrake Ings on the 5th, 300 at Scagglethorpe on the 21st, an impressive 1,200 at Poppleton on the 22nd, and 200 near Raker Lakes, Wheldrake on the 23rd. Good numbers persisted into November, but these flocks dwindled towards the end of the year, with only a scattering of birds left in the LDV.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

A typical series of records. A bird was in the Bubwith Ings area on 13th and 14th of February. The next report was of an exceptional party of seven heading east over Heslington East with a Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* on 12th April, showing what can sometimes be recorded passing over the York area if birders watch the skies! A single circling Heslington East before flying off towards Elvington on 19th May was the last in spring.

Two autumn records were of singles over Rufforth Airfield on 10th August and over North Duffield village later in the month, on the 24th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Winter visitor, passage migrant and breeder

Large numbers in the first winter period overshadowed the more modest numbers towards the end of the year. Impressive flocks were present in the LDV during January, with at least 5,000 present at NDC on the 5th and reportedly 'several thousand' further north in the valley. At the end of the month, the freezing conditions caused an exodus, presumably to the Humber Estuary, and only low numbers remained in the area. As conditions improved, flocks returned and 2,000 were in the North Duffield/Bubwith area mid-February. Notable counts away from the LDV included 100 at Clifton Backies on the 1st and 150 at Castle Howard on the 27th. By March, birds began to return to their breeding sites and the large winter flocks started to diminish though 2,500 were still present in the LDV on the 8th, with 400 at Aughton Ings on the 24th.

Displaying birds were noted from mid-March, and breeding or possible breeding was reported from Church Ings (Acaster), Bank Island, Castle Howard, Heslington East, Melbourne Ings, Milford Common, NDC, Sutton-on-the-Forest, the Tillmire (Heslington) and Wheldrake Ings.

Post-breeding flocks began to assemble in the second half of June, with 68 at Bank Island noted on the 22nd. Numbers gradually built during July with the highest counts being 133 at Castle Howard on the 23rd and 130 at Wheldrake Ings on the 20th. Visible migration was noted over York on 20th August, and arriving migrants increased the flocks in the LDV to a peak of 880 at Elvington on the 26th, while at CHL 300 were counted on the 25th. Numbers remained at a similar level in September, with 700 in the LDV on the 19th being the peak, before they dwindled to a few hundred through to the end of the year.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

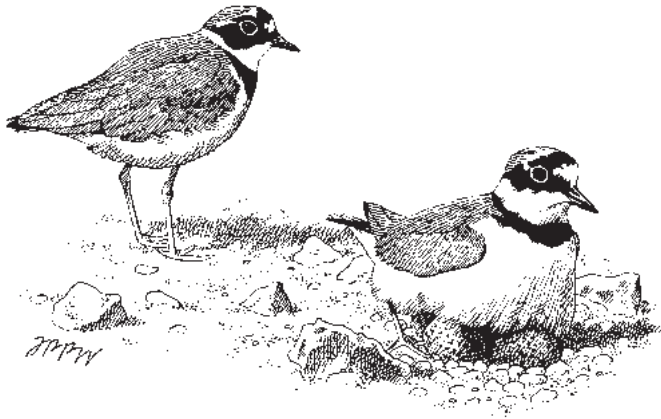
Scarce summer breeder and passage migrant

Following an increase in breeding records during the construction of the Heslington East campus, numbers continue to dwindle as this site matures. The first spring migrant arrived on 14th March and numbers increased to five

birds by the 22nd. Elsewhere, three were at Bootham Stray on 30th April, with two there the following day, one was in a wet area of a ploughed field at Kexby Stray Farm on 19th April, another single was at Pocklington Industrial Estate on 11th May and two were at Clifton Backies on 28th May.

Besides Heslington East, a pair bred at once more at Elvington WTW (last bred 2011), and although successfully hatching four chicks, the breeding attempt failed within a week. Singles turned up at Bank Island on 16th June, with two there from the 17th until the 21st, and again on the 29th. A single bird was recorded at Clifton Backies on 17th and 19th June.

Autumn passage was minor with singles staying at Bank Island from 17th to 24th July, Thorganby Ings on 21st July, Redhouse Reservoir on 22nd July, with the last bird recorded at Heslington East on 4th August.



Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Passage migrant and occasional breeder

A good spring showing with migrants noted from Heslington East and the LDV. The first bird of the year arrived at Heslington East on 17th February, with two there on the 23rd. Four birds were present at Rufforth Airfield on 10th March, by which time the count at Heslington East had also risen to four birds. Up to four birds remained at Heslington East until mid-April, before declining to just one bird by mid-May. A good spring passage was noted in the LDV, with three following the River Derwent at NDC on 18th April, followed the next day by six at Ellerton and two at Wheldrake Ings. An impressive 20 were at NDC on the 26th, but 12 on the 27th and 13 on the 28th. Passage continued during May, with most records from NDC, peak counts there being seven on the 14th, nine on the 17th and six lingering birds between the 18th and the 23rd. The last records in spring were two at Clifton Backies on 26th May and four the next day at Skipwith Common.

A single at Heslington East on 21st June and three at Wheldrake Ings briefly on 26th September were the only other records.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage migrant

Following lower numbers in spring 2012, due to flooding in the LDV, a much better showing was recorded in 2013. The first spring migrant was at Wheldrake Ings on 17th April. Numbers built up to a maximum April count of 51 at Wheldrake Ings on 25th rising to 139 in the roost on 3rd May. Thereafter numbers dropped, with 40 noted on the 6th and 14 on the 14th. The last of the spring were two at Wheldrake Ings on 19th May. During this period up to 50 were located feeding in traditional fields around Storwood.

Four birds reported at Wheldrake Ings on 4th July is an unusual mid-summer record (LDV blog). The first returning migrant was one flying southwest at Heslington East on 24th July, with one seen at Wheldrake Ings the same day. Two flew over NDC on 6th August, with a single north at Heslington East on the 24th, four southwest at Wheldrake Ings on the 31st and then two at the same site on 5th September, the last of the year.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Winter visitor, passage migrant and migrant breeder

The year started with low numbers in the LDV, and 18 at Aughton Ings on 15th February was the first notable count, the same day as the first displaying bird was heard. Numbers rose quickly to a peak of 70 in the valley on the 21st. Numbers remained high throughout March with the highest individual site counts recorded being 54 at NDC on the 19th, 50 at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th and ten at Melbourne on the 28th. Elsewhere, one or two birds were noted but from only six sites in contrast to 13 sites in 2012.

By April, many birds were on territory, though migrants were still clearly passing through, with records from Heslington East, Kexby and the Heslington Tillmire (eight). Breeding behaviour was reported from Acaster Church Ings and Acaster South Ings, Bank Island, Castle Howard, East Cottingwith, Ellerton Ings, White Carr (Flaxton), Lodge Field House (Gilling East), Melbourne, Milford Common, NDC, Storwood, Strensall Common, Thorganby Ings, Thornton and Wheldrake Ings. Post breeding flocks were recorded from Wheldrake Ings, where 21 were present on 4th July, falling to seven on the 26th.

Very few records were received for the last four months of the year, with singles at Wheldrake Ings on the 15th and 24th September and at Bank Island in early December, followed by an influx of 14 at Wheldrake Ings on 28th December.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Passage migrant and rare breeder, occasionally seen in winter

A much better showing this year with a marked spring passage, the majority of records being from the LDV. A pair was present at Bubwith Ings and at NDC from 15th February, with two further birds arriving on the 17th at Wheldrake Ings. These four were joined by a fifth in early March, increasing to ten by the

8th and 14 by the month-end. An additional flock of 15 flew over Wheldrake Ings on 29th March. The flock of 14 remained in the LDV into April, dwindling rapidly after the middle of the month. A large flock of 140 flew north at Wheldrake Ings on 9th April. Away from the LDV, a single was seen migrating with Grey Plovers *Pluvialis squatarola* over Heslington East on the 12th. In May, two were present at Wheldrake Ings between the 21st and 24th.

Autumn records were more widely scattered with 27 at Heslington East, a great count away from the LDV, being the first of the season on 13th July. In August, single birds were present at Wheldrake Ings on the 1st and 2nd, with another there on the 20th. Seven following the River Ouse in York on 21st August was noteworthy, with a single at Poppleton on the 31st. Apart from a lone juvenile at Elvington WTW on the 4th, all September records arose from Wheldrake Ings, where a single bird was present from the 2nd to the 4th, joined by a second on the 5th, and then rising to seven on the 7th. Two birds were present on the 10th with the last singles recorded on the 11th and the 19th.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Scarce passage migrant

A poor showing this year. One reported from Thornton on 13th May (per CR) was the only record.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Passage migrant, usually in spring

A typical showing with two spring records: a single at NDC on 15th May (AW) was followed by two at Foggathorpe on the 18th (LDV blog).

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

One was found at Heslington East on 27th January (JL) and remained in the area until 1st February.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Mainly passage migrant and winter visitor; rare breeder

All records bar one were from the LDV where decent numbers were recorded during the first winter period, with a small autumn passage and then good wintering numbers once the floods returned to the LDV at the end of December.

The year began with at least 30 in the LDV throughout January. Numbers had increased by the middle of February when 50 were counted on Bubwith Ings. At least 60 were thought to be present in the valley by the end of the month, and the numbers remained stable until the end of March, with most birds frequenting the Ellerton and Bubwith Ings area, though up to 20 were recorded at Wheldrake Ings. At least 58 were still present in early April, 25 of

which were seen lekking at Aughton on the 10th. As the LDV began to dry out, numbers declined to 30 by the 19th, with two males and a female at Bank Island on the late date of 2nd June the last of spring.

Autumn passage began on 10th August when a single bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings. Two juveniles were then present at this site from the 11th to the 22nd, with three from the 23rd to the 25th, and five noted from the 31st to 4th September. Single birds were then present until the 8th. A further single was noted in an arable field at North Duffield on 12th September, the same day as one was at Heslington East, the sole record away from the LDV this year. It was a further three months until the next sighting on 28th December, when 50 arrived in the LDV. As the winter floods arrived in December, birds were spread through the valley, with a single bird at Aughton Ings, 24 at Bubwith Ings and 25 at Wheldrake Ings. The flock rose to 65 at NDC by the 31st.

Monthly WeBS Counts for wintering Ruff in the LDV

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| LDV | 30 | 61 | 8 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 |

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Infrequent passage visitor, usually in the autumn

Not recorded in 2013; last recorded in the area in 2010.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Rare passage migrant

Not recorded in 2013; last recorded in the area in 2012.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

Not recorded in 2013; last recorded in the area in 2012.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Passage migrant and winter visitor

Good numbers were present in the LDV in the first winter period, with modest spring passage observed in April and May. A tiny autumn passage was noted before higher numbers appeared at the year end.

In the LDV, 148 at Thorganby Ings was the highest January count on the 5th. The only other notable count during the month was 100 at Ellerton Ings on the 9th. In February, numbers increased, with up to 300 at Bubwith Ings on the 12th, rising to 400+ by the 23rd. Counts seemed to diminish early in March, but rose again to 300 by the 31st. Numbers thereafter fell dramatically as wintering birds departed. Twenty at NDC on the 15th April were thought to be the last of the wintering flock. However, up to nine birds were present in the LDV until 12th May. Six birds at Aughton on 19th April were thought to have been of the *alpina* subspecies, presumably en route for

northern Scandinavia or Western Siberia. During this period Heslington East attracted singles on the 16th and 27th April, with two on 8th May.

The first bird of the autumn was a single at Heslington East on 26th July, followed by further singles the following month at Wheldrake Ings on the 14th and 19th and Bank Island on the 25th. An unlucky individual was found dead on the road at Skipwith Common on 30th August. In September, singles were seen at Wheldrake Ings the 22nd and 25th, with two at Bank Island on the 26th. The last passage bird was seen at Heslington East on 11th October.

A lone bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd December, but no further birds appeared until the LDV flooded at the end of the month. At least 47 birds were then present in the LDV on the 28th, with 55 at NDC on the 31st.

Monthly WeBS counts of wintering Dunlin in the LDV

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| LDV | 100 | 283 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 |

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Scarce passage migrant, mostly autumn

None seen in 2013; last recorded in the area in 2011.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Rare vagrant but becoming more frequent

Not seen in 2013; last recorded in the area in 2012.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Passage migrant

The first spring migrant arrived at Bank Island on 17th April, with two there the next day. Subsequently, three birds were in the Bank Island/Wheldrake Ings area until the 22nd, with all three seen together at Wheldrake Ings on the 20th. Another single was recorded at NDC on the 19th. Also on the 19th, singles arrived at Heslington East and Newburgh Priory lake. Numbers rose at Heslington East to a maximum of five on the 27th and 28th April, with the last being a single on 9th May. Other May records were singles from Castle Howard on the 6th and the 15th, Poppleton on the 8th, Rawcliffe Lake on the 15th, and the last of spring at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th.

In the autumn, an early single was at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd June, presumably a failed breeder from elsewhere further north. Almost a full month elapsed before the next autumn migrant, with another single at Redhouse Reservoir on 22nd July. Other July records included singles at Rawcliffe Lake from the 25th to the 26th, Heslington East on the 26th and Castle Howard on the 27th. There was a marked passage during August, with Heslington East and the LDV accounting for most of the records. At Heslington East, up to five birds were generally present throughout the month and it is likely

that there was a continual turnover of birds. An impressive 16 were seen on the morning of the 25th, reducing to four by the afternoon. In the LDV, Wheldrake Ings held a single between the 16th and the 28th, with four at Elvington on the 26th, three at Thorganby on the 27th and one at Aughton on the 28th. CHL held five on 25th August. By September, passage had virtually concluded, with singles at Heslington East and Wheldrake Ings on the 1st, four at Elvington WTW on the 4th and the last bird at Wheldrake Ings on the 11th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Passage migrant and winter visitor

At least three birds wintered in the area, with singles seen at Heslington East from 6th January until 17th April, and other singles at Harewood Whin, Rufforth on the 10th and 15th January, and at Poppleton on 29th January. In March a bird was present at Bubwith Ings on the 7th and 8th with another bird there on 2nd April. A single was present at Hemingbrough on 5th April, with the last spring bird at Wheldrake Ings on 17th April.

Adult female Green Sandpipers are among the first returning migrant waders, and a single turned up right on cue at Bank Island on 15th June, with other singles at this site on the 21st, 25th and 29th. Passage built slowly during July, with six at Heslington East on the 23rd which dropped in during a shower, plus up to three at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings mid-month. Numbers increased in August, including 14 scattered through the LDV on 13th, with Wheldrake Ings alone holding 13 on the 23rd. Elsewhere, Heslington East held up to four during August, with a single at Norton-on-Derwent on the 28th.

The species continued to grace the area with its presence throughout September, though numbers declined and no birds were reported from Heslington East. Wheldrake Ings held up to eight daily, though this had reduced to a single by the end of the month. A trail camera revealed up to seven birds roosting at Wash Dike, Skipwith Common mid-month. Two birds were seen at Ellerton Ings on the 21st, with presumably the same two along the river at NDC the next day. The only other September bird was a single at the Heslington Tillmire on the 1st. Singles remained at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings during October, with two birds at Bank Island on the 18th. Away from the LDV, singles were reported from Hob Moor, York on 19th November and Rufforth on 29th November, the last record of the year.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

An average showing, the scattering of spring records could relate to just a small handful of birds. What were presumably the same two birds flew over both Hagg Bridge and Allerthorpe Common on 13th April. Ten days later, on the 23rd, a single arrived at Bank Island where it remained until the 30th. Possibly the same bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings the next day where it

remained until the 3rd April before moving up the valley to Thornton Ellers on the 4th. What may have been the same wandering bird was seen again at Bank Island on the 5th. Later in the month, another single was present at Bank Island from the 21st to the 23rd.

The first returning migrants appeared early, with a single at Wheldrake Ings on 5th July followed by two over Bank Island on the 9th. In August, singles were reported at Heslington East on ten dates between 7th and 31st August, with one bird possibly accounting for all of the sightings. One was present at Wheldrake Ings from the 4th to the 6th, with two there from the 11th to the 31st, and one bird remaining until 4th September. The only other August sightings were from Wash Dike, Skipwith Common where a single bird was recorded on the 14th and the 18th. The following month, single birds were recorded from Heslington East on 1st, 10th and 12th September, with a late bird on 12th October.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Passage migrant

Following a quiet year in 2012, a good series of records was reported in 2013. The first spring migrant arrived at NDC on 3rd May, remaining there until the 5th, and then what may have been the same bird was present at Wheldrake Ings on the 6th and 7th. Two birds were seen at Thornton Ellers on 11th May, followed by a late spring migrant at Bank Island on 16th June. The first returning birds were a pair at Skipwith Common on 27th July, with singles at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th and at Heslington East on the 31st. Two further singles appeared at Wheldrake Ings on 15th and the 27th August.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

Good numbers recorded in the LDV during the first winter period, but scarce during the second winter period.

The LDV held 12 at Thorganby Ings on 9th January, and the count in the valley increased to 53 by 22nd February. In early March, 27 were present at Thorganby Ings on the 4th and this proved to be the highest count during the month. Very few birds were noted elsewhere, though a single was present at Heslington East on the 11th, increasing to two by the end of the month. As spring progressed, birds appeared at more sites, with one to three reported from Kexby Stray, Langwith Stray, Rawcliffe Lake and the Heslington Tillmire. Numbers tailed off during April as birds returned to their breeding territories, though a count of 12 was made at Aughton Ings on the 6th.

During the breeding season pairs bred or attempted to breed at Aughton Ings, Bank Island, Hagg Bridge, Heslington East, NDC (where 14 were counted on 2nd May), Thorganby Ings and Wheldrake Ings. Post-breeding flocks were noted at Bank Island which held 14 on 22nd June, but only small numbers were seen elsewhere. In the autumn and second winter period, numbers were very

low, with scattered ones and twos throughout the LDV while a count of seven at Wheldrake Ings on 28th Dec ember was the largest in the area since June.

Monthly WeBS Counts for wintering Common Redshank in the LDV

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| LDV | 12 | 53 | 53 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A good year, with most records from Heslington East and the LDV. The first of the year was recorded at Heslington East on 6th January, with five there the following month on the 10th. Spring passage was noted from the end of March onwards, with two at Skipwith Common on 31st March, a peak of eight at Heslington East on 11th April, and single birds at NDC on the 3rd, Hemingbrough on the 5th and Wash Dike (Skipwith Common) on the 11th. The last of the spring was reported from Ellerton on 20th April.

The first returning birds were three at Wheldrake Ings on 10th September. These were followed by one at Bishopthorpe Ings on the 26th, one at NDC on 2nd October and one at Poppleton on the 8th, with three at Seavy Carr from the 9th. A bird returned to Heslington East on 12th October, with one at Skipwith Common on the 13th and another at Wheldrake Ings on the 16th. Up to six were colour-ringed at Skipwith Common during October. At Heslington East, numbers had risen to a new site record of ten by 18th November. The last sighting was one on the shore of the main lake at Heslington East on 27th December.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

This year heralded the BTO national survey for this species, so many sites were covered during the breeding season. The year started with a corpse picked up at Stearsby Hagg on 1st January. Later in the month, singles were at Buttercrambe on the 6th and at Dunnington on the 24th with two at Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd. A similar showing the following month, with a single flushed at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe on the 16th, one over Elvington Lane the next day and another on Allerthorpe Common on the 24th. One was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd March, with another at Skipwith Common on the 15th and 19th and two there on the 28th. A single was seen at Thornton Ellers on 19th February.

During spring, a single was at Warren Wood, Dunnington on 12th April, and two birds were seen at Askham Bog the next day though no roding was noted here on subsequent visits. Territorial behaviour was noted from Bishop Wood from early April onwards, with at least two roding birds seen, and a single roding bird was seen at SHL in mid-May. At Skipwith Common, survey results suggest that only one pair was present.



Autumn migrants appeared from the second week of November, with singles recorded from 12 sites by the end of the month, and with a large influx into the LDV noted on the 20th, though no further counts were received. Two in the vicinity of the car park at Wheldrake Ings were present at the end of the year.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Resident and migrant breeder; passage visitor

There were good numbers in both winter periods in the LDV, with a scattering of records elsewhere. In January the highest count was 87 on the edge of the River Derwent at Ellerton Ings on the 24th, with 62 along the river at Bubwith a few days earlier on the 20th. Earlier in the month, 45 were at Bank Island on the 13th, several at Strensall Common on the 6th and singles present at the Heslington Tillmire and Bootham Stray during the month; the Tillmire held 14 on 1st February. By March, birds began to return in force to the LDV following high late-winter water levels, with 150 counted at NDC on the 6th. Few birds were reported elsewhere, apart from three at Skipwith Common on the 31st. During April, numbers fell as wintering birds departed and local breeders began establishing territories. Signs of territorial behaviour were first noted in the LDV on the 10th. The highest count in April was from Bank Island, where 16 were recorded on the 6th. Three were at

Monthly WeBS Counts for wintering Common Snipe in the LDV

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| LDV | 5 | 2 | 5 | 88 | 0 | 79 | 192 | 143 |

Heslington East on 3rd April, with three at Dunnington the same day, four at the Tillmire on the 19th and singles at Hagg Bridge on the 20th and Skipwith Common on the 27th.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Very scarce passage migrant

Following last year's record, a single sighting this year of a dark morph flying over the Bootham area of York city centre on 13th April constitutes the 6th record for the YOC area (AH).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Rare passage migrant

A disappointing year for this species with just one report relating to a bird which rested briefly at Bank Island on 15th May.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Scarce passage migrant

A welcome return to the area for this species after an absence of 14 years, relating to a single record on 5th April of two birds together, roosting with gulls at a small fishing lake complex at Hemingbrough (BH).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Passage migrant and rare migrant breeder

The first record of the year was a single bird which turned up at Heslington East with a lone Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* on 12th April. These probably account for the two unidentified *Sterna* sp. seen over Blossom Street in the centre of York the previous day. A second bird appeared at Heslington East on 19th April and the pair subsequently bred on the newly installed tern raft (courtesy of the annual Michael Clegg Memorial Bird Race) on the main lake. Despite one of the chicks perishing at a very young age the persistent adults fledged one chick by the first week in August (these birds last seen on 7th August). There were further records in August from Canal Head (Pocklington), Wheldrake Ings and Heslington East with an adult and juvenile at the latter site on the 25th being the last of the year.

Regular records also came in from around the YOC area throughout May and June with pairs present during the breeding season at several sites including Wheldrake Ings, Bank Island and Allerthorpe GP.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Passage migrant

Following 2012, which was a bumper year, 2013 saw a more modest spring.

The first record, on 20th March at Heslington East, was exceptionally early, and this site also attracted the next record, on 12th April, with one or two birds then present on most days until the end of the month, the

maximum being four together on the 18th. Rather scarce elsewhere, lone birds were reported during April from Wheldrake Ings and on the River Derwent at Aughton. The last record of the year was unfortunately one picked up dead at Heslington East on 28th April.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Scarce passage migrant

Four adult birds were reported, all from Wheldrake Ings, on 18th, 19th and 25th April with a 1st-summer bird additionally present on the latter date.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant

High counts (250 or more) in the first winter period were 10,000 at Castle Howard on 5th January, 800 at NDC on 20th January and 4,000 at Wheldrake Ings on 16th February. The only breeding record was of five pairs at Strensall Common.

Numbers began to build again in the autumn as post-breeding dispersal commenced, with 2,000 at South Duffield on 12th September and 1,750 at Cliffe on the 21st. In October 2,244 were at Hemingbrough on 12th October, with 3,000 at CHL on 7th November, increasing to 6,000 by the 16th (but decreasing to 1,600 on the 23rd). Elsewhere 1,000 were at Heslington East on the 18th and 280 at Bank Island on 7th December (all counts of 250 or more given).

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Passage migrant and scarce winter visitor

A meagre year for this species which can be present in very large numbers off the Yorkshire coast, especially in the late summer/early autumn period. The first of the year was a 1st-summer bird found at Bank Island on 17th April (AC) followed by a adult which was briefly grounded by a heavy shower at Heslington East on 11th May (AW & TJ). There were no accepted records in the autumn/second winter periods.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

This species has now become almost annual in the YOC recording area and, with a reasonable showing in 2013, the trend looks set to continue. In the first winter period birds were reported from Rawcliffe lake on 26th January (BirdTrack) with a 1st-winter at NDC on 3rd February (JLe). Adults were recorded coming into the large gull roosts at CHL on 24th February (AW) and 10th March (DR), and also at the Wheldrake Ings roost on 26th March (DR).

The only summer record was of one in a ploughed field following a tractor along with Black-headed Gulls at Stillingfleet on 15th July (TJ *et al.*). Autumn birds were reported from Cliffe on 21st September (AW), two together at

Hemingbrough on 12th October (AW) and the last of the year at Heslington East on 21st November (JAB *et al.*).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Recorded throughout the year, but scarce in late spring and summer. Early in the year flocks of 100 or more were: 1,000 roosting at CHL on 5th January, 1,000 at Stamford Bridge on the 8th, 180 at Buttercrambe Weir on the 22nd, 1,000 roosting at Wheldrake Ings on 16th February and 120 at Buttercrambe Weir (again) on 20th March.

In the second winter period it was not until November that larger flocks began to appear with 153 at Newburgh Priory lake on the 15th, 1,500 at roosting at CHL on the 16th, c.500 at Heslington East also on the 16th, and 500 at CHL again on the 23rd.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Predominantly summer visitor and passage migrant

Reported in all months of the year, but with fewer birds present during the winter periods. Only single-figure counts were recorded until 29th June when 12 were at Bank Island. Numbers started to build from late summer onwards especially around Riccall and North Duffield where the largest gatherings occurred. On 10th September 100 were noted at Riccall and numbers in this area had increased to 400 by 12th September with 375 on the 18th and a peak count of 478 on the 22nd in fields around North Duffield. Some of these birds showed characteristics of the Scandinavian race *intermedius*, a much darker-mantled variant than the British race *graellsii*. Numbers soon fell away as these birds left and from the beginning of October only single-figure counts were recorded for the rest of the year.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

The British race *argenteus* is present throughout the year, augmented with larger numbers in winter and joined by large numbers of *argentatus* from further north. It is likely that around 10,000 birds were feeding in the recording area, many of which roosted at Wheldrake Ings or headed to the Humber Estuary. Each day, as the same birds head over York city centre on their return to their roosts, an amazing spectacle ensues with thousands of large gulls passing overhead in a matter of an hour or so. The peak count from the Rufforth (Harewood Whin) landfill site was 6,000 on 9th February. Numbers gradually declined and by 15th March the roost at Wheldrake Ings was down to 3,200.

Only low numbers (fewer than 150) were reported for the rest of the year, apart from a very noteworthy count of over 2,000 which dropped in to bathe in the main lake at Heslington East on 18th November.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

An adult bird was reported intermittently from January until March in the Poppleton area, with an adult and a 1st-winter present near the Red Lion at Poppleton on 5th February. There were no further records until two adults appeared at North Duffield on the 5th August. An adult was found at CHL on 24th August and two birds, an adult and a 2nd-summer bird, were reported from Thornton on the 25th. This species breeds around the Mediterranean and central Europe and presumably post breeding dispersal was responsible for the unprecedented influx that occurred during September. Observers scouring through large flocks of Lesser Black-backed Gulls *Larus fuscus* near Riccall and North Duffield reaped dividends on 12th September with a new YOC record day count of at least 22 individuals, with both adults and juveniles present. Further smaller counts were made from the same area in the next few days but the excitement was short-lived as ten reported from the Barlby area on 24th September were the last of the year.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

Very scarce winter visitor

Although only a recent addition to the YOC list (in 2012), it seems highly likely that this elegant species will go on to become an annual visitor.

By comparing photographs, it seems that a minimum of eight birds of this YNU description species were recorded throughout the year. 1st-winter birds were noted at Rufforth Airfield on 12th and 31st January (CG) with another behind the Red Lion at Poppleton on 5th February (CG/OM). Back at Rufforth, a 1st-winter bird sporting a yellow Darvic ring (unfortunately not readable) was present on 12th February (CG). The last record in the first half of the year was another 1st-winter at the same site on 20th February (CG), this particular bird sitting on the runway alongside a 1st-winter Iceland Gull *L. glaucoides* offering a great photo opportunity of the two species together.

No further records were reported until 4th December when a 2nd-winter bird was found in the sheep fields behind the runway at Rufforth (JAB). Subsequently 1st-winters were also seen at Rufforth airfield on the 15th (JAB/CG) and at Askham Lane on the 18th (CG).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Scarce winter visitor

Another good year for this species, with a very conservative estimate of at least 18 individuals recorded during the two winter periods. The first record of the year was of a 2nd-winter bird found over the tip at Rufforth on 12th January. Birds of various ages were reported from then on until mid-March, usually either around the tip or from the daily roost at Wheldrake Ings, with a peak of three birds (a 1st-winter, 2nd-winter and an adult) at this site on 9th February.

Records in the second half of the year resumed when a 4th-winter bird was found on the main lake at Heslington East on 18th November. At least a further three 1st-winters and two 2nd-winters were found here and in the Rufforth area until the year's end.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor

Similar in status to the previous species, with at least 12 individuals reported. The first record was of a 1st-winter flying south over NDC on the afternoon of 1st January. A further five birds of the same age, along with a 2nd-winter, were found in the first winter period, with a peak count of three 1st-winter birds together at Rufforth airfield on 13th February. Birds, all 1st-winters, were recorded in the roost at Wheldrake Ings on six dates in March with a maximum of three on the 17th. The last record of this period at Rufforth was on the 23rd, and in the Wheldrake roost on the 25th.

Towards the end of the year a small, dark 1st-winter bird at Poppleton on 28th November was different to the large pale 1st-winter seen the next day at Rufforth. On the 15th December three 1st-winters were around the tip and the last of the year was again a 1st-winter at the same site on 24th December.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

The second most numerous of the larger gulls in the recording area during the winter months, it is virtually absent during summer, with only a handful of records received. It is no surprise, therefore, that the only noteworthy records were from winter roosts at Wheldrake Ings where 4,000 were present on 9th February and 4,100 at the same site on 15th March. Only low numbers were recorded from then on until 11th November when 1,500 dropped in for a pre-roost bathe at Heslington East.

Special mention should be given to a leucistic bird which spent the 2013/2014 winter period in the York area. A very distinctive bird, almost all white, masquerading as some sort of 'white winged gull', its true identity was at first very puzzling. After several days, 'Luke', as he became affectionately known, eventually began to give up some clues as better views were obtained. The fact that he was ringed, not only helped with a definitive conclusion as to his identification, but also revealed that he had been ringed as a chick on 20th June 2013 at Mandar, Vest-Agder on the south coast of Norway, to normal plumaged adults, and that his equally distinctive leucistic sibling was spending the winter in and around the London area during the same period!

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Resident breeder

Frequent throughout the recording area and very common in urban and suburban areas where usually under-recorded. The highest number reported was 300 over York on 5th November.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder

Widespread and noted throughout the year in small numbers (of ten or fewer) but single flocks of 22 and 33 were at Milford Common in early October with 12 recorded there on 16th November. Larger gatherings elsewhere were 12 at Bank Island on 29th January, 16 at Melbourne on 10th November with 14 at Bank Island on the 16th. Singing birds were noted at Bank Island, Castle Howard, Heslington church and Wheldrake Ings. From January to March Stock Doves were a scarce but regular visitor to a Heslington garden, feeding on spilt seed below feeders, a habit also noted in Woodthorpe (York).

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder

A very abundant and widespread breeding species boosted in the winter periods by continental birds. During the first winter period flocks of over 500 were as follows: 3,000 in the LDV on 3rd January, 1,000+ near the Heslington Tillmire on the 15th, 1,000 in the LDV on the 22nd, 500 at Whey Carr Plantation (Sand Hutton) on 3rd February, 500 at Bubwith Ings on the 21st, 540 at Grimston Park (Kirkby Wharfe) on 4th April and 600 at Sherburn in Elmet on the 15th.

Singing was frequently recorded and 20 pairs bred at Skipwith Common, with abundant breeding elsewhere.

During early November there was a large national movement with, locally, 500 southeast at Bank Island on the 9th, 4,410 south at Milford Common on the 10th (with 1,540 in one 10 minute period), 530 southeast over Wheldrake Ings on the 11th and 3,200 south there on the 12th. At Low Grounds, Wheldrake Ings 1,500 were present on 16th November. Flocks of 500 were recorded at Wheldrake Ings on 7th and 28th of December.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder

Frequently seen around human habitation, in parks and around farmsteads and waterways where a common breeder. Records of gatherings in double figures were 30 at Sherburn in Elmet on 5th October and 39 at Kirkby Wharfe on 10th November.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Passage migrant and increasingly scarce migrant breeder

A slight increase in records this year but still infrequent nowadays in the YOC area. Two were seen in a garden in Whenby on 17th May where they were photographed (see inside back cover), seen mating and chasing off a Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*. On the same day another was also noted flying north over Wheldrake Ings. On 26th and 29th May one was singing and gave good views at Appleton Roebuck while on the 27th a pair was seen at nearby Acaster Selby and at least one was present in this area on various dates until 28th July. The only other record was one at Allerthorpe GP on 9th June.



Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Occasional but scarce visitor

The first since 2009 was one heard in Rowntree Park (York) for two weeks from 7th–21st August (JAB, CG), considered to be of this species.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Migrant breeder

Frequently recorded in the area during the year, although declining nationally. The first was one at Strensall Common on 16th April followed by singles near the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on the 19th, Haxby on the 20th, Easingwold

on the 21st and Wheldrake lngs on the 25th. Thereafter singles were frequently reported throughout the recording area but there were three at Aughton on 4th May and two at Melbourne the following day. Four singing males were estimated at Strensall Common on 7th June during the annual MOD survey.

An interesting observation near Sutton-on-the-Forest was a juvenile on 24th July that continually flew down from overhead wires into a beet field and was repeatedly followed by a Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*. Although the observer did not see the Corn Bunting feed the Cuckoo, he had the impression the Cuckoo was feeding itself but also accepting any food the Corn Bunting had to offer.

Adult Cuckoos usually leave the country early but a juvenile was seen at Skipwith Common on 22nd August and 1st September.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Resident breeder

Frequently seen hunting in the recording area though there were fewer sightings later in the year due to a very poor breeding season. There were many daytime sightings in the early part of the year, possibly due to relocation after flooding in the LDV or elsewhere in the spring, combined with high numbers resulting from a good breeding season in 2012. A dark-breasted bird was seen at Thornton Ellers on 3rd January while a regular bird hunted around Wilberfoss at dusk in late March, giving much pleasure to the village's inhabitants.

Frequently observed in the LDV, usually in ones or twos, though three were seen at Wheldrake lngs on 15th October where it was noted numbers were 'below par' due to the poor breeding season. A decrease in sightings was also noted by regular observers at NDC, Skipwith Common and Thornton.

Within the York outer ring road, birds were seen at Monks Cross on 20th February and Tang Hall Beck Fields on 12th March and 29th June. Elsewhere, away from the LDV, individuals were observed at Allerthorpe, Bolton, Buttercrambe, CHL, Dunnington, Easingwold, Fangfoss, Gate Helmsley, Hessay, Jeffry Bog, Nunnington, Redhouse Wood (Moor Monkton), Scagglethorpe, Seaves Farm (Brandsby), Stillington, SHL, Strensall Common, the Tillmire (Heslington), Westow and Whitwell Grange.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder but can be elusive

Regularly seen throughout the area but no confirmed records of breeding. The LDV had regular sightings of single birds while two were recorded at Hessay on 12th March and at Scagglethorpe the day after. The highest number noted was five around the Heslington Tillmire area on 2nd April.

Other sightings outside of the LDV came from Brayton Barff, Catterton, Colton, Dunnington Common, Easingwold, East Moor (Sutton-on-the-Forest), East Ness, Haxby, Heslington East, Naburn Wood, Riccall and SHL.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco***Resident breeder throughout the area**

Regularly heard and seen throughout the year in the recording area. Many singles were heard calling in the early part of the year with two near Low Catton on 26th January and at Allerthorpe GP on 5th May. While taking part in the BTO Woodcock survey, observers heard five at Bishop Wood (Selby area) and one at Black Dike Plantation (near Sand Hutton) on 16th May, and two at Redhouse Wood on the 27th.

Successful breeding was noted at Bishopthorpe Palace, where a pair raised three young, and at Norton where two young were food begging on 11th August. At Skipwith Common, where seven nest boxes have been monitored since 2007, this was the first year females did not lay eggs. The annual mean for 2007–12 was noted as 4.6 pairs, 10.5 eggs laid and 4.7 chicks ringed.

During September six birds were vocal around Bank Island and five around Melbourne, and by the end of the year pairs had set up territory at Acaster Malbis, Bishopthorpe Palace and near Naburn Bridge, Bishopthorpe.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus***Resident breeder and winter visitor**

No records this year after a few sightings and a single breeding record in 2011 and 2012.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus***Winter and passage visitor; casual breeder**

The high numbers recorded in the previous year had departed and there were only a few sightings in 2013. A single was at Milford Common on 13th April (PD) and another was at Kennythorpe on the 21st (RH), while one flew north through NDC on 16th May (AC).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus***Scarce passage migrant and breeder**

Two records this year after reports of up to three birds at Skipwith Common in 2012 but none in 2011. One was seen briefly at 22:00 on 23rd May at Hagg Wood, Dunnington during a Woodcock survey (CB) and another was in flight at Hollicarrs Wood between Escrick and Skipwith on 19th June (CC).

Common Swift *Apus apus***Migrant breeder**

The first of the year were on 25th April when singles were seen at Newburgh Priory lake, North Duffield and Wheldrake Ings and two were at Skipwith Common. The following day, one was at Upper Poppleton, with five or more at Bank Island and at least 12 at Wheldrake Ings. Thereafter numbers increased daily, with major arrivals at Wheldrake Ings on 8th May, when

200+ present, and on the 12th with 300+ while 500 were at CHL the same day. It appears birds first collect at these major wetland sites and then move into the villages and towns as the first urban birds were only noted in Bishopthorpe on 5th May, Westow on the 8th, Hemingbrough on the 11th, Fulford (York) on the 13th and Strensall on the 17th.

Breeding was confirmed at Ampleforth where a partial albino nested and was photographed (the observer estimated this bird was probably two or three years old when it first started to nest in 2011). There were many other records throughout the recording area over the summer but numbers began to decrease in early August with a big clear out noticed at Wheldrake Ings on the 7th and 8th. Fifty were still at Norton on 8th August and at least seven were at Askham Bog on the 11th, with the last recorded at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder

Observed frequently throughout the year in ones and twos mainly along the River Ouse around York, in the LDV, along the Pocklington Canal and at larger water bodies.

There was only one probable breeding record, of a pair prospecting at Bank Island on 23rd April, though during the spring and summer two birds were also recorded at Allerthorpe GP, Millennium Bridge (York), the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne and on the River Derwent at Wheldrake Ings.

During the winter periods, birds were relatively more frequent on lakes and other areas of open water including Allerthorpe GP, CHL, Gilling Lakes, Hassacarr NR, Heslington East, Newburgh Priory, Newhay, Rawcliffe Lake and SHL.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Rare passage migrant

The 8th record for the YOC area was one which was caught and ringed at Bootham Stray (York) on 26th August (PT, IN). The bird was also photographed by Peter Richman (see opposite).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder but not widespread

Frequently seen throughout the year in suitable habitats, mostly on sandy heathlands or other areas with short grassland. Regularly seen at Crambeck, in the LDV, at Milford Common, Red House and SHL, plus Allerthorpe, Skipwith and Strensall Commons.

In early February birds were 'yaffling' at Elvington and Strensall Common, and at Allerthorpe Common on 3rd March a male and female were calling and flying together. At Skipwith Common birds were present throughout the year although in spring most activity was around New Plantation, with birds often using the wooden electricity pylon. Despite this, breeding was not proven at this site, or elsewhere on the Common.



Anti-clockwise from above:

Firecrest at Redhouse Wood,
November *Photo: Paul Reed*

Wryneck ringed at New Earswick,
September *Photo: Peter Richman*

Turtle Dove at Acaster Malbis,
August *Photo: Nigel Stewart*

Common Quail at Poppleton, June
Photo: Nigel Stewart

Waxwing at Dunnington, March
Photo: Terry Weston



Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder

Widely distributed throughout the area and frequently seen on garden feeders or heard 'drumming'. Larger numbers recorded were three at Brecks Farm, Haxby and Yearsley Moor/Woods, four at Crambeck, six at Brayton Barff and Bishop Wood and 11 at Strensall Common.

Juveniles, confirming breeding, were seen at Skipwith Common on 11th June, 21st July and 10th September.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Scarce resident and localised breeder

The first year since 1998 without any accepted records of this declining species.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Rare summer migrant

Not recorded in 2013; last sighted in 2011.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Resident breeder

This species was widely reported throughout the year across the recording area, mostly in single-digit numbers. Notable counts in the first winter period included 23 at Landing Lane (Haxby) on 5th January, 25 at Clifton Backies NR (York) on 1st February, and 13 at Dunnington Common on 8th February, plus 18 on 11th February and 20 on 19th March by the River Foss, Huntington (York), and 20 at Osbaldwick (York) on 28th March.

In the second winter period there were counts of 30 at Brecks Farm (Haxby) on 28th October and 14, all in one tree, at Poppleton on 7th November.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Birds were reported throughout the year from suitable habitats. Sites where five or more birds were seen included Bank Island, Hagg Wood (Dunnington) and Wheldrake Ings. Fewer than five birds were reported from a further 30 locations. Breeding most probably took place at Askham Bog, in the LDV and at Skipwith Common.

Numbers increased slightly in the second winter period following an influx of birds from the continent, including six birds along the Ebor Way (York) on 8th October and four at Yearsley Moor on 29th December.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Resident breeder

Most reports were of flocks of more than ten, with large numbers of pre-roost and roosting birds. Reports of 50 or over were as follows: 433 at

Allerthorpe Common on 12th February, 100 at Heslington West on 29th May and 26th June, 100 at CHL on 27th July, 80 on 7th November (and 75 on the 16th) at Milford Common, 80 at Bank Island on 7th December, 800 at Church Fenton and 60 at CHL both on 8th December, 300 at Patefield Wood (Barkston Ash) on 17th December and 50 at Church Bridge, Pocklington Canal on 28th December.

JL reported that Jackdaw became a regular visitor to his Heslington garden feeder towards the end of 2012. Previously a rare visitor it was recorded in 95% of weeks in 2013, typically two pairs (max. seven in January) but none or just one in September/October.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder

There were counts in double figures throughout the recording area. Significant numbers of 100 or more were: 100 at Storwood on 25th January, 250 at Hassacarr NR (Dunnington) on 30th January, 300 at Whey Carr Plantation (Sand Hutton) on 3rd February, 140 at Frog Hall (Allerthorpe Common) on 17th February, 100 at Bank Island on 28th July with 150 on 16th November and 150 on 7th December, 100 at Wheldrake Ings on 31st August and 800 at Patefield Wood (Barkston Ash) on 17th December.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Resident breeder

Relatively few counts were received but those of a significant number were as follows: at Milford Common 69 on 13th April with 67 on 17th May and 128 on 19th May, 80 at Bishop Wood on 16th May, 150 from Wheldrake Ings Pool Hide on 11th August and 30 at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd December.

At Skipwith Common four pairs bred successfully.

Raven *Corvus corax*

Rare visitor

Despite records in eight out of the last ten years, the last in 2012, not recorded in 2013.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

There were more records this year with up to six birds at 34 different locations throughout the recording area, and birds heard singing from April to June. Significant numbers (ten or more) were 20 at Yearsley Moor/Woods on 25th August, ten at Pretty Wood (Castle Howard) on 20th October, six (with a Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*) at Redhouse Wood (Moor Monkton) on 22nd November with 15 on the 23rd, and 26 at Hagg Wood (Dunnington) on 14th December.

At Skipwith Common six were present in the Bomb Bays on 7th February, with singing birds heard in May in the central stand of Scot's Pine though breeding was not proven. Autumn numbers were higher than usual and 13 were caught and ringed.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Scarce passage migrant

An unconfirmed report from locals at Heworth, York (per JLe) of a single bird on 21st June could not be verified by subsequent visits. One bird was seen at Skipwith Common on 20th October (HP) which became the 14th record for LDV area. As far as is known this is a first record for the Common. A single bird was recorded at Redhouse Wood, Moor Monkton between 17th and 25th November (PaR *et al.*), while at the same location two birds were seen together on the 23rd (AW). These two birds constitute the 15th and 16th records for the YOC area.



Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus***Resident breeder**

This species was seen across the whole area and throughout the year but was probably much under-recorded. Numbers of 15 or more were 20 along the River Derwent (Stamford Bridge) on 8th January, 39 at Brecks Farm (Haxby) on 9th February, 26 on 11th February and 16 on 19th March by the River Foss (Huntington), 15 at Allerthorpe GP on 2nd March and 21st April, 20 at Dunnington on 20th March, 15 at Londesborough Lodge Farm on 20th April, 15 at Hagg Wood (Dunnington) on 5th November, and 36 at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd December.

Birds were present all year and bred successfully at Skipwith Common.

Great Tit *Parus major***Resident breeder**

A common species reported throughout the year at 19 separate sites. Numbers (of 15 or more) were as follows: 18 at Allerthorpe GP on 20th January, 15 at Brecks Farm (Haxby) on 9th February with 20 on the 11th, and 16 by the River Foss (Huntington) on 19th March.

Birds were heard singing from early March. A nest containing almost fully-grown young was found in a cavity at the base of a Silver Birch on 18th June at Skipwith Common. Although vulnerable this may suggest a shortage of cavities and/or excessive predation at higher levels.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater***Resident breeder**

This species was widely reported, mainly in single figures. However, there were higher numbers of ten at Skipwith Common on 6th January, ten at Yearsley Moor/Woods on 25th August and 15 at Hagg Wood (Dunnington) on 14th December.

Birds were heard singing from April to September at Bank Island, CHL, Coneysthorpe Bank Woods, Hovingham, Oulston Reservoir, Skipwith Common, Strensall Common, Wheldrake Ings, Yearsley Moor/Woods and St. Nicholas Fields (York).

At Skipwith Common a nest was found in a cavity at the base of a small oak tree and, as with Great Tit *Parus major*, although vulnerable the choice may again reflect a shortage of cavities and/or excessive predation at higher levels.

Willow Tit *Poecile montana***Resident breeder**

A considerable increase in records this year probably due to the Willow Tit survey carried out by some YOC members and other conservation groups. Reports of ones and twos were concentrated in the LDV with up to five individuals regularly seen at Bank Island, where two separate broods were

ringed in late July. Two or three pairs also appear to have bred nearby at Wheldrake Ings. Other locations included Allerthorpe GP, Allerthorpe Common, Askham Bog, Hagg Wood and Warren Wood (Dunnington), Pocklington Canal (Melbourne), Milford Common, SHL, Skipwith Common, Stamford Bridge and Yearsley Wood.

During the breeding season three singing males were reported on 7th April at Bishop Wood with a single bird collecting nesting material at Brayton Barff on 19th April. Additionally, a bird was calling at Askham Bog on 9th June and another was calling near Hagg Bridge, Pocklington Canal on 22nd July. No territorial birds were reported this year at Skipwith Common.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Resident Breeder

Up to two birds were seen throughout the year in many locations including Allerthorpe GP, Frog Hall (Allerthorpe Common), Askham Bog, Brayton Barff, Calley Heath NR, Crambeck, Hovingham, Jeffry Bog (Low Hutton), Newburgh Priory, Ray Wood and Pretty Wood (Castle Howard), Redhouse Wood (Moor Monkton), Stamford Bridge, Strensall Common, Warren Wood (Dunnington), Welburn, Whitwell Grange and Wistow. Three birds were seen at New River pond (Castle Howard) on 17th February with five birds at Hagg Wood (Dunnington) on 14th December.

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

Recent re-colonist in small numbers

Again, both Skipwith and Strensall Commons were the two main locations, each with several sightings.

The first record of the year at Strensall Common was of three birds, two of which were singing on 27th February (DL & NL). This was followed by two singing birds on 8th March (NS), a single bird on 6th April (PeR) and a singing male on 5th May (DR). Two birds were seen collecting food and nesting material on 6th May (PeR) and a pair plus another bird were singing on 16th May in the same area (NS). Two birds were recorded on 29th May (BirdTrack) and a minimum of two birds was seen on 7th June (MW) during the annual MOD survey. In all, three territories were estimated there during the summer (PeR).

At Skipwith Common the first two returning birds were singing on 7th March (LDV blog) and one was displaying on 17th March (DB). A single bird was present on 29th March (HP) with another single recorded on 13th April (CH). At least one bird was singing throughout April and there were four singing birds on 4th and 5th May (LDV blog). A single bird was reported on 22nd May (BirdTrack) and two were seen on 4th June (BirdTrack), with another heard in partial song on 17th June (BirdTrack). It is estimated that four pairs bred at the site though the success rate was unknown and post breeding flocks were not reported (DT *et al.*).

On 16th March a single bird was recorded at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common (PB) and two territorial males were seen at Allerthorpe Common on 10th April (JLe).

Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

The first winter period was very cold with snow falling from 18th January. This resulted in huge flocks of Sky Larks, sometimes mixed with a few Corn Buntings *Emberiza calandra* and finches, reaching a total of 670 in the Bubwith area on 20th January. These hard-weather movements were seen regularly in the LDV until 25th January. In this same period large numbers of 100+ birds were also seen outside the LDV at Melbourne, Stamford Bridge and Ulleskelf.

On 9th February the first bird was heard singing at NDC along with three birds at Strensall Common. Records of singing birds continued during the breeding season and through summer, mainly in the LDV but also at 17 other locations in the recording area.

In the autumn, towards the end of September, birds started to form flocks again and 48 were seen over Scarcroft Road, York on the 23rd with 45 at Hemingbrough on 12th October. Along with some winter migrants and passage birds at least 300 were recorded moving west/southwest in the LDV on 5th October. Milford Common and Sherburn in Elmet regularly saw large numbers with up to 110 in October/November usually moving south/southwest. On 19th October a bird was still singing at Wheldrake Ings while two were singing at Castle Howard on the 20th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

A noticeably late arrival this year with the first two at Wheldrake Ings on 10th April, then a major influx on the 17th when 1,000 passed over Bank Island. Away from the LDV spring records were in single or low double figures, except for a minimum of 500 at CHL on 12th and 15th May. No actual breeding records were received, though birds were seen prospecting at Heslington East and NDC. Autumn records were in single or low double figures except for 150 passing through the LDV on 5th October; this was the last record of the year.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

A single at Newburgh Priory lake on 10th April was the first, followed by another at Sand Hutton on the 11th and 21 flying northeast over Heslington East on the 12th. The first large arrival was on the 17th when at least 400 were at Bank Island. Away from the LDV the highest spring count was 35 at Allerthorpe GP on 28th April, except for CHL on 15th May when a gathering

of hirundines and swifts included at least 1,000 Barn Swallows, some sitting on molehills in the cool conditions.

No information was received on breeding numbers or success, though 60 at Sutton-on-the-Forest on 17th July included many juveniles.

Autumn records involving 100 or more were 500 at the Pocklington Canal (Bielby) on 6th August, 250 at Skipwith Common on the 31st, 1,000 at Crook Moor on 20th September, an early evening movement of at least 200 at Poppleton on the 21st with another of 100 on both the 21st and the 22nd, and 215 at Beckwith Close (York) on the 25th. In the LDV there were 150 at Wheldrake Ings on 1st September with 1,000 there on the 11th. Large numbers moved through the LDV between 17th and 28th September, including 1,500 through Wheldrake Ings on the 19th, 500 at North Duffield on the 20th, 100 each at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings on the 21st, 1,000 through the LDV on the 22nd and 100 at North Duffield on the 28th. In October 300 went south through the LDV on the 5th with another 130 recorded there on the 6th but the last record of the year was of a single bird at Bank Island on the 12th.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Two at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April had increased to ten by the 15th and there were 100 at Bank Island on the 19th. Away from the LDV single or low double figures were noted, though an exceptional 500 were at CHL on 15th May; apart from that the peak count was 20 over Brayton Barff on 1st May.

At Hessay it was noted that initial activity failed to produce any breeding records, which compares with the 13 pairs nesting when the observer moved there 26 years ago. Conversely, at Bishopthorpe the number of pairs has increased from two to six (2012 to 2013).

In the autumn there was a minimum of 400 at Wheldrake Ings on 11th September, 70 were at CHL on the 15th and 200 at North Duffield on the 21st (one of which was taken by a Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*). The departure of local birds from both North Duffield and Wheldrake Ings occurred in the last week of September and a minimum of 40 birds flew south over Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. There were still 70 at Bank Island on 5th October and 18 flew south over Milford Common on the same date. The final record was 14 at Bank Island on 6th October.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Rare visitor

One was at Wheldrake Ings from 5th to 9th October (LDV blog).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder

Widespread in single or low double figures; the highest counts were about 20 at Wheldrake Woods on 2nd December and a minimum of 20 at Strensall

on the 9th. Birds bred successfully at Skipwith Common despite many records of nest predation.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Vagrant

One was found at Bank Island on 6th October (DB) and was seen until the 10th and again on the 15th. This becomes the 3rd accepted record within the YOC area following the discovery of an earlier record in 1996 (see below).

Addition: One heard and seen at Askham Bog on 1st November 1996 (JLe). This record has only recently come to light and now represents the first acceptable record for the YOC recording area (see account of this bird on page 105). The record of a bird at SHL on 4th October 2009 now becomes the 2nd record for the York area.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Scarce breeder and passage migrant

One was singing at Strensall on 1st and 2nd May (NM), a single was at Gilling East on the 5th (RNHS) and one was singing at Yearsley Moor on the 27th (DB).

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant with some birds overwintering

During the first winter period there was a single at NDC on 19th January. The first probable migrant was at East Cottingwith on 16th March, but arrivals were delayed with the next record occurring at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th. At Rawcliffe Ings the first record was on 5th April, three weeks later than the previous year's first record. There were ten at Wheldrake Ings on 10th April and 16 there on the 22nd. Birds were then widely reported in single figures, but further counts of ten (or more) were ten at Yearsley Moor/Woods on 19th April, ten at Crambeck on the same date and the same number there again on 2nd May. A Heslington garden recorded this species on 76% of the weeks between mid-April and the end of September and had a single on 27th October as well as what could have been the same bird on 16th November. One at Poppleton on 25th November was probably a wintering bird.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first birds were at Clifton Ings and Red House (Moor Monkton) on 12th April with singles at Heslington East and Wheldrake Ings on the 13th, then ten at Bank Island on the 15th and about 20 at Wheldrake Ings on the 20th. May records in double figures were 13 at Skipwith Common on the 5th and 11 at Yearsley Moor on the 27th. The only autumn count in double figures was about 20 at Wheldrake Ings on 29th August and it was noted that

passage through the LDV was lighter and later than usual. The final record was one at Fulford on 12th September.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder with some birds overwintering

Overwintering birds were seen at Poppleton on 11th January, and at Holgate, York on 18th March and again on 2nd April. One at NDC on 2nd April was probably a migrant after which records, still only of singles, became more widespread. Subsequently 11 were recorded at Crambeck on 2nd May and 12 were singing at Brayton Barff on 1st June.

During the autumn most records came from the LDV with a maximum of three at Wheldrake Ings on 26th August. After one at Cawton Fen on 6th October there was then a gap until one appeared at Bank Island on 16th November, probably the last migrant. A female was in a Heslington garden on 30th November, with a male there on 6th December. There were also singles at Grosvenor Terrace, York and Strensall Common on 9th December and one at Osbaldwick, York on the 19th. The records in late November and in December are likely to be overwintering birds.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder

Late arriving this year with no April records. One was at Strensall as well as three at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May, and there were seven singing males at Wheldrake Ings on the 12th. Brayton Barff had three singing males on 13th and 20th May, but elsewhere records were restricted to one or two birds. The last record was one at North Duffield on 14th September. An adult which had been ringed at Skipwith Common in May 2012 was retrapped in June 2013 and was the first proven case there of breeding-site fidelity.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder

The first record was at Allerthorpe GP on 21st April, with one at North Duffield the next day and three there on the 25th. There was an obvious influx into the LDV on 5th May when 17 singing birds were recorded. Records elsewhere were limited to one or two birds at Allerthorpe, Billbrough, Bolton Percy, Clifton Backies, Milford Common, Storwood, West Lilling and Whitwell Grange. The final record was one at Clifton Backies on 5th August.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder

One was at Whitwell Grange on 17th April with further singles seen at Clifton Backies, Heslington East and at two locations near South Duffield on the 19th. Six were at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd April and six pairs were located at North Duffield on 25th April. Birds were then widespread in single figures, but

with ten at Old Malton on 8th July. At Skipwith Common birds colonised the scrub on the main part of the common and three territories were detected. The last record was one in the LDV on 26th September.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Scarce migrant breeder

The first was reeling near North Duffield village on 16th April and continued to sing to the end of the month, with another at NDC on the 24th. In May one was at Melbourne from the 1st to the 3rd, a single was at Thornton Ellers on the 5th, another at Wheldrake Ings on the 14th and a pair at North Duffield all month. On 15th June there were five reeling males along the Pocklington Canal, two at NDC and singles at Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island. The final record was one reeling at Wheldrake Ings on 20th July.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first records were from the Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on 19th April, with singles at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings on the 20th. Most records were from the LDV with up to 15 at Wheldrake Ings on 14th May. Two singing males were recorded at a traditional breeding site near Brighton on 21st May. The closing records were singles at Wheldrake Ings on 7th, 8th and 22nd September.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

One was singing at Wheldrake Ings on 26th April. A single was by Thornton Lock, Pocklington Canal on 1st May and on the 2nd there were singles at NDC and Skipwith Common, plus two at Wheldrake Ings. Numbers at Wheldrake Ings then increased to ten or more by 14th May. Regular reports came from Allerthorpe GP (maximum of 11 on 9th June) and CHL (maximum of eight on 2nd June). Successful breeding occurred at Skipwith Common, but the number of pairs was not known. Just one male was recorded singing at a traditional site near Brighton on 21st May. One at SHL on 2nd July was only the 3rd record there. The final records were singles at CHL on 1st September and Wheldrake Ings on 7th and 20th September.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Occasional winter visitor though more regular in recent years

The major influx from the previous autumn continued into 2013 with small numbers and flocks reported widely throughout the recording area though not seen at all during the second winter period. Popular birds in January included 20+ at the Rawcliffe Bar Park & Ride later moving to Poppleton, and c.50 moving around the LDV. Up to 40 remained at Poppleton in early February and another sizeable flock of around 50 birds was found in Strensall

with 97 counted there on the 8th including a bird ringed in Newtown, Powys in November 2012. Another large flock was discovered in the Beckfield Lane area of York mid-month with counts of up to 100 to the month end; another colour-ringed bird had been ringed near Aberdeen on 18th November 2012. Early March found 60 down Kerver Lane in Dunnington but generally numbers started to decrease thereafter with the last sighting being six birds at the Hogg Estate in Strensall on 24th April.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Local resident breeder

Fairly widespread with single figure counts coming from a wide range of sites throughout the year including Askham Richard, Bank Island, Bishop Wood, Bishopthorpe Palace, Buttercrambe, Crambeck, Escrick, Gilling, Hagg Wood (Dunnington), Hovingham, Londesborough Lodge (Dunnington), Moorlands NR, Strensall Common, Thorganby, Wheldrake Ings, Whitwell Grange and Yearsley Moor/Woods with higher counts of six or more coming from Brayton Barff and CHL. Other notable sightings included a bird seen in the Museum Gardens, York on 4th January and one attending feeders in a garden in Melbourne on 3rd March.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder

Very widespread species with single figure counts coming from a wide range of sites throughout the recording area, but an amazing count of 29 at Strensall Common on 9th December.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder

A common and widespread breeder, the highest count was of nine at Strensall Common on 7th June.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Very common especially around human habitation and flocks of several hundred birds were widely reported most notably 2,000+ over Clifton Moor (York) on 23rd February, 5,000+ just west of Haxby on 26th March and 1,200 at CHL on 6th November.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Very scarce passage migrant

No spring records and just one in autumn, a bird which flew over Bank Island on 20th November (LDV blog), the first record of this species in the recording area since 2009.

Blackbird *Turdus merula****Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor***

A very common resident with numbers augmented by continental birds during winter months, but tends not to form flocks so the only notable counts, over a hundred, were on some visible migration watching sessions between 12th–14th April in the LDV (100+ over three days) and over Blossom Street, York (141 recorded in one and a half hours on the 14th).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris****Winter visitor and passage migrant***

Common and widely reported throughout the recording area during both winter periods with the last birds of the first winter period being six at Storwood on 26th April and the first returning birds, a flock of 350 through the LDV, on 10th October. Quite often encountered in large flocks, with counts of 150 or more as follows:

- 16th January, Hagg Bridge – 200
- 19th January, Melbourne – 300
- 3rd February, Old Malton – 240
- 17th February, Wheldrake Ings – 300
- 2nd April, Ellerton – 237
- 6th April, South Duffield – 500
- 12th–14th April, LDV – 1,500 (approximately) moving through the valley
- 10th April, Askham Bryan – 270
- 12th April, Dunnington – 500
- 10th October, LDV – 350
- 10th November, Kirkby Wharfe – 225 with 300 there on the 17th
- 16th November, Wheldrake Ings – 600
- 6th December, Seavy Carr – 250

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos****Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor***

Reported widely throughout the area all year round though generally a declining species only recorded in small numbers, although 20 were seen along the Pocklington Canal from Hagg Bridge on 16th January, 13 were along the Outgang at Heslington on 21st February and eight were at Bank Island on 6th October.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus****Winter visitor and passage migrant***

Common and widely reported throughout the recording area during both winter periods with the last bird of the first winter period reported from Brayton Barff on 20th April and the first returning birds heard over Osbaldwick during the night of 1st October. Notable counts of 100 or more were as follows:

16th January, Hagg Bridge – 150
 19th January, Melbourne – 100+
 10th April, Askham Bryan – 100+ (some singing)
 11th April, NDC – 350 (very excitable, chattering and some singing)
 12th April, Clifton Ings – 200 (again reported as excitable) plus 125 at Dunnington on this date
 13th April, over Wheldrake Ings during vis-mig – 400
 14th April, over Blossom Street, York during vis-mig – 375
 10th October, Bank Island – 2,500 over, with 1,000 over Pocklington and 300 at Bishopthorpe
 11th October, Ampleforth – 300, with 185 over North Duffield
 12th October, Bank Island – 208
 17th November, Bank Island – 150

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Reported widely throughout the recording area although no double-figure counts were received this year.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder and passage visitor

A good number of records this year with the first being an early bird at Moorlands NR on 27th April, and then a more traditional arrival date of 11th May involving a single at Brayton Barff where up to ten were counted during June. Breeding was confirmed at Brayton Barff, Skipwith Common, West Ness and along the Pocklington Canal near Melbourne. The last bird of the year was a single in Old Malton on 25th September. Birds were also reported from Acaster Selby, Askham Bog, Bishopthorpe Palace, Gilling Park, Hovingham, Pretty Wood (Castle Howard), Strensall Common and Ulleskelf.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder

Common and widespread, some notable counts included:

9th February, Brecks Farm, Haxby – 14
 11th February, along the River Foss at Huntington – 12, with 20 there on 19th March
 10th April, St Nicholas Fields, York – 12
 15th October, Old Malton – 15, with 14 there on the 24th

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Very scarce passage migrant

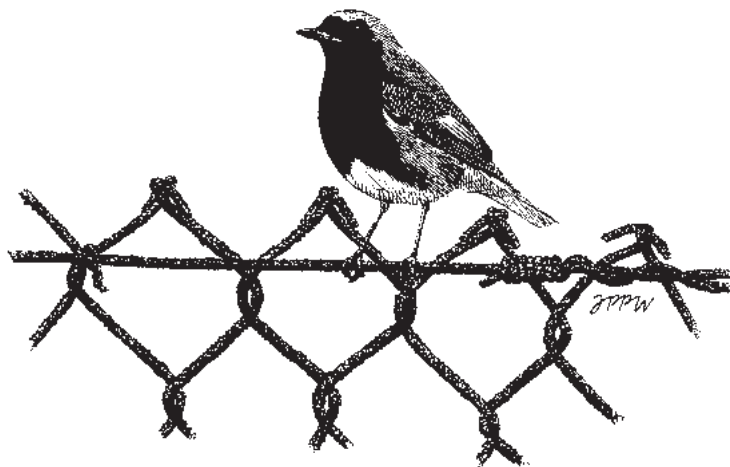
There were three records this year after none in 2012. The first involved a bird at Frog Hall, Allertorpe Common on 26th May seen again on 2nd June (PB), then a male near Sands Lane, Skipwith Common on 31st May (DT et

al.), seen again in the same location on 20th June, and a third bird seen near the River Foulness at Arglam Grange on 17th July (LDV blog).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Very rare visitor

A first summer male seen several times around Blossom Street, York at the beginning of June (JAB & CG) was then seen around York railway station into early July (CH *et al.*) and what was probably the same bird was singing near Skeldergate Bridge on 1st August (OM).



Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first birds of spring comprised one at Bank Island and a female at Clifton Ings on 19th April. Another was near the car park at NDC on the 22nd and two pairs were back at Byland Abbey by the 25th. A male returned to Skipwith Common on the 27th with one or two reported there over the next couple of months but no female so breeding not proven, the two males remaining till 20th June, while three were reported from Wass Woods on 27th May.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Passage migrant and former migrant breeder

The first of the year was a singing male at NDC on 25th April with a different male there on the 27th. A single was reported from Melbourne on 1st May with a male at Bank Island on the 13th and a female at NDC on the 16th. Another male was at Heslington East on 19th May with four birds present there on 24th August and up to eight at Wheldrake Ings from late August till 14th September.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*

Casual breeder and passage visitor, sometimes over-winters

After being reported from both Strensall and Skipwith Commons during the latter months of 2012, birds were seen at both sites throughout January but then disappeared. Elsewhere a male was at Heslington East on 7th March and two birds frequented the Pocklington Canal between Thornton and Church Bridge, Melbourne from 13th–15th March.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Summer visitor and passage migrant

Excellent spring passage this year but far fewer autumn birds. The first record was of three at Heslington East on 20th March followed by one there on 14th April and a female at East Cottingwith on the 15th. A good passage of birds then occurred in the Heslington area through April with up to 30 counted some days. Single-figure sightings also occurred during this period at Bulmer Bank, East Cottingwith, Ellerton, Hagg Bridge, Redhouse Reservoir, SHL, Skipwith Common, Strensall Common, Sutton on Derwent, Thornton Ings, Westfield House (Melbourne) and Whitwell Grange, with 12 seen at NDC and ten near South Duffield on 19th April. Up to 12 were still being recorded in the first week of May, mostly at Heslington East with three birds of the Greenland race *leucorhoa* reported from Bulmer Bank on the 5th.

Return passage involved up to six birds at Heslington East late August, with juveniles at Bishopthorpe on 2nd September, the Knavesmire (York) on the 25th and two at East Cottingwith on the 28th; a late bird was at Heslington East on 23rd October.



Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder throughout the area

This UK BAP species continues to be common and widespread in the YOC area but is under-recorded. The largest counts for any location were all under double figures and there were few records received of breeding.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder

Another under-recorded species which is also a UK BAP species as well as being Red-listed. Associated with built-up areas and farms, the pattern of reduced numbers continued. A count of 58 along the River Foss at Huntington on 11th February was the largest of the year and the only one above 50. Otherwise 45 at Brecks Farm, Haxby on 9th February, 25 at Storwood on 5th May and 45 (again) at Breck's Farm, Haxby on 11th and 31st August, and 25 at Wheldrake Ings on 17th August were typical of the larger flocks seen in 2013.

Also recorded at Acaster Selby, Appleton Roebuck, Billbrough, Catterton, Bolton Percy, Bossall, Bubwith bridge, Calley Heath NR, Canal Head (Pocklington), Dunnington Common, Hagg Wood (Dunnington), Hemingbrough, Heslington, Heslington East, Heslington West, Hollin's Grove Farm (Easingwold), Hovingham, Low Catton, Melbourne, Riccall, Sand Hutton (village), SHL, Seavy Carr, Stamford Bridge, Strensall and Thorganby Ings.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder

As with the previous species, this is a UK BAP species which also appears on the Red List, but it tends to be better recorded. During the course of the year the largest gatherings were in the LDV where feeding stations at Bank Island and NDC showed how important this supplementary feeding is along with the provision of nest boxes. In the first half of the year high counts (of 50 or more) were 200 at South Duffield on 3rd January, 90 at Bank Island on the 13th with 80 on the 15th, 50 at Bubwith bridge on the 20th with 60 on 15th February, and 60 at Thorganby on 20th April.

The first breeding activity was noted on 19th March at Whitwell Grange where a pair nested on a barn wall. Breeding was also confirmed in nest boxes at Acaster Selby, Bank Island, Hessay (where seven pairs nested), Hornington Manor (Bolton Percy), Storwood and Upper Poppleton (where a pair produced three broods).

High counts post breeding were 100 at the Bank Island feeding station by late October, 50 at Melbourne (Pocklington Canal) on 10th November, 150 at the Bank Island feeding station by end November but with 80 there by end December, and a similar number at NDC in late December.

Other records through the year came from Allerthorpe GP, Ampleforth, Aughton Ings, Bolton Percy, Brecks Farm (Haxby), Castle Howard,

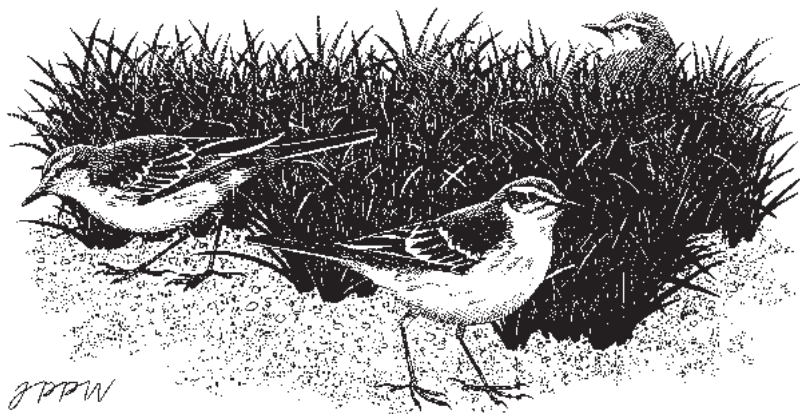
Danesmead Copse (York), East Cottingwith, Ellerton, Fryton, Hagg Wood (Dunnington), Hassacarr NR, Heslington, Hollin's Grove Farm (Easingwold), Hovingham, Huntington (River Foss), Langwith Stray (York), Lonsborough Lodge Farm (Kexby), Kelfield, Low Catton, Milford Common, Nunnington, Red House (Moor Monkton), SHL and Stamford Bridge.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first record of the year came on 13th April when a single was at Heslington East, some five days later than in 2012, with 12 there on the 19th. On 18th April, ten were at Skipwith Common. In the LDV, a roost at Wheldrake Ings in April increased from 11 on the 18th to 50 on the 20th and peaked at 80 on the 28th. At NDC roosting birds increased from 30 on the 22nd to 100 on the 26th and peaked at an impressive 216 on the 28th. In May 70 were at Thornton Ellers on the 1st with 100 still at NDC on the 3rd, and 60 there and also at Wheldrake Ings on the 6th. Single figures were typically recorded from May onwards with evidence of breeding received from Allerthorpe GP where a single pair nested in oil seed rape, Ellerton Ings where five pairs were seen carrying food, and Sutton-on-the-Forest with juveniles seen.

Return passage was noted from the second half of August with 37 at Brighton Meadows on the 21st, and 17 over Wheldrake Ings and ten at Heslington East on the 25th. In September, southerly passage in the LDV was noted until the 18th. Counts this month included 15 at NDC on the 9th, with 20 at South Duffield and 30 at Riccall on the 12th. The final records of the year were singles at Hovingham Carrs on 23rd September and over Bank Island on 3rd October.



Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava*

The influx of Yellow Wagtails *Motacilla flava* during April and May produced a good run of this scarcer race after a total absence in 2012. A single at North Duffield on 18th April (AW) was followed by further reports from there with a single on the 27th and two on the 28th. In May one was still present at NDC from the 2nd to the 5th, with four present on the 6th and three on the 7th. At Thornton Ellers a single was present on the 4th with two there the next day (OM & CH).

'Channel' Wagtails (*Motacilla flava flava* x *Motacilla flava flavissima*) were reported from NDC on 26th April (OM), with two there the next day and a single still present on the 28th (AW).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

At the beginning of the year ones and twos were reported from many locations, typically from water courses and the area's water treatment works, including birds in York city centre. The only confirmed breeding occurred at Bank Island where a pair produced three young at the WTW there. Breeding was also suspected at Castle Howard and at St Nicholas Fields, York where four were present on 4th September.

Post-breeding counts (of three or more) included, in September, four at CHL on the 12th and five on roofs in Coney Street, York on the 17th, while birds remained to the year end at Bank Island, where an opportunist took advantage of the moth trap on the 31st, with four there on 5th October! On 1st November three roosted along the River Ouse in York city centre, while on 9th December the biggest count of the year was of seven at Strensall Common WTW.

Also recorded during the year at Allerthorpe GP, Bishopthorpe, Black Plantation (Gilling East), East Cottingwith, Hassacarr NR, Haxby, Hemingbrough, Heslington East, Hollin's Grove Farm (Easingwold), Hull Road Park (York), Kirkby Wharfe, Melbourne, North Duffield, Poppleton, Red House (Moor Monkton), Redhouse Wood, Roscars, SHL, Skipwith Common, Welburn WTW and Wheldrake Ings.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Resident breeder

Widely reported throughout the recording area so only larger counts (generally 20 or more) and evidence of breeding are detailed here. The winter roost in the St Sampson's Square/Parliament Street area of central York involved 100 in January, with a peak of 250 in early February. On 16th March 50 fed at Bubwith Ings as water levels dropped while 20 were at Heslington East from 2nd–3rd April with 18 at NDC on 2nd May.

The only indication of breeding was a pair nesting by the Pocklington Canal and birds carrying food at Sutton-on-the-Forest.

Passage was first noted on 18th August when 25 passed through Heslington East, with 30 there on 25th August. On 12th September, 40 roosted at CHL with 15 roosting there on 7th November. September also saw the start of the York city centre roost when 110 were seen heading for the roost site on the 18th, with 150 on 1st November, increasing to 350 during December. Elsewhere 30 were noted at Brayton Barff on 10th November with 18 at Hollin's Grove Farm, Easingwold on 9th December.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Scarce spring passage migrant

All reports of this race came during spring. The first of the year was at Bank Island on 12th April, with further sightings there on the 16th and 27th (LDV blog). On 18th April four were in fields by North Duffield village (AW), while another was at Storwood on the 21st (MW), with four at Skipwith Common on the 25th (LDV blog) and a single at Heslington East on the 28th (AW). In May singles were at Bank Island on the 2nd and 5th and at NDC on the 3rd (LDV blog), with two at Heslington East on the 5th (OM & CH).

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

Rare vagrant

On 8th October, during a visible migration watch on Milford Common, a single was picked up as it flew fairly low towards the south, calling three times. It was not relocated (PD).

This is the 3rd record for the YOC area following singles at NDC on the unusual dates of 20th and 26th June 1990, and a single on the flood bank there on the more typical date of 5th October 1999.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder though numbers have recently declined

The first records of the year came on 10th April with single birds singing at both Skipwith Common and Allerthorpe Common followed by one singing at Strensall Common on the 15th. Reports during the summer were localised with breeding confirmed only at Skipwith Common where six singing males were present during May. Other reports of singing males were received from Yearsley Moor with two during May, and from Strensall Common with three territories estimated during the MOD survey on 7th June.

The final reports of the year came during August with singles at Wheldrake lngs on the 17th and at SHL on the 28th, the first record for this site.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Resident and migrant breeder, and passage migrant

At the beginning of the year 20 were present at Heslington East during January, with single figures counts from several other sites. During April, passage was in evidence as counts included 15 at Poppleton on the

2nd with c.15 at Heslington East increasing to a maximum of c.50 on the 11th.

No evidence of breeding was received and, after a single at Heslington East on 21st June, there were no further reports until return passage started from early September.

On 9th September a minimum of 80 was counted at Heslington East while 30 flew southeast over York on the 18th. An amazing estimate of 1,500 was reported as grounded throughout the LDV on the 19th. Elsewhere 50 were at Poppleton and 20 at Wheldrake Ings on the 25th, with 30 at the Knavesmire, York on the 26th. Passage continued in October with 30 through Milford Common on the 5th and 34 present between Bubwith and Aughton on the 6th while steady passage was reported through North Duffield the same day. A further 25 were reported moving south at Milford Common (again) on the 9th with 21 in the Hemingbrough area on the 12th. Numbers decreased during November, and the only additional high counts were 25 at Hollin's Grove Farm, Easingwold on 9th December and up to 30 roosting at Skipwith Common throughout this month.

Note: all counts of 20 or more are given.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Scarce, mainly winter visitor

No reports during 2013 but recorded from 2010–2012.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

The only record of the year was of a single at NDC on 6th–7th May (AW).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

This species continues to be common and widespread throughout the region. In the first winter period counts of 25 or more were: 30–40 at Fulford Golf Course on 15th January, 25 at Langwith Stray (York) on the 19th, 60 at Ellerton on the 20th, 40 at Thornton Ellers on the 21st, 30 along the River Foss at Huntington on 11th February, 150 at East Cottingwith on the 20th, 40 at the Heslington Tillmire on 2nd April and 30 at Slingsby Bank Wood on the 16th.

Few breeding reports were received although a BBS survey of two adjoining 1km squares between East Cottingwith and Hagg Bridge produced counts of 64 including 30 singing on 5th May and 76 including 47 singing on 8th June. During the summer seven chicks from two nests were ringed at Skipwith Common and a family party was at Sutton-on-the-Forest.

Post breeding, passage was noted through the LDV in the last week of September when 50 were caught and ringed. On 17th October 50 were at Hollin's Grove Farm, Easingwold with 40 still there on 5th November. Finally, during December, up to 150 visited the feeding station at NDC.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

Some good-sized flocks were reported early in the year. Fifteen were present at North Duffield on 1st January, and again on the 20th, with 30 along Intake Lane, Bubwith on the 2nd and 15 at Red House (Moor Monkton) on the 8th. Elsewhere ones and twos were recorded during January and February at Allerthorpe GP, Gaterley, Healaugh, Low Catton and Stamford Bridge. An impressive flock of up to 50 visited a garden in Ampleforth in the first half of March while a single visited a feeder in a Poppleton garden on the 25th. Further reports came in April with 25 still in at Ampleforth on the 13th and the last spring records, of single birds, at Ampleforth and Poppleton on the 28th.

The first returning bird was a single at Bank Island on 5th October with another at NDC on the 8th. A flock of 16 was reported flying south at Bank Island on the 10th but with just a single the next day, and other singles were present at Ampleforth and North Duffield on the 11th, at CHL on the 13th and 20th, Wheldrake Ings on the 14th and at Bishopthorpe on the 18th. Six were at SHL on 7th November, with a single at Allerthorpe GP on 9th December, a male at SHL (again) on the 19th and a two at Cawood on the 26th.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

The only larger counts (25 or more) in the first half of the year were 50 at Newhay on 19th January, 30 at Allerthorpe GP on the 20th, and c.30 at Upper Poppleton on 2nd February.

Few breeding reports were received although a BBS survey of two adjoining 1km squares between East Cottingwith and Hagg Bridge produced a total 20 individuals on 8th June including nine singing.

Post-breeding, numbers increased with 32 at Hassacarr NR in September and 250 at Hollin's Grove Farm, Easingwold during October, and 200 still there in November. Otherwise numbers were quite low.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Higher counts (30 or more) at the beginning of the year were 50–60 at the Heslington Tillmire on 18th January, 30 at NDC on the 20th, 30 by the River Foss (Huntington) on 11th February and c.60 at Riccall on 25th February with 34 still at this site on 8th March.

No breeding reports were received. Post-breeding flocks were reported from mid-August with higher counts of 45 at Breck's Farm (Haxby) on the 11th, 100 at Ruddins Ings (Poppleton) on the 30th, 100 at Wheldrake Ings on 9th September (peaking at 120 on the 15th), 39 at Ellerton on the 19th, c.30 at Heslington East on the 20th and 120 at Bubwith on the 23rd. October saw 180 at Milford Common on the 8th (with evidence of passage south here on the 17th) and 300 at Roscarrs (east of Selby) on the 12th.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder in small numbers, passage and winter visitor

Higher counts (30 or more) in the first winter period were c.40 at Stamford Bridge on 8th January, 200 at Thornton Ellers on the 10th, 110 at Calley Heath NR on the 26th and 60 at Heslington West on the 31st. Into February there were 40+ at St Nicholas Field (York) on the 1st, c.90 by the Pocklington Canal (Melbourne) the same day and about 30 there on the 22nd, and c.30 at Stamford Bridge on 4th March. There was a report of 'several hundred' at Allerthorpe Common during the first week of April, with smaller numbers reported thereafter, including 34 at Yearsley Moor on the 19th.

There were just a few records in the breeding season from Allerthorpe Common, Castle Howard, Strensall Common and Yearsley Moor, all sites with potentially suitable habitat but no evidence of nesting. Additionally one, sometimes two, females were regular visitors to niger feeders in a Heslington garden between 18th May and 18th June but no male was seen and there was no obvious reason for their continuing presence.

Post-breeding flocks (30 or more) were 40 at Askham Bog on 24th September, 40 at Melbourne on 5th October with 30 still present there in November, and lastly a flock of 75 at Hassacarr NR on 11th December.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Generally the highest counts came at the beginning of the year. Counts of 30 or more were 40 at the Heslington Tillmire on 19th January, 177 at Ellerton Ings in game cover on the 20th and 230 (maximum count) at Moor Lane, Full Sutton on the 23rd and 25th. At least 40 were at Whitwell Grange on 28th February, with c.40 at Heslington East on 5th March, 60 (minimum) at the Heslington Tillmire on 2nd April and 50 roosting at Wheldrake Ings on the 20th. The flock at Heslington East, peaked at 150 on 5th May.

Breeding was confirmed at SHL where a pair was seen feeding young, while the MOD survey at Strensall Common on 7th June located four territories, a reduction from the seven recorded in 2012. A decrease in breeding numbers was also reported at Skipwith Common where only a single nest was found, largely due to loss of nesting habitat though this may be temporary.

Post-breeding flocks were 75 at Brecks Farm, Haxby on 11th August, 400 at Stillingfleet on 11th September with 60 (minimum) at Poppleton on the 25th and 80 at Heslington East on the 28th. In October, visible migration was noted at Milford Common on the 9th when 30 flew south, while 80 were still at Heslington East on the 12th, with 70 there on 3rd November, 50 at Gilling on 15th December and c.30 at Heslington East on the 27th.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Very scarce winter visitor

Not recorded in 2013; last record 2012.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

As in 2012 there were few flocks in double figures. More significant counts (and all counts of 30 or more) are given. Twenty were present at Thornton Ellers on 10th January with c.40 present at Melbourne on the 20th, while a mixed flock in excess of 200 along the Pocklington Canal near Church Bridge, Melbourne on the 29th contained uncounted numbers of Redpolls while c.60 were counted in the same area on 1st February. On this date 65 were at the Heslington Tillmire and then at least 40 at Langwith Stray on 2nd April, 20 at Castle Howard on the 17th and 20 at Skipwith Common on the 25th. The final spring records came in May with singles at Low Catton on the 4th and at Allerthorpe Common on the 5th, followed by three at Strensall Common on the 6th and 22 at Yearsley Moor on the 12th.

The next report was of ten at Strensall Common on 27th September. Reports were widespread thereafter with 19 at Hollin's Grove Farm, Easingwold on 28th October, 20 at Redhouse Wood on 23rd October and 25 at Brayton Barff on the 25th.

Much smaller numbers were recorded quite widely in both winter periods at Acomb (York), Allerthorpe GP, Askham Bryan, Bank Island, Bishop Wood, Bishopthorpe, Castle Howard, Cawton, Heslington East, Holgate (York), Huntington (York), Milford Common, Poppleton, St Nicholas Field (York), SHL, Welburn WTW and Wheldrake Ings.

Mealy (Common) Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Scarce winter visitor

This species has been an annual visitor to the area since 2008, with 2013 a slightly better year compared to 2012.

The first record was of a single feeding in a flock of Lesser Redpolls at the Heslington Tillmire on 6th January (TJ *et al.*). Also in January, singles were at the Wheldrake Ings car park on the 25th (CR), and at Church Bridge, Melbourne on the 29th (AW), in with a large flock of Lesser Redpolls *Carduelis cabaret* and Siskins *Carduelis spinus*. On 26th March a single at Bank Island (LDV blog) was the last report until two were found at Red House (Moor Monkton) on 29th November (JAB), the only report of the autumn.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Casual breeder and passage migrant

The year started with five at Langwith Stray on 4th January and four at SHL on the 23rd. At Allerthorpe Common numbers increased from three on 16th February to 27 on 29th March before peaking at 53 on 8th April. Also, in

April, five were at Coneysthorpe on the 6th with 35 at Red House (Moor Monkton) on the 9th and a single at the Heslington Tillmire on the 17th. The only reports in May were of a single at Scagglethorpe on the 16th and 12 flying west over Heslington East on the 29th. A report of six at Skipwith Common on 8th June was the last until late summer.

In August nine were present at Yearsley Moor on the 18th with 40 there on the 25th, while three were at SHL on the 28th. The only reports in September came from Wheldrake lngs with two on the 26th and three on the 29th, plus another three at Frog Hall (Allerthorpe Common) on the same date. Small numbers continued to be reported until the year end including 15 at Hagg Wood, Dunnington on 4th December.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

The only counts of ten or more were ten at Red House (Moor Monkton) on 15th January, 15 at Wheldrake lngs on 25th September with 14 still present on 14th October, 17 at Strensall Common on 9th December and an impressive 25 or more visiting a riverside bird table at Bishopthorpe on the 30th. Other sightings came from a variety of locations through the recording area but there were no confirmed records of breeding.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare winter visitor

The first record since 2008 involved a single bird visiting St Hilda's churchyard, Ampleforth where it fed in a Yew from 17th January to 8th February (JP *et al.*). On 2nd October, there was another report, this time of four, again in Yew trees, at the vicarage in Askham Richard (AH per TJ).



Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Very scarce winter visitor

Not recorded in 2013; last record was in 2011.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

The peak count, in the first half of the year, was 40 at Askham Richard on 6th January compared with the highest count of 70 in 2012. Additional counts of 20 or more were c.20 at Heslington East on 1st February with 25 there on the 23rd, and 20 at Whitwell Grange on 6th, 7th and 13th March with 30 there on 4th April.

Singing birds were reported at numerous sites from February onwards suggesting this species remains a widespread breeder in low densities. During the breeding season better news was received from Strensall Common with an estimated five territories located during the annual MOD survey (on 7th June) compared with just two in 2012.

Only small numbers were reported post breeding including 12 at Hollin's Grove Farm, Easingwold on 28th October, while 37 feeding on winter stubble at Dunnington Common on 16th December was the only count of 20 or more in the second winter period.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder and passage visitor

The only high counts, of 20 or more, in the first winter period, were 100 at Melbourne on 3rd January and 38 at Intake Lane, Bubwith on the 20th with 50 there the next day. The winter roost at Hollow Swang on Skipwith Common regularly held up to 50 birds (in both winter periods). At this site ringing produced 39 new birds and just two retraps, showing there is a continual change-over of birds at the site.

During the breeding season increased numbers came from Strensall Common with an estimated 15 territories recorded during the annual MOD survey (on 7th June) compared with just four in 2012. At Skipwith Common six pairs bred, and a pair also bred at Heslington East for the first time. Also, during the breeding season, nine were singing along the Pocklington Canal between Hagg Bridge and East Cottingwith on 8th June, with 13 singing at Wheldrake Ings on 14th July, while breeding was strongly suspected at Foggathorpe. As in 2012 there were many records of singing birds, mostly in the LDV but also at Allerthorpe GP, Bishopthorpe and at CHL.

Post breeding, a large movement of birds was reported at Wheldrake Ings from 19th September, and 130 had been ringed there by the month's end. Other reports, of 20 or more, were 50 near Church Bridge, Melbourne on 7th October, 30 to roost at CHL on 7th November, 45 to roost along the towpath at Melbourne on the 10th and 45 at Thornton on the 11th. Finally, on 28th December, 23 came into roost near Church Bridge, Melbourne.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Resident breeder

The York area probably holds one of the best populations of this UK BAP and Red-listed species in Yorkshire; nowadays it is scarce or absent from many areas in the county. January began with impressive numbers of 120 at South Duffield on the 5th, 134 at Melbourne on the 19th, and 210 at Sutton upon Derwent on the 21st after heavy snow. Other high counts (of 20 or more) in the first winter period were 50 at Church Bridge, Melbourne on 3rd January, 30 at East Cottingwith on the 9th, 30 at Bubwith on the 20th (after snow) and 30 at Melbourne on 28th March.

Singing males were reported from February onwards, with reports during the breeding season including two at West Lilling, three at Sutton-on-the-Forest, four at Hagg Lane (East Cottingwith), and six between Cliffe and North Duffield, seen regularly in the early summer. Single singing birds were also recorded from Bishopthorpe, Kelfield, Naburn, Storwood and Thornton.

The only report received after August was of 32 coming to roost at Church Bridge, Melbourne on 28th December.

Appendix A: Introductions/Escapes

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Birds were reported regularly through the year from the LDV, in particular Bubwith Ings, North Duffield Carrs and Wheldrake Ings, and also from Allerthorpe GP and Heslington East (occasionally Heslington West). Most sightings were of one bird, very occasionally two. In 2013 no evidence of breeding was received.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

The feral flock at York University appeared much reduced (to about 30 birds) after deliberate action by the University, with 26 being the maximum recorded at either Heslington West or Heslington East. The flock was recorded at one or other of these sites in most months, apart from May (only two birds at Heslington East), June, July and December (no reports).

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

Six birds were reported at Heslington East on 24th April, the only other record being of a single bird on 5th May at Heslington West (presumably one of the feral birds resident at the University).

Marbled Duck *Marmaronetta angustirostris*

One, presumed escape, on fishing ponds near Pocklington arrived with about 50 Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* on 7th September (LDV blog).

Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*

One reported from Upper Poppleton on 16th February (BirdGuides) was considered to be probably not pure Saker.

Appendix B: Hybrids

Canada x Greylag Goose

One was reported from Bubwith on 17th February with another at Allertorpe GP on 3rd August, two at CHL on 12th November (and the same two at Nunnington on the 13th), one at Newburgh Priory lake also on the 13th and three at Allertorpe GP on the 14th. One thought to be a Canada x domestic Greylag cross was recorded at Allertorpe GP on 15th August.

Barnacle x Canada Goose

One was reported at CHL on 24th October.

Aythya hybrid

A hybrid Aythya duck was first located at NDC on 17th January and seen there and at East Cottingwith on various dates until 18th April. The bird, a male, was provisionally identified as Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* but this was quickly ruled out. All sightings were considered to be the same bird but the evidence for this is not conclusive. This individual was apparently at Tophill Low in February which also raises questions as to whether more than one bird was involved. Similar hybrids were also recorded at CHL on 3rd March and at Heslington East on 16th August. These may well have been different birds but the status of the CHL bird is unknown.

Peregrine x Saker

This bird was seen by gull watchers at Rufforth Airfield on 16th February as it flushed the flock of gulls.

Glaucous x Herring Gull

One was photographed at Rufforth Airfield on 19th January.

Appendix C: Unproven records

The following records, all of which require descriptions to be submitted for validation by the appropriate authority (YOC Recorder, YNU Rarities Committee, British Birds Rarities Committee), were received for the 2013 report. In each case either no description was forthcoming or the description was insufficiently detailed to confirm identification.

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis rossicus* Thorganby Ings 5th March
 Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* Bank Island 23rd May
 Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* Bank Island 25th April, Canal Head
 (Pocklington) 31st August
 Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* Canal Head (Pocklington) 3rd January, Hagg
 Bridge 9th October
 Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* Wheldrake Ings 16th October
 Great Skua *Stercorarius skua* Bank Island 15th October
 Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus* Heslington East 3rd September
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor* Askham Bog 7th June
 Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* Huntington Road (York)
 31st October
 Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Wheldrake Ings 24th August
 Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* Huntington 24th May

References

- Musgrove, A *et al.* 2011 Overwintering populations of British waterbirds.
British Birds **104** 364–397.
 Village, A. 2010 *The Kestrel*. Poyser Monographs.

Earliest and latest dates for summer visitors/passage migrants

| Species | Arrival date/ first reported | Last Reported |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Garganey | 12th April | 21st September |
| Quail | 17th May | 22nd July |
| Osprey | 30th March | 10th October |
| Hobby | 17th April | 9th November |
| Oystercatcher | 15th February | 29th August |
| Little Ringed Plover | 14th March | 4th August |
| Ringed Plover | 17th February | 26th September |
| Whimbrel | 17th April | 5th September |
| Common Sandpiper | 17th April | 11th September |
| Greenshank | 13th April | 12th October |
| Wood Sandpiper | 3rd May | 27th August |
| Common Tern | 12th April | 25th August |
| Turtle Dove | 17th May | 28th July |
| Cuckoo | 16th April | 1st September |
| Nightjar | 23rd May | 19th June |
| Swift | 25th April | 18th August |
| Sand Martin | 10th April | 5th October |
| Barn Swallow | 10th April | 6th October |
| House Martin | 13th April | 12th October |
| Wood Warbler | 1st May | 27th May |
| Chiffchaff † | 16th March | 16th November |
| Willow Warbler | 12th April | 12th September |
| Blackcap * | 2nd April | 16th November |
| Garden Warbler | 2nd May | 14th September |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 21st April | 5th August |
| Common Whitethroat | 17th April | 26th September |
| Grasshopper Warbler | 16th April | 20th July |
| Sedge Warbler | 19th March | 22nd September |
| Reed Warbler | 26th April | 20th September |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 27th April | 25th September |
| Common Redstart | 19th April | 20th June |
| Whinchat | 25th April | 14th September |
| Wheatear | 20th March | 23rd October |
| Yellow Wagtail | 13th April | 3rd October |
| Tree Pipit | 10th April | 28th August |

† Overwintering birds seen on 19th January, 25th November

* Overwintering birds seen on 11th January, 18th March, 2nd April, 30th November and 6th, 9th & 19th December

Earliest and latest dates for winter visitors/passage migrants

| Species | Last reported in Spring | First reported in Autumn |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bewick's Swan | 18th March | Not recorded |
| Whooper Swan | 13th May | 4th October |
| Pink-footed Goose | 1st June | 26th August |
| Eurasian Wigeon [†] | 27th April | 10th August |
| Eurasian Teal | 16th June | 1st August |
| Pintail | 4th May | 7th September |
| Common Goldeneye | 16th April | 3rd August |
| Goosander | 20th April | 13th July |
| Golden Plover | 13th May | 24th June |
| Ruff | 2nd June | 10th August |
| Dunlin | 12th May | 26th July |
| Green Sandpiper | 17th April | 15th June |
| Jack Snipe | 20th April | 10th September |
| Fieldfare | 26th April | 10th October |
| Redwing | 20th April | 1st October |
| Brambling | 28th April | 5th October |

[†] Excluding small number of potential breeders (see RBBP report page 95).



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| Andrew Kisby | Alan Worsley |
| Wendy Knowles | BirdGuides |
| Anne Lawn | Natural England (NE) |
| Tom & Julia Lawson | Sand Hutton Bird Report (SHBR) |
| John Lawton (JL) | YOC website reports |

Rare Breeding Birds of the Lower Derwent Valley 2013

Compiled by Craig Ralston

Category A – Rare Species

Breeding data for each species (where available) is shown in the accompanying table (overleaf). Comments on some species are given below.

Eurasian Wigeon

Up to ten pairs were present in late April and appeared to be holding territory. Eight pairs remained through May and early June, but no broods were seen.

Pintail

Three pairs were present in late April with two pairs remaining until mid May and a single pair remaining into early June. No evidence of breeding.

Garganey

The first two returning birds were two drakes on 13th April, building up to a peak of six drakes and two ducks by the end of the month. Numbers remained high during May with five drakes and a duck on the 6th and up to four pairs thereafter into early June by which time birds were thought to be attempting breeding. Sightings became fewer during June but at least one female remained into July and was seen distracting during the month suggesting the presence of a brood. A single female, eclipse drake and juvenile were present in August and may have been related to this successful attempt.

Black-necked Grebe

Just a single, returning passage bird was seen during the spring.

Little Egret

Up to two birds were present in the valley from April and were seen occasionally in the heronry and cormorant colony but with no other signs of breeding.

Breeding success of Category A species in the LDV

| Species | Max. no. adults | No. of young | No. of pairs | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|-------|--------|-------|
| | | | Poss. | Prob. | Proven | Total |
| Eurasian Wigeon | 20 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0–8 |
| Pintail | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0–2 |
| Garganey | 8 | 1+ | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1–4 |
| Shoveler | 196 | 47+ | 45 | 15 | 10 | 10–70 |
| Black-necked Grebe | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Little Egret | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Marsh Harrier | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0–1 |
| Peregrine | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Water Rail | 12* | 6+ | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5–12 |
| Spotted Crake | 2* | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0–2 |

* Number of calling males

Common Crane

LDV NNR – following a fly-over pair on 27th March, a pair returned to NDC on 22nd April and started nest-building and displaying. However, only a single could be located subsequently, being seen there on the 24th and at Wheldrake Ings on the 25th, and in arable fields near Skipwith Common on 1st May.

There were no further records until a single at Wheldrake Ings on 5th July, and at Bank Island on the 7th, feeding amongst newly mown hay, and one was calling after dark near Canal Head, Pocklington on 13th August.

Reported via the UK Crane Working Group as a non-breeding pair.

Marsh Harrier

Several individuals once again summered and/or passed through the valley. A single pair was present from late April and through much of May and the birds were seen displaying and carrying nesting/platform material on one or two dates. However, once again this came to nothing. The valley still looks on the verge of being colonised.

Peregrine

Three pairs bred on adjacent electricity pylons around the valley, the outcome for one pair being unknown; the other two fledged broods of three and two.

Spotted Crake

A poor year with just three records – a single singing male at Wheldrake Ings on 6th and 8th May, and at NDC on 19th June.

Corncrake

A single calling male at Wheldrake Ings at 07:45 on 17th May was the only record during the year.

Little Ringed Plover

Five pairs were present in mid-April and were holding territory with display noted, four of these pairs being on adjacent flooded arable land. However, all these pairs deserted and departed by mid-May following the drying up of these sites. No further breeding evidence.

Ruff

Following reduced wintering numbers, 25 (17 males) were lekking at Aughton Ings on 10th April with 20 (14 males) lekking at NDC on the 15th, and six (five males) still lekking there on 26th April until 6th May. Two males were still present on 28th May with two males and a female present at Bank Island on 1st and 2nd June. No further evidence of breeding.

Category B – Less Scarce Species

Breeding success of Category B species in the LDV

| Species | Max. no. adults | No. of young | No. of pairs | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------|--------|-------|
| | | | Poss. | Prob. | Proven | Total |
| Gadwall | 142 | 0 | 50 | 8 | 13 | 13–71 |
| Common Quail | 6 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0–3 |
| Hobby | 8 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0–4 |
| Wood Lark | 12 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0–6 |
| Willow Tit | 26 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 5–13 |

Egyptian Goose

Following a steady increase in recent records and breeding attempts by a single pair in 2012, two pairs bred in 2013 producing two broods totalling four young.

Terminology (summary)

Possible – bird(s) present in breeding season in suitable habitat or singing male(s) present or heard in breeding season.

Probable – pair(s) in suitable habitat, birds holding territory, courtship display, nest building, agitated behaviour, visiting probable nest site.

Proven (confirmed) – nest with eggs, nest with young seen or heard, recently fledged young, recently used nest or eggshells, distraction display, adults carrying food or faecal sac.

For full details see: <http://www.rbbp.org.uk/downloads/rbbp-recording-standards.pdf>

Ringling Report 2013

Compiled by David Tate

Introduction

It has always been a challenge to produce a ringing report for the York recording area because ringing data is published at county level. Previously, Gordon Craine compiled 1960–79 data for the York area and his results were published in the YOC Report for 1980. During the period 33,000 birds of 78 species were caught and ringed. However, the total includes an unknown number of birds caught at Thorpe Arch which lies outside the York recording area.

Subsequently, ringing reports appeared in the YOC's volumes for 1981–1983, 1991–1995 and 1998–2000. The 2000 report shows that the cumulative totals had risen to 117,000 birds and 119 species, including the addition of Black-necked Grebe, Bewick's Swan, Garganey, Ruff, Dipper, Barred Warbler and Firecrest. As with previous reports there are lists of notable recoveries. In the absence of recent ringing reports an educated guess would suggest that by 2013 the cumulative totals will have risen to some 200,000 birds and 160 species.

Bird ringing in 2013 – numbers, species, locations and personnel

The BTO supplied contact details for 40 ringers who live in or close to the YOC recording area. Data has been provided by 27 ringers who probably carried out 80–90% of the area's ringing during 2013.

Table 1 shows that almost 8,000 birds of 94 species are known to have been ringed in the York area during the year. Of these 23% were either Great Tits or Blue Tits. Young in the downy stage (pulli) or unfledged juveniles accounted for 15% of the total.

Table 1: Species and numbers of birds ringed in 2013

| | Adult | Pulli | Total | | Adult | Pulli | Total |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Little Grebe | 1 | | 1 | Teal | 211 | | 211 |
| Gannet | 2 | | 2 | Mallard | 299 | 98 | 397 |
| Grey Heron | | 22 | 22 | Shoveler | | 4 | 4 |
| Mute Swan | 12 | 1 | 13 | Tufted Duck | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Whooper Swan | 12 | | 12 | Goldeneye | 1 | | 1 |
| Greylag Goose | 36 | 48 | 84 | Sparrowhawk | 7 | | 7 |
| Canada Goose | 5 | 7 | 12 | Kestrel | | 15 | 15 |
| Shelduck | 39 | | 39 | Moorhen | 11 | 1 | 12 |
| Mandarin | 1 | | 1 | Coot | 1 | | 1 |
| Wigeon | 235 | | 235 | Little Ringed Plover | 1 | | 1 |
| Gadwall | 1 | 6 | 7 | Lapwing | 2 | 3 | 5 |

| | Adult | Pulli | Total | | Adult | Pulli | Total |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Ruff | 4 | | 4 | Sedge Warbler | 91 | | 91 |
| Jack Snipe | 12 | | 12 | Reed Warbler | 87 | | 87 |
| Snipe | 11 | | 11 | Lesser Whitethroat | 9 | | 9 |
| Woodcock | 2 | | 2 | Whitethroat | 96 | 41 | 137 |
| Whimbrel | 6 | | 6 | Garden Warbler | 29 | 2 | 31 |
| Curlew | 2 | | 2 | Blackcap | 260 | 3 | 263 |
| Redshank | 2 | | 2 | Chiffchaff | 347 | | 347 |
| Green Sandpiper | 6 | | 6 | Willow Warbler | 281 | | 281 |
| Collared Dove | 3 | | 3 | Goldcrest | 46 | | 46 |
| Stock Dove | | 11 | 11 | Spotted Flycatcher | | 9 | 9 |
| Wood Pigeon | 18 | 4 | 22 | Long Tailed Tit | 133 | | 133 |
| Barn Owl | 5 | 15 | 20 | Marsh Tit | 12 | | 12 |
| Little Owl | 5 | | 5 | Willow Tit | 14 | | 14 |
| Tawny Owl | 14 | 4 | 18 | Coal Tit | 90 | | 90 |
| Cuckoo | 1 | | 1 | Blue Tit | 885 | 259 | 1144 |
| Swift | 9 | 10 | 19 | Great Tit | 412 | 275 | 687 |
| Kingfisher | 3 | | 3 | Treecreeper | 11 | | 11 |
| Wryneck | 1 | | 1 | Nuthatch | 6 | | 6 |
| Great Spotted | 22 | | 22 | Jay | 1 | | 1 |
| Woodpecker | | | | Magpie | 1 | 11 | 12 |
| Skylark | 1 | | 1 | Jackdaw | | 10 | 10 |
| Sand Martin | 4 | | 4 | Rook | 2 | | 2 |
| Swallow | 557 | 113 | 670 | Carriion Crow | 2 | | 2 |
| House Martin | 5 | | 5 | Starling | 255 | | 255 |
| Tree Pipit | 4 | | 4 | House Sparrow | 67 | 9 | 76 |
| Meadow Pipit | 55 | | 55 | Tree Sparrow | 253 | 37 | 290 |
| Pied Wagtail | 1 | 6 | 7 | Chaffinch | 295 | 22 | 317 |
| Waxwing | 17 | | 17 | Brambling | 10 | | 10 |
| Wren | 82 | | 82 | Greenfinch | 205 | | 205 |
| Dunnoek | 140 | | 140 | Goldfinch | 94 | 5 | 99 |
| Robin | 135 | 13 | 148 | Siskin | 42 | | 42 |
| Wheatear | 2 | | 2 | Linnet | | 24 | 24 |
| Blackbird | 251 | 75 | 326 | Lesser Redpoll | 21 | | 21 |
| Fieldfare | 30 | | 30 | Bullfinch | 108 | | 108 |
| Song Thrush | 26 | 20 | 46 | Yellowhammer | 18 | 19 | 37 |
| Redwing | 19 | | 19 | Reed Bunting | 225 | 5 | 230 |
| Mistle Thrush | 3 | | 3 | Totals | 6744 | 1211 | 7955 |

Some 60% of the ringing was carried out by members* of the Huddleston & Jackson partnership. The group's work is greatly enhanced by financial support from Natural England. The main ringing sites and the focus of activities are as follows.

* Robin Arundale, Steve Huddleston, Mike Jackson, Fallon Mahon, Karen McDiarmid, Lucy Mugatroyd, Ian Nicholson, Craig Ralston, David Tate, Jean Thorpe and Paul Thorpe.

Lower Derwent Valley NNR – trapping, mainly at Wheldrake Ings and North Duffield Carrs, accounts for virtually all the wildfowl and waders (plus Meadow Pipits, Sedge and Reed Warblers) caught in 2013 as well as over 100 each of Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler and Reed Bunting. The reserve is one of the 18 UK ringing stations supported by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and during 2013 notable proportions of the national total of Wigeon (40%), Teal (30%) and Shelduck (20%) were caught. Whooper Swans were captured with the aid of a canon net operated by Mark Fletcher on North Duffield Carrs. Due to adverse conditions, the number of ducklings ringed was below average, though the four Shoveler were the only ones caught in the UK during 2013. A focus on Greylag Geese and Mallard produced large numbers of both adults and young. The Mandarin was the second caught at the site.

The number of waders caught was also below average but included a sample of the staging Whimbrel and wintering Ruff along with five Green Sandpipers.

A student from York University ran a Tree Sparrow project at the Natural England base at Bank Island where over 100 birds were caught, and specialist tree climbers made 22 Grey Heron pulli available for ringing at the Thicket Priory colony.

Further details about ringing activities on the reserve may be accessed at <http://ldvnnr.blogspot.co.uk>.

Skipwith Common NNR – Although only 250 birds were ringed on the reserve in 2013 the total included six Jack Snipe, 20 Teal, 14 Garden Warblers, 39 winter-roosting Reed Buntings, a brood of five Spotted Flycatchers and the first Meadow Pipit for the site.

Farmland south of York – Both Barn Owl and Kestrel had a very poor breeding season during 2013 and as a result few pulli were ringed. Continued monitoring of open nests in eight hedges east of Riccall resulted in the ringing of almost 80 pulli – 22 Linnets (4% of the national total), 36 Whitethroats (6%) and 19 Yellowhammers (12%). Six pairs of Swift bred in accessible boxes at Riccall and produced ten young which were ringed before departure.

York and suburbs – Long-standing studies of Starlings (228 caught in 2013), Goldfinch, Blackbird and House Sparrow continue as well as nest box monitoring. Surprisingly, a Wryneck, almost certainly the first to be ringed in the recording area, was caught during a general ringing session (see entry page 64 and photo page 65).

Other sites – These include Stubb Wood, Acaster Malbis where breeding Blue and Great Tits are monitored, and migrant warblers which are trapped at Kirkby Wharfe.

Elsewhere, Chris Wright, who trains Leeds University students at private sites near Thorganby, supervised the ringing of 1,100 birds. Almost half of these were pre-migratory Swallows roosting in a maize field. In addition, most of the Fieldfares (27) and many of the Greenfinches (57), Blackbirds (47), Blackcaps (44) and Tree Sparrows (46) ringed in the recording area were caught at these sites. Other notable captures were 17 Waxwings and a Cuckoo.

Phil and Sarah Bone, who operate in areas around Haxby, Pocklington and Allerthorpe, processed 800+ birds including 73 Swallow and 37 Tree Sparrow pulli at a farm near Haxby, as well as 24 Siskins, four Willow Tits and three Kingfishers near Allerthorpe. At Stockton-on-the-Forest, Mark Fletcher ringed 600+ birds, notably 34 Swallow pulli, 87 Blackbirds and 30 Coal Tits. Smaller numbers were ringed by David Turner (151 at Hovingham, including 6 Yellowhammers), Hugh Brazier (128 in his back garden at Strensall, including 60 Greenfinches), staff at SHL (118 at Sand Hutton, including 38 Chaffinch), Jim Pewtress's group (84 at Sheriff Hutton) and by the Yorkshire Swan Rescue Hospital (nine Mute Swans at Selby).

Birds ringed during rehabilitation are not usually included in ringing totals. However, the two Gannets are reported for interest's sake. Both were grounded juveniles found during October and later cared for by Jean Thorpe (see entry for Gannet page 31). One was taken from a ploughed field at Malton and later died whilst the other, collected from a horse paddock at Warthill, was eventually released at Bempton.

Background to local ringing results

Probably the earliest ringing result from the York area relates to a Black-headed Gull pullus ringed on Skipwith Common on 4th June 1910 which was later recovered at Morpeth, Northumberland. Details of other historical recoveries are available on the BTO website where it covers North Yorkshire (replace GBNY with GBHU for that part of the recording area east of the river Derwent). Many of these results pre-date the formation of the YOC, e.g. the Peregrine which was ringed in Sweden during 1946 and found dead at Escrick in 1947. Some other results did not find a place in the YOC's annual reports, e.g. the Red-footed Falcon ringed in southern France on 28.07.84 which was hit by a car near Easingwold in early September. The bird was cared for and then released only to be found dead in Dumfries a few days later.

Ringling results for 2013

Highlights of the 2013 ringing results for the recording area are shown in Table 2 and further details may be accessed on the BTO website.

Table 2: selected ringing recoveries in 2013

| Species | Place ringed | Date | Recovered | Date | Distance/Age |
|---------------|------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Mute Swan | Derwent Ings | 18.03.96 | Dewsbury | 17.03.13 | 16yr 11m |
| Wigeon | NDC | 24.11.06 | R. Ob, Russia | 23.05.13 | 4,115km |
| Gadwall | Wheldrake Ings | 10.07.08 | N. Ireland | 03.01.13 | 363km |
| Teal | Skipwith Common | 14.09.11 | Karelia, Russia | 01.05.13 | 2,264km |
| Shoveler | Wheldrake Ings | 01.08.12 | S. France | 16.01.13 | 845km |
| BH Gull | Wheldrake Ings | 19.06.97 | Ripon | 08.03.13 | 15yr 8m |
| Barn Owl | Warthill | 12.07.02 | Scrayingham | 08.04.13 | 10y 8m |
| Swallow | Thorganby | 17.09.13 | Sussex | 23.09.13 | 346km |
| Blackcap | Hereford | 10.07.13 | New Earswick | 22.09.13 | 235km |
| Sedge Warbler | Wheldrake Ings | 21.08.13 | Dorset | 27.08.13 | 381km |
| Reed Warbler | Wheldrake Ings | 19.07.11 | S. France | 08.08.13 | 956km |
| Waxwing | Akershus, Norway | 25.11.12 | Shipton | 01.01.13 | 957km |
| Greenfinch | Thetford | 03.12.10 | Malton | 26.07.13 | 219km |
| Goldfinch | Allerthorpe | 21.07.12 | Hampshire | 10.03.13 | 313km |
| Siskin | New Earswick | 04.02.13 | Denmark | 15.04.13 | 765km |

The future

The BTO is increasingly encouraging ringers to focus on local population studies and join its 'Constant Effort Site' or 'Re-trapping Adults for Survival' schemes. Although none of this work currently takes place in the recording area, some population-based projects have been developed and it will be interesting to see the results of this work.

Finally, an analysis of previous ringing data may provide a historical context for survey work planned by the YOC. For example, the number of Willow Tits caught as a proportion of the total annual catch has been:

| Year | 1980 | 1991 | 2000 | 2013 |
|----------|------|------|------|------|
| Percent. | 0.80 | 0.53 | 0.37 | 0.17 |

The steady decline appears to mirror the number of reported sightings in the recording area.

Allerthorpe Gravel Pits 2013

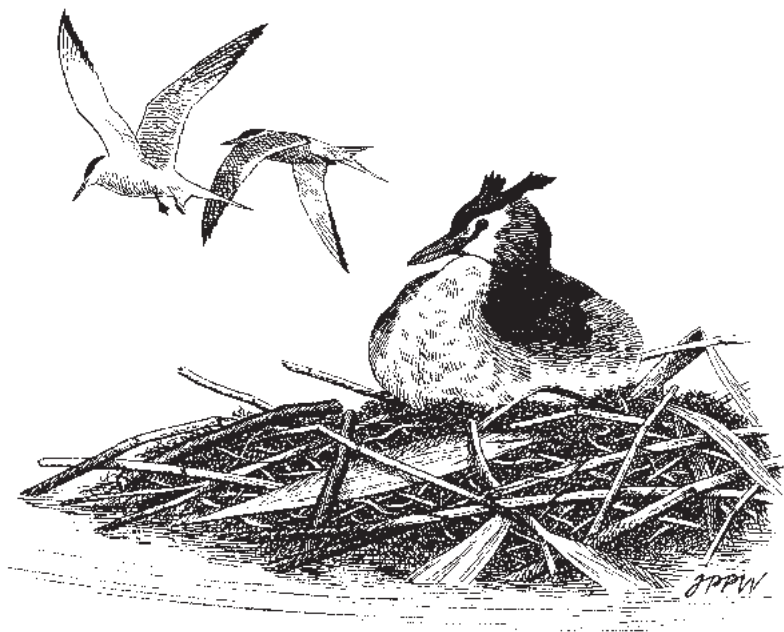
Phil Bone

After the washout of the previous year, 2013 started very quietly with very few winter thrushes about and finch numbers low, with just occasional small parties of Siskin and Lesser Redpoll noted. There were just two records of Brambling; there were two birds on 20th January and a lone bird on 13th April. Red Kite is becoming more common in the area, with several spring sightings this year, including birds drifting over the nearby town of Pocklington and with regular sightings of birds just outside the YOC recording area at Hayton (and elsewhere), hopefully a reflection of how good the population is doing on the Wolds; long may it continue. There were several sightings of birds over the Gravel Pits, including two very low birds on 17th February.

Survey work on site (Common Bird Census) showed that most of our resident birds were starting to recover from the wet summer of 2012, though populations were still lower than normal and were not yet back up to their pre-2012 level. An example of this is Wren with a population of 13 pairs in 2011, six in 2012 and nine pairs in 2013. It was also a better year for some of our warblers too with ten pairs of Chiffchaff present in 2011, falling to just five in 2012 and then back up to a more respectable nine in 2013, and Blackcap showed a similar pattern, with nine pairs in 2011, five in 2012 and eight pairs in 2013.

After an absence of many years it was great to see that Grey Partridge may be making a come back in the area. First noted in May a pair took up residence and were seen on and off all summer. Other highlights include a Turtle Dove heard purring on 9th June, the first one we have had on site in three years.

While it felt like a very quiet summer with little bird activity, many species had a good breeding season, with successful breeding confirmed for both Tawny Owl and Sparrowhawk. The Great Crested Grebes also seem to have had a good breeding season; for the first time two pairs bred on site and managed to raise five young between them. Elsewhere two pairs of Great Crested Grebes also bred at the nearby Lakeland Park, though not as successfully. At least one other bird was resident at Waplington Hall but with limited vision from the road the presence of pair in this area could not be confirmed. Tufted Duck also seemed to have enjoyed a good breeding season with three broods this year on the Gravel Pits and two on the Lakeland Park.



The final half of the year was very quiet; there was clearly more natural food around over the autumn and winter and, with the mild weather, fewer birds had needed to resort to bird feeders. There were no roosts of any size noted and there were hardly any Redpolls or Siskins around. The only winter visitor of note was a passage Brambling on 9th November. That day there was clear evidence of autumn passage, with small parties of Redwing and finches also noted moving overhead.

What may have been the highlight of the year was a large white bird, similar in size to Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, seen on several dates standing on some of the islands by the site owners. Present on and off from the end of September and into October, could this have been the Great White Egret from the LDV? Another one that gets away!

Phil Bone

[Note, Allerthorpe GP is a site with no public access; please respect this. Allerthorpe Lakeland Park is open to the public.]

Yellow-browed Warbler 1st November 1996

1st record for the YOC area

Jono Leadley

November 1st 1996 was cool and overcast and mid-morning I decided to have a wander across the fields into Askham Bog (YWT reserve) from my parents' house in Woodthorpe. It was nice to see the old patch once again having spent the last few years at university in Norfolk. Six Red-legged Partridges were in the fields on the way in, but otherwise just the usual host of tits and finches, plus a Great Spotted Woodpecker greeted me.

I headed into the bog and suddenly heard the distinctive loud disyllabic 'tees-weest' of a Yellow-browed Warbler. Blimey – did I imagine that? But no, the call came again from close by. Panic! Long-tailed Tits appeared and then there it was, a tiny green and white sprite on the edge of a large Blackthorn bush! I had seen many Yellow-brows before but always on the coast and an eastern vagrant in the York area was simply amazing. With shaking hands I tried as calmly as I could to savour the moment.

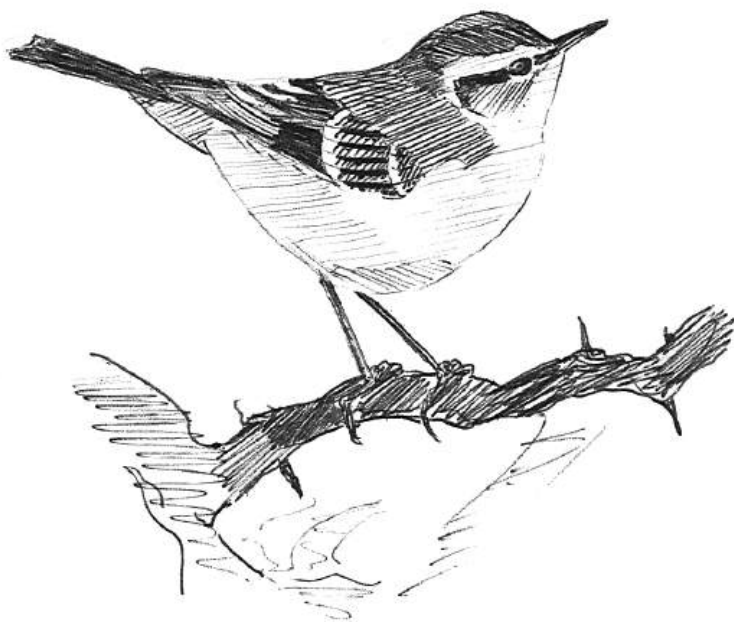
After I had watched the bird for about 15 minutes, soaking up the experience and noting down all the key identification features, it moved off. This was in the days before mobile phones so I decided I should get back to my parents' house to alert other birders and put the news out. I was called shortly afterwards by Birdline Northeast who asked if I had ruled out Hume's Warbler, which at the time was considered a subspecies of Yellow-browed Warbler. I had indeed done this based on call and general bright appearance, with nice crisp wingbars and tertial edges. I headed back in later when I found another local birder searching for the warbler but neither of us managed to relocate the bird. Undoubtedly it was still present but with the vast amount of cover in the bog and few pairs of eyes looking, it wasn't surprising that it had slipped away. The following day, I headed back to university and the record though written up in my notebook, never surfaced again until recently, though the experience has not been forgotten!

From my notebook:

'Seen with c.20 Long-tailed Tits feeding actively in Blackthorn bushes near Pheasant enclosure on the northern edge of the Bog. Located on distinctive call, loosely associating with tit flock and moved off with them. Watched for 15–20 minutes. Classic individual of nominate race being bright green above and greyish white below, with disyllabic call.'

Upperparts olive-green, crown, mantle and rump all same colour. Slightly paler crown stripe, not as obvious as on some individuals I have seen. Broad lemon supercilium contrasting with dark eyestripe and mottled grey cheeks. Underparts: yellowish wash on throat, rest dirty off white-grey. Wings: broad yellow wingbar on greater coverts most obvious feature, followed by second wingbar and pale edges to tertials and secondaries. Dark base to secondaries appeared as a block like on 'crests. Tail, legs and bill as usual. Very active and quite confiding. Despite extensive searching failed to relocate it after leaving to put the news out. The first record for the York area!'

Jono Leadley



Sketch of the Yellow-browed Warbler from Jono Leadley's notebook

Colour-ringing in the Lower Derwent Valley NNR

Craig Ralston

Under the national ringing scheme administered by the BTO, licensed ringers in the UK catch and fit birds with small uniquely numbered metal rings bearing the address of either the BTO, or previously, of the Natural History Museum. These rings have formed the basis of the ringing scheme for over a century and have provided much information on the movements, longevity and ecology of both our resident and migratory birds. However, the use of these rings largely involves the recapture of these individuals again by other ringers, either in this country or abroad, or of ringed birds being found dead or dying by members of the public and the ring numbers reported. Clearly this has some limitations – both on the birds being found and reported (perhaps as many as 1 in 10 ringed Mute Swans being found and reported but as few as 1 in 500 Wrens being found in a similar vein) but also in that this data only gives us two ‘moments in time’ of an individual bird’s life: where and when it was ringed, and where it was when it was found. Seldom do we get information that tells us where it has been in the meantime, what it might have been doing at those sites, how long it might have stayed at some sites, and whether it was a one-off or part of a pattern used by many birds.

The use of colour-rings has greatly improved the reporting rate of ringed birds, with us just not relying on the recaptures by other bird ringers or reports of dead or dying individuals. Now anyone, especially with a pair of binoculars, can in fact become amateur bird researchers adding to the unravelling of migration and other avian mysteries. Recording the legs and sequences of colour-rings, and the numbers or letters on larger colour-rings can provide that ‘missing piece of the jigsaw’ in our knowledge of bird movements.

Colour-ringing in the Lower Derwent Valley

Colour-ringing in the LDV NNR started in 1992 when a project began which involved fitting Mute Swans with colour-rings in the York area (see the 1992 YOC report for a short account). Since then colour-ringing has expanded to cover several other species:

Whooper Swan: Joint WWT project – yellow or orange rings with a 3 character black alpha-numeric code

Mute Swan: Joint Swan Study Group project – red rings with three white numbers

Grey Heron: Yellow ring above the knee with two black letters or numbers

Shelduck: Black ring with two white letters

Gadwall/Shoveler/Mallard/Garganey/Tufted Duck: One or two colour-rings and a metal ring

Coot/Moorhen: three colour-rings and a metal ring

Lapwing/Redshank/Curlew/Snipe/Whimbrel: three or four colour-rings and a metal ring

Note: rings may be fitted on either or both leg(s), above and/or below the 'knee'.

So, what can a little bit of plastic tell us?

The Lower Derwent Valley NNR is one of only a handful of sites in the UK which specialises in ringing waterfowl, and particularly in catching and ringing UK bred ducklings. As a result the information we can gather from this small national sample is even more valuable, and hopefully by adding colour-rings we can maximise the chances of getting multiple re-sightings of individual birds.

The ease with which large colour-rings (such as those fitted to Whooper Swans) can be read has helped show that the population in the LDV NNR is constantly turning over, both within and between winters. Although the wintering herd of Whooper Swans may typically peak at 100 birds, the presence of colour-ringed birds in the herd, along with counts and assessments of family parties have shown that perhaps as many as 500 different birds use the valley during an average winter. It has also shown that birds are often only site faithful to the LDV NNR for one or two winters before moving onto other wintering sites, which we now know include the Ouse Washes, Martin Mere and Caerlaverock WWT centres.

We know from metal BTO rings that many of our local-bred ducklings move south into France during the late autumn and early winter (when we typically get the information back after they are shot). Since colour-ringing began we have been able to show that Tufted Ducks at least move from the valley, with three individuals being seen at Castle Howard Lake. The information on most of our metal BTO ringed Shelducks has come from Martin Mere WWT (where they take two or three catches a winter) but colour-ring sightings have further highlighted a westerly movement, often into Ireland, during the winter period.

Colour-rings have also proved to be invaluable in helping to answer some of the questions surrounding our nationally important spring Whimbrel staging site; we now know that:



Colour-ringed birds in the LDV (anti-clockwise from top) Tufted Duck, Whimbrel, Grey Heron and Black-tailed Godwit (ringed outside of the LDV).

Photos courtesy the LDV Team

- Each bird tends to stay in the valley for several days re-fuelling
- Individual birds appear at the roost site in subsequent years on very similar dates
- Birds have a limited number of feeding sites off the protected designated site on which they depend.

This information can then be fed into actions to help conservation measures, either at a local level of site management and agri-environment scheme targeting and delivery, or at the national and international flyway level. So please help us to help our local (and not so local) birds by looking out for colour-ringed birds and reporting them to us – we'll be able to let you have the known life histories of these birds.

Some further examples of knowledge gained from colour-ringing

Black-necked Grebe (FP70695) Ringed NDC 25th May 2004,
Farnham Gravel Pits (Knaresborough) 2nd June 2004, Wheldrake
Ings 4th April 2005.

Black-necked Grebe (FP70696) Ringed NDC (pullus) 25th May 2004,
NDC 5th April 2005, NDC 10th April 2006.

Extending knowledge of site fidelity.

Barnacle Goose (CA25524) Ringed Oienkukla, Bohemananflya,
Svarlbard (juvenile) 10th August 1990, Caelaverock WWT 29th
October 1990, Caelaverock WWT 4th December 1990, shot 5th
January 1991 LDV.

Barnacle Goose (CA27019) Ringed Oienkukla, Bohemananflya,
Svarlbard 10th August 1990, Caelaverock WWT 29th October 1990,
Caelaverock WWT 4th December 1990, shot 5th January 1991 LDV.

Two birds, adult and a juvenile, shot out of Canada Goose flock showing not
all LDV Barnacles are from York University, even when with Canada Geese.

Craig Ralston

Senior Reserve Manager, LDV

Contact:

Email: Craig.Ralston@naturalengland.org.uk

Post: NE Office, Bank Island, Church Lane, Wheldrake, York YO19 6FE (or
in person)

Log Books: in hides at Bank Island, North Duffield Carrs and Wheldrake Ings

When submitting records please give full details of any colour rings seen (left
or right leg, above or below 'knee', and the order (e.g. 'red below yellow').
Metal rings can also be read on occasion (usually with a telescope).

The Birds of Allerthorpe Common

Ian Andrews

Introduction

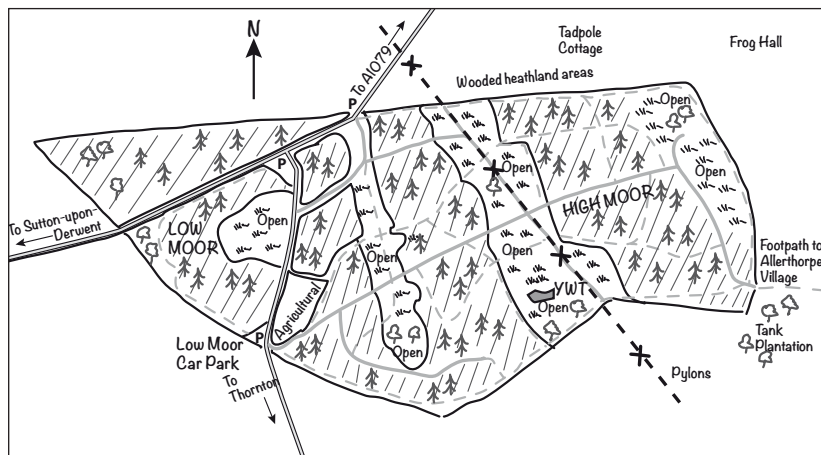
Allerthorpe Common (SE7647) lies about ten miles southeast of York, on the edge of the Vale of York. It used to be a wild place, known for its breeding species like Curlew, Nightjar and Whinchat. They were attracted to an area which was a mix of heather, cotton grass bog and bare sandy patches, all sprinkled with conifers and much birch scrub. Once part of a wild area stretching down to North Cliffe and across to Holme-Upon-Spalding Moor, it must have been quite a remote place, rich in wildlife, and for the first half of the 20th century attracted not only ornithologists, but also leading botanists, dipterists and hymenopterists of their time. Unfortunately, when the Lord of the Manor and the commoners looked to sell their rights to the Forestry Commission in the early 1960s, it seems that many of those same naturalists who had visited the site failed to stand up and protest about the sale. Consequently, the site was sold, drained and densely planted with Scots and Corsican Pines; and it changed for ever. Just 12 acres remained as an oasis within the plantations, and today's Yorkshire Wildlife Trust reserve is a glimpse of what the whole site must once have been. Work by the Forestry Commission over the last few years, right up to summer 2014, has opened up the woods by removing much of the Corsican Pine and clearing more small blocks here and there, so far more light now enters the previously dark plantations, to the great benefit of all wildlife.

The following account is based upon the author's visits to the site over 15 years, including ringing on site since 2009.

Access to Allerthorpe Common

Most visitors to the site will park at the Low Moor car park and enter across the road. In winter, the car park itself can be a good place to see common birds like Chaffinch and Reed Bunting, but also Marsh and Willow Tit and Tree Sparrow, all attracted to seed put out for the birds by some of the regulars (the presence of rats, though, has recently led to the FC putting up signs in an attempt to stop this practice). Across the road, to the left of the entrance gate, is a small field which is sometimes ploughed, but remains herb-rich grassland; it is not unusual to see a Barn Owl hunting for voles here, early on summer mornings. The general

area from here up the main track for a couple of hundred yards is a good spot to listen for Crossbills. The number of these varies, but the Common usually holds a few birds, and if there is a large irruption, then July onwards can see good numbers around (over a hundred sometimes), with many staying through the winter and occasionally breeding in the quieter areas, in early spring.



Map of Allerthorpe Common based on an original sketch by Ian Andrews

Following the main track, the first clearing is a good area for small birds in spring through to autumn. The area on the right, at the back, has dense sallow and birch scrub; in spring this can be alive with the song of warblers, and Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Blackcap and Garden Warbler all breed here. The areas of bracken and birch scrub closer to the track are good habitat for breeding Whitethroat, though the FC have recently started spraying the bracken and birch saplings in an attempt to remove them (ongoing at summer 2014), so such habitat may give way to heather and grasses over the next couple of years.

Continuing along the track brings you to the main cross-track underneath the pylons. The Forestry Commission has done a lot of clearance in this area; the intention is to keep it open and to encourage regrowth of heather. It is a good area to stand awhile and watch the birds moving from one part of the Common to another. On early spring mornings, Sparrowhawk and Buzzard circle up above and Red Kites are not infrequently seen, drifting across from the Wolds. Green Woodpeckers are usually around and it is a great spot for listening for Woodlark on bright mornings from mid-February onwards. Sometimes,



Pines alongside the main track near Low Moor car park attract Crossbills most years.
All photos: Ian Andrews

Restored lowland heath at the Eastern side of the Common.



they sing from the pylons above, but they can be hard to pinpoint as the song resounds from the blocks of trees or drifts across from other clearings. Management of this area has taken down much of the birch scrub and gorse in recent years, but what remains is still used as a roost site by finches and buntings. A late afternoon visit in winter, a couple of hours before dusk, sees flocks of Linnet and Redpoll gathering in the

high birches before dropping into the gorse to roost. The area of gorse just inside the YWT reserve is a favourite spot, though they do move about depending on disturbance by dog walkers. Up to 300 Linnet have been counted in recent winters and up to 100 Lesser Redpoll, usually with numbers of Yellowhammer and Reed Bunting, roosting in nearby scrubby sallows. A few pairs of Linnet breed here, but otherwise they leave the Common after roosting. In contrast, many Lesser Redpoll remain on the Common and can often be seen on the ground feeding on birch and heather seeds in the YWT reserve. In winter, Mealy Redpolls are usually present in small numbers; occasionally in larger numbers, as in 2011 when over 70 were around for a few weeks in January and February, accompanied by a probable Coues's Arctic Redpoll.

The track heading north under the pylons towards a lone picnic table at the top end is a good area for migrants in autumn. Ringing has shown that numbers of warblers roost on the Common and that they follow an early morning route through the trackside sallows here. In July and August, up to about 09:00, the bushes can be alive with the common warblers, often with the odd Lesser Whitethroat, or out-of-habitat Reed or Sedge Warbler. Single Redstart and Pied Flycatcher have both been seen in recent years as well. At the very northern end of this pylon ride, the ploughed field alongside the Common is a very good area to watch Woodlark in early spring, as they feed on the ground at quite close range; three or four are often seen together.

Just to the south of the main cross tracks, the YWT reserve itself attracts the odd Tree Pipit and Woodlark to sing in the spring and the pond and wet area adjacent often attract a few Snipe and Teal in winter, to accompany the usual Mallard and Moorhen. In a dry late summer, Crossbills are attracted to the pond here and can be seen very well in the birches beside it.

Carrying on from the central crosstracks, the track heading East through High Moor leads to a large open area with heather, which after heavy rain becomes waterlogged and is very attractive to Snipe. Meadow Pipit and Reed Bunting favour this area in winter. There is a small pool which retains water through most of the year and so draws birds in to drink. Surrounded by a couple of pines and a few mature birches, it is also a good spot to see Crossbills when they are around, especially if most of the Common is dry. As this open area adjoins the private SSSI at Frog Hall, it forms the largest area of open lowland heath on the site and the least disturbed by dog walkers. It is therefore the best place to watch for birds like Woodcock on late spring evenings, when several birds can be seen roding at the same time. The spring of

2014 saw Nightjar back on site, and this is the area to listen for them. The Common itself probably has far too much disturbance from dogs for Nightjars to breed, but if they can find a quiet spot to breed outside the Common, then the recent clearances have produced very good conditions for them to feed, with no dense blocks of pines remaining and more areas cleared. In winter, Merlin have been seen here a couple of times, dashing low across the heather. It is also a good spot to see the large movement of corvids which passes across the Common late on winter afternoons, heading for a roost to the southwest; often they form a pre-roost in the pines on the Common or at Frog Hall before carrying on. Several hundred Rooks and Jackdaws are involved every day.

A walk back to the car park can take in the southern boundary of the Common, where the fields alongside often have rank vegetation, attractive to finches and buntings; or fields of short grass, attractive to pipits and wagtails; or even fields of pigs, when the associated mud and wet areas sometimes attract Green Sandpiper in winter or on passage.

Bird Ringing on Allerthorpe Common

Ringing started on the Common in 2009, concentrating on the warblers which were breeding in the dense birch scrub in the central clearings. It was proving useful in terms of monitoring local breeding birds and birds passing through. The following totals were ringed over three years, just using a couple of 60ft nets.

| | July | August | Total |
|--------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Sedge Warbler | | 1 | 1 |
| Reed Warbler | | 1 | 1 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | | 2 | 2 |
| Whitethroat | 76 | 88 | 164 |
| Garden Warbler | 39 | 36 | 75 |
| Blackcap | 33 | 47 | 80 |
| Chiffchaff | 66 | 219 | 285 |
| Willow Warbler | 114 | 268 | 382 |

The actual numbers of warblers passing through the whole Common must be very high indeed each autumn, as visits were made every four or five days and not many retraps were caught between sessions. A few recoveries of ringed birds have been made, the most interesting being that of a young Garden Warbler (X858802) ringed at 5am on 3rd August

2009 and then recovered in Ashanti, Ghana on 15th February 2011, shot by a young boy with a catapult and taken in to his school to show to his teacher – an unfortunate end for the bird, but a great shot with a catapult! The bird presumably travelled the distance of 5,243km at least three times in its life. The totals of birds ringed, which give an idea of the species using the Common, were:

| | Full grown | Re- traps | Total | | Full grown | Re- traps | Total |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| Kestrel | 1 | 0 | 1 | Willow Tit | 9 | 11 | 20 |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | 1 | 0 | 1 | Coal Tit | 108 | 10 | 118 |
| Wren | 113 | 8 | 121 | Blue Tit | 67 | 27 | 94 |
| Dunnock | 40 | 6 | 46 | Great Tit | 54 | 17 | 71 |
| Robin | 90 | 18 | 108 | Treecreeper | 6 | 0 | 6 |
| Blackbird | 30 | 3 | 33 | Jay | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Song Thrush | 11 | 2 | 13 | Chaffinch | 21 | 0 | 21 |
| Sedge Warbler | 1 | 0 | 1 | Goldfinch | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Reed Warbler | 1 | 0 | 1 | Linnet | 72 | 4 | 76 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 1 | 0 | 1 | Common Redpoll | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| Whitethroat | 172 | 26 | 198 | Lesser Redpoll | 142 | 2 | 144 |
| Garden Warbler | 78 | 13 | 91 | Redpoll (Common/ Lesser) | 16 | 0 | 16 |
| Blackcap | 91 | 10 | 101 | Bullfinch | 103 | 25 | 128 |
| Chiffchaff | 341 | 75 | 416 | Yellowhammer | 29 | 3 | 32 |
| Willow Warbler | 398 | 37 | 435 | Reed Bunting | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Goldcrest | 120 | 4 | 124 | Grand Total: | 2281 | 359 | 2640 |
| Long-tailed Tit | 138 | 55 | 193 | Total Species: | 33 | 21 | 33 |
| Marsh Tit | 10 | 3 | 13 | | | | |



Whitethroats breed widely across the Common in scrubby clearings.



The thin 'seep' of Goldcrests is one of the sounds of autumn across the Common.

Unfortunately, the large-scale forestry work which has gone on over the last two years brought the ringing to an end in 2012, but it will carry on once this work is finished.

The wider picture

One of the joys of the site is the wealth of other wildlife which can be observed. Botanically, there are a lot of locally rare plants still to be seen, with Bog Pimpernel, May Lily, Common Wintergreen, Bird's-foot, Water Purslane and Sand Spurrey just a few of the unusual species to be found near the YWT reserve without leaving the paths. The Rare Plant Register for South-East Yorkshire (VC61) lists 33 species found on the Common, out of a total of 175 for the Vice County. Bees and wasps abound and the Common is still considered as one of Yorkshire's 'excellent' sites for aculeate Hymenoptera, with 108 species recorded at the last survey in 2008. Among the True Flies or Diptera, with over 300 species recorded since 2010, this is one of the best places in the north for the large and raptorial Robberflies, which sit on vegetation and fly out to seize other insects in flight. It is also an excellent site for the normally scarce Thick-headed Flies, which in a split second can land on the back of a flying bumblebee and deposit an egg inside the bee's abdomen, which the hatched larva eventually eats away from the inside. Approaching 100 species of hoverfly have been recorded here in the last few years too. Dragonflies can be spectacular in a damp summer when the Common holds water and Black Darter, uncommon locally, can be seen around the heathy pools. Moths are well studied and include some unusual heathland species like Clouded Buff, Marbled White Spot and Grass Wave (to name a very few!). Butterflies often include the odd Marbled White, presumably straying across from the Wolds.

Adders are well known here, of course, and far more people visit the Common to look for these than do for birds. They are widespread across the site, not just around the YWT reserve. Common Lizards live up to their name and Slow Worms are seen occasionally.

It is this mix which makes a visit to Allerthorpe interesting. It will never be the wild place it once was, and as the local population grows it will only get more busy, so it is unlikely that Nightjar, Whinchat and Long-eared Owl will breed again on the Common, as they did up to the early 1980s. However, a visit outside of peak times can certainly give the chance of some good heathland birding and wildlife watching – and you can be fairly sure that you will be the only person there with a pair of binoculars.

Ian Andrews

Species in the York recording area since 1966

This is a list of species recorded in the YOC area since 1966. Uncommon birds are marked in **bold**. Species for which the YNU requires descriptions are marked *. Species considered by BBRC are marked † and *all* require descriptions. Regular breeding birds are marked **B** and occasional breeders (**B**). Regular winter visitors are marked **W** and regular passage migrants **P** while regular non-breeding summer visitors are marked **S**. Brackets indicate species of dubious origin or subspecies.

This report uses the version of the British List, revised and updated as a result of taxonomic changes, as at January 2013. These changes include revisions to the order of species, changes to the names (English and scientific) of species and includes the most recent splits (of races into full species). The list below reflects this order of species. Recent taxonomic changes mean that auks and terns now precede gulls. If anyone can think of any species which should have been included in this list then please contact the YOC Recorder.

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Mute Swan B | Mallard B |
| Bewick's Swan W | Pintail (B) |
| Whooper Swan W | Garganey B |
| Bean Goose W * | Blue-winged Teal † |
| Pink-footed Goose P | Shoveler B |
| White-fronted Goose | Red-crested Pochard |
| (Lesser White-fronted Goose) † | Common Pochard (B) |
| Greylag Goose B | Ring-necked Duck |
| (Snow Goose) | Ferruginous Duck * |
| Canada Goose B | Tufted Duck B |
| Barnacle Goose | Greater Scaup |
| Brent Goose | Common Eider |
| (Egyptian Goose) | Long-tailed Duck |
| (Ruddy Shelduck) | Common Scoter |
| Common Shelduck B | Velvet Scoter |
| Mandarin Duck B | (Barrow's Goldeneye) † |
| (Wood Duck) † | Common Goldeneye W |
| Eurasian Wigeon (B) | Smew |
| American Wigeon * | Red-breasted Merganser |
| Gadwall B | Goosander (B) |
| Eurasian Teal B | Ruddy Duck B |
| Green-winged Teal | Common Quail (B) |

Red-legged Partridge B
 Grey Partridge B
 Common Pheasant B
 (Golden Pheasant)
 Red-throated Diver
 Black-throated Diver
 Great Northern Diver
 Fulmar
 Manx Shearwater
 European Storm-petrel
 Leach's Storm-petrel
 Northern Gannet
 Cormorant B
 Shag
 Bittern (B)?
 Night Heron *
 Cattle Egret †
 Little Egret (B)
 Great White Egret *
 Grey Heron B
 Purple Heron *
 Black Stork *
 White Stork
 Spoonbill
 Little Grebe B
 Great Crested Grebe B
 Red-necked Grebe
 Slavonian Grebe
 Black-necked Grebe (B)
 Honey Buzzard *
 Black Kite *
 Red Kite (B)
 Marsh Harrier (B)
 Hen Harrier
 Montagu's Harrier *
 Goshawk B
 Sparrowhawk B
 Common Buzzard B
 Rough-legged Buzzard *
 Osprey P
 Kestrel B

Red-footed Falcon *
 Merlin
 Hobby (B)
 Peregrine B
 Water Rail B
 Spotted Crake (B)
 Corncrake (B)
 Moorhen B
 Coot B
 Common Crane (B)
 Stone Curlew
 Black-winged Stilt †
 Avocet (B)
 Oystercatcher B
 American Golden Plover *
 European Golden Plover W
 Grey Plover
 Lapwing B
 Little Ringed Plover B
 Ringed Plover B
 Kentish Plover *
 Dotterel
 Whimbrel P
 Curlew B
 Black-tailed Godwit (B)
 Bar-tailed Godwit
 Turnstone
 Knot
 Ruff (B)
 Curlew Sandpiper
 Temminck's Stint
 Sanderling
 Dunlin W & P
 Baird's Sandpiper? †
 Little Stint P
 White-rumped Sandpiper *
 Buff-breasted Sandpiper *
 Pectoral Sandpiper
 Red-necked Phalarope *
 Grey Phalarope
 Common Sandpiper (B)

Green Sandpiper P & W
 Spotted Redshank P
 Greenshank P
 Lesser Yellowlegs †
 Wood Sandpiper P
 Common Redshank B
 Jack Snipe W
 Woodcock B
 Common Snipe B
 Pomarine Skua
 Arctic Skua
 Great Skua
 Puffin
 Little Auk
 Common Guillemot
 Little Tern
 Caspian Tern †
 Whiskered Tern †
 Black Tern
 Sandwich Tern
 Common Tern B
 Roseate Tern
 Arctic Tern P
 Sabine's Gull
 Kittiwake
 Black-headed Gull B
 Little Gull
 Mediterranean Gull
 Common Gull W & P
 Ring-billed Gull *
 Lesser Black-backed Gull S & P
 Herring Gull W, P & B
 Yellow-legged Gull
 Caspian Gull *
 Iceland Gull (W)
 Glaucous Gull
 Great Black-backed Gull W
 'Feral Pigeon' B
 Stock Dove B
 Woodpigeon B
 Collared Dove B

Turtle Dove B
 (Ring-necked Parakeet)
 Common Cuckoo B
 Barn Owl B
 Little Owl B
 Tawny Owl B
 Long-eared Owl B
 Short-eared Owl (B)
 Nightjar B
 Common Swift B
 Alpine Swift *
 Common Kingfisher B
 European Bee-eater
 Hoopoe
 Wryneck
 Green Woodpecker B
 Great Spotted Woodpecker B
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker B
 Golden Oriole
 Red-backed Shrike
 Lesser Grey Shrike †
 Great Grey Shrike
 Magpie B
 Jay B
 Jackdaw B
 Rook B
 Carrion Crow B
 Hooded Crow
 Common Raven
 Goldcrest B
 Firecrest
 Blue Tit B
 Great Tit B
 Coal Tit B
 Willow Tit B
 Marsh Tit B
 Bearded Tit
 Wood Lark B
 Sky Lark B
 Sand Martin B
 Barn Swallow B

House Martin B
 Red-rumped Swallow *
 Cetti's Warbler
 Long-tailed Tit B
 Yellow-browed Warbler
 Wood Warbler (B)?
 Common Chiffchaff B
 (*Siberian Chiffchaff*)
 Willow Warbler B
 Blackcap B
 Garden Warbler B
 Barred Warbler
 Lesser Whitethroat B
 Common Whitethroat B
 Grasshopper Warbler B
 Sedge Warbler B
 Marsh Warbler *
 Reed Warbler B
 Waxwing
 Nuthatch B
 Treecreeper B
 Wren B
 Common Starling B
 Rose-coloured Starling
 Dipper (B)
 Ring Ouzel
 Blackbird B
 Fieldfare W & P
 Song Thrush B, W & P
 Redwing W & P
 Mistle Thrush B
 Spotted Flycatcher B
 Robin B
 Common Nightingale (B)
 Red-breasted Flycatcher
 Pied Flycatcher (B)?
 Black Redstart (B)

Common Redstart B
 Whinchat (B)?
 Stonechat B
 Northern Wheatear
 Dunnock B
 House Sparrow B
 Tree Sparrow B
 Yellow Wagtail B
 (*Blue-headed Wagtail*)
 Grey Wagtail B
 Pied Wagtail B
 (*White Wagtail*)
 Richard's Pipit
 Tree Pipit B
 Meadow Pipit B
 Rock Pipit P
 Water Pipit
 Chaffinch B
 Brambling W
 Greenfinch B
 Goldfinch B
 Siskin B
 Linnet B
 Twite
 Lesser Redpoll B
 Mealy Redpoll
 Arctic Redpoll *
 Common Crossbill B
 Bullfinch B
 Hawfinch (B)?
 Snow Bunting
 Lapland Bunting
 Yellowhammer B
 Cirl Bunting *
 Reed Bunting B
 Corn Bunting B

Guidelines for the submission of records

One of the most important functions of the York Ornithological Club is the publication of the Annual Report. The value of this publication depends on members submitting records of their sightings within the Club recording area. All members are encouraged to submit records, whatever their level of knowledge.

Records are received and split into sections which are distributed to the Assistant Editors who compile reports for their particular section:

Swans & Geese

Ducks

Game birds, divers, herons, egrets, storks & grebes

Raptors (ex. owls)

Crakes, rails, Moorhen, Coot & Common Crane

Waders

Skuas, terns and gulls

Doves, pigeons, owls, woodpeckers & shrikes

Crows, tits and larks

Martins, swallows & warblers

Waxwings to thrushes, flycatchers, chats & wheatears

Sparrows, wagtails & pipits

Finches & buntings

Introductions/Escapes

These are then returned to the Editor for editing and the addition of other features and illustrations before a final version of the report is produced.

In order to ease their task and speed up the production of the report please follow the guidelines given below.

1. Records should be submitted at the end of the year (or earlier in stages) and certainly by end of February following the relevant year to guarantee appearance in the Annual Report.
2. For each species, records should give the site and date with numbers of birds noted where possible. Counts are preferable to terms such as 'few', 'several' or 'many' as these terms are very subjective and actual numbers enable the comparison of populations between years. The counts do not have to be too accurate – approximate numbers will do. This particularly applies to flocks of birds such as wildfowl and waders.

3. Records of scarce or rare birds will need a description for consideration by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Reports Committee and, if necessary, the British Birds Rarities Committee. Descriptions should be submitted to the Recorder as soon as possible after the sighting, preferably by email to recorder@yorkbirding.org.uk. A list of species and subspecies needing written supporting evidence can be found elsewhere in this Report or contact the Recorder for guidelines or rarity forms. The importance of such descriptions for the validation of rare records cannot be overemphasized.
4. Please do not forget to include your contact details, particularly name and telephone number or email address, with your records.
5. Records should, preferably, be submitted in electronic format as attachments to an email. Ideally records should be compiled as an Excel spreadsheet using the customised spreadsheet, developed for YOC use, which can be downloaded from the YOC website www.yorkbirding.org.uk. Records for inclusion in the YOC Report should be submitted directly to the editor by email at editor@yorkbirding.org.uk.
6. Records submitted using the YOC spreadsheet may be in any order but if you submit records by any other means then we ask that your records follow the **new taxonomic order** issued by the British Ornithologists' Union – a revised list of species recorded in the YOC area since the Club's inception in 1966 can be found elsewhere in this Report (or contact the Recorder who can also supply a full list of British birds in the new order).

Submission of records using the YOC spreadsheet has the advantage that it allows records to be entered in any order, for example in date order, as they can subsequently be easily re-ordered into the correct taxonomic order required by the YOC Bird Report (and many other bird reports). Observers wishing to submit records other than as a spreadsheet should contact the editor to check for acceptability of other formats.

Note that news of recent sightings, descriptions of rarities etc. should continue to be submitted to the Recorder and/or circulated on the YOC newsgroup (see the YOC website) as previously, though caution should always be exercised over publicising records of rare breeding birds in the breeding season. Sensitive records can be submitted confidentially to the Recorder via the website.

The need for field descriptions

To enable us to present our reports with complete accuracy, contributors are reminded that records of certain species must be supported by descriptions taken in the field or as soon as possible after the sighting – preferably before reference to textbooks. The updated list given below is of species for which the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Reports Committee (YNU) require descriptions before acceptance for publication in their annual report. **It would help both the YOC Recorder and the YNU if descriptions were submitted as soon as possible after the sighting.** Forms for species considered by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) or the YNU can be obtained from the YOC Recorder or any YNU vice-county recorder.

In addition to species considered by the BBRC (which has now 'dropped' a number of more regular rarities from its remit), the following uncommon or difficult species/subspecies are those requiring descriptions for consideration by the YNU (as of 2014):

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| (Taiga) Bean Goose | Ring-billed Gull |
| (Tundra) Bean Goose (<i>in flight</i>) | Caspian Gull |
| Black Brant | Alpine Swift |
| American Wigeon | Woodchat Shrike |
| Ferruginous Duck | (Red-billed) Chough |
| Surf Scoter | (Greater) Short-toed Lark |
| White-billed Diver | Red-rumped Swallow |
| Wilson's Storm-petrel | Greenish Warbler |
| Cattle Egret | Radde's Warbler |
| Great White Egret | Dusky Warbler |
| Purple Heron | Dartford Warbler |
| Honey Buzzard | Subalpine Warbler |
| Black Kite | Melodious Warbler |
| White-tailed Eagle | Aquatic Warbler |
| Montagu's Harrier | Marsh Warbler |
| Rough-legged Buzzard | Tawny Pipit |
| Golden Eagle | Red-throated Pipit |
| Red-footed Falcon | Arctic Redpoll |
| American Golden Plover | Parrot Crossbill |
| Kentish Plover | Girl Bunting |
| White-rumped Sandpiper | Rustic Bunting |
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper | Little Bunting |
| Red-necked Phalarope (<i>in flight</i>) | |
| White-winged Black Tern | |

Additionally, contributors **are** asked to provide details to the YOC Recorder for the following species/subspecies:

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Bewick's Swan | Gannet |
| (Greenland) White-fronted Goose | Shag |
| Brent Goose – all races | (Great) Bittern |
| Green-winged Teal | Night Heron |
| Garganey | White Stork |
| Red-crested Pochard | Spoonbill |
| Ring-necked Duck | Red-necked Grebe |
| (Greater) Scaup | Slavonian Grebe |
| (Common) Eider | Black-necked Grebe |
| Long-tailed Duck | <i>(away from LDV)</i> |
| Velvet Scoter | Hen Harrier |
| Red-breasted Merganser | Goshawk |
| Red-throated Diver | Osprey |
| Black-throated Diver | Spotted Crake |
| Great Northern Diver | Corncrake |
| Fulmar | Common Crane |
| Manx Shearwater | Stone Curlew |
| European Storm-petrel | Dotterel |
| Leach's Storm-petrel | Bar-tailed Godwit |



Spotted Crake, a species for which a description needs to be submitted to the YOC Recorders

Knot
 Curlew Sandpiper
 Temminck's Stint
 Sanderling
 Purple Sandpiper
 Little Stint
 Pectoral Sandpiper
 Grey Phalarope
 Spotted Redshank
 Great Skua
 Pomarine Skua
 Arctic Skua
 Long-tailed Skua
 Puffin
 Razorbill
 Little Auk
 Little Tern
 Black Tern
 Sandwich Tern
 Roseate Tern
 Arctic Tern
 Sabine's Gull
 Kittiwake
 Little Gull
 Mediterranean Gull
 Yellow-legged Gull
 Ring-necked Parakeet
 Long-eared Owl
 Short-eared Owl
 Nightjar
 European Bee-eater
 Hoopoe

Wryneck
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker
 Golden Oriole
 Red-backed Shrike
 Great Grey Shrike
 Common Raven
 Firecrest
 Bearded Tit
 Wood Lark
 (away from breeding areas)
 Shore Lark
 Cetti's Warbler
 Yellow-browed Warbler
 Wood Warbler
 Barred Warbler
 Rose-coloured Starling
 Ring Ouzel
 Nightingale
 Red-breasted Flycatcher
 Pied Flycatcher
 Black Redstart
 Yellow Wagtail
 ('Blue-headed' race and
 'Channel' hybrid)
 Richard's Pipit
 Rock Pipit
 Water Pipit
 Twite
 Mealy (Common) Redpoll
 Hawfinch
 Snow Bunting
 Lapland Bunting

In addition, the Recorder may ask contributors to provide some supporting evidence for some species not listed here, taking into account such factors as observer experience, out-of-season occurrences and unusual or difficult plumages, etc. This will be at the Recorder's discretion and the list of species requiring descriptions is under constant review.

Note that if photographs showing key identification features are submitted of these species a field description may not be required (as long as details such as location, date, observer, etc. accompany the photographs).

Gazetteer of sites in the YOC recording area

All grid references within the YOC recording area refer to the 100km OS square SE so this is not included in the grid references given. Six figure grid references are provided for most sites but in many instances this simply identifies a larger area for which the grid reference is the approximate centre.

Most farms and woods are omitted (in the systematic list the nearest village is given for reference) unless particularly isolated, when they are included here, and street names are not listed except in rural areas where it might otherwise be difficult to locate the road referred to.

A

| | |
|---|--------|
| Acaster Aerodrome | 575428 |
| Acaster Malbis | 590455 |
| Acaster Selby | 574415 |
| Acklam | 785618 |
| Acomb, York | 5751 |
| Allerthorpe Common | 7547 |
| Allerthorpe Gravel Pits (also known as the Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe) | 7947 |
| Allerthorpe Lakeland Park | 780465 |
| Ampleforth | 583787 |
| Anchor Plain, Strensall | 6363 |
| Appleton Roebuck | 555423 |
| Askham Bog | 5748 |
| Aughton (Ings) | 7038 |

B

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Baldwins Bridge, Pocklington Canal | 740450 |
| Bank Island | 695452 |
| Barmby Moor | 776490 |
| Barthorpe | 774598 |
| Barton-le-Willows | 715632 |
| Beningbrough | 529578 |
| Beningbrough Hall | 516586 |
| Bielby | 789437 |
| Billbrough | 532468 |
| Bishopthorpe | 5947 |
| Bishop Wilton | 797553 |
| Bishop Wood | 5533 |
| Black Wood, Easingwold | 5467 |
| Bolton Percy | 532414 |
| Bootham Stray, York | 597548 |
| Bossall | 719607 |
| Bowthorpe Hall | 697331 |
| Brandsby | 589724 |
| Brayton | 601305 |
| Brayton Barff | 5830 |

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Breck's Lane, Strensall | 641612 |
| Brecks (The), Strensall | 648618 |
| Brighton | 709341 |
| Brind | 742310 |
| Brindley's Plantation | 742318 |
| Broomhill Plantation | 703449 |
| Bubwith bridge | 705364 |
| Bubwith Ings | 7037 |
| Bugthorpe | 773579 |
| Buttercrambe | 733582 |
| Buttercrambe Weir | 734585 |
| Butterwick | 732775 |
| Byland Abbey | 549790 |

C

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Calley Heath NR | 753498 |
| Canal Head, Pocklington | 798474 |
| Castle Howard Lake | 7170 |
| Cawood | 573377 |
| Cawton | 643767 |
| Church Fenton | 515370 |
| Church Bridge, Melbourne | 759445 |
| Claxton | 694602 |
| Cliffe | 662320 |
| Cliffe Common | 666339 |
| Clifton | 593532 |
| Clifton Backies NR, York | 596540 |
| Clifton Ings | 583531 |
| Clifton Park | 584533 |
| Coates Bridge, Pocklington Canal | 785453 |
| Coneysthorpe | 713713 |
| Coneysthorpe Banks Wood | 720725 |
| Copmanthorpe | 565469 |
| Cornborough Manor | 630671 |
| Cornfield NR, Rawcliffe | 579542 |
| Coxwold | 536772 |
| Crambe | 733649 |

Crambeck 738674
 Crayke 562705
 Crockey Hill 625466

D

Danesmead Copse, York 607497
 Designer Outlet, York 607477
 Dringhouses, York 580495
 Dunnington 671525
 Dunnington Common 6750

E

Easingwold 529698
 East Cottingwith 703425
 East Moor,
 Sutton-on-the-Forest 600644
 Ellerton (Ings) 700400
 Everingham (Park) 804426
 Elvington 700476
 Elvington Airfield 670480
 Elvington WTW 7048
 Escrick 631427
 Escrick Park 635418

F

Fangfoss 765533
 Fireman's Leap, New Earswick 609550
 Flamingoland 7780
 Flaxton 680624
 Foggathorpe 755377
 Foss Island, York 609520
 Fulford, York 610496
 Fulford Ings 608493
 Fulford Golf Course 624494
 Fulford Hall 606484
 Full Sutton 746555

G

Ganthorpe 689704
 Garganey Hide,
 North Duffield Carrs 698368
 Garrowby Hill 798567
 Gaterley 737696
 Geoff Smith Hide,
 North Duffield Carrs 696372
 Giles Lock,
 Pocklington Canal 795464
 Gilling (East/Park) 614770

Goosewood Caravan Park,
 Sutton-on-the-Forest 591631
 Great Barugh 750790
 Grimston 644514
 Grimston Bar (roundabout) 649516
 Grimston Moor 613744

H

Hagg Bridge 717452
 Harewood Whin 538518
 Hartrigg Oaks, York 608559
 Hassacarr NR 673518
 Haxby 609582
 Healaugh 500477
 Hemmingbrough 6730
 Heslington East,
 York University 6350-6450
 Heslington Tillmire, York 638475
 Heslington West,
 York University 6250
 Heslington, York 627504
 Hessay 524534
 High Catton 718538
 High Hutton 755685
 High Lodge, SHL 675586
 Hob Moor, York 585506
 Hogg's Pond, Dringhouses 581493
 Hollicarrs 626395
 Holtby 675542
 Hopgrove (roundabout) 642553
 Hovingham 667758
 Howardian Hills 5875-7568
 Howe Bridge 809761
 Howe Hill, Norton 803702
 Huby 566655
 Hull Road Park, York 620515
 Huntington, York 612550
 Huttons Ambo 763677

J

Jeffry Bog, Low Hutton 759667
 JRTNR, New Earswick 608548

K

Keldspring Crossing,
 Pocklington 786498
 Kelfield 594384
 Kennythorpe 790660
 Kexby 705511

Kilburn 504796
 Kirby Misperton 780794
 Kirkham Priory 736658
 Knapton 562522
 Knavesmire, York 594495

L

Langton 798671
 Langwith Stray, Heslington 650480
 Laytham 749395
 Leppington 763613
 Linton-on-Ouse 495607
 Loftsome Bridge 705301
 Long Marston 502512
 Low Carr, Sutton-on-the-Forest 600623
 Low Cattton 705538
 Lower Derwent Valley 7036-7046

M

Malton 785717
 Mausoleum, Castle Howard 727696
 Melbourne 753441
 Middlethorpe Ings 603486
 Melbourne Scamland 766437
 Meltonby 796525
 Milford Common 5332
 Millennium Bridge, York 603497
 Monks Cross, York 630550
 Moor Lane, Bishopthorpe 585470
 Moor Monkton 506569
 Moreby Wood 606428
 Moorlands 577588
 Mount Ferrant, Birdsall 796639
 Murton 650527

N

Naburn 599455
 Naburn Bridge 598467
 Naburn Marina 599462
 Naburn Sewage Works 601467
 Naburn Wood 609438
 Newburgh Priory (lake) 542767
 Newhay 661307
 Newton-on-Ouse 512599
 Newton Carr 740494
 Newton upon Derwent 720495
 New Earswick 609555
 North Duffield Carrs 695375

North Howden 7530
 Norton-on-Derwent 795710
 Nunnington (Hall) 667794
 Nursery Wood, SHL 678585

O

Osballdwick 633519
 Osgodby 641338
 Oswaldkirk, York 625790
 Oulston Reservoir 570745
 Oxtan 505431

P

Petersfield Farm, Bielby 793422
 Pocklington 802490
 Pocklington Airfield 793485
 Pocklington Canal 698426-800474
 Poppleton 560546
 Pretty Wood, Castle Howard 732690

R

Raker Lakes, Wheldrake 684463
 Rawcliffe Bar Country Park 577547
 Rawcliffe Ings 575544
 Rawcliffe Lake 586546
 Rawcliffe Meadows 577545
 Redhouse Reservoir 529575
 Redhouse Wood, Moor Monkton 520570
 Refuge, Wheldrake 708435
 Riccall 620380
 Roscarra 645316
 Rossmoor Park 722436
 Rowntree Park, York 604508
 Ruddins Ings 5456
 Ryther 550392
 Ryton 795757
 Ryton bridge (Riggs Road Bridge) 796754

S

Sand Hutton 695586
 Scackleton 650726
 Scagglethorpe Moor 5355
 Scamlands 766439
 Scoreby Lodge 684513
 Seaton Ross 780415
 Seavy Carr, Thornton 753451
 Selby 615324

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|------------------------------------|-----------|--|---------------|
| Sessions NR, New Earswick | 610548 | Towthorpe Civic | |
| Settrington House | 839702 | Amenity Site, York | 648586 |
| Sheriff Hutton | 655664 | Towthorpe Moor Lane, Strensall | 625585–663579 |
| Silburn Lock, Pocklington Canal | 797468 | Triangle Meadow, York | 604547 |
| Skewsby | 625710 | | |
| Skipwith | 657385 | U | |
| Skipwith Common | 6537 | Ulleskelf | 520400 |
| Skirpenbeck | 747570 | | |
| Sleights, Amotherby | 737758 | W | |
| Slingsby | 698750 | Walbut Lock, Pocklington Canal | 773442 |
| Slingsby Banks Wood | 698733 | Walbutts Sewage Works, Strensall | 646618 |
| South Duffield | 681335 | Walmgate Stray, York | 617505 |
| Stamford Bridge | 715555 | Waplington Hall, Allerthorpe | 776468 |
| Stearsby Hagg | 620720 | Warhill | 675555 |
| Steeton Whin | 520435 | Wash Dike, Skipwith Common | 662372 |
| Stillingfleet | 594410 | Wass Woods | 550796 |
| Stillington | 585678 | Welburn | 720680 |
| Stittenham | 679677 | Welburn Sewage Works | 714685 |
| Stockton on the Forest | 655561 | West Bank Park, York | 584512 |
| Stonegrave | 657777 | West Cottingwith Ings | 695419 |
| Storwood | 712442 | West Lilling | 648652 |
| Strensall | 633608 | West Ness | 690790 |
| Strensall Common | 6460–6661 | Westow | 7565 |
| St Nicholas Fields, York | 615517 | Wheldrake | 682450 |
| Stubb Wood | 585433 | Wheldrake Ings | 7043 |
| Sutton-on-the-Forest | 584647 | Wheldrake Wood | 6546 |
| Sutton upon Derwent | 707468 | Whitehill Mine | 667359 |
| Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings | 707438 | White Carr, Flaxton | 663603 |
| Swinton | 760731 | Whitwell Grange | 715666 |
| Swinton Ings | 772748 | Wiganthorpe | 662724 |
| | | Wigginton | 595585 |
| T | | Wilberfoss | 734510 |
| Tang Hall Beck fields | 6353 | Winchmore, Stamford Bridge | 727547 |
| Tang Hall, York | 620520 | Wistow | 594357 |
| Terrington | 670707 | Woodhouse Grange | 733470 |
| Terrington Moor | 685716 | World's End Plantation Strensall Common | 6659 |
| The Retreat, York | 617510 | Wressle | 708313 |
| Thorganby | 691420 | | |
| Thorganby Ings | 6941 | Y | |
| Thormanby | 495747 | Yearsley | 585744 |
| Thornton | 760453 | Yearsley Moor | 5875–6076 |
| Thornton Ellers | 730460 | York Minster | 603523 |
| Tockwith | 465525 | | |
| Tollerton | 513643 | | |
| Towthorpe | 625586 | | |



