

YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB REPORT 2016

**Published by the York Ornithological Club
2017**



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Printed and bound by
ColourOptions Ltd, York

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Artwork

The following drawings by Nigel Stewart appeared in earlier reports and are included here in his memory:

Osprey, Avocet, Bar-tailed Godwit and Pied Wagtail

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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 a range of habitats: wetlands (the Lower Derwent Valley), deciduous woodland (Hambleton and Howardian Hills), coniferous woodland (Yearsley and Ampleforth), lakes (Castle Howard and Heslington East), residual heathland (Allerthorpe, Skipwith and Strensall Commons), peat bog (Askham Bog) 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. The annual Michael Clegg Memorial Bird Race takes place in January, when teams from across Yorkshire, including the YOC, focus on seeing as many species as possible in one day within their clubs' recording areas. Full details of the Club's activities can be found on the website – www.yorkbirding.org.uk. This also includes a general Twitter feed (@yorkbirding) as well as one devoted to the York Minster Peregrines (@yorkperegrines). In addition we have an active email group which shares information about local sightings.

Editorial

Welcome to York Ornithological Club's 2016 report, compiled and produced by the Editorial Committee. This is notable for being the 50th edition. Over the 50 years since the first edition there have been many changes, not least to local bird populations; some formerly commonly seen species becoming real rarities in the area but balanced by a welcome increase in others. The report is now put together on a computer and printed digitally from a PDF - whilst publication is still a time consuming process this is a far cry from the laborious transcription of handwritten records and then having to print, collate and staple the report by hand as happened in earlier years. Likewise, dramatic advances in digital photography have made the inclusion of coloured images of rare species easy. More people than ever submit records (predominantly online) and technology has transformed the way we collect, collate and sort these – the master spreadsheet these days holding the thousands of records from which we distil the classified list and species reports herein to give a flavour of the birds that reside, breed in or pass through the recording area.

How the report is produced

Records are received and collated, then split into sections which are distributed to the section writers who compile reports for their particular section. These are then returned to the Editorial Committee for checking of species report accuracy,

editing, proofreading and the addition of articles, regular features and illustrations, before a final version of the report is produced.

The list of birds seen in the York recording area since 1966 has also been reviewed and a number of species no longer appear on the list as we have been unable to verify the reports; for each of the species concerned we could find no record of a description being submitted to the appropriate body (e.g. the YNU or BBRC) and subsequently accepted. For a few species which are rarities in the recording area (American Wigeon, Long-tailed Duck and Great White Egret), the number of previously accepted records has also been amended in light of the research done by Jono Leadley, Club Recorder, for his book 'The Rare and Scarce Birds of the York Area 1965 – 2015'.

Despite receiving more records in 2016 than ever before, we are particularly interested in receiving more evidence of confirmed breeding of common resident breeding birds as these are often under reported. As with any breeding bird, please exercise discretion; sensitive records should be sent to the recorder.

Articles this year are by Peter Watson - 50 years of the YOC; Paul Doherty and David Tate - YOC Curlew survey 2016; and two by David Tate - Local Historical Records and Anniversaries and 2016 Re-sightings of birds ringed in and beyond the YOC recording area.

Acknowledgements

This report is dedicated to the memory of Nigel Stewart. In tribute to his talents as an artist, as well as for all his many contributions to the club over the years this year's report includes some of his drawings from earlier reports. Very sadly, though he was keen to do so again, Nigel's illness prevented him from writing his section (waxwings to wheatears), though, as ever, he sent in his records for the year.

Thank you to everyone who contributed records, without which the annual report would not be possible, and to YorkBirding email group through which local sightings are often publicised. Many thanks again to Elaine Gathercole who carries out the counts and provides WeBS data to the club for Castle Howard Lake and to Sean Garvey who provides the WeBS data for the University of York (Heslington East and West). This report benefits again from the ongoing efforts of Natural England staff in the Lower Derwent Valley, which is one of the most significant sites for birds in the York area. We much appreciate their allowing us to use records posted on the LDV blog and for providing WeBS counts. Thank you to Craig Ralston for allowing us to reprint the annual Rare Breeding Bird Panel report for the Lower Derwent. Thanks to Nick Moran at the BTO for providing BirdTrack records. Many thanks also to FERA (now National Agri-Food Innovation Campus, Sand Hutton) and to Ryedale Natural History Society for allowing us to extract records from their 2016 Reports. In particular, the former is an important source of breeding records of more common species (recorded as SHL in the main species accounts).

The Editorial Committee would also like to express its gratitude to Paul Doherty, David Tate and Peter Watson for their articles. Thank you to everyone who was involved with the preparation of the report for publication. Records from YorkBirding emails were collated by Paz Fletcher; Jane Chapman and Jonathan Begbie extracted records from the LDV blog; and Rob Chapman formatted all records and collated them onto the master spreadsheet.

The species reports in the Classified List were written by the following individuals:

Jane Chapman	swans and geese
Jonathan Begbie	ducks
Peter Watson	game birds, divers, herons, egrets, storks and grebes
Duncan Bye &	
Jane Chapman	raptors (excluding owls)
Jane Chapman	crakes, rails, Moorhen, Coot and Crane
Jono Leadley	waders
Chris Gomersall	skuas, terns and gulls
Rob Chapman	doves, pigeons, owls, woodpeckers and shrikes
Julia Lawson	crows, tits and larks
Paul Doherty	martins, swallows and warblers
Jane Chapman	waxwings to thrushes, flycatchers, chats and wheatears
Duncan Bye	sparrows, wagtails, pipits, finches and buntings

Verification of records of scarcer species was undertaken by Jono Leadley, Recorder. Records still awaiting confirmation by the BBRC or YNU are marked with an asterisk (*) in the Highlights section. These are detailed in the relevant species reports and updates on their acceptance will be given in future reports. Records from previous years that have been accepted/rejected are detailed at the end of the classified list. Paul Doherty edited the Highlights of 2016. The weather report was prepared by David Tate using data from the University of York electronics department weather station and the Met Office.

Many thanks to Sue Ball, Ian Brookes, Duncan Bye, Jane Chapman, Mark Coates, David Tate, Paul Greenwood, Chris Gomersall, Adam Hutt, Jono Leadley, Jonathan Pomroy, Nigel Stewart, Jean Thorpe, Trevor Walton, Tim Ward, Terry Weston and Alan Whitehead for their photos which illustrate this report.

Thanks to Rob Chapman for running the website and keeping it updated, and to Duncan Bye and Jono Leadley for running the Twitter feed. Thank you to Doug Crawford for keeping everyone up to date about the Minster Peregrines via their dedicated Twitter feed.

Jane Chapman 2017

Highlights of 2016

Weather in 2016

The legacy of Atlantic storms Desmond, Eva and Frank, which had brought heavy rainfall to the Pennines and North Yorkshire Moors during December 2015, continued into 2016. Flooding remained extensive in the LDV and soils elsewhere remained saturated. The failures of flood defences in York and near Riccall contributed to unusually high levels of flooding in the lower Ouse catchment area. Although the rainfall total for January was similar to the local 2006-15 mean, the totals for February, and especially March, were higher than normal and these amounts led to the flood levels in the LDV, and water tables elsewhere, remaining high. Temperatures in January were generally mild reaching an unseasonable high of 15°C on the 27th; a level not exceeded until the first week of May. Only three air frosts occurred during the month and day temperatures remained above the minimum of 2°C. There were a couple of cold snaps in February which resulted in six air frosts and - 2°C on the 6th proved to be the coldest night of the year. March was cool and maximum temperatures never exceeded 14°C.

The cool showery weather continued throughout April making conditions difficult for open nest breeding birds. Temperatures in early May were relatively warm and reached 23°C on the 8th. However, this was followed by anticyclonic conditions which resulted in an easterly air flow and temperatures for the rest of the month ranged from 10 -17°C. The high pressure also resulted in prolonged periods of dry and sunny weather. There were 17 rain free days and the monthly rainfall total of 12mm was the lowest reported for May during the past 10 years. Despite the drier conditions the river levels remained high and extensive flooding in the LDV remained until the end of the month - see photo on p.128. The easterly air flow lasted into June and although night time temperatures were above average the maximum of 25°C on the 7th was followed by cooler weather and only nine days exceeded 20°C.

July was notably dry. Although there was a downpour of 22mm on the 29th the monthly total of 36mm was about half the 2006-15 mean. On the 19th the temperature reached 29.6°C, making this the hottest day in 2016. The month also had three days over 25°C. Rainfall in August was 40% below average. Despite a high of 26°C on the 23rd, when a southerly airflow dominated, the rest of the month tended to be cloudy and only half the days had temperatures above 20°C. The first few days of September had changeable weather, however this was followed by a heat wave and by the 13th the maximum temperature had risen to 29°C. It is probable that this was the most extreme local event since 1911. September was also dry and the rainfall total was again half the 2006-15 mean. By now the saturated soils and floods encountered in the first half of the year had given way to almost drought conditions.

An easterly airflow affected the York area for most of October and this brought a good deal of sunshine and cool to mild maximum temperatures ranging from 11-15°C. There were no air frosts and minimum temperatures remained above 5°C

on all but two nights. The long run of below average rainfall continued. The rainfall total for the month was 31.6mm compared with the previous 10 year mean of 48mm. November began mild and quiet but unsettled conditions developed mid-month. Storm Angus had little effect on the York area but the following depression brought 25.99mm of rain on the 21st. This downpour produced half the monthly total and was the wettest day of the year. High pressure developed during the final week of November and this resulted in minimal rainfall and a night time temperature of -2°C on the 29th. Anticyclonic conditions continued until the second week of December when southerly winds brought mild temperatures and occasional light rain. Data from the University weather station became unavailable after the 15th. Until that time the rainfall total was very low (8.1mm) and mild conditions had persisted. Maximum temperatures were within the range 4-13°C and air frosts were not recorded. The Met Office described December in the UK as warm (2°C above the 1981-2010 mean); dry (65% of the average rainfall) and foggy in the Vale of York during the second half of the month.

January

The start of the year was dominated by extensive flooding along the river valleys. The Michael Clegg Memorial Bird Race was held on the 3rd January and the species seen included **Scaup**, **Long** and **Short-eared Owls**, **Jack Snipe**, **Pink-footed Geese**, **Chiffchaff** and **Stonechat**. Pride of place however went to a **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** which showed well at Allerthorpe Common. The best bird of the month was probably a **Cattle Egret*** which flew over Crook Moor near Thorganby on the 15th, before appearing to land at Ellerton Ings. The flooding encouraged notable counts of diving duck in the LDV, with 316 Pochard and 200+ Tufted Duck. As well as a small movement of **Pink-footed Geese**, the LDV had several **European White-fronted Geese**, five **Brent Geese** at Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd, seven **Tundra Bean Geese** flew over Bank Island on the 26th and 132 **Whooper Swans** were present. Up to five **Scaup** were recorded in the LDV and a female **Smew** was at Thorganby Ings on the 24th. The year's highest count of **Goosander** came from Wharfe Ings on the 8th when 56 were present. At least two **Marsh Harriers** hunted the LDV and a female **Hen Harrier** at Skipwith Common on the 13th could have been last year's returning bird. True to recent form the Rufforth area had multiple sightings of **Caspian**, **Iceland** and **Glaucous Gulls** amongst the thousands of gulls attracted to the Harewood Whin tip, and the 13 **Caspian Gulls** reported on the 13th were a new record for our area. Passerine records were generally unremarkable, though Birdguides reported a **Firecrest** at Stensall Common on the 18th and Elvington had a minimum of 120 **Yellowhammers** and 40 **Corn Buntings** on the 17th, whilst the Corn Bunting roost at Melbourne had reached 50 by the end of the month.

February

February opened with a **Firecrest** at Bubwith on the 3rd (sadly brought in dead by a cat). An adult **Little Gull** at North Duffield on the 4th was a good sighting, but a more menacing presence was provided at Wheldrake Ings by a **Great Skua**

which was present from the 4th to the 7th and which attacked and killed a **Grey Heron**. A **Red-throated Diver** made a brief visit to Bank Island on the 11th. Wildfowl counts in the LDV remained healthy and included 12,500 **Wigeon**, 6000 **Teal** and 500 **Pintail**. A **Green-winged Teal** was at Wheldrake Ings from the 9th to the 16th and what was presumably the same bird reappeared at Ellerton on the 30th. A family party of four **Bewick's Swans** was present from the 18th to the 23rd; though finding them amongst 147 **Mute Swans** and 143 **Whooper Swans** wasn't always easy. The LDV also had an impressive 7500 **Lapwing** and 4700 **Golden Plover** together with 35 **Ruff** and 200 **Dunlin**. The main wildfowl interest away from the LDV was provided by a drake **American Wigeon*** at CHL from the 12th to the 18th, and CHL had a record count of 25 **Mandarin Duck** on the 15th. The Wheldrake Ings gull roost was impressive with an estimated 20,000 **Herring Gulls**, 4500 **Great Black-backed Gulls** and 40,000 **Black-headed Gulls**, as well as a scattering of **Iceland**, **Glaucous**, **Caspian** and **Yellow-legged Gulls**. The traditional **Pied Wagtail** roost on Parliament Street in the centre of York numbered 850 on the 2nd and the 20th. Two **Hawfinches** were at Gilling East on the 7th and the **Cetti's Warbler** which had been seen at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne in early January remained until the end of February. Eighteen **Black-tailed Godwits** which returned to Wheldrake Ings on the 28th were a hint of spring.

March

The wintering **Hen Harrier** at Skipwith Common made its final appearance on the 3rd. The now expected spring "wanderings" of the Yorkshire **Cranes** provided a garden tick for a Dunnington observer on the 4th and what may have been the same two birds were seen at Bank Island on the 16th. At CHL there were 68 **Goldeneye** on the 6th and the **Smew** at Aughton Ings increased to five on the same date, with a single at Wheldrake Ings from the 19th to the month end, and six **Scaup** were on Aughton and Ellerton Ings throughout the month. The city lights illuminated 150 **Whooper Swans** flying over close to the Minster near midnight on the 13th and 254 went through the LDV during March, bringing the spring passage total to 422. Gull watching at Rufforth produced a **Kumlien's Gull*** on the 3rd and the 16th, whilst some unexpected variety was provided by a **Knot** in a flooded field with gulls on the 14th. Wheldrake Ings had two **Kittiwakes** on the 11th and one was at Heslington East on the 20th and 21st. A **Slavonian Grebe** at NDC on the 27th and 28th was the first in the LDV for 16 years. A **Long-tailed Duck** at Aughton Ings on the 28th was another good record, while two records of **Common Scoter**, a female at Wheldrake Ings on the 17th and a male over Bank Island on the 20th, were both typical March records. By the end of the month thoughts were turning to the return of our summer migrants. Two **Sand Martins** at Wheldrake Ings on the 20th were followed by two **Swallows** at Slingsby on the 26th. An **Osprey** flying north at NDC on the 29th was a hint of birds to come.

April

A **House Martin** was at NDC on the 1st, the 2nd saw two pairs of **Garganey** at Ellerton Ings, whilst two **Sandwich Terns** south over NDC on the same date were part of a wider movement across the country. The 3rd saw **Wheatears** at two sites and **Willow Warblers** singing at both Aughton and Wheldrake Ings. The pace of arrivals picked up with **Tree Pipit** (4th), **Redstart** (7th) and **Yellow Wagtail** (9th) in the next week, whilst an **Osprey** was at NDC on the 5th. The middle of the month saw the appearance of several more species, including the first **Cuckoo** at Easingwold on the 16th, two **Hobbies** on the 17th and a **Swift** over York Minster on the 22nd. A more exotic and unexpected arrival was a **Hoopoe** at Wigginton on the 17th. A drake **Green-winged Teal** at Wheldrake Ings from the 9th to the 30th could well have been the bird seen in February. Other wildfowl included a female **Common Scoter** at Wheldrake Ings on the 9th and two males there from the 11th to the 13th. **Crane** sightings away from the LDV were at Dunnington, Skipwith Common and Clifton Ings and a **Corncrake** was at NDC on the 27th. The first returning **Whimbrel** were three at Bank Island and by the end of the month the Wheldrake Ings roost had built up to 71 birds. A flock of 16 **Bar-tailed Godwits** flew over Bank Island on the 29th and a large movement of 190 *islandica* **Black-tailed Godwits** on the 30th involved 96 roosting at NDC; 79 flew north-west at Wheldrake Ings towards dusk and a party of 15 seen at Wheldrake Ings during the afternoon finally departed high to the northwest with much excited calling.

May

The rather cool wet weather encouraged wildfowl to linger with the long-staying **Smew** still present on the 5th, **Scaup** until the 7th and two **Goldeneye** at Bank Island on the 30th. The **Whimbrel** roost at Wheldrake Ings peaked at 86 on the 1st, but soon declined with the last bird on the 16th. Wader passage was generally poor though an **Avocet** was seen at Aughton on the 8th and a summer-plumaged **Knot** appeared at Bank Island on the 13th. The 8th saw a notable movement of **Black Terns** with 13 at Wheldrake Ings, seven at NDC and a single at Bank Island. The LDV had an **Osprey** (11th), three **Common Cranes**, five **Spotted Crakes** (from the 10th), three **Corncrakes** (from the 19th), two **Quail** (from the 23rd) and a **Great White Egret** (29th-30th). **Hobbies** also showed well, with up to five in the air at both Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings - a welcome sight as they hawked for insects over the Ings.

June

With spring migration effectively over, attention turned to breeding birds. Five **Ravens** at Castle Howard on the 4th and 5th may well have bred on the coast. Churring **Nightjars** were a welcome sound at Strensall Common from the 5th to the month end. A **Gannet** found dead in a field at Hagg Wood on the 7th was unexpected and an **Osprey** was at Scagglethorpe Moor on the 8th. Breeding season highlights at the LDV included up to seven **Corncrakes**, mostly at NDC, and three broods of **Garganey** with a total of 21 ducklings seen. **Quail** were heard

at Ellerton and also at four sites away from the LDV. The continuing success of the **Little Egret** was reflected in the five pairs which bred in the LDV. A **Wood Sandpiper** was at Thornton Ellers on the 18th, 21st and 23rd.

July

The **Little Egret** theme continued into July when post-breeding dispersal meant that there were as many as 70 in the LDV. Two **Nightjars** were churring at Strensall Common on the 6th, but not thereafter. A **Sandwich Tern** flew east over Bank Island on the 16th. The return of migrating waders added interest with up to seven **Little Ringed Plovers**, five **Ringed Plovers** and **Dunlin** and 11 **Black-tailed Godwits** at Thornton Ellers, which also had a **Wood Sandpiper** on three dates. There were several records of **Greenshank**, whilst **Green Sandpipers** included up to nine present on the pool at Wheldrake and a **Black-tailed Godwit** was at Heslington West from the 27th to the end of the month. Three **Yellow-legged Gulls** at Rufforth on the 25th were a hint of the approaching gull watching season at this renowned site for them. The end of the month saw 1000 **Swifts** passing south over Bank Island on the 29th and the first **Wheatears** of the autumn with birds at Stockton on the Forest and NDC.

August

Cuckoos are one of the first birds to head south, so one at Wheldrake Ings on the 1st to the 4th was relatively late. Up to four **Whinchats** were recorded there. Four **Tree Pipits** flew south over Bolton Percy Ings on the 16th. Wader migration is a major feature of August and 2016 was steady rather than spectacular. As usual most of the action was from the LDV where there were up to 12 **Green Sandpipers**, four **Greenshanks**, four **Ringed Plovers** and singles of **Dunlin** and **Wood Sandpiper**. A juvenile **Spotted Redshank** was at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st to the 26th and two **Curlew Sandpipers** there on the 22nd were part of a national influx. Eleven **Wigeon** at Wheldrake Ings on the 26th were the first of the autumn, whilst **Teal** had built up to 450 by the end of the month, and a **Garganey** was with them on the 27th.

September

A **Spotted Redshank** at Heslington East on the 3rd and a **Black-tailed Godwit** at Clifton Ings on the 7th were both excellent site records, but bird of the month was the **Manx Shearwater** rescued from a sand pit in a garden in Heworth! It was healthy, but couldn't get airborne and was taken to the coast and released. The first skein of **Pink-footed Geese** flew over Copmanthorpe on the 10th and wildfowl returning to the LDV included **Pochard** on the 15th and **Pintail** on the 17th. The last **Swifts** of the year were two at Bolton Percy Ings on the 13th. A **Crane** was at Foggathorpe on the 15th and what was probably the same bird flew over Wigginton on the 17th. A **Bittern** flew across the scrape at Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd. The end of the month saw good numbers of birds heading south and totals from a visible migration watch at Bolton Percy Ings on the 28th included 1465 **Meadow Pipits** and 605 **Linnets**.

October

October saw the expected arrival of the first winter thrushes with two **Fieldfares** at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on the 2nd and multiple reports of **Redwings** on the same date. Two late **Whinchats** at Wheldrake from the 2nd to the 8th were replaced by wintering **Stonechats**, with four present at Wheldrake and a total of seven across the LDV. Four **Bearded Tits** were at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd, with six there on the 15th. A **Grey Plover** was at Elvington on the 9th and **Whooper Swans** returned on the 10th when six flew over Bolton Percy Ings and by the end of the month there were 25 in the LDV. **Teal** numbers in the LDV increased to around 1700 with **Wigeon** and **Mallard** peaking at about 1000. A female **Red-crested Pochard** was at Wheldrake Ings on the 24th. A **Great Grey Shrike** was an excellent find at Strensall Common on the 23rd and the same site had a flock of 250 **Lesser Redpoll** on the 29th which included at least one **Mealy Redpoll**. The month closed with a **Hen Harrier** at Wheldrake Ings on the 31st.

November

The LDV **Whooper Swans** had increased to 44 by the 1st and at least 100 were present by the end of the month. Four **Tundra Bean Geese** flew north past Aughton Ings on the 1st. The 2nd saw the only significant **Wood Pigeon** movement of the autumn when 10,230 flew south past Whit Hill and on the same day a very late **Hobby** was at Aughton. The **Great Grey Shrike** reported at Strensall Common in October remained until the 4th. A **Slavonian Grebe** at Heslington East on the 10th didn't linger and three **Knot** at Bank Island on the 12th flew off to the north. A **Yellow-browed Warbler** was a good find at Hob Moor on the 14th and a **Hawfinch** was at Ampleforth on the 20th and 25th. Another **Knot** appeared at Bolton Percy Ings on the 23rd and 12 **Waxwings** paused briefly at Bank Island on the 25th. A **Scaup** at Wheldrake Ings on the 27th was possibly the same bird as the one seen at CHL on the 20th. A wintering **Chiffchaff** was at Fangfoss on the 29th.

December

The year's highest **Brambling** count came on the 1st when 60 were at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe. A **Hawfinch** was at Ampleforth on the 3rd, 4th and again on the 16th, whilst the following day saw 40 **Waxwings** at Yearsley. Two **Chiffchaffs** were at St Nicholas Fields on the 9th. The LDV held up to 3200 **Lapwing** and 2200 **Golden Plover**, and there were 61 **Ruff**, 12 **Black-tailed Godwits** and 500 **Dunlin** until a cold snap after Christmas moved most of them on. Dabbling ducks built up in the LDV with counts of at least 10,000 **Wigeon** and 4000 **Teal**, and diving ducks included four **Scaup**. Goose watching was rewarding with up to 71 **White-fronted Geese** in the LDV and four **Tundra Bean Geese** on the 31st. A **Great White Egret** was at Stillingfleet on the 29th and there were several flocks of **Waxwings** towards the year end, with 42 still present in the centre of York on the last day of the year.

Classified List

The sequence and scientific nomenclature follow that of the British List maintained by the British Ornithologists' Union. It was last revised by BOU in 2013, and most recently updated December 2016; as in previous reports, the classified list uses the British (English) vernacular names. There are a few minor changes to taxonomic order - e.g. Plovers are rearranged and Corn Bunting is no longer the last species in the main list. The status of birds in the York recording area has also been reviewed and some revisions made to reflect changes in, for example, breeding status or increasing/decreasing rarity.

The following abbreviations are used throughout:

BBRC	British Birds Rarities Committee
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey (BTO)
CBC	Common Bird Census
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
SHBR	Sand Hutton Bird Report (from SHL)
SHL	National Agri-Food Innovation Campus, Sand Hutton, part of 'FERA', the Food and Environment Research Agency (formerly the Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton then Sand Hutton Laboratory) [To avoid further confusion 'SHL' will still be used to denote this site]
VMW	Visible migration watch
WBBS	Waterways Breeding Bird Survey (BTO)
WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey (BTO)
WWT	Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
WTW	Water Treatment Works
YNU	Yorkshire Naturalists' Union
YOC	York Ornithological Club
YWT	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

In addition, the following nature reserves appear as sites in the report:

Cali 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 Heslington East campus of the University of York 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 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. WeBS counts for the University - comprising the combined totals for Heslington East and Heslington West (HES) – for several species are included again. 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 2016:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	17th	21st	13th	18th	8th	5th	25th	21st	24th	16th	13th	18th
LDV	17th	21st	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17th	14th	18th
HES	17th	21st	13th	10th	8th	5th	24th	24th	18th	17th	15th	18th

For more detailed information on the breeding of scarce and rare birds in the LDV refer to the Rare Breeding Birds Panel (RBBP) Report on page 111.

The Red/Amber conservation status of birds has been updated as per BOCC – 4 [British Birds 108 • December 2015 • 708–746]. New for this year are national and local description species designations (BBRC/YNU/YOC) for easy reference.

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. Observers' initials are included for less common species, however, the majority of BirdTrack records relate to commoner species which normally just merit a summary.

The systematic list also includes those species recorded in at least three of the previous ten years even if they were not recorded in 2016. The information given for these shows the year last recorded.

Category E records, including the University's free-flying geese and escapes are listed in Appendix A, while hybrids are listed in Appendix B. The birds listed in Appendix C are included for completeness, but either a description has not been forthcoming or is insufficient to exclude possible confusion species. If a description is submitted, we will include any additional accepted records in a future report.

Status Definitions	
Vagrant/Very rare	1-10 records (since 1966)
Rare	1-10 in the past ten years
Scarce	11-100 in the past ten years; may not occur annually
Common	Widespread and frequently occurring species within the preferred habitat e.g. Moorhen
Abundant	Large numbers of this species occur across the area e.g. Woodpigeon or gatherings of over 1000 individuals
Resident breeder	All or part of the local population is present throughout the year and breeds within the area e.g. Blackbird
Migrant breeder	Breeds within the area but all or most of the breeding population departs in autumn and winter e.g. Willow Warbler
Casual breeder	Has bred irregularly in the area since 1966 and may do so again e.g. Pied Flycatcher
Winter visitor	All or part of the population breeds outside the area but either spends the winter here or has visited on at least 30 occasions in the winter months e.g. Whooper Swan
Passage visitor	Occurs during spring and/or autumn migration e.g. Black Tern

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Amber listed

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

CHL and the LDV continue to hold the largest numbers outside of the breeding season, with breeding records again coming from a number of sites in the area. In the first winter period, the maximum count from the LDV in January was 123 on the 15th. Of the 101 present on 3rd February, 49 were at NDC. Numbers increased to 147 on the 5th, with 62 at NDC on the 8th. During March there were up to 91 present. In April numbers increased again with the annual build-up of non-breeding sub-adults. On the 30th, 99 were at NDC out of 172 in the valley as a whole. There were 131 at NDC on 9th May. Numbers at CHL stayed fairly constant between January and March at around 60, with the highest count 67 on 6th March. The April maximum was 52 on the 18th. Elsewhere, the only counts above ten were all from Wharfe Ings with 12 there on 4th February and 15 on the 16th, then 11 on both the 11th and 13th March.

In the LDV nesting was delayed owing to the prolonged flooding. Nesting was confirmed at CHL, Heslington East, NDC, Newburgh Priory, Pocklington Canal (both at Melbourne and Thornton Lock), Wheldrake Ings and Wistow Clough. The first cygnets seen were broods of three and four respectively at Wheldrake Ings on 24th May, while at CHL there were at least five broods of very small young on the 29th – including broods of seven, seven, six and two counted there on 5th June. A family party of two adults and seven cygnets was seen at Foss Island, the same day. Only one cygnet survived at Heslington East (from three hatched by 29th May from a clutch of ten eggs) remaining with the adults into the autumn. A pair with six small young was at Wistow Clough on 7th June, and a brood of four was at Melbourne on the 13th. A pair raised three young at Newburgh Priory.

Post breeding, numbers at CHL were well up on last year, increasing to just over 100 in June, with three-digit WeBS counts to the end of the year. The maximum count for the year was 130 on 23rd August - much higher than in 2015 (maximum 83). Numbers having dropped to around 13 in July as birds departed to moult, birds returning from moult sites increased numbers in the LDV during September to 74 on the 29th, with similar numbers present during October including 35 at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th. In November there were up to 80 present during the month, and up to 90 during December, with 46 at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. Elsewhere, ten were at Old Malton on 28th November.

Monthly WeBS counts for Mute Swan

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	64	64	60	52	46	50	107	106	106	117	119	102
LDV	123	147								59	79	90
HES	2	2	2	4	5	3	2	5	3	9	9	9

Note: HES birds in Aug and Nov all at Heslington West

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

In February a family party of two adults and two juveniles turned up at Ellerton Ings on the 18th (DMB, DR), remaining to the 22nd when they were re-located at Bubwith Ings (DT). One of the adults had a colour ring (Yellow 702) and is a long returning bird to the LDV (CSR, LM). Also on the 18th, a single adult was present with the Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* herd at Ellerton Ings (LDV Blog).

The only record in the latter part of the year was on 20th December when a family party of six, comprising two adults and four juveniles, was seen in the Melbourne/Thornton area (IA).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Amber listed

Winter visitor and passage migrant

The flooding in January suited the Whooper Swans and up to 132 were in the LDV during the month. The largest herd of 85 was at Ellerton on the 3rd and 122 were at Ellerton/Thorganby on the 15th. A further four birds were at Melbourne the same day. There were 99 on the 17th, and 103 at Aughton Ings on the 19th, while 88 were at Ellerton Ings on the 24th. Into February, 112 were in the Ellerton area on the 3rd, 136 on the 10th and 143 on the 12th, indicating some spring passage. By the 21st 72 were present, so local birds may have begun to move on. On the 25th, 118 flying north over Bank Island were passage birds, then 25 thought to be on return migration were seen at Wheldrake Ings late on the 28th. On 4th March 102 were at Aughton Ings but as the birds departed northwards numbers dropped rapidly with 32 seen on the 13th and a flock of 37 there on the 29th. Passage birds during March involved a further 254 birds (much lower than 2015), including 70 north over Bank Island on the 17th, 13 at Ellerton on the 19th (one being colour-

ringed bird YGA), 116 pausing at NDC on the 26th and 54 north over Bank Island on the 29th. The spring return passage comprised 422 birds to this date.

Away from the LDV, eight were on the floods at Ulleskelf Mires on 6th January, remaining to the 13th. In March, 33 were seen at Bolton Percy on the 12th and 20 over Catterton the same day, while 150, illuminated by the city lights, were seen flying over the centre of York east of the Minster at 23:20 on the 13th. Two flew over Milford Common on the 14th, 50 over Scagglethorpe Lane on the 17th and 17 over Burtonfields on the 26th. Fifty flew over Bolton Percy Ings on 1st April. A handful of birds lingered in the LDV during May, with two seen on the 26th at NDC the last.

The first of the autumn were six flying northwest over Bolton Percy Ings during a VMW on 10th October, then four south over Bank Island on the 20th and 15, (seven and eight, including one juvenile) arrived at Wheldrake Ings the following day. There were 25 in the LDV by the 25th including a colour-ringed bird (Yellow G5F – sighted on 5th March 2016 at Caerlaverock, Dumfries) and six juveniles. By 1st November the resident herd was up to 44, 84 by the 19th (at NDC on this date), 92 by the 20th and more than 100 by the end of the month. Elsewhere in November, on the 23rd, six were seen flying over Skipwith Common (possibly heading for the LDV), a noteworthy record for the site and ten flew south at Bolton Percy Ings the same day. The maximum for December in the LDV was 107 on the 4th - including a herd of 70 at NDC - with 101 in the valley on the 28th.

Monthly WeBS counts for Whooper Swan

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LDV	132	143	-	-	-	16	84	102

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* YNU (taiga)/ YOC Amber listed
Scarce winter visitor (Tundra, Rossicus); very rare winter visitor (Taiga, Fabalis)

The only sightings of the year, all of the 'Tundra' race *Anser fabalis rossicus*, came in the second winter period. Four flew north up the LDV on 1st November (CSR), then three were in the Wheldrake/Thorganby area from 27th December (CSR, AF), increasing to four on the last day of the year.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* Amber listed
Passage migrant and winter visitor

In the first winter period, one was at Bolton Percy Ings on 2nd January, with some movement noted during the Bird Race the following day; 200 south over East Cottingwith, 130 northwest over Milford Common, as well as a flock of 32 birds on the ground at Seavy Carr. Five were at Milford on the 13th, two at Aughton Ings on the 17th, one at Derwent Cottage Farm with the Greylag Goose *Anser anser* flock on the 19th, and seven at Wheldrake Ings on the 24th. In February one was at Ellerton on the 21st.

Passage mostly took place between late January and early March, with 260 over Wheldrake Ings on 23rd January, the largest skein seen. The last skein of spring, seen over Melbourne, departed on 10th April, leaving a few lingering individuals – three that had been at Wheldrake/Bank Island throughout March were at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April. In May one was there on the 8th, 14th and 26th, with two there on the 24th.

The first birds of the autumn were in an early skein of 60 seen flying over Copmanthorpe on 10th September. Over a week later 70 flew southeast over Acaster Airfield on the 19th, while 70 flew south over Wheldrake Ings the following day were the first seen over the LDV. Passage continued throughout October and November.

During late November and December a number of skeins were seen flying northwest, possibly to Lancashire wintering grounds: on 28th November 60 over Fangfoss and 80 over Milford Common the same day, then in December, 210 over Patefield Wood on the 16th, 49 over Bank Island on the 18th and 280 over Aughton Ings at dawn on the 19th.

In contrast to last year, the only three figure count on the ground in the second winter period was 110 flying in to roost at Wheldrake on 30th December, joining 16 already there.

Notable counts (150 and more) were:

3rd January, East Cottingham - 200 over flying south
23rd January, Bank Island/Wheldrake Ings - 260 flying northwest
25th January, LDV - 262 over in three skeins of 170, 76 and 16
5th February, Heslington - 165 over high heading west and 250 on the 11th
12th February, LDV - 240 northwest, then 190 on the 15th
1st March, Osbaldwick - 200 flying north
9th April, Langwith Lane - 293 high over WNW at 14:00
10th April, Wheldrake Ings - 190 north and 109 over Melbourne the same date
30th September, Bolton Percy Ings - 200 west over
12th October, Bank Island - 210 over
18th October, Easthorpe - 300
20th October, Elvington - 200 flying south
27th October, Scagglethorpe Moor - 250 flying south
14th November, Fangfoss - 300 over
16th December, Patefield Wood - 210 flying northwest
19th December, Aughton Ings - 280 flying northwest at dawn

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

YOC

Red listed

Scarce winter visitor

Easily the best showing since 2012, sightings included a couple of family parties in the first winter period as well as some away from the LDV later in the year.

An adult at Thornton Ings on 2nd January was followed by a flock of 11 adults at Bank Island on the 4th and 16 seen flying west at Melbourne Ings on the 5th. On 11th January an adult was at Derwent Farm, North Duffield with a flock of 350 Greylag Geese *Anser anser*. A family party of three, one adult and two 1st-winter birds, were at Thornton on the 17th, and seen there again on the 20th, 21st, 23rd and the 1st to 3rd February. Two were at Westfield House on 18th January. A family party of two adults and two juveniles was seen at Ellerton Ings on 7th February and again from the 20th to the 29th. Four adults flew over Aughton Ings on 21st February and were seen flying again there on the 22nd, while 12 were at Thornton from the 21st to the 23rd. The family party of four was at Ellerton on the 28th and at Aughton the following day. In March this long-staying family was seen at Ellerton on the 7th, and again on the 14th and 15th.

In the latter part of the year 13 flew southwest over NDC on 18th October. There were no further sightings until 19th December when a flock of ten birds arrived from the south at NDC, circling the site before settling in the arable field next to the car park. Fifteen were seen flying north there later the same day. On the 20th there were 32 at NDC and, away from the LDV, three were seen flying north at Bolton Percy Ings the same day. By the 27th there were 71 scattered throughout the LDV, with up to 27 at Wheldrake Ings to the 31st. Two birds of the Greenland race '*flavirostris*' were at CHL on the 27th (NB).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Amber listed

Naturalised breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant

Well reported throughout the year from areas of suitable habitat, though the LDV continues to hold the largest numbers in the winter months. Up to 1200 were present across the LDV throughout January and into February, decreasing to 600 by the end of the month. At CHL the only three-figure count was 160 on 17th January.

Nest building was observed from March and the first goslings reported were broods of eight and four at Bank Island and the Refuge respectively on 21st April, followed by many other records of goslings at: Bishop Wood, Bolton Percy Ings, East Cottingwith, Frog Hall (Allerthorpe Common), Heslington East, Low Catton Ings, NDC, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pottery Fish Pond Strensall, SHL and Ulleskelf Mires.

Post breeding, the June WeBS count at CHL of 546 was very similar to that of 2015. Whilst not beating last year's record count, numbers again increased dramatically at Heslington East and West during August and September, peaking at 731 on 18th September. During October, numbers in the LDV rose to 704 roosting at Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd. As flood waters appeared in November numbers increased rapidly from 1000 on the 14th to over 2000 by the end of the month, mainly at Wheldrake Ings. There were over 1000 at both Ellerton Ings and Wheldrake Ings on 4th December. The peak count for the year was 2400 on 11th and 12th December. At CHL there were 680 present on 13th November, with the peak count for the year 775 on 27th December.

Individual site counts of 200 or more away from the LDV (and in addition to WeBS counts) were:

8th January, Ulleskelf Mires - 270

27th July, Heslington East - 210 min and 232 there on the 29th

8th August, Heslington East - 242; 300 there on the 14th and 335 on the 24th

1st September, Skipwith Common - 350 and 200 there late in the month

8th September, Heslington East - 587

7th November, Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe - 250 and 260 there on the 13th

23rd November, Wharfe Ings - 240, then 275 there on the 28th

27th December, CHL - 775

Monthly WeBS counts for Greylag Goose

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	160	0	6	12	5	546	43	2	230	142	680	280
LDV	1200	1100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	704	1470	2150
HES	192	106	75	68	71	125	275	486	731	129	150	8

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Naturalised breeder and winter visitor

Similar to recent years, though CHL, Heslington East and the LDV continue to support the largest numbers, Canada Geese were seen at most suitable bodies of water, including gravel pits and ponds, throughout the year, with many counts in double figures at these other sites.

Five hundred were present in the LDV throughout January, decreasing to 350 during February. At CHL the peak count for the first winter period was 348 on 17th January, with 201 there in February.

Nesting birds were reported from the beginning of April, with the first brood of two small goslings seen at Milford Common on the 26th. Broods were also reported from Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, the River Foss, Strensall (Pottery Fish Pond) and Wheldrake Ings.

Post breeding, the recent trend for increased numbers using Heslington East and West in August and September continued, with 169 on 24th August the peak count for the year. Numbers fluctuated more markedly at CHL with the highest counts being 374 in July (WeBS), and at the end of the year. The year's peak count was on 4th December with 583 present. In the LDV, numbers built to 150 by the end of September. On 14th November, 289 were at Bank Island increasing to the peak count of 376 for the second winter period by the 18th November. Numbers in the valley remained around 320 throughout December.

Individual site counts of 100 or more (excluding WeBS counts) were:

18th January, Westfield House - 100

22nd March, CHL - 100

24th August, Heslington East - 124

14th November, Bank Island - 289 and 100 there on the 20th

3rd December, Redhouse Lagoon - 109

3rd December, Wheldrake Ings - 100, and 192 there on the 18th

4th December, CHL - 150 and 583 there on the 27th

Monthly WeBS counts for Canada Goose

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	348	201	135	74	82	196	374	75	273	73	160	487
LDV	500	346	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	134	365	302
HES	19	26	44	31	37	49	70	169	112	68	43	2

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor with a small naturalised breeding population

No reports of presumed wild individuals this year.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

The only report this year was of five individuals seen at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd January (LDV blog).

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Scarce visitor and naturalised breeder in small numbers

The pair at East Cottingwith pond was regularly reported during the first half of the year, also possibly accounting for two seen at Thornton Ings on 4th February. Incubating by 28th March, they were seen with five newly hatched goslings on 12th May and again on the 16th. However on 1st June, there were only four goslings present – the family party then remaining at East Cottingwith to at least the end of the month. Two adults and one immature were by the pond on 31st July. There were no further reports from the site until December when two were there on the 24th.

Elsewhere in the LDV, seven flew into the Refuge on 23rd January, a different female to the East Cottingwith one was at NDC on 28th March and three adults were at Wheldrake Ings on 9th April. Two were on the Refuge on 26th April with further sightings of two birds at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings on the 28th and in the first week of May. A pair with four fledged young was at Wheldrake Ings on 19th July (presumably the East Cottingwith family), followed by three there on the 20th, four on the 21st and two on the 23rd. After July there were very few reports. In September four flew west over Wheldrake Ings on the 14th, one was at Bank Island on 17th November and two at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd December.

Away from the LDV one was on Hessay Moor Pond on 3rd March and four on the 12th, with two there on 29th April. One was at Scagglethorpe on 27th April.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna**Amber listed**Common winter visitor, migrant breeder and scarce autumn passage migrant*

In the first winter period in the LDV there were 62 at Ellerton Ings by 10th January increasing to 92 by the 18th. Numbers increased during February to 192 in the whole valley on the 5th. Eighty three were at Ellerton on the 20th and 98 there on the 22nd. In March good numbers remained throughout the month, centered on the Ellerton/Thorganby area, where up to 180 were present during the early part of the month before birds started to disperse in pairs and small groups.

Away from the LDV the flooding of Riccall Ings – a rare event – resulted in 15 birds being present on 30th January to 1st February. Eight were on Wharfe Ings on the 4th, six on the 16th, and a singleton at Newburgh Priory also on the 16th. Further singles were reported from Acaster Malbis on 6th March and Bolton Percy Ings on the 7th, with two at Wharfe Ings the same day and ten there on the 11th, when there was a single bird on Ulleskelf Mires. March sightings at slightly more unusual locations were a single on the pig pond at East Moor on the 16th, a pair on Scagglethorpe Moor on the 25th and one seen flying over Grosvenor Terrace in York on the same date.

In the LDV, during April displaying birds were first reported at Low Catton Ings on the 24th. Eighty seven were present on the 28th and 81 territorial males were reported by the month end. Elsewhere during April, reports of small numbers came from Acaster, Bolton Percy Ings, Hessay Moor, Newburgh Priory, Poppleton (20 on the 23rd), Redhouse Wood area, Rufforth (28 there on the 22nd), Stillingfleet Ings and Ulleskelf Mires. Several pairs bred successfully in the LDV. The first brood seen was a pair with seven ducklings on 8th June at Thornton Ellers (caught and ringed on the 13th). Four broods totalling 25 ducklings were seen during the month. Eight recently fledged young were at The Grange, Pocklington Canal on 13th July. A juvenile remained at Wheldrake Ings throughout the summer and into autumn, last seen on 26th September.

In the second winter period there were six at Bank Island on 12th November and eight at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th increasing to 42 at Wheldrake Ings by the 27th following a period of flooding. During December, numbers increased to a peak of 63 on the 30th, which included a single Australian hybrid, previously sighted at Spurn on 26th November, giving further information on the movement of our "local" population. Elsewhere there were two at Bolton Percy Ings on 19th November, four there on the 25th and four on the same day at Wharfe Ings.

Monthly WeBS counts for Shelduck

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
LDV	92	192	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	43

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata**Scarce resident breeder*

Most records during the year came from CHL. Three (two males and a female) were at CHL on 1st January, nine (six males and three females) there on the 9th

and two on the 17th. In February there were 16 on the 12th, then 11 (eight males and three females) on the 13th, an impressive peak count of 25 birds on the 15th, three on the 19th and one on the 21st. In March, six (four males and two females) were seen on the 6th and then two on 3rd April, a single on the 18th and one again on 8th May and two on 5th June. Elsewhere two were seen flying into Redhouse Wood on 16th March, one at Bolton Percy Ings on 1st April, and a single at Scrayingham on the 24th.

The only evidence of breeding was a female seen with three ducklings (approximately two weeks old) on the River Derwent at Kirkham Park SSSI on 28th June.

The only sightings later in the year were of 22 at CHL on New River Pond on 9th September, with a further two on the lake itself.

Wigeon *Anas Penelope*

Amber listed

Abundant winter visitor, spring passage migrant and rare breeder in small numbers

Once again, impressive numbers particularly in the LDV as befits the area's status as a key national wintering location for this species.

In the first winter period in the LDV, numbers in January were reckoned to be a minimum of 9000, widely scattered, but extensive flooding made accurate counts difficult because of limited access to sites. The February maximum was estimated to be a staggering 12,500 birds, reducing slightly to 10,000 plus from early March with numbers down to an estimated 4700 by the 27th. At CHL numbers fluctuated, peaking at 687 on 21st February. Extensive flooding along the Lower Wharfe resulted in a peak count of 780 birds on 18th January with 310 still present on 11th March.

Counts of over 100 away from the LDV and CHL were as follows:

2nd January, Bolton Percy Ings - circa 500; 180 on the 8th, 140 on the 12th, 240 on the 13th

8th January, West Ings - 220; 550 on the 18th and 650 on the 19th

18th January, Wharfe Ings - 189

1st February, Riccall Ings (after floods – a rare event here) - 338

3rd February, West Ings - 310; and again on the 4th

9th February, Bolton Percy Ings - 420; 210 on the 10th, 200 on the 14th and 126 on the 22nd

15th February, Wharfe Ings - 160; and 330 the following day

7th March, Bolton Percy Ings - 180; 190 on the 11th and 160 on the 13th

Away from these locations there were 40 birds on Hessay Moor Pond on 16th March.

In April in the LDV numbers fell from 2000 early in the month to 67 by the 30th when there were nine pairs present on the reserve. An estimated 11 pairs were

present throughout May, although no young birds were seen. In July there was a single bird at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on the 8th.

The first returning birds of autumn were 11 into the LDV on 26th August and a day later two at Skipwith Common. Numbers in the LDV built steadily throughout September from 11 on the 8th to a monthly maximum of 247 by the 30th. In October a maximum of 1000 were present throughout the valley by the 31st. In November numbers reached 6000 plus by the month end, including 3000 at Bank Island on the 14th attracted by flooding there. In December numbers increased again from 9300 on the 4th to 10,000 by mid-month.

At Skipwith Common there was a maximum of 500 at the beginning of November but numbers declined thereafter as birds appeared to re-orientate to the LDV with the onset of flooding there. At CHL monthly maxima were 275 on 16th October, 445 on 13th November and 367 on 18th December. Along the River Wharfe, there were 190 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 24th November, 150 at Ozendyke Ings on the 28th and 225 at Wharfe Ings the same day. In December there were 110 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 27th.

At Wistow Clough there were 32 on 14th October; birds continued to be seen regularly there, with largest count 112 on 22nd December. On December 4th, 30 were at Newburgh Priory Lake.

Monthly WeBS counts for Wigeon

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	402	687	454	2	0	1	0	4	176	275	445	367
LDV	9020	12543	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	780	5490	9781

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

Very rare winter visitor

A male was found at CHL on 12th February (JLe) where it remained until the 18th. This was the second record in two years after 2015's NDC sighting and the fourth in the past ten years. If accepted by the YNU, it will be the fourth record for this species for the area.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Amber listed

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

Good numbers in 2016 for this species with the slight decline in numbers at CHL more than offset by an enhanced presence in the LDV.

In the LDV monthly maxima in the first winter period were 52 on 17th January, 234 on 21st February and the annual peak count of 237, of which 103 were at Wheldrake Ings, on 28th March. CHL monthly maxima were 109 on 9th January, 131 on 21st February (peak count for the year), 67 on 6th March and 51 on 3rd April. There was a notable count of 100 birds at Skipwith Common on 7th February. Small numbers were also seen during the period at Bolton Percy Ings,

Heslington East, Milford Common, Riccall Ings, West Ings, Wharfe Ings and Ulleskelf Mires.

Into the breeding season in the LDV there were 97 pairs on the reserve by 29th April. The first broods were at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd. In July it was reported that good numbers remained throughout the site and breeding success appeared high with up to 53 ducklings recorded from Wheldrake Ings (ten broods) and a further 21 ducklings (four broods) noted elsewhere during the month.

Away from the LDV, an interesting sighting was of a pair with nine very small ducklings at Church Fenton on 22nd April and two adults with at least six small young there on the 25th. Reports of between one and five birds also came from Foggathorpe, Hessay Moor Pond, Low Catton Ings, Ozendyke Ings, Sherburn in Elmet, Skipwith Common and Ulleskelf Mires

In the autumn and second winter period in the LDV monthly maxima were 21 on 14th September, 19 on 17th October, 31 on 14th November and 63 on 18th December (all WeBS). CHL held 40 by 21st August, with monthly maxima of 123 on 24th September, 96 on 16th October, 64 on 13th November and 89 on 18th December. Low single digit records also came from Bolton Percy Ings, Heslington East, Ozendyke Ings, and Wistow Clough (maximum of 15 on 22nd December).

Monthly WeBS counts for Gadwall

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	75	131	48	9	15	3	3	40	123	96	64	89
LDV	52	234	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	31	83

Teal *Anas crecca*

Amber listed

Abundant winter visitor and resident breeder in small numbers

Not unexpectedly the most significant numbers in the area were to be seen in the LDV, indicative of its national importance to this species as a key wintering area.

First winter peak counts in the LDV were 6035 on 17th January and 6320 on 21 February. By mid-March numbers were beginning to fall but 3700 were still present on the 28th and on in to April, dropping to 1300 by the 7th but increasing again to 4000 there at the end of the month. Birds were widely scattered as a consequence of the flooding. At CHL monthly maxima (all WeBS) were 428 on 9th January, 168 on 21st February and 69 on 13th March. Of larger gatherings elsewhere, the Lower River Wharfe predominated following extensive flooding, the peak count being 1220 at West Ings on 18th January, with 750 there the following day, 520 there on 4th February and 750 on the 20th. On 14th February there were 100 at Bolton Percy Ings and 100 there on 13th March. On 15th February there were 110 at West Ings. Riccall Ings was home to an exceptional 3000 on the 30th after a rare flood there. Thereafter the numbers fell to 1000 on 1st February and to 500 by the 3rd. Birds seen at less usual locations included small numbers at Acaster Marshes, Allerthorpe Common, Askham Bog, Colton Pond, Clifton Ings,

Heslington East, Hessay Moor Pond, Milford Common, Skipwith Common, where there were 200 on 5th March, and Stillingfleet.

In the breeding season in the LDV an estimated seven pairs produced young, with a further three pairs thought to have done so, and 34 additional pairs attempting/summering. In June three pairs with 11 young and 12 drakes were at Wheldrake Ings on the 26th. Another pair had 12 young there on the 29th.

Post-breeding numbers built up at Wheldrake Ings during August to over 450 by the month end. In September, numbers increased to 800 by the 17th and 1050 by the 28th. Thereafter the second winter period produced counts of 1655 on 17th October, 2430 on 14th November and 3546 on 18th December in the LDV; much lower at the end of the year than in 2015. At CHL the maximum was 180 on 13th November. In the Lower River Wharfe there were 84 and 76 on 26th and 27th August respectively at Ozendyke Ings following flash flooding after a thunderstorm. Later significant records from that area included 127 at Bolton Percy Ings on 23rd November, 290 on the 24th and 116 on the 25th and 150 at Ozendyke Ings on the 28th. Elsewhere, 29 at Heslington East on 7th October was a high count for this site. There were 80 on the lake at Newburgh Priory on 16th October and 70 there on 4th December. Brumber Pond hosted 140 birds on 29th November and 40 were at Patefield Wood on 16th December.

Monthly WeBS counts for Teal

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	326	168	69	3	0	0	0	7	59	76	180	136
LDV	6035	6320								1655	2430	3546

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

YOC

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

Following one last year, a male was found at Wheldrake Ings on 9th April (DMB, DT). It was seen again from the 12th to 20th April during which time it was seen displaying to a Teal *Anas crecca*. It consorted with other Teal and its behaviour was described as rather aggressive. It later reappeared at Ellerton Ings with a flock of 167 Teal on the 30th (CSR).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Amber listed

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

Once again our most recorded duck species in the York area although, early in the year, numbers in the LDV were slower than last year to build up.

In January a maximum of 1100 was recorded in the LDV on the 17th and numbers remained at 1000 plus throughout the month. Also on the 17th, 199 at CHL and 228 at Heslington (East and West) were monthly maxima. Notable counts elsewhere were 100 at West Ings on 13th January (and 138 on the 18th) and 79 at Acaster on the 3rd. February saw 1500 at Wheldrake Ings on the 16th and a total of 2,397 in the LDV on the 21st, with WeBS counts of 79 at CHL, and 137 at Heslington (East and West) monthly maxima at those sites. 2500 birds

were noted in the LDV on 1st March before birds dispersed for breeding. On 13th March, 34 were at CHL, and 71 at Heslington East and West (WeBS).

In the breeding season there were estimated to be 350 pairs in the LDV by 1st April. However, the first ducklings seen were quite early and in an unusual location – two in a small pond near Monks Cross on 18th March. With numerous reports of broods, breeding was also confirmed at: Acaster, Aughton Ings, Bank Island, Bolton Percy Ings, Brecks Farm Haxby, East Cottingwith, Foggathorpe, Heslington East, Heslington West, Howsham, Milford Common, NDC, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pottery Fish Pond Strensall, SHL, Thorganby, Ulleskelf Mires and Wheldrake Ings (where six broods totalling 39 ducklings were seen on 30th April).

Post breeding, 203 were at Wheldrake Ings on 11th August. During September, numbers increased with the evening flight at Wheldrake Ings attracting 500 on the 11th. The population throughout the LDV at this time was thought to number around 1500, consisting of local breeding birds and supplemented by birds released locally by shooting interests. In October, 550 were seen at Bank Island on the 10th and the LDV held 970 on the 17th. From 700 at Wheldrake Ings in early November, after extensive flooding numbers increased to 1700 by the 28th, while 1800 were present during December.

Away from the LDV, at Heslington East and West, 285 on 18th August was the peak count for the year. Numbers dropped to between 150 and 200 there for the remainder of the year (see WeBS table below). There were 184 at CHL on 25th July (WeBS), numbers dropping thereafter to between 50 and 90 to the year end. Elsewhere 50 were at Bolton Percy Ings on 29th September.

Monthly WeBS counts for Mallard

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	199	79	34	34	26	34	184	110	51	64	45	57
LDV	1100	2397								970	1465	1800
HES	228	137	71	45	76	119	263	285	174	139	178	190

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Amber listed

Winter visitor and rare breeder

In the first winter period, scattered distribution and limited access made full counts difficult but there were 249 in the LDV on 17th January, over 500 on 16th February, of which 372 were at Wheldrake Ings and 417 on the 21st. On 6th March 130 were at Aughton, with 300-400 across the whole site in early March. Numbers increased during the month as presumed spring passage brought additional birds, leading to a peak count of 620 between the 22nd and the 24th before decreasing to 446 on the 28th. On 3rd April there were 115 at Ellerton and a further 97 at Wheldrake Ings on the 4th contributing to a total estimate of 300 birds in the LDV. Thereafter numbers fell quickly.

Away from the LDV, at CHL there were four on 1st January, one on 13th February and again on the 21st. There was a cluster of sightings at Bolton Percy Ings, double figure counts including; 31 on 2nd January with 32 there on the 6th,

17 on the 8th, 14 on the 12th and 11 on the 13th. In March, there were 22 on the 11th. There were 14 at Wharfe Ings on 4th January and two on the 18th, seven there on 3rd February, a single the next day, three on the 10th and two pairs on the 13th. Four were still there on the 15th. On 8th January there were 30 at Ulleskelf Mires, 12 there on the 13th and 34 on the 17th (possibly some overlap with the Bolton Percy Ings birds.) West Ings had 24 on 18th January. Rare flooding on Riccall Ings accounted for the impressive 44 birds seen there on 30th January and nine still there on 1st February.

Pairs were at Wheldrake Ings on 9th April, at Thorganby Ings on the 17th and then at Wheldrake Ings again from the 26th to the 29th. A full count of the LDV on 30th April was seven pairs, falling to two pairs in May with the last report from Wheldrake Ings on the 8th; there was no concrete evidence of breeding.

The first returning bird of the autumn was a female at Wheldrake Ings on 17th September, the next being four on CHL on 2nd October and six there on the 9th. In the second winter period in the LDV there were ten at Wheldrake Ings on 15th October, 14 at Bank Island on the 12th and 13th November, 20 on the 16th at Wheldrake Ings and 28 at Bank Island on the 17th. After wider flooding there were 51 at Wheldrake on the 27th, of 75 present throughout the valley. In December there were 86 at Wheldrake Ings on the 10th, 134 throughout the LDV on the 18th and a final count of 41 at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. Elsewhere, there were four at Bolton Percy Ings on 19th November and again on the 25th with seven birds there on both the 23rd and 24th, and nine on 27th December, while Wharfe Ings held two birds on 28th November.

Monthly WeBS counts for Pintail

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	0	1	0	0					0	0	0	0
LDV	249	478	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		41

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

YOC *Amber listed*

Scarce migrant breeder

A much better year for this species than in 2015, with three pairs breeding successfully.

The first record of the year was of two pairs at Aughton/Ellerton on 2nd April with a pair also observed at NDC on the 12th, then a handful of singles around the same general area before a further two pairs with a drake were noted in the LDV on the 22nd and possibly the same two pairs at Ellerton Ings on the 30th.

Throughout May birds showed well, with two pairs in the Wheldrake Ings area, a pair at NDC and at least two drakes and a female in the Ellerton/Aughton area – at least three females were also thought to be incubating during the month.

The only sighting away from the LDV was at Heslington East where a single bird was reported on 6th May. On 20th June at NDC, where a pair had been present during the month, a female was seen with six newly hatched ducklings, while at Thornton Ellers on the following day a female and eight newly hatched ducklings

were seen - a surprise and presumably relating to birds that had gone previously undetected at this site. In addition, on the 29th, a pair appeared at Wheldrake Ings with seven newly hatched ducklings.

Singletons were seen on the 2nd and 14th July at Wheldrake Ings, on the 8th and 13th at Melbourne and an eclipse drake was at NDC on the 19th. In August one was on the pool at Wheldrake Ings from the 27th to the month's end. During September one was on the pool on the 3rd, joined by a second on the 10th, one remaining to the 13th. The last of the year was seen on the 20th at Wheldrake Ings, almost a month later than last year's final bird. See also the RBBP report on page 111.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Amber listed

Winter visitor and resident breeder in small numbers

In common with other dabbling ducks, the majority were located in the LDV, but flooding meant that numbers were greater in SE53 compared with other years. First winter monthly maxima in the LDV were 78 on 17th January and 178 on 21st February, with 207 present in the valley on 28th March, 98 of these in the Aughton/Ellerton Ings area. At CHL a pair was there on 13th February. Twenty five were at Bolton Percy Ings on 2nd January and 23 on 9th February. At Ulleskelf Mires the peak was 18 on 13th January. Wharfe Ings held four birds on 4th January and four again on the 18th while February saw six there on the 16th. There were two at West Ings on 18th January and five on 2nd April. An unusual sighting for Heslington East was one on 26th February. Hessay Moor Pond held a single bird on 19th March. Elsewhere the rare flooding at Riccall Ings resulted in a notable sighting of 52 birds on 30th January, with 20 still there on 1st February.

During the breeding season, in the LDV in April there was a maximum of 75 pairs present by the end of the month and 80 pairs into May. Several broods were seen towards the end of June, including broods of six at both NDC and Thornton Ellers and a brood of ten at the latter on the 28th. At least 67 young were produced, of which 18 were caught and ringed. Elsewhere, a pair was at Newburgh Priory Lake on 25th May and a pair at Ozendyke Ings on 26th August.

By September in the LDV there were 20 left, largely on the pool at Wheldrake Ings. Second winter maximum monthly counts in the LDV were 16 on 17th October, at least 50 on 28th November and 101 on 31st December. Elsewhere, at CHL the highest count was nine on 29th October, while at Heslington East a maximum of three was seen on both the 1st and 15th November. On the 25th 53 were at Bolton Percy Ings while Wharfe Ings held 10 birds on 28th November. One was at Wistow Clough on the same date and two there on 22nd December, while there were two at Skipwith Common on Christmas Eve.

Monthly WeBS counts for Shoveler

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	0	0	0	0					3	2	4	1
LDV	78	178	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	41	97

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

YOC

Rare vagrant although escapes from wildfowl collections are more likely

The first record for the area since 2012 was of an adult female seen on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 24th October (CSR).

Pochard *Aythya farina**Red listed**Winter visitor and breeder in small numbers*

In comparison with last year's numbers this was an excellent winter for the species, particularly in the first period. Even more importantly, the breeding season in the LDV was adjudged to have been the most successful since the mid-1990s. In the first winter period the LDV held 171 birds on 17th January and 341 on 21st February, while there was a single at CHL on the 12th to 14th February, with four there on the 21st. By 6th March there were two males at CHL. At Heslington East, totals were well down from the counts of the previous two years (when over 30 were present), with a maximum of eight on the 15th and 19th January. At Heslington West, the maximum was three on 25th March.

Away from the usual haunts the exceptional flooding at Riccall Ings, which produced sightings of several duck species not normally found there, turned up 20 birds on 30th January. One was at West Ings on 11th March.

In the LDV up to nine pairs were thought to be breeding and incubating clutches early in May with nine drakes and two females at Wheldrake on the 10th and five drakes and a female on the 14th but, frustratingly, no broods were seen. Observers at Heslington East had reason to celebrate with a mother and three ducklings sighted in June after a single "spare male" had been observed there on 20th May and a single bird on 5th June. These three young, by now fully grown, were then seen on the 18th and again on the 30th. A further intriguing sighting was of a female with four fully grown young on 1st July, while at Heslington West there was a female with a single duckling on 5th June and, on 29th July a single wary juvenile was possibly one of the Heslington East brood.

In the second winter period counts reached double figures in December with 57 at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th and 19 at CHL on the 27th the highest counts, while 23 at Heslington East, also on the 27th, was the peak count at the site for the year.

Monthly WeBS counts for Pochard

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	11
LDV	171	341	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	56
HES	7	2	3	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	19

Note: HES birds in Dec and Jan all at Heslington East

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Winter visitor and breeder in small numbers

During the first winter period monthly peak counts in the LDV were 132 on 17th January and 276 on 21st February. Into March there were 153 on floodwater at NDC on the 11th and by the 13th there were thought to be 340 plus birds throughout the LDV and 282 on the 28th. CHL hosted 95 on 17th January, 119 on 21st February and 49 on 13th March decreasing to 20 on 18th April. At Heslington East 65 on 17th January was the largest count in this period. Along the Lower River Wharfe sightings were frequent with small numbers (maximum 12) seen at Bolton Percy Ings, West Ings, Wharfe Ings and Ulleskelf Mires. A minimum of 20 were at Clifton Ings on 16th January and a single was on the River Ouse near York Post Office on the 25th.

Approaching the breeding season birds were seen in suitable nesting habitat at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe, Frog Hall Allerthorpe Common, Heslington East (two pairs), Hessay Moor Pond, Milford Common and Westfield House. A gathering of 127 at NDC on 13th April included displaying birds. The first broods (two females with six young) were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July and two broods of five and two respectively at Wheldrake Ings on 9th July. A female with nine young was at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on the 8th. No breeding took place at Heslington East though 42 were present by 8th August.

During the second winter period the maximum count in the LDV was 61 on 18th December. At CHL numbers increased from 34 on 24th September to 97 on 29th October, with 91 on 13th November, and an annual peak of 153 on 27th December. At Heslington East 79 on 18th September and 99 on 18th December were the highest counts. Elsewhere, one or two were seen at Wistow Clough on several dates in mid/late October increasing to four by mid-November with ten there by 22nd December. A single was at Bolton Percy Ings on 17th October and one at Patefield Wood on 17th December.

Monthly WeBS counts for Tufted Duck

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	95	119	49	20	32	37	7	31	34	50	91	143
LDV	132	276	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	19	61
HES	65	36	2	4	8	7	29	21	79	16	18	99

Note: HES birds all on Heslington East

Scaup *Aythya marila*

YOC Red listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

A really first rate year for the species starting with a flurry in January and February, although, as was the case later in the year, it was sometimes difficult to ascertain just how many individuals were involved.

A female was at NDC on 1st January with possibly the same bird at Wharfe Ings from the 3rd to the 8th. A 1st-winter male at Aughton Ings on 3rd January was the first of several birds which took up residence in the Bubwith/Aughton Ings area

with three females, a 1st-winter drake and an adult drake present on the 17th, followed by two ducks and a drake at Bubwith Ings on the 19th. A pair lingered there from the 20th to the month end and a single female was present at Bank Island on the 29th. In February birds remained in the Bubwith/Aughton Ings area with two females at Aughton Ings on the 3rd, increasing to seven birds on Bubwith Ings from the 7th to the 12th, and then fluctuating numbers for the rest of the month with five still present at the month end. Also during February, Bank Island produced two immature females on 3rd with a single female there on the 13th. Into March several birds remained in Aughton Ings/Ellerton area with a peak of six including two drakes on the 13th, with five remaining to the month end. In April with water levels dropping, the birds relocated to NDC, with three females and a drake present on the 3rd remaining to the 6th, when another female was present at Wheldrake Ings. Throughout the rest of April there were numerous further sightings of between one and four birds at Wheldrake Ings and NDC. By the 21st and into May there was one female remaining though she was joined fleetingly by a male on the 8th but was alone again by the 14th.

The next sighting, an immature female, was on 20th November at CHL and on the 27th, a single 1st-winter female (possibly the CHL bird) was at Wheldrake Ings. This bird lingered into December and was then joined on the 10th by three 1st-winter birds (one female, two male), dwindling to one male by the 18th, seen again on the 27th and the 30th. A male was at Heslington East on the 27th.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

YOC

Red Listed

Very rare passage migrant

After an absence of ten years in the area, a female/1st-winter bird was seen at Aughton Ings on 28th March (CSR). This is only the seventh record for the recording area.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Red listed

Scarce passage migrant

A distinct improvement upon last year's showing began with a female which flew over Bank Island on 17th March (FM), then on the 20th there was a single drake on the flooded Refuge at Wheldrake Ings (DMB, DT).

In April there was a pair at CHL on the 3rd (NM) while a drake flew in to NDC on the 6th (LDV blog). This was followed by a female at Wheldrake Ings on the 9th (JCn/RCn/DMB/JLe) and a pair of drakes on the 11th (DMB, JLe). Amazingly, another pair was present at Bank Island on the 12th (CSR, FM). The final sighting of the year was of the two drakes at Wheldrake Ings on the 13th (JLe).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Amber listed

Winter visitor and passage migrant

2016 was notable for some slightly larger gatherings than 2015, particularly at CHL where there were 36 on 17th January, 44 on 21st February and 68 on 13th

March. In the LDV monthly maxima were 12 on 18th January, 20 on 28th February and 26 at Wheldrake Ings on 20th March. In April the maximum count was nine on the 4th with only a pair remaining by the month end. At Heslington East there was one on 9th January and again on the 17th, then one on 16th February. In the Lower River Wharfe extensive flooding resulted in frequent sightings with six on the 6th and 8th January, two on the 12th and three on the 13th at Ulleskelf Mires. One was at West Ings on the 6th, two on the 28th and two on 4th February, while at Wharfe Ings four on 18th January were followed by one on 3rd February, two on the 4th, two on the 10th and one on the 15th. The flooded Riccall Ings held six birds on 30th January and one was at Coneysthorpe on 16th February.

The first displaying bird was seen on 8th April at Wheldrake Ings. A singleton was reported from Scrayingham on 24th April and one at Braithwaites Wood the same day. There were frequent sightings of singles and pairs at Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island in the first half of May where the last birds of spring (two immature males at Bank Island /Wheldrake Ings) were observed on the 30th.

The first returning bird of the autumn was at CHL on 16th October where there were maximum counts of 11 on 13th November and 37 on 18th December.

In the LDV the first arrival was noted on 13th November, where the highest count for the month was four at Wheldrake Ings on the 27th and, in December, at the same location, 12 on the 18th. At Bolton Percy Ings there were two or three birds on 6th November, three on the 11th and the peak count for the month was 15 on the 27th. Six were there on 31st December. Heslington East hosted a male on 5th December and again on the 12th, the same day as one at Gilling East.

Months WeBS counts for Goldeneye

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	36	44	24	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	37
LDV	5	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	9

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor

Altogether an excellent year for the species after a blank year in 2015. A female was seen to fly in to Thorganby Ings on 23rd January. Thereafter activity picked up and after two red-heads were seen at Aughton Ings on 3rd February, three birds were present at Bubwith Ings on the 8th (the highest number seen together since 2007). Four were at Bubwith Ings on the 10th and 11th, followed by three on the 12th and four again from the 13th to the 18th before moving to Aughton Ings from the 19th to the 21st. Three were then present on the 22nd to the 26th while a pair flew over Bank Island on the 25th. On the 27th two remained at Aughton Ings and a single moved to Wheldrake Ings, remaining there until the month's end. At least five or possibly six birds were involved during the month.

Into March there were two red-heads from the 1st until the 3rd at Aughton Ings, three birds on the 4th and five on the 6th. A female reported from Ellerton Ings on

the 14th remained until the 18th, while there was a red-head reported from Wheldrake Ings on the 19th which remained there throughout April, being joined on the 3rd by another. It was last seen on 5th May.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Winter visitor, passage migrant and casual breeder

Well reported from suitable lake habitat and along the River Ouse with many double figure counts between January and March. However, the peak count at CHL was only seven on 9th January, far lower than Heslington West where double figure counts included 19 on 21st February, and 27 on the 26th, with 28 there on 1st March, 32 on the 2nd, and 42 (26 females and 16 males) on the 3rd. In the Lower River Wharfe there were 25 at Wharfe Ings on 2nd January, 41 on the 4th, 56 on the 8th and 20 on the 12th; February saw 15 there on the 4th and 18 on the 13th, some of which were displaying. Clifton Ings hosted 15 birds on 16th January. By 2nd February Rawcliffe Lake held 28, increasing to 46 (35 males) on the 8th, then 12 on the 10th and 11th, 36 on the 22nd and 31 on the 23rd. Ten were on the fish pond at Yearsley Common on 7th February. Records from central York included 11 on 5th February near Millennium Bridge, also on the River Ouse 17 were at Beningborough on the 15th and 16th and Redhouse Reservoir hosted 34 the same day. There were 21 at the latter on 21st March. At Bolton Percy Ings numbers peaked at ten on 30th April.

A small number of birds summered at Bolton Percy Ings, with seven there on 2nd May, and ten large juveniles (probably a single brood) seen on 25th July. One female remained from 21st August until the autumn intake boosted numbers.

The first returning birds were in the LDV with two females at Bank Island on 12th November, while a female seen at Ozendyke Ings in the early part of the month may have been the long staying individual from Bolton Percy Ings; two were there on the 13th. Fewer double figure counts were received in the latter part of the year. Ten were at Heslington West on the 16th and twelve at Wharfe Ings on 28th November. In December, at Heslington West, at least 23 (7 males and 16 'brown heads') were actively feeding on the 1st and 25 were there on the 24th. Ten (two males and eight females) were on the bottom lake at Gilling on the 20th. Low single digit numbers were also seen at Acaster, Bolton Percy Ings, CHL, Clifton Backies, Clifton Ings, Patefield Wood, Redhouse Lake, Wheldrake Ings and on the River Ouse, York during the second winter period.

Monthly WeBS counts for Goosander

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	5	6	2	0					0	0	0	1
LDV	1	2	-	-					-	-	-	-
HES	0	19	13	1					0	0	0	25

Note: HES birds all at Heslington West

Quail *Coturnix coturnix**Amber listed**Scarce migrant breeder*

Generally a poor year, with the LDV reporting only three singing males. The first calling bird was heard on the 23rd and 24th May in a garden near Thorganby (CW). On the 26th and 27th May a single was calling at Ellerton. In June one was at Milford Common on the 3rd, two at Menthorpe Ings on the 12th, then singles at East Cottingham on the 13th and in a field near Naburn Wood on the 16th. During July two were at Thornton Ellers on the 9th and a single at Heslington Tillmire on the 23rd. The last of the year was a single at Scarthingwell on 16th August. See also the RBBP report on page 111.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa**Resident breeder and released to shoot*

Widespread throughout the recording area mostly in low single figures, though many, particularly in SE53, are known to be released for shooting. In the first winter period counts of more than ten were 36 at Skipwith on 1st January, 13 there on the 20th and 38 on the 25th.

Breeding evidence was noted at Riccall and Westfield House, Thornton.

In the second winter period most records came from Bank Island with counts over ten being 19 on 9th September and 13 on the 10th, 20 on 1st October and 43 on the 15th, then 11 on 19th November. There were 16 on 18th December and 20 on the 30th, also 30 at Wheldrake Ings on the latter date. Elsewhere 12 were at Burtonfields, Stamford Bridge on 23rd September and 20 there on 23rd November, while 23 were at Bolton Percy Ings on 13th November.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix**Red listed**Resident breeder*

Fairly widespread with records from 30 different locations throughout the recording area. Some birds are released for shooting.

The only confirmed report of breeding was a female and seven young seen at Bolton Percy Ings on 24th September.

Counts of six or more were:

3rd January, Heslington East - 15

3rd January, Milford Common - ten

5th January, Brumber Hill - seven

8th January, Nunnington - eight

10th February, Hagg Wood - six

29th May, West Lilling - six

2nd August, Hagg Wood - six

5th August, Scagglethorpe Lane - nine

24th September, Bolton Percy Ings - eight

4th, October, Hagg Wood - eight and the same number on the 11th and 15th

Rare and Scarcer Birds recorded during 2016



5th October, Milford Common - six
 5th November, Copmanthorpe - seven
 16th November, Milford Common - 30
 29th November, Fangfoss - 12
 11th December, Milford Common - 35
 30th December, Knavesmire - eight

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder and released to shoot

Well reported and widespread throughout the region, but many released for shooting. Five young seen at Milford Common on 4th July was the only breeding evidence received.

Counts of 20 or more were mostly from Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island through July to December. Peaks at Wheldrake Ings were 32 on 27th July, 45 on 25th August, increasing to 97 on the 31st and 47 on 3rd December. At Bank Island there were 40 on 25th September and 46 on 30th October. Elsewhere, 30 were at Hovingham on 17th April and 76 at Pocklington Canal on 31st August, with 23 there on 7th September.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellate*

YOC

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

One was briefly present at Bank Island on 11th February (FM); the first since 2012 and only the ninth record for the LDV.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

YOC

Amber listed

Very rare passage migrant

One of the more extraordinary sightings of the year! The eighth record for the area, and the first since 2006, was of one which turned up in a sandpit in a garden in Heworth, York on 8th September. Rescued from there, it was subsequently released safely on the coast (JT per JAB).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

YOC

Amber listed

Rare visitor

The first since 2013, sadly an adult was found dead in a field at Hagg Wood on 7th June (DW).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Passage and winter visitor; localised resident breeder

CHL and the LDV remain the strongholds, but higher numbers than in previous years were recorded from Bolton, Wharfe and Ozendyke Ings in the second winter period. In the first winter period, higher counts at CHL were 12 on 10th January and 25 on 6th March. At Wheldrake Ings 26 were at the roost on 24th January, 23 on 6th February, and 31 there on 1st March. Elsewhere, five were at Heslington

East on 27th January, 11 at Pocklington Canal and eight at Old Malton both on 12th February and 11 at Redhouse lagoon on 15th February.

In the breeding season, on 29th May nine nests were occupied at CHL and ten birds were there on 5th June. At Wheldrake Ings roost numbers were in the teens through April with 20 there on the 26th and again on 1st June.

In the second half of the year notable counts were:

23rd August, CHL - 13

9th September, Bolton Percy Ings - 30 and seven on the 12th

9th September, Ozendyke - 26

6th November, Ozendyke -13

19th November, Bolton Percy Ings - seven

28th November Wharfe Ings - nine

10th December, Wheldrake Ings - 22; and 24 on the 30th

27th December, CHL - 20

WeBS counts for Cormorant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	7	7	10	11	10	6	22	12	4	3	10	17
LDV	26	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	14	21

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor

Like 2015, there was only one record during the year - a single seen flying over the scrape at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd September (CSR, MFJ).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

YNU

Very rare vagrant

What would only be the second record for the recording area was a single bird seen flying over Crook Moor, Thorganby on 15th January (DT) , the first being a party of five in Nunnington in 1992.

This record is subject to ratification by the YNU and an update regarding its acceptance will follow in future reports.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Resident, with small numbers breeding in the LDV

Sightings again increased with records from every month. Most records were from the LDV - frequently of one or two birds - from at least 18 named locations. Five were present during February and at least eight different individuals were involved in the March sightings. A ringed bird (J9 – ringed by Mid-Lincolnshire ringing group as a nestling in May 2015) was at NDC on 26th May and at

Wheldrake Ings on 23rd July; another ringed bird (B9 - ringed on 5th July 2009 as a nestling at Penrhyn Castle, Bangor) was also present on the latter date.

During the heronry census on 15th May, there were five nests at Thicket Priory. Numbers increased during May and June with 14 present between Wheldrake Ings and NDC on 6th June and 16 feeding at NDC the following day. On the 10th there were 31 present, in addition to the five pairs in the heronry. Eight remained through the month with 16 present in the valley on the 29th.

Successful breeding was again reported from the LDV with five pairs raising a total of 15 young; with the first young noted on 10th June and the first fledged offspring seen at Wheldrake Ings on 14th July. Higher numbers during July included 16 at Thornton Ellers and eight at Wheldrake Ings on the 15th, increasing to 12 at the latter site the following day, then up to 18 there daily thereafter and 13 at Thornton Ellers, with smaller numbers scattered about elsewhere. In total there were estimated to be up to 70 birds present in the valley (including the breeding pairs and their young). Numbers gradually fell from August and records became more widespread.

Away from the LDV small numbers, including ones flying over, were reported at Acaster, Bolton Percy Ings, Brumber Hill, Clifton Ings, East Ness, Flamingoland (Kirby Misperton), Germany Beck (Fulford), Heslington East (three together on 27th July), Heslington Tillmire (four feeding there on 6th September), Heworth Green, Howsham, Milford Common, Naburn, Ozendyke, Redhouse Reservoir, Riccall, Stillington and Ulleskelf Mires. One unusual sighting was of a singleton photographed on the River Ouse in the centre of York. See also the RBBP report on page 111.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

YNU

Rare vagrant

This species has now been seen annually in the past four years. Sightings in 2016 may refer to three different individuals, constituting the 10th, 11th and 12th records for the area. A single was at Bank Island on 14th May (CSR) then one, presumed to be the same bird, was seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 24th. A single in breeding plumage was at NDC on 30th May (DR, CG). The bird was then seen daily up to 4th June and again on the 12th.

In the autumn, a single was at Newburgh Priory Lake (JPe) on 16th October and then on 21st at Yearsley (JP and IB). One was Melbourne/Thornton Ings on 25th October with the last sighting of the year on the 29th in the Stillingfleet area.

These records are subject to ratification by the YNU and an update regarding acceptance will follow in future reports.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder

Well recorded with many reports of one or two birds in areas of suitable habitat. At the beginning of the year, only eight were in the LDV on 1st January,

with flooding reducing feeding opportunities. In February, 18 were seen on the 1st.

Breeding evidence came from four sites, with the heronry at Thicket Priory adjacent to Wheldrake Ings again the largest of these. Twenty four active nests were counted on 21st April and 30 on 15th May. Thirteen juveniles were colour ringed in the heronry on 5th May and for the first time a breeding bird with colour rings was seen, having been ringed in 2014. The first fledged young were seen on 24th May. Including 21 young birds still in the heronry, there were 77 birds in the LDV on 10th June. At Acomb Ings 14 nests were counted on 14th April and there were 11 nests with 16 birds seen at Bishop Wood on 9th May. There were two nests at Castle Howard with two large juveniles on 29th May.

Post breeding counts of more than ten included 30 at NDC on 2nd June, 44 at Wheldrake Ings on 13th June, 26 there on 23rd July and 27 on 1st August when up to 40 were in the LDV as a whole. In the autumn and winter the monthly maxima in the LDV were 21 on 13th September, 24 on 21st October and 18 on 14th November. Elsewhere 11 were at Acaster on 31st December.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Resident breeder

In the first winter period up to eight were in the LDV in January and February, with Pocklington Canal a favoured site. Two were at CHL on 10th January. Singles were seen at West Ings on 2nd January, Wharfe Ings on the 8th, Bolton Percy Ings on the 23rd, Middlethorpe Ings on the 30th and Milford Common on the 31st, then singles at Gilling Woods Lake on 26th February and at Milford Common on the 29th.

In the breeding season, pairs were returning to the LDV by 1st March and there were six pairs there on 30th April. An immature bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 29th June and one at East Cottingham on 31st July. On 6th March there were six birds at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe. Three were building there on 1st April and a nest was occupied on the 21st. Five birds were there on the 23rd and five pairs and two families on 17th June. There were six on 29th June and 27th July reducing to three there on the 31st. Successful breeding also took place at Heslington. In July four adults and one juvenile were seen on the 27th, then two adults and two juveniles on the 29th. One large youngster was seen on 14th August, a tiny chick on the 24th and four adults, a fully grown juvenile and a tiny chick on the 31st. Displaying birds were at White Carr, Strensall Common on 31st March. A pair bred at Milford Common with a well grown juvenile seen there on 1st August. At CHL there were eight on 6th August, ten on 9th September and 13 on 2nd October, but no breeding records.

In the second winter period there were seven at NDC from 1st November, five of which were on the river from the 11th to the 30th, and seven on Pocklington Canal, Melbourne, which remained all month. Seven were at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on 10th November. In addition there were low single figures at the breeding sites as well as records from Bolton Percy Ings, Clifton Backies, Osbaldwick, Ozendyke and Wistow Clough.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder and passage visitor

In the first winter period five were at Heslington West on 29th January and 16th February with a displaying pair there on 3rd February and a pair was displaying at Wheldrake Ings on the 28th. One or two birds were also at Bank Island, CHL, Heslington East, NDC and Rawcliffe Lake during the same period. In March three were at Naburn Lock on the 20th and two at West Ings on the 11th.

In the breeding season a pair at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe hatched three young, two of these surviving beyond 17th June. An adult with an immature was at CHL on 5th June, eight (including five immatures) there on 23rd August and a juvenile on 9th September. At Wheldrake Ings four birds were displaying on 5th March with eight pairs present by the end of April. A pair was displaying on flood water at NDC on 24th April. Eleven birds were at Wheldrake Ings on 8th May. At Heslington West a pair seen displaying in early March and nesting during the month was then seen on 9th April with three newly-hatched chicks riding on their backs. On 1st May one half-grown juvenile was being fed by an adult and another adult was with two half-grown juveniles – presumably the same family. Records from Heslington East showed four birds there on 3rd May and a fledged juvenile on the 29th, probably from Heslington West. Nesting was also noted at Rawcliffe Lake, but success was unknown.

During the second winter period there were up to four birds at CHL and two or three birds at Heslington East and West.

Monthly WeBS counts for Great Crested Grebe

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	0	1	2	5	4	4	10	9	3	0	1	0
HES	2	5	5	4	3	6	3	0	0	0	0	1

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

YOC *Red listed*

Rare winter visitor

After a run of records in the 1990s and none since New Year's Day 2001, it was a welcome return for this species with sightings in both March and November. A winter plumage bird was seen and photographed at NDC on 27th March, remaining to the following day (DMB, NS).

In November, a single in winter plumage spent the day at Heslington East on the 10th (DR).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

YOC *Amber listed*

Scarce passage visitor; formerly rare breeder

Not recorded in 2016 after records in 2008 and 2010 to 2014.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

YNU

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant

No reports in 2016, the third blank year in a row after annual records between 2005 and 2013.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Resident in the southern part of the recording area; scarce elsewhere

As in 2015, there were multiple sightings in every month, though most were of one or two birds and in the southern half of the area. However it was noted that there were almost 50% fewer sightings near Sherburn in Elmet during the year compared with last year. Their scarcity in the northern part of the region was indicated by one flying high west over Ampleforth in May being only the second record there for the observer in six years.

The only counts of more than two in the first half of the year were three over the A64 near Stockton Lane on 3rd March and five at Grimston on the 7th. Three were seen at Bolton Percy on 7th April and four at Kirkby Wharfe on 27th June. In March, one was found shot in the throat on farmland in Malton, which was taken into care by Jean Thorpe; further evidence of needless persecution of raptors.

During June in the LDV, a pair was seen regularly in the wider Wheldrake/ Storwood/ Sutton area, with further sightings at Melbourne thought to relate to another pair or individual. In August two were seen daily at Bank Island/Wheldrake Ings and occasionally three there following hay making. It is thought that the pair that attempted breeding in 2015 successfully bred in the LDV in 2016, fledging a single youngster. A second pair, thought to be first time breeders, abandoned their nest during incubation. Breeding may also have taken place in the southwest part of the area. In December a juvenile was seen flying there.

In the second half of the year; three over Acaster Airfield on 23rd September, five in the air together at Kirkby Wharfe on 17th October and three there on 5th November were the only counts above two.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Amber listed

Scarce visitor and passage migrant; now resident in the LDV in small numbers

As in 2015, most records came from the LDV where they were present all year, though they remained scarce elsewhere. There was no evidence of breeding however.

During January and February there were sightings of an adult male, a cream-crown and an immature. In March, an immature flying north on the 20th was being mobbed by crows. A female was in the valley throughout April and May, mostly at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings; an immature was also seen there on the 4th, 8th and 11th. During June at least three birds, including an immature, were present; a male was at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st. A female in moult was at Wheldrake Ings in late July and two cream-crowns present on the 26th. In August a single cream-crown lingered early in the month, ranging throughout the valley. There

were increasing numbers and sightings as the month progressed with up to two males and three cream-crowns present at the end of the month. Up to five were also present in September. One shot in North Yorkshire, rescued and rehabilitated by Jean Thorpe, was ringed and released at Bank Island. During October an immature and a cream-crown were present to at least the 17th, while two cream-crowns spent November in the LDV. A female and an immature were also reported on several dates in December.

Away from the LDV, there were a few sightings at nearby Skipwith Common (probably wandering over from the LDV); a cream-crown was being mobbed by crows on 20th January, an immature there on 5th March, an adult male on the 6th and one was quartering over the pool flushing Teal *Anas crecca* on the 29th. A female was seen heading north over Dunnington on 10th April and a single flying over Clifton Moor on 12th May. On 6th May an immature was seen at Heslington Tillmire, then on the 30th a cream-crown was hunting in the northwest corner of the Tillmire, being aggressively chased by five Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus*, before appearing to drift away northeast; however it returned about 40 minutes later, landing in the northwest corner. Later in the year a male was hunting over cornfields during harvesting at Wressle on 14th August; a juvenile female with a damaged leg was present along the Lower Wharfe from 10th September to 17th October; a female flew over Dunnington Common on 4th October; one was at Skipwith Common on 1st November and a female flew over Hassacarr NR on the 4th.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

YOC Red listed

Scarce winter visitor

A ringtail was seen at Skipwith Common on 13th January (JR) and again on the 27th (FM). This wintering bird was then present throughout February and in March was seen on the 3rd (LDV Blog), the last report of the spring.

In the autumn and winter, a ringtail was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 31st October (CSR) and what may have been the same bird was seen at Strensall Common on 3rd November, although this was not confirmed. The last of the year was a male at Skipwith Common on 22nd December (NC). This is the third winter in succession that individuals have been seen there.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

YOC

Rare passage visitor and very rare resident breeder

The only report from the first half of the year was of a female perched in a tree in the southern part of the area on 3rd April (DT). No evidence of any breeding was reported.

In autumn a female was heard and seen on 4th September and again the following day at Burtonfields, near Stamford Bridge (AS). Three were present in the southwest of the club area between 22nd October and 10th December, but sightings were of one or two birds on any given date.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Common resident breeder and passage migrant

Widespread across the area and well reported throughout the year, mainly in ones or twos, with passage seen in the autumn.

Displaying birds were seen at East Moor and Pocklington Canal, Melbourne during February (and at the latter in May) and a pair was circling in a thermal with four Buzzards *Buteo buteo* at Allerthorpe Common on the 28th. In March a pair was displaying over Skipwith Common on the 29th, while another pair was displaying over Foss Island, York on 4th April. Breeding was confirmed at Bolton Percy Ings, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe and Wheldrake Ings, where a family party of three was seen on 7th August. On 29th August a juvenile was observed making unsuccessful attempts at first a Magpie *Pica pica* and then a Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* in a Naburn garden.

Between three and six were recorded on a number of dates during the autumn, including six at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd September and four at Bank Island on the 25th – this increase in sightings was probably due to young becoming more widespread as they dispersed, though passage birds may have been involved too. Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 23 flying south between 21st August and 28th October, with a peak of five on 28th September. In October, a male and female were displaying over the reserve at Hassacarr on the 2nd. Three were at Sutton upon Derwent on 30th December.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Passage migrant and common resident breeder

Well reported, common and widespread across the area; the majority of records were of between one and five birds, with most of the higher counts coming in September. The only double figure counts in the first half of the year were 13 at Grimston on 7th March and a minimum of 15 at Poppleton on 23rd April.

Displaying birds were noted at Bolton Percy, Breck's Farm Haxby, Hagg Wood, Heslington Tillmire, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne), Monks Cross and Westfield House, with pairs holding territory and seen in suitable nesting habitat at a number of other sites as well. Occupied nests and recently fledged young were reported from four sites.

Double figure counts in September were: 12 at Bank Island on the 7th, following a successful breeding season in the LDV; ten circling over Heslington Tillmire on the 11th; ten circling over Sherburn in Elmet before dispersing to the north on the 18th; ten over Bolton Percy Ings on the 23rd and 11 over Ozendyke on the 28th.

One was seen feeding on a dead Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* at Wharfe Ings in February, a less usual prey item.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

YNU

Rare visitor and passage migrant

No sightings in 2016, after records in three of the past ten years.

Note: The records from 2015 are still awaiting ratification

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant

All records came during the first half of the year. The first of the year was a report of one at NDC on 29th March (Birdguides), followed by a further single flying north there on 5th April (LDV Blog). Then in May a single was seen over Easingwold on the 6th (Birdguides) followed by a single north at Crockey Hill also on the 6th (LDV Blog).



Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Winter and passage visitor; resident breeder

A number of birds wintered in the LDV: at NDC, along the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne, at Thornton Ellers and at Wheldrake Ings. Maximum counts were three calling at Thornton Ellers on 10th January, and three at Wheldrake Ings on 1st February. Away from the LDV, there were a few records of one or two birds from Bolton Percy Ings, Milford Common, Heslington East and Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe in the first four months of the year.

In the breeding season, one was calling from Wash Dike at Skipwith Common on 11th April. From mid-April two singing males were at NDC, with several singing males at Wheldrake and other singles at Melbourne and Thornton Ellers. Three were calling at Wheldrake Ings on 1st May. One immature was seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd and 25th August. The only other sighting of young was from Milford Common where one juvenile was with an adult on 4th July.

In the latter part of the year, away from the LDV, singletons were at Castle Howard on 29th October; Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on 30th October and again on the 7th and 13th November; St Nicholas Fields, York (a rarity for this site) on the 23rd; Flamingoland, Kirby Misperton on the 26th, and Milford Common on the 28th. One was seen again at St Nicholas Fields on 9th December and one at Bolton Percy on the 27th. In the LDV, two or three were at Wheldrake Ings during October and November; on 6th November, one was seen on the riverside path

near the Andy Booth Hide, possibly an incoming wintering bird. During December up to five were calling at Wheldrake Ings, and three on the river bank at Bank Island as the wintering population there increased to an estimated minimum of 12 birds, plus three at Skipwith Common.

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana* YOC Amber listed
Scarce passage migrant and casual breeder

A welcome return for this species after an absence of two years, with a total of five singing males heard at two sites in the LDV during May. Two singing males were at NDC on 10th May, then three at Wheldrake Ings on the 13th, two on the 18th and a single heard calling late in the evening on the 24th (DMB, CSR). See also the RBBP report on page 111.

Corncrake *Crex crex* YOC Red listed
Scarce summer migrant and casual breeder

An excellent year for this species with seven calling males known to have been present in the LDV, and another possible (though not confirmed). Four were considered to be probably breeding owing to the length of stay and behaviour exhibited.

A singing male was present at NDC at dawn on 19th May where it remained, singing regularly until the month's end (MFJ, CSR). Other males were singing at Ellerton Ings on the 22nd (JR) and Wheldrake Ings on the 24th and again at Ellerton on the 29th (PC). The long-staying male at NDC was joined by another on 3rd June (MJF, CSR, AK). Also in June one was at Wheldrake Ings on the 8th (CSR), a single at Thornton Ellers on the 21st and Bubwith Ings on the 22nd (NC et al). At NDC one was heard calling in front of the hide on the 14th (DMB) with another male singing near the car park from the 11th to the 30th (CG,OM,CSR,DT et al), and one calling on 1st July (FM, CC et al). One was at Bubwith Ings on the 5th and 6th July (FM, CC et al). See also the RBBP report on page 111.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Common resident breeder and winter visitor

Well recorded in suitable habitats, with CHL, Heslington (East and West) and the LDV the areas with the highest counts. At the University, numbers remained around 50 from January to the end of March, higher than at CHL where the maximum counts were 39 on 9th January, only 11 in February (WeBS) and 16 on 6th March. Elsewhere, between 12 and 16 birds were counted on several dates at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe, with the peak count of 16 there on 6th March. No other sites saw double figure counts in the early part of the year.

Breeding was confirmed at Castle Howard Arboretum, Heslington East and West (eight broods seen on 27th July), Monks Cross, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne and Thornton Lock), Rawcliffe Lake, SHL, Ulleskelf Mires and Wheldrake Ings, with the first brood of six seen at Monks Cross on 19th

April.

Post breeding, numbers at Heslington East and West built up to 61 in August, with between 50 and 70 there to the end of the year. The peak count was 70 on 15th November. At CHL numbers were lower, the peak count being 40 in September (WeBS). An influx of birds during November saw numbers rise in the LDV to 98 on the 14th, increasing to 121 by 18th December. Away from these areas, 15 were at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on 13th November and 18 there (peak count) on 8th December.

Monthly WeBS counts for Moorhen

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	8	11	12	14	7	10	16	25	40	37	27	23
LDV	-	199	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	98	121
HES	51	53	52	27	32	9	36	61	49	60	70	49

Coot *Fulica atra*

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

Similar to last year, all significant counts came from CHL, Heslington (East and West) and the LDV, with fewer reports in single-digit numbers received from other areas with suitable habitat.

Monthly high counts during the first winter period in the LDV were 87 on 17th January (WeBS), 120 at Wheldrake Ings on 16th February with 208 in the valley on the 21st (WeBS) and 529 on 28th March, with 109 at NDC and 197 at Wheldrake Ings on this date. At CHL the monthly maxima were all WeBS counts – 122 in January and 134 in February, but dropping to less than 50 thereafter. At the University numbers peaked at 87 across the site in January (WeBS) - much higher than last year – the January count was also up at CHL, but way lower in the LDV despite the flooding.

Breeding was confirmed at: Brumber Pond, CHL, Heslington East (nine different broods seen on 27th July), Milford Common, NDC, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pottery Fish Pond at Strensall and Wheldrake Ings. The first chicks seen were a brood of six at Heslington East on 24th April, while the first brood from the LDV was seen on 11th May. At least 150 pairs were thought to have nested in the valley.

Post breeding, numbers at CHL peaked at 171 in July, rising to 191 in August before dropping to 107 in September, then below 100 to the end of the year, with 93 present on 27th December. In the LDV, in the latter half of the year, the only double figure count was 21 in December (WeBS), the monthly maximum.

Monthly WeBS counts for Coot

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CHL	122	134	41	23	32	28	171	191	107	92	72	82
LDV	3	208	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
HES	87	74	60	41	53	39	80	73	95	60	56	53

Crane *Grus grus*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant

Now annual since 2007, at least three birds were involved this year, though many of the records may relate to the same non-breeding wandering pair. The first report, in March, was of two circling over Dunnington Common on the 4th (TW), then a pair flew east over Bank Island on the 16th (CSR). In April a pair was seen over Dunnington on the 3rd (TW) and a pair over Skipwith Common on 10th April (Birdguides). Two came low in over Cornfield NR at Clifton Ings before circling and gaining height, then drifting off west on 22nd April (NS), the same day as one was seen high over NDC, then three were at Bank Island on the 23rd (CSR), the only record received of more than two birds seen together during the year. In May a single was at Wheldrake Ings on the 14th, then one at Elvington on the 21st (DR), the same day two passed over Selby before roosting at NDC (LDV Blog), these two being seen again at Skipwith Common and Wheldrake Ings on the 24th (DMB). One was reported at Nether Poppleton (Birdguides) on the 26th and at Easthorpe (HT) the same day.

The only autumn sightings were one feeding on arable at Foggathorpe on 15th September (CSR), and one, possibly the same bird, reported passing over Wigginton on the 17th (Birdguides). Sightings in the LDV also appear in the RBBP report on pages 111.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Amber listed

Rare passage migrant

A similar showing to 2015, with three records. A pair on a typical date of 14th April at Bubwith Ings may well have been a pair returning to a breeding site on the Humber. This was followed by a single, heard as it flew south, at Aughton Ings late in the evening on 8th May and three at Thornton Ellers on 29th June, which may well have been failed breeders.



Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Amber listed

Common passage migrant and scarce breeder

Following on from last year's mid-winter record, a single appeared in the LDV on 31st January at Wheldrake Ings and was seen subsequently at NDC and East Cottingwith in February. Another single returned to Heslington East on 12th February. Numbers built up during February and March in the LDV, with ten seen at Thorganby Ings on 29th February. Elsewhere, birds were reported from many localities, with up to four birds seen at Acaster Ings, Bishopthorpe/Naburn, Bolton Percy Ings, Castle Howard, East Moor (Sutton-on-the-Forest), Heslington East, Hessay Moor Pond, Milford Common, Redhouse Reservoir, Rufforth Airfield, Sutton Wood and Wharfe Ings.

In the breeding season, up to 30 birds were in the LDV area, many of which nested. Other sites hosting pairs which may have attempted to breed were Acaster Malbis, Ampleforth/Gilling, Burtonfields, Castle Howard, Church Fenton Airfield (where a pair nested on a flat-roofed building!), East Moor (Sutton-on-the-Forest), Hemingbrough, Heslington East (three pairs present), Hessay, Langwith Lane, Milford Common, Naburn area, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Redhouse Reservoir, Stillingfleet, Strensall Common, Ulleskelf, Warthill and Wharfe Ings.

Birds continued to be reported quite widely in July, but towards the end of the month most had moved on. The last birds of the year were recorded on 27th July, when a pair was at Wheldrake Ings and a single was at Bolton Percy Ings.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

Only one record this year. A single was found among Golden Plovers *Pluvialis apricaria* in fields next to Dauby Lane, Elvington on 9th October (AF). It was still with the flock on the 13th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Mild winter weather resulted in good numbers throughout the first winter period, with up to 2200 in the LDV in mid-January, with 1000 present on Derwent Farm, North Duffield. 400 at North Milford was the only other notable count in January. The following month, the highest counts were 800 at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st, and 500 at Thorganby Ings the same day, with over 3400 present in the valley as a whole. Up to 2500 were still present in the LDV at the beginning of March, but had dropped to about 500 by the 10th. Birds were heard calling at night on the Knavesmire, York on 19th March, presumably seeking earthworms in the short grass. Many birds departed for their breeding grounds during March and only a few flocks were reported in April: 120 at Bank Island on the 1st, 56 at Milford Common on the 5th, 45 near Raker Lakes, Wheldrake on the 18th and 11 at Bank Island on the 27th being the last of the spring.

The first returning birds were also at Bank Island, where 17 were seen on 22nd July, with 41 on the 29th. In August, three birds were reported from near Hagg Wood on the 2nd, 55 near Raker Lakes on the 23rd and one at Bolton Percy Ings on the 26th and 31st. Numbers increased during September as birds moved through or returned for the winter. The first notable count was from fields near Raker Lakes, where the flock had built to 130 by the 8th, rising to 346 by the 20th. 320 at Bolton Percy Ings on 11th September was the only other flock of note during the month. Large numbers gathered in the Low Catton area during October, with the flock reaching 2100 by the 25th. Early in October 500 were at Elvington with 120 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 8th. Towards the year-end, 2300 were present at Low Catton, with over 2100 present in the LDV, with individual flocks of 1200 at Wheldrake Ings on 21st December, 1000 at Bank Island on 24th December and 900 at Ellerton Ings on 30th November the highest counts.

Monthly WeBS counts for Golden Plover

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
LDV	2200	3410	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2100	2057	2107

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Red listed

Passage migrant and casual breeder

A dreadful spring for this species in the York area, with a slightly better autumn. The only spring record was of two at Thornton Ellers on the late date of 8th June.

Five birds at Thornton Ellers on 1st July were followed by four at The Grange, Pocklington Canal on the 13th, with a single at Thornton Ellers on the 15th. Four arrived at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd August, with three there between the 23rd and 27th, with a single juvenile lingering until the 30th. A single was at Ozendyke Ings on 26th August. Three flew over Wheldrake Ings on 4th September, with two there on the 11th and the last of the year was at Aughton on 17th September.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Passage migrant and scarce breeder

Two arrived at Thornton Ellers on 13th April, with one remaining until the 17th. A single was seen at the former breeding site of Heslington East on 23rd April but the maturing habitat no longer seems to be suitable for this species to nest. Three further spring singles were seen: at Wheldrake Ings on 4th May, NDC on 20th May and a late bird at Clifton Backies and Bootham Stray on 3rd June.

The first returning birds, presumably failed breeders, were only a few weeks later with a single at Thornton Ellers on 17th June and another single at Heslington East the next day, which may have been the same bird. July yielded two at Thornton Ellers on the 1st, remaining there until the 17th with a remarkable seven there the next day, three of which remained until the 25th. There were three on Bootham Stray on the 12th and a single at The Grange, Pocklington Canal on the 13th. Six were at The Grange on 22nd July, with two still present on 1st August.

Further singles were reported from Heslington East on 24th August, Ozendyke Ings on 29th August and Clifton Backies and Bootham Stray on 8th September, which was the last of the year.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Red Listed

Winter visitor, passage migrant and resident breeder

The LDV held large numbers during the first winter period a full count on 25th January yielded 7520 birds. Large counts from single sites during the period included 1000 at Melbourne on 6th January, 1800 at North Milford the same day, 1200 at Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd and 1000 near Poppleton on the 24th. Numbers reduced during February, with 4000 in the LDV, including 1900 at Riccall on the 1st and 2000 at Wheldrake Ings on the 28th. The first displaying birds were noted in the LDV on 12th February.

Good numbers remained in March, with at least 2200 still present in the LDV early in the month, reducing to 500 by the month end as many birds returned to their breeding grounds. In the breeding season, the LDV held the largest number of breeding pairs. Elsewhere, pairs attempted to breed at the following sites: Barton-le-Willows, Bolton Percy Ings, Bolton Percy, Brecks Farm (Haxby), Breezy Knees (Warthill), Brumber Hill, Burtonfields, Castle Howard, Church Fenton Airfield (four pairs), East Moor, near Hagg Wood, Heslington East (three pairs), Heslington Tillmire (four pairs), Hessay Moor, Kelfield Ings, Low Catton Ings, Milford Common, Monks Cross, Naburn Wood, Newburgh Priory, Ozendyke Ings, Poppleton, Rufforth, Strensall area (six pairs), Sutton-on-the-Forest, Ulleskelf Mires (two pairs), West Ings and Wharfe Ings.

Post-breeding flocks of Lapwings are a feature of the countryside from mid-June onwards. A flock of 106 at Thornton Eilers on 26th June was the first large flock noted. Numbers built during July, with 1000 present in the LDV on 2nd August. 140 were on Ozendyke Ings on 26th August. By September, large flocks were noted at a number of sites, including up to 300 at Bolton Percy Ings, 800 at Low Catton and 300 at Brumber Hill.

Towards the year-end, large numbers assembled in the LDV again, with up to 3240 birds present on 18th December. Single site counts of note were 1500 at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th and 1000 at Newton-on-Derwent on 23rd December.

Monthly WeBS counts for Lapwing

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
LDV	7520	7500	-						-	1342	1835	3240

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Red listed

Passage migrant

With no autumn sightings this year, all records fell between mid-April and mid-May. The first three birds flew southeast over Bank Island on 16th April, the exact date the first were recorded in 2015. The Wheldrake Ings roost built to 14 by the

20th, climbing to 47 by the 25th, 60 on the 29th and a peak of 71 the next day. Twenty four were present on 4th May, but numbers decreased thereafter, with the last singles on the 15th and 16th.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Red listed

Winter visitor, passage migrant and migrant breeder

Curlews were the subject of a club survey this year (see page 120) and consequently the number of records received was higher than normal. This gives a good benchmark for future reference.

In the first winter period, up to 40 birds were present in the Ellerton Ings – Thorganby Ings area of the LDV, with 16 at West Melbourne on 24th February and scattered individuals elsewhere. Numbers increased to at least 95 in the valley by the end of February. Elsewhere, 34 was a good count at Hessay Moor Pond on 27th February and five were seen at Bolton Percy Ings, also in late February. In early March, a large flock of 52 was noted at Byland Abbey on the 7th and 23 roosted at Hessay Moor Pond on 9th April. At the end of March, 156 birds were counted in the LDV, a mix of migrant flocks and territorial birds.

Birds began returning to their breeding territories in late February. The LDV held at least 72 breeding pairs. Outside of the LDV, birds were present in the breeding season at 43 sites, although breeding evidence was minimal. All counts refer to single pairs unless specified otherwise: Acaster Airfield, Acaster Church Ings, Acaster South Ings (three pairs), Ampleforth, Beningbrough Ings (four birds), Bishopthorpe Palace Ings, Bolton Percy Ings (14 birds), Brecks Farm Haxby, Brumber Hill, Byland Abbey, Castle Howard, Church Fenton, Church Fenton Airfield (three pairs), Clifton Ings, Coneysthorpe, Easingwold Golf Course, Eastmoor, Fulford Ings, Hagg Wood, Heslington Tillmire, Hildenley Wood West (Malton), Kirkby Wharfe, Langwith Lane (two pairs), Long Marston, Low Catton Ings, Middlethorpe Ings, Milford Common, Naburn, Newburgh Priory, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Redhouse Reservoir, Redhouse Wood, Rufforth Tip (four birds), Rufforth, Scagglethorpe Moor (four birds), Sherriff Hutton, Skipwith Common (six birds), Stillingfleet, Strensall Common (four pairs), Towthorpe, Ulleskelf Mires, West Ings, Westfield House (28 birds) and Wharfe Ings (six birds).

Post-breeding dispersal was noted from late June. Flocks included 14 at Wheldrake Ings on 25th June. Numbers dropped from July onwards, with single figure counts noted from a handful of sites in the LDV. Only one bird was seen in September, at Wheldrake Ings on the 8th. October was equally quiet, with one bird seen, again at Wheldrake Ings, on the 17th. Wintering birds began to arrive in the LDV during November, and up to 30 were in the Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings area by mid-month. Twenty birds were present there until the year-end.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Red listed

Passage migrant also occasionally seen in winter and casual breeder

A really good showing this year, especially in spring, when impressive numbers of Icelandic birds passed through the LDV.

The first returning birds were 18 at Wheldrake Ings on 28th February, which remained throughout March. The flock in the LDV increased to 40 on 3rd April, and then to 52 the following day. Part of this flock departed, with 27 remaining until the 6th, followed by 34 between the 9th and 11th. Thirty nine appeared on the Refuge at Wheldrake Ings on 16th April, 19 of which remained in the area until the 26th. Clear evidence of passage was noted at the end of April as Icelandic birds moved through on their way north. Thirty-two passed through Bank Island on the 29th, with an impressive 190 the following day. The same day, 96 roosted at NDC and two parties of 79 and 15 flew north-west at Wheldrake Ings just before dusk. The last of the spring was seen at NDC on 12th May.

Autumn passage began on 11th July when 11 birds arrived at Thornton Ellers. A single appeared at Heslington East on 27th July and remained until the end of the month. Low water levels in the pool at Wheldrake Ings attracted a number of waders in late summer, and a single juvenile Black-tailed Godwit was among them, being seen from 4th September until the 9th. Another single was seen on Clifton Ings, before flying south on 7th September. No further birds were recorded until 3rd December, when 12 arrived at Wheldrake Ings. Eleven of these birds remained until the 24th, with at least four present until the year-end, one of the best December showings on record.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant

An impressive flock of 26 flew over Bank Island on 29th April, a day noted for its heavy showers.



Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant, usually in spring

No records this year; though seen in five of the past ten years, most recently in 2014.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

Four records of this coastal species this year, after a blank year in 2015. A single was found on a flooded field near Rufforth village on 14th March, remaining until the 16th. Another single was at Wheldrake Ings on 11th May.

In the second winter period, three were at Bank Island on 12th November and a single was at Bolton Percy Ings on 23rd November.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Red listed

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Small numbers were present in the LDV for the first two weeks of the year. Fourteen birds were counted at Bubwith Ings on the 19th, with 29 nearby at NDC on the 25th. A single bird at Riccall Ings was a notable record, in a flock of Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* and Golden Plovers *Pluvialis apricaria*. The LDV count increased slightly in February, to a peak of 25 on the 12th at Thorganby, dwindling slightly to 22 at Wheldrake Ings on 20th March, perhaps surprisingly the last record of the spring.

The first returning bird of the autumn was at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd August, and further singles were seen in the LDV on the 5th, 21st and 30th. Elsewhere, four birds arrived on Ozendyke Ings on 26th August, which had been flooded due to a heavy downpour during a thunderstorm. The birds were still present the next day, with two remaining until the 31st. In September, singles were noted at Wheldrake Ings on the 11th, flying south at Bolton Percy Ings on the 28th and Wheldrake Ings on the 15th.

The first two wintering birds appeared almost simultaneously with the first of the flooding in the LDV, on 12th November, increasing to ten by the 14th and 21 by the 30th. In December the flock continued to build, with 46 noted by the 10th, rising to 61 by the 19th and then dwindling due to freezing conditions, before climbing back to 47 by the year-end. A single at Wharfe Ings on 28th November was the only other record of note.

Monthly WeBS counts for Ruff

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
LDV	29	35	-						-	1	14	61

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce passage visitor, usually in the autumn

In what was an impressive year for this species nationally, York managed just two juveniles, both at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd August.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

YOC

*Red listed**Rare passage migrant*

Not seen this year, though recorded in three of the past ten years, in 2008, 2009 and 2012.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

YOC

*Amber listed**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant*

Not recorded in 2016, though present in three of the preceding ten years, most recently in 2014.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina**Amber listed**Winter visitor and passage migrant*

Extensive flooding in the LDV during January meant conditions were unsuitable for this small species, and consequently the highest count for the month was only 26, at Thorganby Ings on the 4th. As flooding reduced, numbers built, with a flock of 130 at Thorganby Ings on the 15th, and flocks of 100 noted at Ellerton Ings on the 21st and Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd. The peak count for the month was again from Thorganby Ings, where 200 were recorded on the 29th. Birds remained throughout March, but numbers dwindled into low double figures. A singleton was recorded at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April which was possibly a passage migrant rather than a late wintering bird, with two at NDC on 7th May and four there on the 13th the only records of a poor spring passage. A single at Thornton Ellers on 8th June was either an unusually late spring migrant or a very early failed breeder.

Five at Thornton Ellers on 11th July were the first of the autumn, with singles at The Grange at Melbourne on 22nd July and 10th August the only birds noted until a single that resided on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th and 31st. Two birds were then present on the pool from 5th September until the 8th, with another single on the 15th. Elsewhere, one flew south at Bolton Percy Ings on 3rd October.

The first six wintering birds arrived in the LDV as soon as the site flooded on 12th November. This small flock increased to 12 by the 18th, with 50 recorded at Ellerton Ings on the last day of the month. Up to 200 were present in the LDV early in December, with an impressive 500 recorded on the Low Grounds, near Wheldrake Ings on the 26th, though only 55 remained at the year-end due to many having departed following the onset of freezing conditions.

Monthly WeBS counts for wintering Dunlin in the LDV

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
LDV	20	202	-						-	-	42	473

Rare and Scarcer Birds recorded during 2016



Left to right and top to bottom
Manx Shearwater (rescued from a sandpit in Heworth, York) © Jean Thorpe
Slavonian Grebe at NDC in March © Duncan Bye
Crane © Duncan Bye
Great White Egret © Chris Gomersall
Knot © Duncan Bye
Spotted Redshank © Duncan Bye
Great Skua © Trevor Walton

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

YOC

Scarce passage migrant, mostly in autumn

Not seen this year, though recorded in three of the past ten years, in 2008, 2010 and 2011.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

YOC

Rare vagrant

Not seen this year, though recorded in three of the past ten years, in 2007, 2008 and 2012.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos**Amber listed**Passage migrant*

A modest spring showing, followed by a better than average autumn.

The first for the year was seen at Bolton Percy Ings on 10th April, followed by one at Heslington East on the 16th. Further singles were seen at Bolton Percy Ings on the 17th, Heslington East on the 23rd and Bank Island on the 26th, Bolton Percy Ings again on 14th May and then the last of the spring at Osbaldwick on 27th May.

A single by the River Ouse at Clifton Ings on 1st July was the first of the autumn passage, followed by two at Thornton Ellers on the 11th. Four other birds were seen during July: at Wheldrake Ings on the 19th and 26th, Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on the 22nd and Bolton Percy Ings on the 25th. One or two birds were at Wheldrake Ings most days between 10th August and 3rd September, with three at Bolton Percy Ings on 21st August, while two at Heslington East at the end of August rose to a good count of seven in early September. The last bird of the autumn was at Newburgh Priory Lake on 3rd October.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus**Amber listed**Passage migrant and winter visitor*

A small number overwintered. A single at Bolton Percy Ings on 8th January was joined by two further birds a week later, with a singleton at Ulleskelf Mires on 11th March perhaps relating to one of these. One was seen in the Thornton – Melbourne area in mid-January, and two were present on Rufforth Airfield on the 16th. Presumably the same singleton was seen at Melbourne again on 28th March. Three were between Cliffe and Riccall on 9th April, one at Ulleskelf Mires on the 10th and 11th April and a late migrant at Wheldrake Ings on 28th May.

Right on schedule, birds were picked up in mid-June as adult birds began to head south. The first record was of two at Thornton Ellers on 19th June, followed by a single at Bank Island on the 21st, increasing to three by the 29th. Five birds were in the LDV early in July, mostly occupying suitable habitat at Wheldrake Ings, Bank Island and Thornton Ellers. Numbers rose during August, peaking at 12 at Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd, reducing to seven by the month end. Elsewhere, two were at Strensall on 5th August, one at Milford Common on the 30th and another at Bolton Percy Ings the next day and again on 7th September. Eight were present

in the LDV on 1st September, six of which remained until the 7th, with four present in the area until the month end. Four birds were present at Wheldrake Ings in early October, with a single present until the month end. Singles were seen at Milford Common and Brumber Hill in mid-October. In November, one was flying over the Ings at Bishopthorpe on the 2nd, with two at Skipwith Common on the 23rd, one at Melbourne on the 25th and two at Wharfe Ings on the 28th. Singles were at Milford Common on 1st December and at Brumber Hill on the 10th and the last report was from Bank Island on the 17th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant

An obliging juvenile was well-watched on the pool at Wheldrake Ings from the 21st to 26th August. Another single was reported by Birdguides at Heslington East on 3rd September.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Amber listed

Passage migrant and rare winter visitor

A good year, with notable passage in both spring and autumn in the LDV.

A single at Bank Island on 18th March was early, and the first of a decent spring passage. The next bird graced Wheldrake Ings over a month later on 24th April, with a really notable group of five on the Low Grounds to the north of Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. The following day three were on Wheldrake Ings, perhaps part of this group, followed by two on the 4th, and two at NDC on the 7th. Two were at Bank Island on the 12th and 13th, with a single the next day and one also at Wheldrake Ings on the 12th. A late bird was at Bank Island on the 22nd, followed by one at Thornton Ellers on 13th June, a remarkable mid-summer record.

Return passage began in July, when one appeared at Thornton Ellers on the 10th, with presumably the same bird there on the 15th and 21st. A single arrived at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd July with two there on the 28th. In August, good conditions for waders on the pool at Wheldrake Ings attracted single Greenshanks in the first half of the month, with four on the 14th and up to three daily to the 25th, with two present until the month end. Elsewhere, one was at Ozendyke Ings from the 26th to 29th August. Good numbers continued to be present in September, with three in the LDV up to the 6th, two lingering until the 21st and a single to the month end. A single flew over Bank Island on 2nd October and this proved to be the last record of the year.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant

A bird at Thornton Ellers on the 18th, 21st and 23rd June was unusual for the time of year. This site hosted singles on the 11th, 14th and 17th July (presumably

one bird) and again on 11th August. The only other record was of a single at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd August.

Redshank *Tringa tetanus*

Amber listed

Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

Deep flooding in the LDV in January kept numbers low, with seven at Ellerton Ings on the 10th the highest count. Numbers increased as water levels dropped, with 50 along the Derwent riverbank at Thorganby on 15th February. Very few were recorded from elsewhere, but as spring arrived passage migrants and birds checking out potential breeding habitat were seen at Bolton Percy Ings, Church Fenton Airfield and Rufforth, along with up to three at Heslington Tillmire, two or three at Heslington East and a pair adjacent to Langwith Lane (possibly the same as the Tillmire birds). In the LDV, in March birds peaked at 67 by the 28th, with incoming breeding birds and passage migrants boosting numbers.

A declining breeding species in our area, birds were present in the breeding season in the LDV, along with Bolton Percy Ings, Heslington East, Heslington Tillmire and Newburgh Priory.

After breeding, small numbers lingered around the LDV with up to three birds seen at Wheldrake Ings, Bank Island and Thornton Ings through to the end of August. Elsewhere, two were recorded at Bootham Stray on 25th August, with another there on 19th September. After a short absence, wintering birds began to arrive back in the LDV from 23rd October, when one was at Wheldrake Ings. Four were at NDC on 4th November and up to 15 were present throughout the site during December. The only other record was of a single at Heslington East on 27th December.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A good spread of records was reported with some notable counts. This secretive bird is clearly overlooked and the numbers present in the area both in winter and on passage may be significantly higher than the number of reports received suggests.

Three at Milford Common on 3rd January rose to a great count of eight on the 12th, with a single at Heslington East on 9th January. Another good count was seven at Skipwith Common on 20th January, with singles at Melbourne on 4th February, Cali Heath YWT on the 16th and East Cottingham on the 29th, the same day as three were recorded at Milford Common. A single was still present at Heslington East, five at Milford Common on the 11th, one at Colton Pond on the 13th, three at Melbourne Ings on the 16th, and three at Heslington Tillmire on 4th April. The last of the spring was a single at Wheldrake Ings on 25th April. Some of the March and April birds may have been passage birds rather than wintering individuals.

Three birds at Bank Island on 15th October were the first of the autumn with two at Wheldrake Ings two days later. Elsewhere, singles were seen at Skipwith

Common on 23rd November and Heslington East on 23rd November with two at Milford Common on 2nd December, rising to ten on the 9th, with an impressive 11 there the next day, the highest single count of the year.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Red listed

Winter visitor and resident breeder

In the first winter period a single was seen at Church Bridge, Melbourne on 2nd January, followed by four at Allerthorpe Common on the 3rd. Six were flushed from woodland at Thornton Ellers on 6th January, with eight in the same area on the 10th, dwindling to two on the 15th possibly due to freezing conditions causing a departure. Elsewhere, one was at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on the 15th and one at Askham Bog on the 28th with two there on 1st February. Further February singles were seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 7th, Cali Heath YWT on the 16th and Stubb Wood on the 24th. In March, one was at Melbourne on the 13th.

Birds holding territory were seen roding in Bishop Wood, where a 75 minute survey in June yielded a peak of 13 sightings early in the month. Two roding males were seen at Yearsley Common in June, up to three at Skipwith Common, one at Black Dike Plantation, Sand Hutton and up to seven in the Melbourne area.

In late autumn one at Clifton Backies/Bootham Stray on 3rd November was the first obvious migrant bird, with another on Foss Islands cycle track the same day. Three were seen at Bank Island at dusk on 17th November, with singles during the month at Scagglethorpe Lane on the 23rd and Dunnington on the 24th. In December, one was seen at the side of Howden Lane, Naburn on the 15th, with three at Thorganby on the 10th and one at Patefield Wood on the 16th, the last record of the year.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Amber listed

Resident and migrant breeder and passage visitor

Snipe were widespread in the first winter period possibly due to deep floodwater in the LDV forcing birds to leave their traditional wintering areas.

Ten were at Milford Common on 12th January, with 18 at Askham Bog on the 28th, 26 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 30th and small numbers noted at a range of other sites. As water subsided, the LDV attracted birds again and 88 were counted during the January WeBS. Up to 100 were in the Thornton/Melbourne area on 4th February, attracted by the receding waters which created good feeding conditions. Twenty two were present at Bank Island on the 12th, 16 at Milford Common on the 29th, nine at Bolton Percy Ings on the 28th and 14 at Heslington Tillmire on the 9th. Again small numbers were reported from scattered sites. As birds moved through on migration or returned to breeding sites, numbers increased in the area. Over 100 were present in the Thornton/Melbourne area in the middle of March, with a good count of 28 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 18th, 15 at Milford Common on the 16th and seven at Colton Pond on the 13th.

As spring arrived, birds were back on their breeding grounds and drumming birds were beginning to be recorded. Good numbers of birds were still present at

wintering sites, with notable counts of 45 at Melbourne on 13th April, 18 at Milford Common on the 5th, 17 at Wharfe Ings on the 10th, ten at Heslington Tillmire on the 4th and ten at Wheldrake Ings on the 24th. Drumming birds were noted at Low Catton Ings, Melbourne, NDC, Strensall Common, Thornton Ings and Wheldrake Ings. Birds were also present during the breeding season at Heslington Tillmire.

Following the breeding season, numbers built up during August. Good counts came from Ozendyke Ings, where 46 on 27th August was superseded by 69 on the 31st. Up to 31 were present at Bolton Percy Ings during August, with smaller numbers reported from Bank Island, Burtonfields, Heslington East, Melbourne and Wheldrake Ings. Numbers remained similar during October, though building a little later in the month. The only notable flock was 32 at NDC on the 18th. In November, flocks away from the LDV built up as wintering birds arrived. The highest counts reported were 12 at Skipwith Common on the 23rd, with 12 also at Wharfe Ings on the same day. Eight were at Bolton Percy Ings on the 23rd. Towards the end of the year, 41 was a good count from Milford Common on 2nd December, as was 39 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 12th, eclipsed by 88 at Skipwith Common on the 27th and a count of 250 from the LDV on the 18th.

Monthly WeBS counts for wintering Snipe in the LDV

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
LDV	88	100	-						-	43	88	211

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

YOC

Red listed

Scarce passage migrant

Not recorded during 2016, after records in four of the past ten years, most recently 2014.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

YOC

Amber listed

Very rare passage migrant

The first since 2007 and only the fifth record for the area, one appeared at Wheldrake Ings on 4th February remaining there for four days. Well watched, during its stay it was seen to kill and feed upon a Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* - a fuller account of this is on page 117.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

YOC

Scarce passage migrant

Mid to late spring is generally the best time of year to see these beautiful terns as they pass through our region heading to their breeding grounds in central and eastern Europe. A welcome return after none were recorded last year and reflecting a nation-wide movement, 8th May saw at least 21 birds pass through the LDV with a single at Bank Island, seven at NDC and another 13 at Wheldrake Ings. The same location hosted three birds the next day and the last of the year, a singleton, on the 11th.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

YOC

*Amber listed**Scarce passage migrant*

Two, albeit brief, records were received this year. Two vocal birds were seen heading south over NDC on 2nd April (CSR), part of a large influx into the country and inland movement at the time. The only other report involved a lone bird that flew east over Bank Island, calling, on 16th July (CSR).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo**Amber listed**Passage migrant and rare migrant breeder*

The first record of the year was a single bird on 13th April present at NDC. Pairs were observed throughout May at Bank Island, Heslington East, Redhouse Reservoir and Wheldrake Ings, the latter site playing host on the 5th to the largest flock of the year, with eight individuals present and four there from the 11th to the end of the month. One or two were seen at Wheldrake Ings during June, July and August.

Incubating by the end of May, the only confirmed breeding success was on a tern raft at Heslington East where a single chick fledged.

Away from these areas, three flew SSE over Sherburn in Elmet on 8th May, with two at Acaster Malbis the same day; between one and four were seen flying over Naburn on several dates - 13th May, 25th July, the 5th and 12th August; one was at CHL on 5th June and one at Wharfe Ings on 24th July.

The final birds of the year were two seen on 5th September at Wheldrake Ings.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

YOC

*Amber listed**Scarce passage migrant*

A very poor year for this species with only two records, both coming from Wheldrake Ings. The evening of 20th April saw a single bird present (CSR), with a further two passing through there on 8th May (DMB, CR).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

YOC

*Red listed**Scarce passage migrant*

Only two records this year, both in March. On the 11th, two adult birds were seen briefly at Bank Island (LDV Blog), with another adult reported from Heslington East on the 20th, when it was on the west scrape with other gulls and seen again on the 21st at the western end of the lake (GW).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus**Amber listed**Resident breeder, abundant winter visitor and passage migrant*

Recorded all year round, though most numerous in winter. In January, flooding throughout the Vale of York led to some exceptionally high counts. On the 6th, there were 1000 at Bank Island with the same number also at North Milford. The 8th saw 2000 feeding on the Knavesmire, rising to 3000 by the 15th. Naburn had 2000 on the 18th, whilst an impressive 4400 were present at Wharfe Ings on the

same date. The highest count of the year was not surprisingly at Wheldrake Ings when on the evening of the 28th, a mind boggling 60-80,000 were estimated to be in the roost. These large flocks diminished quickly as the floods subsided, the Wheldrake Ings roost was down to 40,000 by 5th February, with 3000 reported on the 9th from Rufforth. Milford Common held 590 on 13th March.

The regular breeding colony on Strensall Common still appears to be increasing with about 60 occupied nests counted on 20th May.

Numbers remained low to the year end with the highest count 426 at Castle Howard on 27th December.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

YOC

Passage migrant and scarce winter visitor

A welcome return after last year's blank! An early adult was present at NDC on 4th February (TD, DT), with an incredible movement of 58 individuals passing over Bank Island during the afternoon of the 11th April (CSR). Sadly not replicated elsewhere, the only other record of the year was of one in flight over North Duffield village on 13th April (AW).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

A very poor year with just two records received. On 10th February, one was seen over Acaster Airfield (CR) whilst a 1st-winter bird dropped into the roost at Wheldrake Ings on 19th March (DMB).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Amber listed

Abundant winter visitor and passage migrant

This species can occur in very large numbers during the winter as shown on 28th January when an estimated 20,000 were present at the Wheldrake Ings roost. Into February this figure diminished quickly and the 9000 there on the 5th reduced even further to just 2000 by the 7th. Only single digit counts were recorded over the summer, mainly from the LDV, where the first juvenile was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd July. Most likely under recorded, the only significant count for the remainder of the year was an autumn gathering of 150 individuals on Pocklington airfield on 30th October.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

One or two birds were reported from Rufforth during the early part of the year, but the first notable gathering was 18 seen at Wheldrake Ings on 19th February. As spring progresses, this species passes through our region heading to northerly breeding grounds and the 64 recorded from Wheldrake Ings on March 26th included many of the darker Scandinavian 'intermedius' race. A possible Baltic Gull *Larus fuscus fuscus* was photographed on a flooded field near Rufforth on 22nd April

(AH). As is usual a few non-breeders summered in the area with single figure counts coming from the LDV on most days until the first real sign of autumn passage with 47 on Milford Common on 30th August. Returning birds peaked on 11th September with 110 on Bolton Percy Ings. Numbers soon dwindled down to just single figures with the last record on 6th November when two were seen at Bank Island.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Red listed

Winter visitor, passage migrant and recently colonised breeder in small numbers

Present all year round and particularly numerous during the winter months when the larger nominate race from northern Europe far outnumbers the local '*argenteus*' population. The largest reported congregation of the year was at Wheldrake Ings on 5th February when 20,000 birds roosted. With a long return journey to breeding areas for some, numbers fell away sharply as spring commenced and the roost was down to 10,000 on 1st March.

It would appear that the recent colonisation of urban nest sites in York looks set to increase; the original pair on rooftops by Walmgate successfully bred for the third year in a row and three juveniles were seen there on 14th June. Another pair bred just outside the city walls on a house on Foss Islands Road, raising two young. The large brownfield site between York railway station and the old carriage-works held many adults and birds were seen on top of city centre buildings throughout the summer, with juvenile begging calls regularly heard. Though difficult to assess, there could be several pairs nesting in York.

As autumn and winter progressed numbers in the region gradually built up with the LDV and Rufforth attracting the largest flocks, while 480 were at Bolton Percy Ings on 23rd November.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

Another good year for this species starting in January with two 1st-winters seen at Rufforth on 7th (DF), and others of the same age seen there on the 8th and 22nd (CG). An adult bird first seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 31st (DMB) was also recorded at Rufforth during February and last reported back at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd March. In the same month another 1st-winter was at Rufforth on the 14th (CG). One was reported from the unusual location of Heslington West on 9th June (BT).

The only real sign of return passage concerned three adults present together on Rufforth airfield on 25th July (CG). Another adult at the same site on 13th October (DR) was the last of the year.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor

A very good year for this species as its increasing trend continued. This year started on 7th January with at least 13 individuals present (CG, DF); these included birds of all ages. Many of them stayed and were reported regularly during January. The peak day count for February saw six 1st-winters and a 2nd-winter on the 18th, whilst on the 20th three 1st-winters were seen during the Club outing to the area. Regular sightings fell away during March, though four 1st-winters were still present on the 29th. Three more 1st-winters were together on 1st April (CG), with another on the 29th.

There was a long wait until the next record when a fresh 1st-winter individual was seen on 4th November near Poppleton (CG).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor

Another good year for this wandering visitor with the first a 3rd-winter bird at Rufforth on 4th January followed by a 1st-winter and two adults on the 7th. Birds continued to be seen regularly from either Rufforth or at the Wheldrake Ings roost into February with the peak day count four on the 11th. Individuals were seen from several sites around the recording area during March with three 1st-winters on the 5th at Rufforth, while NDC had a 1st-winter and an adult on the 11th. The 2nd-winter seen on the 28th at Wheldrake Ings was the last record until the back end of the year when on 24th November a 2nd-winter bird was seen on recent floodwater on Clifton Ings.

Kumlien's Gull *Larus glaucoides kumlieni*

YNU

A 3rd-winter was present at Rufforth 20th February (CG) with another of the same age seen on 3rd March (TL), photographs showing that this bird roosted outside our region the day before at Nosterfield. Also in March, an adult bird was seen on the 16th in a flooded field near Rufforth (CG).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor

Another good year for this species which generally tends to occur in larger numbers than Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*, with, as expected, most records coming from Rufforth and the gull roost at Wheldrake Ings. An adult was seen on 5th January at Rufforth, with three 1st-winters there on the 7th. One or two individuals, including a distinctive 2nd-winter bird were seen throughout February with a peak of five seen on several dates, including on the Club outing on the 20th. Up to four birds were recorded during March, with two lingering 1st-winters last seen at Rufforth on 25th April.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus**Amber listed**Winter visitor and passage migrant*

Quite numerous during the winter and generally seen at the usual haunts of Wheldrake Ings and Rufforth. A noteworthy 520 were seen on Milford Common on 13th January, while the roost at Wheldrake peaked at an estimated 7500 on the 28th. As birds headed off to more northerly breeding grounds the numbers fell away sharply to 4500 on 5th February, with just 2500 present at the regular roost by 1st March. On 12th February 600 were at Wharfe Ings. A single 1st-winter picked up dead on the river bank at Ellerton on 15th February had been ringed in the nest as a chick in 2015 in Norway.

With only single figure counts of non-breeding birds occurring over the summer months it wasn't until the late autumn when flocks began to increase, (most probably under recorded); 190 at Bolton Percy Ings on 23rd November and 208 on the 25th at Wharfe Ings being the only 3-digit counts.

One was fighting over a dead rabbit with a Red Kite *Milvus milvus* at Brumber Hill on 7th December.

'Feral Pigeon' *Columba livia**Common resident breeder*

Reported throughout the year across the recording area. A flock of 250 at Malton in 3rd February was the largest single count and 100 were at Bank Island on 17th August.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas**Amber listed**Resident breeder*

Widespread across the area in suitable habitat with most records of between one and five birds.

Flocks of 20 and more were: 35 in the Towton area on 10th January, 24 at Acaster Airfield on 24th January, 36 at Bolton Percy Ings on 9th September and 56 at Patefield Wood (on the edge of the area) on 16th December. In the autumn, during visible migration watches, 23 flew south over Bolton Percy Ings on 28th September and 22 south on 17th October. On 28th October 27 flew over Ozendyke Ings (22 southwest and five northwest).

During the breeding season singing birds were heard at: Aughton and Ellerton Ings, Bank Island, CHL, Church Fenton airfield, East Cottingham, Ellerton Ings, Foggathorpe, Hull Road Park (York), Milford Common, Ozendyke Ings, Wharfe Ings and Wheldrake Ings. Nesting was also confirmed at Brecks Farm (Haxby), Pocklington Canal (Melbourne) - with recently fledged young seen there on 8th August - and Strensall Common.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Abundant resident breeder

Widespread and reported throughout the year, Wood Pigeon continues to be one of the commonest birds seen in the area, though fewer counts above 500 were received this year.

Flocks over 500 during the first winter period were:

23rd January, Milford Common - c.500

18th February, North Milford - 1,300

14th March, Milford Common - 550

14th March, West Ings - 600

11th April, Knavesmire, York - c.500 feeding on the racecourse

Breeding birds were heard singing or seen displaying in many areas and nest building was reported at Brecks Farm, Haxby in March. Seventy two were at Naburn Wood during a BBS on 18th June. Little evidence was received of breeding success however, with breeding only confirmed at Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, SHL, Stamford Bridge and at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne where recently fledged young were seen on the 5th, 15th and 16th September.

As last year, migrating birds swelled numbers in the autumn with visible migration watches at Milford Common, Ozendyke and Whit Hill recording 21,997 flying south and 3592 flying north between 4th October and 11th November (a large reduction from 154,705 in 2015). In contrast to 2015, apart from migrants there were no counts over 500 in the second half of the year, the peak count being 320 at Wharfe Ings on 18th December.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common resident breeder

Common and widely reported in low single digit numbers across the area and throughout the year in areas of human habitation.

Young birds seen at Stamford Bridge was the only breeding evidence received.

The only flock over 20 seen this year was 22 at Bolton Percy on 13th January, while 19 were at Melbourne on the Pocklington Canal on 22nd February.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

YOC *Red listed*

Passage migrant and declining scarce migrant breeder

The first returning bird was at Canal Head, Pocklington on 9th May (Birdguides), then it was almost a month until the next; one at Colton on 3rd June (JF), heard again there on the 4th. A pair was present at an undisclosed site in SE54 during June and may have bred. A singing male at Ampleforth on 8th June turned up in the same place as last year and on the same date (JP). Further reports of a singing male there came on 11th and 28th June (JP), then on the 5th, 7th and 9th July (JP) – one bird being seen sitting on a branch for over an hour in

pouring rain on the latter date. Also on 9th July, two were singing at the traditional site in Foggathorpe - the only report of the year from there (DMB). In August one singing male was reported from Ampleforth on the 10th (JP) and the last record of the year was of three there on the 13th (JP).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Red listed

Migrant breeder

The first bird of the year was on 16th April at Easingwold. An influx followed from the 20th with one reported from Strensall Common, then singles from Melbourne, Strensall and Towthorpe Road on the 21st and from Skipwith Common and White Carr on the 22nd. One heard on the 27th at a site in Wigginton, was six days later than in 2015.

Most records were of singing males from April to June in ones or twos. There was a maximum of 15 calling in the LDV throughout May. Other records came from Acaster Airfield, Allerthorpe Common, Askham Bryan, Bank Island, Bolton Percy, Burythorpe, Canal Head, Castle Howard, Earswick, Easingwold, Haxby, Heslington Tillmire, Milford Common, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Ozendyke, Poppleton, Melbourne, Scagglethorpe Moor, Thornton Lock, Warthill, Wheldrake Ings, West Ings and Wistow.

Four territories were estimated on 20th May at Strensall Common during the MOD survey. Females were recorded at Heslington Tillmire on 9th June and at Melbourne on the 13th, which was the last record of adults apart from two late birds at Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island from the 1st to 9th July.

Individual juveniles were recorded on 13th July at Thornton Ellers and The Grange along the Pocklington Canal. Other sites with young birds were Bank Island, Bolton Percy Ings and Wheldrake, the last of these was on 4th August. A very late bird rested in a garden at Skirpenbeck for 15 minutes before flying east on 1st September.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Resident breeder

Reported throughout the year and across the recording area in ones and twos, though overall there were fewer records than in 2015. Most records came from the LDV, along the Pocklington Canal and in SE53.

Breeding records indicate a poor season with evidence coming from Allerthorpe Common, Coulton, Hagg Bridge/Storwood area, Melbourne, Wheldrake Ings (two pairs) and Wistow. However, hunting in daylight was noted at several locations. On 26th July one bird hunting in daylight near Ozendyke almost got back to its nest before being robbed by a Kestrel. The LDV Blog reported good occupancy of boxes in the valley during May with daytime hunting indicating broods were hatching late in the month and into June. The season was believed to be late and breeding productivity remaining low but showing signs of a vole cycle recovery from last year. A fully fledged chick was ringed in the valley on 25th July when some pairs were thought to still be on eggs.

The only counts above two birds were three at Bank Island on 23rd January, three at Brumber Hill on 29th February and 7th March, with at least three along the Pocklington Canal on 26th July.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder but can be elusive

Widespread in the area in suitable habitat, with birds reported in every month. Sightings were generally of single birds even during the breeding season. Outside the breeding season records came from: Acaster Malbis, Burtonfields, Copmanthorpe, Craven Farm at South Brandsby, Heslington, Melbourne, Naburn, Scagglethorpe Lane, Sherburn in Elmet, Thorganby, Wheldrake Ings and Yapham. However, for the first time none were seen at Milford Common.

During the breeding season two were at Craven Farm, South Brandsby on 21st April, two pairs were at Thorganby and Wheldrake Ings respectively during May and a juvenile with a damaged eye was photographed sitting in the middle of Common Lane, Heslington (a pair are known to nest in this area) on 29th June. On 16th July two were seen sitting on separate telegraph poles in a field to the north of Naburn village, apparently a favoured spot. Later in the July, on the 26th, a pair was seen at Storwood, during a Club walk along Pocklington Canal. On 3rd August two young were seen in a barn at Melbourne. Other sightings, all of singletons, during the breeding season came from: Acaster Malbis, Ampleforth, Bossall, Burtonfields, Copmanthorpe, Naburn Hall, North Duffield, Patefield Wood, Raker Lakes (Wheldrake), Redhouse/Brecks, Scagglethorpe Lane and Thornton Eilers.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Amber listed

Resident breeder

Widespread in suitable habitat, most reports outside the breeding season were of one or two calling at night. Counts over two were four heard calling at Allerthorpe Common during the Bird Race on 3rd January; three calling at Wheldrake Ings on 16th and 25th August and 2nd October; and three at Acaster Malbis on 4th September. Other records in the non-breeding periods came from: Acaster Malbis, Allerthorpe Common, Bank Island, Bolton Percy, Burtonfields, Clifton Backies and Bootham Stray, Ellerton, Fulford, Hemingbrough, Heslington, Hull Road Park (York), Knavesmire, Marygate (York), Milford Common, Norton, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne), Poppleton, Scarthingwell, Skipwith Common, Strensall Common, Wheldrake Ings and Whitwell Grange West.

During the breeding season (April to July), confirmation of breeding came from Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe where a nest was occupied in April; Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common where a nest containing young was reported on 5th June; Wheldrake Ings, where an adult and a juvenile were heard on the 6th and Bolton Percy where a family of four were near a nest box on the 7th. An adult and juvenile were at Bishop Wood on 9th June. Four pairs bred at Skipwith Common with an

average clutch size of 2.5, higher than the recent average. Other counts above two in the breeding season were five at Yearsley Moor/Woods on 5th June and five at Redhouse on the 26th. Sightings of one or two birds also came from: Acaster Airfield, Acaster Malbis (two), Bank Island, Bishop Wood, Braithwaites Wood, Castle Howard, Foggathorpe, Garrowby Hill, Low Catton Road, NDC, Scrayingham, Stamford Bridge and University of York (two).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

YOC

Scarce localised breeder and winter visitor

All sightings were from the first half of the year. The first was of one seen during the Bird Race on 3rd January at an undisclosed site (TJ, OM, CG, JA-B). On 24th April one was briefly seen quartering through trees in the copse behind Butt pools, Strensall Common, where they have nested in the past (PR) and one on Strensall Common on the 27th (DMB, RCn). The sole report from the LDV was of one that gave brief flight views at close range as it flew over Bank Island on 11th May (CSR, CC).

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

YOC

Amber listed

Winter and passage visitor; casual breeder

The first of the year was one seen at an undisclosed site during the Bird Race on 3rd January (TJ, OM, J A-B, CG). One was at NDC on the 4th and 5th (TD), and one at Heslington Tillmire on the 5th (MW) and the 12th (JW). Three were at Rufforth on the 11th (MN), then two there on the 16th (CH) and singletons on the 19th (CH), 24th (HSi) and 30th (Birdguides). On the 17th, one was at Thornton Ings. In February two were at Rufforth on the 5th (Birdguides) and one was hunting in rough fields by Rufforth Village on the 15th (AH). In April one at NDC on the 2nd was presumed to be an outward bound passage bird (JLe). One was seen being mobbed by Curlews at Skipwith Common the same day (TWa) and one at North Milford on the 8th was also presumed to be a migrant. One was seen at Naburn on 6th May (JB) and one seen flying in an easterly direction over farmland to the east of Naburn at a height of about 80 feet on 6th June (JB).

In the second half of the year, the only sightings came in December with one at Milford Common on the 3rd and 4th, one at Rufforth on the 13th (Birdguides) and a sad end to the year with one flushed near Foggathorpe and taken into care on the 23rd having to be put to sleep (JT).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce passage migrant and scarce migrant breeder

The only reports of Nightjar this year came from Strensall Common, the first being one heard 'churring' on 5th June (DW). A churring bird was also heard there on the 13th and 14th (PJR) then two on the 21st (JBe) and 22nd (PJR); these were singing in competition about 500m apart and flight calls were also heard. The

last report of the year was of two males still singing in competition there on 6th July. These were the first records at Strensall Common since 2005.

Swift *Apus apus*
Migrant breeder

Amber listed

The first returning birds were one on 22nd April seen over the Minster in York, one into roost at Ampleforth on the 24th and the first back to the LDV, at Wheldrake Ings and over North Duffield village, the same day. Birds in low single figures were reported widely to the end of the month and into the first week of May, building up after that with 30 at Ampleforth on the 5th, 20 at Catton the same day, 50 over Wheldrake Ings by the 11th and upwards of 500 feeding over the Ings on the 14th. Three hundred and thirty were seen passing northeast over Whit Hill on the 23rd. In late May one observer noted that birds were staying in the nest rather than feeding due to bad weather and 600 at NDC on 2nd June were struggling to find food (CG).

Breeding was noted at Ampleforth (nine pairs present on 9th June along with ten non-breeders prospecting), Easthorpe, Francis Street (York - two broods), Naburn and Newburgh Priory. It was also suspected at Whitwell Village; however this year there was very little information about breeding success. Birds were reported from many areas with suitable nesting habitat including Heworth, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne, New Earswick and North Duffield, so may have bred at some or all of these sites.

Southerly departure of birds started in July. On the 1st a movement of many hundreds of birds was seen over Wheldrake Ings, while smaller numbers were seen moving south over Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on the 8th. Larger gatherings in July included 200 feeding over Aughton Ings on 16th July and 180 over Pocklington Canal at Melbourne the same day. The largest movement south was 1000 over Bank Island on the 29th, with further movements out of the area on the 1st and 6th August. At Poppleton 127 flew west on the 6th, while 120 flew southwest over Heslington East on the 14th, with another 20 feeding over the lake the same evening. A flock of 13 left Naburn the same day; the last from the village. Reports thereafter were of one or two birds, mainly from Bolton Percy Ings and Milford Common, with the last of the year being two seen flying south over Bolton Percy Ings during a VMW on 13th September.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*
Rare passage migrant

YOC

One was seen and photographed by one lucky observer (PM) on 17th April in Wigginton; this is only the 8th record for the area.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis**Amber listed**Resident breeder*

Birds were recorded throughout the year in ones or twos in suitable wetland habitats from the following sites: Acaster, Bank Island, Bolton Percy Ings, Buttercrambe Weir, Church Bridge, Clifton Ings, Clifton Park, Copmanthorpe, Danesmead Wood, Frog Hall (Allerthorpe), Hagg Bridge, Hassacarr LNR, Heslington East, Melbourne, Milford Common, Naburn, Naburn Lock, NDC, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Old Malton, Osbaldwick, River Ouse, Rawcliffe Ings, Rawcliffe Lake, Ryther Ings, Sherburn, Sand Hutton, Thornton, Thornton Ellers, The Stank, St Nicholas Fields, Wharfe Ings, Wheldrake Ings, Wistow and York. Records of three birds were received from Clifton Ings, St Nicholas Fields and Wheldrake Ings, the latter being the site with the most records.

Breeding evidence was noted at Wheldrake Ings where a bird was carrying food on 25th May and 25th June. A nest was located at Bolton Percy Ings on 5th June; two juveniles were recorded at the Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on the 17th; food carrying was observed at Acaster on the 25th and a juvenile at Wharfe Ings on the 26th. Food carrying was also seen near White Sykes Farm, Sand Hutton. They probably bred at Bolton Percy.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

YOC

Rare passage migrant

Not recorded in 2016, following records in three of the past ten years, most recently 2015.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis**Resident breeder*

Though widely reported in areas of suitable habitat, records were mainly of one or two birds. Two or three pairs were present at SHL with regular sightings from March. The only other site where more than two were reported was Skipwith Common where up to three were present during March; at least five were present on 28th June; and later in the year two or three were present daily during November, with four there on the 28th. Birds were heard or seen regularly at several sites throughout the year, including Milford Common, Skipwith Common, Strensall Common and along the Lower Wharfe between Ozendyke and Cawood, while a female was at Hassacarr NR from May to the end of the year. Other sightings came from: Acaster Airfield, Acaster Malbis, Allerthorpe Common, Ampleforth, Bolton Percy Ings, Bolton Percy, Burtonfields, Easingwold (Black Wood and the golf course), Escrick, Frog Hall Allerthorpe, Gilling Redcar, Hagg Wood, Heslington East (Kimberlow Hill and Low Lane), Heslington Tillmire, Heslington (village), Howsham, Kirkham, Melbourne Ings, Middlethorpe Hall, Naburn, Naburn Wood, Nun Appleton, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Patefield Wood, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne), Riccall, Riccall Bridge Pump Station, Stubb Wood, The Stank, West Ings, Wharfe Ings, White Carr (Strensall), World's End

Stockton. A male yaffling in trees along Grovesnor Terrace, Bootham in the heart of the city on 23rd April, was in a less usual location.

There were few reports of confirmed breeding. A juvenile was seen perched in an apple tree in a Nabum garden, with an adult calling nearby on 24th July and a youngster was calling noisily there on 17th August. Two or three pairs bred at SHL; adults and juveniles were seen foraging for ants together on several dates in August. They almost certainly bred at Milford Common. Elsewhere, at least one pair was seen together at Skipwith Common and singing males were noted at Frog Hall Allerthorpe, Heslington East and Strensall Common.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder

Widespread and well reported throughout the year, though mostly as singletons and some twos, from over 70 locations. Counts above two included three at Bolton Percy Ings on 23rd January, five there on 14th, 26th and 28th February and on 6th March but only three on the 19th. Four were at Wharfe Ings on 19th February. On 29th March there were four at Strensall Common and three at Skipwith Common, with three again at the latter on 13th April. During May, three were at Strensall Common on the 20th, four at Clifton/Rawcliffe on the 25th and four at Yearsley Moor the following day. Three were at Skipwith Common on 28th June and three at Bolton Percy Ings on both 29th August and 10th September. Three were near Redhouse Lagoon on 4th December and three in the Knavesmire area on the 27th.

During the breeding season drumming and displaying birds were heard and seen at several locations, but confirmation of breeding success was limited. Nesting at Strensall Common was indicated by the agitated behaviour of the adults. An occupied nest was seen at Redhouse Wood on 5th June; while two adults and a juvenile were on feeders in a garden at Bolton Percy on 10th June. It was reported to be a very good year at SHL; several juveniles as well as adults were seen during June. Juveniles were also seen being fed in a Stamford Bridge garden and a juvenile was seen in Poppleton regularly during September. They probably bred at Milford Common

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor* YOC *Red listed*

Rare resident breeder

The only sighting during the year of this increasingly scarce woodpecker came during the Bird Race on 3rd January (undoubtedly the bird of the day for the York region), when a male landed on a tree in a hedge separating fields between Allerthorpe Common and Warren Farm Cottage. It gave great views to the lucky team for two to three minutes before flying off again (DMB, JCn, RCn, PW).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus**Amber listed**Resident breeder*

This is a common and widespread farmland raptor which is regularly encountered throughout the York area. In the first winter period counts of one or two were recorded at numerous sites. Three of the Bird Race teams on 3rd January recorded a total of seven birds in the area.

Good numbers were present in the LDV, with five nest sites visited during the breeding season which contained broods of five, four, four, four, and three, compared to three pairs in 2015. Other breeding records came from Appleton Roebuck, Bolton Grange, Bolton Percy Ings - where three young fledged, Kexby, Londesborough Lodge Farm, Milford Common, Rawcliffe Ings, Scagglethorpe Lane, Scoreby Lodge - where three young fledged, Strensall Common, Thornton and Ulleskelf Mires.

Numbers were lower but again widespread in the second winter period, and the only reports of more than two birds were of up to four at Milford Common and three at both Bank Island and Bolton Percy Ings.

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

Following on from 2015, another good year for this species in the York area. In January, singles were at Seavy Carr on the 8th, Ulleskelf Mires on the 12th, Rufforth on the 16th, Towton on the 24th, Wheldrake Ings on the 25th and at Ozendyke on the 26th. Further singles were reported during February at East Cottingwith on the 7th, Wheldrake Ings on the 10th and at Rufforth on the 22nd. On 21st March a single was seen hunting at Elvington. In April a male was at East Cottingwith on the 9th and a single at High Hutton on the 11th was the last of the spring.

The first returning bird was a single at Bank Island on 21st September, followed by another at Bolton Percy Ings on 17th October. On 14th November, a single was at Fangfoss. Finally in December, a female was seen to catch a bird on the 11th at Milford Common and a single was at Brumber Hill on the 16th.

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

The first records of the year came in late April with two at NDC on the 28th and two at Acaster Malbis on the 30th. Into May there was a good scattering of one to two present across the area with 11 present in the LDV on the 9th, including five showing well hawking insects over Bank Island and a pair displaying over Wheldrake Ings. At Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings up to four were present during the rest of May; an estimated four pairs were reportedly on territory in the LDV by the month end. Breeding was also suspected in SE53.

From June to August, one or two birds continued to be reported from throughout the area, including one which had caught a hirundine at Long Lane,

Heslington on 9th July. There were no gatherings reported during September though singles were reported at Bank Island/Wheldrake Ings as well Bolton Percy Ings at the month end. There were two late records with singles at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd October and at Aughton on 2nd November.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Winter and passage visitor; scarce breeder

During the first winter period, up to four were present in the LDV where the gatherings of winter wildfowl provide a ready source of prey. Singles were also reported during this period from Askham Bog, Bolton Percy Ings, Clifton Ings, Milford Common, Naburn, Poppleton, Rufforth and Selby.

A pair once again held territory on York Minster throughout the year, but again failed to breed successfully. Prey items identified from remains at the Minster included juvenile Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*, Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*, Corncrake *Crex crex* and Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*. There were three successful breeding pairs within the LDV, producing broods of three, two and two. A further two breeding pairs were reported in the York area.

The second winter period produced reports of one to two birds from widespread locations across the area, with up to four again present in the LDV during November and December, including three seen together at Wheldrake Ings on 24th December.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

YOC

Scarce visitor but escapes cannot be ruled out

One was heard calling from dense conifers in a Naburn garden on several dates between February and April. All other records were from September onwards with ones heard calling or seen at Heslington Hill on 22nd September, University of York on 7th October, Clifton Park and Clifton Ings on the 16th (and again on the 28th), Osbaldwick on the 23rd and Bishopthorpe Road on the 28th. In November one was at St Nicholas Fields on the 14th and one at Fulford on the 25th. December sightings were at Heslington West on the 2nd, Acaster Malbis on the 18th (and again on the 21st), the same day as one at Clifton Ings, while the last of the year was one heard on the 27th in the same conifers in Naburn as the beginning of the year.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

YOC

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

One turned up at Strensall Common on 23rd October (MH) and was well watched and photographed over subsequent days by numerous observers, with almost daily reports to the end of the month. On the 30th it was being harried around the Common by a large flock of Lesser Redpolls *Acanthis cabaret*, landing in tree tops for a few minutes at a time before being moved on. It stayed on into the first week of November and was seen chasing a Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

and insects, as well as dismembering a mole, on the 3rd (TWa). It was last seen on the 4th (DR, GW), when it was observed fly-catching and was often vocal when mobbed by Reed Buntings *Emberiza schoeniclus*, giving various chirrups and tack type calls as well as a strange almost cat-like mew.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Common resident breeder

Single numbers were commonly recorded throughout the year while records of more than ten were 11 at Brumber Hill on 2nd February, 14 at Rawcliffe Ings on 15th May, 11 at Nether Poppleton on 19th May and 11 at Bank Island at a roost on 20th November.

During the breeding season records of pairs observed in suitable nesting habitat came from Brecks Farm Haxby, Cliffe/Osgodby, Oaklands Way Easingwold, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Strensall Common, White Carr (Flaxton) and Priory Street (York). A bird was noted building a nest in Rowntree's Park, York and breeding was confirmed at Bank Island, where a family party of five was seen, SHL, where two pairs bred, and Stamford Bridge.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Up to five birds were regularly seen in suitable habitats throughout the year with one record of six birds at Nun Appleton on 7th October and seven birds at Patefield Wood on 17th December. Many records were from Allerthorpe Common, Bishop Wood, Bolton Percy Ings, Cali Heath, Hagg Wood (Dunnington), Milford Common, Pocklington Canal and Skipwith Common. Good numbers were present across the LDV during October with daily sightings of two or three birds.



Jay

© Paul Greenwood

During the breeding season birds in suitable nesting habitat were observed at Allerthorpe Common, Frog Hall (Allerthorpe), Pocklington Canal Melbourne and Strensall Common. Confirmed evidence of breeding came from SHL where an adult was seen flying into Nursery Oaks with a full crop in May, a family party of four was at Wheldrake Ings on 14th July and recently fledged young at The Grange, Pocklington Canal on 1st August.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Common resident breeder

Again large numbers of roosting birds and flocks of this widespread species were recorded. Significant numbers of 100 or more were:

3rd January, Allerthorpe Common - 100

3rd January, University of York Lake - 300

5th January, Skipwith Common - 100

23rd February, Patefield Wood - 400

27th February, Hornington Manor Farm, Bolton Percy - 100

27th July, Heslington East - 113 (including a number of young birds)

13th September, Bolton Percy Ings - 130 (pre-roost) and 250 on the 28th

26th October, Ozendyke Ings - 230

29th October, Strensall Common - 100

22nd November, Thornton, Pocklington Canal - 150

16th December, Patefield Wood – c.1000

During the breeding season birds were seen in suitable nesting habitat at Askham Bog, Bolton Percy, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe and Strensall Common. Birds were seen visiting nest sites in the LDV on 29th March and at Pocklington Canal Melbourne on 8th April and an occupied nest was recorded at Thornton, Pocklington Canal on 13th May. At Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe recently fledged young were seen on 17th June, fledged young were brought by adults into a garden in Stamford Bridge, and there was a very late sighting of young begging for food at Heslington, York on 8th November.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Common resident breeder

Again widely recorded with notable counts in excess of 100 including:

5th January, Skipwith Common - 200

24th January, Thornton, Pocklington Canal - 545

30th January, Pocklington Airfield - 250

8th February, Norton - 150

21st August, Wheldrake Ings - 100

6th September, Naburn Hall (opposite village church) - 100

13th September, Bolton Percy Ings - 110

24th September, Bank Island - 150 (peak count)

29th October, Strensall Common - 200

31st October, Melbourne, Pocklington Canal - 150 circa (peak count)

3rd November, Mill Lane and River Foss (SE56) - 100

16th December, Patefield Wood - 400 (peak count)

During the breeding season, occupied nests were seen at Bolton Lodge (12 nests with 15 birds attending); Brandsby Hall Rookery (13 active nests); Electricity Transformer Station Hull Road (14 birds on site and at least seven/eight on, or immediately adjacent to a nest); Hildenley Wood West, Malton; Joseph Rowntree School (18 nests); Kirkby Wharfe (maximum of 26 nests with 30 birds attending), Oakbutts Farm, Towthorpe (eight nests with attendant birds); Scrayingham and Strensall. On 25th May, five recently fledged young were seen at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne while a flock of 32 at Rawcliffe Ings on 19th June included a number of young birds.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

Common resident breeder

Many more records were submitted in 2016 than in past years, most of which were of fewer than 20 birds. Notable counts of 50 or more during the first winter period were 55 at Milford Common on 14th March, a peak of 169 at Rufforth on 11th February and 89 were attracted by flooding to Wharfe Ings on 18th February.

Birds were observed in the breeding season in suitable nesting habitat at Askham Bog, in the LDV, Frog Hall (Allerthorpe), Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pocklington Canal and Strensall Common. On 5th January at Clifton Backies a pair was apparently using an old nest. Nest building was observed on 4th April at Rowntree Park, York and on the 10th at Norton. Two pairs bred successfully at SHL and recently fledged young were present on 15th June and 20th July at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne.

In the second winter period Lower Wharfe flooding attracted up to 94 birds on 28th November and 89 were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 18th December. Unusually, a pair was seen nest building in Green Dykes Lane, York on 18th December.

Raven *Corvus corax*

YOC

Scarce visitor

There were more records this year adding to the regular, almost yearly sightings of the last twelve years. A family party of two adults and three immature birds was seen on 4th June at Castle Howard in fields between Ray Wood and Bog Hall/Mausoleum (DMB) and again the following day (DMB, JLe, DR). These birds are thought to have bred at Ravenscar on the sea cliff and dispersed inland. It is unlikely they bred locally in the recording area due to heavy keeping presence. A record of a single bird flying low and south, being mobbed by Jackdaws *Corvus monedula*, on 7th June at Hopgrove Roundabout was possibly one of the Castle Howard birds (GW).

One was observed at Bolton Percy Ings on 29th September (PD, ASw) and two were at the same location on 17th October (PD, ASw).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Records of up to ten birds were widespread throughout the recording area. Ten were at Strensall Common on 2nd January. From mid-February to early July birds were heard singing from many sites including 13 singing, out of a count of 19 birds, at Yearsley Moor on 26th May. A late record of a single singing bird was heard at Monks Cross on 18th August.

Later in the year ten were at Strensall Common on 23rd October. On 14th December about 50 were seen at Scagglethorpe Lane, the only significant evidence of a possible autumn influx, although numbers generally increased fractionally at this time.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

YOC

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

There were two records of this scarce species in 2016, the first in the area since 2013, one at Strensall Common on 18th January (per Birdguides) and one at Bubwith on 3rd February (JH) which sadly was identified when brought in dead by a cat.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Common resident breeder

An increased number of records were submitted throughout the year across the whole of the recording area, mostly in single numbers. Significant numbers of over 15 birds were: 16 at Hassacarr NR on 13th January; 20 at Strensall on 28th January; 25 at Brecks Farm, Haxby on 12th March and 15 at Rawcliffe Ings, Clifton on 15th May.

Singing birds and birds observed in the breeding season in suitable nesting habitat were found at Brayton Barff, Oaklands Way Easingwold, Strensall Common, White Carr Flaxton and Willowbridge, River Derwent. Occupied nests were recorded at Acaster Malbis, Easthorpe and Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings. At SHL there were five confirmed pairs, all nesting inside CCTV camera poles! Fledged young were seen at Askham Bryan (seven fledged from eight eggs), Bank Island, Breezy Knees Warthill, Pocklington Canal (mostly Melbourne and Thornton), SHL and Stamford Bridge.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Common resident breeder

Widespread reports throughout the year, mainly in single figures. Records of ten or more were: ten at Strensall on 28th January; ten at The Stank on 12th February; 12 at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on 6th March; 15 at Brecks Farm,

Haxby on 12th March; 11 at Ebor Way on 25th March; 14 at Skipwith Common on 26th June and ten at Bank Island on 14th July.

Breeding evidence of birds singing or visiting probable nest sites came from Crambeck Woods, near Malton, Fox Covert Stockton-on-Forest, Frog Hall Allerthorpe, Hildenley Wood East Malton, Howsham, NDC, Scrayingham, Strensall Common, White Carr Flaxton, Whitwell Grange East and Willowbridge, (River Derwent). Confirmed breeding was recorded at Skipwith Common on 24th May when an adult bird was seen with faecal sac/food; Hemingbrough on 29th May with recently fledged young from a nest in a natural hole which has been used for many years and is only three feet from the ground; Huntington on 30th May and Bank Island on 25th June – both with recently fledged young; Skipwith Common on 29th June with at least three family parties; and Pocklington Canal, Melbourne with recently fledged young seen on 19th September. Breeding also took place at SHL, where there were two pairs on site and three further possible pairs in the woods, and at Stamford Bridge.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Resident breeder

Widespread across the area, there were more records in 2016 of higher numbers than in previous years, though the majority were of up to five birds. Sightings of ten or more birds were: ten at Strensall Common on 2nd January; ten at Allerthorpe Common on 3rd January; 15 at Skipwith Common on 4th January and 15 at Yearsley Moor on 26th May.

Birds were recorded singing from early February through to early September, and pairs were observed in suitable nesting habitat in the breeding season. At SHL there were five singing males in High Plumps Wood next to the campus, with breeding deemed probable. Adults with two young were seen in a Naburn garden on 22nd July, and fledglings were also seen in a Stamford Bridge garden.

Willow Tit *Poecile montana*

YOC *Red listed*

Scarce resident breeder

Reports of ones and twos were recorded mainly in the LDV. During June at least two pairs were observed and a family party was noted near the car park at Wheldrake Ings. In July these birds were still present, while three family parties were also present in the area around the pool. Five pairs were confirmed to have bred there. During August four birds were regularly reported with a maximum of six on the 3rd and up to ten individual birds during October. Regular sightings and probable breeding took place at Milford Common and Ulleskelf Mires.

Other records also came from: Acaster and Acaster Airfield, Askham Bog, Bolton Percy Ings, Fulford, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Redhouse Wood, Stamford Bridge and Strensall Common. See also RBBP report on page 111.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris**Red listed**Resident breeder*

There was no confirmed breeding evidence in 2016 but singing males were recorded at Frog Hall Allerthorpe, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe and Yearsley Moor. Two pairs were also observed in suitable nesting habitat on Skipwith Common during the whole of April.

Sites and peak numbers per site were: Acaster (1), Allerthorpe Common (3), Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe (2), Askham Bog (2), Bank Island (2), Black Plantation (2), CHL (3), Gilling Woods (1) Hildenley Wood East (1) and West (1), Hovingham, South Wood (1), Howsham (1), Londesborough Lodge Farm (2), Melbourne, Pocklington Canal (1), Norton (2), Redhouse Wood (1), Rufforth (1), Scrayingham (1), Skipwith (2 pairs), Strensall Common (1), The Stank (2), Wass Bank Woods (10), Wheldrake Ings (1), Whitwell Grange West (1), Yearsley Moor (2).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

YOC

Scarce visitor usually in autumn and winter

This rare visitor was recorded on only two occasions during 2016. At Wheldrake Ings on 3rd October four birds were seen in the reed bed (CSR). Twelve days later, on 15th October, six birds, including three males, were seen flying high and going north after a short stay at Wheldrake Ings (DMB).

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

YOC

Localised migrant breeder

The two usual locations providing multiple sightings were Skipwith and Strensall Common. The first record of a returning bird was at Skipwith Common on 22nd February (CSR, FM), followed by regular sightings of up to six singing males from the beginning of March through to the end of June. Close to the Common, a single bird was seen singing on an electricity wire in the centre of a stubble field on 12th March (DT) and a pair was seen in suitable nesting habitat on 31st March (CMF). In April up to six singing birds were present on the Common throughout the month (LDV Blog) and individual birds continued singing into May. One was observed carrying food on 19th June (JCn, RCn). Three pairs were confirmed to have bred, with others possible. See RBBP report on page 111.

At Strensall Common the first bird was seen on 28th February (PeR) followed by regular sightings until 18th September (PeR). Single singing birds were observed in April and May and seven territories were recorded during the MOD bird survey on 20th May (PeR) an increase from five territories in the previous year. On 20th May a party of four birds, including recently fledged young, was recorded (PeR) and there were several sightings of pairs feeding in suitable nesting habitat in the breeding season.

At Allerthorpe Common two singing birds were heard on 13th March and again on the 16th (DMB). A pair was carrying food and visiting a probable nest site on

19th June (GP) and a single male was recorded singing on 30th June and 4th July (PB).

Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*

Red listed

Resident breeder and winter visitor

During the first winter period there was a very small increase in numbers in the LDV with 29 birds on 23rd January at East Cottingwith and 29 at Wheldrake Ings on the same day. Brumber Hill near Bolton Percy peaked with at least 19 birds on 28th January and on 2nd March, 45 were counted at Acaster Airfield.

Two out of a count of nine were the first singing birds recorded at Thornton on 23rd January. Singing birds were heard until mid-July in the whole of the LDV and along the Pocklington Canal. Other locations included Allerthorpe Common, Breezy Knees Warthill, Brumber Hill Bolton Percy, Castle Howard, Heslington East, Howsham, Londesborough Lodge Farm, Milford Common and Monks Cross. Along the Pocklington Canal birds were displaying at Westfield House on 13th April, again on 4th May and at Melbourne on 6th June. Confirmed breeding was recorded at Brumber Hill on 10th May. Seven territories were recorded in a MOD survey on 20th May at Strensall Common.

In the autumn and second winter period there were several records of large numbers. A minimum of 50 birds were seen at Brumber Hill on 23rd September; 150 minimum at Bolton Percy Ings on 15th October; 166 at Wheldrake Ings on 15th October; 100 minimum at NDC on 1st November; circa 40 at Fangfoss on 29th November; 40 at Acaster Airfield on 9th December and 40 at Sutton-on-Derwent on 30th December. Visible migration watches at Milford Common and Ozendyke recorded 554 flying south between 23rd September and 28th October with peaks of 181 on 28th September and 128 on 17th October.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Two at Wheldrake Ings on 20th March were the first returning birds, then four at Bank Island on the 21st and there were 13 between Wheldrake and Bank Island on the 27th. The LDV had 150 on 3rd April; there were a minimum of 200 at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd April and 150 there on 2nd May. On 11th April there were 100 at Heslington East.

Birds were seen prospecting nesting holes at Heslington East on 9th April and an end of season check revealed 77 occupied burrows (39 out of a possible 50 in the older 'hotel' and 38 out of a possible 48 in the new 'hotel'). At SHL at least twelve holes in the Sand Martin wall were occupied during the season and 44 others showed signs of excavation. Elsewhere nesting behaviour was seen at Beningborough Ings, Dock Mire (Moor Monkton), Kirkby Wharfe, Middlethorpe Ings and Redhouse Wood, whilst two pairs bred at Naburn Lock and a good number bred at several places along the river at Rawcliffe Ings.

Thirty nine were at the Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on 2nd September and the final record was a single at Wheldrake Ings on 25th September.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first record was of two at Slingsby on 26th March, while three were at Wheldrake Ings and two at Bank Island on the 28th with reports from many sites thereafter. Spring counts in triple figures were 100 at Heslington East on the 11th, 100 at Wheldrake Ings on the 28th and 250 there on 30th April, with 170 at Newburgh Priory on 25th May.

Breeding was recorded at Bolton Percy, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pocklington Canal (The Grange and Melbourne), Scagglethorpe Lane, Strensall Common and Westfield House. At SHL at least six nests were located and the first juveniles were seen on the wing on 23rd June.

Visible migration watches at Milford Common between 15th August and 5th October recorded 966 moving during 10 hours of observations. At Ozendyke between 4th September and 10th October there were 3695 flying south and 546 north in 42.5 hours of observations, including 490 flying south in one hour on 13th September. A minimum of 4000 flew south over Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island on 6th September, with another 1000 moving south on the 13th. There were 3000 feeding over NDC prior to dusk on 14th and a minimum of 1000 roosted at Wheldrake Ings on the 14th. October opened with 255 flying south at Wheldrake Ings on the 1st and 300 roosted in a maize field at Church Bridge, Pocklington Canal on the 3rd. The final record was of 15 flying south at Bolton Percy Ings on 17th October.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Amber listed

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

One was at Bank Island on 1st April and single figures were then seen until the 23rd when 10 were at Wheldrake Ings.

Spring counts of 50 or more were 100 at Wheldrake Ings on 30th April and in May there were 150 at Sherburn WTW on the 2nd, 150 at Wheldrake Ings on the 14th and 70 at Newburgh Priory on the 25th.

Reports of breeding came from Ampleforth, Castle Howard, Easingwold, Fulford Road (York), Melbourne, Monks Cross, Naburn Lock, Newburgh Priory, Scarcroft and Whitwell. At SHL a slight increase in the number of nesting pairs was noticed with nine active nests.

In the autumn 200 were at Bolton Percy Ings on 4th September and other counts over 100 were 150 at SHL (with 100 Swallows *Hirundo rustica*) on the 5th, 200 at Wheldrake Ings on the 6th and the 13th, 150 at Melbourne on the 13th and 136 flew south at Bolton Percy Ings on the 28th. The final record was of three at Bank Island on 6th October.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

YOC

Rare visitor

One at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne was seen or heard, intermittently, from 6th January to 22nd February and on 29th February one was at Pocklington Canal, East Cotingwith. The only other record was a single at NDC on 3rd June. These are the 9th to 11th records and continue the run of recent sightings, so perhaps we may get some evidence of breeding in the near future.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus**Common resident breeder*

Widespread throughout the year in single or low double figures.

Probable or confirmed breeding was recorded at Frog Hall Allerthorpe, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne), SHL and Wheldrake Ings. Counts of over twenty birds were: 22 at Hassacarr NR on 13th January and in the second half of the year, SHL had a flock of 32 consisting of several family parties on 5th July, while Wheldrake Ings had 30 on 31st July, 25 on 27th August, 29 on 25th September and 30 on 15th October. A Heslington garden reported their presence in 100% of weeks (96% in 2015), with a maximum of ten in February.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

YOC

Very rare vagrant

One was with a roving tit flock at Hob Moor LNR on 14th November (JAB). This was the 7th record and the fourth consecutive year this species has been seen in the club area.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

YOC

*Red listed**Rare passage migrant*

Not recorded in 2016, the second blank year in the last ten.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita**Migrant breeder and passage migrant with some birds overwintering*

The year opened with a wintering bird at NDC on 3rd and 4th January and another was at Leeman Road, York on 6th February, whilst one at Redhouse Wood on 13th March may have been a migrant. There was an obvious arrival on 21st March with birds reported from Bank Island, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe Sheriff Hutton, Wheldrake Ings and Yearsley Moor. Seen daily thereafter, birds were widely reported in single figures. Counts of ten or more were: 11 at Castle Howard on 3rd April, ten at St Nicholas Fields on the 6th, ten at Bolton Percy Ings on the 10th and 30th, ten at Allerthorpe Common on the 16th, 13 at Wheldrake Ings on 17th April, 16 at Wass on 7th May, 19 at Clifton and Rawcliffe Ings on the 15th, ten at Strensall Common on the 20th and 19 at Yearsley Moor on 26th May.

Breeding was confirmed at Fulford Ings, Naburn, Norton, along Pocklington Canal at The Grange, Melbourne and Thornton Lock, and Strensall Common. At

SHL the CBC suggested at least three and up to five males were holding territory and juveniles were seen on 11th July and again on the 18th, accompanied by a metal-ringed adult bird.

Autumn records were mostly in single figures, with double figure counts of 11 at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on the 5th and 16 at Wheldrake Ings on 10th September. The final migrant was one at Skipwith Common on 3rd November, as one at Fangfoss on 29th November and two at St Nicholas Fields on 9th December were probably wintering.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Amber listed

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

One was at Aughton Ings on 3rd April at the same time as two were at Wheldrake Ings, where there was an obvious arrival on 12th-14th April with a minimum of 30. Away from Wheldrake, counts in double figures were 14 at Allerthorpe Common on the 16th, ten at White Carr on the 22nd, 20 at Bolton Percy Ings on 30th April and 18 at Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings on 15th May. Birds were widespread during the breeding season and confirmed breeding records came from Butterwick, Pocklington Canal (The Grange, Melbourne and Thornton Lock), Skipwith Common, Wheldrake Ings and Yearsley Moor.

Autumn passage peaked in August with 18 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 21st and 17 at Wheldrake Ings on the 27th. The final records were on 23rd September when two were at Brumber Hill and a single at Bolton Percy Ings.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder with some birds overwintering

The male and female seen in a Poppleton garden on Christmas Day 2015 reappeared on 1st January and were seen intermittently until 25th March. The presence of two females on the 12th March showed that at least three birds were involved. A male was at Haxby from 14th to 21st January, one was near Acaster Malbis on 7th February and another at Fulford on 7th March. One on the Ebor Way on 25th March could have been an early migrant and the next record was a singing bird at Coneysthorpe on 3rd April. There was a distinct arrival between the 12th and 14th April.

Breeding was confirmed at Hassacarr NR, Heslington East, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne, Thornton Lock and SHL. This is another of the species for which confirmed breeding is under-reported.

This year the only records in double figures were 19 at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on 16th July and a minimum of 20 at Bolton Percy Ings on 11th September. The final record was one in a Fulford garden on 29th October.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder

The first was at Wheldrake Ings on 17th April, increasing to four by the 8th and five by 27th May. Away from the LDV reports of one or two birds (mostly singing males) came from: CHL, Clifton Backies, Foggathorpe, Frog Hall Allerthorpe, Melbourne, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Old Malton, Pocklington Canal, SHL, Skipwith Common (with four there on 24th May), Strensall Common and Ulleskelf Mires.

Breeding was confirmed at Castle Howard and Skipwith Common, with a family party including two juveniles seen at the latter on 26th June. The final records were of singles at Clifton and Wheldrake Ings on 6th September.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder

The first was at Thorganby on 17th April and after a small influx from the 23rd they were regular at Bank Island, NDC and Melbourne. Elsewhere, reports of mostly one or two came from Bolton Percy Ings (four on 24th April), Batridding Farm Appleton Roebuck, Bootham Stray, Brecks Farm Haxby, Clifton Backies and Ings, Fangfoss, Fulford Ings, Milford Common, Naburn Wood, Poppleton, Scagglethorpe Lane, Scarthingwell, Strensall Common, West Ings and Wistow.

Breeding was confirmed at Pocklington Canal, with two family groups totalling 14 seen there on 16th July, Melbourne and Ulleskelf Mires.

The last record was a single at Clifton Ings on 6th September.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Amber listed

Migrant breeder

The first was one singing at Askham Bryan on 13th April. Two were at NDC and one at Wheldrake Ings on the 14th with a more general arrival on 16th April. Counts of ten or more were:

5th May, Wheldrake Ings - ten and again on the 8th, plus 11 on the 29th

30th May, Scagglethorpe Lane - 14

3rd June, Brumber Hill - 12

16th July, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne - ten

12th September, Brumber Hill - 15

Breeding was confirmed at Brumber Hill, Foggathorpe, Heslington East, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne) and Scagglethorpe and probably at SHL; a juvenile was seen sitting on the boundary fence between SHL and High Plumps wood on 24th August.

The final record was of four at Brumber Hill on 25th September.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Red listed

Scarce migrant breeder

There were fewer records than in 2015, and none heard after the beginning of

July. The first record was relatively early with one reeling at Bishopthorpe Ings on 16th April. Singles were at Welham on the 15th and at Acaster Malbis on 28th May and 5th June. Two were reeling at Ryther Ings on 26th June and another at Kirkby Wharfe on 6th July was the last reported.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April with several more the following day, 17 singing there on 30th April and increasing to 22 on 5th May. There were also 22 at Ryther Ings on 8th and ten at Bolton Percy Ings on 21st May. Eleven were at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on 6th July. Away from the LDV and the locations mentioned above, single figures were also noted at Askham Bog, CHL, Clifton Ings, East Cottingwith, Heslington East, Howsham, Old Malton, Pocklington Canal (Thornton Lock) and Rawcliffe Ings.

Breeding was confirmed at CHL, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne and Thornton Lock) and Wheldrake Ings.

The final record was of one at Wheldrake Ings on 29th August.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was singing at Milford Common on 20th April. Twelve were at Pocklington Canal (Thornton Lock) on 21st May with 13 at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe the following day. Twenty were at Pocklington Canal (Thornton Lock) on 20th July and ten at Wheldrake Ings on 6th August. Away from the LDV and the locations mentioned above, single figures were also noted at Askham Bog, CHL, Cawood Ings, East Cottingwith, Foggathorpe, Heslington East, Monks Cross, Strensall Common, Wharfe Ings and Wistow Clough.

The only breeding evidence received came from Thornton Lock on Pocklington Canal, where food carrying was noted in early June and recently fledged young seen from 19th July, and Wheldrake Ings.

The final record was of a juvenile caught and ringed at Wheldrake Ings on 1st October.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Scarce winter visitor

A better year with several flocks recorded, although all sightings came in the second winter period. The first sighting was of one over Strensall Common on 3rd November, with five at the Garrison church on the 5th and two over Dunnington on the 4th. A flock of 15 were at Castle Howard Arboretum on the 7th, 12 at Copmanthorpe on the 10th, seven at Feoffee Lane on the A1079 on the 18th and 12 at Bank Island that paused briefly before flying off north on the 25th. Records of one or two birds were also received from Ampleforth, Huntington, Monks Cross, Rufforth, Thorganby, Woodthorpe and in York City Centre up to six birds – mostly

Rare and Scarcer Birds recorded during 2016



round the Bishopthorpe road area near the Swan Pub. Seven were at Melbourne on the 29th. The largest flocks were 40 at Yearsley on 17th December, 22 at Hambleton on the 27th, then a rather mobile flock of up to 44 birds was present from the 29th to the 31st feeding in the area around Nunnery Lane, Castle Museum gardens and St George's Field in the centre of York.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder

Widespread in areas of suitable wooded habitat, Nuthatches were reported mainly in ones or twos from 29 different locations, including Grosvenor Terrace in Bootham, York. Three were at Brayton Barff on 17th April, three at Castle Howard on 9th September and also on 4th December, and three at the Duck Decoy, Escrick throughout October.

The only record of confirmed breeding was at Naburn, where a pair was present all year, with a recently fledged juvenile seen on 1st June. Possible dispersing birds were one at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July, and one calling on 12th October near Spring Lane in Heslington (the first in that area since November 2015).

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Common resident breeder

Common and widespread, with records, mostly of one or two birds, coming from 49 different locations, including up to two coming to feeders from January to the end of March in Poppleton.

Singing males were noted in several places from early April but the only confirmation of breeding this year came from SHL, Strensall and Yearsley. At SHL an adult with three nestlings was found during the nest box survey in High Plumps Wood on 5th May. At Strensall Common an adult was seen carrying a faecal sac/food for young on 11th May, and an adult was feeding young there on 24th June. Ten round Yearsley Moor on 26th May included a family of two adults and one juvenile.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Common resident breeder

Very common and widespread; mostly reported in low single figures but, again, virtually no breeding evidence was received.

Double figure counts were received from Pocklington Canal, Melbourne where there were ten on 12th February and the same on 25th March. Ten were along Scagglethorpe Lane on 30th May, 13 at Old Malton on 6th June (and again on 8th July), while there were twelve near Naburn Wood on the 18th.

Though many singing males were reported between late February and mid-September, the only confirmed breeding was from two locations at SHL (where the CBC showed there were between 18 and 22 singing males holding territory)

and one family of recently fledged young was seen at Stamford Bridge on 11th June.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Red listed

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

Common and widespread across the area. In the first winter period, flocks of 100 or more were:

9th February, Rufforth - 100 minimum

15th February, Moor Monkton - 120

18th February, Wharfe Ings - 200

12th March, Acaster Marshes - 200

28th March, Acaster Airfield - 120

4th April, Scagglethorpe Lane - 100

Nesting was noted from March onwards and breeding confirmation came from Acaster Malbis, Bank Island, Clifton Moor, Fulford, Haxby, Pocklington Canal (The Grange), and Stamford Bridge.

In late summer and into autumn some larger flocks were also seen: 100 were at Easthorpe on 24th June and up to 110 were seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 9th, 16th and 23rd July – these flocks including fledged juveniles. There were 102 at Pocklington Canal on 2nd September, 100 at Copmanthorpe on 13th October and 124 at Wheldrake Ings on the 15th.

In the late autumn and second winter period some larger flocks were recorded, with several murmurations seen at Monks Cross, the largest being 300 birds on two occasions - the 8th and 16th November - and 300 at Bubwith Ings on the 27th. Other flocks of 100 or more during November were recorded at NDC, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne) and Whitwell Grange. Visible migration watches at Ozendyke between 12th September and 15th November recorded 1542 moving in a broadly south westerly direction in 21 hours and 20 minutes of observations. At Whit Hill on 11th and 14th November there were 687 and 205 flying northeast in 145 minutes of observations. Flooding along the Lower Wharfe in late November attracted feeding birds with 1000 at Wharfe Ings, 700 at Ozendyke Ings and 300 at Bolton Percy Ings on the 28th. The only notable flock in December was 400 coming in to roost at Wheldrake Ings on the 17th.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Rare visitor, formerly a breeding resident in small numbers

One, the first since 2008, was reported from the Kirkham area on 28th June (CM).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

YOC

*Red listed**Scarce passage migrant*

A male turned up at Heslington East on the south east corner of the main lake on 10th April (GW and CG) and there was a second sighting of one in the same area on the 14th (Birdguides). Two birds were at Leavening on 24th April (LA).

Blackbird *Turdus merula**Common resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant*

Common and widespread in the area with most counts in single figures. The only count above 20 this year in the first winter period was 22 at Brumber Hill on 20th January. Other counts of 15 or more were:

3rd January, Acaster Malbis - 15

15th January, Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe - 18; and again on the 16th

17th January, Old Malton - 15

4th February, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne - 16; 15 on the 18th

During the breeding season, 22 were counted during a BBS near Naburn Wood on 30th April. Breeding was confirmed at Acaster Malbis, Bank Island, Bolton Percy, Crambeck, Fulford, Haxby, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne), Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, SHL, Stamford Bridge, Upper Poppleton and York (Cromer Street and Ouseburn Avenue), with many young birds seen. In the summer, 22 were at Old Malton on 21st July.

Only small numbers were noted during VMW, with an influx of continental birds not especially evident this year. The highest count of the year was 42 at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on 2nd October. Other autumn and second winter counts of 15 or more were:

24th September, Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings - 18

20th October, Easthorpe - 17

19th November, Bank Island - 20

11th December, Old Malton - 20

23rd December, Knavesmire - 15

30th December, Aughton Ings - 20

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

A common winter visitor with flocks of more than 100 birds often encountered. Counts of 150 or more in the first winter period were:

19th January, Bolton Percy Ings - 300

31st January, Brumber Hill - 150

14th February, Bolton Percy Ings - 300

15th February, Brumber Hill - 300

15th February, Moor Monkton Moor - 250

24th February, Ellerton Common - 180

6th March, Bolton Percy Ings - 200
12th March, Acaster Marshes - 200 and the same on the 18th
25th March, Acaster Selby - 200
2nd April, Poppleton - 200
3rd April, Scagglethorpe Lane - 200 and 400 there on the 4th
15th April, Barton-le-Willows - 170

The last of the spring were 11 at Wheldrake Ings on 24th April.

In the autumn the first returning birds were eight at Pocklington Canal on 2nd October with the next one flying west over Bank Island on the 6th and ten there on the 9th. The first major flock of the autumn was 524 at Wheldrake Ings on the 15th. Visible migration watches at Ozendyke between 8th October and 10th December recorded 2471 flying in a broadly southwesterly direction during 25.5 hours of observations, with a peak of 838 on 17th October. A movement of 170 birds was seen over Cawood Marshes on 21st October and 180 were feeding there on the 22nd. On 10th November 1000 went over Bank Island with 500 remaining there on the 11th. In December the largest flock recorded was 120 birds at Redhouse Lagoon on the 4th.

Other notable counts over 150 in the second winter period were:

17th October, Bank Island - 350
25th October, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne - 225
30th October, Melbourne/Thornton - 400
3rd November, Strensall Common - 400
5th November, Wheldrake Ings - 242; then 250 on the 6th and the 27th
7th November, NDC - 350
9th November, Field House, Bielby - 250
13th November, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne - 200
14th November, Wistow Clough - 180
23rd November, Scagglethorpe Lane - 200

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Red listed

Resident breeder but declining in some areas; winter visitor and passage migrant

Reported in small numbers (mostly one to three birds) throughout the year, with some passage evident in late September and early October. Notable counts in the first half of the year were nine roosting at Thornton Ellers on 10th January and ten at Yearsley Moor on 26th May, of which nine were singing males.

Though many singing males were reported during the breeding season, the only confirmation of successful breeding came from Pocklington Canal, Melbourne where recently fledged young were seen from 2nd June and SHL, where at least two and up to five breeding pairs were present and juveniles seen in June and July.

In September, 24 were 'feeding frantically' at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on the 23rd, possibly an influx to the area following an arrival of migrants at the coast around this time and there was a small arrival of seven at Bank Island on 4th

October. Six were seen flying south during a VMW at Ozendyke on the 7th. Eleven were at Old Malton on 10th October and 12 at Wheldrake Ings the same day.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Red listed

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Larger flocks were generally recorded in the autumn with significant movement in mid to late October.

The highest count of first winter period was 430 at Wharfe Ings on 11th March, with other counts of 100 or more being:

19th January, Bolton Percy Ings - 100

31st January, Kirkby Wharfe - 120

14th February, Copmanthorpe - 150

18th February, Wharfe Ings - 120

6th March, Bolton Percy Ings - 100

24th March, East Moor - 100

3rd April, Scagglethorpe Lane - 100 with 200 there on the 4th

The last of the spring was one at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April.

In the autumn groups of ten and 20 flying over Ampleforth towards dusk on 2nd October, with many heard calling thereafter, were the first back. There was a large movement mid-month with notable counts at several sites. At Ozendyke visible migration watches recorded 6323 heading in a broadly south westerly direction in 31 hours of observations between 3rd October and 10th December.

The most notable counts in the autumn and second winter periods were:

4th October, Ozendyke - 605; 428 on the 10th; 2023 on the 17th (peak count) and 601 on the 22nd (all VMW)

11th October, Bank Island - 254, including 191 northwest over

15th October, LDV - 400, and 700 on the 17th

16th October, Clifton Park and Clifton Ings - 200

18th October, Brumber Hill - 1500; with 2000 over on the 25th

22nd October, Cawood Marshes - 200

6th November, Bolton Percy Ings - 200

29th November, Whit Hill - 1350 northeast in two hours (VMW)

8th December, Brumber Hill - 200

2nd December, Milford Common - 173, 310 on the 3rd and 572 on the 9th (VMW)

10th December, Ozendyke - 566 (VMW)

18th December, Wharfe Ings - 180

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Red listed

Resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant

Widespread in the area these were generally reported in ones or twos with only a handful of counts over five. Nine were at North Milford on 6th January, later in the year eight were on a bare field at Dunnington Common on 12th June, a flock

of nine was at Ulleskelf Mires on 1st July and 11 were at Brumber Hill on the 6th. Post breeding the only large flock of the year was 36 at Dunnington Common, seen on wires before going to roost, on 22nd August. Nine were at Bolton Percy Ings on 28th September.

Another species for which breeding evidence is badly lacking, there was one report of nest building at Brayton Barff in April, and a number of singing males reported, but the only confirmed breeding was from Fulford Ings where young were seen on 25th May and SHL, where an adult was seen carrying food on 5th May.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Red listed

Migrant breeder and passage visitor

Records of predominantly one or two birds were received from 28 different locations (including birds on passage). Turning up just a couple of days earlier than in 2015, the first was at Melbourne on 29th April, then one at Bank Island on 2nd May followed by two at Nunnington on the 6th before being reported more widely.

Singing males were heard at Gilling Lakes, Gilling Castle and Strensall Common. Confirmation of successful breeding came from Beningbrough, Castle Howard, Melbourne (one pair thought to have bred), Thornton Lock on Pocklington Canal, SHL (where a pair bred for the first time on the campus, raising a brood of four to fledging) and Skipwith Common/Village (three pairs).

Autumn passage was seen from mid-August. Three were at Clifton Park on 25th August and eight there the following day. A singleton at Wheldrake Ings on the 27th was presumed to be a passage bird. One juvenile was at Bolton Percy Ings on 31st August. There were few reports in September, the last of the year being two at Clifton Park on the 21st.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Common resident breeder

Very common and widespread; mostly reported in low single figures. However, few records came from Brayton Barff or Bishop's Wood, so fewer higher counts were noted in 2016. Early in the year the maximum count was 21 in the Pocklington Canal, Melbourne area on 9th February, while the maximum in the autumn was 30 at Easthorpe on 20th October.

Other double figure counts during the year were:

28th January, Strensall Common - 14

9th February, Strensall - 12

3rd April, Castle Howard Arboretum - ten

June, Old Malton - 11 (on several dates)

September, Old Malton - 12 (on several dates)

October, Old Malton - 11 (on several dates)

9th October, Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe - 13

28th October, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne - 11 and the same on the 31st

More breeding evidence, notably of recently fledged young, was received than in previous years with breeding confirmed at Acaster Malbis, Brecks Farm Haxby, Easthorpe, Hagg Wood, Hemingbrough, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pocklington Canal (Melbourne) SHL, Skipwith, Stamford Bridge and Wheldrake Ings.

At SHL, the 2016 CBC indicated that there were between 21 and 23 territories, so little change to the 22 recorded during the census in 2014.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* YOC *Red listed*

Scarce passage migrant and casual breeder

Just two records this year; the first on 7th May when a male was seen investigating a nest box and then heard singing briefly at Gilling Park (GS). On 13th August a juvenile with a metal ring on the right leg was bathing in a pond and feeding in a garden at Clifton Moor (SJH).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* YOC *Red listed*

Rare visitor

None recorded this year after records in four of the past ten years.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* *Amber listed*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first of the year was a male just northeast of Rufforth village on 7th April. Two were in the far northwest of the region on the 13th, one south of the abbey at Byland and a second towards Coxwold. On the 15th one was at Newburgh Priory. In May one was singing in a field between Abbey Bank Wood and Byland Abbey on the 7th and one singing at Wass by Oldstead Observatory the same day. A singing male was at Castle Howard on 6th June. Two were seen on Bootham Stray on 25th August and the final report of the year was of one at Bolton Percy Ings on 11th September.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* *Red listed*

Passage migrant and casual breeder

The only spring record was one at Strensall Common on 4th May.

Almost all autumn records came from Wheldrake Ings; the first being two there on 23rd July, increasing to three on the 27th and a male present there on the 31st. In August a single on Swantail Ings, Wheldrake on the 6th was followed by two on the 8th and singles on the 10th and 11th. Four were then present on the 22nd and again on the 27th to the month end. During September the run of records continued with birds present almost daily. Up to three were about from the 1st to the 8th, four there on the 9th, three on the 10th then two from the 12th and one on the 29th. The last of the year were a late pair present on 2nd October that lingered to the 8th.

Away from Wheldrake Ings, a juvenile was at Bolton Percy Ings on 29th August and again on 4th September.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*

Casual breeder and passage visitor; sometimes over-winters

Overwintering birds included four at Strensall Common (two males and two females) on 1st January, with a pair also seen there on the 13th. A female was at Rufforth on the 16th and five (one male, three females and one 1st-winter male) at Aughton Ings on the 17th.

In March two pairs and a male were at Strensall Common on the 8th and a male was singing on the 31st. A female seen sitting on a fence in farmland by Naburn on 11th March was the only record away from Strensall Common during spring passage and the breeding season.

At least one of the Strensall pairs bred – an adult with three juveniles was seen on 26th June and a family party on 15th July. A family party there on 24th August was the last of the summer sightings

The first of the autumn was one at Bank Island on 6th October, then one at Wheldrake from the 9th and NDC from the 11th. A pair was at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st and four at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th and 30th – up to seven were in the LDV all together. At Strensall Common, two were seen regularly in the last week of the month with four there on the 28th.

In November, four were at Wheldrake Ings, one at Bank Island and two at NDC throughout the month. There were two males and a female at Strensall Common on the 4th, two at The Grange, Pocklington Canal on the 13th and a pair at Skipwith Common on the 30th that remained there throughout December. One was at Heslington East on 11th December, one at NDC on the 24th and finally four were at Flat Lane, Barmby Moor on the 26th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Amber listed

Summer visitor and passage migrant

The first of the year were two at Overton on 3rd April and two at Scagglethorpe Lane the same day. By the end of the month between one and four birds had also been seen at the following locations: Acaster Airfield, Barton-le-Willows, Brumber Hill, Deighton, East Cottingwith, Heslington East (and at least six on the 11th), NDC, Thornton Ellers, Wheldrake Ings and Wigginton. A female was on farmland at Gilling on 2nd May then there were no further reports until late July.

A fresh juvenile was at Barr Lane, Stockton on the Forest on 22nd and 23rd July.

The first bird of the autumn in the LDV was one at NDC on 30th July also one there on 1st, 11th and 15th August. One was at Wheldrake Ings on the 19th and 26th and three juveniles at Bolton Percy Ings on the 29th. September birds included singles at NDC on the 2nd, 9th and 21st, Ellerton Ings on the 9th, Brumber Hill on the 10th and Wheldrake Ings on the 11th. The last of the year was a late single at NDC on 4th October.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Amber listed

Common resident breeder

This species continues to be common and widespread, if under recorded in the YOC area. Eighteen at Brumber Hill on 20th January was the highest count of the year.

The only evidence of breeding was received from Pocklington Canal (Melbourne), Stamford Bridge and Westfield Farm, Thornton where fledged young were seen. Birds were reported singing from several locations and between six and eight pairs held territory at SHL.

Of interest was a report of a single at Bolton Percy Ings on 26th August which rose to about 30 metres and flew off west.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Red listed

Common resident breeder

Peak counts at the beginning of the year were higher than those seen during 2015 with 40 at both East Cottingwith on 4th January and at Thornton on the 23rd. On 20th February, 50 were at East Cottingwith while 75 at Brecks Farm, Haxby on 12th March was the highest count of the year.

Confirmation of breeding was again under-recorded with the only reports that of three pairs at Bolton Percy and birds feeding young in a garden at Stamford Bridge

Post breeding, 45 were at Brecks Farm, Haxby on 7th May with 30 at Ampleforth on 19th June. On 27th November, 65 were present at Brecks Farm, Haxby and 25 were at East Cottingwith on 18th December. A leucistic bird visited a garden in Bolton Percy on 29th December.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Red listed

Resident breeder

Peak counts at the beginning of the year were higher than those seen during 2015. However the only site reporting significant numbers was Bank Island with 100 present in January and 40 there in February.

Breeding activity was noted at Allerthorpe Common, Melbourne, Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe and Strensall Common. Breeding was also confirmed at Acaster where a pair nested in a garden, Bolton Percy, Canal Head, Castle Howard, Haxby, Thornton, SHL (four possibly five pairs bred) Stamford Bridge and Wheldrake Ings where fledged young were seen. A Heslington Garden noted no records during 2016, where this species previously bred.

Post breeding, 30 were at Westfield Farm, Thornton on 13th July and 16 at SHL on 20th September. Visible migration watches at Bolton Percy Ings produced three flying south on 13th September and two south on 17th October. Flocks at the end of the year were down on 2015 but included 55 at Marsh Lane, Wistow on 15th October and 50 at Burtonfields on 1st November.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava**Red listed**Migrant breeder and passage migrant*

The first records of the year came on 9th April, with two at Heslington East and singles at Bank Island and Naburn on the 11th. During the rest of April one to two were then reported, with peaks of ten at Heslington East on the 11th and 14 there on the 18th, with eight at Bank Island on the 17th. Single figures continued to be reported during May including six at Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 5th.

During the summer birds were reported from suitable breeding habitat. Singing birds were present at Bolton Percy Ings, Cawood Ings, Milford Common and Wharfe Ings. Evidence of breeding was received from Acaster Malbis, Barmby Moor, Brumber Hill, Melbourne, SHL and Thornton.

Visible migration watches at Milford Common recorded 17 flying south between 15th August and 6th September with peaks of nine on the 23rd and five on 30th August. Eight went south over Sherburn in Elmet on 10th September. On 21st August, six flew south west at Wheldrake Ings. In September late singles were at Ozendyke on the 18th and at Acaster Airfield on the 23rd. Also in September, birds passing through the LDV included 14 on the 6th, 21 on the 12th, five on the 18th and four on the 28th, the last of the year.

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava*

YOC

There were two reports of singles showing characteristics of Blue-headed Wagtail, both from Heslington East in April. On the 18th to 19th a male was present, with a female there on the 24th (OM et al).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea**Red listed**Resident breeder and winter visitor*

At the beginning of the year ones and twos were reported from widespread locations, typically from water courses and sewage works. In January, two roosted on the NNR base at Bank Island.

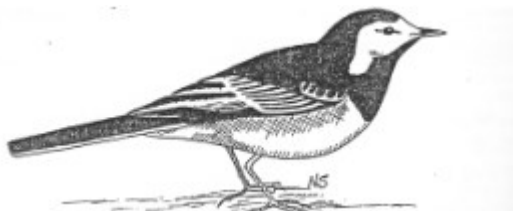
At SHL there were at least three breeding pairs; three families were seen on 23rd June and a flock of 11 on 24th August included four juveniles. Birds seen carrying food near the River Derwent at Stamford Bridge was the only other breeding evidence received.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 26 between 12th September and 23rd October with peaks of five on both the 13th and 28th September. On 22nd November, seven at Bolton Percy Ings was the highest count of the year.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba**Common resident breeder*

In January, the traditional roost on Parliament Street in York City Centre held 800 before peaking at 850 during February. On 3rd March the roost was photographed and the 13 trees being used held 771. By the end of March 200 were still present. Elsewhere during this period, 40 were at York train station on

10th February. The only evidence of spring passage came from Heslington East where 30 were present on 11th April.



During the breeding season juveniles and food carrying were noted at Heslington East, Melbourne and Thornton Ellers.

Post breeding, in August, 12 were at Thornton on the 10th with 13 west over Hull Road Park on the 21st. On 9th September, 32 were in fields at Castle Howard. Visible Migration Watches at Ozendyke between 11th September and 17th October recorded 334 flying south with a peak of 89 on 28th September. At Milford Common on 5th October 43 flew south with a further 25 grounded. On 6th October 100 were feeding in a newly ploughed field adjacent to the Knavesmire.

The first reports of birds back at the Parliament Street roost came during November with 50 on the 1st increasing to 200 by the 18th, before peaking at an impressive 1100 on 29th December. Elsewhere towards the end of the year, in November, 40 were at Bank Island on the 12th, with 41 at Bolton Percy Ings and 40 at Bubwith Ings on the 27th. On 23rd December 40 were at Milford Common.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Scarce spring passage migrant

The first records of the year came on 27th March with singles at Welburn Sewage Works and Yearsley (DR). On 12th April a single was at Bank Island (LDV Blog). There was also an autumn record with a single at Acaster Airfield on 23rd September (TD).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Red listed

Migrant breeder though numbers have recently declined

The first reports of the year were two at Heslington Tillmire on 4th April and a single at Skipwith Common on the 6th, over a week earlier than in 2015 (the 13th). The next records were singles at Gilling Woods on the 17th, at Skipwith Common on the 21st and at Strensall Common on the 22nd. By 24th April, three singing birds were at Skipwith Common. On 25th April, a single flew north at Ozendyke, the only evidence of spring passage.

During the spring and summer reports came from just a handful of sites. Three singing males were at Gilling Woods with three also at Skipwith Common. At Strensall Common the MOD survey identified eight territories (an increase from

seven in 2015 and three in 2013). At Yearsley Moor up to three singing males were present and an adult was seen feeding an immature bird on 26th May.

Visible migration watches produced singles south at Milford Common on 15th and 30th August, and four flew south at Ozendyke on 16th August with three south there on 10th September the last report of the year.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Amber listed

Resident and migrant breeder and passage migrant

At the beginning of the year only small numbers were reported with the peak counts, 12 at Milford Common and ten at Rufforth on 3rd January, and ten at Melbourne on 3rd February. In April, 14 were at Heslington Tillmire on the 4th, with 21 roosting at Skipwith Common on the 7th, ten at Heslington East on the 11th and 12 at Milford Common on the 20th.

The first singing bird was at Seavy Carr, Thornton on 5th March, with reports of singing birds from widespread locations after this. Breeding was confirmed at Bolton Percy Ings, Eastmoor, Melbourne and Milford Common, while at Strensall Common the MOD survey identified a single territory. Singing and displaying birds were also present at Acaster Marshes, Dunnington, Kirkby Wharfe, Thornton Ellers, Wharfe Ings and Wheldrake Ings.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 6003 flying south between 10th September and 17th October with peaks of 1055, 1465 and 1163 on the 26th, 28th and 30th September respectively. In September, 52 flew south east over Wheldrake Ings on the 7th, and 80 were at Brumber Hill on the 23rd. On 2nd October, 21 were at Wheldrake Ings with 12 at Thornton on the 21st and at Strensall Common on the 29th. The final counts of the year included 17 at Bolton Percy Ings on 19th November and 16 at Heslington East on 2nd December.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

YOC

Scarce, mainly winter visitor

Not recorded in 2016, having been recorded in five of the past ten years, most recently 2013.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

YOC

Amber listed

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

No confirmed records in 2016 (see Appendix C), though seen in seven of the past ten years, most recently 2013.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

In January, one to two were present at Acaster, Bank Island and Ganthorpe, with four at Allertorpe Common on the 3rd and 29 at East Ness on the 8th. Two were present at Thornton on the 9th and 10th February, while in March singles were in a Rawcliffe Garden on the 8th and at Yearsley on the 27th, with four at

Ulleskelf Mires on the 17th. The final records of the period came in April with singles at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on the 1st and at Coneysthorpe on the 3rd.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 11 flying south between 4th October (the first returning bird) and 8th November. Also in October, singles were at Poppleton on the 10th, Bank Island on the 15th, Clifton Park on the 16th, Wheldrake Ings on the 17th and NDC on the 18th. Two were by CHL on 29th October. In November, up to 40 were present at Whitwell Grange, while singles were at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe and at Ampleforth on the 26th. The year ended with singles at Milford Common on the 2nd and 21st December.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Common resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

At the beginning of the year, 60 were at Thornton on 10th January.

During the breeding season a BBS visit near Naburn Wood produced a count of 25 on both visits, while at SHL there were 14 or 15 males holding territories with food carrying seen in May and juveniles seen with adults in High Plumps Wood in July. Evidence of breeding was also received from Pocklington Canal at Melbourne, Stamford Bridge and Strensall Common.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke between 11th September and 17th October recorded 267 flying south with a peak of 60 on 28th September. On 30th September, 60 at Towthorpe, was the only significant count towards the end of the year.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

YOC *Red listed*

Rare winter visitor

For the fourth consecutive year, all sightings were in the north western part of the region. The only record at the beginning of the year was of two at Gilling East on 7th February (OM). Then in November birds were again reported from Ampleforth, mainly in St Hilda's churchyard. On 20th November, three were present, with a single remaining from 25th November to 16th December (JP et al).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Amber listed

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

At the beginning of the year the only notable counts were eight at West Ings on 9th February, eight at Scagglethorpe Lane on 21st March and ten (six male, four female) in a short stretch of hedge at SHL on the 24th.

During the breeding season evidence of breeding was received from Old Gravel Pits Allerthorpe, Pocklington Canal at Melbourne, Stamford Bridge, Strensall Common, Scagglethorpe Lane and Wheldrake Ings.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 15 flying south between 30th September and 28th October. Post-breeding counts included 12 at Wheldrake Ings on 27th August with up to nine there during September. Also in September, nine were at Brumber Hill on the 12th. In November eight were at Strensall

Common on the 28th, while in December eight were at Castle Howard, Patefield Wood and Scagglethorpe Lane.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

A better start to the year than in 2015, with 40 at Thornton on 3rd January and 12 at East Ness on the 8th. In February, 19 were at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on the 9th with 12 at Acaster Airfield on 2nd March.

During the breeding season confirmation of breeding was received from Coneysthorpe, Easingwold, Hemingbrough, Melbourne, Osbaldwick, Stamford Bridge and Strensall. The 2016 CBC at SHL indicated that there were at least two and possibly three breeding pairs present.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 16 flying south between 26th September and 15th November. Towards the end of the year a flock on Marsh Lane, Wistow increased from 60 on 21st October to an impressive 110 on 28th November. Also in November 30 were at Ulleskelf Mires on the 18th. On 2nd December, 20 were at Ampleforth.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*

Red listed

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

At the beginning of the year a flock of 200 was at Thornton on 3rd January, with 120 still there on 16th February. Also in January, 50 were at Towton on the 10th. On 3rd February, 68 were at Wharfe Ings, while in March, 31 were at Ulleskelf Mires on the 17th with 35 at Acaster Airfield on the 28th. In April, 30 were at East Cottingwith on the 8th, with 60 at Heslington East on the 11th and 45 at Acaster Malbis on the 23rd.

Breeding data included a colony of an estimated ten pairs at Milford Common. A BBS visit near Naburn Wood produced a count of 26 on 30th April. On another BBS visit to Dunnington Common, 28 were present on 12th June. The MOD survey of Strensall Common identified a single territory compared with none in 2015 and seven in 2012, indicating a continuing decline there. Breeding was also confirmed at Brumber Hill, Pocklington Canal at Melbourne, Thornton and White Carr, while at least one pair nested at SHL.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 1273 flying south between 9th September and 15th November with an impressive peak of 605 on 28th September. Also in September 70 were at Castle Howard on the 9th, with 52 at Brumber Hill on the 12th, and 60 at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th. A flock of 120 near Sherburn in Elmet on 15th September had increased to 180 by 11th December. On 15th October, 50 were on Dauby Lane, Elvington, while in November up to 40 were at Bank Island, with 60 at Thornton Ellers on the 25th. Ninety were at Milford Common on 2nd December and 60 were at Acaster Airfield on the 9th.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

YOC

*Red listed**Rare winter visitor*

Not recorded in 2016, having been recorded in six of the past ten years, most recently 2014.

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret**Red listed**Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor*

In January a flock of up to 150 were present along the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne, with 100 at Lilling Bottom on the 1st and 40 at Allerthorpe Common on the 3rd. By March, 40 were still present at Melbourne, while 40 were at Acaster Marshes and 40 were at Easingwold Golf Course on the 22nd. On 13th April 100 were present at Skipwith Common, with 48 still at Melbourne.

On a positive note, unlike in 2015, there were records during May and July. In May a single was at Fulford Golf Club on the 1st with two at Bishop Wood on the 5th and three flew northwest over Whit Hill on the 5th. On 10th July a single was at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe.

The first autumn passage bird was a single south at Bolton Percy Ings on 28th September. Records increased during October with peak counts of 250 at Strensall Common on the 29th and 30 at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. On 30th November, 30 were at Skipwith Common. Only single figure counts were received during December.

Common (Mealy) Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

YOC

*Amber listed**Scarce winter visitor*

This species has now been recorded annually since 2008. On 10th March a single was at Askham Bog (MC) and a single was at Strensall Common on 29th October (OM).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra**Casual breeder and passage migrant*

A poor year for this species. On 26th February, 30 were present on Allerthorpe Common, with one or two there during March. Also in March, a single flew northeast at Milford Common on the 14th, two were at Hagg Wood, Dunnington on the 21st and four at Wheldrake Wood on the 29th. A pair was at SHL in the conifer woods there on 8th April. The next report was of two which flew low over Skipwith Common on 19th June. The final record of the year was of six at Gilling on 11th December.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis**Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor*

Widely reported through the region, the highest count at the beginning of the year was 50 at Poppleton on 2nd February.

There were few breeding reports, but confirmation was received from Hemingbrough, Heslington East, Pocklington Canal at Melbourne, SHL, Stamford Bridge and Wheldrake Ings.

Post breeding, 60 were at Heslington East on 14th August with 60 at Wheldrake Ings on 18th September. Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 87 flying south between 26th September and 15th November. In October, 50 were at Wistow Clough and 130 were near Sherburn in Elmet on the 22nd. On 30th November, 100 were at Thornton Lock. In December, 100 were at Milford Common on the 2nd and 50 were at Wistow Clough on the 10th.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Resident breeder in small numbers, passage and winter visitor

In January 110 were at Milford Common on the 3rd with 118 there on 9th February. Also in January, 70 were along the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on the 18th.

The only summering birds reported in suitable breeding habitat were a single at Allerthorpe Common on 6th May, five at Yearsley Moor on 26th May and six at Strensall Common on 10th July. Interestingly, a female was mobbing a Jay in High Plumps Wood on 8th June while an adult male was circling over the wood and calling on 19th July.

Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 13 flying south between 17th September and 22nd October. The peak counts at the end of the year all relate to a flock at Pocklington Canal, Melbourne, which increased from 50 on 21st October to 102 on the 28th, with 90 there on 30th November and finally 80 present on 21st December.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Red listed

Resident breeder

During January a flock on Field Lane at Thornton peaked at 40 on the 3rd while the nearby traditional roost site at Church Bridge, Pocklington Canal held up to 50 on the 13th with 30 there on 1st February. This number was significantly down on the 2015 peak of 170, but again demonstrates how important the York population is, with this species now scarce or absent from large parts of Yorkshire. Also in January, 40 were present at Elvington on the 17th. On 6th March 20 were at Gilrudding Grange.

No confirmation of breeding was received, although singing males included one at Acaster, three at Ellerton Ings, three at Hagg Lane, East Cottingham, five at Gilrudding Grange, one at Moreby Ings, one at Scagglethorpe Lane, six heard during a 17km bike ride north of Strensall and three at West Lilling.

There was only a handful of reports post breeding. After a single at Thornton on 1st August and an adult and immature seen close to Catterton on 18th August, there were no further reports until December. In December, 20 were at Yapham on the 3rd, a single at South Ings on the 18th, 13 into roost at Church Bridge,

Pocklington Canal on the 18th and finally three at Flat Lane, Barmby Moor on the 26th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citronella*

Red listed

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

In January a flock at Elvington peaked at 120 on the 17th. This was the largest flock reported during the course of the year. Also in January, 33 were at Acaster on the 3rd with 50 at Allerthorpe Common on the 5th, 30 at Heslington Tillmire on the 10th and 37 at Brumber Hill on the 23rd. In February, 25 were at Gilrudding Grange on the 12th, with 50 at Acaster Selby on the 16th and 40 at Kirby Misperton on the 26th. On 2nd March 28 were at Hagg Wood, Dunnington, while a flock of 33 was still at Brumber Hill on 18th April.

The breeding season was generally under-recorded; six birds were singing at Allerthorpe Common on 16th April, with breeding confirmed at Brumber Hill (where up to 19 were present during June) and at Melbourne. The MOD survey on Strensall Common identified two territories compared to one in 2015 and five in 2013.

Post breeding, on 27th September 27 were at Brumber Hill. October saw up to 50 at Marsh Lane, Wistow with 35 still there in November. Visible migration watches at Ozendyke recorded 11 flying south between the 4th and 17th October. The flock at Brumber Hill peaked at 33 in October with 30 still present into December.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Amber listed

Resident breeder and passage visitor

At the beginning of the year, numbers were significantly down on 2015 when up to 150 were present at two sites. The maximum count was 30 at the Pocklington Canal, Melbourne on 13th April.

Breeding data included four singing males at Bank Island, two at Barmby Moor, four at Heslington East, two at Lilling Low Lane and a single singing male on Scagglethorpe Lane. Confirmation of breeding was received from Bolton Percy Ings, Fulford Ings, NDC, Pocklington Canal, Melbourne and SHL (where one pair held territory and were seen food carrying on 8th June). At Strensall Common 18 territories were found on the MOD survey compared to just four in 2015 and 14 in 2013. Up to 12 were singing at Wheldrake Ings during May and June.

Numbers started to build up in October, with 28 coming to roost at Wheldrake Ings on the 9th and 20 at Marsh Lane, Wistow on the 15th. On 28th November, 30 were at Wharfe Ings. Finally in December, 49 came into roost at Church Bridge, Pocklington Canal on the 18th.

Appendix A: Category E

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

The Black Swan at Heslington East was recorded there every month, mostly associating with the resident breeding pair of Mute Swans *Cygnus olor*. Two were seen at Wharfe Ings on 15th February, and one in the LDV, mainly on the Refuge at Wheldrake Ings, on a number of dates from 21st February through to the end of May. One seen at NDC on several dates in May was presumably the same bird. During December one was at the Refuge on the 23rd and 24th.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

There are two feral flocks in the recording area, at Flamingoland, Kirby Misperton (about 70 birds) and Heslington East and most reports pertained to these. The flock at Flamingoland peaked at 109, including goslings, in early September, while the maximum reported from the University was 17 on 27th December, somewhat lower than in the past three years.

Away from these sites, seven were at Thornton on 1st – 2nd February, then at Aughton on 3rd February. One long staying bird was at Wheldrake Ings from 23rd April through to 8th June – all presumed to be feral birds.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

The free-flying flock at the University of York was reported in several months, mainly at Heslington West which they tend to prefer. On 27th July eight goslings from four broods (of four, two, one and one), were also present with the 25 adults. On 27th December there were 28 birds present. It should be noted that on occasion small numbers have also been seen flying over Fulford towards the University in the early morning, so they may not always roost at the University.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Following the individual seen at Bolton Percy Ings until 16th December 2015, one was seen at the same location on 3rd January. An adult female, the first in the LDV for several years, was seen in the Ellerton/Thorganby area on 28th February. It was reported as still present on 13th March having apparently been consorting with local Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* since early in the month. On the same day it was seen flying north. There was a further sighting of one at Ellerton Ings on the 30th. One was then seen at Ulleskelf Mires on 8th April, with another report of one at Ellerton Ings, again in the company of local Shelduck, on the 16th. The last sighting of the year was of an adult female at NDC on 29th May, which then flew north; assumed to be the one seen in the LDV in March. Note: all these sightings may relate to one individual.

Appendix B: Hybrids and Escapes

Greylag/Canada Goose Two at Thornton on 18th January.

Canada Goose x domestic Greylag Four at Old Gravel Pits, Allerthorpe on 22nd July.

Bar-headed Goose (escapes) Two in Thornton/Melbourne/Ellerton Ings area on the 18th and 23rd January, then the 8th, 18th and 22nd February.

Gyr Falcon (escape) One at Murton on the 10th and 14th March.

Crimson Rosella (escape) One at Askham Bryan on 31st July.

Appendix C: Insufficient evidence received

The following records are included for completeness, but a full description has not been forthcoming or is insufficient to exclude similar species. If a description is submitted, we will include any additional accepted records in a future report.

Ringed/ Little Ringed Plover One flew north over Grosvenor Terrace, York, on 24th March.

Water Pipit - one in summer plumage at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April and one at Thornton Ellers on 21st October which remained until 25th October. Descriptions were received but some key features were inconclusive so '*littoralis*' Rock Pipit could not be eliminated.

Update on records from previous years requiring a description by the BBRC or YNU

Aquatic Warbler: The record from 12th August 2015 was classed as not proven by the BBRC, so not accepted.

Earliest and latest dates for summer visitors/passage migrants 2016

Species	Arrival Date/First Reported	Last Reported
Garganey	2nd April	20th September
Quail	23rd May	16th August
Osprey	29th March	8th June
Hobby	28th April	2nd November
Oystercatcher	31st January	27th July
Little Ringed Plover	13th April	8th September
Ringed Plover	8th June	17th September
Whimbrel	16th April	16th May
Common Sandpiper	10th April	3rd October
Greenshank	18th March	2nd October
Wood Sandpiper	18th June	22nd August
Common Tern	13th April	5th September
Turtle Dove	9th May	13th August
Cuckoo	16th April	1st September
Nightjar	5th June	6th July
Swift	22nd April	13th September (VMW)
Sand Martin	20th March	25th September
Swallow	26th March	17th October
House Martin	1st April	6th October
Wood Warbler	(None seen this year)	-
Chiffchaff †	13th March	3rd November
Willow Warbler	3rd April	23rd September
Blackcap *	3rd April (first singing)	29th October
Garden Warbler	17th April	6th September
Lesser Whitethroat	17th April	6th September
Whitethroat	13th April	25th September
Grasshopper Warbler	16th April	6th July
Sedge Warbler	13th April	29th August
Reed Warbler	20th April	1st October
Spotted Flycatcher	29th April	21st September
Redstart	7th April	11th September
Whinchat	4th May	8th October
Wheatear	3rd April	4th October
Yellow Wagtail	9th April	28th September
Tree Pipit	4th April	10th September (VMW)

† Overwintering birds seen on 3rd and 4th January, 2nd February, 29th November, 12th December

* Overwintering birds seen in Haxby during January to the 23rd and Poppleton (New Year to 25th March – at least three different birds visiting feeders)

VMW = Visible migration watch

Earliest and latest dates for winter visitors/passage migrants

Species	Last reported in Spring	First reported in Autumn
Bewick's Swan	23rd February	20th December (only autumn/winter record)
Whooper Swan	26th May	10th October
Pink-footed Goose	26th May	10th September
Wigeon‡	1st May	26th August
Teal *	Mid-May	Mid-August
Pintail	8th May	17th September
Goldeneye	30th May	22nd October
Goosander +	30th April	12th November
Golden Plover	27th April	22nd July
Ruff	20th March	2nd August
Dunlin	8th June	11th July
Green Sandpiper	29th May (late bird)	19th June
Jack Snipe	25th April	15th October
Fieldfare	24th April	2nd October
Redwing	13th April (late bird)	2nd October
Brambling	3rd April	4th October

‡ Excluding small number of potential breeders (see RBBP Report on page 111)

* Small numbers (c. 35 pairs) remained in the LDV throughout the summer.

+ Excluding a small number that over-summered at Bolton Percy Ings



Chiffchaff - a common migrant

© Tim Ward

Rare Breeding Birds of the Lower Derwent Valley and Skipwith Common 2016

Compiled by Craig Ralston

Terminology (Summary)

Possible – birds (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.

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

Category A – Rare Species

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

Breeding success of Category A species in the LDV

Species	Max. no. adults	No. of young	No. of Pairs			
			Poss.	Prob.	Confirmed	Total
Wigeon	16		6	2	0	0 - 8
Garganey	5	21	3	0	3	3 - 6
Shoveler	207	min 67+ 18 ringed	35	21	19	19 - 75
Pochard			4	5	0	0 - 9
Little Egret	30 +	15 +	0	1	5	5 - 6
Peregrine		3 broods of 3, 2, 2			3	3
Marsh Harrier			1			0 - 1
Goshawk				1		0 - 1
Red Kite		1				3
Water Rail	10 (calling males)	2+	5	4	1	1 - 10
Spotted Crake	5 (calling males)	0	4	1	0	0 - 5
Corncrake	7 (calling males)		3	4	0	0 - 7

Wigeon: No young seen

Garganey: The first returning birds were a pair at Ellerton Ings on the 2nd April (JL) followed by two pairs in the Aughton/Ellerton area on the 3rd. A pair was then present on North Duffield Carrs on the 12th (DT) with another on Storwood Ings on the 14th (CM). A drake was present at Bubwith Ings on the 22nd (JHL) with five

(two pairs and a drake) in the valley on the 23rd (CSR). Two pairs were at Ellerton Ings on the 30th with another female amongst the Teal flock at Wheldrake Ings on the same date. During May, birds showed well and daily throughout, with two pairs in the Wheldrake Ings area, a single pair at North Duffield Carrs and at least two drakes and a female in the Ellerton/Aughton area – at least three females were also thought to be incubating during the month. A single pair remained at North Duffield Carrs throughout the June where a female appeared with six newly hatched ducklings on the 20th (LM, CSR). A female with eight newly hatched ducklings were then found at Thornton Ellers on the 21st (CSR) – a surprise and presumably relating to birds that had gone previously undetected at this site. A single pair appeared at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th with seven newly hatched ducklings. It now appears three pairs bred raising 21 ducklings, and a further three pairs possibly attempted breeding.

Max no of adults from June onwards - 5

Shoveler: Good numbers were present early in the season with 207 recorded in late March/early April, with 75 pairs recorded later in that month.

Pochard: Up to nine pairs were thought to be breeding and incubating clutches early in May with nine drakes and two females at Wheldrake on the 10th and five drakes and a female on the 14th - the best spring breeding season showing since the early mid 1990's. However, no broods were seen.

Common Crane: Still reported in increasing numbers and several records may well relate to the same non-breeding wandering pair. Recorded here for completeness.

Following a pair over Bank Island on 16th March (CSR), a pair flew over Dunnington Common on the 3rd April (TW) – perhaps the same wandering pair seen last month and possibly the same as reported at Skipwith Common on the 10th April (per Birdguides). A single then flew high north over North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd (JHL) followed by three at Bank Island on the 23rd (CSR). A single was present with Greylags at Wheldrake Ings on the 14th May (CSR). One was reported near Elvington on the morning of the 21st May when two birds also passed over Selby later in the day before roosting at North Duffield Carrs. These two birds were then seen at Skipwith Common and Wheldrake Ings on the 24th (DMB).

Peregrine: Three pairs were present in the wider LDV area and used the reserve and wider area for hunting – three broods, of three, two and two were fledged or reared close to fledging stage.

Marsh Harrier: Present throughout the year and now almost 'resident'. Several cream-crowns lingered and several males were also present this year – mainly sub-adults although an adult pair was present throughout – no signs of breeding.

Goshawk: One pair was present in the area – probable breeding record.

Red Kite: A single pair bred raising one young to fledging whilst another pair built a nest but deserted thereafter – thought to be a young first time breeding pair. A further pair summered but no evidence of breeding.

Spotted Crane: Two singing males were at North Duffield Carrs on the 10th May with three at Wheldrake Ings on the 13th, two on the 18th and a single on the 24th (CSR, DMB).

Corncrake: A single was present in front of the Geoff Smith Hide at North Duffield Carrs on the 27th (OW). Following that sighting at North Duffield Carrs, a singing male was present at the top pond at dawn on the 19th May where it remained, singing regularly until month end (MFJ, CSR). Other males were singing at Ellerton Ings on the 22nd (JR) and Wheldrake Ings on the 24th and again at Ellerton on the 29th (PC). The long staying singing male was at North Duffield again on the 2nd and 3rd June with a second singing male on the latter date (MFJ, CSR, AK), while another was singing there near the car park between the 11th-30th (CG, OM, CSR, DT et al). Another male was reported again from Wheldrake Ings on the 8th with a single at Thornton Ellers on the 21st (CSR), and Bubwith Ings on the 22nd (NC et al). A single was still calling at North Duffield Carrs on the 1st July with one again at Bubwith Ings on the 5th and 6th (FM, CC et al). Another possible was reported from Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings on the 25th but not confirmed.

A total of seven calling males are now known to have been present throughout the site with four birds considered to be probably breeding given their behaviour and length of stay

Category B – Less Scarce Species

(NB – some of these are now not considered by the RBBP but are included here for completeness and comparison with previous years' submissions)

Breeding success of Category B species in the LDV

Species	Max. no. adults	No. of young	No. of Pairs			
			Poss.	Prob.	Confirmed	Total
Gadwall		Min 97 29 broods 36 ringed	48	12	29	29 - 89
Common Quail	0 - 3 (singing males)					0 - 3
Hobby			1	4	1	1 - 6
Woodlark			3	2	3	3 - 8
Willow Tit			3	3	5	5 - 11

50 YEARS OF YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

By Peter Watson, current Chairman of the YOC

The foundation of the Club goes back to an Adult Night School Class 'British Birds' held at the Settlement, Holgate, York in the winter of 1958/1959 and run by Michael Clegg (Ornithologist, Museum Curator and Raconteur). The class included outings at weekends with those involved meeting at Piccadilly Labour Exchange (no change there then!). There were also weekend outings, including to Spurn Bird Observatory at a cost of 20p per night for accommodation.

Michael eventually moved to Sheffield and could not continue his class but suggested to those who wanted to continue birding to form York Ornithological Group. When numbers fell to five or six, more birders were sought and the York Ornithological Club was eventually formed with a formal committee and constitution and an annual report was started in 1965, with the first fully local report appearing in 1966.

The Club took part in the BTO Atlas work; having been given 15 10kms squares around York that became the York Recording Area. Surveys were also done to help the Yorkshire Naturalists Trust (now Yorkshire Wildlife Trust) set up Skipwith Common Nature Reserve, as well as obtaining much critical information in connection with the purchase of Wheldrake Ings Nature Reserve.

Much has changed in the world of birding over the last 50 years both nationally and locally. Optics have improved no end, as have identification books and guides, together with the boom in digital photography and birding generally.

Locally, the YNT under the guidance of Stephen Warburton, Ian Carstairs, Tim Dixon and Ian Kibble had a significant victory in the High Court by preventing free navigation rights on the River Derwent. Wheldrake Ings and the Lower Derwent Valley now form part of the Lower Derwent National Nature Reserve. Selby Coalfield has come and gone with the diversion of the main East Coast rail line near Bishop Wood. Anchor Plains, Strensall is no longer a ringing station. Rufforth Tip has enjoyed a period as a Mecca for gulls and the expansion of the University of York at Heslington East has provided excellent birding habitat. However, much birding habitat has been lost with removal of hedge rows, increased drainage, and the loss of elms owing to Dutch Elm Disease as well as steady residential and industrial estate expansion. Agricultural intensification has also played a major part in declines of farmland species and effects of global warming are now apparent. With the uncertainty of Brexit there is added worry that Conservation Legislation may be weakened. Many species have declined and this is reflected locally with species such as Whinchat, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Turtle Dove, Spotted Flycatcher and Grey Partridge and Bewick's Swan having significantly decreased, alongside a general decline in farmland species. On the plus side some species have increased including Common Buzzard, Red Kite, Little Egret, Gadwall, Goldfinch, Cetti's Warbler, Collared Dove and Peregrine.



From Club founders, Chairmen, recorders and long-time members of the Club to the present day

With thanks to Jean Smith, Ian Newton and Elaine Blake for sharing some of their photos.



Left to right from the top:

Tim Dixon with Frank Oates; Geoff Smith; the YNT team having won their court battle (including Ian Carstairs, Elaine Blake and Tim Dixon); Nigel Stewart, Alan Hannington and Ian Newton on a trip to see Golden Eagles; Val Weston, Peter Watson, Jenny Dixon Linda Newton and Mike Leakey in Wells Wood; Jim Pewtress (also on the Golden Eagles trip); Peter Richman in disguise on the Farne Islands; and a recent (2016) Club trip to the East coast

I look forward to the publication of a book by Jono Leadley (current YOC recorder) 'Rare and Scare Birds of the York Recording Area 1966-2015' covering the 50 years of the Club.

York Ornithological Club continues to flourish and the prime aim of the Club, production of the Annual Report continues - a credit to those who devote so much time to its preparation and publication, within a strict timetable. The Club has a good relationship with the BTO, RSPB and YWT as well as Lower Derwent Valley NNR. There is a varied programme of indoor speakers each month as well as birding outings, both locally and further afield. We are fortunate that several members are excellent photographers and travel abroad a lot and can provide excellent presentations. There is an annual photographic competition and this is still co-judged by Jean Smith, the wife of Geoff Smith a leading local birder and YOC Chairman, who sadly died so early. The Club takes part in the Mike Clegg Memorial Bird Race in January each year with other Yorkshire Bird Clubs - another link with the start of the Club.

The Club has had the benefit over its 50 year history of many great characters and birders who have contributed to its success in numerous different ways. It is not possible to record every member but a random selection are mentioned below and I apologise for the many that have been missed and have not been possible to include.

Going back to the beginning, founder members included Overton Wallis, Peter Pearson, Tony Dennison and Ed Clark later joined by Geoff Smith, Brian Pepper, Peter Hutchinson, Iris Lemare, Frank Oates and Brian Caffrey. Presidents have included Mike Clegg and Professor Sir John Lawton, while Chairmen have included R Hardcastle, Julia Lawson, Ian Newton, A R Potter, Geoff Smith and Ian Traynor. Recorders have included Andy J Booth, Dave Braithwaite, Tim Dixon, Jono Leadley, Brian G Pepper, Jim Pewtress, Nigel Stewart and Andy Walker. Other characters in no particular order include: Ian Wallace, R A Innes, Ian McDonald, Mike Leakey, Pete March, Trevor Charlton, Sid Maitland, Colin Rafton, Terry and Val Weston, Tom Lawson, Mike Williams, Malcolm Douglas, Russell Slack, Roy Crossley, Phil Bone, Paul Doherty, Muriel Pirozek, Jack Whitehead, Richard Ward Smith, Ian Carstairs, Alan Hannington, David Tate, Brenda Gilling, Rob and Jane Chapman, Barry Bishop, Dave Waudby, Elaine B Blake, D Anderson, Andy Botterill, Danae Murfitt and Ruth Traynor.

Grey Heron no match for a Great Skua

A Great Skua was located on the main meadow at Wheldrake Ings on 4th February, spending the rest of the day on and around the reserve (TW, CSR, JL) – only the second record for Wheldrake Ings this arrival caused much excitement in the local birding community and it was well watched during its stay.

It was still present on the 5th when the following behaviour was noted by Ollie Metcalf:

"I arrived at 08:15 when the Bonxie was sat peacefully on the edge of the water. Shortly after, it shot up in the air, ignoring several corvids and gulls, before aerially diving on an adult heron. It then continued to force the heron out of the air and on to the water. Both birds then struck aggression postures and viciously attacked each other with blows from the beaks. After about five minutes, they both appeared exhausted and at stalemate. After a brief reprieve, with both birds still on the water, the heron began making small charges at the Bonxie to scare it away. It obviously misjudged one of these as the Bonxie managed to get it by its neck and force its head underwater. After a lengthy struggle, the heron went limp and the Bonxie turned it over and appeared to try and rip its foot off. This brought the heron back to life, but after another prolonged struggle the Bonxie sat on the heron's back and forcing its head and body underwater, it finally succumbed. I had to leave as it was slowly pushing the body back to dry ground whilst aggressively plucking it, still perched on the carcass. I have no doubt it was intending to eat the heron".

This was confirmed as observers on the 6th saw it guarding the corpse and feeding on the carcass. Additionally, one bold Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* was seen to pull on its tail feathers whilst it was resting.



Great Skua at Wheldrake Ings © Trevor Walton

Local Historical Records and Anniversaries

By David Tate

Records of bird sightings in the York area date back to the 17th century, although many are hidden away in long forgotten journals. Thomas Nelson published the most noteworthy historical records in 'The Birds of Yorkshire' (1907). At the time the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union's (YNU) annual journal, 'The Naturalist', included bird reports for each Riding. Since the York recording area included parts of each Riding local sightings could appear in any of the three accounts. As a result the question of a defined York area was discussed at a meeting in Leeds on 21st November 1914. The outcome was positive; Sydney Smith was appointed recorder and his York report for 1915 was published in the 'The Naturalist' the following year. The area covered by the report was slightly larger than the current recording area and included such places as Newton Kyme to the west and Huggate to the east. Progress was interrupted when Smith was assigned to a military post in west Africa and as a result York bird reports for 1916 and 1917 were not produced, but the accounts for each Riding contain a few local sightings. In the continued absence of the recorder, W. Hewett volunteered to compile York reports for 1918 and 1919. On his return Smith carried on from where he had left off and wrote York reports for 1920-39, only ceasing when he became ill.

In 1939 Ralph Chislett established the YNU's 'Committee for Ornithology' and this led to a greatly expanded bird report in 'The Naturalist'. However, the 1940 edition contains the last separate account of birds in the York area. As a result of the demise of the York report, fewer local records were published during the next 25 years. Eventually, the newly formed YOC re-established the York area bird report. The first edition, produced in 1965, contains a mix of sightings from the York area and elsewhere but following reports have been devoted to local records.

2016 is the 100th anniversary of the publication of Sydney Smith's first York bird report and also the 50th anniversary of the first fully local YOC report; therefore it seems timely to start noting highlights from the archives.

25 years ago – records from the 1991 YOC report – a vintage year

Rare Birds:

Great Northern Diver - Castle Howard Lake, 6th-16th November.

Manx Shearwater - LDV, 6th October - killed by a Peregrine

Spoonbill - LDV, 12th and 13th March.

Long-tailed Duck - A 1st-winter at Newburgh, 20th-26th October

Little Auk - A decapitated corpse at Wheldrake Woods, 29th March

Red-breasted Flycatcher - Burnholme Wood, Heworth on 16th October

Snow Bunting - Heslington, 11th December, along with a **Lapland Bunting**

Breeding:

Nightjar - 13 or possibly 14 pairs reported at Skipwith Common

Dipper - A pair reared three young at West Ness

Grasshopper Warbler - at least six pairs bred at Wheldrake Ings

High counts:

Wigeon - 11500 in LDV in March - a record at the time

Goosander - 140 at Castle Howard Lake in January

Magpie - 65+ to roost on Clifton airfield on 8th March

Waxwing - 250 at Copmanthorpe on 18th January. 14 of these birds had been colour-ringed in Aberdeenshire during late 1990.

50 years ago – from the 1966 YOC and YNU (*italics*) bird reports

Rare Birds:

Red-crested Pochard - A drake at Aughton on 6th March

Eider - One shot near Bubwith during the winter of 1965/66

Knot - *Two by the floodwater on Elvington airfield*

Little Gull - *An adult in full breeding plumage displayed at a small Black-headed Gull colony in the LDV from 14 - 28th May*

Roseate Tern - *One passed through the LDV on 21st May*

Corn Bunting - *Three in York city centre during February – a rare event*

Breeding:

Nightjar - Three, possibly four pairs at Wheldrake Woods in June

Whinchat - A pair at Skipwith Common on 8th June

Redstart - Bred at Skipwith and Strensall Commons and Brandsby

High counts:

Bewick's Swan - c255 at Aughton on 6th February

Collared Dove - 50 feeding at the BOCM site in Barlby; bred since 1964

Starling - 1.5 million (*YNU reported 2.5m*) at a roost near Rufforth.

Blackbird - 950±150 roosted in yew bushes at Heslington Hall

100 years ago – from the 1916 and 1917 editions of 'The Naturalist'

As mentioned above 1916/17 bird reports for the York area were not produced due to the disruption caused by the First World War. The only local record published in the 'The Naturalist' bird report for 1916 relates to a female Great Spotted Woodpecker shot at Cawood. It may seem surprising that such a record is included but the breeding range of the Great Spotted Woodpecker in northern Britain had declined during the early 1800s and the species became extinct in Yorkshire (Holloway, 1996). Despite re-colonising the county during the 1870s it appears to have become very scarce 100 years ago when substantial areas of woodland were being felled as part of the war effort.

The 1916 edition of 'The Naturalist' includes an account of a YNU member's visit to the Malton area during Easter (April 22-24th) which notes that Green Woodpeckers were in abundance and that there were 20 pairs of Tufted Duck, 5 Great Crested Grebe and a few Pochards on Castle Howard Lake. The members were 'greatly surprised' to see 12 Swifts feeding over the lake. According to the author, '*the Swift has been arriving much earlier during the last few years*'; a trend which is still continuing.

Holloway, S., (1996) The Historical Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1875-1900. London: T. & A.D. Poyser Ltd.

Curlew in the York Recording Area

By Paul Doherty and Dave Tate

Introduction

The UK has a globally important population of Curlew *Numenius arquata* and within our club area the far-carrying calls and bubbling song of the Curlew can be heard at a number of sites. Recent years have seen a worrying decline nationally and this article describes their historical status, both nationally and in our area, and examines their current status, including the results of a club survey carried out in 2016.

Breeding Curlew in the UK

Historical accounts of the national breeding distribution of Curlews describe them as upland birds. This seems to have been true until the late 19th century but since when there has been an expansion of the breeding range into many lowland areas (Holloway, 1996). For example, the Somerset Levels were colonised in 1900 and by 1948 birds were breeding on the Brecks in Suffolk. However, this distinctive bird began to encounter difficulties in the late 1960s and since then there has been noticeable decline in the breeding range. Balmer *et al* (2013) reported that,

'The loss of breeding Curlews from most parts of Ireland and parts of western Britain over the last 40 years is a key finding from Bird Atlas 2007-11: since the 1968-72 Breeding Atlas the range has contracted by 78% in Ireland and 17% in Britain.' p.376

The number of breeding pairs has also declined and losses of 55% and 32%, for Scotland and England respectively, for the period 1995-2013, were described by Brown *et al* (2015). As a result of the concerns raised over these declines the Curlew was added to the Red List (the most endangered status) for Birds of Conservation Concern in 2015.

Breeding Curlew in the YOC recording area

Breeding Curlews appeared to have colonised the club area at the same time as the national expansion took place. Breeding birds first appeared on the heathlands, which provide a similar habitat to the upland moors. Skipwith Common was colonised in 1901. By 1936 three pairs were present at Skipwith and during the following year eight pairs were reported to have bred on Strensall Common.

It is not known when Curlews first bred on the river valley grasslands. Smith (1912), who wrote about the birds in the Lower Derwent Valley, made no mention of breeding Curlews. However, by the early 1950s Chislett (1954) reported that breeding birds could be heard about the marshy fields in the Vale of York so it is probable that grasslands were colonised during the inter-war years.

Previous surveys of Curlews in the YOC recording area

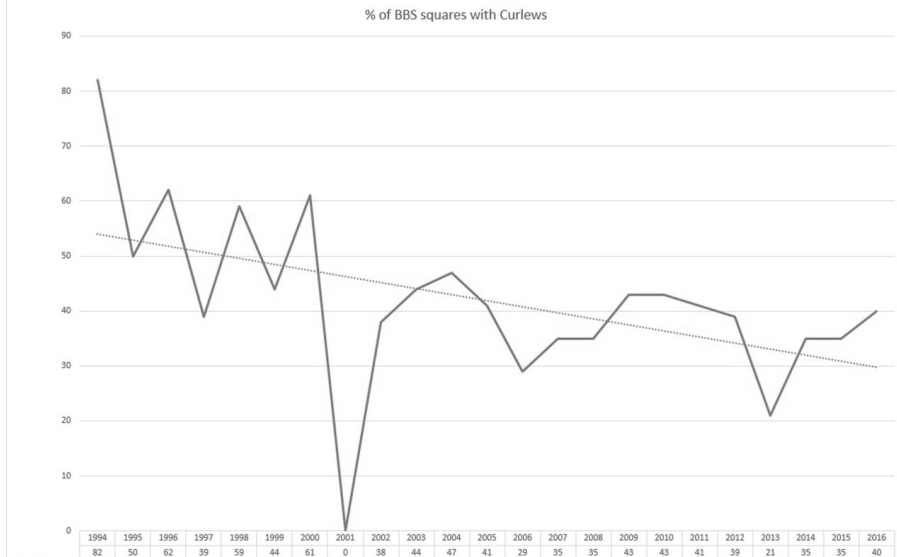
National breeding bird atlases

There have been three national surveys of breeding birds which led to published atlases. Local results from the first (1968-72) and second (1988-91) surveys show that Curlews were proven to have breed in all 15 of the club's 10km squares (see inside front cover). The club published some of the results from the surveys including the presence of eight pairs of Curlew 'along the river Derwent' (1972) and 12 breeding pairs on Strensall Common (1991). However, the third atlas (2007-11) shows that although Curlews were present during the breeding season on all the 10km squares, proven breeding was restricted to only seven of them.

The national Breeding Bird Survey

The national annual Breeding Bird Survey, run by the British Trust for Ornithology, began in 1994. It is the main scheme for monitoring population changes in our common breeding birds. The surveys are carried out by volunteers who visit randomly selected 1km squares twice during the breeding season and record birds along pre-set transect lines. In 1994 eleven 1km squares were surveyed in the club area, mostly by club members, and by 2014 the number had risen to 41, which represents almost 3% of the total recording area.

The graph below shows the percentage of BBS squares in the York area which have reported Curlews.



Note that the figure of 0% of BBS squares reporting Curlews in 2001 is because an outbreak of foot and mouth meant that only one square could be surveyed and that did not have any Curlews.

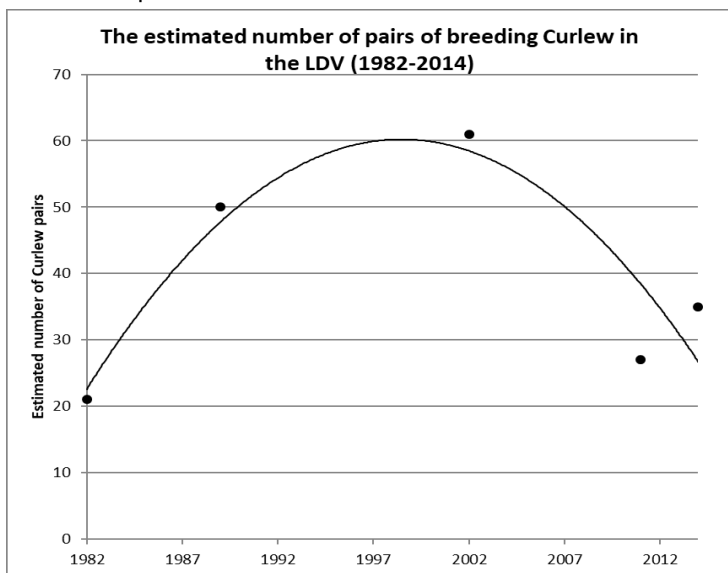
A comparison of the percentage of BBS squares recording Curlews for 1994-1998 with 2012-2016 shows a 42% reduction. This is consistent with the Breeding Bird Survey Report 2015 which shows a 48% decline in the UK between 1995 and 2014, and includes a 33% decline in England (Breeding Bird Survey Report 2015).

However, the greatest loss has been in Northern Ireland and western Britain, whereas increases have taken place in the east. It should be borne in mind that, as noted above, the number of squares surveyed rose from 11 in 1994 to 41 in 2014. Habitat analysis based on proximity to rivers and watercourses indicated that the new squares added since 1994 have contained proportionally less suitable Curlew breeding habitat (if closeness to watercourses is accepted as a significant criterion). So, it is possible that the apparent reduction in Curlews in the club area can be explained by the newer BBS squares containing less in the way of suitable habitat.

Surveys of the Lower Derwent Valley (LDV)

During the late 1970s it became apparent that the national population of breeding waders, including Curlew, on lowland grassland areas was in decline. As a result a national survey, using an agreed methodology, was carried out in 1982. Sightings of Curlews were mapped and a specially developed formula was used to estimate the number of breeding pairs though the results do not indicate if birds actually bred.

The four 'Sites of Scientific Interest' (SSSI) in the LDV, namely Newton Mask; Melbourne & Thornton Ings; Derwent Ings and Brighton Meadows, were included in the national survey which was repeated in 1989, 2002 and 2010/11. The methodology was also used in 2014. The graph below shows the estimated number of Curlews present on the four SSSIs.



So, it appears that on the designated parts the Lower Derwent floodplain the number of breeding Curlews rose after colonisation and peaked in about 2000.

Local Natural England (NE) staff also estimate the number of breeding Curlews in the LDV using their own methodology. The results are usually higher than those derived from the nationally agreed methodology. For example, the 1999 NE estimate was 100+ pairs and the figure for 2016 was 72 pairs.

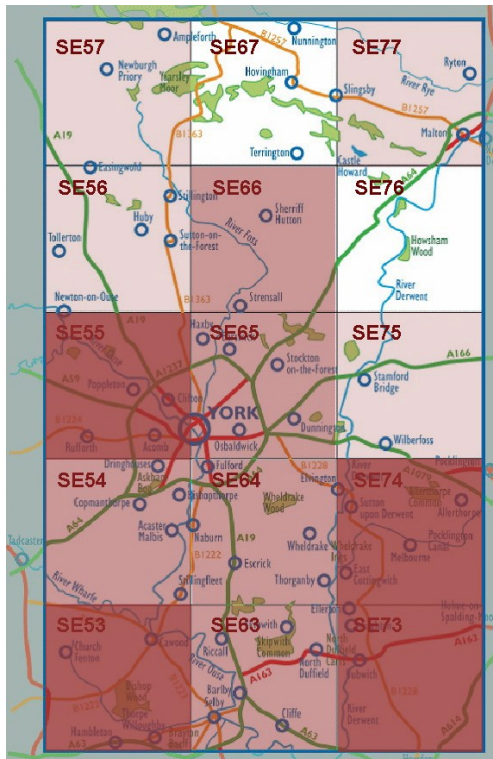
The 2016 YOC survey of breeding Curlews

Methods

Club members were asked to report any Curlews seen during the breeding season in 2016 (which for these purposes was described as April, May and June). A request for records was made at Club meetings, on the YorkBirding email group and via the YorkBirding Twitter account.

Results

The map below shows the distribution of records across the club area.



Light red: 1-8 site reports

Mid red: 9-16 reports

Deep red: 17+ reports

No records were received from SE67 and SE76, which could be due at least in part to limited coverage as the 2007/11 Atlas shows that Curlews were present in both areas and probably bred in SE76 (though only possible in SE67 & SE53). Elsewhere the records show a concentration of records from tetrads in the southern part of the club area which have flood plains capable of supporting Curlews. However, it is likely there will be some bias as recording effort has historically been greater in the southern and central part of the club area.

Discussion

Much of the research regarding the decline of the Curlew has focused on the population in the uplands, whereas our population is a lowland one. Brown et al (2015) described a number of possible reasons for the decline in the UK population. The most relevant ones in our area are probably predation (especially Carrion Crows and Red Foxes), trampling by livestock and habitat loss.

The club survey was not intended to produce data which might indicate why Curlews are declining, so any comments on the reason for the decline are speculative. However one of us concentrates on the SE53 10km hectad and during 2016 saw land drainage being carried out at five sites. Three of these were definitely used by Curlews for feeding and for the other two there is no evidence either way. In 2017 one of the few remaining damp meadows in SE53 was drained, resulting in the greatly reduced attractiveness of an area which had been heavily used by Curlew. If SE53 is at all representative of events across the club area, then habitat loss is likely to be a factor.

Conclusion

Curlews are still reasonably widespread in the York area and the apparent decline of the breeding range in the YOC area indicated by the BBS data may well be due to a reduction in the proportion of BBS squares holding suitable breeding habitat. This survey will give us more information to judge how well (or how badly) Curlews are doing in our area in future years.

Thanks

Many thanks to all the people who contributed to the survey by sending in their sightings. As well as records from the LDV Team and BirdTrack it was pleasing to have so many individuals contributing. Records from the Breeding Bird Survey were invaluable and I am very grateful to Rob Chapman for his help with this.

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Flock of Curlews at Wheldrake Ings © Duncan Bye

2016 re-sightings of birds ringed in and beyond the YOC recording area

By David Tate

The selection of 20 re-sightings, shown below, has been taken from the BTO's website (www.BTO.org) where other records for the York recording area are available. The records were chosen because of the notable distances or ages involved. Most of the data results from ringing activities carried out by members of the Huddleston and Jackson partnership in the Lower Derwent Valley and at the Harewood Whin landfill site near Rufforth.

Species	Place ringed	Date	Recovered/sighting	Date	Distance /age
Mute Swan	Pocklington Canal	07.08.05	Wheldrake Ings	20.09.16	11yr 1m
Whooper Swan c	North Duffield Carrs	30.11.08	Hviteyrar, Iceland	29.05.16	1,677km
Greylag Goose c	Rawcliffe Lake	08.08.04	North Duffield Carrs	13.06.16	11yr 10m
Teal	Wheldrake Ings	29.09.15	Arkhangelsk, Russ. (s)	14.05.16	2,886km
Shoveler	Wheldrake Ings	02.07.14	Loire Atlantique, Fr (s)	23.12.16	792km
Cormorant c	Abberton, Essex	25.04.07	Castle Howard	25.03.16	8yr 11m
Little Egret c	Bangor, Wales	05.07.09	Wheldrake Ings	23.07.16	222km/7yr
Moorhen	Wheldrake Ings	15.07.14	Nordjylland, Denmark	21.10.16	791km
B-headed Gull c	Opolskia, Poland	29.05.12	Wheldrake Ings	29.12.16	1357km
G.B.B. Gull c	Rufforth	01.04.16	Hirtshals, Denmark	07.05.16	804km
L.B.B. Gull c	Rufforth	21.08.15	Taghzout, Morocco	29.04.16	2746km
Herring Gull c	Rufforth	01.04.16	Bergen, Norway	13.04.16	812km
Barn Owl	North Duffield	11.07.15	Dereham, Norfolk	11.11.16	180km
Tawny Owl	Acaster Malbis	05.09.04	Acaster Malbis	08.09.16	12yr 0m
Swift	Riccall (nest box)	19.06.09	Riccall (nest box)	06.07.16	7yr 1m
Long-tailed Tit	Skipwith Common	13.10.15	East Cowick, E. Yorks	04.04.16	15km
Willow Warbler	Montrose, Scot.	09.08.16	Wheldrake Ings	19.08.16	335km
Blackcap	Wheldrake Ings	24.08.15	Leon, Spain	01.10.16	1342km
Wren	Wheldrake Ings	03.10.15	Pickering	05.07.16	47km
Siskin	Strensall	29.02.16	Alnwick, Northumberland	16.04.16	159km

c = colour-ringed; s = shot; Scot. = Scotland; Russ = Russian Federation; Fr = France

Both Swan species and the Greylag Goose were ringed during their first year so their age is known. The colour-ringed Whooper Swan was not re-sighted until it died after colliding with overhead wires eight years later. There were eight re-sightings of the colour-ringed Greylag Goose in the York area until 2013. However,

the bird then went un-reported until 2016. About 1 in 16 of the ducks ringed in the UK are later shot and reported by hunters. Most of the Teal that winter in the LDV breed in Scandinavia and Russia. The record concerns a female which had made the return spring migration to the eastern part of the breeding range. Very few Shoveler ducklings are ringed in the UK and the movement from the LDV to France is one of only 20 similar national records.

The dead Cormorant found at Castle Howard was colour-ringed as a nestling and was seen in Nottinghamshire in October 2014. It is surprising that the colour-ringed Little Egret went un-reported for seven years before it appeared at Wheldrake Ings. The Moorhen was ringed when a chick, and its movement is most unusual because young birds rarely disperse more than 20 km. However, during the autumn a few Moorhens arrive in England from the near continent and there are about 60 reports of birds ringed in the UK during the winter re-appearing there during the following breeding season. It may be that the Wheldrake bird returned to Denmark, along with another continental bird, after it reached maturity. The Black-headed Gull was colour-ringed when it was a few weeks old at a colony near the Czech Republic boarder; whilst the three larger gulls were colour-ringed, along with many others, at Harewood Whin. The Lesser Black-backed Gull was probably wintering in North Africa when it was reported at a fishing village near Agadir. The reports for the Greater Black-backed and Herring Gull involve birds dispersing from Harewood Whin in the spring to breeding grounds in Scandinavia.

Adult Barn Owls rarely move more than a few kilometres from their territories. However, after fledging, local owlets disperse over a wide area, especially towards the south. The record shown is one of the longest movements made by a young Barn Owl from the York area. Adult and young Tawny Owls are sedentary. The record is for a male ringed during its first year at Stub Wood which was also re-trapped at the same site in 2006. Swifts start to breed in their second year and the reported bird, which was ringed as an adult, is likely to be at least 9 years old. The median distance moved by Long-tailed Tits and Wrens between ringing and recapture is 2km and 1km respectively and therefore the distances reported above are much longer than usual. The Long-tailed Tit re-sighting was unusual because only part of the bird was found lodged in protective netting on a cherry tree.

Colour-ringing has led to far more re-sightings per bird than the traditional metal rings. However, the real breakthrough in avian migration studies began when battery powered satellite tags were employed. The following example, which has some local interest, shows what can be achieved by this method.

At 19:40 on 2nd May 2016 seven Black-tailed Godwits landed on a bund at the North Duffield Carrs. The birds fed vigorously before flying off to the north at 20:30. One of the birds was colour-ringed and details were sent to Jenny Gill who helps to manage the project. The reply showed that the bird was a female named *Vorsabaer* and that she was also carrying a satellite tag. During the late

winter of 2015 transmissions from *Vorsabaer* allowed a student to follow the bird's movements and compare them with local weather and feeding conditions. Further details of this project and movements of current satellite-tagged Black-tailed Godwits may be accessed at 'The King of the Meadows' web site (www.volg.kenningfanegreide.nl)



***Vorsabaer* at a distance** - North Duffield Carrs - 02.05.16
(Note the degree of flooding in May)

The details of *Vorsabaer*'s life history from the time of capture are:

27.06.15 - Caught in Iceland; described as a failed breeder

08.08.15 - Present on Hazelwood marshes in Suffolk

30.04.16 - Left the wintering ground in East Anglia for NDC

02.05.16 - Seen at North Duffield Carrs

05.05.16 - Arrived at the breeding grounds in southwest Iceland

Summer 2016 - remained in Iceland but not detected on the ground by researchers therefore breeding status unknown.

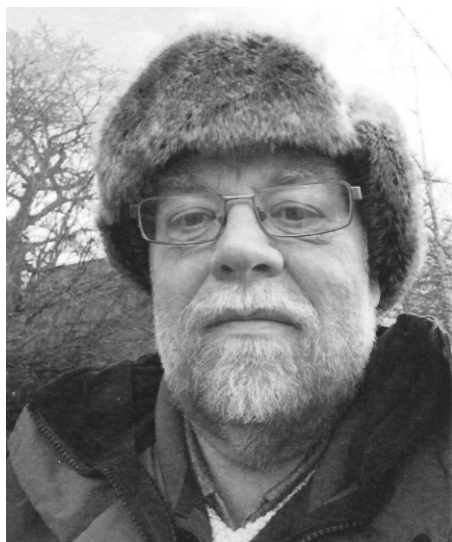
29.07.16 - Left Iceland

Autumn/Winter 2016 - wintered by East Anglian estuaries

13.02.17 - Last transmission (battery failure?) from Tollesbury, Essex

Obituary for Nigel Stewart 1957 - 2017

We sadly report the death of Nigel Stewart (Nige) following a battle against cancer. Nige was a prominent member of the Club from at least 1986, a long time Committee member, and will be sadly missed for his many and varied contributions to the Club.



He was born in York in 1957 living in the Stockton Lane area with four sisters before eventually setting up home in Rawcliffe. He may have acquired his interest in natural history from his father a keen gardener. Aged 17 he became an apprentice Lithographic Printer at Herald Rusholmes Printers and when they went under he moved to North Wold Printers near Pocklington and in all that time only had three days off with illness. He married Dawn in 1982 and had two daughters. He was a strong family man and there were often trips into the country. Christmas was a favourite time with television banned and many board games played; with help from his expertise at making cocktails. He

taught himself to play the guitar and would often play along and sing to many of his favourite bands including Pink Floyd, Police and David Bowie.

He enjoyed walking the family dogs which allowed regular access to his local patch of Clifton and Rawcliffe lngs as well as Rawcliffe Lake. Nige travelled widely in many southern European countries so that birding and family holidays could often be combined. He was very meticulous in everything he did and this included his bird identification, finding several rarities, as well as being a leading local photographer and having a great knowledge of butterflies, dragonflies and flowers.

He was joint Recorder for the Club, as well as writer of a section of the YOC Report, for a number of years. For many years he also took on the task of printing the report. He also led many field trips, gave talks to the Club and helped many young and inexperienced birders. Many followed his enjoyable Blog – Clifton Birding - where he gave detailed accounts of his local records and trips around the country twitching.

Species in the York recording area since 1966

This is a list of species recorded in the YOC area since 1966.

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.

Rarer species requiring descriptions

Rare and scarce species at national, county and local levels are marked in the list with three, two or one asterisks. Records of rarer birds require descriptions to be submitted for ratification as follows: *** British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), ** Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Rarities Committee (YNURC), * YOC Recorder. Records for these species must be supported by descriptions taken in the field or as soon as possible after the sighting – preferably before reference to textbooks. Forms for species considered by the BBRC or the YNU can be obtained from any YNU vice-county recorder or the YNU website. Note: If photographs showing key identification features are submitted a field description may not be required (as long as details such as location, date, observer, etc. accompany the photographs). Full lists of YNU and YOC description species are on pages 134 and 135.

If anyone can think of any species which should have been included in this list then please contact the YOC Recorder.

Mute Swan B	Teal B
* Bewick's Swan W	* Green-winged Teal
Whooper Swan W	Mallard B
/* Bean Goose W (taiga/tundra*)	Pintail (B)
Pink-footed Goose P	* Garganey B
White-fronted Goose	*** Blue-winged Teal
Greylag Goose B	Shoveler B
Canada Goose B	* Red-crested Pochard
Barnacle Goose	Pochard (B)
* Brent Goose	* Ring-necked Duck
Egyptian Goose (B)	** Ferruginous Duck
(Ruddy Shelduck)	Tufted Duck B
Shelduck B	* Scaup
Mandarin Duck B	* Eider
Wigeon (B)	* Long-tailed Duck
** American Wigeon	Common Scoter
Gadwall B	* Velvet Scoter

- Goldeneye W
- Smew
- Red-breasted Merganser
- Goosander (B)
- Ruddy Duck (now absent from area following national cull)
- Quail (B)
- Red-legged Partridge B
- Grey Partridge B
- Pheasant B
- (Golden Pheasant)
- * Red-throated Diver
- * Black-throated Diver
- * Great Northern Diver
- * Fulmar
- * Manx Shearwater
- * Storm-petrel
- * Leach's Petrel
- * Gannet
- Cormorant B
- * Shag
- * Bittern (B)?
- ** 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
- Buzzard B
- ** Rough-legged Buzzard
- * Osprey P
- Water Rail B
- * Spotted Crake (B)
- * Corncrake (B)
- Moorhen B
- Coot B
- * Crane (B)
- * Stone Curlew
- *** Black-winged Stilt
- Avocet (B)
- Oystercatcher B
- ** American Golden Plover
- 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
- * 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

- Redshank B
- Jack Snipe W
- Woodcock B
- Snipe B
- * Pomarine Skua
- * Arctic Skua
- * Great Skua
- * Puffin
- * Little Auk
- * 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)
- ** (*Kumlien's Gull*)
- Glaucous Gull
- Great Black-backed Gull W
- 'Feral Pigeon' B
- Stock Dove B
- Woodpigeon B
- Collared Dove B
- * Turtle Dove B
- Cuckoo B
- Barn Owl B
- Little Owl B
- Tawny Owl B
- * Long-eared Owl B
- * Short-eared Owl (B)
- * Nightjar B
- Swift B
- ** Alpine Swift
- * Hoopoe
- * Bee-eater
- Kingfisher B
- * Wryneck
- Green Woodpecker B
- Great Spotted Woodpecker B
- * Lesser Spotted Woodpecker B
- Kestrel B
- ** Red-footed Falcon
- Merlin
- Hobby (B)
- Peregrine B
- * (Ring-necked Parakeet)
- * Golden Oriole
- * Red-backed Shrike
- *** Lesser Grey Shrike
- * Great Grey Shrike
- Magpie B
- Jay B
- Jackdaw B
- Rook B
- Carion Crow B
- Hooded Crow
- * Raven
- Goldcrest B
- * Firecrest
- Blue Tit B
- Great Tit B
- Coal Tit B
- * Willow Tit B
- Marsh Tit B
- * Bearded Tit
- * Woodlark B
- Skylark B
- Sand Martin B
- Swallow B
- House Martin B
- ** Red-rumped Swallow
- * Cetti's Warbler
- Long-tailed Tit B
- * Yellow-browed Warbler
- * Wood Warbler

Chiffchaff B	Wheatear P
** (<i>Siberian Chiffchaff</i>)	Dunnock B
Willow Warbler B	House Sparrow B
Blackcap B	Tree Sparrow B
Garden Warbler B	Yellow Wagtail B
* Barred Warbler	* (<i>Blue-headed Wagtail</i>)
Lesser Whitethroat B	Grey Wagtail B
Whitethroat B	Pied Wagtail B
Grasshopper Warbler B	(<i>White Wagtail</i>)
Sedge Warbler B	* Richard's Pipit
** Marsh Warbler	Tree Pipit B
Reed Warbler B	Meadow Pipit B
Waxwing W	* Rock Pipit P
Nuthatch B	* Water Pipit
Treecreeper B	Brambling W
Wren B	Chaffinch B
Starling B	* Hawfinch
** Rose-coloured Starling	Bullfinch B
Dipper (B)	Greenfinch B
* Ring Ouzel	Linnet B
Blackbird B	* Twite
Fieldfare W & P	Lesser Redpoll
Song Thrush B, W & P	* Common (Mealy) Redpoll
Redwing W & P	** Arctic Redpoll
Mistle Thrush B	Crossbill B
Spotted Flycatcher B	Goldfinch B
Robin B	Siskin B
* Nightingale (B)	* Snow Bunting
* Red-breasted Flycatcher	* Lapland Bunting
* Pied Flycatcher (B)	** Cirl Bunting
* Black Redstart (B)	Yellowhammer B
Redstart B	Corn Bunting B
Whinchat	Reed Bunting B
Stonechat B	

Following a comprehensive review of previous reports, undertaken by Jono Leadley, some rarities that were included in the list have now been removed since no descriptions appear to have been sent to/or there is no record of acceptance by the BBRC or YNU and are therefore not proven (e.g. Baird's Sandpiper).

The YOC Recorder may ask contributors to provide extra supporting evidence for some species not on the description species lists taking into account factors such as observer experience, out-of-season occurrences and unusual or difficult plumages. This is at the recorder's discretion and the list of species requiring descriptions is reviewed regularly.

YNU Description Species for 2016

(Taiga) Bean Goose	Kumlien's Gull
Black Brant	Alpine Swift
American Wigeon	Woodchat Shrike
Ring-necked Duck	Penduline Tit (ex BBRC 2015)
Ferruginous Duck	Red-billed Chough
Lesser Scaup (ex BBRC 2015)	Short-toed Lark
Surf Scoter	Red-rumped Swallow
White-billed Diver	Greenish Warbler
Wilson's Storm-petrel	Radde's Warbler
Cattle Egret	Dusky Warbler
Great White Egret	Siberian Chiffchaff
Purple Heron	Dartford Warbler
Glossy Ibis (ex BBRC 2013)	Subalpine Warbler
Black-crowned Night Heron	Melodious Warbler
Honey Buzzard	Marsh Warbler
Black Kite	Rose-coloured Starling
White-tailed Eagle	Citrine Wagtail (ex BBRC 2015)
Montagu's Harrier	Olive-backed Pipit
Rough-legged Buzzard	Arctic Redpoll
Golden Eagle	Parrot Crossbill
Red-footed Falcon	Girl Bunting
American Golden Plover	Little Bunting
Kentish Plover	
White-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Note: The following four species have</i>
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	<i>returned to the BBRC since 2015</i>
White-winged Black Tern	Aquatic Warbler
Ring-billed Gull	Tawny Pipit
	Red-throated Pipit
	Rustic Bunting

YOC description species (additional to YNU)

Bewick's Swan	Velvet Scoter
Tundra Bean Goose (ex YNU 2016)	Red-breasted Merganser
(Greenland) White-fronted Goose	Red-throated Diver
Brent Goose – all races	Black-throated Diver
Green-winged Teal	Great Northern Diver
Garganey	Fulmar
Red-crested Pochard	Manx Shearwater
Scaup	Storm-petrel
Eider	Leach's Petrel
Long-tailed Duck	Gannet

Shag
 Bittern
 White Stork
 Spoonbill
 Red-necked Grebe
 Slavonian Grebe
 Black-necked Grebe
 (*away from the LDV*)
 Hen Harrier
 Goshawk
 Osprey
 Spotted Crake
 Corncrake
 Crane
 Stone Curlew
 Dotterel
 Bar-tailed Godwit
 Knot
 Curlew Sandpiper
 Temminck's Stint
 Sanderling
 Purple Sandpiper
 Little Stint
 Pectoral Sandpiper
 Red-necked Phalarope (ex YNU)
 Grey Phalarope
 Spotted Redshank
 Pomarine Skua
 Arctic Skua
 Great Skua
 Long-tailed Skua
 Puffin
 Razorbill
 Guillemot
 Little Auk
 Little Tern
 Black Tern
 Sandwich Tern
 Roseate Tern
 Arctic Tern
 Caspian Gull (ex YNU 2016)
 Sabine's Gull
 Kittiwake
 Little Gull

Mediterranean Gull
 Yellow-legged Gull
 Turtle Dove
 Long-eared Owl
 Short-eared Owl
 Nightjar
 Hoopoe
 Bee-eater
 Wryneck
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker
 Ring-necked Parakeet
 Golden Oriole
 Red-backed Shrike
 Great Grey Shrike
 Raven
 Firecrest
 Willow Tit
 Bearded Tit
 Woodlark
 (*away from breeding areas*)
 Shore Lark
 Cetti's Warbler
 Yellow-browed Warbler
 Wood Warbler
 Barred Warbler
 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
 Hawfinch
 Twite
 Common (Mealy) Redpoll
 Snow Bunting
 Lapland Bunting

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's recording area. All members are encouraged to submit records, whatever their level of knowledge.

1. Records must be submitted by the end of March following the relevant year to be considered for 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. For large flocks of birds, approximate numbers are acceptable.
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. These descriptions should be submitted to the Recorder as soon as possible after the sighting, preferably by email to recorder@yorkbirding.org.uk. The importance of such descriptions for the validation of rare records cannot be overemphasized.
4. Please remember to include your contact details, particularly name and telephone number and email address, with your records.
5. Records should, preferably, be submitted in electronic format as attachments to an email. Ideally records will be submitted on the club spreadsheet, which can be downloaded from the website www.yorkbirding.org.uk. Records for inclusion in the YOC Report should be submitted directly to the editorial committee by email to editor@yorkbirding.org.uk. Casual records can also be submitted via the casual records form on the website.

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.

In line with the YNU, the YOC reserves the right not to publish records of scarce birds which cannot be attributed to a named observer and are unsupported by photographic evidence.

Contributors to the YOC Bird Report for 2016

(with apologies for any accidental omissions)

P Abbott	J Cox	G Jones
S Aldous	Doug Crawford	Tim Jones (TJ)
I Andrews	Pat Crofton	A Jowatt
L K Arkless	W Dewsnap	M S Kirby (MSK)
Jack Ashton-Booth (JAB)	Jenny Dixon	Anne Lawn
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D Baker	Paul Doherty (PD)	John Lawton (JL)
Sue Ball	Trevor Douglas (TD)	Jono Leadley (JLe)
Colin Beale (CB)	J Dove	Nicola Lefanu (NL)
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Phil Bone (PB)	D Foster	Fallon Mahon (FM)
Hugh Brazier	John Forrester	M May
Ian Brookes (IB)	Sean Garvey	D Maynard
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J Bullock	Elaine Gathercole	Naomi J Meredith
Duncan Bye (DMB)	Tim D Godson	Ollie Metcalf (OM)
N A Calbrade	Chris Gomersall (GC)	Matthew Midgley
Nicholas Carpenter	A Gomez	D A Money
S Caudwell (SC)	B H Greenacre	Nick Moran (NM)
E G Chapman	Paul Greenwood	Neil & Elizabeth N Moran
Jane Chapman (JCn)	S Grimwood	P Mountain
Rob Chapman (RCn)	J Hall	Lucy Murgatroyd (LM)
A Chard	C Hannah	F A E & L Murray
T Charman	Christopher Harris	A Musgrove
A P Chick	Martin Hathaway	M Naylor
Anne Clarke	M Hessey	P J Nicholson
J Clarkson	M Holling	M Nightingale
Steve Clarkson	Mark Horner	Jan Nobel
Mark Coates (MC)	R Hoskin	R North
P Collins	Steve Huddleston	M D Nowers
Derek Cooper	C W Hudson	Stuart Ogilvy
Neil Cooper	Adam Hutt (AH)	R T & G Osborne
Robert (Bob) Coursey	J B Ingham	G Paterson
(RCo)	P Izzard	S Perutz
A Cowen	R E Jackson	Mark Petullis

J Pewtress (JPe)
 N Pickering
 Jonathan Pomroy (JP)
 K Proud
 R Putnam
 T Quantrill
 Colin Rafton
 Christy Ralph (CR)
 Craig Ralston (CSR)
 P Rawnsley
 A Reaney
 Paul Reed
 Peter Reed (PR)
 J Reid
 Penny Relf
 Dave Richardson (DR)
 K Ritchie
 J Robson
 D W G Rothwell
 G Rowden
 L Ryan
 H Saxby
 Andrew Schofield
 M Scragg
 B Scott
 W Scott
 Helen Searstone
 M Seaton
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 Colin Sherwood
 J R Silvey
 H Simons (HSi)
 R D H Simpson
 A C Sims
 M Sitnikova

T M Smart
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 A Swain (ASw)
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 David Tate (DT)
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 C B Thomas
 Jean Thorpe
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 C Toop
 D Tyler
 G & R Voakes
 Andy Walker (AW)
 C Walker
 Geoff Wallis
 D Walsh
 J Walsh
 Mike & Fiona Walton
 Trevor Walton (TWn)
 S Ward
 Tim Ward (TWa)
 George Watola (GW)
 Peter Watson (PW)
 M Weir
 Terry Weston (TW)
 J Whitfield
 P Willey
 Anne Williams
 Mark Williams
 J Wilson

M Windmill
 D Wilson
 J Wolfe

 BirdGuides
 LDV Blog
 Natural England (NE)
 Ryedale Natural History
 Bird Report 2016 (RNHR)
 FERA (Sand Hutton) Bird
 Report
 YOC Website reports

The LDV team comprises:

Craig Ralston
 Mike Jackson (MFJ)
 Steve Huddleston
 David Tate
 Lucy Murgatroyd
 Fallon Mahon
 Jean Thorpe
 Beki Johnson

Gazetteer of sites in the York 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		Brighton	709341
Acaster Airfield	575428	Brind	742310
Acaster Malbis	590455	Brindley's Plantation	742318
Acaster Selby	574415	Broomhill Plantation	703449
Acomb, York	5751	Bubwith bridge	705364
Allerthorpe Common	7547	Bubwith Ings	7037
Allerthorpe, Old Gravel Pits	7947	Bugthorpe	773579
Allerthorpe Lakeland Park	780465	Buttercrambe	733582
Ampleforth	583787	Buttercrambe Weir	734585
Anchor Plain, Strensall	6363	Butterwick	732775
Appleton Roebuck	555423	Byland Abbey	549790
Askham Bog(s)	5748	C	
Aughton (Ings)	7038	Cali Heath NR	753498
B		Callis Wood	6971
Baldwins Bridge, Pock. Canal	740450	Canal Head, Pocklington	798474
Bank Island	695452	Castle Howard Lake	7170
Barmby Moor	776490	Cawood	573377
Barthorpe	774598	Cawton	643767
Barton-le-Willows	715632	Church Fenton	515370
Beningbrough	529578	Church Bridge, Melbourne	759445
Beningbrough Hall	516586	Claxton	694602
Bielby	789437	Cliffe	662320
Bilbrough	532468	Cliffe Common	666339
Bishophorpe	5947	Clifton	593532
Bishop Wilton	797553	Clifton Backies NR, York	596540
Bishop Wood	5533	Clifton Ings	583531
Black Wood, Easingwold	5467	Clifton Park	584533
Bolton Percy Ings	537397	Coates Bridge, Pock. Canal	785453
Bolton Percy	532414	Coneysthorpe	713713
Bootham Stray, York	597548	Coneysthorpe Banks Wood	720725
Bossall	719607	Copmanthorpe	565469
Brandsby	589724	Cornfield NR, Rawcliffe	579542
Brayton	601305	Coxwold	536772
Brayton Barff	5830	Crambe	733649
Breck's Lane, Strensall	641612	Crambeck	738674
Brecks (The), Strensall	648618	Crayke	562705

Crockey Hill	625466	Haxby	609582
D		Healaugh	500477
Designer Outlet, York	607477	Hemingbrough	6730
Dringhouses, York	580495	Heslington	627504
Dunnington	671525	Heslington East, York Uni.	6350 –
Dunnington Common	6750		6450
E		Heslington Tillmire	638475
Easingwold	529698	Heslington West, York Uni.	6250
East Cottingwith	703425	Hessay	524534
East Moor, Sutton-on-Forest	600644	Heworth	618529
Ellers Farm, Buttercrambe	7257	High Catton	718538
Ellerton (Ings)	700398	High Hutton	755685
Elvington	700476	High Lodge, SHL	675586
Elvington Airfield	670480	High Plumps Wood, SHL	671584
Elvington WTW	7048	Hob Moor, York	585506
Escrick	631427	Hogg's Pond, Dringhouses	581493
Escrick Park	635418	Hollicarrs	626395
F		Holtby	675542
Fangfoss	765533	Hopgrove (roundabout)	642553
Fireman's Leap, New Earswick	609550	Hovingham	667758
Flamingoland	7780	Howardian Hills	5875 –
Flaxton	680624		7568
Foggathorpe	755377	Huby	566655
Foss Island, York	609520	Hull Road Park, York	620515
Fulford, York	610496	Huntington, York	612550
Fulford Ings	608493	Huttons Ambo	763677
Fulford Golf Course	624494	J	
Fulford Hall	606484	Jeffry Bog, Low Hutton	759667
Full Sutton	746555	JRTNR, New Earswick	608548
G		K	
Ganthorpe	689704	Keldspring Crossing, Pock.	786498
Garrowby Hill	798567	Kelfield	594384
Gaterley	737696	Kexby	705514
Giles Lock, Pocklington Canal	795464	Kilburn	504796
Gilling (East/Park)	614770	Kirby Misperton	780794
Goosewood Caravan Park,		Kirkham Priory	736658
Sutton-on-the-Forest	591631	Knapton	562522
Great Barugh	750790	Knavesmire, York	594495
Grimston	644514	Knavesmire Wood, York	593488
Grimston Bar (roundabout)	649516	L	
Grimston Moor	613744	Langwith Stray, Heslington	650480
H		Laytham	749395
Hagg Bridge	717452	Linton-on-Ouse	495607
Harewood Whin (Rufforth Tip)	538518	Londesborough Lodge Farm	
Hassacarr NR	673518	Dunnington	6952

Long Marston	502512	Ozendyke Ings	539398
Low Carr, Sutton-on-the-Forest	600623	P	
Low Catton	705538	Parliament Street, York	603518
Lower Derwent Valley	7036 –	Patefield Wood	500381
	7046	Petersfield Farm, Bielby	793422
Low Grounds, Wheldrake Ings	703444	Pocklington	802490
M		Pocklington Airfield	793485
Malton	785717	Pocklington Canal	698426
Mausoleum, Castle Howard	727696		-800474
Melbourne	753441	Poppleton	560546
Melbourne Scamland	766437	Pretty Wood, Castle Howard	732690
Meltonby	796525	R	
Middlethorpe Ings	603486	Raker Lakes, Wheldrake	684463
Milford Common	5332	Rawcliffe Bar Country Park	577547
Millennium Bridge, York	603497	Rawcliffe Ings	575544
Monks Cross, York	630550	Rawcliffe Lake	586546
Moor Lane, Bishopthorpe	585470	Rawcliffe Meadows	577545
Moor Monkton	506569	Redhouse Reservoir	529575
Moreby Wood	606428	Redhouse Wood, Moor	
Moorlands	577588	Monkton	520570
Mount Ferrant, Birdsall	796639	Refuge, Wheldrake	708435
Murton	650527	Riccall	620380
N		Rossmoor Park	722436
Naburn	599455	Rowntree Park, York	604508
Naburn Bridge	598467	Ruddins Ings	5456
Naburn Marina	599462	Rufforth	5251
Naburn Sewage Works	601467	Ryther	550392
Naburn Wood	609438	Ryton	795757
Newburgh Priory (lake)	542767	Ryton Bridge (Riggs Rd Bridge)	796754
Newhay	661307	S	
Newton-on-Ouse	512599	Sand Hutton	695586
Newton Carr	740494	Scackleton	650726
Newton Mask SSSI	705501	Scagglethorpe Moor	5355
Newton upon Derwent	720495	Scamlands	766439
New Earswick	609555	Scoreby Lodge	684513
North Duffield Carrs	695375	Seaton Ross	780415
North Howden	7530	Seavy Carr, Thornton	753451
Norton-on-Derwent	795710	Selby	615324
Nunnington (Hall)	667794	Sessions NR, New Earswick	610548
Nursery Wood, SHL	678585	Sheriff Hutton	655664
O		Silburn Lock, Pock. Canal	797468
Osballdwick	633519	Skewsby	625710
Osgodby	641338	Skipwith	657385
Oswaldkirk	625790	Skipwith Common	6537
Oulston Reservoir	570745	Skirpenbeck	747570
Oxton	505431	Slingsby	698750

Slingsby Banks Wood	698733	Walmgate Stray, York	617505
South Duffield	681335	Waplinton Hall, Allerthorpe	776468
Stamford Bridge	715555	Warren Wood, Dunnington	677503
Stearsby Hagg	620720	Warthill	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 Ings	550394
Strensall	633608	West Lilling	648652
Strensall Common	6460 –	West Ness	690790
	6661	Westow	7565
St Nicholas Fields, York	615517	Wharfe Ings	568387
Stubb Wood	585433	Wheldrake	682450
Sutton-on-the-Forest	584647	Wheldrake Ings	7043
Sutton upon Derwent	707468	Wheldrake Wood	6546
Swinton	760731	Whitehill Mine	667359
Swinton Ings	772748	White Carr, Flaxton	663603
T		Whitwell Grange	715666
Tang Hall Beck fields	6353	Wiganthorpe	662724
Tang Hall, York	620520	Wigginton	595585
Terrington	670707	Wilberfoss	734510
Terrington Moor	685716	Winchmore, Stamford Bridge	727547
The Retreat, York	617510	Wistow	594357
Thorganby	691420	Woodhouse Grange	733470
Thorganby Ings	6941	World's End Plantation,	
Thormanby	495747	Strensall Common	6659
Thornton	760453	Wressle	708313
Thornton Ellers	730460	Y	
Tockwith	465525	Yearsley	585744
Tollerton	513643	Yearsley Moor	5875 –
Towthorpe	625586		6076
Towthorpe Civic Amenity Site	648586	York (city centre)	599519
Towthorpe Moor Lane,	625585	York Minster	603523
Strensall	-663579		
Triangle Meadow, York	604547		
U			
Ulleskelf	520400		
W			
Walbut Lock, Pock. Canal	773442		
Walbutts Sewage Works			
Strensall	646618		