

SANDWICH BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

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Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust is located on the East Kent coast, half way between the River Stour estuary and the mudflats of Pegwell Bay to the north and the town of Deal to the south. It operates within the private Sandwich Bay Estate and on the adjacent farmland and golf courses by courtesy of the landowners concerned. The Trust also manages several nature reserves which it has acquired by purchase or leasehold in the Sandwich Bay Estate area. A map of the full Recording Area can be found at the back of this Report.

The Sandwich Bay coastline and the marshes inland to the River Stour have been created over many centuries by the northerly coastal drift of sand and shingle, together with alluvial deposits; a process that is still continuing. The stabilised sand hills of three local golf courses form a protected stretch of coastal dunes unique in the county and are recognised as being of the highest scientific value. Much of the rest of the Recording Area is also officially designated and protected at local, national and international levels for its value to wildlife.

As well as the bird interest, the variety of habitats at Sandwich Bay ensures that a rich fauna and flora is present. Many plants are rare, unusual or restricted in range and in the summer the coastal dunes abound with a wide variety of insects. Butterfly and dragonfly surveys are carried out regularly during the summer and moth-trapping takes place on most days of the year.

The Observatory started life as one of the country's first independent bird ringing stations in 1952. Official Bird Observatory status was achieved in 1962, when a move was made into former First World War buildings on the site of its current headquarters. The Observatory became a Charitable Trust in 1985 and the new, fully-renovated, Field Centre was opened in 2002.

The main day-to-day work of the Observatory is to study and record the birds of Sandwich Bay, with the object of placing local distribution and bird movements within a national context. In addition, whilst monitoring the effects of continuing changes in the wider environment, it also provides valuable data in support of measures taken for the conservation of threatened habitats. As a result, the Observatory has become increasingly involved in the study and practical conservation of other aspects of the fauna and flora within its Recording Area. The Observatory also has a major educational role, working with local groups, schools, colleges, and the wider community.

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Trustees and Officers 2021

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Vice-chair (Trustee): Pam Worrall (May – Dec)

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Other Trustees: J Buckingham, P Dean, I Hunter, E Hood, R Johnson, N Smith, S Irvine, A Weaving, P Poole, H Daly (Jan – Mar), B Beolens (May – Dec), R Thompson (May – Dec).

Acknowledgements

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Front Cover – Lapwing by Steve Ray.

Chair's Report

2021 was a time of slowly-developing optimism as the Covid-19 pandemic began to ease during the course of the year. Despite this, the Observatory continued to follow a cautious approach in opening up its facilities and range of activities in order to protect both the membership and also the staff who work at the Field Centre. Having said that, there were clear signs by the year-end that things were picking up, members and visitors were returning, and that the Observatory had 'survived the worst'.

The essential work of the Observatory in recording all aspects of the wildlife of the area went on much as usual, ably led by our Warden, Steffan. Good records occurred throughout the year and new discoveries continued to be made, as can be seen by a reading of his Report. The volunteer Education Team, ably led by Trustee Sharon Irvine and with support from Assistant Warden Becky Downey, strengthened their work throughout the year by putting on exciting and appropriate activities for young people and other members of the community. Contacts were made with new schools and other organisations and all of this was supported by some very positive results from fund-raising efforts to buy equipment, resources and to pay salaries. Not to be outdone in the area of education and entertainment, the programme of Zoom talks, first started in 2020, continued in the winter months of early 2021. Trustee John Buckingham, again supported by Becky Downey and others, devised a comprehensive programme of interesting and popular talks and classes for members and guests. Not only were these a major financial benefit to the Observatory but they offered a valued service to the membership and were excellent publicity for the work that we do. Behind the scenes, the Trustees turned their attention to changing the charitable status of the Observatory Trust to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), approving new policies for our educational work, and improvements to our safeguarding procedures. Work also proceeded on a new Development Plan, much of which will concentrate on necessary work planned for the Field Centre. Twenty years on from its major renovation in 2001-2002, the building needs up-grading and improvements in its layout, heating, facilities, and décor.

Meanwhile, out of doors, the Conservation Team under the leadership of Bill Martin and Claire Ward, busied themselves with the backlog of work that needed doing on our nature reserves. Footpaths had become overgrown, fences and gates needed checking and repairing, and a special project was to drain down and re-establish the pond in the Middle Field. While working in this area, an opportunity was taken to create a 'bee bank' to attract those species which nest in burrows. The Observatory is taking more account of the need to improve access for all and, under the leadership of Trustee Bo Beolens, we are looking at such issues as improving footpaths, removing any remaining stiles and replacing them with appropriate kissing-gates and similar improvements. The work has extended to cooperation with local

landowners such as the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club, the RSPB and Kent Highways. To support this initiative even further, the Observatory has bought an electric buggy which will be available for those members and visitors who might have issues with their personal mobility.

During the year there were a number of other events of note. July saw the 2021 Open Golf Tournament take place at Royal St. Georges and during this time the whole Field Centre was rented out to two companies who were delivering services to the Tournament. This arrangement proved to be very good for the Observatory's finances. We also benefitted from several substantial Government grants and furlough payments which were related to the pandemic. The traditional Observatory Open Day at the end of August was a rather lower key event than in past years but still turned a profit, as did the only members' holiday of the year, to the Isles of Scilly in October.

On the staffing front, there were a number of important comings and goings. Our Assistant Warden, Becky Downey, left at the end of the year to take up a similar education-oriented post with a large Wildlife Trust. She was replaced by Greg Lee, from January 2022. During the Autumn we welcomed two university placement students. Charlotte Joy (Christchurch, Canterbury) was with us for two months until September and Carla Hill (Exeter) started in September for a nine-month placement. Dawn Stockley stood down as our Field Centre Manager in November, as a consequence of moving out of the area. Her post has been taken on by Cleo Newhouse, who was already volunteering as Shop Manager. At the May 2021 AGM, three new Trustees joined the Council – Bo Beolens, Russell Thompson and Pam Worrall, with Pam taking over the Vice-Chair role. Earlier in the year Helena Daly had resigned as a Trustee for personal reasons.

I have mentioned a number of people by name in this Report and of course there are many, many, more individuals that I could list but I would especially like to thank all of the Trustees for their commitment to the Observatory, especially during the difficult days of the pandemic. The amount of work involved in running such a thriving and complex organisation on a voluntary basis is considerable, especially as all of us have family, work, or other commitments. Thanks too, to all of the volunteers who so readily returned to their posts as the conditions allowed during the year. It was good to see familiar faces behind the shop counter, in the Conservation Team and just members turning up at the Observatory to buy from the shop or to meet up with friends for coffee.

Finally, I extend our usual expressions of gratitude to all of our neighbouring landowners and friends in the Sandwich Bay area. As has been pointed out many times in the past, we are indebted to them all for their cooperation and support, without which our activities would be so much more difficult.

By Ken Chapman



Stonechat by S.Ray

Warden's Report

2021 was once again a year with many talking points. Covid-19 continued to have a large effect on Bird Observatory life but we are pleased at how well SBBOT has dealt with everything that came its way.

Last autumn's influx of geese meant an excellent start to the year with large numbers of White-fronted Geese in the area and smaller numbers of Tundra Bean, Pink-footed, and Barnacle. The addition of Hen Harriers, Tree Sparrows, Cattle Egrets, and Dartford Warblers made for superb winter birding, topped off by a stunning adult White-tailed Eagle which spent three days on Worth marshes in January. It was great to see some familiar faces online at the Bird Observatory Council meeting later in the month. There were freezing temperatures from 8th-15th February and a carpet of snow and ice throughout the Recording Area. This produced large numbers of waders and wildfowl, including six Smew, lots of Woodcocks, and unprecedented numbers of Snipe. This was quickly contradicted by our first butterflies of the year and our first Swallow on the 26th. There were still lots of geese present in March but migration started early with a Black Kite on the 6th, three Mandarins on the 10th, and our first push of Sandwich Terns on the 14th, quickly followed by Wheatears, Blackcaps, Willow Warblers, and early Sedge Warblers and Redstarts. Woodlark and Stone-curlew were further highlights.

Good numbers of Emperor Moth occurred in April but it was a very slow start to the butterfly season. A run of four different Siberian Chiffchaffs occurred with Garganey, Lapland Bunting, White Stork, another White-tailed Eagle, Rough-legged Buzzard, Stone-curlew, and Blue-headed Wagtails of note. Cold northerlies hampered the numbers of commoner spring migrants though. On the flip side, there was confirmation of breeding Great Black-backed Gull and Long-eared Owl, both new for the area and rare breeding records for Kent. As restrictions began to ease in May we held more events, including our first Young Birders Walk of the year, a Plant Sale on the 2nd, and a walk for the local Bruderhof group. A Cattle Egret dropped in on the 6th and 7th and a Black Stork on the 10th and 11th was exciting, if a little mobile. There was a regular Spoonbill throughout the month. Our AGM was held online on the 23rd and was a nice opportunity to catch up with members.

June started with an unseasonal Bittern and then a flock of four Rosy Starlings on the 3rd. This was then followed by Red-footed Falcon, Honey-buzzard, Caspian Tern, four Bee-eaters, another Rosy Starling, and a passage of 84 Red Kites through the area on one day. In addition, both Marsh Warbler and Redwing attempted to breed in the area. Invertebrates did well with exceptional numbers of Red-veined Darters, Scarce and Southern Emerald Damselflies, and Norfolk Hawkers, plus two Lesser Emperors on Restharrow Scrape, and the discovery of a Small Yellow

Underwing population, a new moth for Sandwich Bay. The Observatory was a busy place during this period with our Holiday Club running for the second year in a row and a series of guided walks to see the Dainty Damselflies, the UK's rarest *Odonata*.



Red-veined Darter by S.Reynaert

July continued at the same level with both Scarce Silver Y and Waved Black new for Sandwich Bay. These were followed two nights later by *Sciotia rhenella*, a rare migrant with only eleven previous UK records. Sussex Emerald and Brussels Lace added to the good moth records during the month. Bird-wise, the first two weeks of July held nine Bee-eaters, a Honey-buzzard, and our second Black Stork of the year but, on the whole, autumn migration was delayed with Willow Warblers, Whinchats, and Redstarts all around three weeks later than usual. The Open Championship was held next door at Royal St George's Golf Course which meant over 100,000 people visited the Sandwich Bay area. It was an unusual time but welcome advertisement and income for SBBOT. The Observatory opened its doors again from the 23rd and led our first *Odonata* tour with NatureTrek at the end of the month.

Migration in August was not as dramatic as usual but significant numbers of Wood Sandpiper did pass through the area and three Wrynecks appeared at the end of the month. It was pleasing to see Small Tortoiseshell in good numbers again after many years of poor counts. Our second Holiday Club of the year was a great success and outreach continued during the month with lots of school visits, our annual Open Day, and two students on University placements, one of whom, Carla Hill, stayed with us into the New Year.

These events continued into September with another Young Birders Walk and attendance at the East Kent Ploughing Match. Cattle Egrets, Dotterel, Purple Heron, Barred Warbler, White Stork, and two Pectoral Sandpipers, made for an entertaining month, with Nuthatch, Sabine's Gull, and 34,000 House Martins on the 22nd particularly exciting for the locals. In Middle Field we excavated a new pond for *Odonata* and used the spoil to create a bee bank. We look forward to seeing it develop over the next few years. With Lucy Mitchell's help, our first Blackcaps were also tagged with MOTUS transmitters and it will be interesting to seeing the data these birds create.

A Long-tailed Skua offshore on 2nd October was unusual and recorded for the second year in succession. There were regular Cattle Egrets and Spoonbill in the area and above average numbers of Jays and Bramblings. A few Radford's Flame Shoulders were in the moth trap and a male Vagrant Emperor was only the second Sandwich Bay record. There were lots of visits from local RSPB groups, a student working group from Hadlow College, another Holiday Club, a Family Trail, and we were pleased to see Becky Taylor spend a week with us, courtesy of the RBA Young Ornithologist Fellowship. After a Radde's Warbler on the 16th and 17th, the month ended with good totals of Snipe on Restharrow Scrape and a few Little Gulls offshore.

November began with another Vagrant Emperor, though this one was found dead. The month was mostly spent creating new Management Plans for our reserves and a Development Plan for the future of the Observatory. A talk about Dainty Damselflies to the British Dragonfly Society went well and so did our day developing the skills of staff of the local schools. A Crane on the 13th and 14th, and then a Sabine's Gull on the 15th, showed there were still migrants to be found. There were large numbers of Cormorants offshore, plus a few Scaup and Velvet Scoters, and an unseasonal White Stork which lingered to the year's end.

Despite the appearance of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 our last events of the year went well. In particular, a Christmas Shopping Day on the 5th was well attended. Good numbers of Snow Buntings then appeared, there was an arrival of White-fronted and Barnacle Geese, as seen at the beginning of the year, and a late Eastern Lesser Whitethroat was ringed. Noteworthy omissions from the SBBOT area this year included Bewick's Swan, Crossbill, Black-necked Grebe, Waxwing, Glaucous Gull, Kentish Plover, and Yellow-browed Warbler. The end of the year also saw Assistant Warden Becky Downey leave SBBOT after two years in the role. We have all been impressed by her ability to bring outreach and education to children around East Kent despite the obvious Covid-19 restrictions! We wish her the best of luck going forward. SBBOT have appointed Greg Lee as the new Assistant Warden for 2022.

Hopefully, we'll see some respite from Covid-19 next year. In SBBOT's 60th Anniversary year we look forward to seeing everyone again. So why not come for a visit? Whatever your reason for visiting Kent, the Field Centre offers modern and comfortable, self-catering accommodation with a kitchen, library, wi-fi, and free parking, allowing you to be on hand for early morning ringing, late night moth-trapping, or just time to explore the local area.

My thanks as always to all the trustees and volunteers for all their help and advice throughout the season and to the Sandwich Bay Estate Residents for supporting the work of the Observatory.

By Steffan Walton



Grey Partridge by S.Reynaert

Features of the Year

January

The year started off with Water Pipit, Hen Harrier, and the flock of 200 White-fronted Geese still present on Worth marshes. At least 25 Tree Sparrows were at Mary Bax, four Bearded Tits and a Coal Tit were on the Green Wall, an Egyptian Goose was on the Estate, 1,400+ Cormorants were offshore, and another Hen Harrier was on New Downs. The next day only 12 White-fronted Geese and two Brent Geese were viewable on the Willow Farm side of Worth but on the Minnis side there were three Water Rails, a Jack Snipe, and four Green Sandpipers. A Great Northern Diver went north offshore along with small numbers of Teal, Wigeon, and Common Scoter, whilst an Avocet was on New Downs. Pegwell was busy with people but a Hen Harrier was the highlight, along with three Corn Buntings in the saltmarsh (a scarce bird there). It was a surprisingly busy day on the 3rd despite the spells of torrential rain, sleet and hail. Two **Cattle Egrets** were on Worth marshes with another between the Sandwich toll gate and the farm buildings next to the Observatory. At least ten White-fronted Geese remained and a Pintail dropped in by the Great Wood. A flock of eight Barnacle Geese flew over Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course and offshore there were at least 870 Cormorants and a Razorbill. Singles of Yellowhammer and Water Pipit appeared on the Green Wall whilst on the Estate a Chiffchaff was in The Elms and a Merlin behind Restharrow Scrape. There was appalling weather again for the 4th but a few brave souls stuck it out to add a few new things to the year. A Raven flew over the Observatory, a Caspian Gull was next to Restharrow Scrape, and two Goosanders went north offshore. Over on Worth marshes there were at least 20 White-fronted Geese, four Tundra Bean Geese, and a Merlin.

A wander around the Estate on the 5th was quickly curtailed with news of an adult **WHITE-TAILED EAGLE** flying south over the Green Wall. After a few mad minutes waiting for it to re-appear it was found dropping down onto Worth marshes. Over the next few hours, it put on a great show, though I'm not sure the petrified Wigeon flocks felt the same. A stunning bird to start the year! The secretive flock of Tree Sparrows put in a brief appearance at the sandpit at Dickson's Corner, with at least 25 present, whilst a Brent Goose flew over the Estate and 17 White-fronted Geese were on Willow Farm. A short sea watch on the 6th produced 20 Red-throated Divers, a few Great Crested Grebes, and a Kittiwake offshore whilst a wander through the Gullies produced the first Woodcock of the year. Two Ring-necked Parakeets and a Greenfinch were welcome additions to the Warden's year list whilst the Stock Dove flock numbered 357. A **Great White Egret** flew over Worth marshes late morning with the **WHITE-TAILED EAGLE** and three overwintering **Cattle Egrets** still present plus three Water Pipits, two Hen Harriers, four Tundra Bean Geese, three Barnacle Geese, 90 White-fronted Geese, and a flock of c.200 Pied Wagtails to cap an excellent day. Despite the nice sunny conditions, it was rather cold still on the 7th.

A wander around Worth marshes produced the three **Cattle Egrets**, 21 White-fronted Geese, and two Hen Harriers (including a new adult male). Wildfowl numbers were down on the pool by the Great Wood but there were good numbers of finches along the Worth track and the Pied Wagtail/Meadow Pipit flock at Blue Pigeons. The **WHITE-TAILED EAGLE** flew off strongly early in the morning but was not seen to return.

There was dense fog and frozen temperatures for the walk around the Estate on the 8th. Singles of Firecrest and Woodcock were the best on offer. The three **Cattle Egrets** had moved over to the Worth track and must've been feeling the cold as they were standing on the rams' backs (for warmth?), with 20 White-fronted Geese, two Brent Geese, and a surprise Dartford Warbler on the marsh. A flock of 31 White-fronted Geese showed extremely well in the evening light along the footpath behind Restharrow Scrape and the asparagus fields on the 9th. The Dartford Warbler was still present on Worth. After a seriously hard frost there was a small influx of Pochards on the 10th with a female on Worth and a handful on Stonar lake. A lovely male Hen Harrier flew through Worth marshes in the evening with Jack Snipe, two Water Pipits, and five Green Sandpipers for good company. A pleasant walk up to the Point for the high tide roost on the 11th saw two Dartford Warblers and a Snow Bunting on the beach along the way. The immature male Hen Harrier with grey central tail feathers flew over Hundred Acre field, with 31 Tree Sparrows and 31 White-fronted Geese at their usual spots. On the 12th the adult male Hen Harrier was out hunting over Willow Farm with two Pochards, a Raven, and 90 Fieldfares also noted across the Worth marshes. Sea watching wasn't too productive but 180 Auks was a good count. After some truly horrible weather over the previous few days it was good to be out and about on the 15th. New Downs was excellent with close views of the grey male Hen Harrier north over towards the Sampher, three Tundra Bean Geese with the Greylag flock by the North Pool, two groups of Bearded Tits (on North Pool and New Downs Pool), three Kingfishers, ten Rock Pipits, five Pochards (four males and one female), a Green Sandpiper, and 22 Corn Buntings.

A walk around Worth marshes on the 17th saw the flock of 31 White-fronted Geese with the Greylags, a Dunlin in with the Lapwing flock, an Egyptian Goose, two Marsh Harriers, and a Corn Bunting. On the 18th the three Tundra Bean Geese were still on New Downs with a Hen Harrier, four Pochards, and three Green Sandpipers on Worth marshes. A Mute Swan sitting on the sea was a strange sight. A Great Skua harassing Herring Gulls offshore the following day was the first of the year whilst the immature male Hen Harrier cruised around the asparagus fields on the Estate and at least 28 White-fronted Geese were in the field behind Restharrow Scrape. A Great Northern Diver was sitting on the sea just off the Estate in the afternoon of the 20th. A Woodcock was in The Elms on the 21st and the regular flock of 31 White-fronted Geese were in the fields behind Restharrow Scrape again. Small numbers of Kittiwake and distant Auks were seen offshore and six Barnacle Geese flew south along the shore.

It was a really nice day on the 22nd. There was a double-figure flock of Corn Buntings at the Drove and another handful at Dickson's Corner. Combined with the 65+ seen on New Downs before New Year, and some regularly reported along Prince's Beach, we had ourselves a very good winter (by recent standards) for this declining farmland species. The group of 31 White-fronted Geese were seen again flying around the Estate before heading off towards New Downs, where the three Tundra Bean Geese were still residing. Although a quiet day on the 23rd, there was a movement of over 2,500 Cormorants heading out to sea in the morning. A Pintail was also new in on Worth marshes. There was just the one White-fronted Goose in with the Greylags behind Restharrow Scrape on the 24th but good numbers of other birds nearby included 220 Skylarks, 400 Stock Doves, 120 Golden Plovers, 35 Tree Sparrows, 60 Linnets, 22 Reed Buntings, and the regular immature male Hen Harrier. A Jack Snipe was on Worth. It was a nice and bright day on the 25th, if a little cold and frosty, with two White-fronted Geese in with the Greylags by Restharrow Scrape, a female Marsh Harrier on the Estate, and both Water Pipit and Raven on Worth.

There was quite a lot of activity on the Estate on the 26th despite the overcast conditions and frost. There were plenty of singing Great Tits, the odd Corvid carrying twigs, and a few Lapwings displaying over the fields. A party of nine Long-tailed Tits flying north along the beach added to the feeling that spring was on its way. Also of note were 123 Great Crested Grebes and 68 Red-throated Divers offshore, an Egyptian Goose sat outside the Observatory, and a Water Rail in the Haven. A fine walk around the Green Wall on the 27th saw Yellowhammer, Coal Tit, Firecrest, two Woodcocks, and two Bearded Tits. Offshore there were 62 Red-throated Divers and 118 Great Crested Grebes, plus a male Goosander, whilst Water Pipit and Pintail were on Worth marshes. A group of 35 Kittiwakes milling about offshore on the 28th contained a 2cy (second-calendar year) Little Gull, and a Raven circled the Estate. Two Ravens, a Marsh Harrier, four Grey Partridges, three Bullfinches, and four Green Sandpipers were highlights on Worth on the 29th. In some horrible conditions on the 30th, a 2cy Caspian Gull dropped in amongst the large gathering of gulls on the field next to Restharrow Scrape. On the last day of the month the Caspian Gull was still present in the same field on the Estate along with bonus prizes in the form of an adult Yellow-legged Gull and a 2cy Mediterranean Gull. Over by Blue Pigeons on Worth the wagtail flock remained at large with at least 120 Pied and two Grey in the leftover brassicas.

February

The 1st was a dreary and drizzly day. A flock of 20 Sanderlings on the Estate beach were unusual and a Chiffchaff was in the Cellars. Over on Worth marshes there was a further drop in wildfowl numbers, perhaps another sign of the incoming spring, whilst a male Merlin, four Green Sandpipers, and 77 Fieldfares were of note. A Slavonian Grebe on Stonar lake was the best bird of the day. There were lots of singing Robins and

Song Thrushes on the Estate, and hundreds of Black-headed, Common, and Herring Gulls outside the Observatory. Only a handful of Red-throated Divers, Kittiwakes, and Auks were offshore whilst a Water Rail on the Green Wall was particularly showy. The Slavonian Grebe remained on Stonar on the 4th. An immature Peregrine was hunting Lapwings nearby, seven Mute Swans flew overhead, and 37 Tree Sparrows were in the Mary Bax area. There were two Treecreepers, two Coal Tits, and a Woodcock on the Green Wall and a male Merlin and five Green Sandpipers on Worth marshes.



Woodcock by J.Dodds

It was positively spring-like on New Downs on the 5th. There was an increase in Tufted Ducks, to 32, but a decrease in all other wildfowl. Singles of Water Rail, Bearded Tit, and Corn Bunting were seen and five Rock Pipits were at Backsand Point. There were quite a few noisy Oystercatchers new in around the riverbank and the North Pool. The nice weather stimulated the first movement of Buzzards of the year with at least 19 noted. At least 130 Great Crested Grebes were on the sea and a Water Pipit was on Worth marshes.

The 8th saw an even covering of snow and icy wind as Storm Darcy took hold. A flock of six **Smew** (two drakes) were seen on Worth first thing in the morning before flying north. Snipe were recorded in huge numbers with over **750** on Worth marshes alone, plus another 100 spread elsewhere around the Recording Area. There were also six Pink-footed Geese, six Jack Snipes, three Ringed Plovers, 206 Golden Plovers, 1,100 Lapwings, 1,400 Dunlins, and a Black-tailed Godwit recorded. The harsh weather continued the next day with thick snow in some places and risky ice patches in another. Meadow Pipits were ice skating around frozen puddles in search for food, clouds of gulls were by the shore, and waders were all over the fields near the Observatory.

Despite a sunny start to the 10th, which started to melt the ice, more snow came in the afternoon continuing the wonderful winter birding weather. Highlights of the day, aside from many Snipes, included three Pintails and a Merlin on Worth, 66 Brent Geese and a Goldeneye on New Downs, and 35 White-fronted and one Tundra Bean Goose in with a Greylag flock on the Asparagus fields between the Estate and Worth. The 11th was still very chilly but lots of interesting things were around. There were about 30 White-fronted Geese still in among a large group of Greylags around the Estate. A short wander in the afternoon produced totals of 21 Woodcocks and 135 Snipes around the Estate as well as a large flock of 165 Skylarks. On Worth, highlights were two drake Pintails, a Jack Snipe, and another 192 Snipe. The 12th saw 35 White-fronted Geese on the Estate, 125 Brent Geese on New Downs, and 23 Pink-footed Geese flying north. Another very cold day on the 13th produced five Pintails and two Black-tailed Godwits on Worth, and three Bearded Tits on the Green Wall. The flock of Stock Doves on the Estate reached around 600 birds. Overnight there was an influx of more Wigeon and Teal to Worth, bringing their totals up to 600 and 250, respectively. Another 400 Wigeons were present at Pegwell. Two Jack Snipe were still on Worth marshes with two Firecrest also present. Around the Estate at least 37 Woodcocks were recorded.

The increase in temperature meant everything thawed out and things finally got a bit warmer. It also meant a lot of the Snipe and Woodcock moved on, but there were still at least eight of the latter around the Estate. On the Green Wall there were good numbers of Dunnock and Robin, along with 150 Greylag and 185 Brent Geese. A Ruff was seen around Dickson's Corner on the 16th, along with Fieldfare, Redwings, Lapwings, Golden Plover, and Stonechats. On the Green Wall there were two White-fronted and two Pink-footed Geese in with the flock of Greylag and Brents. On Worth, alongside large numbers of Teal, Wigeon and Lapwing, there were 101 Dunlins.

While warmer, it was still fairly drizzly on the 18th. Around the Estate a few Woodcocks were still present and a flock of Greylags contained a Tundra Bean Goose. On an overcast and windy 19th, there was a large flock of Greylag and Brent Geese with a couple of White-fronted Geese in among them on New Downs. Bearded Tits were also nice to see.

The 20th was a much milder day and perfect for our livestream from Restharrow Scrape. Large skeins of Cormorants were moving north and south offshore. On Worth there was the young male Hen Harrier, Marsh Harrier, and at least five Bullfinch around the Great Wood and along the Worth Track. Duck numbers on Worth fell overnight on the 21st with only 300 on the deep pool. The juvenile male Hen Harrier was seen again, noted by its pale tail feathers.

The 22nd was another mild day in lockdown. On Worth, a Water Pipit and an Egyptian Goose were among the regular collection of Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler and Lapwing. Snipe numbers picked up to 31 and the five Green Sandpipers remained on the deep pool. On New Downs, Avocet numbers increased with the spring temperatures, and a Tundra Bean Goose and several White-fronted Geese were present with the Brents and Greylags. Two flocks of Corn Buntings and a singing Greenfinch were also spotted. In the evening, a Tawny Owl was seen along the Ancient Highway. There were signs of spring all around on the 25th with lots of birds singing and displaying. It was great to hear 'Chiff-chaffing' from the Willows in the Haven and see the parachuting display flight of a Meadow Pipit in Restharrow Dunes. Despite the spring fare the winter geese were still present and today a smorgasbord of Tundra Bean, Pink-footed, Canada, Egyptian, and five White-fronted Geese were among the local Greylag flock.

A walk around Worth marshes in the spring sunshine on the 26th was lovely and some contrast to the blanket of snow and ice from just over a week previously. A **Great White Egret** flew over heading towards Ham Fen and there was a fair amount of raptor activity with one Red Kite, two Sparrowhawks, two Peregrines, one Marsh Harrier, and double figures of Buzzards competing for airspace. Two Water Pipits were coming into summer finery near Roaring Gutter and 11 Pintails were scattered on the pools near the Great Wood. A minimum of 600 Starlings was also present. A Swallow was reported from Pegwell Bay in the afternoon. There were still a few Woodcocks in the Oasis area on the 27th and a nice selection of wildfowl were in Pegwell Bay, plus our first Sandwich Tern of the year. There were pairs of Coot and Gadwall in the Dragonfly Pond on the 28th, no doubt prospecting for breeding sites, and vocal Little and Barn Owls after dark. Grey Herons were mating on Worth marshes and there were still two Water Pipits, Hen Harrier, four Pintails, and a Jack Snipe.

March

At a very cold Pegwell Bay on the 1st there was a nice drake Pintail showing well on the Garage Pool and two summer-plumaged Mediterranean Gulls on the mud. There was no sign of the recent Sandwich Terns in the Bay. A Red-legged Partridge on Worth was the rarest bird of the day, with Hen Harrier, Water Pipit, and five Chiffchaffs also present. A very foggy start on the 2nd didn't clear until mid-morning. There were still 20 Tree Sparrows in the ploughed field between the Clay Pigeon shoot and the sandpit area at

Dickson's Corner. A flock of 42 White-fronted and four Barnacle Geese were mobile in the area. On Worth there were now ten Chiffchaffs, as well as eight Pintails, four Pochards, five Green Sandpipers, and two Water Pipits. The 3rd was another morning of dense fog, only this time it refused to clear. A murky wander to the Chequers and back produced six Canada Geese, four Barnacle Geese, one Pink-footed Goose, and 91 White-fronted Geese, mostly on the fields behind Restharrow Scrape or on Willow Farm. There were also lots of displaying Lapwings despite the poor conditions.



White-fronted Geese by X.Taylor

The 4th was cold and still a touch misty. Brent Geese were on the move though and a few hours watching the sea produced 830 birds north, plus a nice selection of other birds heading north including ten Shelducks, two Teals, two Shovelers, four Common Scoters, two Red-breasted Mergansers, two Goldeneyes, 226 Red-throated Divers, one Black-throated Diver, 62 Great Crested Grebes, 50 Gannets, 99 Cormorants, and 68 Dunlins. The 'Geese Feast' continued on the 5th. There were five Barnacle Geese, 82 White-fronted Geese, one Tundra Bean, one Brent, one Pink-footed, three Egyptian, one Canada, six Canada x Barnacle hybrids, and many Greylag Geese in the fields behind Restharrow Scrape. The first signs of spring vismig ('visual migration') comprised 110 Chaffinches flying north whilst 11 Pintails were on Worth marshes and a House Martin was seen in Pegwell Bay. On the 6th there were 42 White-fronted Geese and a Black-tailed Godwit on New Downs and four Barnacle Geese and 60 White-fronted Geese on the Estate.

Over on Worth a **Black Kite** drifted through around midday, before heading back south, and 25 Dunlins were on Willow Farm. A **Great White Egret** dropped into Worth early on the 7th and was later seen heading north over the Observatory and New Downs. The Estate goose flock comprised four Barnacle Geese, 84 White-fronted Geese, one Pink-footed, one Tundra Bean, and six Canada x Barnacle hybrids. A Merlin was perched nearby whilst 135 Red-throated Divers and 141 Great Crested Grebes were on the sea. Sightings on the 8th continued to revolve around various geese. The four Barnacle Geese, 88 White-fronted Geese, one Pink-footed, and six Canada x Barnacle hybrids were on Estate fields around Restharrow Scrape whilst one Barnacle Goose and 40 White-fronted Geese were on New Downs, as well as 11 Pintails, two Ringed Plovers, one Grey Wagtail, and one Siskin. In the afternoon, a Firecrest was on the Green Wall, a Hen Harrier hunted around the Jubilee field, and a Yellowhammer was singing at the Observatory. There were singles of Hen Harrier, Water Rail, and Mediterranean Gull on the Estate on the 9th and the first pulse of Siskins moved through. Analysis of nocmig ('nocturnal migration') data showed significantly more activity overnight than recently, with waders, thrushes, and wildfowl noticeable, including Common Scoters.

Despite the mostly horrible and windy weather it was an interesting day on the 10th. A small flock of Mandarin Ducks were the most obvious arrival, with two drakes and a female on the deep pool next to the Great Wood on Worth marshes. Our first Sand Martins of the year were also present and the first Blackcaps of spring were noticeable on the Green Wall. Meanwhile a Black-throated Diver was offshore and the White-fronted Goose flock was seen flying around the Willow Farm area. Sea-watching was well below-par on the 11th with just the odd Shelduck, Common Scoter, and Kittiwakes noted. A Sparrowhawk hunting Sanderlings on the Estate beach was the highlight. The two Sand Martins remained on Worth but there was no sign of the Mandarins. A Black-throated Diver drifted past offshore close-in at the top of King's Avenue on the 12th and the mixed flock of White-fronted and Barnacle Geese were seen briefly near Restharrow Scrape. Meanwhile the two Sand Martins were still hawking over the pools by the Great Wood on Worth and our first White Wagtail of the spring dropped in briefly. A Hen Harrier motored through and the five Green Sandpipers continued to be seen, having over-wintered successfully on the marshes.

WeBS counting across the northern sectors on the 14th produced 22 Sandwich Terns heading into Pegwell Bay and singles of Jack Snipe, Rock Pipit, and Merlin at the Point. At least 68 White-fronted Geese were on the Estate and two Sand Martins and a White Wagtail were on Worth. The goose flock behind Restharrow Scrape included 73 White-fronted, one Tundra Bean, five Barnacle, and six hybrid Barnacle x Canada Geese on the 15th. Nearby, the flooded rills of the asparagus fields harboured nine White Wagtails, with another on Willow Farm, plus a Sand Martin on Worth and a Scandinavian Rock Pipit at Dickson's Corner.

A female Bearded Tit was on the Green Wall on the 16th, there was a small increase in Chiffchaffs, and a pair of Spoonbills were on the Garage Pool at Pegwell in the evening. The brisk northerly wind encouraged the first significant 'vismig' of the year on the 17th. Chaffinches and Starlings were on the move, originally in dribs and drabs, but later picking up momentum. At least 800 Chaffinches were logged going north and Starlings were everywhere with at least 12,000 birds between the Estate and Worth. A Merlin, a Grey Wagtail, and a few Siskins were also passing through. A Woodcock was on the Estate, a small group of White-fronted Geese were glimpsed near Restharrow Scrape, and another 85 White-fronted Geese and a Short-eared Owl were north of the Chequers.

A Great Northern Diver and three Goosanders flew past offshore on the 18th, a handful of Chaffinches flew north overhead, and a bit of raptor activity included a Hen Harrier, Marsh Harrier, Sparrowhawk, and three Buzzards over the Estate. Two Black-tailed Godwits were on Worth marshes. In the afternoon, a **Siberian Chiffchaff** was discovered on Worth marshes. It was a busy day in the spring sunshine on the 19th. New Downs held the regular juvenile Tundra Bean Goose and a Barnacle Goose in with 82 White-fronted Geese by the North Pool. A male Bearded Tit showed well along the river by the Polytunnels. On Worth yesterday's **Siberian Chiffchaff** was still present and calling frequently in hedgerows along the footpath between Cornfield Wood and Great Wood. A Long-eared Owl, two Firecrests, and a White Wagtail were seen on the Estate and huge numbers of Starlings continued to be seen in the area. The 20th began with two Great Northern Divers sitting offshore amongst the Red-throated Divers and Great Crested Grebes. Two Lesser Redpolls flew overhead, the first this spring, and then a push of raptor passage included a Red Kite, 11 Buzzards, a Peregrine, and two Sparrowhawks north. On Worth the **Siberian Chiffchaff** was singing, a Water Pipit was present near Roaring Gutter, and eight Ravens flew over (a new record count for Sandwich Bay).

A **Great White Egret** flew over the Estate early on the 21st and an Avocet went past offshore. The **Siberian Chiffchaff** was still present with a bonus Treecreeper nearby too. There were 130 Sanderlings at the Point and later on our nocturnal recorders at Stonar picked up our first Little Ringed Plover of the year and lots of Redwings. Worth marshes was good on the 22nd with the **Siberian Chiffchaff** still, **Great White Egret**, Avocet, and Hen Harrier. There was a male Common Scoter diving just offshore and 134 Red-throated Divers further out, with a Merlin and two Firecrests on the Estate. A few Grey Wagtails and Siskins moved overhead. The **Siberian Chiffchaff** remained on Worth on the 23rd and a Red Kite and three Grey Herons flew north. A pleasant walk in the spring sunshine on Worth marshes the next day saw Pochard, two Peregrines, Dunlin, Golden Plover, plus lots of displaying Lapwings and Skylarks and singing Reed Buntings. Our first Wheatear of the year was at Sandilands. On the 25th the Wheatear at Sandilands was replaced by a Black Redstart and a White Wagtail. A Hen Harrier was hunting in Restharrow Dunes, a few Mediterranean Gulls were flying around, and a Firecrest was in the Little Elms.

The Black Redstart was still at Sandilands the next day, a Wheatear was nearby at Dickson's Corner, and a Black-tailed Godwit flew north over Estate. The first Willow Warbler of the year was on Worth marshes and two Sand Martins flew through. Three Sandwich Terns were offshore. A Woodlark on Worth marshes on the 27th was an excellent record. It was mostly seen in the fields along the Pinnock Wall, between the concrete bridge at Roaring Gutter and the wooden bridge further up, occasionally sitting out on the bushes. Unfortunately, the Skylarks did not take kindly to its presence and soon saw it off. There were also three Wheatears on the Estate and a Red Kite flew north. Wheatears increased to seven at Dickson's Corner on the 28th. A Blackcap and Firecrest were on the Estate, a Merlin flew north, a Marsh Harrier and four White-fronted Geese flew over the Green Wall, and the **Siberian Chiffchaff** was re-discovered on Worth marshes. Three Whimbrels and a Common Tern offshore were both their first records this year.



Siberian Chiffchaff by G.Segelbacher

There was a noticeable arrival of spring migrants on the 29th with at least 45 Chiffchaffs, six Blackcaps, two Sedge Warblers, 15 Wheatears, one Black Redstart, three Swallows, and three White Wagtails spread around the Recording Area. It felt like there had to be a Bluethroat hiding in a ditch somewhere. A **Cattle Egret** was near Mary Bax, along with 16 Tree Sparrows, and on Worth marshes the **Siberian Chiffchaff** and four Water Pipits remained. Warm sunshine all day on the 30th encouraged another wave of spring migrants to make landfall. Highlights were three Little Ringed Plovers, a Greenshank, a Hen Harrier, a Sedge Warbler, two Black Redstarts, one Common Redstart, and a '*flava*' Wagtail on Worth marshes.

A Black Redstart and three Wheatears were also on the Estate and analysis of our 'Nocmig' recordings discovered a **Stone-curlew** flying over Stonar in the early hours of the morning. Temperatures soared again out on the marshes on the 31st. The three Little Ringed Plovers remained on the grassy pool by the wooden bridge, six Sand Martins and a Swallow flew through, and singles of Greenshank, Water Rail, Mediterranean Gull, and Corn Bunting added to the mix.

April

Two Great Crested Grebes on the Green Wall on the 1st were unusual and a Lesser Redpoll flew north (scarce in spring). There was a flock of 24 Sand Martins and six Swallows on Worth, plus two Blue-headed Wagtails, whilst on the Estate a Long-eared Owl was seen. It was bright and sunny at times on the 4th. Two Grey Herons and two Buzzards thermalled over the Observatory and there was an increase in hirundines on Worth with at least 14 Sand Martins and 45 Swallows. The two Water Pipits remained and were in stunning summer plumage. The weather was a lot colder and windier on the 5th, there was even snow falling late morning. A few bits and pieces went past offshore, namely Brent Geese, Common Scoters, Kittiwakes, and Sandwich Terns, with a Whimbrel the best over on Worth.

A steady passage of birds moved through in the northerly wind on the 6th. At least 116 Sandwich Terns and 29 Common Terns went north offshore, two White Wagtails dropped in on the Estate, two Red Kites went over, and there was a light movement of finches along the beach, mostly Linnets, but also a few Goldfinches, Chaffinches, and Siskins. A few things were new in on the Worth marshes pools on the 7th including a Ruff, three Canada Geese, and a White Wagtail, whilst a Red Kite drifted over. A Merlin and 31 Golden Plovers were seen over the Estate. An early wander around the Green Wall on the 8th produced a slew of spring migrants with 13 Chiffchaffs, four Blackcaps, six Sedge Warblers, and one Swallow, plus two Siskins, four Yellowhammers, and a singing Goldcrest. Eight Water Pipits, two Ruffs, two Canada Geese, and a **Siberian Chiffchaff** were on Worth marshes.

On the 9th, a female Blue-headed Wagtail was the highlight in a medley of spring migrants on Worth marshes which included our first Whitethroat of the year, three Little Ringed Plovers, 30 Swallows, seven Sedge Warblers, a Merlin, and a Red Kite. Lingering wildfowl on New Downs included eight Canada Geese and a Pintail, as well as a House Martin. A long trudge up to the Point discovered two more Whitethroats, a Wheatear, a Greenshank, 124 Sanderlings, and passage of four Sand Martins, 22 Swallows, and 53 Linnets north. Across the river in Pegwell there were 160 Sandwich Terns. A Hen Harrier toured around various sites in the morning of the 10th, two Water Pipits were still on Worth, joined by eight Wheatears and 31 Golden Plovers, and a male Redstart showed well in Stonelees. With a heavy frost at dawn on the 12th it didn't feel spring like at all but singles of House Martin and Whimbrel were seen flying over the Estate.

After another thick frost on the 13th the sun came out and revealed a stunning day. New Downs was excellent and produced a total of 75 species, not bad at all for a morning's work. A drake Garganey on the Sampher pool was the highlight and the first recorded here this year. Other birds of note were a female Pintail, an immature male Hen Harrier, two Whimbrels, a Greenshank, a Green Sandpiper, four Mediterranean Gulls, a Yellow Wagtail, and a Willow Warbler. Worth marshes was also good with a summer-plumaged Lapland Bunting very nice (though a little mobile), a Willow Warbler, and a Water Pipit.

A couple of Whimbrels and the first Fieldfares for some time were on New Downs on the 14th. There were a few summer-plumaged Golden Plovers on the Estate fields, a singing Firecrest, and some Wheatears on Worth marshes. The 15th was still rather nippy even in the spring sunshine. There was some light sea passage including a few Brent Geese, Common Scoters, Whimbrels, and a Bar-tailed Godwit and Linnets moving along the shore. A few Redwings and a Yellow Wagtail were new in on the Estate. Most activity was on Worth marshes on the 16th with a **Great White Egret**, two Blue-headed Wagtails, five Wheatears, three Little Ringed Plovers, two Bar-tailed Godwits, two Green Sandpipers, and a Yellowhammer. In the afternoon a **White Stork** headed north towards Pegwell.

On the 17th the **White Stork** went north over Roaring Gutter before heading off inland towards Ham and Eastry. Still on Worth were our first Garden Warbler and Tree Pipit of the year, plus a rather late White-fronted Goose. Singles of Black Redstart and Wheatear were on the Estate on the 18th and our first Lesser Whitethroat was in Stonelees. Much larger numbers of Sedge Warblers arrived on Worth with at least 20 present. A Red Kite also drifted north over the Green Wall. An early start on the Estate on the 19th felt more like winter with Brambling, Siskin, Fieldfare, and an influx of Song Thrushes in the cold conditions. The sun soon came through and other birds started moving, with nine Mediterranean Gulls, two Bar-tailed Godwits, two Whimbrels, and a Willow Warbler. A dead Sandwich Tern picked up on the Estate was very peculiar but presumably dropped by a passing Peregrine. Over in Pegwell our first Reed Warbler of the year was singing and later a **White-tailed Eagle** went over Worth marshes. After going missing for a few hours it was relocated kettling over Stonar and joined by a **Rough-legged Buzzard**! A further cherry on top came when analysing the night's Nocmig data with the clear calls of a **Stone-curlew** flying over, as well as Ring Ouzel and Tree Pipit. The last few days had been difficult in a blanket of fog however two Mediterranean Gulls and a Siskin were on the Estate on the 21st with a **Siberian Chiffchaff** and Reed Warbler on Worth marshes. Late news then came in of a **White Stork** on Worth marshes. There was no sign of the White Stork on the 22nd. New Downs was very pleasant but still remarkably cold. There were nine Bar-tailed Godwits, one Ringed Plover, two Green Sandpipers, and two Common Sandpipers on the pools, plus two Wheatears, a Cuckoo, a Willow Warbler, and an increase in Whitethroats and Blackcaps.

There were another 11 Bar-tailed Godwits on the Estate, a Wheatear on Royal St George's Golf Course, and three Bar-tailed Godwits and 18 Whimbrels near the Chequers. On the 23rd, there were three Bar-tailed Godwits and 15 Whimbrels between the Drove and the Chequers, two Bar-tailed Godwits and four Whimbrels on the Estate fields, 12 Bar-tailed Godwits offshore, and a further six Whimbrels on the other side of the railway on Worth marshes. There was also Willow Warbler and 19 Mediterranean Gulls on the Estate, plus three Greenshanks and a Lesser Whitethroat on Worth.

Two Pomarine Skuas moving north offshore started the 24th well and two Red-breasted Mergansers followed shortly after. Over on Worth there was lots of action as two Little Gulls flew north over Blue Pigeons (part of a huge movement through the UK), a late Water Pipit lingered, eight Wheatears fed on fence posts, and warbler totals increased to 45 Sedge Warblers, four Reed Warblers, one Lesser Whitethroat, and 18 Whitethroats. There was a small arrival of waders including two Snipes, 12 Whimbrels, 13 Greenshanks, one Green Sandpiper, and four Common Sandpipers. A Cuckoo was at the Observatory, two Wheatears at Sandilands, and a Willow Warbler on the Green Wall. The last few Wigeons clung on to the pools on Worth marshes on the 25th. There were still seven Whimbrels and 14 Greenshanks on offer and Lesser Whitethroats now numbered four.

A good spell in the northern sectors of the Recording Area on the 26th. There were 29 Whimbrels, three Wheatears, and four Ring Ouzels (three males) on Hundred Acre field viewable from the public footpath. A Cuckoo was munching on Brown-tail caterpillars on the Sea Buckthorn along Prince's Beach whilst two Swifts flew north. Over in Pegwell there were excellent counts of 110 Shelducks, 289 Bar-tailed Godwits, 49 Mediterranean Gulls, and 1,410 Herring Gulls. There were also the remains of a long-dead Slavonian Grebe at the Point, presumably taken by a Peregrine.

A pair of Tree Pipits were new in at St George's bushes on the 28th. There were also a handful of Whimbrels on the Estate, as well as Greenshank, Yellow Wagtail, and a few Mediterranean Gulls overhead. Three Avocets and a Bar-tailed Godwit were on Worth marshes on the 29th whilst five Canada Geese continued to linger in the area. A Woodlark on the short turf field next to Restharrow Scrape took top billing on the last day of the month. It didn't stay long though and moved off towards The Elms area. Six Whimbrels went north offshore and one flew over the Estate, with a Willow Warbler in the Haven. The first Turtle Dove of the year was on Worth marshes whilst a walk to the Point produced Red-legged Partridge and 24 Whimbrels. New Downs was reasonable too with three Canada Geese, six Whimbrels, two Common Sandpipers, three Greenshanks, three Cuckoos, two Sand Martins, two Yellow Wagtails, two Wheatears, 27 Whitethroats, three Lesser Whitethroats, and 18 Reed Warblers.

May

A lovely male Whinchat was at Dickson's Corner on the first of the month, a bird (and plumage) that is really quite rare here in spring. There was a Willow Warbler, an increase in hirundines, and lots of territorial Whitethroats also on the Estate. A Red Kite and 12 Buzzards flew over Worth marshes and a female Ring Ouzel dropped in. A Hobby over the Observatory was a good start to the following day but Worth produced Spotted Redshank and Ring Ouzel to take top spot. A Wood Sandpiper flew over Stonar after dark. The 3rd was the first day without northerlies for a month. A **Great White Egret** flew south from the Sampher and three Turtle Doves and five Wheatears were on Worth. Over on the Estate 27 Whimbrels were in the fields around Dickson's Corner, a few Mediterranean Gulls loafed around, and 14 Lesser Redpolls flew overhead (noteworthy in spring). Two Bullfinch in the Whitehouse were also unusual.

There was enough passage offshore on the 4th to keep us interested for a while, though it was hardly Cap Gris-Nez. A Hobby came in off, 32 Sanderlings and three Whimbrels went north, and 77 Sandwich Terns milled to and fro. A flock of 69 Dunlins in nice summer finery were on the Estate beach with 11 Whimbrels and a Curlew at Dickson's Corner allowing close comparison. Fourteen Swifts and two Yellow Wagtails also went north.

There wasn't too much in the way of new migrants to shout about on the 5th but it was pleasing to note the Turtle Doves back on territory on Worth. It's always a delight to hear their soft purring across the marshes. Five Turtle Doves were on Worth marshes on the 6th and a **Cattle Egret** flew straight through heading inland. There were 24 Whimbrels, a Wheatear, and a White Wagtail in fields between the Chequers and Dickson's Corner. And then it hailed (again). The Estate was reasonably productive on the 7th. A few Wheatears were along the coast, a trickle of hirundines flew through, and a Hobby sat on the beach early on (presumably having just made the sea crossing). An Arctic Tern went north offshore in the company of a few Sandwich Terns. A Bar-tailed Godwit in Restharrow Dunes was a strange sight whilst 40 Whimbrels were spread in various fields between the Drove and Restharrow Scrape, with seven Mediterranean Gulls calling overhead. A/the **Cattle Egret** flew over the Estate just before midday. A Turnstone on New Downs was an unusual inland find, with Black-tailed Godwit and ten Greenshanks more expected.

An Osprey motored through Worth marshes on the 9th, avoiding almost everyone, with another also seen heading north from Deal which must've crossed the Recording Area too. There were still lots of Whimbrels around, plus a handful of Common Scoters, Mediterranean Gulls, and Sandwich Terns offshore. A Turtle Dove was a good sighting on the Green Wall. In the evening the heavens opened and was accompanied by impressive thunder and lightning.

A few singing Reed Warblers around the Oasis/Whitehouse area were perhaps new migrants on the 10th, a Great Spotted Woodpecker heading high north certainly was. The wind soon picked up and made things rather difficult after. In the late afternoon, a **BLACK STORK** was filmed flying over Worth marshes. This is presumably the same bird which has also been seen around Stodmarsh and Bekesbourne in the last few days.

The **BLACK STORK** must have roosted somewhere on Worth marshes as it was present at first light the next day. It soon hopped over to Ham Fen, where it spent most of the morning before heading off again inland. Also on Worth were Greenshank, three Cuckoos, and a Turtle Dove. Eight Whimbrels and three Bar-tailed Godwits were in the Dickson's Corner/Mary Bax area. Three Wheatears were still hanging around the area south of Sandilands on the 13th. We were hopeful the light drizzle and easterly winds would drop some migrants in but it was surprisingly quiet. However, whilst prepping the Restharrow Scrape hides for opening, a Sandwich Tern dropped in. Singles of migrant Greenshank, Ringed Plover, and Common Sandpiper were on New Downs on the 14th, as well as 11 Corn Buntings and 140 Swallows. Three Wheatears and four Whimbrels were on the Estate. The hides at Restharrow Scrape opened again on the 17th. Two Blue-headed Wagtails dropped into the newly open scrape to kick things off. Also of note were Wheatear, Barnacle Goose, and the first **Honey-buzzard** of the year which flew over the Observatory at midday.



Black Stork by R.Rackliffe

A Willow Warbler was at Mary Bax, an Avocet was on Restharrow Scrape first thing, and two Wheatears were at Dickson's Corner, on the 18th. At least 21 Red Kites went north overhead later in the morning. In a spell of sunshine on the 19th 15 Red Kites went north over Worth. There were at least four Hobbies hunting the marshes too whilst three unseasonal Siskins zipped over. On the 20th a female Hen Harrier sparked excitement as it motored through Worth marshes late morning. A Wheatear was out on the scrapes too. The wind soon became quite strong and made birding rather difficult, but a Dunlin dropped into Restharrow Scrape. It remained very windy on the 21st. Little was happening on the sea but Restharrow Scrape was busy with breeding activity. All the Coots had tiny chicks, the Black-headed Gulls were all on nests, and the Tufted Ducks were trying to discretely hide away in the surrounding vegetation. A Gadwall pair hanging around likely had a nest somewhere. Over on Worth a Spoonbill dropped in on the deep pool east of the Great Wood before heading off mid-afternoon.

The Spoonbill was relocated on New Downs on the 22nd. A handful of waders were on the pools and also at the Point, with more so in Pegwell Bay including 41 Ringed Plovers, 135 Sanderlings, and 75 Dunlins, plus a lone Little Tern. A flock of 29 Corn Buntings on Prince's Beach was high and unseasonal, though they are often later nesters, and it was pleasing to see the first Redshank young on Worth marshes.

The Spoonbill remained on New Downs on the 23rd whilst the first Black-headed Gull young were seen on Restharrow Scrape. A different Spoonbill was on New Downs on the 24th. The previous bird had a pale bill indicative of immaturity (hatched last year) whereas this bird had a mostly black bill with a pale tip. Darting around the Estate between heavy rain showers on the 25th found two Spotted Flycatchers in the Haven, small numbers of Swifts overhead, a late White Wagtail, and ten Black-tailed Godwits on Restharrow Scrape. The following day a **Great White Egret** flew off from New Downs towards Stonar whilst a Red Kite drifted north through and a female Garganey was on Worth marshes.

The warm weather on the 27th saw the best morning for raptor passage this spring with 53 Red Kites and ten Buzzards north, plus at least eight Hobbies in the air at the time. Over on New Downs on the 28th the Spoonbill spent most of its time asleep on the North Pool (as Spoonbills often do), a Hobby showed well near New Downs New Pool, and a Whimbrel bathed along the river by Bloody Point. It was nice to hear a duet of 'bubbling' female and 'cuckoo-ing' male Cuckoos on the walk. The early arriving Warblers, such as Chiffchaff, Blackcap, and Sedge Warbler were beginning to go quiet now they have large young, but Reed Warblers and Whitethroats were still active. On the last day of the month there were several Hobbies, Buzzards, and a few Marsh Harriers hunting and soaring over the marshes in the summer sun. A pair of Stonechats fed young at Dickson's Corner.

June

At times it felt as if flaming June could have been replaced by freezing June, particularly at night. However, when the sun was out it had a typical midsummer heat. It certainly produced a mixed bag of sightings starting with a Bittern on New Downs on the 1st. The big arrival of **Rosy Starlings** across the country briefly delivered four to Sandilands on the 3rd. Long stayers such as the Spoonbill continued to be sighted on New Downs and Worth throughout the month. A new Spoonbill appeared at New Downs on the 4th when a few Red Kites, perhaps the scouts for later, drifted over Worth.



Rosy Starlings by P.Blanche

Calm sunny conditions on the 6th were good for raptor movement and at least 84 Red Kites drifted north. They were joined by two Ospreys, whilst a **Honey Buzzard** flew south. The day was topped by a **Rosy Starling** flying over Worth and a female **Red-footed Falcon** near the Great Wood. The heat on the 8th certainly stirred the local Whitethroats into vocal action. A **CASPIAN TERN** flew north over Willow Farm but could not be relocated. If accepted this will be our fifth record. A Green Sandpiper on Worth was a sign of autumn approaching. The next day four Bee-eaters hawked over Blue Pigeons before disappearing north. A nice variety of chicks including waders on Worth and Stonechat along the Ancient Highway was good to note. **Great White Egrets** continued to be seen daily but a young Grey Wagtail near the Observatory was notable.

The Autumn build-up of Lapwings reached 38 on New Downs by the 15th. The 12 Gadwall ducklings on Restharrow Scrape on the 17th showed birds appreciate all the effort that has been put into that area, however a Sandwich Tern there on the 21st was more unexpected. Further evidence of the benefits of this work was the presence of a Great Crested Grebe on the 22nd. From the 23rd a few Cuckoos made the most of the caterpillars in the Sea Buckthorn as they headed back south. They were joined by a few groups of Sand Martins. One each of **Cattle Egret** and Tree Sparrow were on Worth marshes on the 26th. Worth also continued to deliver regular sightings of Turtle Dove, although became difficult to see being so well camouflaged in the grass by the pools. The final few days of June were quiet with not much to report other than sightings of juvenile waders which are always a delight to see.

July

Warblers continued to sing from their territories on the 1st indicating renewed breeding attempts. Around the Green Wall, Blackcaps, Whitethroats, and Chiffchaffs were still going strong and Sedge Warblers and Reed Warblers were striking up again around the river edge. The main event was a flock of nine **Bee-eaters** which flew south in the late afternoon over Sandown Road. As usual their persistent calling drew attention to them. The 2nd was a gorgeous day. A Peregrine over the Observatory in the morning was a nice start. Three Greenshanks and three Green Sandpipers were present on Worth marshes. Starling flocks increased with a flock of around 100 on Worth and 190 on New Downs. Three Greenshank were also flushed from the riverbank of New Downs, and a few Lapwings and Oystercatchers were flying around, and a couple of odd Curlew were spotted on Worth and New Downs. An eclipse drake Shoveler and a Pochard were present on one of the bigger pools on Worth marshes the next day. Three Green Sandpipers were still present and two Turtle Doves were seen flying towards Ham Fen. Two Peregrines were putting on a display at the Point with one being attacked by a bold Oystercatcher.

Young Tufted Ducks were finally spotted on Restharrow Scrape on the 4th. Present on Worth was a Dunlin, a male Ruff in moult, along with three Green Sandpipers and two Common Sandpipers. A Yellow Wagtail was spotted at Blue Pigeons Farm and a couple of Turtle Doves were seen around Worth. A lovely sunny 5th seemed to produce many more butterflies than birds. Skylarks dominated the soundscape around the Estate with the odd Wren and small flocks of House Martins chirping through. Two Sparrowhawks and two Kestrels were both nice to see, both species hunting successfully in the Dunes. Grey Partridges were hiding unsuccessfully on Royal St. George's Golf Course. Around 140 Swifts moved through in small, loose groups on the 7th and on the 8th an immature Grey Wagtail was on New Downs amongst the waders including Redshank, Greenshank, Curlew and 57 Lapwings. A few Hobbies had been seen daily on Worth recently with a Spotted Flycatcher too.

A grey and humid morning on the 9th saw 16 Sand Martins fly over the Estate, followed by a **Honey-buzzard** moving west. In the evening a **BLACK STORK** was seen on Worth marshes before the persistent harassment of the local Avocets shooped it off towards Betteshanger. Presumably this is the same roaming adult seen here (and other places around Kent) earlier this year.

There was heavy rain throughout the morning on the 12th but there was a short sunny spell in the early afternoon to cover Restharrow Scrape and the Estate. Young Tufted Duck and Lapwing showed well on Restharrow Scrape, with semi-fledged Stonechats, Sparrowhawks, and Herring Gulls around the rest of the Estate. A Great Crested Grebe on Worth marshes was notable and presumably the same adult bird seen on Restharrow Scrape a few weeks ago. A **Bittern** was sound-recorded flying over Stonar over the night of 12th/13th, with a number of waders also noted including Little Ringed Plovers, Whimbrels, and Common Sandpipers. A few Long-tailed Tits were new in on the 14th (having not bred on the Estate this year) and a Little Egret glided over, along with 29 Swifts and 11 Sand Martins north under the low cloud. A flock of 23 Lapwings were on Restharrow Scrape, a Teal dropped in, and the resident Corn Buntings were still singing away nearby. On the 15th New Downs was relatively peaceful away from the eyes of 40,000 spectators on Royal St George's Golf Course. A Common Tern on the North Pool was a good find with a few Sand Martins and a Yellow Wagtail over. Waders show signs of building with eight Oystercatchers, eight Avocets, two Ringed Plovers, 73 Lapwings, one Green Sandpiper, 15 Common Sandpipers, two Greenshanks, 17 Redshanks, two Black-tailed Godwits, two Whimbrels, and three Curlews.

A trip around the Estate post-Open Championship on the 19th was uneventful in the sweltering heat but still nice. There were a few waders around including two Whimbrels, a Dunlin, and a Ringed Plover. A Hobby was pursuing hirundines, a handful of Sandwich Terns were offshore, and a Yellow Wagtail flew over the Oasis. The 21st was equally thirsty work on Worth marshes in the scorching sun. There was an excellent count of 61 Reed Warblers with juvenile birds all over the place. The 28 Sedge Warblers was good too, plus two Yellow Wagtails, Hobby, Turtle Dove, and two Green Sandpipers. The first Willow Warbler of the autumn was over in The Elms and a juvenile Yellow-legged Gull was in Pegwell Bay. A Pochard dropped into Restharrow Scrape mid-morning on the 23rd. A Redwing was also caught by the ringing team. This follows on from a series of sightings in late May, suggesting at least some sneaky birds summered/bred in the area. A Wood Sandpiper was on Worth in the evening. On the 23rd a **Great White Egret** was on Worth marshes and a Tawny Owl was calling on the Estate after dark. The 25th was a great day with a noticeable arrival of waders. A **Great White Egret**, 20 Little Egrets, 56 Redshanks, 13 Greenshanks, nine Green Sandpipers, 29 Common Sandpipers, and six Wood Sandpipers were on New Downs.

Worth was also busy with a **Bittern**, eight Green Sandpipers, eight Common Sandpipers, and nine Wood Sandpipers, plus the Great Crested Grebe was joined by another. A Turtle Dove was at the Observatory and four Green Sandpipers were on Restharrow Scrape. Pegwell Bay had yet another Wood Sandpiper, plus 290 Sandwich Terns.

Nine Wood Sandpipers and three Common Sandpipers were on Worth marshes still on the 26th. The selection of Sandpipers on Worth marshes continued to the next day with four Wood, 14 Green, and one Common present. On the 28th, bang on cue, the autumn's first Wood Warbler was caught by the ringing team on the Estate. There were also five Willow Warblers and eight Reed Warblers noted, plus ten Sand Martins, 60 Swallows, and 180 House Martins, plus a few Willow Warblers on the Green Wall. The blustery conditions made it difficult but two Wood Sandpipers, 11 Green Sandpipers, and 12 Sand Martins were on Worth marshes and six Whimbrels were on the Estate beach on the 29th. In the evening three Little Ringed Plovers dropped into Pegwell Bay with 180 Sandwich and ten Common Terns also present. A good number of waders were on New Downs in the evening of the 30th with eight Oystercatchers, three Avocets, one Ringed Plover, 60 Lapwings, one Knot, 13 Dunlins, 227 Redshanks, 14 Greenshanks, two Green Sandpipers, and 43 Common Sandpipers. Also notable were 16 Little Egrets and 11 Mediterranean Gulls. A Wood Sandpiper remained on Worth marshes. A Roseate Tern reported in Pegwell Bay was the pick of the day of the 31st. There were now five Wood Sandpipers on Worth plus two Wheatears on Prince's Beach and four Willow Warblers on the Estate.



Wood Sandpipers by S.Reynaert

August

A Garganey and four Wood Sandpipers were on Worth marshes in the morning of the 1st. The Estate was good with Whinchat, four Sand Martins, Cuckoo, Garden Warbler, and eight Willow Warblers, plus the hybrid Swallow x House Martin which continued to be seen around the Oasis and Royal St George's Golf Course area. A Wigeon in Pegwell was the first of autumn with a few hundred Sandwich Terns still present.

A handful of Willow Warblers made landfall on the Estate on the 2nd. Ten Whimbrels were on Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course near Dickson's Corner and three Wheatears were nearby at Sandilands. A few species were moving around on Worth on the 3rd with now eight Grey Herons and 86 Coots plus a Water Rail and two Willow Warblers new. Two Golden Plovers were on the Estate and an Arctic Skua was offshore. The wader selection on New Downs was still good on the 4th with 90 Lapwings, six Dunlins, three Whimbrels, 178 Redshanks, ten Greenshanks, five Green Sandpipers, and 22 Common Sandpipers. One Wood Sandpiper remained on Worth marshes along with 110 Lapwings and a Pochard new in. On the Estate were two Wheatears at Sandilands, four Willow Warblers, a Marsh Harrier, plus two Greenshanks and two Common Sandpipers on Restharrow Scrape. Two Whinchats were on the fences by Restharrow Scrape on the 6th. There was some good movement offshore with 210 Sandwich Terns and 108 Common Terns going north in just over an hour, plus a handful of Kittiwakes and waders. Garganey and Wood Sandpiper were on Worth. Four Spoonbills dropped into Worth marshes briefly on the 7th before heading off inland. There were also two Wood Sandpipers and an influx of 120 Sand Martins.

Nightingale and Treecreeper were both good finds on the Estate on the 8th. There was a good arrival on the Estate on the 10th with the first Redstart of autumn, four Wheatears, a Wood Warbler, 23 Willow Warblers, three Garden Warblers, and small parties of Swifts and Sand Martins heading through. On the 11th a Tawny Owl was perched in the Whitehouse at dawn before flying off towards the Haven. There was another good mix of migrant Warblers on the Estate again including Reed, Willow, Sedge, and Garden, plus Whitethroats and Blackcaps. Three Wheatears were also at Sandilands. A flock of 40 Snipe on Worth was a surprise with two Wood Sandpipers still present. A really good mix of waders were seen on the 12th. Worth marshes held 90 Lapwings, two Ruffs, 46 Snipes, six Greenshanks, 20 Green Sandpipers, and five Wood Sandpipers, with Ringed Plover on the Estate beach, a Ruff and three Common Sandpipers on Restharrow Scrape, and three Oystercatchers, 55 Lapwings, one Whimbrel, one Curlew, 23 Redshanks, seven Greenshanks, seven Green Sandpipers, one Wood Sandpiper, and 13 Common Sandpipers on New Downs. Pegwell Bay in the evening held 575 Oystercatchers and 195 Curlews. It was also great to confirm breeding Water Rail on New Downs.

Wood Sandpipers continued on Worth marshes with at least nine on the pools on the 13th. Maybe not quite as eye-catching to visitors but it was interesting to see an increase in Coot to 121. A **Great White Egret** dropped into Worth marshes mid-morning on the 14th with at least six Wood Sandpipers still present. A Wood Warbler was caught and ringed on the Estate on the 15th. It was present around the Haven later in the day. Five Wood Sandpipers and a **Great White Egret** remained on Worth marshes.



Common Sandpiper by S.Ray

A reasonable mix of birds offshore on the 16th included an Eider, an Arctic Skua, and three Great Skuas, plus a handful of Terns and Waders. The **Great White Egret** was still on the pools on Worth along with four Wood Sandpipers, four Dunlins, two Ruffs, and five Greenshanks. Nine species of wader were on the Estate on the 17th including a nice group of Sanderlings, Ringed Plovers, Dunlins, and Turnstone on the beach by Sandilands. Six Wheatears and three Mediterranean Gulls were also next to the wader flock. Hirundine passage was noticeable with 300 Swallows and smaller numbers of Sand Martin and House Martin moving through. A good mix of Warblers were present in the bushes with Willow Warbler and Reed Warbler most common. Numbers of Warblers were still low so far though. The autumn's first Tree Pipit also flew north.

Nine Wheatears and a Whinchat were dotted around Dickson's Corner area on the 18th. A Kingfisher flying along the Ancient Highway was peculiar. Six Greenshanks, three Green Sandpipers, two Wood Sandpipers, one Common Sandpiper, two Ruffs, two Little Ringed Plovers, four Ringed Plovers, and eight Snipes were on the pools on Worth, plus three Yellow Wagtails. The selection of waders on New Downs was similar with two Ringed Plovers, one Golden Plover, 50 Lapwings, one Ruff, one Whimbrel, four Curlews, 36 Redshanks, eight Greenshanks, two Green Sandpipers, and eight Common Sandpipers. Two Hobbies went over the Observatory early in the morning, 30 Swifts went south, and ten Golden Plovers dropped into the Green Wall. There were 11 Wheatears around the Sandilands/Dickson's Corner area the following day. A brief pulse of Swallows pushed through and a handful of Willow Warblers with a few Garden Warblers thrown in were on the Estate. At least one Redwing persisted. Worth marshes was where it was at (again) though. Three Wood Sandpipers, two Green Sandpipers, two Common Sandpipers, seven Greenshanks, three Little Ringed Plovers, four Ruffs, 35 Lapwings, four Dunlins, and six Snipes were on the pools with six Wheatears, two Whinchats, and ten Yellow Wagtails also dotted around. There was a **Great White Egret**, two Wood Sandpipers, and an increase in Garden Warblers and Lesser Whitethroats on Worth in the morning of the 20th. A **Cattle Egret** was also reported online. Meanwhile the fourth Wood Warbler of the autumn was on the Estate and 49 Mediterranean Gulls were just offshore.

An unseasonal summer-plumaged Red-throated Diver was sitting just offshore on the 21st. Over on New Downs the best was a flyover Spotted Redshank whilst Worth held its usual selection of waders plus at least 100 Mediterranean Gulls. The group of Whinchats and Wheatears remained around Sandilands on the 22nd, now joined by five Yellow Wagtails. Worth marshes continued with a good variety of waders highlighted by four Wood Sandpipers, seven Greenshanks, four Ruffs, and two Little Ringed Plovers, with at least nine Yellow Wagtails also around. The House Sparrow flock along the Green Wall riverbank area continued to build to impressive numbers. At least 230 birds were seen in the evening. There was a big increase in Teal on the WeBS count on the 23rd with 71 around Pegwell Bay, 212 on New Downs, and 200 on Worth marshes. New Downs, the Point, and Pegwell all recorded a good selection of migrant waders with 17 species on offer including a pure albino Oystercatcher in the flock in Pegwell. Six Wood Sandpipers and four Little Ringed Plovers were also additional on Worth marshes.

A Great Skua passed offshore on the 24th. A decent movement of Yellow Wagtails occurred early on the 25th with 26 going over, as well as a Tree Pipit. Six Whinchats were at Dickson's corner and another two around the Oasis area. A Redstart was in the Jubilee field and a Shag also went north offshore. The first Pied Flycatcher of autumn was along the edge of the Great Wood on Worth and a few more Whinchats were seen. In the evening a **Wryneck** was found in the Downsbridge area.

Not one but two **Wrynecks** were now in the Downsbridge area on the 26th. The next day our third **Wryneck** of the autumn was found in the paddock and along the fence line south of Sandilands. It soon moved onto the lawn at Sandilands and showed spectacularly well. There were at least nine Wheatears, 14 Whinchats, and two Stonechats on the fences nearby, a few parties of Sand Martin moved through, and a Pied Flycatcher was along the path from the Cellars to the Gullies. On the 28th two Tree Pipits flew over and almost 100 Linnets were around Dickson's Corner. Meanwhile two Lesser Redpolls around the Great Wood on Worth were unseasonal. The 29th was a busy day for our Wildlife In Close-up event. There was a nice selection of birds around for people to see including Pied Flycatcher in the ringing room. The autumn's first Short-eared Owl was at Dickson's Corner before flying off towards Mary Bax. At least 13 Wheatears and ten Whinchats were good counts nearby. A Little Stint was also an excellent find on the pool near Roaring Gutter pumphouse on Worth. Two Wood Sandpipers were the pick of the bunch on New Downs.

An increase in wildfowl on Worth marshes on the 30th produced 11 Pochards, 175 Teals, 40 Wigeons, and a mega count of 160 Coot. The Little Stint was still present. The final day was grey and windy again but there seemed to be birds around. Willow Warblers continued to call from the bushes. There were Pied Flycatchers in the Haven/Whitehouse area and The Elms and at least eight Whinchats at Dickson's Corner. Two Little Stints were now on Worth, another 12 Whinchats, and a Tree Pipit. Three Little Ringed Plovers were on Restharrow Scrape and a flock of 14 Snipe flew around a few times before heading off. There was also a steady passage of Terns, Waders, and Wildfowl offshore.

September

A Grasshopper Warbler at the Drove was the best bird of the 1st. Overhead passage consisted of 44 Sand Martins and three Grey Wagtails north. There were plenty of Whinchats with at least ten in Restharrow Dunes, another seven at the Drove, and three on Worth. A handful of Willow Warblers, one Spotted Flycatcher, and seven Pied Flycatchers were around the Estate (mostly in The Elms and Gullies). Also on Worth marshes were two Ruffs, a Little Stint, and a Raven. Bang on cue the first **Cattle Egret** appeared on Worth marshes on the 2nd. The two Little Stints were near Roaring Gutter still with one Wood Sandpiper, ten Whinchats, and eight Corn Buntings good too. An intriguing large pale warbler at the corner of the Great Wood unfortunately avoided firm identification. Two more Pied Flycatchers were on the Estate on the 3rd and there continued to be lots of Whinchats around, including 14 on New Downs. **Cattle Egret** and Wood Sandpiper remained on Worth with a Black-tailed Godwit new in and an increase in Teal to 600. Two Pied and two Spotted Flycatchers, a Redstart, a Short-eared Owl, and a good scattering of Lesser Whitethroats and Whinchats were on the Estate on the 4th, a decent haul considering the strong breeze. The **Cattle Egret** was still on Worth marshes as well as 16 Yellow Wagtails.

There were a few Pied Flycatchers around the Hoverport bushes at Pegwell too and an Egyptian Goose on Restharrow Scrape. The 5th was a busy day with lots of birds and lots of people. A Dotterel was the pick of the bunch, flying over Willow Farm and Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course. A Nightingale was reported in Waldershare Gully with at least two Pied and one Spotted Flycatcher also present. Over on Worth marshes a Garganey was new in among the Teal flock, the **Cattle Egret** remained, and the muddy pools produced 11 Little Ringed Plovers, nine Dunlins, eight Ruffs, two Greenshanks, and three Green Sandpipers. A major influx of Whinchats also occurred throughout the area with 28 on the Estate and 12 on Worth, plus another in Pegwell. At least 11 Yellow Wagtails, four Grey Wagtails, and 15 Wheatears added to the day's tally. The first autumn arrival of Blackcaps occurred on the Estate on the 6th with 43 seen. There were also small increases in Swallow and House Martin, particularly sitting on the wires around Sandilands and the rooftops on the Estate. Most interesting was a call recorded overnight at the Observatory that sounded very much like Purple Heron. Two Pied Flycatchers, a Redstart, and another batch of Blackcaps were on the Estate on the 7th. Nine each of Yellow Wagtail and Grey Wagtail flew north and a separate flock of Yellow Wagtails was on the Green Wall. The **Cattle Egret** remained on Worth and a **Barred Warbler** was along the path leading inland from Great Wood towards Jubilee Road, in the bushes by the sluice gates. This is very close to the where the 'large pale warbler' was seen on the 2nd.

On the 8th the **Barred Warbler** was seen in the hedge along the track south of the Great Wood. It was skulking but gave reasonable views occasionally. Ten Ruffs and four Little Ringed Plovers were on the pools nearby, a Dotterel flew around, and the **Cattle Egret** was still around. Over on New Downs **Great White Egret** and Wood Sandpiper were the highlights. Pied and Spotted Flycatchers were on the Estate. The next day five Yellow and 12 Grey Wagtails moved north overhead and a good spread of Warblers and a Pied Flycatcher were on the Estate. On Worth a Spotted Flycatcher was in a mixed warbler/tit flock along the Pinnock Wall and a **Great White Egret** dropped in. The elusive Dotterel put in another appearance on Worth briefly on the 10th and Spotted Redshank flew over calling. In the evening a Tawny Owl called on the Green Wall. An unringed **White Stork** turned up on Worth in the evening with a Wood Sandpiper also present.

The **White Stork** was still on Worth the next day but was later seen heading along the coast near St Margaret's. Singles of Turtle Dove, Pied Flycatcher, and Redstart, plus six Yellow Wagtails were on the Estate and there was an arrival of at least 80 Blackcaps. Five Wheatears, eight Whinchats, and four Stonechats were on Prince's Beach in the afternoon. A Cetti's Warbler was on the Estate on the 13th, plus a Redstart, three Whinchats, six Wheatears, two Pied Flycatchers, and a Coal Tit but the 14th was quieter with a few Wigeon offshore, a Pied Flycatcher around the Whitehouse, and a late Swift over Prince's Golf Course. On the 15th the Dotterel once again flew over Worth marshes calling. A Garganey was hiding in among the Teal flock on

the pool near the wooden bridge, with Black-tailed Godwit and Wood Sandpiper on the same water, plus Turtle Dove, four Whinchats, and a few Corn Buntings also seen during the morning. A few Wheatears were on the sea front on the Estate, a Hobby flew north offshore, and two Water Rails were on New Downs South Pool.

There was a significant arrival of Blackcaps on the Estate at dawn on the 16th. Birds were bounding around the bushes in the Haven, Whitehouse, and Oasis area. The final total was 139 birds. Also in the area was a Hobby, a Coal Tit, and the first Firecrest of autumn. Around 70 Meadow Pipits went north. On the 17th a **Pectoral Sandpiper** dropped into Worth marshes briefly mid-morning before heading off towards Betteshanger. Later in the evening a search revealed there were in fact two birds, both on the muddy pool by the wooden bridge, south of the Great Wood. On the Estate there was another decent fall of Blackcaps and our first Brambling of the autumn in the Gullies. Visible migration finally 'kicked off' with 240 Meadow Pipits, 1,040 House Martins, a few Grey Wagtails, and one Tree Pipit heading north. Five Tree Sparrows were also seen around the sandpit area at Dickson's Corner, the same site they were present at the end of last year.



Pectoral Sandpiper by S.Reynaert

The 18th was a busy day full of talking points. It started off with the first Black-throated Diver of autumn north offshore. The two **Pectoral Sandpipers** were still present on Worth marshes from yesterday and were briefly joined by a Curlew Sandpiper (actually rarer on Worth than Pectoral Sandpiper), followed swiftly by a **Great White Egret**.

The following day was busy again. As well as the two Pectoral Sandpipers there were 16 Grey Partridges, a Peregrine, a Spotted Redshank, two Little Ringed Plovers, a Grey Plover, a Mediterranean Gull, a Short-eared Owl, 215 Meadow Pipits, three Whinchats, four Wheatears, and two Tree Sparrows. A Brambling was at the Hoverport in Pegwell Bay. After a damp start, a total of 158 Meadow Pipits, three Yellow Wagtails, and four Grey Wagtails flew north the next day, and 22 Brent Geese and a male Merlin were seen offshore. There was a small but noticeable increase in Song Thrushes on the Estate and lots of Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs. The two **Pectoral Sandpipers** were still on Worth in the company of three Ruffs, six Ringed Plovers, three Green Sandpipers, and a Greenshank.

The forecast was for low cloud all day but it was quite a clear (and cold) start to the 21st. There were lots of warblers around the Estate once again, predominantly Blackcap and Chiffchaff, with final totals of 170 and 58, respectively. Visible migration was also good with 931 Swallows, two Tree Pipits, 233 Meadow Pipits, two Yellow Wagtails, four Grey Wagtails, and 131 Linnets moving north. The bushes were busy with ticking Robins, 33 in total, as well as singles of Redstart and Brambling and six Ravens. An interesting 'brown' Lesser Whitethroat was seen in the Haven and was later caught by the ringing team. It looked like a good candidate for Eastern Lesser Whitethroat *C.blythi* at first but biometrics and tail pattern suggested otherwise and was most likely just a nominate Lesser Whitethroat *C.curruca*. On Worth the two **Cattle Egrets** re-appeared and a Spoonbill dropped in briefly, with Wood Sandpiper, Short-eared Owl, Whinchat, and at least 20 Chiffchaffs also present.

The 22nd was another excellent day with a massive movement of hirundines north through the area. By mid-afternoon 34,300 House Martins and 3,900 Swallows had been recorded. A walk along the Green Wall provided good numbers and diversity with 37 Chiffchaffs, 25 Blackcaps, ten Little Grebes, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Yellow Wagtail, four Coal Tits, and best of all, a vocal **Nuthatch**. On the Estate another big fall of Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs occurred with 139 of the former and 89 of the latter. A Wood Warbler was in Waldershare Gully, 600 Meadow Pipits and ten Grey Wagtails flew through, and an Owl species was seen around the Whitehouse area at dawn (but wasn't re-found). New Downs Pools held 117 Wigeons, a Water Rail with two fluffy chicks, four Ruffs, five Black-tailed Godwits, and three Greenshanks. Worth marshes didn't miss out on the fun and provided a Spoonbill, two Cattle Egrets, and a nice male Redstart. Then, in the evening, a fantastic juvenile **Sabine's Gull** was found in among the large gull flock on the ploughed field at Blue Pigeons. On the 23rd the juvenile **Sabine's Gull**, Spoonbill, and two **Cattle Egrets** all remained on Worth marshes, plus a Merlin and two Ruffs. Singles of Coal Tit and Tree Pipit were the best on the Estate. There was no sign of the Sabine's Gull the next day but the two **Cattle Egrets** and the Spoonbill remained on Worth marshes. A Spotted Flycatcher was on the Estate as well as lots of Chiffchaffs. Small numbers of Linnet and Goldfinch moved along the shore.

The usual **Cattle Egrets** and Spoonbill were still on Worth marshes on the 25th, joined by 120 Stock Doves, a Tree Pipit, and an increase in Stonechats, and were followed by a **Honey-buzzard** north in the afternoon. Both Spoonbill and Barn Owl over the Observatory in the morning of the 26th was unusual. The regular Spoonbill was still on Worth marshes (so the Estate bird was different) and the two **Cattle Egrets** remained. There were 41 Chiffchaffs and hundreds of House Martins on the Estate. It was hard work in the rain early on the 27th but worth it with Pomarine Skua, Arctic and Great Skuas, Little Gull, two Manx Shearwaters, and two Black Terns offshore. The Spoonbill and **Cattle Egrets** were still present inland on Worth marshes.

It was quieter in the Estate bushes on the 28th but there was a reasonable spread of Chiffchaffs, plus another 20 on the Green Wall. Just under 1,500 House Martins went north overhead and a Mediterranean Gull was on Royal St George's Golf Course. Offshore was good again with a Balearic Shearwater south and a dark phase Arctic Skua chasing Gannets and Herring Gulls. The first two Siskins of autumn were on Worth, plus a small arrival of Pochard, a Spotted Redshank, a Wood Sandpiper, and the regular Spoonbill. The 29th was windy again. The south end of the Estate was busy with Chiffchaffs. 'Vismig' along the shore comprised 500 House Martins, six Siskins, a trickle of Linnets and Meadow Pipits, a Merlin, plus a handful of Sand Martins and two late Swifts. Three Rock Pipits dropped onto the jetty near Sandilands and at least five mobile Jays were bouncing around. There were reports of large numbers of Jay on the move on the Continent so these could be migrants. There was not much new to report on Worth marshes but a Turtle Dove was seen and the Spoonbill and two **Cattle Egrets** continued to please. The mixture of Brent Geese, Red-throated Divers, and Great Crested Grebes offshore on the 30th made it feel rather like winter. A Kestrel came in off the sea but most activity was from Meadow Pipits as a steady progression of birds came along the shore or in off. At least 368 went south. Little Owls were vocal on the Estate and plenty of Blackcaps were in the bushes, 87 in total. The Spoonbill remained faithful to Worth but the two **Cattle Egrets** had found a new friend as there were now three birds, plus a Merlin.

October

On the 1st two Arctic Skuas were the highlights offshore and a Pochard and a Greenshank were on Restharrow Scrape. Ring-necked Parakeet is not a species that gets a mention very often but 11 on Worth was unusual. The Spoonbill and two **Cattle Egrets** made it into October. There was horrible weather for most of the 2nd but sea-watching was very good. A **Long-tailed Skua** was the pick of the bunch and recorded for the second year in succession. Eight Arctic Skuas and six Great Skuas provided good comparison. It felt birdy first thing in the morning on the 3rd with the 'hueet' of Chiffchaffs from the bushes around the Observatory.

There was no hoped-for Red-flanked Bluetail but a Short-eared Owl, a Black-throated Diver offshore, and a Spoonbill over the Observatory (which may have been the Worth bird) were compensation. A Spotted Redshank joined the two **Cattle Egrets** on Worth marshes. After a few early downpours there was an Arctic Skua, seven Common Terns, and a Guillemot offshore, and a Siskin over the Observatory on the 4th. A Wood Sandpiper was on Worth plus four Jays, and a number on the Green Wall and Estate too. The 5th was another wet start to the day but a Black-throated Diver was seen offshore. As conditions got better a Spotted Flycatcher was found in Waldershare Gully among the feeding Chiffchaffs. At least nine Jays flew north over the Estate. The next day a Hen Harrier flew south offshore and there was a steady passage of wildfowl north, an Arctic Skua, plus a Rock Pipit along the shore. The two **Cattle Egrets** on Worth were joined by a third but there was no sign of the Spoonbill. The first Redwings of autumn were around the Observatory car park and later two Short-eared Owls came in off the sea. In the evening a Tawny Owl was in The Elms, a Spotted Redshank flew over, and the autumn's first Jack Snipe was on Restharrow Scrape.



Sanderling by N.Smith

A calm morning with low-lying cloud on the 7th was perfect for observing visible migration. Meadow Pipits were the main movers with 777 counted going south. There were handfuls of Skylarks, Starlings, Goldfinches, Linnets, and Reed Buntings in amongst plus two Bramblings and two Rock

Pipits. Robins increased to 54 on the Estate, a Spotted Flycatcher was at the Observatory, and a Jack Snipe was seen briefly on Royal St George's Golf Course. A/the Spotted Redshank was on Worth marshes. The 7/8th was a really busy night of migration with hundreds of Redwings and Song Thrushes recorded calling overnight at Stonar and at the Observatory. During the day a Merlin, three Rock Pipits, and a Coal Tit were new on the Estate and there was a noticeable increase in Skylarks. A good variety of winter waders were in Pegwell Bay on the 9th. Two Avocet were unusual for the time of year and 1,170 Oystercatchers was an above average count. Two Wheatears were on Prince's Beach and three Pochards, two Ruffs, a Whinchat and a Rock Pipit were the highlights on New Downs.

A very foggy start to the 10th made it hard work. Mid-morning things cleared and a Manx Shearwater glided south over the Estate beach, presumably disorientated by the fog. An impressive 175 Pied Wagtails flew north too, along with 198 Meadow Pipits, three Rock Pipits, 150 Starlings, and a Brambling. There were 23 Reed Buntings around the Dickson's Corner area and a few new Goldcrests made landfall on the Estate. The Manx Shearwater was seen again offshore the next day, plus 41 Pied Wagtails flew north, and a few Short-eared Owls were on Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course. In the morning of the 12th the first Lesser Redpoll of autumn flew over and there was an increase in Redwings. The 13th was nice, sunny, calm, and cool. Light passage comprised 25 Jays north, two House Martins, a Red Kite, 230 Goldfinches, and a handful of Bramblings. There were a scattering of Song Thrushes and Chiffchaffs in the bushes and at the back of the asparagus fields there were four Tree Sparrows, 22 Corn Buntings, and 80 Skylarks. A Jack Snipe was on Restharrow Scrape and Bullfinches were at the Drove and in the Gullies. The first Fieldfare of autumn flew through and a Bearded Tit was along the river on the Green Wall. A pale Buzzard also around the Restharrow Scrape area caught the eye, with bright white underparts, a white tail, and white head.

The 14th toggled back and forth from bright and sunny to grey and cloudy. There was some finch passage through with small parties of Chaffinches, Goldfinches, and the odd Brambling. At least 17 Jays came through the area and flocks of 170 Swallows and 40 House Martins were unexpected. Two **Cattle Egrets** were back on Worth marshes, presumably the same birds which had been present on and off for a while now. Visible migration only occurred in fits and starts on the 15th despite the conditions being seemingly perfect. Still, 230 Chaffinches and 400+ Goldfinches came through over the course of the morning. Both Merlin and **Great White Egret** flew over Restharrow Scrape, with a Water Rail on it. A Razorbill was offshore and four Firecrests were around Vigo Sluice on the Green Wall. On the 16th a **RADDE'S WARBLER** was discovered at Dickson's Corner in the ditch north of the Clay Pigeon Shooting School, along the public footpath behind the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course sandpit area. The first Snow Bunting of autumn was also seen flying along the Estate beach and the Jack Snipe remained on Restharrow Scrape.

The **RADDE'S WARBLER** continued to play hard-to-get the next day. It remained stubbornly elusive in the vegetation with just the odd call heard. A Spoonbill flew over the Observatory and a **Great White Egret** was on view from the Drove. Flocks of Golden Plovers and winter thrushes were more noticeable and a few Lesser Redpolls and Bramblings were seen. A Yellowhammer and five Jays flew through early on the 18th, a Merlin was at Dickson's Corner, and later 2,500 Black-headed Gulls were on Worth marshes in the afternoon. It was quite breezy on the Estate on the 19th. Birding the bushes was unproductive but the sea saw 50+ Gannets and a few Razorbills, 27 Swallows and six House Martins flew through, and Restharrow Scrape had almost 30 Snipes and a Pochard. A wader flock on the Estate beach comprised 95 Sanderlings, 46 Ringed Plovers, 36 Dunlins, and three Turnstones. Singles of Merlin and Water Rail were on Worth marshes whilst an Alexandrine Parakeet provided some colour. A Ring Ouzel on Worth marshes the subsequent day was our first of the autumn. A spell along the sea front produced 39 Siskins north overhead and 23 Sanderlings north offshore. A Brambling flew over Restharrow Scrape where a Rock Pipit and 32 Snipes were seen.

A flock of six female Goosanders north offshore was the best sighting of the 21st. A handful of Siskins also flew over, two late Wheatears were seen, Jack Snipes were on Restharrow Scrape and on Worth marshes. On the 22nd two **Cattle Egrets** on Worth marshes were the first since the 14th (or new arrivals maybe?). There were still good numbers of Swallows around the Restharrow Scrape area, 35 Lesser Redpolls in the Oasis, and a noticeable increase in Tits too. Similar peaks of the latter were also seen on the near Continent during the week. A Greylag Goose offshore on the 23rd was unusual and the elusive flock of Tree Sparrows got pinned down finally and showed at Dickson's Corner. At least nine, maybe 12, birds were present among the Linnets and Reed Buntings. Some interesting movement offshore on the 24th comprised a drake Eider north, an Arctic Skua, and three Arctic Terns, whilst almost 400 Starlings came in off the sea. Two Jack Snipes were glimpsed on the Estate and at least 62 Swallows and a House Martin lingered. Three Pochards were on Restharrow Scrape.

There was impressive *Gallinago* action on Restharrow Scrape on the 25th with 54 Snipes and a Jack Snipe. It was our highest ever count of Snipe on Restharrow Scrape (previously 45 on 24th November 2011). At least five Tree Sparrows were around the sandpit area at Dickson's Corner. There were still a number of Corn Buntings singing nearby and a few coveys of Grey Partridge, completing a good morning for farmland species. A mix of species on New Downs on the 26th with a minimum of eight Bearded Tits on the South Pool, and two Ruffs, 521 Lapwings, 176 Golden Plovers, and 412 Wigeons on the North Pool. Rock Pipit, Green Sandpiper, and Water Rail were also seen and there were unusually high counts of 38 Pheasants, 15 Ring-necked Parakeets, and 110 Coots. Both Rock and Water Pipit were on Worth marshes, plus five Ravens, and an arrival of Gadwall (71). Two Bearded Tits were also present on the Green Wall by the Black Sluice.

Bearded Tits continued to arrive on the 27th with two small flocks on the Pinnock Wall on Worth marshes in the morning, complementing the flocks already present at the Hoverport in Pegwell Bay, on the South Pool on New Downs, and along the river on the Green Wall. There was a little visible migration overhead with 66 Swallows and small numbers of Chaffinches and Siskins, whilst 60 Mediterranean Gulls were also on Worth. A Rock Pipit was along the beach the next day and a few Sandwich Terns offshore. At least eight Tree Sparrows remained at Dickson's corner and a Ring Ouzel was at New Downs New Pool.

Stormy conditions on the 29th encouraged a southward passage of Auks offshore with 112 counted, plus eight confirmed Razorbills and one Guillemot, a Mediterranean Gull, a Pintail, 165 Great Black-backed Gulls, and 151 Gannets. In Pegwell there were over 5,000 Gulls including 4,100 Black-headed, 690 Herring, and 400 Great Black-backed. Another day looking at the sea on the 30th produced Slavonian Grebe and two Little Gulls, plus 11 Razorbills (and 135 Auks), 155 Gannets, and two Mediterranean Gulls. Sea watching was the name of the game again on the final day of the month, before rain stopped play. Singles of Arctic Skua, Great Skua, Purple Sandpiper, and Little Gull were well worth the effort, plus 54 Auks and 108 Gannets. There continued to be large numbers of Snipe on Restharrow Scrape.

November

The month got off to a good start with the discovery of two Dartford Warblers behind the sandpit at Dickson's Corner on the 1st. Two Tree Sparrows were still present from previous months, as was the Jack Snipe on Restharrow Scrape. The best elsewhere was a Water Pipit on Worth, two Yellow-legged Gulls between Worth and Restharrow Scrape, a Slavonian Grebe offshore and a Bearded Tit at Pegwell Bay. The 2nd saw an increase in Tree Sparrow numbers, with 15 seen. Two Short-eared Owls were spotted hunting over Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course, and 14 Pink-footed Geese flying north, as well as a passage of Siskins and Skylarks and an influx of Lapwings and Golden Plovers into the area. Eight Egyptian Geese and a **Great White Egret** were present on Worth. A Snow Bunting on Prince's Beach was the highlight of the 3rd. Ten Tree Sparrows and at least one Dartford Warbler were still present at Dickson's Corner, and there were two Water Pipits on Worth. The 4th proved a good day for sea watching, with highlights of 243 Brent Geese, a Goldeneye, two Velvet Scoters, 113 Gannets, 51 Knot, 164 Dunlin and a Shag, as well as a Snow Bunting flying along the shore. A **Cattle Egret** and a Water Pipit were seen on Worth, and a male Hen Harrier on the Estate. Fieldfares finally began to arrive into the area.

Offshore highlights for the 5th were an Eider and 79 Brent Geese. The Tree Sparrows and Dartford Warbler remained at Dickson's Corner, and numbers of Blackbirds, Bramblings and Siskins continued to increase. Six Swallows remained on the Estate.

The 6th saw another large arrival of Blackbirds, with the Observatory, Estate and Worth providing around 250, as well as Redwings, Song Thrushes and Fieldfares. Worth had two each of Water Rail, Bearded Tit and Yellowhammer, and three Snow Buntings arrived on the beach south of Sandilands. Four Tree Sparrows were still at Dickson's Corner, and seven Swallows and a House Martin overhead. Snow Bunting numbers increased to eight on the 7th – four along Prince's Beach and four south of Sandilands. A Merlin was seen on New Downs and a **Great White Egret** at Pegwell. Ten Tree Sparrows remained at the sandpit and Worth had two Jack Snipes. WeBS counts were also done on the 7th and had some varied totals – 970 Oystercatchers, 559 Lapwings, 255 Golden Plovers, 90 Grey Plovers, 405 Dunlins, 120 Sanderlings, 268 Curlews, 18 Bar-tailed Godwits, 15 Black-tailed Godwits, 11 Knots, two Ruffs, 110 Redshanks, 13 Snipes, three Green Sandpipers, 811 Wigeons, 120 Teals, and four Water Rails. Merlin and Woodcock were both seen around Dickson's Corner on the 8th and the Snow Bunting flock south of Sandilands and on Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course had increased to five individuals, remaining at that number on the 9th.

The 10th saw a ringtail Hen Harrier around the Willow Farm area and a new Dartford Warbler at Prince's Beach, with two still remaining at Dickson's Corner. Three Tree Sparrows flew over Mary Bax, five Snow Buntings were still present south of Sandilands as well as one on Prince's Beach and Worth had two Water Pipits. The 11th started off quietly, with just one Dartford Warbler at Dickson's Corner, but the evening brought a Woodcock in the Observatory car park, a Firecrest in the Haven, and a Short-eared Owl on Royal St. George's Golf Course. Worth once again had two Water Pipits on the 12th and the ringtail Hen Harrier was seen again. One of the best birds of the month arrived on the 13th, a **Crane** seen briefly first thing at Willow Farm. It flew off north, and unfortunately could not be relocated.

The **Crane** was spotted again briefly on the 14th, flying near the Discovery Park. Worth had three Water Pipits and a single Pink-footed Goose, and sea watching produced 35 Pink-footed Geese, 96 Teal and three Pintails. The sea watch highlight of the 15th was a **Sabine's Gull**, with a drake Eider, three Red-breasted Mergansers, 11 Pink-footed Geese and a Sandwich Tern also offshore. The ringtail Hen Harrier was once again seen, seven Black-tailed Godwits were on the garage pool at Pegwell Bay, and the Whitehouse area had two Woodcocks. The 16th saw an increase in Siskin and Lesser Redpoll numbers. The Green Wall had a Water Pipit, Brambling and two Firecrests, and the best from Worth was a Woodcock and a Tawny Owl. The 17th was quiet, but at least one Dartford Warbler remained at Dickson's Corner. On the 18th, the Tawny Owl was again present at Worth, as well as one Water Pipit and three Water Rails. The Green Wall also had three Water Rails, suggesting an arrival overnight. A Lapland Bunting joined the flock of three remaining Snow Buntings on Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course and was seen again briefly on the 19th but was not relocated. The 19th also saw some unusual sights in the form of a Brent Goose on Restharrow Scrape and a Rock Pipit flying over the Green Wall.

Bird of the day on the 20th was a Goldeneye on Worth, an unusual place for one to turn up. Other highlights were a Yellowhammer on Worth, a Water Pipit and two Water Rails on the Green Wall, and three Snow Buntings still present at Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course. The 21st saw an increase to 280 Teal on Restharrow Scrape and the Snow Bunting flock increased to four. The ringtail Hen Harrier and Goldeneye were both seen again, a Black-throated Diver was moving north offshore, and two Swallows were still around. Sea watching on the 22nd saw large numbers of wildfowl moving through helped by the strong wind, with the highlights 142 Brent Geese, 155 Shelducks, 218 Wigeon, 80 Teal, two Pintails, two Goldeneyes, a Red-breasted Merganser, and an Eider. Elsewhere, a lone Pink-footed Goose flew over Worth Marshes. The 23rd saw the arrival of a drake Pintail on the muddy pool at Worth, as well as a Yellow-legged Gull. The best birds of the day came from offshore, in the shape of a female Scaup sitting on the sea before moving north, and two Velvet Scoters also heading north.



Snow Bunting by R. Denison-pender

The Snow Bunting flock saw a large increase on the 24th, with 13 individuals dividing their time between the beach and Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course. Worth had large thrush numbers, with 48 Blackbirds, 24 Fieldfare and 20 Redwing, and the Goldeneye and a Water Pipit were once again present. A Tawny Owl was found roosting on the Estate. Snow Buntings remained on the 25th and two more Velvet Scoters were seen moving north offshore. The Teal count on Restharrow Scrape on the 26th reached over 600, with good numbers of Gadwall, Shoveler and Tufted Duck also present. The ringtail Hen Harrier was again seen around the Estate. A windy day on the 28th thanks to Storm Arwen made for good sea watching, with two more Velvet Scoters and a male Goosander seen moving north, along with Red-throated Divers, Gannets, Cormorants, Dunlin and Greater Black-backed Gulls.

The 29th began with the brief presence of a **Cattle Egret** in with the young cattle in the field next to the Observatory, but it had disappeared by 9am. Later on, a **White Stork** was reported flying from Deal towards Sandwich and was located on Worth just before sunset. The **White Stork** remained on Worth on the 30th, and the Goldeneye and drake Pintail were also both still present.

December

The month started with singles of Pintail, Goldeneye, and Hen Harrier on Worth marshes, along with the **White Stork**, meanwhile good visibility for sea watching rewarded those taking part with Great Northern Diver, Shag, and Great Skua offshore. A Merlin was near Restharrow Scrape. On the 2nd the **White Stork** was still present on Worth marshes whilst a drake Goosander was a good sighting offshore. The 3rd saw Teal numbers rise up on Restharrow scrape to 715 and a Red-breasted Merganser was the best offer for sea watching. The **White Stork** continued on Worth marshes, this time flushing a Woodcock! Large numbers of Golden Plover, Lapwing and Starlings were present on the 4th on the Estate, with two Merlins, a Barn Owl, and a Hen Harrier present. Three Green Sandpipers, Pintail, and Goldeneye supported the **White Stork** on Worth Marshes on the 5th with a Great Northern Diver being sighted offshore and a Merlin once again at Dickson's Corner. The 6th saw the ringers catch a very late Lesser Whitethroat showing features of one of the Eastern races. Elsewhere, a few Siskins and Lesser Redpoll were on the Estate along with high numbers of Blackbirds and Song Thrushes. A large build-up of Cormorants on the 8th in the aftermath of Storm Barra was an interesting talking point with 900+ recorded offshore. A **Great White Egret** was on Worth Marshes. On the 9th Tree Sparrows made a welcome re-appearance around the sandpit area with at least 16 present in the scrubby undergrowth and nearby Hawthorns. At least 1,434 Cormorants were offshore and at high tide in Pegwell Bay there were flocks of 49 Shelducks, 310 Wigeons, 882 Oystercatchers, 265 Lapwings, 128 Curlews, 101 Redshanks, 420 BH Gulls, 590 Common Gulls, and 435 Herring Gulls. Two Avocets and 31 Black-tailed Godwits were unusual for mid-winter. Three Water Rails, a Green Sandpiper, and a Coal Tit were also on the Green Wall.

The 10th recorded a nice male Merlin on Worth marshes, as well as the **White Stork** and Goldeneye, and a Shag joined the melee of Cormorants offshore. The Tree Sparrows remained on Dickson's Corner on the 11th, though now reduced to six. Three Water Rails, Green Sandpiper, and Brambling were highlights along the Green Wall. The ringtail Hen Harrier was seen a few occasions throughout the morning of the 12th. Singles of Blackcap and Brambling were caught by the ringing team and six Snow Buntings were on Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course. The 13th brought ten Snow Buntings and a Tree Sparrow in their usual spots. Worth was productive with Goldeneye, Water Pipit, Brambling, Hen Harrier, Mediterranean Gull, and an increase in Wigeon and Teal.

The **White Stork** was still nearby at the Round House. There was an arrival of Meadow Pipits and Water Pipits on Worth marshes on the 14th, with at least five of the latter. A Woodcock was on the Estate, 11 Snow Buntings were seen on RCPGC, and at least one Dartford Warbler was re-found at Dickson's Corner after going missing for a few weeks. On the 15th New Downs produced a Green Sandpiper on the flooded fields and over 1,000 Lapwings. Four Pochards were on Prince's Reservoir and at least two separate Bearded Tits were calling from reedbeds around the South Pool and the North Pool. Over on Worth, a Hen Harrier and Water Pipit were present with the **White Stork** and on the Green Wall seven Water Rails were calling and three Water Pipits came into roost.

Calm conditions on the 16th produced a mild morning for birding. The flock of 11 Snow Buntings were still by the raised tee on Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course (south of Sandilands) and a flock of Siskins were in the Haven. Out to sea, plenty was about with 317 Red-throated Divers and 172 Great Crested Grebes, but also a handful of Razorbills. Over on Worth marshes the highlights were two Water Pipits and the **White Stork**. The 18th proved to be an excellent day of birding with the discovery of a mixed flock of Geese consisting of at least 27 White-fronted Geese, one Tundra Bean Goose, and nine Barnacle Geese, among the Greylag Goose flock around Willow Farm. Whilst viewing the geese from Dickson's Corner both a Dartford Warbler and a Tree Sparrow were found. There were further totals of one Goldeneye, one Woodcock, three Green Sandpipers, 49 Snipes, six Jack Snipes, and five Water Pipits, with the **White Stork** still present. There were now 12 Snow Buntings south of Sandilands on RCPGC and sea watching was just as productive with another eight Barnacle Geese north, a Shag, and a Little Gull. On the 19th The ringed **Eastern Lesser Whitethroat** from two weeks ago re-appeared in The Elms in a mixed Tit and Chiffchaff flock. At least 26 White-fronted Geese were still on Worth marshes, as well as the Goldeneye and the White Stork, whilst the Dartford Warbler and five Tree Sparrows were in the sandpit area. Another Dartford Warbler was seen in the Sea Buckthorn along Prince's Beach and over in Pegwell Bay there was an excellent count of 42 Barnacle Geese and two Tundra Bean Geese. A Velvet Scoter flew along the shore.

Two Velvet Scoters flew north offshore on the 20th whilst coverage of Worth marshes recorded 40 Barnacle Geese, 18 White-fronted Geese and a Merlin. The 21st recorded further interesting geese totals with a mixed flock of nine Brent Geese, 55 White-fronted Geese, one Pink-footed, five Tundra Bean, and 68 Barnacle Geese on Worth marshes, with the Hen Harrier and **White Stork** also seen. A Black-throated Diver offshore was the sea watching highlight on the 23rd. Worth marshes once again held good numbers of geese with Willow Farm having 42 Barnacle Geese and 50 White-fronted Geese. On the other side of the railway, four Brent Geese and the **White Stork** were also noteworthy. 220 Golden Plover on the Estate was a good flock-size and the ringtail Hen Harrier once again made an appearance. The 24th saw 70 Barnacle Geese still on Willow Farm, and 11 Pink-footed Geese in with them.

The **White Stork** remained on Worth and a drake Pintail was on the pools. Five Short-eared Owls, a Marsh Harrier, and a Hen Harrier were quartering between Restharrow Scrape and the Chequers in the evening. Two Dartford Warblers were present at Dickson's Corner on the 26th with five Woodcocks along the Green Wall. Two Little Gulls offshore was the best offer in grim conditions on the 27th with a few Chiffchaffs and a handful of Redwings on the estate. The 28th witnessed a mass arrival of Lapwings to the area with around 7,400 recorded, five Water Pipits were on Worth with 50 Barnacle Geese still remaining at Willow Farm. The large Lapwing numbers remained on the 29th with 5,200 on Worth alone, four Ruff were in the flooded fields by Restharrow Scrape. A good mix of offshore sightings were notable on the 30th including a female/immature male Velvet Scoter and a Shag. At Willow Farm around 100 White-fronted Geese were present. Although quiet on the Estate for the final day of 2021 with a few Chiffchaffs in the Elms, Worth recorded a good selection of species including Goldeneye, Pintail, Water Pipit, two Ruffs, Hen Harrier, Merlin, Peregrine, and the **White Stork**.



Skylark by J.Buckingham

A Systematic List of Species

At the end of 2019 the number of species recorded within the Observatory Recording Area stood at 345. There were no new additions in 2021.

The taxonomic order in the list that follows and the English vernacular names used correspond to the most recent BOU list. Below each species name is the status of the bird in the SBBOT Recording Area. Peak monthly counts and bird-day totals are shown below many species. The peak count is the highest number recorded on one day combined across all the Recording Area. For example, if there were 12 Swallows on the Estate on 12th April compared to six on the Green Wall, four on the Estate, and seven on Worth on the 13th. In this instance the peak count for the month would be 17. Bird-days are the sum of sightings each month. Using the same Swallow data as before the number of bird-days would be 29. Rare species included in the list have been accepted by the SBBOT, KOS, and BBRC records panels.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Scarce visitor

There were only three records again this year. Singles were on Worth marshes on 1st March, at the Point on 30th April, and on Worth on 7th May.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Common resident breeder

The year's total of 446 bird-days is a 37% decline on last year. The highest count of the year was in February with 19 on the 5th. Peak counts at the start of the year were of four on the Estate, six on New Downs, eight at the Point, and up to ten in the Worth area.

There was an increase in sightings in September which included ten on the Estate on the 4th, nine on New Downs on the 8th, and 16 on Worth on the 19th. These good numbers continued into the winter period with at least 41 birds spread through the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	12	19	3	4	5	3	2	4	16	12	18	12
B/days	26	54	25	21	28	7	4	17	54	78	70	62



Grey Partridge by S.Reynaert

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Common resident breeder

The early months of the year saw triple-figure bird-days into May, with only February experiencing a lull. Peak counts in spring were 23 and 20 on New Downs, 12 on the Estate, and 12 on Worth.

An expected rise in numbers occurred in the autumn months with a peak count of 68 on 16th November, 47 of these birds being recorded on New Downs. Peak counts on the Estate and Worth in the autumn were 18 and 21, respectively.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	20	8	23	13	13	14	12	15	15	50	68	50
B/days	148	57	149	141	102	56	32	80	91	246	371	295

(Dark-bellied) Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Common migrant and winter visitor

Around 90 birds were in Pegwell Bay at the start of the year and two birds were seen infrequently on Worth marshes. In February a flock on New Downs peaked at 186 on the 13th. Passage began offshore at this time with 56 north on the 8th, 830 north on the 4th, and 86 on the 19th all counts of note. A few stragglers were seen in April and one north offshore on 22nd May was the last of spring.

The first returning birds were seen on 19th September. Autumn passage was poor on the whole, it wasn't until November that birds began to move in significant numbers. There were 243 north on the 4th, 156 on the 5th, and 142 on the 22nd. Up to eight birds were present on Worth at the end of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	90	207	830	3	1				46	39	243	21
B/days	108	763	980	7	1				115	195	632	63

There were no Pale-bellied Brent Geese *B. hrota* recorded in 2021.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Regular visitor and occasional breeder

There were 121 bird-days in the first six months, a 34.4% increase on the same period last year. Single birds were seen on five dates over January and February followed by a noticeable increase in March. Six were seen on Restharrow Scrape on the 3rd and five were on New Downs on the 29th. Most of the year's activity occurred in April. Most days saw one-three birds with eight on the 9th, six on the 14th and 25th, and seven on the 29th. Birds lingered through May in low numbers with the last two seen on the Green Wall on 8th June.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

The 351 bird-days was a further increase on the numbers seen in 2020. The majority of records in January came from Worth, with six offshore on the 21st the only other records from the area. A single at Stonar on 13th February was the only record during that month. March saw an increase to the area with 39 bird-days. The majority of these records were on the Estate and Worth with up to five throughout the month, a single was also recorded on a couple of dates on New Downs. Contrary to last year, May was quiet with a single bird on Restharrow Scrape on the 17th.

It wasn't until December that birds would return with 294 bird-days in this month alone. Worth held the bulk of birds with a flock of up to 70 present on Willow Farm. A flock of 42 at Pegwell on 19th December and eight north offshore on the 18th were the only records elsewhere.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

The first six months of the year were busy. Just shy of 300 birds were present during January and February, mostly on the Estate, Worth, or New Downs. Birds began to leave in March leaving a non-breeding flock of around 50 individuals to summer on Worth marshes. The only breeding records were from New Downs with at least six pairs present.

The usual post-breeding build-up occurred in July and August. This usually occurs on the cut arable fields on the Green Wall but this year the flock made use of the pools and grasslands on Worth marshes. There they remained until the end of September. Sightings of the flock were intermittent in October and November. A single bird offshore on the 23rd was the only sign of migration. Around 150 birds were present in the area in December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	240	295	133	58	75	60	113	200	250	220	87	170
B/days	2610	2292	856	393	630	412	898	2370	1867	513	205	832

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

The first record was of six seen flying north on 8th February and was followed by another 23 flying north on the 12th. Two were on New Downs on the 16th, one was on Restharrow Scrape on the 25th, and 12 on Worth on 26th. March saw singles on the Estate on the 3rd, Worth on the 4th, and the Estate on the 5th, 6th, and 7th, likely all the same bird.

November brought 78 bird-days with 15 moving north on the 2nd, one on the 14th, 47 south offshore on the 14th, 11 on the 15th, one on the 22nd, and three recorded flying over the Estate overnight on the 23rd. One was on Worth on 21st December and the final record of the year was of 14 on Worth on the 24th.

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

Scarce winter visitor

The 33 bird-days from January through to March was a reduction from last year's excellent numbers but still a reasonable showing. The year began with four birds on Worth marshes followed by three on New Downs on a few dates. There were singles on Restharrow Scrape and Worth marshes in February, all referring to the same bird, which stayed into March where it was last seen on New Downs on the 19th.

The end of the year saw only a single on Worth on 18th December and two in Pegwell Bay on the 19th.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Occasional winter visitor and passage migrant

Large numbers were found in the area following last autumn's influx. There were 200 birds on Worth marshes on the first day of the year. Numbers then fluctuated between 30-100 birds on Worth, the Estate, or New Downs and were seen more-or-less daily until March, when they increased to 170. Most birds left the area by the end of the month. One was on Worth on 17th April. The total spring bird-day count totalled 1,198.

The first birds of winter were 27 on Worth on 18th December. The flock increased to 55 on the 21st and then 100 on the 30th.



White-fronted Geese by J.Buckingham

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

At the start of the year peak counts were similar to the same time last year with up to 24 on Worth marshes and one-two birds occasionally on New Downs. One went south offshore on 18th January. Two were in Pegwell Bay on 9th May and ten on 9th June. A non-breeding flock on Worth reached 15 individuals but one pair bred and raised ten cygnets. Another pair attempted to breed on Resttharrow Scrape but failed.

In contrast to previous years, the early autumn period was quite busy as the double-figure flock remained on Worth marshes. The peak count on Worth was 39 on 22nd October. Five were offshore on 17th November and two birds on 17th December. December had more bird-days than any month of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	24	21	21	31	24	34	28	27	31	41	31	29
B/days	215	184	170	170	237	299	321	313	380	480	452	523

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Occasional but increasing

A total of 43 bird-days was recorded, most of which were in the first four months of the year. A single bird toured around the Estate, Resttharrow Scrape, and Worth marshes in January, and was joined by a second in February. The peak count of the year was four on Worth on 18th March. Two on the Estate on 24th April were the last of spring.

A single was on Resttharrow Scrape on four dates in early September and eight were seen on Worth marshes on 2nd November.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Annual breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

The year began with up to 42 on New Downs, two on Worth, and 81 in Pegwell Bay. February saw an increase in numbers, followed by a decrease in March for all three areas, with only eight birds remaining on Worth and 35 in Pegwell Bay. New Downs numbers remained steady, while Pegwell Bay increased up to the levels of January once again, with 124 birds recorded on 22nd May. Worth numbers dwindled, with very few records in the summer months. June and July saw combined counts from across the Recording Area fall into double-figures, and summer counts were all low, not reaching triple figures again until 15th November. On 22nd November, 155 were recorded moving north offshore, with a total of 235 birds seen moving offshore that month. The year ended in a similar way to which it began, with up to 50 on New Downs, one on Worth, and 58 in Pegwell Bay.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	106	189	80	116	189	47	40	30	32	35	156	111
B/days	250	593	357	433	411	118	63	53	59	79	396	271



Egyptian Goose by S.Ray

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Occasional but increasing

The only sighting was of two males and a female on Worth on 10th March.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Regular migrant and rare breeder

A male on the Sampher on 13th April was the only spring sighting.

Singles were on Worth marshes on 1st August and on Restharrow Scrape on the 5th, followed by a bird seen on Worth on four dates in September, with the last sighting on the 15th.

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Occasional breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

Winter numbers at the start of the year remained high with 4452 bird-days in the first three months. New Downs held the highest numbers during the spring build-up with up to 85 present, with up to 65 also on Worth. Restharrow Scrape had between 14-21 individuals present. Most birds dispersed in late spring with very few recorded in June and July.

August saw a build-up of numbers once again although this was less marked than last year. Up to 30 birds were in the Recording Area in September, half of last year's totals at the same time. Numbers built-up considerably in late October with up to 38 on Worth. November experienced a further increase with up to 57 present on Worth, with a peak of 68 on the 16th. During the winter up to 83 birds were present in the Recording Area, although the general figure remained around 70. Worth held the bulk of the numbers and Restharrow Scrape held up to 18 birds during this period.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	84	130	161	51	4	2	8	19	30	64	94	83
B/days	1682	1446	1324	391	16	2	20	181	314	709	1265	1312

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Uncommon breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

An impressive year with over 8,000 bird-days. In January there were up to 40 birds on Restharrow Scrape, ten on New Downs, 24 on Stonar, and 40 on Worth marshes. These numbers stayed roughly the same through to March, with around 35 present in April. Over the summer pairs bred on Restharrow Scrape, New Downs, and Worth marshes.

Autumn numbers were even higher than in spring. They began building significantly from October with up to 19 on Restharrow Scrape and 74 on Worth marshes. In November there were counts of up to 39 on Restharrow Scrape on the 15th and 24 on New Downs on the 16th. The peak counts of the year occurred in December with 42 on Restharrow Scrape on the 23rd and 89 on Worth marshes on the 18th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	66	74	72	31	13	13	17	28	22	93	97	121
B/days	1188	978	948	266	101	81	102	224	286	560	1401	1929

Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Common migrant and winter visitor

In January there were up to 14 on Restharrow Scrape, 53 on New Downs, 30 on Stonar, 1,020 on Worth marshes, and 360 in Pegwell Bay. A spell of harsh weather in mid-February brought an increase in numbers with now 94 on Restharrow Scrape, 260 on New Downs, 60 on Stonar, and 680 in Pegwell. Counts dropped after that but some good numbers remained into March. April saw low double-figures become single figures, and the last four were on Worth on 1st May.

One was in Pegwell Bay on 1st August and by the end of the month there were around 50 birds present in the Recording Area. Light passage occurred offshore from mid-September. Peak numbers were 74 north on 6th October, 63 on 4th November, and 218 on 22nd November. During this time the flocks on New Downs and Pegwell increase to over 400 birds, whereas the Worth marshes flock remained low until end of November. By mid-December the number of birds wintering in the Recording Area was around 1,600.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1163	1605	495	24	4			50	132	526	860	1000
B/days	17525	12523	8568	217	4			125	673	2548	4909	8870

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

Counts in each of the first five months were lower than the same months last year. This was particularly noticeable in Pegwell Bay with a winter peak of just 12 birds. In total, around 140 birds wintered in the Recording Area with the highest numbers on New Downs. Birds were found throughout the area in spring and summer. Almost 60 young were seen in the Recording Area but still thought to be an underestimate of the breeding population.

In comparison to the first five months, the latter half of the year saw higher counts in each of the last five months compared to last year. Peak activity was in September and October with a mobile feeding flock in the cut fields between the Estate, Worth, and the Green Wall. Highest counts were 104 birds on Worth on 15th September and 126 on the Green Wall on 1st October. Of note were two north offshore on 22nd November and two south on 23rd December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	64	74	71	54	58	60	47	59	136	206	61	85
B/days	731	681	749	490	337	291	364	713	966	1100	540	822

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Regular migrant and winter visitor

After two singles in January, the cold weather spell in early February brought with it an arrival of birds into the area. Up to 15 were on New Downs, two on Restharrow Scrape, one on Stonar Lake, 11 on Worth marshes, and six in Pegwell Bay. The flocks on New Downs and Worth stayed until mid-March. The last of spring was one on New Downs on 22nd April.

Six in Pegwell on 28th August were the first of autumn. Migrants were thin on the ground with one south offshore on 29th October, three north on 14th November, and two north on the 22nd. A lone drake was on Worth marshes on nine dates in December. The final bird-day total of 386 is our highest since 2012.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1	26	31	3				6		1	3	1
B/days	2	157	194	6				6		1	11	9

Teal *Anas crecca*

Rare breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

The year began with up to 434 on Restharrow Scrape, one on the Green Wall, 168 on New Downs, 27 on Worth, and 78 in Pegwell Bay. There was a big influx in February coinciding with a cold snap. Restharrow Scrape counts reached 629 and up to 245 on Worth, 400 on New Downs, and 300 in Pegwell Bay. Most of these birds had disappeared by March and numbers quickly decreased down to just two on Worth on 14th June.

Numbers started to pick back up again from July, with the first double-figure count on Worth on 15th July and the first triple-figure counts of the autumn on Worth and New Downs on 23rd August, 201 and 212, respectively. The year ended with almost double the number with which it began, and numbers on Restharrow Scrape getting up to 715 in December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	455	1366	197	86	6	2	11	529	714	503	670	802
B/days	3529	6949	2215	583	14	4	73	1943	6435	6410	8294	8407

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Occasional breeder, migrant and declining winter visitor

At the start of the year there were up to five on New Downs, four on Stonar, and nine on Worth. In February there were ten and 11 on Stonar lake on the 11th and the 13th. A male was on Restharrow Scrape on 9th March but all other sightings came from Worth.

Three on Worth on 29th June were the first returning birds. After a slow start the flock gradually increased to 13 on the last days of August. A small flock remained on Worth until the end of the year, with up to four on Restharrow Scrape on six dates in October, three on New Downs on 9th October, and four on New Downs on 15th December. The final year tally of 313 bird-days was the highest since 2012.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	9	11	4			3	1	13	12	7	3	4
B/days	76	36	16			3	3	46	71	38	13	11

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder and common winter visitor

In January there were up to 19 on Restharrow Scrape, 25 on the Green Wall, 13 on New Downs, and 28 on Worth. Numbers on Restharrow Scrape increased up to a spring peak of 34 on 2nd March, with up to 12 on the Green Wall, 43 on New Downs and 33 on Worth throughout the spring. There were two broods on Restharrow Scrape in the summer and probably four-five more on Worth marshes.

The latter half of the year was much quieter than the first six months. There were only a handful of records from the Green Wall and New Downs, and the only movement was two birds seen moving north offshore on 4th November. By mid-September all birds had moved on from Restharrow Scrape, with numbers slowly increasing again throughout October onwards, including up to 18 on 29th December. Worth had around 20 birds for the last few months of the year, which seemed to all stay to winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	66	83	69	48	34	33	38	30	22	30	27	40
B/days	587	894	949	613	425	260	424	248	249	244	337	274



Tufted Duck by J.Buckingham

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Occasional winter visitor

Females were seen on Stonar lake on 13th February and offshore on 23rd November.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Regular migrant and winter visitor

For the second year in a row there were very few records. One flew north offshore on 16th August, a male flew north offshore on 24th October, and single males were offshore on 5th, 15th, 22nd, and 23rd November.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Occasional migrant and winter visitor

Two flew north offshore on 4th, 25th, and 28th November, and then in December there were three on the 17th, one on the 19th, two on the 20th, and singles on the 30th and 31st.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Common migrant and winter visitor

Another understated year with few movements of note. The biggest counts at the start of the year were 22 on 2nd January and 45 on 19th February. There was a trickle of birds in March and April, with the last record a flock of 18 north offshore on 9th May.

Return passage began with one on 1st August. September was the busiest month of the year with 114 bird-days, including 81 on the 18th. A flock of 50 flew south on 12th December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	22	45	4	9	18			19	81	6	15	50
B/days	23	61	12	38	22			20	114	22	50	91

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, becoming scarcer.

A female was on New Downs on 10th February with presumably the same bird on Stonar on the 13th. Two flew north offshore on 4th March.

A male north offshore on 4th November with another two north on the 22nd. A female appeared on Worth on 20th November and was seen there intermittently until the end of the year.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Occasional winter visitor

A flock of six, two males and four females, were briefly at Roaring Gutter on Worth marshes on 8th February.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Occasional but increasing migrant and winter visitor

All records were offshore this year. Two went north on 4th January and a male flew north on the 27th, three went south on 18th March, six females/immatures flew north on 21st October, a male went north on 28th November, and a final male south on 2nd December.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Migrant and winter visitor

There were only 14 bird-days this year. In March, there were two offshore on the 4th and one on the 13th, followed by two on 24th April, and one in Pegwell Bay on 5th May.

One flew south offshore on 12th October. In November three went south on the 15th, singles went north on the 22nd and 23rd, and then in December there were birds on the 3rd and 17th.

Swift *Apus apus*

Non-breeding summer visitor and migrant

Two individuals over Worth on 24th April were the first records of the year. They were followed by a further 11 sightings through the month. Spring passage was significantly lower than the previous year with 799 bird-days in May and 449 in June. Peak counts included 253 on 3rd June, 106 on 15th May, and 100 on 20th May.

Autumn passage in July saw 435 bird-days with a peak count of 146 on the 7th, with 53 on 14th the next highest. August saw quieter passage overall although peak counts of 231 on the 10th and 66 on the 17th were notable. September records were sparse with the last two birds recorded on the 29th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak				4	106	253	146	231	8			
B/days				13	799	449	435	442	14			

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Breeding summer visitor and migrant

With 96 bird-days across five months and not a single double-figure count all year, it was an evidently worse year for Cuckoo than last year. The first of the year was on Worth on 20th April, closely followed by one on the Estate on 24th. April's counts peaked at three on New Downs on 30th and May wasn't much better, providing the year's high count of seven individuals on the 20th (made up of three on Worth and four on New Downs). Between the 11th and 14th May, there were at least three birds present on Worth each day. June saw a peak count of four on the 3rd, 7th, and 12th, with birds split between New Downs and Worth. From then on records were thin, with only one in July, on Worth on 14th. The last record of the year was early, a single bird on the Estate on 1st August.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak				3	7	4	1	1				
B/days				12	53	29	1	1				

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder, migrant, and winter visitor

The wintering flock on Worth peaked at 600 birds on 13th February. There were 450 on the Estate on the 21st and up to 12 on the Green Wall and seven on New Downs. The main flock remained until late March, with 192 on the Estate on the 22nd and 120 on Worth on 24th the last big counts. There was no obvious sign of spring migration. Around 40 birds remained in the Recording Area for the summer, with 45 present on New Downs on 15th June.

August and September saw a gradual increase in numbers, the first triple-figure counts were 100 on Worth on 2nd and 4th September. There were again no clear signs of movement. By the end of November the usual wintering flock, moving between the Estate and Worth, consisted of 120 birds. Numbers picked up quickly on 6th December when 300 were present. Elsewhere 40 were on the Green Wall on the 7th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	400	671	270	23	17	47	24	61	122	105	145	320
B/days	3459	3781	2381	193	135	164	190	346	797	386	1184	2876

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder, migrant, and winter visitor

There was no sign of the large roosting numbers seen on Prince's Golf Course last year. About 300 birds were present in January increasing to 500 in February. In March there were 416 on Worth on the 3rd and 684 on the Green Wall on the 10th, plus peak counts of up to 120 on the Estate and 75 on New Downs. There were no counts of any note over the summer.

Low numbers persisted until October. There was a slow increase in records over the late autumn and winter months but no obvious signs of visible migration. Around 500 birds wintered.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	148	409	791	201	53	61	81	63	84	164	223	303
B/days	1209	2082	3173	1286	481	450	621	534	696	1266	2241	1988

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Declining breeding summer visitor and migrant

One was on Worth on 30th April and sightings were almost daily during May and June. Bird-days were a little less this summer but still very healthy. Five on 6th May, six on 12th June, and seven on 19th June were the maximum counts. One on the Green Wall on 9th May was the only record away from Worth marshes. Five pairs bred.

Away from Worth, there were singles on the Green Wall on 5th July, the Estate on 25th July, Green Wall on 2nd August, and the Estate on 12th September. The last of the year was on Worth on 15th September.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak				1	5	7	3	2	1			
B/days				1	51	39	18	5	2			

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder, migrant, and winter visitor

Numbers this year were overall low, peaking at the beginning of the year when there were up to 38 on the Estate in January and up to 56 on Worth in February. In March numbers dropped as birds left for their breeding territories, with only around 15 individuals staying in the Recording Area between March and June. Most of these were on the Estate, until June when numbers on the Estate decreased and more were found on Worth.

Numbers increased a little in June, but then stayed relatively constant over the next few months, peaking in October with up to 23 on the Estate and 11 on Worth. At least 18 birds remained to winter in the area, a much lower figure than last year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	38	27	14	15	16	12	22	18	26	31	24	18
B/days	258	172	83	109	83	81	132	105	184	214	210	150

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The 248 bird-days recorded is a 66.4% increase on last year. It is thought at least six birds wintered in the Recording Area. There was a particular high bird-day count in March as migrating birds passed through. Ten birds were recorded overnight on 'Nocmig' and up to four were seen daily on Worth marshes. A pair raised three young on the North Pool on New Downs and intermittent summer sightings from Worth suggest another pair likely attempted to breed.

Returning birds increased numbers in October. November saw peaks of five on Worth, one on New Downs, three on the Green Wall, and four in Pegwell Bay, but all were likely undercounts of the true numbers present.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	3	3	6	2	1	1		5	4	4	7	7
B/days	21	18	47	6	1	1		8	7	20	77	42

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

The year began with one on the Estate, two on Restharrow Scrape, and up to 19 on the Green Wall, eight on New Downs and five on Worth. Early spring saw a dip in numbers as pairs returned to their breeding areas and became more secretive.

Numbers increased a little with autumn passage, peaking on 10th October with seven on Restharrow Scrape, five on the Green Wall, and 19 on Worth marshes. Around 50 individuals remained for the winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	23	12	15	18	9	9	13	18	25	31	21	27
B/days	136	131	182	131	58	31	105	190	189	251	247	325

Coot *Fulica atra*

Common resident breeder and winter visitor

At least 193 birds were present at the start of the year including 70-80 each on New Downs and Worth marshes. There was little sign of spring migration and pairs bred in most wetland sites across the Recording Area over summer.

Productivity was good and numbers soon built to almost 80 individuals on Worth by the end of July. The flock continued to increase and break records on Worth. It peaked at 160 birds on 30th and 31st August; over 3,000 bird-days were recorded in August alone. High numbers continued throughout the autumn and at least 254 birds remained to winter. The year ended with over 19,000 bird-days recorded, a 143.9% increase on last year, most likely due to the increase in pools on Worth marshes/Lydden Valley created by the RSPB.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	159	115	92	62	47	51	137	216	221	223	218	196
B/days	1845	1587	1221	634	403	218	1104	3203	2508	1807	2648	1933



Coot chicks in nest by S.Reynaert

Crane *Grus grus*

Uncommon migrant

A bird was on Worth marshes on 13th November and seen again the following day flying over the New Downs/Stonar/Discovery Park area.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

At the beginning of the year there were at least 12 birds in the Recording Area. Though there were little direct signs of spring migration, the totals from a few sites, such as Restharrow Scrape, crept up slightly in March, as breeding birds returned. Five pairs bred in the Recording Area (three pairs on Worth marshes and two on Restharrow Scrape).

High numbers in late summer/early autumn were due to good breeding productivity. Bird-day totals and peak counts remained above last year's averages as autumn progressed, but late in winter there were 16 birds left, including six on the Garage Pool at Pegwell Bay.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	5	7	8	6	5	3	6	27	22	12	10	8
B/days	33	25	61	55	34	33	84	369	218	132	104	47

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Migrant and common winter visitor

Numbers offshore were higher than the previous year with around 120 birds in January. The build-up of numbers began in February with 250 birds seen on multiple dates and a peak of 343 on the 19th. Numbers began to then decline once more in March with 141 the peak count on the 7th. Singles were observed offshore on 3rd and 8th May.

A single bird lingered on Worth through July and August, with a second also observed on 25th July. A handful of records offshore were recorded through the autumn and two were recorded in Pegwell on 27th October. Numbers built slowly in November with a maximum of 12 offshore on the 9th. The wintering flocks offshore in December numbered mostly around 60 birds but a peak of 172 was recorded on the 15th. Overall, there were 592 bird-days in December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	123	343	141	10	2	1	2	1	2	2	12	172
B/days	351	1537	610	34	4	1	10	11	2	7	69	592

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

One was on Stonar lake on 2nd and 4th February and the remains of a deceased bird were found on Hundred Acre field on 26th April. One was offshore on 30th October.

Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedichnemus*

Uncommon migrant

Singles were sound-recorded over Stonar on 30th March and 18th April.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

Counts in Pegwell Bay were fairly consistent around 800 and 900 birds over the first three months. Returning birds were already on New Downs by 5th February, and from then on were ever present. Breeding pairs comprised one at the Point, one on the beach opposite the Chequers, two on Worth marshes, one on Restharrow Scrape, and seven on New Downs/Backsand. By the end of July there were a few hundred birds in Pegwell Bay, increasing to 850 in August. September, October, and November saw the highest counts of the year with peaks on 1,173 and 1,250 on 9th October and 7th November, respectively. The December flock settled at around 900 birds.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	795	800	939	228	191	34	300	853	935	1173	1250	882
B/days	1543	859	2166	790	349	122	569	1456	1494	1924	1287	1392

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Migrant and winter visitor, scarce breeder

There were records in all months of the year. A flock of 12 in Pegwell Bay on 1st January was an unusual start to the year. Birds began returning to New Downs on 10th February and reached 30 birds by the end of the month. There was no further change until May when a light passage brought birds to Restharrow Scrape, Pegwell, and Worth marshes. At the latter site it soon became clear that birds were interested in nesting and by the end of the month the first young hatched. Only four pairs nested on Backsand Scrape but two new colonies on Worth marshes totalled eight pairs.

After the breeding birds left there were sporadic reports of ones and twos in the area, with the exception of 11 in Pegwell Bay on 22nd November.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	12	33	21	36	34	30	24	4	1	2	11	3
B/days	14	110	55	115	184	263	151	9	2	3	11	5

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Resident breeder, migrant and abundant winter visitor

Numbers at the start of the year were only half of what they were at the same time last year, but this species can be extremely mobile and variable in its habitat choices in the area. As is usual, most birds left in February.

A good number of pairs bred with at least 25 pairs on Worth marshes, three pairs on Restharrow Scrape, seven on the Estate, and three on New Downs. Failed breeders appeared in early July on Worth but were slow to reach any significant number. The first four-figure counts were recorded on 2nd November, reaching 2,171 on the 16th. Totals ranged between 800 and 1,500 during December, with a sudden arrival of 7,000 on Worth on the 28th, with 5,200 present the next day and a few thousand to see the year out.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1089	1140	135	45	30	39	143	200	400	672	2171	7000
B/days	12117	7439	1118	427	245	328	1501	2072	2493	4454	8799	24189

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant and winter visitor

The year started with peak counts of 250 on Worth, 137 on the Estate, and 41 on New Downs, with some degree of movement between them. Numbers stayed relatively steady on Worth and the Estate over the next two months. The 31 birds that remained into April spent their time between Worth and the Estate, and the last spring sighting was of six on the Estate on 14th April. The first autumn record was a single on the Estate on 26th July. Numbers slowly began to increase over August and September with up to 21 on New Downs and 17 on Worth in September. There was a large increase as more birds arrived in November. At least 450 birds wintered, a similar number to last year, moving between the Estate, New Downs and Worth.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	291	206	250	31			1	10	32	180	475	450
B/days	1120	830	956	96			1	35	146	593	2866	2151



Golden Plovers by X.Taylor

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Migrant and winter visitor

The peak count at the Point was 126 on 15th January. By late February, most of the flock had departed, with a small number moving through the Bay in April. The only double figure count of the spring was 20 in Pegwell Bay on 26th April. The last individual was on New Downs on 3rd June.

Autumn migration began on 23rd August with three at the Point and nine in Pegwell Bay. After a quiet September, 20 in Pegwell Bay and 13 at the Point on 9th October was the beginning of a few higher counts. There were 77 at the Point on 3rd and 90 on 7th November, and three in Pegwell Bay on the 19th. The wintering flock numbered 92 at the Point on 19th December, a large decrease on the previous winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	126	112	9	20	1	1		12	1	33	90	92
B/days	236	190	13	34	2	1		12	2	50	171	95

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

A small flock of 20 birds wintered on the Estate/Prince's Beach. Up to nine birds then appeared on Worth during the cold snap in mid-February but soon disappeared. Two birds on New Downs on 8th March were likely the first returning migrants. Overall, it was a poor spring with a low bird-day count, primarily due to a lack of coverage of Pegwell Bay at the peak times, with 41 there on 22nd May the only count of note. A few pairs attempted to breed on the beach.

August migration comprised 10-15 along the beach, up to four sporadically on Worth marshes, and a few birds seen on New Downs and at Pegwell Bay. September was the busiest month of the year with regular 'Noemig' records from the Estate and Stonar, and a small flock daily on Worth marshes (peaking at six on the 20th). A flock of 46 were on the Estate beach on 19th October, with 38 on the 21st. There were just two records at the end of the year, one offshore on 17th December and three at the Point on the 19th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	20	9	5	10	47	7	7	18	28	46	21	3
B/days	36	23	25	24	55	14	13	64	140	120	29	4

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Occasional breeder and annual migrant

It was another busy year with 255 bird-days and confirmed breeding. The first record of the year was a bird calling overnight at Stonar on 21st March, with three birds present on Worth marshes at the end of the month. The same three birds remained on Worth throughout April and May. The first young were seen on 29th May, with two present throughout June and July, and fledging successfully.

In August, up to three were on Restharrow Scrape on two dates, and up to four on Worth marshes, later increasing to 11 on 5th September, with at least six on three dates thereafter. The last bird was seen on 4th October.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			3	3	5	5	3	6	11	1		
B/days			7	49	42	48	22	28	58	1		

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Scarce migrant

One was present on Worth marshes from 5th to the 15th September.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Common migrant

Three flying north on 28th March was the first record of the year. Passage was light at the start of April, but consistent double-figure counts were recorded after the 22nd, with peaks of 42 on the 26th and 55 on the 29th. May saw larger numbers than April with continued double-figures in the first half of the month. Numbers sharply declined after the 12th with the last bird recorded at Pegwell Bay on the 22nd. Spring ended with 528 bird-days.

Autumn passage started with two on Worth on 10th July. Between this date and 18th September there were 99 bird-days. Peak counts were ten on 2nd August and 12 on 4th August.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Common resident and winter visitor

Wintering numbers were lower than usual across the Recording Area with up to 65 on New Downs, 13 on the Estate, ten at the Point, and a peak of 270 in Pegwell Bay (on 13th February). Just under 200 birds were seen in March and April and masked any obvious signs of migration. Records suggest up to 50 birds summered in the area, mostly in the saltmarsh at Pegwell.

Numbers increased quickly at Pegwell in mid-to-late summer. The year's peak of 394 occurred on 23rd August. Thereafter, the flock in the northern parts of the Recording Area decreased and settled around 280 birds.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	255	270	181	178	16	47	240	394	189	282	274	130
B/days	432	525	385	342	35	70	476	624	276	543	759	681

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Migrant and winter visitor

Around 115 birds wintered at the Point, with 190 in Pegwell Bay on 15th January perhaps additional. March saw a lull in records, with a single in Pegwell Bay on the 1st and 11 on the 14th. The bulk of spring passage occurred in April, with up to 289 birds in Pegwell Bay on 26th and a smattering of records of up to ten birds across the Estate, Restharrow Scrape, Worth marshes, and New Downs. The last birds of the spring were on 22nd May, with three in Pegwell and two on New Downs.

Autumn began with 11 birds on 23rd August, eight in Pegwell Bay and three at the Point. Autumn was quiet with few records, peaking on 9th October with 20 in Pegwell Bay. There were two birds in Pegwell Bay on 1st December and the wintering flock at the point reached 139 on 19th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	304	250	11	290	5			11	6	20	18	139
B/days	423	366	12	498	16			11	9	28	32	141

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Migrant and winter visitor

As seen last year, there was a small wintering flock in Pegwell Bay, peaking at 13 on 15th January. A few birds arrived on Worth marshes during the cold spell in mid-February, but spring migration began properly with a trickle of birds through the area in March. This continued through April and May but the only double-figure counts were 22 in Pegwell Bay on 9th April and ten on Restharrow Scrape on 25th May.

One was on Worth on 7th July and two were on New Downs on the 15th. Autumn was below-par with no counts of more than six. The wintering flock arrived in Pegwell in October and later peaked at 31 on 9th December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	13	2	3	22	10		2	6	6	20	15	31
B/days	24	4	5	28	11		3	7	18	20	31	60

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Migrant and winter visitor

The start of the year saw 27 bird-days in January with a peak of 14 at the Point on the 11th. Numbers then dwindled as spring approached with ten on the Estate on 20th February and six on the Estate on 11th March, the highest counts for those months. There was a rare record from New Downs on 7th May, and singles at Pegwell on the 18th and the Point on the 22nd.

One on 25th July was the first of the autumn. August and September were quiet with only seven bird-days combined. October saw an increase to 30 bird-days, with a peak count of 15, and the remaining counts all being on the Estate during the month. During December, there were six at Pegwell on 9th December with sporadic records on the Estate, offshore, and at the Point.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	14	10	6		1		1	2	1	15	3	6
B/days	27	11	8		3		1	5	2	30	7	17

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Migrant and winter visitor

The wintering flock at the Point peaked at 95 birds on 15th January. Three in Pegwell on 14th March was the start of spring migration but the only other record from there was ten on 26th April. At least five birds flew over the Estate calling overnight on 7th May.

One was on New Downs on 30th July but there were no further records until one 4th September (also recorded calling overnight on the Estate). This was followed by two more on the 12th. The only other migrants were three at the Point/Pegwell on 9th October and one offshore on the 21st. A flock of 35-50 birds took up residence again at the Point in late winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	95	30	3	10	5		1		2	3	51	36
B/days	161	50	3	10	5		1		3	4	76	36

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Migrant and occasional winter visitor

The cold snap in February brought one bird to the Estate on the 11th, rising to four on the 14th. Light spring passage followed with one on Worth on 31st March, one on 7th and two on 8th April, and a summer-plumaged male commuting between Worth and the Estate on 14th and 15th May.

A single on Worth on 4th and 5th July was the first of autumn. Passage in August and September was good with four-five birds on Worth for around a month, increasing to ten on 7th and 8th September. Four birds toured the area in October and November and stayed on to winter on New Downs.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak		4	1	2	1		1	5	10	4	5	4
B/days		7	1	3	2		2	68	78	8	7	6

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Migrant

One on Worth marshes on 18th September was the only sighting this year.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Migrant and winter visitor

Following on from last autumn, there were some high numbers at the Point with 165 on 13th February, 130 on 21st March, and 124 on 9th April. The 140 birds on 22nd May were almost certainly migrants passing through.

Nine were present on 25th July. Autumn passage was underwhelming but triple-figures were at the Point in winter, including 158 on 19th December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	86	165	130	124	140		9	27	35	95	120	158
B/days	151	268	271	171	172		9	60	46	446	257	219

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Migrant and winter visitor

The winter flock fluctuated between 600-700 in January. The flock increased dramatically in February during the freezing weather, peaking at 1,300 birds on the 8th. During this time there were also up to three on the Estate, ten on Restharrow Scrape, and peaks of 56 and 101 on Worth marshes, on the 8th and 16th respectively. Passage in March included 40 birds on Worth on the 4th, and 25 on the 6th, but only singles elsewhere. April and May were mostly quiet with only 75 in Pegwell Bay on 22nd May of note. One on Restharrow Scrape on 1st June was the last of spring.

Autumn migration was sparse with 13 on New Downs on 30th July, 25 birds logged moving north offshore during August, and 40 at the Point/Pegwell on the 23rd. Higher numbers appeared in November as the wintering flock at Shellness Point reached 400 birds on the 7th. There was little further increase though and the flock remained below 500 at the end of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	680	1369	108	17	77	1	15	40	35	73	405	475
B/days	1444	2527	276	35	150	1	19	127	84	266	817	572

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Scarce migrant

One flew south offshore on 31st October.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Migrant and scarce winter visitor

There were no birds in spring. One-two birds were seen on Worth marshes on three dates in late August and last seen on 2nd September.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Scarce migrant

Two birds were present on Worth marshes from 17th to 21st September.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Migrant and winter visitor

There were two each on the Estate and the Green Wall in January. However, the freezing spell across UK and Europe in mid-February brought impressive numbers to the area. The highest counts on the Estate were 21 on the 11th and 37 on the 14th. Elsewhere numbers were lower with up to four on New Downs, one at the Point, seven on Worth, and one in Pegwell Bay Country Park. Single migrants were seen on the Estate on the 17th and 19th March.

There were 19 bird-days at the end of the year. In November one-two were seen on the Estate on seven dates, with singles on Worth on two dates, and once at the Point. Records were sparser in December but up to three were seen on the Green Wall at the end of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2	45	1								2	3
B/days	6	108	2								11	8

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

There were no systematic surveys of the saltmarsh in Pegwell Bay this year. In January there were counts of two at the Point, singles on Worth, and one in Pegwell. As noted with other species, there was an arrival with the cold weather in February with one on the Green Wall, four at the Point, and at least four on Worth marshes. There were two records in March, singles on Worth on the 2nd and at the Point on the 14th.

The end of the year was also productive with more than five times the bird-days as last year. It began with one on Restharrow Scrape on 6th October. The bird remained there all month, with two also seen on the Estate, and one on Worth. Worth continued to produced records of one-two, though it was likely that more were present, as proven by an impressive six recorded there on 18th December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2	5	1							2	2	6
B/days	7	18	2							13	7	9

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Migrant and winter visitor

After a quiet start to the year there was an exceptional arrival in February. The freezing conditions forced hundreds of Snipe into the open and areas not normally frequented. A count on the 8th produced a minimum of 751 on Worth marshes alone, plus 35 on the Estate and 43 on New Downs. Numbers on the Estate peaked later in the week with 135 on the 11th, when there were still 212 on Worth. The last major count of note was 170 on Worth on the 13th. March saw regular counts of up to 19 on Restharrow Scrape and single-figures on Worth, though 28 were present on the 3rd. Counts in April were much reduced and then in May there were singles on Restharrow Scrape on the 4th and Worth on the 5th and 7th.

A bird on Worth marshes on 16th June was potentially an early autumn migrant. After a trickle in July there was a big increase in August, with 46 on the 12th. There was little variation in counts over the rest of the autumn with peaks of 54 on Restharrow Scrape, singles on the Estate and Green Wall, 36 on New Downs, 33 at the Point, 49 on Worth, and six in Pegwell Bay.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	18	831	28	10	1	1	4	46	25	57	57	49
B/days	50	1801	225	52	4	1	12	442	246	579	513	222



Snipe by N.Smith

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Common migrant and scarce winter visitor

There were two wintering birds, one seen on New Downs on 25th January and 25th February, and another on Worth on two dates in February. Neither were seen again after the cold snap in February. The first spring migrants were two on New Downs on 22nd April. Passage was light with four on Worth on 24th April and three there on 7th May, but mostly ones or twos there, plus sporadic birds across the other parts of the Recording Area, with the last on 22nd May.

A returning bird was on New Downs on 23rd June. As is usual, the vast majority of the year's bird-days came along the river in July and August. Peak counts were 29 on 25th July, 43 on 30th July, and 21 on 4th August. The only other counts of note were eight on Worth on 25th July and seven on Restharrow Scrape on 23rd August. There were no wintering birds at the end of the year. In September most counts were of less than five birds, apart from nine each on the 8th and 13th, with four on the 22nd the last birds of the year,

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1	1		4	4	1	43	24	9			
B/days	1	3		9	16	2	112	127	37			



Common Sandpiper by S.Ray

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Common migrant and scarce winter visitor

There were almost the exact same number of bird-days as last year (819 compared to 815). This was aided by another good spread of wintering birds and impressive autumn passage. At the start of the year there were five on Worth marshes and one on New Downs. One was on Restharrow Scrape on 11th February. It was unclear when spring passage began but it is likely birds from mid-April were passing through, judging by the six on Worth on the 16th. The last of spring was on 3rd May.

Single birds on 8th, 9th, 13th, and 15th June were all likely returning birds rather than late spring birds. Counts increased significantly after with 22 on 25th July (four on Restharrow Scrape, nine on New Downs, eight on Worth, and one in Pegwell Bay), and 11 on Worth on the 29th. In August there were 13 on the 4th and 27 on the 12th (20 of which were on Worth marshes). The last double figure records of the year were 11 on 9th and 13 on 13th September, and later in the year there were one on the Green Wall, one on New Downs, and three on Worth marshes set to winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	5	5	5	6	1	2	22	27	13	5	5	4
B/days	91	88	98	42	1	9	131	138	102	47	41	31

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

Low numbers in the first three months of the year with no more than 50 in the Recording Area. Breeding birds returned to Worth marshes mid-March and masked migration, though one was on Restharrow Scrape on the 22nd and the flock on New Downs increased to 27 on the 29th. April also saw an increase with 112 in Pegwell Bay on the 9th. May and June were very quiet but a minimum of four pairs bred on Worth marshes.

July saw the highest count of the year; 227 on New Downs on the 30th. This was swiftly followed by 178 there on 4th August. Elsewhere there were few counts of note with one or two on Worth marshes and barely double-figures in Pegwell. After a brief lull there was an increase again in October and numbers stabilised around 150-200 birds until the end of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	40	10	37	131	8	4	227	178	68	160	111	195
B/days	67	58	133	236	34	36	328	346	272	358	161	306

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Uncommon but annual migrant

The only spring record was a bird calling overnight at Stonar on 2nd May.

There was a very good autumn passage with 96 bird-days recorded between 23rd July to 4th October. An impressive 16 birds were recorded on 25th July (nine on Worth, six on New Downs, and one in Pegwell Bay) and six on the 31st. In August there were six birds on three dates between 12th and 23rd, and a peak of nine on the 13th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

One on Worth on 2nd May was the only spring record. Following one on New Downs on 21st August, a bird was present on Worth marshes on four dates in September. Four sporadic sightings in October on New Downs, the Estate, and Worth, all probably relate to the same mobile bird.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Common migrant and uncommon winter visitor

There was an early bird in March on Worth marshes on the 30th and 31st. More typical passage occurred through late April and early May. During this time there were daily counts of between five and fourteen on Worth marshes, plus three on New Downs. Ten on New Downs on 7th May was the last count of note, with just singles after, including to 9th June.

Spring passage rolled straight into autumn, with two on 15th June likely to have been returning birds. After a continuous trickle of singles, there were 13 on New Downs on 25th July. Thereafter, there were regular counts of up to 12 birds on New Downs and seven on Worth, plus one-two from Restharrow Scrape and Pegwell. September was reduced somewhat but still with regular sightings. A lingering bird on Worth stayed until 25th October, a week later than last year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			1	14	10	2	14	19	7	2		
B/days			2	69	18	8	40	126	58	10		



Greenshank by S.Ray

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Common migrant and winter visitor

Counts in the first six months were better than last year but there were no particularly large numbers. There were 37 offshore on 28th January and 34 on 19th February. The last bird of spring was seen on 21st May.

There were sightings again from 2nd August. Sightings were no more than a trickle but 16 were offshore on 29th October and 24 were seen on 30th December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	37	34	2	2	1			6	1	16	3	24
B/days	93	45	4	3	1			7	3	33	6	34

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Scarce visitor

A surprise juvenile fed in a ploughed field on Worth marshes on 22nd September. This was followed by another south offshore on 15th November.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Abundant migrant and winter visitor, regular breeder

There were very few large counts in the first six months of the year, primarily due to reduced coverage of the Pegwell Bay roost. Around 300-500 birds were seen through the Recording Area during the winter months, with a peak of 800 on Worth marshes on 24th February. There was some passage through the area in March with 200 north offshore on the 21st and 96 on Restharrow Scrape on the 25th. The highest counts over the rest of the spring and summer came from New Downs/Backsand Scrape and Restharrow Scrape, where small colonies bred. There were at least 44 nests on Backsand Scrape and 13-20 on Restharrow Scrape.

A co-ordinated count on 25th July produced almost 1,000 birds. August saw a count of 2,588 on the 12th and then in October there was 4,189 on the 29th, both primarily from birds roosting in Pegwell Bay. The only other four-figure count of the year was 1,590 on 12th December, again from Pegwell, but 850 on Worth on 9th November was also of note.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	210	800	365	295	316	250	996	2588	833	4189	860	1590
B/days	1098	4186	1825	1530	1188	1025	2653	5898	4204	10248	3134	3322

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

A single in Pegwell Bay on 23rd January was the first record of the year, with another there on February 7th. The next record wasn't until 24th April with two recorded on Worth marshes.

The first record of Autumn was a single offshore on 27th September. Two birds were then sighted offshore on 30th October and another the following day. The only winter records were a first-winter offshore on 18th December and two more birds on the 27th.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

Increasingly regular migrant

After no more than a handful of winter sightings there was an obvious passage through the area in March and April. Nine on Worth on 31st March was the first count of note, followed by near-daily counts of one-nine in all subsites in the Recording Area. Worth marshes provided counts of up to 22 at the end of the month, only beaten by 49 in Pegwell Bay on the 26th. May and June saw only small numbers in the area.

There were no exceptional counts in autumn with 'just' 100 on 9th and 107 on 21st August (though either of these would have been significant for Sandwich Bay as recently as 2015). After a poor September there was an increase in October, including a steady passage of birds offshore, 21 on the Green Wall on the 14th, and regular counts of up to 25 on Worth, with a peak of 60 there on the 27th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1	3	9	60	8	10	35	107	4	61	8	2
B/days	2	7	40	173	27	34	75	337	19	224	15	2

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Migrant and common winter visitor

Counts were much lower than last year, with no day count reaching any more than 500. The first triple-figure count of the year was 204 on 16th January. February saw an increase with 303 on the 8th and 500 on Worth marshes on the 11th. Numbers declined through the spring with the peak count of 23 seen heading north offshore on 4th May. One on Restharrow Scrape on 3rd June was the only June record.

Numbers increased slowly and steadily through late summer and early autumn, then 27th October saw a large increase with the arrival of 200 individuals in Pegwell Bay. November had consistent sightings of up to 190 birds, then December saw another big increase with 590 in Pegwell Bay on the 9th and 450 on Worth on the 12th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	204	500	167	6	25	1	14	31	14	202	190	590
B/days	895	1800	425	26	81	1	15	65	58	397	825	1833

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Migrant and common winter visitor

There were no triple-figure counts in the first six months. Numbers were low in January with the highest count 65 on the Estate on the 30th. In May there were 42 in Pegwell Bay on the 18th and 38 at the Point on 15th June.

Autumn took a while to get going with the first big count on 27th October when 500 were in Pegwell Bay. The year's peak was 565 on the 29th. Autumn passage seemed to stop in early November with the last big count of the year 360 at the Point on the 7th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	65	62	60	11	43	50	24	25	29	565	366	31
B/days	146	94	136	58	133	100	96	46	64	1411	529	148

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Migrant and abundant winter visitor, rare breeder

After a quiet January there was an influx on 8th February as the cold weather brought 900 birds offshore and 200 scattered elsewhere. These birds disappeared soon after but in April there was a resurgence in Pegwell Bay, with 1,410 on 26th and 1,400 on 30th, followed by 1,500 on 3rd May and 1,020 on the 22nd. Also, of note were 75 on Restharrow Scrape on 20th April. A pair raised two young from a rooftop on North Road on the Estate and, similar to last year, around 300-350 birds summered in the Recording Area.

These counts continued over the early autumn months with no real increase until October. There were around 200 birds on Worth marshes on both the 3rd and the 4th, and 690 birds in Pegwell Bay on the 29th. The end of the year saw no four-figure counts and around 550 birds in the area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	195	1114	417	1470	1631	335	357	164	344	697	280	459
B/days	1127	2939	2980	4046	4316	902	1732	787	1047	1845	1540	1243

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

Uncommon but increasingly regular migrant and winter visitor

A very poor year with only a second-calendar bird on the Estate/Restharrow Scrape on 4th, 30th, and 31st January, and one in Pegwell Bay on 28th August.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

As with the above species, there were few records this year with just seven bird-days. An adult was on the Estate on 31st January, with a second-calendar bird there on 8th February and another on New Downs on the 26th. Then none until a juvenile in Pegwell Bay on 21st July, a juvenile north offshore on 6th August, and then two adults in November on Restharrow Scrape on the 9th and on Worth on the 23rd.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Migrant and winter visitor, breeds nearby

A disappointing year throughout with below average bird-days and peak counts. Around 10-12 birds wintered in Pegwell Bay. There was a small increase in March as spring migrants passed through, with most subsites seeing up to five birds. The breeding colony on the Discovery Park buildings was responsible for the majority of records over the summer period with usually around 15-20 birds present but peaking at 51 on 15th June.

Once the breeding birds departed there was just single figures present in the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	12	10	25	22	23	56	25	8	3	8	3	4
B/days	19	36	93	155	122	109	133	48	10	19	7	9

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Vagrant

A fantastic adult flew north across Worth marshes on 8th June.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Migrant, occasional winter visitor

There were no mid-winter records with the first spring migrant in Pegwell Bay on 27th and 28th February. Spring passage was reduced for the second year in a row. Peak counts were 116 on 6th April, 38 on 8th April, 160 on the 9th, and then 77 on 4th May. One found dead in Middle Field on 19th April was an unusual record, as was one roosting on Restharrow Scrape on 13th May. There was just one June sighting, at the Point on the 15th.

Autumn passage was better than spring but there were no particularly significant counts. In July there were 294 on the 25th, 184 on the 29th, and 200 on the 31st, followed by 200 on 1st August, 210 on the 6th, and 155 on the 14th. Small numbers remained through September and October. In November there were up to four on five dates with the last on the 15th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak		1	22	160	77	1	294	210	19	21	4	
B/days		2	39	329	98	1	690	897	79	77	12	

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Regular migrant

There were five bird-days in spring and nine in autumn. One was in Pegwell Bay on 22nd May, four went north offshore on 4th June, and nine were in Pegwell Bay on 22nd August.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Scarce migrant

One was in Pegwell Bay on 31st July.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Common migrant. Rare Breeder.

A very quiet spring with one record in March, a single moving north offshore on the 28th. April also saw very few records with 29 moving north offshore on the 6th followed by two more on the 9th.

The next record wasn't until 6th July when one moved past south offshore, followed by a few records from Pegwell and one each from New Downs and Worth. Autumn numbers were far lower than last year, with the peak in August 'just' 108 moving north on the 6th. Other peaks were 20 in Pegwell on the 1st, 50 offshore on the 3rd and 24 offshore on the 17th. There were a few stragglers into October and the last of the year was a single offshore on 1st November.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			1	29			12	108	1	7	1	
B/days			1	31			25	217	1	14	1	

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Uncommon migrant

One flew north offshore on 7th May and three did the same on 24th October.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon but regular migrant

The only record was of two birds in Pegwell Bay on 27th September.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Uncommon but regular migrant and winter visitor

There were 15 bird-days this year, beginning with one offshore on 19th January. There were no further sightings until one came past on 6th April, which was the only spring sighting. August saw three offshore on the 16th and one on the 24th, followed by one on 27th September. October held the highest count of the year with six offshore on the 2nd. There was one on the 31st but not another until the last of the year on 1st December.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Uncommon migrant and occasional in winter

Two north on 24th April and one south on 27th September.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Regular migrant

There were no spring sightings for the first time in five years, followed by 19 bird-days in autumn. The first singles were offshore on 3rd and 16th August, with two on 27th and one on 28th September. Then, in October, there were two on the 1st, eight on the 2nd, and singles on the 4th, 6th, 24th, and 31st.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Scarce autumn migrant

A juvenile was offshore on 2nd October.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Migrant and occasionally abundant winter visitor

A very similar year to the previous with only 27 confirmed bird-days. There were five bird-days in the first three months and the rest between 19th September and 31st December. All records were of either one or two birds apart from five on 30th December.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Migrant and winter visitor

A single offshore on 3rd January and three on 19th February were the only records in the first part of the year. It was a better ending to the year with 55 bird-days. A small movement first noted on 2nd October built throughout the month to eight on the 29th and 11 on the 30th. Ones and twos continued to the end of the year with five on 16th and four on 17th December.

Auk sp.

There were an additional 970 bird-days recorded as *Auk sp.* This was mostly due to the distance of the birds offshore being too far to confirm identification. Peak movements were 183 on 12th January, 112 on 29th October, 135 on 30th October, 102 on 17th December, and 153 on 30th December.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Common migrant and winter visitor

The year started off with very low numbers, with seemingly less than ten birds wintering offshore, but increasing to 68 on the 26th. This flock peaked again towards the end of February with 74 on the 21st. This time numbers remained higher into March with 226 on the 4th by far the highest count of the spring. The last of the spring was one moving south on 28th April.

Autumn was slow to get going after the first on 21st August. Counts began to reach double figures in November and December saw some higher numbers moving through, peaking on the 16th with 317.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	68	74	226	1				1	5	6	26	317
B/days	205	248	792	3				1	14	53	85	842

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor

Eight bird-days this year. Singles offshore on 3rd January, 19th February, and 4th and 12th March. The first bird of autumn was seen offshore on 18th September. What was likely the same bird was seen on 3rd and 5th October, and 21st November.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Scarce migrant and winter visitor

Another good year with sightings on 2nd and 20th January, 22nd February, 18th and 20th March (two), and then 1st and 5th December.

Fulmar *Fulmaris glacialis*

Common migrant, summer and winter visitor

A very similar set of records to last year with highest numbers in winter and early spring, dropping over summer, peaking again early autumn, then going missing completely in October, before resurging at the end of the year. The highest counts of the year were seven on 25th April, eight on 4th May, and six on 6th July.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2	3	2	7	8	1	6	2	1		1	3
B/days	6	5	11	9	14	1	7	5	1		1	12

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Irregular migrant

Two went south offshore on 27th September followed by singles on 10th and 11th October.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Irregular migrant

One flew south offshore on 28th September.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

Vagrant

Singles on Worth marshes on 10th and 11th May and on 9th July were our 4th and 5th area records.



Black Stork by R.Rackliffe

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Scarce migrant, increasing

Singles on Worth marshes on 17th and 21st April were presumably the same bird. In the autumn there was a bird on Worth on 11th and 12th September, and then an arrival of a bird on 29th November which remained on Worth and the surrounding area until the year's end.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Common migrant and winter visitor

There were 2,698 bird-days in 2021, a 60.4% increase on last year. Counts in the first half of the year were not too dissimilar though. There were less than 30 offshore in January, increasing in February to around 90, and then a spring peak in March with 182 on the 5th. Only a handful of birds were recorded after April.

In August and September there was a noticeable rise in birds offshore. The highest numbers occurred from October through to December. Peak counts were 220 on 2nd October, 151 on the 29th, 155 on the 30th, and 108 on the 31st, followed in November by 113 on the 4th, 173 on the 13th, and 280 on the 14th. Ninety on 8th December was the last major count of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	30	87	182	7	11	1	3	25	86	220	280	90
B/days	122	170	294	9	20	1	3	39	199	886	651	304

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

Five sightings this year comprised single birds offshore on 25th August, 4th November, and then 1st, 10th, and 30th December.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Common resident, migrant and abundant winter visitor

After last year's drop in numbers, there was a return of the impressive four-figure winter flocks. There were 1,454 offshore on 1st January and 2,503 flew over Worth marshes and out to sea on the 23rd. This was followed by 2,500 in Pegwell Bay on 19th February and 1,080 offshore on 5th March. There were singles on Restharrow Scrape on 22nd March, 21st and 24th May, and 23rd June. No more than 10-20 birds spent the summer in the Recording Area.

There was a small peak in August of 61 birds on the 23rd but most counts were in the region of 20 or 30 until November. December saw the large flocks return with 1,434 on the 9th and 1,000 on the 24th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2504	2540	1084	21	10	9	23	61	22	33	80	1438
B/days	7585	6143	1619	143	82	52	107	200	176	279	328	5656

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Uncommon migrant, increasing

The 22 bird-days was an improvement on last year. Two were in Pegwell Bay on 16th March. In May one was on Worth on the 21st and a single was on New Downs on four dates, also seen on three dates in June up to the 7th. One was on Worth marshes on nine dates from 21st September to 5th October, with singles over the Estate on 26th September, 3rd October, and 17th October.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Vagrant

Singles were on New Downs on 1st June and on Worth on 25th July.



Bittern by P.Beraet

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Scarce migrant, increasing

The first records of the year came on 3rd January, when there were two on Worth and one on the Estate. The three were then seen on Worth on the 6th-8th. Over the next few months there were five well-spread records of singles and all on Worth apart from one on the Estate on 7th May. The last of these was on Worth on 26th June.

A bird was present on Worth from 2nd September, increasing to two birds from the 20th, and throughout October. Only one bird remained on 4th November and no more were seen thereafter until the last record of the year, one on the Estate on 29th November.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	3	1	1		1	1			2	2	1	
B/days	12	1	1		2	1			20	12	2	

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

Around ten birds were spread through the Recording Area in January. A few higher counts occurred in February with seven present on Worth marshes on 8th-9th and ten on the 24th. Spring passage was limited to three north on 23rd March. In the summer two pairs nested in the Great Wood on Worth.

June saw higher totals as fledged young boosted the counts. Up to nine were on Worth, six on New Downs, and three in Pegwell. In July, there was an increase on New Downs to nine, with 11 in September. The high counts during this period were largely responsible for the 12.4% increase in bird-days in 2021 over 2020. The end of the year saw counts drop back down with up to 12 birds present in December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	5	10	8	9	9	17	18	16	16	10	11	9
B/days	79	71	97	72	69	80	126	174	163	77	101	78

Great White Egret *Egretta alba*

Increasing migrant and winter visitor

A slightly better year with 31 bird-days and sightings in all months of the year. One was on Worth on 6th January, one flew south offshore on 23rd February, and an elusive bird was seen on Worth on six dates over February and March. Perhaps the same bird was seen on 16th April and two dates in May, but two on Worth on 8th June were different, and singles in Pegwell on 11th and 15th likely too.

There were singles on 14 days in the last period. September was busiest with four bird-days and October with three. Most records came from Worth marshes. The last records of the year were on Worth on 2nd November, in Pegwell Bay on 7th November, and on Worth on 8th December.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Resident breeder, common migrant and small numbers in winter

The year again started with some low counts, with seven on New Downs on 8th March the peak count for the first three months. Three moving north on 6th April was the only sign of spring migration. Counts of up to nine on New Downs, four on Worth, and one on the Estate was a decrease on last year, but 16 in Pegwell Bay on 22nd May was an unusually high number.

As usual, July and August saw the highest counts of the year with up to 20 birds present on New Downs, 23 in Pegwell Bay, five on Restharrow Scrape, seven on Worth, and the occasional individual elsewhere in the Recording Area. Numbers settled down over the rest of the year leaving at least eight individuals in the Recording Area over the winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	7	3	8	11	26	18	39	39	36	29	13	6
B/days	20	16	44	59	68	63	127	194	227	59	43	27



Little Egret by S.Reynaert

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Occasional migrant

There were only three bird-days this year, all from Worth marshes. One was present on 9th May and two on 6th June.

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Scarce but annual migrant

There were four singles this year over the Estate on 17th May, Green Wall on 6th June, Estate on 9th July, and Worth on 26th September.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The total of 332 bird-days was lower than last year. March saw the most activity for this species with the regular breeding pairs on the Estate, New Downs, Green Wall, and Worth once again. A peak of six birds on the 15th was the highest record in the year.

After a lull in June and July, records increased in August and September with peaks of four in both months. October was slightly less busy but still recorded plenty of sightings. At least three birds remained in the area during the closing months of 2021.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	4	3	6	2	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	2
B/days	35	24	50	28	20	14	16	37	32	31	28	17

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Migrant and winter visitor, breeds nearby

It seems likely at least four birds wintered in the area. There was a small but noticeable increase in sightings in March, including five on Worth marshes on the 15th. This was followed by fewer sightings in April and over the summer months than usual, though a pair bred again just outside the Recording Area.

Counts increased in July and six birds on 1st August was the year's peak. Totals dropped afterwards leaving just a few regular birds on Worth marshes until November, when they were joined by at least two others in the northern parts of the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	4	3	5	2	3	3	4	6	2	2	4	3
B/days	28	28	41	16	12	29	48	35	22	15	31	24

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Decreasing migrant and winter visitor

Throughout January and February up to four birds were reported to be present within the Recording Area: an adult male, an immature male, an adult female, and another ringtail. On 18th March one was seen moving north through the area. By April, seemingly only the immature male remained, then a female was seen on Worth on 20th May.

One moved south offshore on 6th October. A male was seen on the Estate on 4th November but didn't stick around, then a ringtail showed up on 12th November and remained for the rest of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2	1	1	1	1					1	1	1
B/days	18	12	11	5	1					1	10	12

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Regular spring migrant, increasing in numbers

Early birds were seen on 24th and 26th February and were followed by three singles in March. April was quieter than expected but the annual movement of immature birds began in earnest in May with 21 on the 18th. There were 15 the following day and 53 on the 27th. Passage proved to be short-lived with 84 on 6th June the only other count of note. The last bird of spring was on the 12th.

In autumn, singles flew over the Estate on 29th August and 13th October.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak		1	1	2	53	84		1		1		
B/days		2	3	9	93	91		1		1		



Red Kites by P.Blanche

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Scarce migrant

An early migrant flew north over Worth marshes on 6th March.

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Vagrant

A stunning adult was present, mostly on Worth marshes, on 5th-7th January. Immature birds went north over Worth marshes on 5th April and 19th April, both originating from the Isle of Wight release scheme.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Scarce migrant

An adult female drifted over Stonar on 19th April, at one point in the company of a White-tailed Eagle!

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Resident breeder, migrant

Around 11-12 birds were present in the Recording Area in January and February, with 23 on 5th February an outlier. Spring passage was much reduced compared to last year. There were eight double-figure counts in March, three in April, and three in May, with the highest being 17 birds on 9th May (15 of which were on Worth marshes). At least five pairs bred in the Recording Area.

August and September were much better with a combined 275 bird-days. Peak counts were 16 on 12th August, 17 on 7th September, and 18 on 22nd September. After a lull in October, November was also surprisingly busy with 17 birds on the 2nd. Thereafter counts dropped back down to the usual ten or so wintering birds.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	7	23	14	17	15	13	9	16	18	8	17	8
B/days	86	94	175	150	128	97	90	127	148	80	123	70

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Most records over the course of the year came from the Estate, with those from other parts of the Recording Area few and far between. The Estate held regular singles throughout the year, as well as two birds seen on 30th April, 24th July, and 21st October. One pair bred on the Estate. Elsewhere, there was a single on Worth on 22nd February, with a couple more later in the year on 18th November and 4th and 13th December. The situation on the Green Wall was similar with singles on 30th May, 30th October, and 29th December. There were no records from anywhere else in the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak		1	1	2	1	1	2		1	2	1	1
B/days		3	2	6	3	1	6		7	12	10	9

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Rare, but resident breeder nearby

A good year with singles at Mary Bax on 22nd February, calling on the Estate on 6th April and 24th July, in the Whitehouse on 11th August, on the Green Wall on 3rd October, and in The Elms on 6th October. There were then five bird-days in November (three from Worth marshes, and two from the Estate on the 9th and 24th).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder

The resident pair around the Field Centre remained and provided the bulk of records through the year. Singles were present on Worth on 18th January, 17th March, 28th April, and 4th October. The Green Wall also held records with a pair present on 19th February and a single on 2nd August. Peak counts were never more than two throughout the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
B/days	3	12	10	8	2	1	14	9	15	18	12	11

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Migrant and winter visitor

There were 19 bird-days in spring, all attributable to a pair which attempted to breed on the Estate. The first was noted on 19th March and it became apparent on 2nd April that a nesting attempt was underway. Unfortunately, it proved to be unsuccessful and the last was recorded on 7th May.



Long-eared Owl by R.Johnson

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Migrant and winter visitor

A very quiet first six months with no winter records and just three birds in spring. One was on Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course on 19th April and two were present on 7th May.

Autumn was much improved with 32 bird-days. One was on the Estate on 29th August and from then on there was an even spread of records in the next four months. Three birds were regularly between the Estate and the Chequers in September, plus two birds at the Point in October. In December there were five around Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course on the 24th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Occasional breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

There were 120 bird-days this year, a 31% decrease on last year. The highest count at the start of the year was three on New Downs on 15th January, with singles on the Green Wall and two on Worth also at this time. The last wintering birds were seen on 22nd March. In the summer, a pair bred just outside the Recording Area but made regular forays onto the Green Wall and their recently-fledged young were seen in June.

September was the busiest month of the year with two on the Green Wall, one on New Downs, and regular sightings of up to three on Worth marshes, plus one in Pegwell Bay on the 19th. There was a similar spread of records at the end of the year with around seven birds present.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	3	1	2		2	2	1	2	4	2	4	4
B/days	20	6	4		3	2	3	5	30	15	20	12

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Scarce migrant

A flock of nine birds flew north over the Green Wall on 1st July.



Wryneck by S.Reynaert

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Scarce migrant

In August there was one in the Downsbridge area on the 25th, with two the next day, and then followed by one on the Estate on the 27th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The year began with at least nine individuals in the Recording Area. There was a small increase in bird-days in March and April as birds began drumming and were more noticeable. Counts at this time suggest a population of around five-six pairs. Singles north on 9th April and 10th May were the only signs of visible migration.

No birds bred on the Estate so five singles in July were signs of post-breeding dispersal. September was the busiest month of the year. Up to five were on the Estate. Two went north in October, on the 7th and 12th. December was quiet but at least eight birds stayed until the year's end.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	4	3	4	6	4	5	5	4	6	7	5	4
B/days	23	31	34	46	14	24	48	29	57	48	36	29

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder

Numbers were low throughout the winter period with nine birds on 22nd February the highest count. March saw a small spike in bird-days but the peak counts remained stable. As breeding commenced, the number of records dropped in May and the birds became more elusive.

July saw numbers begin to rise again, a trend which continued into August when the peak count of the year of ten, on the 1st, was recorded. November saw a slight raise in bird-days compared to the previous two months. As December arrived around nine birds lingered in the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	7	9	8	9	4	6	8	10	8	5	6	4
B/days	70	73	90	70	31	38	74	84	72	65	75	31

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The total of 935 bird-days was lower than the previous year. Around nine birds were present over the winter period. During spring, at least two were present on the Estate, two on the Green Wall, three on New Downs, and four on Worth marshes. At least four pairs bred.

With all the fledged juveniles, numbers were at the highest during August and September. Six on Worth and seven on the Estate on 8th September were notable counts during this period. Bird-days then declined but perhaps up to 13 birds were still present in the Recording Area at the end of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	6	5	7	8	6	5	6	11	15	8	8	6
B/days	76	37	69	57	73	47	33	137	172	99	79	56

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*

Scarce migrant

A female was on Worth marshes on 6th June, with the (presumed) same bird also on the 26th.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Migrant and winter visitor

There were 17 bird-days in the first four months. Most sightings came from Worth marshes where two birds wintered, with occasional forays onto the Estate. An additional bird was at the Point on two dates. Birds on Worth and New Downs on 9th April were the last of spring.

These were followed by 18 bird-days in the latter four months of the year, with a bird on Worth on 16th September. There was a good spread of records from around the Recording Area in October. In December there were at least three in the area, including two together on Worth on the 4th.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Summer visitor and occasional breeder

Records began much later than last year, with none present until 1st May. Throughout May and June there were at least eight birds on Worth marshes, as well as a few on the Estate and New Downs, though there was likely a high turnover at this time. Two pairs bred in the Recording Area over summer.

There were lower numbers in the autumn with a September peak of five, split between Worth and the Estate on the 17th. The last of the year was moving south offshore on 2nd October.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak					8	8	3	6	5	1		
B/days					54	83	38	35	36	1		

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

A very similar spread of records as last year. Over winter there were regular sightings from Worth, New Downs, and Pegwell, suggesting around five-six birds in the area. Birds were seen offshore on 12th and 20th March and these may have been migrants. A trickle of sightings over the summer months were from breeding pairs nearby.

There was an increase in activity in September. This continued through the rest of the autumn and winter, but overall bird-days were lower than earlier in the year. It is likely that just three birds were around in December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	3	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	3
B/days	21	22	34	5	4	2	9	6	15	4	11	11

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Uncommon resident breeder

There were once again over 1,000 bird-days this year, 62% of which were from the Green Wall. Birds also showed up in small numbers on the Estate, Worth, and New Downs throughout the year. Most counts in the first half of the year remained in single figures, though there were multiple counts of ten or 11 on the Green Wall, and 13 on 10th June.

September held some large movements over the Green Wall, with 64 moving north on the 9th, followed by 159 on the 24th. There were consistent double-figure counts on the Green Wall in October, with 20 on the 15th and 17th, and 22 on the 24th. November also saw 13 flying north on the 11th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	11	10	11	6	6	13	9	12	159	22	29	13
B/days	96	62	73	41	51	64	25	66	325	197	195	120

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

At the start of the year were regular counts of one-three on the Estate, Green Wall, New Downs, and Worth marshes, with nine on New Downs on 25th January a clear exception. There were no signs of any spring migration this year but seven on the Green Wall on 4th April was unusual.

There were few sightings until September at which point there were daily counts of up to five. Totals of 11 on the 22nd and nine on the 28th were the first counts of any note, but October saw lots of activity (reflected UK-wide due to a failure of the Oak masts). Peak movements were 15 on the 5th, ten on the 6th, 17 on the 10th, 24 on the 12th, 27 on the 13th, 22 on the 14th, 12 on the 15th, 15 on the 16th and 17th, and a final peak of 14 on the 26th. There were no double-figure counts in November but 71 bird-days were still recorded. The end of the year was quiet in comparison with eight present.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	11	3	4	9	2	2	2	3	11	27	9	5
B/days	46	35	35	45	14	16	14	15	70	252	71	28

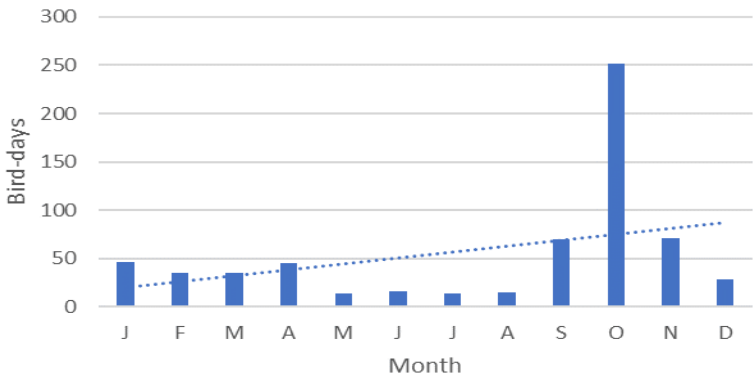


Figure.1 Total number of Jay bird-days each month in 2021.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Resident breeder, partial migrant and winter visitor

Once again, Worth Marshes and Green Wall held most of the numbers during the early winter period with maxima of 22 recorded at both sites. Numbers were rather low during this time on the Estate, with a peak count of only two in March. Bird-days dropped significantly through the spring and summer.

In July there was some recovery, probably due to a swell in juvenile birds. October appeared to be the busiest time with 539 bird-days and a count of 72 on the 15th (with 53 on the Green Wall). Counts dropped in November but were still high with a maximum of 56 on the 2nd.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	41	41	57	29	26	28	18	33	48	72	56	40
B/days	375	384	431	213	164	143	191	200	360	539	529	442

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The overall bird-day total was less than the previous year, but some of the peak counts higher. The highest numbers in the winter were 500 on 1st January and 668 on 19th February. These counts dropped to around 150 birds over the summer.

There was a sharp increase in July as post-breeding flocking peaked at 600 on the 6th. August saw a continued rise with the highest count of the year of 750 recorded on the 15th, though numbers were far lower during the rest of the month. Numbers began to settle down as autumn progressed with between 90-110 birds counted routinely.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	500	668	110	162	67	150	600	750	92	116	94	49
B/days	1596	1512	691	827	390	546	937	1093	568	970	739	521

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The ups-and-downs of the data were broadly similar to that of last year, with a peak in February, few in mid-spring, high post-breeding flocks, a dip in records, then further peaks later in winter. The highest count of the year was 355 on 10th February. There were no signs of any spring migration. One pair bred on the Estate.

After a quiet breeding season, there were counts of 250 on 1st June, 140 on the 9th, 215 on the 14th, and 160 on the 19th, followed in July by 262 on the 7th, 340 on the 16th, 219 on the 21st, and 150 on the 28th. Most birds left the area but an increase in October saw 163 on 17th and then 180 on 5th December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	136	355	161	92	166	250	340	96	98	163	180	70
B/days	707	1236	368	615	487	881	977	211	310	525	746	274

Carriion Crow *Corvus corone*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

At least 300 birds came to roost on Worth marshes on 1st January, with 150 there on 9th February. Spring and summer saw smaller numbers recorded though there were still surprisingly high numbers around, with up to 75 birds scattered through the Recording Area. The highest numbers were on New Downs where there were three counts between 30 and 50 in April and May. Two north along the Estate beach on 12th and 15th April were the only signs of migration.

Apart from 250 to roost on Worth marshes on 15th August, there were no particularly high counts in the last six months. The end of the year saw low numbers reported with around 40-45 birds in the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	309	152	72	58	47	23	19	250	88	53	40	18
B/days	506	354	337	293	208	94	104	393	291	411	325	164

Raven *Corvus corax*

Resident breeder nearby, migrant and winter visitor

Birds were again recorded in every month of the year, with a total of 108 bird-days overall, a decrease from last year. The first four months of the year showed the most activity, with a peak count of eight on 20th March, a new SBBOT record count.

Autumn showed another slight pick-up in numbers with a peak count of eight on 21st September, equal to the spring peak, and five on 26th October. Daily counts otherwise rarely got above three all year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	3	3	8	2	3	2	2	2	8	5	2	1
B/days	16	15	20	12	4	5	5	3	13	10	3	2

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Rare breeder, migrant and winter visitor

Two birds on the Green Wall were responsible for almost all records in the first six months, with one on the Estate on 27th February.

One in Prince's Plantation on 24th June was most likely post-breeding dispersal, with four birds on the Green Wall on 20th July perhaps the same. In September, there were four on the Green Wall on the 22nd, singles on the Estate on three dates, and a rare record from Worth marshes on the 12th. After a single on the Estate on 8th October, all further records came from the regular birds on the Green Wall. Overall, 57 bird-days was a 40.6% decrease on last year. There were no confirmed records of 'Continental' Coal Tit *P.a.ater*.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2	2	1		1	1	4	2	4	2	1	1
B/days	15	4	3		2	4	5	6	8	4	1	5

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Resident breeder and migrant

The wintering population consisted of around 70 birds during the early part of the year. There was no obvious influx of birds or increase in bird-days during the spring and the usual low levels over the summer.

Fledgling birds increased numbers slightly in July and August but September, October, and November were busier. Three north on 11th October implied some migration was occurring, though it was difficult to pick up. There were peak counts of up to 20 on the Estate, 20 on the Green Wall, seven on New Downs, and 18 on Worth marshes. These counts dropped significantly later leaving an overwintering population at the end of the year of around 45 birds.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	44	35	28	28	20	20	25	32	44	33	30	30
B/days	362	343	220	234	101	161	189	183	282	304	288	223

Great Tit *Parus major*

Resident breeder and migrant

January and February saw up to 18 individuals on the Estate, 21 on the Green Wall, eight on New Downs, and 22 on Worth marshes. There was a decline during the breeding season and into the summer, the opposite of what was observed last year, with June peaks for the Estate and Green Wall of 11 and seven, respectively.

Numbers picked up again as we went into Autumn with up to 16 on both the Estate and Green Wall in September. The end of the year saw fewer individuals present for the winter than at the start of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	36	26	31	24	15	15	10	24	30	23	17	21
B/days	265	298	220	215	107	108	84	158	215	226	179	205

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

A busier start to the year with 27 bird-days in the first three months. Most of the January records came from the Green Wall where a flock of up to four was recorded on several dates. New Downs also recorded three on 15th January. Records of one-two from the Green Wall/New Downs continued into February. There were two records in March, a single female was present on the Green Wall on the 16th and a male on New Downs on the 19th, which was the last record for the Spring.

The 28 bird-days in the latter half of the year was quieter than over the same period last year. October saw the bulk of these with 25 bird-days, the maximum count being ten on the 26th, with a pair on the Green Wall and eight on New Downs. A pair were recorded on the 14th and 16th at Pegwell, four were present on Worth on the 27th, and the remaining records for the month consisted of a single/pair recorded on the Green Wall on intermittent dates. A pair on Worth on 6th November was the last sighting of the year.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*
Uncommon migrant and occasional winter visitor

There were three singles in spring; on Worth marshes on 19th February and 27th March, and on the Estate on 30th April.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*
Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

It was a very good winter with 1,904 bird-days throughout January and February, a significant increase over the same period last year. There was an exceptional count of 242 on Worth on 24th January, whilst 165 on the Estate on 11th February was another good total. Most birds had moved on by March and numbers stayed fairly steady for the next few months.

There were a handful of records of small numbers of birds moving north in September, though migration didn't pick up until October. Small flocks of up to 26 birds moved north throughout the month. Numbers peaked on 12th when there were 100 on Worth, three on the Estate, four on the Green Wall, and an additional ten moving north. December numbers were lower than last year, with the highest counts of the month being 26 on the Estate on the 14th and 29 on Worth on the 20th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	242	210	55	37	22	36	36	5	34	117	83	30
B/days	903	1001	530	355	148	152	184	23	141	775	607	178



Skylark by S.Ray

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Non-breeding summer visitor and migrant

Two birds on Worth on 10th March opened the account. April saw fair passage with a peak of 17 on the 22nd and records continued into May with 34 bird-days overall. Worth marshes held the majority of records.

A flock of ten on 25th June was the first sign of autumn and a total of 44 bird-days occurred on the Estate during July. August was better with a peak count of 1,246 on the 10th, with 120 on the 7th the only other significant count for the year. Numbers continued into September with 101 bird-days before the final sighting of the year of five on 6th October.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			6	17	15	10	40	1246	48	5		
B/days			20	80	34	10	178	1755	101	8		

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Breeding summer visitor and migrant

There was an early record in Pegwell Bay on 26th February, followed by four records of one-three from 26th to 30th March. Counts in April and May were like last year but with slightly more bird-days. The highest counts occurred in May and were 162 on the 14th, 146 on the 22nd, and 203 on the 23rd.

Autumn migration began with 104 birds on 29th July but was slow to get going with only two double-figure counts in August. September was (as usual) the busiest month of the year but, as with the previous month, there were only two counts of note, 1,191 on the 21st and 4,394 on the 22nd. Thereafter migration fizzled out. October saw three triple-figure counts and then there were 30 birds on 1st November, quite high for that late in the year. The last birds were on 21st November.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak		1	3	78	203	16	104	427	4394	170	30	
B/days		1	9	525	953	132	401	1205	7186	993	78	

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Breeding summer visitor and migrant

The season began with a bird in Pegwell Bay on 5th March. There was a large drop in bird-days compared to last spring with the first triple-figure count not recorded until June. Most came from Worth marshes, and then later from the Estate and Green Wall as breeding birds returned.

There was little change until September when numbers rose dramatically mid-month to 1,185 on the 17th. This was followed by an impressive 34,655 on the 22nd. Numbers were not quite so high after but still 1,030 on the 27th and 1,551 on the 28th. October passage was much reduced, aside from 213 on the 2nd, as counts rarely scraped into double-figures. One was on Worth marshes on 6th November.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			1	19	80	105	180	85	34655	213	1	
B/days			1	166	714	328	650	727	41813	353	1	



Hirundines by S.Reynaert

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Resident breeder, uncommon migrant and winter visitor

There was a small reduction in bird-days this year, though the population continues to fare very well. As usual, birds were not particularly vocal at the start of the year but bird-days increased in March and April. There were no records from the Estate but a minimum of 29 territories elsewhere.

Late summer and early autumn were the quietest parts of the year but were followed by a large increase in October. There were records on the Estate on the 3rd, the 14th, and 24th (two), as young birds dispersed out of their natal areas. There were at least 20 birds on Worth marshes on the 10th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	14	9	14	14	10	9	4	2	12	30	12	13
B/days	117	77	154	180	88	55	22	14	90	119	107	92

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

At the start of the year, up to nine were present on the Estate, 14 on the Green Wall, and 12 on Worth. There were 38 on Worth on 14th February, an unusually high count. By April, only around 15 birds remained in the area to breed.

Records on the Estate were almost non-existent until August, when a gradual increase saw up to 12 on the 31st. Autumn saw some much higher counts than the rest of the year, with the greatest being 25 on Worth on 7th September, 31 on 16th November, and 35 on 17th November. Around 55 birds seemed to remain for the winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	18	38	9	8	4	11	8	24	27	25	40	27
B/days	169	129	85	41	13	41	36	85	246	207	248	206

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Uncommon migrant

There were five bird-days in autumn, all from the Estate. Singles were recorded on 28th July, 10th, 15th, and 20th August, and 22nd September.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

Vagrant

One near Mary Bax on 16th and 17th October was the sixth SBBOT record.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant

Spring passage was again very light with the first recorded on 26th March. Singles trickled through in April, with three on the 20th. Worth and New Downs recorded two singles each in April with the Estate recording the bulk. In May, all records came from the Estate with three on the 3rd and the 9th. The start of autumn passage appeared to be delayed with just 12 bird days in July, with the 21st bringing our first returning migrant. August, as usual, was the busiest month with two peak counts of 23 on the 10th and the 13th, the highest of a disappointing autumn. Most birds were recorded on the Estate, four on Worth the best count from elsewhere. Passage was heavier in September than in previous years with 15 on the 12th the peak count, perhaps indicating delayed movement due to the cold spring affecting breeding elsewhere. No birds were recorded after 20th September.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			1	3	3		5	26	15			
B/days			1	13	10		12	258	89			

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Breeding summer visitor, abundant migrant, uncommon winter visitor

A quiet start to the year with one on the Estate and two on Worth marshes the only wintering birds in the area. The first obvious sign of spring migration was six on Worth marshes on 28th February. Numbers rose swiftly in March as birds both passed through and returned to breeding areas, peaking at 39 on the 29th. Though the peak count in April was lower, there were more bird-days, with 20 double-figure counts recorded. Seven pairs bred on the Estate. There was a small but noticeable increase in records in August but September was when birds really started moving through the area. On the Estate there were 33 on the 12th, 41 on the 18th, 60 on the 21st, and 114 on the 22nd, with 78 other birds also logged elsewhere around the Recording Area on the latter day. The high numbers on the Estate continued into October with 59 on the 2nd and 44 on the 7th. The last double-figure flock was on the 16th. Later in the year there were still up to five on the Estate and a single on the Green Wall.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	3	6	39	29	12	11	10	18	192	62	8	5
B/days	9	15	296	386	115	92	54	167	1133	564	55	32

It was a surprisingly busy spring for **Siberian Chiffchaffs** *P.c.tristis*. A bird was along the edge of the Great Wood on Worth marshes on 26th February. A different bird, a singing male, was also on Worth marshes on 19th-23rd March, with the presumed same on the 28-29th March and 3rd April. This was followed by a third bird on 8th April with possibly the same on the 21st. None were recorded in autumn.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Breeding summer visitor and migrant

The first birds were back on Worth marshes on 29th March. A real increase in numbers didn't occur, however, until mid-April with a peak count of 46 on Worth Marshes on the 20th. Away from Worth there were 20 on the Green Wall on the 29th, plus three on the Estate, two at the Point, and six on New Downs. The total of 699 bird-days over April and May was lower than the previous year, perhaps owing to the unusually cold Spring.

Two on the Estate on 1st August were the first migrants of autumn. There were 22 bird-days recorded on the Estate throughout the month, with six on the 2nd being the peak count, and only a further four bird-days logged in September, resulting in a poor passage in total. The last bird of the year was on Worth Marshes on 21st September.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			2	56	52	15	28	6	3			
B/days			5	405	294	81	90	22	15			

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Breeding summer visitor and migrant

The first record of the year came on 19th April, when one was in Pegwell Bay. By the end of April, they were present around most of the Recording Area with 18 on New Downs on the 30th. Numbers continued to grow throughout the first half of May with a peak of 33 on the 9th. The June peak count was half that of May, as spring passage finished and breeding birds became quieter.

An influx on 21st July indicated the beginning of autumn migration, with 61 present on Worth, the highest count of the year. Numbers were otherwise low and steady. The last double-figure count of the year came on 13th August, when there were 17 birds left around the Recording Area. Few birds remained far into September, though seven still lingered on the 21st. The last two were on Worth marshes on 5th October.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak				20	33	17	61	23	9	2		
B/days				72	345	146	221	202	65	2		

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Scarce migrant

A single male held territory from 15th June to the 28th.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Migrant

A very unusual year with just the one record, a bird at the Drove on 1st September.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Breeding summer visitor, abundant migrant, scarce winter visitor

One on the Green Wall on 2nd February was the only winter record. Two on the Green Wall on 10th March were perhaps the first migrants but elsewhere in the Recording Area there were no records until the last week of the month. Bird-days in April and May were half that of last year. In the summer there were 12 males singing on the Estate.

Bird-days in August, September, and October were all down on last year. The first autumn arrival of note was 20 on Worth marshes on 2nd September. Gradually counts increased on the Estate with 43 on the 6th, 83 on the 12th, 139 on the 16th, 172 on the 21st, 139 on 22nd, and 87 on the 30th. After 95 on 2nd October, there were only three counts higher than 20, and then just single-figures for the last week. There were two December records, singles on the Estate on the 6th and 12th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak		1	6	22	22	10	11	16	178	95	2	1
B/days		1	18	232	193	91	93	135	1223	259	11	2

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Occasional breeder, summer visitor, and regular autumn migrant

Though this is a species that can be scarce on the south-east coast in spring, it was a particularly poor year. Only two bird-days were recorded: a male singing on Worth marshes on 17th April and one on the Estate on 9th May.

Autumn saw a slight decrease on last year, with 39 bird-days recorded. The first was on the Estate on 1st August. Up to four were seen daily on the Estate throughout August, with two at Pegwell on the 28th. One was on Worth on 9th September. The last of the year was on the Estate on 22nd September.

Barred Warbler *Curruca nisoria*

Scarce migrant

Recorded for the second year in succession with one present on Worth marshes on 7th to 10th September.

Lesser Whitethroat *Curruca curruca*

Breeding summer visitor and migrant

Between 18th April and 29th September there were 315 bird-days, a 39.4% decrease over the equivalent period last year. The majority of records came from Worth marshes where the bulk of the breeding population is located. The peak spring count was 11 on 7th May.

The summer months were slow but August saw numbers increase significantly. The biggest arrival was 32 birds on the 23rd, with double-figures on two other dates. In comparison to spring, most records at this time came from the Estate, with 45 bird-days logged in August and 33 in September. In December, a bird of the eastern race *C.c.blythii* was trapped and ringed on the Estate on the 6th, and seen again on the 19th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak				9	11	5	4	32	8			1
B/days				33	54	40	13	103	52			2

Whitethroat *Curruca communis*

Breeding summer visitor and migrant

Three birds on 9th April were the first for the year. May was the busiest month of the year with 534 bird-days. Breeding totals suggest up to 18 pairs were present on the Estate, 31 on Worth, 15 on New Downs, and 25 on the Green Wall. Productivity seemed to be lower than average, a theme present in many of the passerines this year.

Autumn passage was busiest in August with a peak of 42 on the 10th, plus a few other counts between 21-and 35. The passage period was very short and the last bird was recorded on 28th September.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak				60	61	32	26	42	19			
B/days				313	534	249	255	323	104			

Dartford Warbler *Curruca undata*

Uncommon but regular migrant and winter visitor

There were four bird-days at the start of the year with a bird on Worth marshes on 8th and 9th January and two at the Point on 11th January.

At the end of the year 14 bird-days were recorded with two birds on the Estate on 1st November, near Dickson's Corner, with both individuals sporadically recorded through into December. Singles were also recorded at the Point on 10th November and 19th December.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Migrant and uncommon winter visitor

There were only 29 bird-days this year, a 70.7% decrease from last year. Single birds were seen on the Estate and the Green Wall in January and two were on Worth on 14th February. March passage comprised up to two on the Estate on five dates, plus three singles on the Green Wall. A male on the Estate on 14th April was the last of spring.

Autumn birds began appearing from 16th September. In October, there were three singles on the Estate plus four on the Green Wall on 15th October. One on the Green Wall on 13th December was the only bird set to winter.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1	2	3	1					1	4	2	1
B/days	2	2	10	1					3	7	3	1

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Scarce breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

There were only 32 bird-days in the first five months. Just five birds overwintered in the Recording Area and spring passage was barely noticeable, with three on the Estate on 22nd March and one-two on four dates in April and May, the last on the 6th.

Autumn passage was also massively reduced. The first birds appeared on 11th September. October is usually our busiest month of the year but there were just 29 bird-days, a 95.5% decrease on last year. The year's peak was a paltry six on the Green Wall on 11th November. There were two each on the Estate and the Green Wall at the end of the year.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2	2	3	2	1				3	5	6	4
B/days	8	11	6	6	1				4	29	33	17

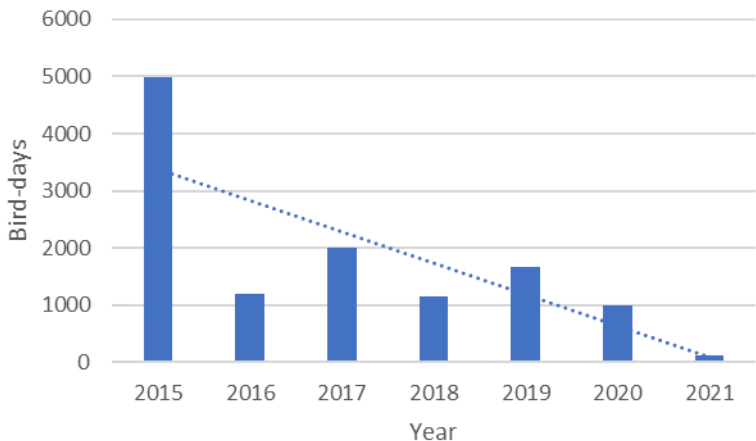


Figure.2 Annual bird-days of Goldcrest 2015-2021.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

Despite good winter totals there was a large reduction in bird-days over spring, compared to last year. This could be partly due to the persistent cold and windy weather in April, with a knock-on effect during the rest of the breeding season.

Autumn peak counts and bird-days were more in line with expected totals. In October, there were around 55-60 birds around the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	19	20	35	25	19	24	22	14	15	30	28	20
B/days	174	163	293	308	187	190	136	119	131	222	260	169

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Vagrant

One on the Green Wall on 22nd September was the tenth SBBOT record and the third in four years.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Rare resident, migrant

Scarce again this year with five bird-days in spring and two in early autumn. In February, two were on the Green Wall on the 4th and one was on Worth on the 6th, with presumably the same bird also present there on 21st and 22nd March. Singles were on the Green Wall on 14th July and ringed on the Estate on 8th August.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

Vagrant

With only three previous records, it was some surprise when a flock of four birds arrived in the Cellars on 3rd June. Unfortunately, they stayed only briefly. Another flew across Worth marshes on the 6th.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

Around 200-300 birds overwintered in the Recording Area. There was an increase in February with almost 800 on the 8th. Numbers stayed high with 621 on the 17th and 639 on the 26th. March began with fairly low numbers, but then picked up with 1,153 on 14th, then the highest count of the year, a massive arrival of 11,970 on the 17th. On the 18th, at least 7,500 remained, and the 19th saw a drop to 3,077. Counts for the rest of March and April remained below 100, with a few hundred birds present over summer.

It took a while for autumn numbers to pick up with no counts over 1,000 until October. The 665 on 13th September was the first increase of any significance, with counts growing up to 705 over the next couple of days then quickly reducing again to double figures. On 9th October there were 1,045 birds, and counts only reached into the thousands one more time in the year, on 5th November when there were 2,639. Between 300-400 birds remained at the end of December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	315	791	11970	98	105	290	450	330	705	1045	2639	550
B/days	2382	7315	28723	550	810	1796	2685	2794	4893	4029	8047	4434

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant

There were seven bird-days in spring and three in autumn. The first bird was sound-recorded over Stonar on 17th April and was followed by a flock of four on Hundred Acre field on the 26th, and a female on Worth marshes on 1st and 2nd May. In October, there were singles over Stonar on the 13th, on Worth on the 20th, and on New Downs on the 28th.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

The start of year saw up to 26 on the Estate, 62 on the Green Wall, and 20 on Worth. Spring was relatively quiet with no noticeable influxes on the Estate, 29 on 19th April being the highest count during the season.

It wasn't until October that numbers began to rise again with a peak of 71 on the 13th. November saw heavier movement. The 6th saw an influx with the Estate recording 103 birds and Worth marshes another 110. Elsewhere, the Green Wall recorded up to 52 birds, with the remaining areas seeing lower counts. December saw between 60-80 birds present in the Recording Area although towards the end of the year, the numbers seemed about half that.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	77	60	43	46	34	37	24	13	15	71	213	88
B/days	847	622	394	329	219	197	136	108	125	491	1361	1062

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Migrant and winter visitor

There were large fluctuations throughout January but counts suggested a wintering population of 160 birds. February was the busiest month of the year and saw the flock on Worth increase, with peaks of 189 on the 3rd, 190 on the 5th, 230 on the 16th, and 132 on the 24th. Most counts in March were less than ten but there was an arrival of 42 on the 17th and 51 on the 18th, and 24 on the 29th. The last of spring was recorded on 30th April.

There was just one October sighting, one north over the Estate on the 13th. There was no repeat of last year's late autumn arrival, with a peak of 80 birds on 5th November, mostly on the Green Wall. In December, there were daily counts of single-figures, apart from 40 on the 19th and 32 on the 29th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	89	230	51	3						1	80	40
B/days	493	1496	174	11						1	277	121

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Rare breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The year began with up to 18 on the Estate, 65 on the Green Wall, five on New Downs, and 23 on Worth. The bulk of spring passage occurred in March, with the peak count of at least 693 recorded flying over Stonar overnight on the 20th. Other good 'nocmig' counts include 154 over on the 21st and 197 over on the 22nd. At least one bird summered in the area.

Nocturnal monitoring once again provided some good records with 449 over Stonar on 7th October, and almost 1,000 birds over the Observatory/Stonar on the 12th. November continued the high counts over Stonar with 224 and 376 on the 8th and 9th, respectively. There were 90 on the Green Wall on the 4th and 200 on Worth marshes on the 16th. December saw much lower numbers, peaking at 25 on Worth on the 5th and 8th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	88	52	693	3	1		1	1	1	981	561	27
B/days	382	261	1408	6	3		1	3	3	2882	1992	185

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

At least 24 were present in the Recording Area in January. Mid-February saw an influx with 29 recorded on the 11th (16 on the Green Wall, nine on the Estate, and four on Worth) and a high turnover of birds during that week. Counts settled in March and April leaving just the breeding population.

Summer was very quiet and this continued in the same vein into September. An increase in bird-days was evident in October as thrush movement reached its peak. A minimum of 528 were logged moving overnight on the 7th, coinciding with an influx of Redwing. There were at least 264 the next day, 116 on the 12th, and 109 on the 15th. Numbers settled but remained at a considerable level through November and December, with up to 34 on the Estate, seven on the Green Wall, three on New Downs, and 18 on Worth.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	13	29	15	13	4	3	5	2	4	528	20	34
B/days	84	227	106	88	29	19	37	16	13	1275	197	137

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

There were up to nine on the Green Wall in January, plus two on New Downs and six on Worth marshes. Birds returned to the Estate at the end of February. March saw the highest bird-day total of spring with at least 21 birds spread around the Recording Area. Counts thereafter were lower and there were no signs of migration through the area.

Counts built slowly from August onwards and included ten birds on New Downs on the 12th. One flew south on 22nd September and, in October, was followed by one north on the 8th, three north on the 12th, and two north on the 21st. Bird-days doubled around this time and the highest counts of the year followed in November. There were 15 on the 9th, including 12 on the Green Wall. The end of the year saw around 17 birds present.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	9	9	11	5	12	8	4	10	8	6	15	9
B/days	63	70	71	41	44	29	5	21	20	51	85	77

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant

There were seven bird-days in May, the majority of which came from nocturnal recordings at Stonar, with two recorded on the 8th and singles from the 9th-11th. Two were on the Estate on the 25th. There were four records on Worth in June, with two present on the 14th and singles on the 19th, 25th, and then 8th July, all hinting at possible breeding for the second season in a row.

There were only 13 bird-days recorded in autumn. September saw the majority of records with seven recorded on the Estate, the peak count being two on the 4th. Singles were recorded on Worth on the 9th and 11th, and New Downs held one bird on the 9th. October held two records on the Estate, the last bird of the year being present on the 7th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

Peak counts in January were 27 on the Estate, 34 on the Green Wall, eight on New Downs, one at the Point, and 13 on Worth marshes, suggesting an overall wintering population of at least 83 birds. In contrast to last year, there was a decline in bird-day totals during spring, perhaps due to the poor weather at this time.

There was a big increase in bird-days in August, bang on cue. Counts continued to increase with more than double the bird-days in September. There were 33 on the Estate on the 21st. October saw further increases and was the busiest month of the year. Peak counts from subsites were 55 on the Estate on the 7th, 37 on the Green Wall on the 10th, 50 on Worth also on the 10th, and 17 on New Downs on the 26th. There were still high numbers in the area in November, but half that in December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	60	37	43	34	21	19	14	21	47	90	70	35
B/days	475	398	281	284	126	90	43	200	520	851	577	326

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Uncommon migrant and occasional breeder

Singles were on the Estate on 8th August and 5th September.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Migrant

A bird calling over Stonar overnight on 8th May was the only spring record. There were 27 bird-days in autumn (29 less than last year). The first bird appeared on 25th August, with four other birds until the end of the month. All other records occurred in September, with the last on the 15th. The peak count was seven on the 1st. As usual, most records came from the Estate, with one on New Downs on the 3rd and two in Pegwell Bay on the 4th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochrurus*

Migrant and winter visitor

There were seven bird-days in spring and none in autumn. The first individual was recorded on 25th March. Most records came from the Estate, however, a single was on New Downs on 29th March and two individuals on Worth on 30th March. The last bird of the year was recorded on 18th April.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant

An early bird was on Worth marshes on 30th March and a male was at Pegwell Bay on 11th April.

There were just ten bird-days in autumn. Birds were on the Estate on three dates in August and five dates in September, with the last on the 21st. One at Pegwell Bay on 28th August was the only other record.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant

There was one spring record this year, a male on the Estate on 1st May. There were then 232 bird-days recorded in autumn. The first was on the Estate on 1st August. Numbers steadily increased up to double-figures, with 14 on the 27th, all on the Estate, being the highest count for August. There were also ten on the 29th and 12 on the 31st. Numbers remained in double-figures for the first few days of September, with 17 on the 1st, 20 on the 2nd, 23 on the 3rd, 14 of which were on New Downs, and a high count of 28 individuals on 5th August. October saw three bird-days with two on Worth on the 4th and the last of the year on New Downs on the 9th.



Whinchat by S.Reynaert

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Rare resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

Wintering numbers were very similar to last year with five on the Estate, two on the Green Wall, two on New Downs, four at the Point, and nine on Worth marshes. There were no signs of passage in spring and, surprisingly, no sightings at all in April. At least one pair, perhaps two, bred around the Estate area in May and June.

After a trickle of migrants in August there was more significant passage in September, including 12 birds on the 25th. October and November were the busiest months of the year. There were ten double-figure counts during this period with 17 on 2nd November the peak. At the end of the year there were around 14 birds wintering in the area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	11	9	4		3	4	4	5	12	14	17	8
B/days	114	80	12		16	12	18	24	51	137	152	67

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
Occasional breeding summer visitor and migrant

There were 147 bird-days in spring, significantly higher than last year. The first bird wasn't seen until 24th March but soon peaked at 15 on the 29th, including 12 on the Estate. April saw regular counts of one-four on the Estate and up to eight on Worth, plus one-two at the Point on three dates and two on New Downs on the 22nd and 30th. there were a handful of counts between four and eight at the start of May but passage finished soon after. A pair attempted to breed south of Sandilands but failed.

Two were at the Point on 31st July. There were more bird-days in August than in any month of the year. During this time there was a high turnover of birds but up to 13 on the Estate and four on Worth, with just the odd single on New Downs and at the Point. Smaller numbers continued through September and in October birds were seen on seven dates, with the last two on the 21st.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			15	10	8		2	13	8	2		
B/days			28	71	48		2	107	79	9		



Wheatear by S.Ray

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The Green Wall had the highest concentration of birds during the first months of the year with around 70 present. Numbers on the Estate were fairly low up until March when 42 were recorded on the 17th before steadying in April to around 26 birds.

Things picked up in July with flocks of up to 80 on the Estate and 120 on the Green Wall. This would continue into August with the Green Wall recording flocks up to 175 during the month. September would prove to be the busiest time of year with a peak of 200 recorded on the Green Wall on the 1st. Unlike the previous year, bird-days decreased as the autumn continued although the overwintering population consisted of at least 155 birds..

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	85	73	69	69	49	51	120	175	203	57	61	81
B/days	783	662	587	540	309	378	550	1107	1204	471	469	547

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
Increasingly scarce migrant and winter visitor

The high numbers from last autumn remained at the start of the year. A minimum of 37 birds were present in the Dickson's Corner/Mary Bax area and were responsible for the 306 bird-days up until 29th March.

One on Worth marshes on 26th June was unseasonal. There were then 114 bird-days from 17th September to the year's end as birds returned to the same area as the previous winter. The peak count was 16 on 9th December.



Tree Sparrow by D.Macey

Dunnoch *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The year began with up to five birds on the Estate, 22 on the Green Wall, five on New Downs, and five on Worth marshes. Numbers increased in all subsites over the spring as birds began to sing again. There were 31 across the Recording Area on 22nd February and 27 on 12th April, with an overall breeding population of around 50 pairs.

There was no obvious autumn passage, but October saw peak counts of up to 15 on the Estate, nine on the Green Wall, three on New Downs, and 19 on Worth. The bird-day total in November remained very high, reducing significantly in December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	22	31	22	27	19	8	7	6	15	25	27	15
B/days	130	278	230	193	112	49	57	48	93	182	235	140

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Rare breeding summer visitor and common migrant

There was a similar number of bird-days in spring as last year. Most records came from Worth marshes but there were birds on New Downs on 13th April, on the Estate on the 15th and 28th, on New Downs on the 30th (two), on the Estate on 1st May, New Downs on the 4th, and on the Estate on the 17th (two) and 18th. It was pleasing to see two pairs breed on Worth marshes, with perhaps a third pair on the Estate.

There was little change until August when passage birds increased the bird-day total to the highest during the year. Up to 14 birds were on Worth marshes in the last week of the month, whilst an exceptional 24 flew north over the Estate on the 25th. There were also counts of up to seven on the Green Wall (26th) and five on New Downs (25th). The highest count in September was of 17 on the 4th, all but one of these on Worth marshes. The last double-figure day count was ten on the 21st and the last two birds of the year were on the 28th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak			1	3	4	4	3	31	17			
B/days			1	24	18	6	12	129	119			

Passage of **Blue-headed Wagtail** *M.f.flava* was the best for a number of years. One was on Worth on 30th March, with two-three present on 1st-4th April, and two on the 16th.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Migrant and winter visitor

At least three, probably four, birds wintered in the Recording Area and were present into early March. Singles then flew north on 17th March and south on 22nd March. Two birds were on New Downs on 13th April.

Single juveniles on Worth marshes on 12th June and on New Downs on 8th July were perhaps locally bred. Autumn passage began on 31st August and from then on there was sustained migration through the area, producing 156 bird-days in September and October. In September there were nine on the 7th, 15 on the 9th, nine on the 20th, and 11 on the 22nd, and in October there were ten on the 10th. At the end of the year there were at least eight birds present.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	2	2	2	2		1	1	1	15	10	3	3
B/days	12	7	6	2		1	1	1	101	55	21	21

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

A large wintering flock on Worth marshes was responsible for the impressive bird-day total in January. There were six triple-figure counts including at least 200 present on the 6th. Elsewhere, there were also up to 18 on New Downs, nine on the Estate, and five on the Green Wall. There were no obvious signs of spring passage through the area but 27 on New Downs on 6th March was unusual high. At least four pairs bred in the area over summer.

Autumn passage was strong, particularly on 10th October when 178 flew north, with a further 41 the next day. There were also counts of up to 13 on the Green Wall, ten on New Downs, and 52 on Worth marshes at this time. In November, a flock on Worth marshes peaked at 87 on the 6th, with around 45 elsewhere in the Recording Area too. The flock did not stick around though and December's totals were much reduced.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	201	48	29	3	2	3	3	2	11	189	107	24
B/days	1473	568	118	30	9	13	10	5	53	530	415	94

The numbers of **White Wagtail** *M.a.alba* fluctuate from year-to-year. In 2021, there were 29 bird-days between 12th March and 25th May. Most passage occurred in March with peaks of nine on the Estate on the 15th, two on Worth on the 15th, and three on New Downs on the 29th. One-two were seen on four dates in April and three in May.



White Wagtail by X.Taylor

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

Overwintering numbers were high with peak counts of 25 on the Estate, 77 on the Green Wall, 42 on New Downs, 27 at the Point, and 66 on Worth marshes. Spring passage was very light with less than 20 birds logged moving overhead in March and April. Around 25 birds summered in the area. Autumn passage was much better than last year. Between 16th September and 9th November, a total of 2,938 birds were counted moving north. Key dates in September included 230 on the 17th, 172 on the 20th, 219 on the 21st, 590 on the 22nd, and 368 on the 30th, and in October, 777 on the 7th, 196 on the 10th, and 170 on the 11th. In December there about 140 birds in the area, including 87 on Worth marshes.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	96	108	84	17	10	10	10	19	704	785	98	87
B/days	841	702	507	136	46	40	53	83	2586	1997	743	405

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant

In April, one was on Worth marshes on the 17th, one was sound-recorded over Stonar on the night of the 18th, and two were on the Estate on the 28th. The 18 bird-days in autumn were half that of last year, which was already poor in comparison to other recent years. In August there were singles on the Green Wall on the 17th and 21st, as well as birds on the Estate on the 17th, 25th, and 28th (two). September saw birds on eight dates, with the highest count of three on the 17th. Six were recorded over Stonar, four were over the Estate, and two flew over Worth marshes, with the last on the 28th.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

Migrant

One on Worth marshes on 18th September becomes the third record for SBBOT and follows hot-on-the-heels of last years' sighting.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Migrant and winter visitor

It was another good winter with 85 bird-days recorded in the first four months. There were singles on the Green Wall on a handful of dates and two on New Downs on 26th February, but most records came from Worth marshes where at least four wintered. For the second year in succession there was a pre-migration build-up on Worth marshes, peaking at eight birds on 8th April. The last bird was seen on the 24th.

The later winter period comprised 52 bird-days, from 22nd October. Again, nearly all records came from Worth marshes, with up to five present, but there were also three on the Green Wall on 15th December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	4	5	4	8						1	3	6
B/days	20	9	33	23						3	18	31

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Resident breeder nearby, migrant and winter visitor

Numbers were good at the beginning of the year with at least seven at the Point, ten on New Downs, and four in Pegwell Bay. Spring passage was uneventful with only one on the Estate in March.

Three birds north on September 29th were the first birds of autumn. October saw the peak passage with the majority recorded on visible migration, with singles also recorded on the Estate, New Downs, and Worth marshes. At least five wintered in Pegwell Bay.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	14	5	2						3	3	2	5
B/days	26	5	4						3	22	5	12

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder, common migrant and winter visitor

A lower wintering population was present compared to the previous year. The Estate held up to 23 birds, Worth up to 74, and New Downs held seven. March saw a surge in numbers as migration began with 110 north on the 5th and a peak of 687 north on the 17th.

Fourteen north on 13th September was the start of autumn passage. October saw mostly small numbers until 99 on the 14th and 219 on the 15th. However, passage diminished as quickly as it started. Up to 92 were present on the Estate at the end of the year, with 52 elsewhere in the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	76	28	687	24	17	15	10	6	15	219	61	92
B/days	532	426	1265	278	156	130	89	44	119	755	727	488

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Migrant and winter visitor

One on Worth on 2nd January was the only winter record. Singles were seen on the Green Wall on 2nd April and Estate on 19th April.

The first bird of autumn was seen on 17th September. There were 84 bird-days over autumn and winter. Peak counts in October included 12 on the 13th and seven on the 16th, and then in November there were 11 on the 3rd, five on the 15th, and six on the 23rd. In December, singles were seen on Worth on two dates and on the Estate on three dates, plus one on the Green Wall.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1			1					1	12	11	2
B/days	1			2					3	38	37	6

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

The monthly bird-day totals were remarkably similar to those from last year. At the start of the year there were up to three on the Green Wall and seven on Worth marshes. Spring passage included one on the Estate on 23rd April and two birds there on three dates between 3rd and 11th May.

Though an elusive species, breeding productivity seemed to be poor with few counts of any note until the end of the year when up to six were seen on Worth marshes. The only migrants noted were one on the Estate on 13th October, three there on the 17th, and one on 1st November.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	7	5	6	4	3	2	3	2	2	3	4	6
B/days	38	28	40	20	11	5	9	2	11	8	30	22

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Resident breeder, decreasing migrant and winter visitor

After few bird-days at the start of the year there was the usual increase in March and April as birds returned to their breeding areas. Two north on 21st March, one north on 22nd March, and one north on 9th April, were the only signs of migration. There were perhaps four-five pairs on the Estate, two on the Green Wall, three on New Downs, and one on Worth marshes. Peak day counts were 11 on 26th February, 11 on 8th March, 15 on 29th March, and 12 on 2nd April.

Bird-days in late summer were much reduced compared to last year. Autumn migration was also quiet with one north on 20th September, five singles north between 8th and 15th October, and the last singles north on 2nd and 9th November. There were less than ten resident birds in the Recording Area at this time.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	3	11	15	12	9	8	9	7	6	5	6	4
B/days	9	47	107	90	47	41	57	37	19	32	30	8

Linnet *Linnaria cannabina*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

Winter counts saw up to 200 on the Estate, 81 on Worth marshes, 60 on New Downs, and the occasional bird elsewhere. Only 151 birds were seen 'visibly migrating' throughout the spring. On 2nd April, there were 210 present on Worth. Numbers then dropped with up to 31 birds on the Estate, 30 on Worth, nine on New Downs, and 16 at the Point.

Autumn migration seemed to begin on 28th August as there were 95 on the Estate. The higher numbers continued into September with 126 on the 3rd, 156 on the 7th, and a large count of 398 on the 21st. A total of 334 birds were seen migrating through in September and October, with another six on 2nd November. Around 150 birds remained to winter in the Recording Area.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	81	200	182	213	60	51	49	97	398	130	79	71
B/days	597	595	761	2005	546	411	464	758	1657	1091	346	279



Linnet by J.Buckingham

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

Migrant and uncommon winter visitor

There were only 221 bird-days this year. The only mid-winter records were two on Worth on 10th January and one on the Green Wall on 12th January. There were 23 bird-days in spring between 20th March and 13th May, plus an unseasonal bird on the Estate on 13th June.

Three birds were on Worth between 28th-30th August. Autumn was well below-par and in complete contrast to last year's impressive migration. The first birds appeared on 12th October. Most days saw single figures, with 37 on 22nd October, ten on 3rd November, and 41 on 16th November the only exceptions. Two on 11th December were the last of the year.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

Records were quite consistent over the winter and suggested a population of 100 birds were scattered across the Recording Area. Spring migration was almost non-existent with just eight birds logged moving through in April and May. There were no particularly high counts at this time either with 46 birds on both 1st March and 19th April.

July and August counts were higher as post-breeding flocks gathered. September and October were the busiest months of the year with 2,898 bird-days. Strangely, there were no signs of active migration in September, but counts on the Estate rose to 100 on the 18th and 128 on the 21st, with peaks of 30 on the Green Wall, 24 on New Downs, and 60 on Worth marshes. October movements were between the 6th and 22nd, with 230 on the 13th and 186 on the 15th the only counts of note, ending a disappointing autumn. In November, there were 113 birds on the 16th, but most counts were far less. The end of the year saw less than 100 birds present.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	37	39	46	46	26	20	62	95	146	341	113	70
B/days	306	340	423	437	182	136	433	876	1115	1783	891	445

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Migrant and winter visitor

A far lighter year in numbers than 2020. A single on the Estate on 24th February was the first record, followed by another on New Downs on the 25th. Spring passage consisted of a maximum of 11 in March, on the 9th, and the remaining records just singles and pairs. In May, two were on the Estate on the 13th and three were on Worth on the 19th.

Records in the autumn began in September with two on the 28th. October would see a modest build-up in numbers with a peak of 51 on the 20th, with the second-highest total being 25 on the 16th. Passage increased into November with 190 bird-days recorded. There was a maximum of 40 on the 16th followed by 30 on the 3rd, and 22 on the 17th. Records continued into December with nine on the 16th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak		1	11	3	3				6	51	40	9
B/days		2	26	9	5				8	180	190	17

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

A summer-plumaged bird on Worth on 13th April was the only spring record. Autumn was similarly sparse with one individual on the Estate recorded on 18th and 19th November.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Migrant and winter visitor

One at the Point on 11th January was the only record in the early winter.

In contrast, there were 177 bird-days at the end of the year. One was on the Estate on 16th October. November saw the most activity with up to 13 seen on the Estate on 17 dates and up to four at the Point on five dates. Four were on Royal Cingue Ports Golf Course on the 21st. Up to 12 were seen regularly on the Estate in December.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Resident breeder, irregular migrant, and winter visitor

In January, there were up to 22 on New Downs, 13 on Worth, and two each on the Estate and at the Point. The New Downs flock subsequently peaked at 26 on 22nd February. Spring and summer saw small numbers of singing males on the Golf Courses and the Estate, with 29 at the Point on 22nd May an unusually high count.

Another unseasonal count was 16 on the Estate on 22nd July. Late summer is often a quiet time for this species. Birds began flocking back together again in September. There were 24 on the Green Wall on the 17th and up to eight on Worth. Up to 22 birds were around the Dickson's Corner area in mid-October, with just the odd single-figure count after.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	22	26	5	6	30	4	16	2	24	22	7	5
B/days	65	36	23	35	79	16	41	4	42	94	16	5

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

With 30 bird-days, it was only a marginally better year than the last. The first of the year was on the Green Wall on 3rd January. Singles were seen on Worth marshes and the Green Wall throughout January and February, then on 15th February there were five on the Estate. The only March record was one on the Estate on the 8th. April had four on the Green Wall on the 8th and the last of spring was seen on the Estate on 7th May.

There were single records from Worth and the Green Wall in October. In November two were seen on Worth with only one remaining into December.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	1	5	1	4	1					1	2	1
B/days	3	8	1	8	1					2	5	2

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder, migrant and winter visitor

Bird-day totals in the first three months of the year were consistent with the totals over the same period last year. However, more birds wintered with at least 41 in the Recording Area. April numbers were less than expected, perhaps due to the foul weather at this time. Summer totals suggested a population of around 35 pairs.

August was the quietest month of the year but bird-days more than doubled in September. Overhead visible migration comprised nine bird-days in September (from 22nd), 88 in October, and two in November (up to the 9th). Peak movements were 20 north on 13th October and 25 north on 14th October. In November there were some large counts on the Estate including 30 on the 7th and 14th, and 45 on the 8th. There were also 29 on Worth marshes on the 6th and 30 at the Point on the 10th.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Peak	27	14	24	18	17	14	15	12	25	47	55	20
B/days	170	164	266	195	125	125	126	96	192	384	428	141



Reed Bunting by J.Buckingham

Hybrids and Unidentified Species

Barnacle x Canada Goose

Six hybrid birds were present on the Estate, among pure Barnacle and Canada Geese, from 4th-6th March.

Swallow x House Martin

A lingering bird was on the Estate on 31st July, 1st August, and 11th August.

Phalarope sp.

Four unidentified phalaropes, but most likely Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*, flew past offshore and landed on the sea on 22nd October.

Escapes and Feral Species

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Asia

One on the Estate on 26th January.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*

India

One on Worth marshes on 19th October.

Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus*

Central Europe and Asia

One on Worth marshes on 17th January was presumably an escaped falconer's bird.

References:

British Ornithologists' Union. 2017. The British List: A Checklist of Birds of Britain (9th edition). *Ibis* 160: 190-240
HBW. *Handbook of the Birds of the World*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona, Spain.
KBR. *The Kent Bird Report*. Published annually since 1952. Kent Ornithological Society.
PBR. *The Pegwell Bird Report*. Published annually since 1998.
SBBOT Annual Bird Reports



Corn Bunting by S.Ray

Ringling Report

In 2021 3,210 birds were ringed of 51 species, all of which were ringed within the Observatory's Recording Area, or very close-by (2020 – 7,068 of 59 species).

The Covid lockdowns limited our operations considerably at the start of the year, with only four birds ringed up until April 19th. The continuation of precautions after that meant that we could only operate with very limited personnel, thus restricting the number of nets we could deploy. Once most of the precautions were lifted in the Autumn, and we were back to normal, some of the regular passage just did not happen. It was a year when Lesser Redpoll numbers were very reduced, which also happened in 2019 and 2014 (when the national totals for those years were also much reduced). Goldcrest passage was also non-existent, with only eight ringed - the lowest since 1979 (six ringed) and 1963 (five ringed).

No new species were added to the Observatory ringing list but of note were single Water Rail, Common Gull, Treecreeper, and another Lesser Whitethroat of the subspecies *blythii*. Four Wood Warblers ringed is worthy of mention; this has not happened since 1990 and has only been exceeded by the five ringed in 1984.

Blackcap was once again the most numerous species ringed (1,071) as it has been for eleven of the last thirteen years, with Chiffchaff second (567), a position it has held seven times in the same period (House Martin or Lesser Redpoll occasionally usurp this position). It is probably not worth dwelling on the species which were reduced in numbers this year in the light of the disruptions, but it is surprising that Wood Pigeon, Collared Dove, Yellow-browed Warbler, and Bullfinch do not even appear on the list for the year.

Again, we have to thank our regular observers for supplying details of colour-ringed birds that they see. This year there was a first - a Teal was found on Worth with a nasal saddle. As, invariably, ducks' legs are not visible, other methods of marking must be found and nasal saddles are occasionally fitted. Although they appear cumbersome, they have no detrimental effect on the ducks as can be seen from this record - it was fitted in Portugal in 2017 and the duck has survived for four years and travelled 1,408 kms to reach Worth Marshes. It is also pleasing to note that this is one of the few movements ever recorded where the Teal was not shot by hunters. There is only one other record on the BTO website of interesting recoveries that did not involve a deceased bird.

Another sight record, of a Spoonbill, is our fourth record of a colour-ringed bird of that species in the area. Nationally, 85% of the birds reported in Britain are from the Dutch colonies, as was this one. However, of our four records, two have been from the Netherlands and two from Germany.

The recovery report below includes records of birds moving to France, Belgium, Norway, and the Netherlands. There are also records of birds from the Netherlands, Portugal, Belgium, and Norway.

As mentioned in last year's report, the MOTUS tracking system is in its infancy in Europe, but there are now aeries all along the European Channel coast down as far as Belgium (France do not have any as yet) and there are several stations along the British east coast, so we are hopeful that these will generate some valuable data. We fitted our first eight trackers on Blackcaps this autumn, and although we have no certain returns from other sites, the records obtained at the Bay are already showing that some birds will stay in the area for a month, feeding prior to onward migration. There is also a record of a Blackcap tagged at Landguard Bird Observatory which was last recorded there on 9th October 2021, and was then recorded at the Bay 75 minutes later. We are optimistic that this system will provide a lot of new data on the speed of migration and the sites visited by the migrants. Hopefully in due course, aeries will be installed in France and Iberia, which would be particularly useful in monitoring our summer migrants.

Amongst the conventional ringing recoveries, the Blue Tit to Belgium is of particular note as only nine British ringed Blue Tits have ever been found abroad. This record represents the third to Belgium. The Song Thrush to Norway is also of note, as only 13 British-ringed Song Thrush have ever been recorded there. Surprisingly, only 19 Goldcrests have been reported in Britain with Belgian rings, so this late 2020 record of ours is doubly interesting, as it was recaptured at the Bay just one day after it was ringed in Belgium. The juvenile Blackcap ringed by us, on migration south, in late September 2019 was controlled at a site near Ghent in Belgium in July 2020. Interestingly, it was recaptured at the same site in April 2021, presumably indicating its breeding area.

The nomadic flocks of Lesser Redpolls continue to give us a large number of recoveries from all corners of the country, although there are none this year from the breeding areas in northern England, Scotland, or Wales. There are however several records to and from Belgium, two of which, from the same village in the southernmost province of Belgium (Luxembourg), and a further two from another village on the Belgian/German border indicate that the flocks probably move from site to site in flocks.

The House Sparrow RAS project was also severely curtailed, with only 16 adults ringed, but the 58 pulli was similar to a normal year. With no access to the Observatory building, sightings of colour-ringed birds were limited, as most records come from the feeders viewed from inside the building. The 87 sightings are, however, creditable and mainly thanks to Steffan Walton and Ian Hunter. With no Collared Doves ringed this year, and only two birds recorded from sightings, the Collared Dove RAS is probably not sustainable, but we shall see what happens now we are back to normal before making a decision.

The team continues to have vacancies for new ringers who have the time to commit to being involved in this fascinating activity, so please contact our Senior Ringer, Ian Hunter, if you are interested, at ringing@sbbot.org.uk.

Our thanks as usual must go to the landowners who allow us to operate on their land, in particular Richard Daw and Royal St George's Golf Club, on whose land our day-to-day ringing is mainly carried out. Our thanks also go to Tim Laughlin for allowing us to install and monitor nestboxes on his land.

I should like to acknowledge data gleaned from the British Trust for Ornithology's Annual Ringing Reports and Website which I have used extensively to compile much of this report.



MOTUS-tagged Blackcap by S.Walton

Selected Recoveries and Controls

Spoonbill

8066500	1	11/06/2020	Ventjagersplaten, (Zuid-Holland), NETHERLANDS
NLA	RR	01/09/2020	Haamstede, Duinzoom, (Zeeland), NETHERLANDS
	RR	21/05/2021	Worth Marshes, Sandwich Bay 212km WSW 344 days

Teal

J20634	5F	18/02/2017	Sao Jacinto N R, (Aveiro), PORTUGAL
POL	RR	02/03/2017	Sao Jacinto N R: 40°40'N 8°43'W (Aveiro), PORTUGAL
	RR	02/01/2018	Sao Jacinto N R: 40°40'N 8°43'W (Aveiro), PORTUGAL
	RR	20/02/2018	Sao Jacinto N R: 40°40'N 8°43'W (Aveiro), PORTUGAL
	RR	24/01/2019	Sao Jacinto N R: 40°40'N 8°43'W (Aveiro), PORTUGAL 1 yr 340 days
	VV	04/04/2021	Worth Marshes, Sandwich Bay 1408km NNE 4 yrs 45 days

Kestrel

EZ68885	1	08/06/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	XF	16/12/2021	Hurstpierpoint. (West Sussex) 115km WSW 191 days

Mediterranean Gull

E940635	6	20/05/2018	Antwerpen, (Antwerpen), BELGIUM
BLB	VV	01/03/2019	Antwerpen, (Antwerpen), BELGIUM
	VV	23/04/2019	Zwin, Knokke-sur-Mer, (West-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM ,
	VV	04/03/2020	Zwin, Knokke-sur-Mer, (West-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM
	RR	23/04/2020	Icklesham, (East Sussex)
	VV	29/04/2021	Antwerpen, (Antwerpen), BELGIUM
	VV	03/04/2022	Worth Marshes, Sandwich Bay 209km W 3 yrs 318 days
E951279	1	16/06/2019	Zwin, Knokke-sur-Mer, (West-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM
BLB	VV	24/07/2019	Titchwell, (Norfolk) 258km NW 38 days
	VV	10/04/2021	River Taff, (Cardiff) 453km W 1 yr 298 days
	VV	10/04/2021	Cardiff Bay, (Cardiff) 442km W 1 yr 298 days
	RR	23/04/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 138km W 1 yr 311 days

Blackbird			
7657565	3	10/08/2021	Olen, Vindafjord, (Hordaland), NORWAY
NOS	R	16/10/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 967km SSW 67 days
RH87873	6M	27/05/2021	Brook Farm, Reculver, (Kent)
	R	22/09/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	10/10/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 18km SE 136 days
Song Thrush			
RL39353	4	06/10/2018	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	06/09/2021	Holmane, (Rogaland), NORWAY 848km NNE 2 yrs 335 days
Blackcap			
16099650	3F	11/09/2019	Oostkamp, (West-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM
BLB	R	05/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 128km W 1 yr 24 days
AAP7533	3M	18/09/2021	St Margarets, South Foreland, (Kent)
	R	24/09/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 15km N 6 days
AEP2489	3J	03/08/2021	St Margarets, South Foreland (Kent)
	R	19/09/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 15km N 47 days
AVJ2563	3M	16/09/2021	Longham Lakes, (Dorset)
	R	21/09/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 237km ENE 5 days
AXR7311	3M	12/09/2021	Marsworth, nr Tring, (Hertfordshire)
	R	02/10/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 154km ESE 20 days
AZJ8800	3M	15/09/2021	Wraysbury Gravel Pits, (Windsor and Maidenhead)
	R	21/09/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 136km E 6 days
S405275	3M	13/09/2018	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	XF	12/04/2021	La Ciotat, Alpes-Cote de Azur, (Bouches-du-Rhone), FRANCE 956km SSE 2 yrs 211days
S732913	3F	30/09/2019	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	21/07/2020	Ursel, (Oost-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM 146km E 295 days
	R	24/04/2021	Ursel, (Oost-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM 146km E 1 yr 206 days
S741693	3M	26/09/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	06/10/2021	Les Boulins, Saint Julien-du-Sault, (Yonne), FRANCE 386km SSE 10 days

Chiffchaff

KBH445	3	27/10/2019	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Upton upon Severn Sewage Farm, (Worcestershire) 264km WNW 61 days
	R	27/12/2019	
	R	02/04/2021	
LKK104	R	02/04/2021	Upton upon Severn Sewage Farm, (Worcestershire) Upton upon Severn Sewage Farm, (Worcestershire) 264km WNW 2 yrs 90 days
	R	25/01/2022	
	R	25/01/2022	
LJ919	3	07/10/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Brook Farm, Reculver, (Kent) 18km NW 2 days
	R	09/10/2021	
LKK104	3	06/11/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Litlington, (East Sussex) 102km WSW 40 days
	R	16/12/2021	
NDC490	3	23/08/2021	Langford Lakes, (Wiltshire) Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 233km E 27 days
	R	19/09/2021	
NPT095	2	14/10/2021	Icklesham, (East Sussex) Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 65km NE 9 days
	R	23/10/2021	

Goldcrest

DJ9734	3F	16/10/2020	Zwin, Knokke-sur-Mer, (West-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM
BLB	R	17/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 138km W 1 day

Firecrest

LKK011	3F	11/10/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Icklesham, (East Sussex) 65km SW 3 days
	R	14/10/2021	

Blue Tit

S405887	3	25/09/2018	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Worth Village, Sandwich, (Kent) 4km WSW 2 yrs 108 days
	XF	11/01/2021	
S733960	5	13/03/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Meulebeke, (West-Vlaanderen), BELGIUM 137km ESE 17 days
	R	30/03/2020	
S734527	3J	28/07/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 99 days Shingleton Farm, nr Tilmanstone, (Kent) 10km SW 214 days
	R	04/11/2020	
	R	27/02/2021	
S739275	3	24/10/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Dungeness Bird Observatory, 49km SW 13 days
	R	06/11/2021	

Starling

LC45093	3JM XF	02/07/2014 22/04/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Deal, (Kent) 6km SSE 6 yrs 294 days
LH28135	3J XF	14/07/2015 22/10/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Deal, (Kent) 6km SSE 6 yrs 100 days
LK29656	4M XF	21/02/2018 09/05/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Ursuladijk, It Heidebskip, (Friesland), NETHERLANDS 336km NE 3 yrs 77 days

A further five birds were recorded moving between SBBO and Deal in the period

Chaffinch

S408391	6F XF	19/03/2019 29/03/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Malden, (Gelderland), NETHERLANDS 315km E 2 yrs 10 days
S408442	5F XF	24/03/2019 05/03/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Longcot, (Oxfordshire) 211km W 1 yr 346 days

Goldfinch

S408762	3J R	21/06/2019 28/02/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Frasnes-les-Buissenal, (Hainaut), BELGIUM 169km ESE 252 days
S737796	3 R	17/10/2020 03/01/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Brunoy, Essonne, (Seine-et-Oise & Seine), FRANCE 299km SSE 78 days
S738311	3M XF	26/10/2020 16/02/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory St Mars de Locquenay, (Sarthe), FRANCE 378km S 113 days
Z453723	3 R	23/10/2015 30/05/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Burwell, (Cambridgeshire) 130km NNW 4 yrs 220 days
	R	24/01/2021	Burwell, (Cambridgeshire) 130km NNW 5 yrs 93 days

Siskin

S735125	3F R	04/09/2020 24/12/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Symington, Biggar, (South Lanarkshire) 583km NW 1 yr 111 days
Z457385	3M R	24/10/2016 09/01/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory West Horsley, (Surrey) 127km W 4 yrs 77 days

Lesser Redpoll

16849501	4F	06/11/2020	Zichem, (Brabant), BELGIUM
BLB	R	16/11/2021	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory 252km W 1 yr 10 days
S736372	3M	28/09/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	14/11/2021	Pamber Forest, Tadley, (Hampshire) 174km W 1 yr 47 days
S736572	3M	03/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	07/05/2021	Edwinstowe, (Nottinghamshire) 270km NW 216 days
S736720	3	05/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	01/01/2021	Davant-Tève, (Luxembourg), BELGIUM 314km ESE 88 days
	R	14/03/2021	Davant-Tève, (Luxembourg), BELGIUM 314km ESE 160 days
S736978	3	06/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	13/10/2020	Davant-Tève, (Luxembourg), BELGIUM 314km ESE 7 days
S737150	3M	07/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	18/10/2020	Sourbrodt, (Liege), BELGIUM 344km ESE 11 days
S737237	3M	09/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	16/10/2020	Thirimont, Beaumont, (Hainaut), BELGIUM 230km ESE 7 days
S737564	3M	12/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	08/04/2021	Brandon, (Norfolk) 141km NNW 178 days
S737809	4M	17/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	20/03/2021	Sourbrodt, (Liege), BELGIUM 344km ESE 154 days
S737907	3M	18/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	XF	05/05/2021	Dursley, (Gloucestershire) 264km W 199 days
S737938	3	18/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	16/04/2021	Chilbolton, (Hampshire) 198km W 180 days
S738069	3M	19/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	XF	23/03/2021	Overton, (Hampshire) 184km W 155 days
S738106	3	19/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	24/11/2021	Woolston Eyes, Warrington, (Warrington) 355km NW 1 yr 36 days
S738339	3	27/10/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	02/05/2021	Brandon, (Norfolk) 141km NNW 187 days
S738491	3	23/11/2020	Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory
	R	20/04/2021	Bardsey Island, (Gwynedd) 454km WNW 148 days

Codes used:

X	found dead
V	alive and prob healthy, caught and released, not by ringer
XF	found freshly dead or dying
N	alive and probably healthy, caught and released, not by ringer - nesting
XL	found dead (not recent)
VV	alive and prob healthy, ring or colour marks read in the field, not by ringer
+	shot or intentionally killed by man
NN	alive and prob healthy, ring or marks read in field, not by ringer - nesting
+F	shot or intentionally killed by man - fresh
R	caught and released by ringer
+L	shot or intentionally killed by man - not recent
B	caught and released by ringer - nesting
SR	sick or injured, released with ring
RR	alive and probably healthy, ring or colour marks read in the field by a ringer
S	sick or injured - not known to have been released
BB	alive and prob healthy, ring or colour marks read in field by ringer - nesting
A	alive and probably healthy - fate unknown
//	condition on finding wholly unknown
AC	alive and probably healthy - now captive



MOTUS Tag on Blackcap by S.Walton

Ringing Totals

	Total 2021	Total 1952- 2021		Total 2021	Total 1952- 2021
Mute Swan		245	Coot		15
Greylag Goose		13	Oystercatcher		162
Canada Goose		10	Little Ringed Plover		36
Barnacle Goose		2	Ringed Plover		573
Brent Goose		2	Kentish Plover		1
Shelduck		13	Golden Plover		13
Wigeon		2	Grey Plover		15
Teal		5	Lapwing		899
Mallard		99	Knot		70
Shoveler		1	Sanderling		1,227
Red-crested Pochard		1	Little Stint		10
Pochard		1	Curlew Sandpiper		18
Tufted Duck		7	Purple Sandpiper		38
Long-tailed Duck		1	Dunlin		1,086
Common Scoter		1	Ruff		11
Red-legged Partridge		3	Jack Snipe		17
Grey Partridge		30	Common Snipe		206
Quail		3	Woodcock		40
Pheasant		1	Bar-tailed Godwit		1
Golden Pheasant		1	Whimbrel		9
Red-throated Diver		1	Curlew		21
Little Grebe		18	Common Sandpiper		470
Great Crested Grebe		3	Green Sandpiper		80
Red-necked Grebe		2	Spotted Redshank		1
Slavonian Grebe		2	Greenshank		33
Black-necked Grebe		2	Wood Sandpiper		20
Fulmar		155	Common Redshank		508
Manx Shearwater		1	Turnstone		694
Storm Petrel		4	Pomarine Skua		2
Leach's Petrel		1	Great Skua		1
Gannet		8	Long-tailed Skua		1
Cormorant		151	Kittiwake		1,413
Shag		5	Black-headed Gull		3,388
Bittern		1	Mediterranean Gull		68
Little Bittern		1	Common Gull	1	475
Little Egret		1	Ring-billed Gull		1
Grey Heron		1	Lesser Black-backed Gull		3
Hen Harrier		1	Herring Gull		901
Sparrowhawk	1	191	Great Black-backed Gull		46
Buzzard		2	Little Tern		27
Kestrel	7	229	Sandwich Tern		21
Merlin		2	Common Tern		67
Hobby		9	Arctic Tern		1
Water Rail	1	79	Guillemot		45
Spotted Crake		2	Razorbill		5
Moorhen		259	Black Guillemot		1

	Total 2021	Total 1952- 2021		Total 2021	Total 1952- 2021
Little Auk		6	Blackbird	234	16,675
Stock Dove	6	236	Fieldfare	5	594
Woodpigeon		546	Song Thrush	43	6,545
Collared Dove		1,415	Redwing	33	2,128
Turtle Dove		223	Mistle Thrush		1,162
Ring-necked Parakeet		6	Cetti's Warbler	1	329
Cuckoo		200	Grasshopper Warbler		323
Barn Owl	3	93	Savi's Warbler		4
Little Owl		110	Aquatic Warbler		6
Tawny Owl		8	Sedge Warbler	8	22,862
Long-eared Owl		72	Blyth's Reed Warbler		1
Short-eared Owl		4	Marsh Warbler		14
Nightjar		8	Reed Warbler	57	31,200
Common Swift		156	Great Reed Warbler		5
Kingfisher		165	Olivaceous Warbler		1
Wryneck		34	Icterine Warbler		47
Green Woodpecker	4	426	Melodious Warbler		5
Great Spotted Woodpecker	9	619	Blackcap	1,071	33,665
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker		25	Garden Warbler	32	3,282
Skylark		677	Barred Warbler		16
Sand Martin	4	31,200	Lesser Whitethroat	38	4,229
Swallow	2	18,818	Common Whitethroat	57	5,739
Swallow x House Martin		2	Dartford Warbler		4
House Martin	80	31,266	Subalpine Warbler		1
Richard's Pipit		2	Greenish Warbler		2
Tawny Pipit		2	Arctic Warbler		1
Olive-backed Pipit		1	Pallas's Warbler		24
Tree Pipit		154	Yellow-browed Warbler		92
Meadow Pipit	1	3,505	Radde's Warbler		4
Rock Pipit		51	Dusky Warbler		7
Water Pipit		5	Wood Warbler	4	89
Yellow Wagtail		4,107	Chiffchaff	567	25,614
Grey Wagtail		23	Willow Warbler	133	17,267
Pied Wagtail		367	Goldcrest	8	14,500
Waxwing		3	Firecrest	4	1,045
Wren	16	5,170	Spotted Flycatcher	2	583
Duncock	31	5,507	Red-breasted Flycatcher		17
Robin	86	13,679	Pied Flycatcher	6	1,550
Thrush Nightingale		2	Bearded Tit		3,525
Nightingale	1	243	Long-tailed Tit	25	2,538
Bluethroat		20	Blue Tit	76	11,439
Red-flanked Bluetail		1	Great Tit	58	6,528
Black Redstart		117	Coal Tit		298
Common Redstart	1	1,324	Willow Tit		61
Whinchat		1,187	Marsh Tit		79
Stonechat		219	Marsh/Willow Tit		4
Wheatear		406	Nuthatch		5
Swainson's Thrush		1	Common Treecreeper	1	207
Ring Ouzel		59	Short-toed Treecreeper		4

	Total 2021	Total 1952- 2021		Total 2021	Total 1952- 2021
Penduline Tit		2	Goldfinch	123	5,766
Golden Oriole		5	Siskin	12	1,849
Isabelline Shrike		1	Linnet		7,105
Red-backed Shrike		32	Twite		46
Lesser Grey Shrike		1	Lesser Redpoll	76	8,585
Great Grey Shrike		7	Common Redpoll		59
Woodchat Shrike		2	Redpoll sp.		1,294
Jay	3	218	Crossbill		3
Magpie	2	295	Parrot Crossbill		1
Jackdaw	2	567	Bullfinch		1,464
Rook		220	Hawfinch		3
Carrion Crow		188	Lapland Bunting		57
Starling	27	21,715	Snow Bunting		437
House Sparrow	74	9,466	Yellowhammer		783
Tree Sparrow		1,865	Ortolan Bunting		1
House x Tree Sparrow		3	Little Bunting		2
Chaffinch	160	9,924	Reed Bunting	2	4,530
Brambling	5	559	African Rock Bunting		1
Greenfinch	7	16,051	Corn Bunting		345
			TOTAL	3,210	444,554
			Total number of species	51	224

Nocturnal bird movements at Stonar and Sandwich Bay, Kent, 2021

Introduction

This summary presents the findings of night migration monitoring at Stonar and Sandwich Bay in Kent during 2021. This is the fifth year in which monitoring has been conducted at these sites. This year monitoring covered a total of 954 hours over 106 nights at Stonar and 416 hours over 42 nights at Sandwich Bay. All monitoring occurs between Civil Dusk and Civil Dawn, the period when the sun is more than six degrees below the horizon.

The full sets of data from the two sites (and many other British and European noctmig locations) are visible on the Trektellen website www.trektellen.org under Nocturnal Flight Calls.

Table 1. Number of nights (N) and hours (Hrs) of nocturnal monitoring per month at each location, 2017-2020 and in 2021.

	Stonar				Sandwich Bay			
	2017-2020		2021		2017-2020		2021	
	N	Hrs	N	Hrs	N	Hrs	N	Hrs
January	4	44.25	2	17.56	0	0	-	-
February	5	55.25	2	24.22	2	18.07	-	-
March	43	389.01	11	101.40	9	124.26	-	-
April	48	384.54	11	90.56	10	91.60	4	36.02
May	44	283.10	7	50.55	28	184.09	3	22.32
June	26	147.08	2	11.33	1	5.00	0	0
July	31	182.00	14	86.51	0	-	2	13.32
August	56	416.06	16	137.33	24	189.49	6	56.14
September	58	528.27	18	178.09	29	225.23	13	127.20
October	58	581.47	13	139.49	33	346.33	8	89.09
November	48	492.54	8	90.14	13	147.10	5	59.33
December	16	169.41	2	24.32	1	7.48	1	11.41
Totals	437	3,991.01	106	954.50	150	1,340.25	42	416.03
2017-21			543	4,945.51			192	1,756.28

Generally speaking, 2021 was rather poor and there were few significant movements. The most notable of these were as follows.

March 20-21st – Light northerly winds and overcast and dry. The largest Redwing movement of the year over Stonar with 1,633 calls and an estimated minimum of 693 birds, mostly between 23:00 and 03:00. Other species included Blackbird (42 calls/23 birds), Fieldfare (7/5), Song Thrush (15/12), Water Rail (16/5), Snipe (22/5), and Goldcrest (3/1).

October 7th-8th – S1, 8/8, rain 2300-0200. The largest movement of Song Thrushes of the year produced an estimated minimum of 543 birds. These included 488 calls from a minimum of 355 birds over Stonar and 269 from 188 over the Observatory. Also, 626 Redwing (778/449 and 253/177), Robin (9/13 and 1/1), and Blackbird (42/30).

October 12th-13th – NW1, variable cloud. The largest Redwing movement of the autumn produced an estimated minimum of 995 birds involving 986 calls from a minimum of 598 birds over Stonar and 562 from 357 over the Observatory). Also 129 Song Thrushes (94/68 and 68/41) and 49 Blackbirds (3/4 and 46/24). Two Bramblings and five Siskins were also of note.

Notable records

Pink-footed Goose	A small group were recorded passing over Sandwich Bay at 02:51 on 23rd November.
Bittern	Single close call from a bird over Stonar at 23:59 on 12th July.
Stone Curlew	Singles over Stonar at 00:37 on 30th March and at 23:04 on 18th April. This is the fourth spring in a row that the species has been recorded following singles on 16th April 2018, 31st March 2019, and 6th April 2020.
Snow Bunting	Four calls were recorded from one passing Stonar at 20:59 on 14th November.

The monthly totals from the monitoring sessions at each site are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2 Minimum numbers of 58 species identified flying at night at Stonar, Sandwich, Kent in 2021. Note that some species, such as Mallard, Herring Gull, and Owls are omitted.

Stonar 2021	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<i>No. of nights</i>	2	2	11	11	7	2	14	16	18	13	8	2	106
Brent Goose	-	6	12	-	-	-	-	-	2	18	-	-	38
Greylag Goose	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	7	31	12	-	54
White-fronted Goose	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Shelduck	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Gadwall	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Wigeon	3	-	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	9	4	87
Teal	1	-	13	5	1	-	-	1	-	2	2	1	26
Tufted Duck	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Common Scoter	-	-	7	10	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	18
Water Rail	-	-	12	2	1	-	2	-	1	4	-	-	22
Moorhen	-	3	18	4	4	-	8	1	2	5		-	45
Coot	-	5	11	9	4	-	1	2	4	5	1	-	42
Little Grebe	-	-	1	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	5
Stone-curlew	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Oystercatcher	-	1	13	3	7	-	33	28	9	-	-	-	94
Avocet	-	-	3	2	4	-	1		2	-	-	-	12
Lapwing	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	3	3	-	11
Golden Plover	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	4	2	4	1	13
Ringed Plover	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	5	52	2		-	61
Little Ringed Plover	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	2	2	1		-	8
Whimbrel	-	-	-	7	6	-	6	10	5	-	-	-	34
Curlew	-	-	2	2	-	-	7	2	5	3	1	-	22
Bar-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	13
Black-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Sanderling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Dunlin	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	2	4	10	4	-	24
Snipe	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	7	1	19
Common Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	2	-	21	16	15	-	-	-	54
Green Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	3	-	-	-	10
Redshank	-	-	2	1	-	-	3	2	4	-	-	-	12
Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Greenshank	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	-	-	-	8
Black-headed Gull	2	-	4	2	-	-	4	-	-	3	-	-	15
Common Gull	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	7
Sandwich Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	20	6	-	-	-	28
Common Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2

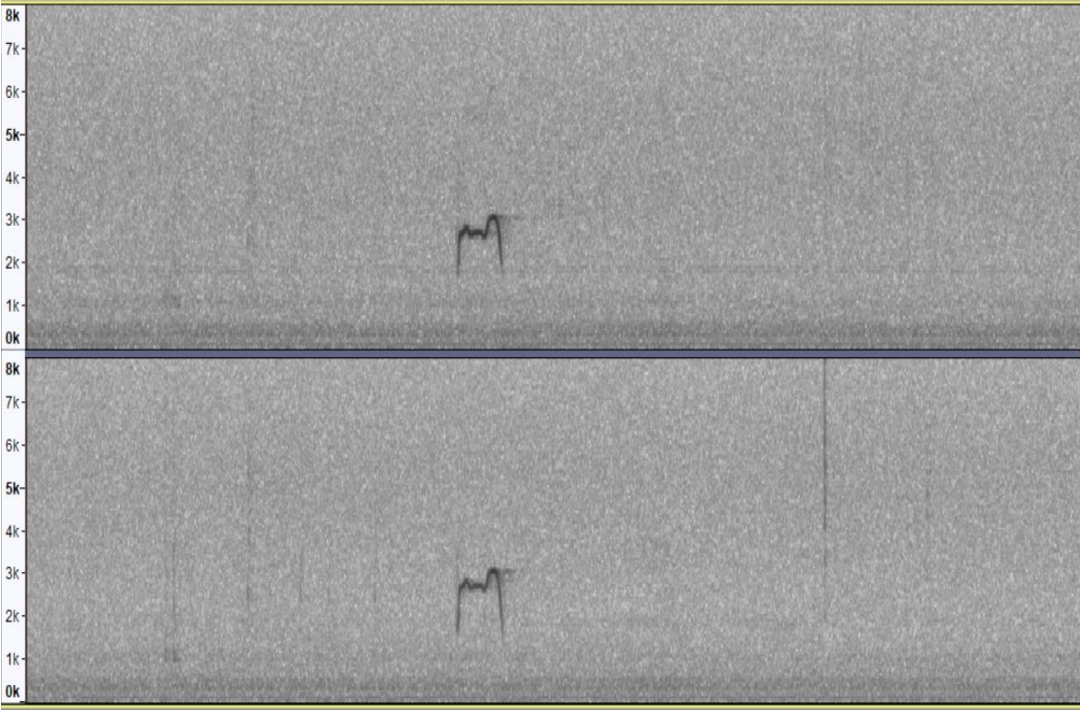
Bittern	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Grey Heron	-	-	3	1	-	-	9	3	51	26	7	2	102
Little Egret	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ring-necked Parakeet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Skylark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	3
Chiffchaff	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Goldcrest	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Starling	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	6
Ring Ousel	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Blackbird	-	1	60	1	-	-	-	-	1	77	88	2	230
Fieldfare	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	9
Redwing	8	5	1194	46	-	-	-	-	-	1928	1151	46	4378
Song Thrush	1	3	49	32	1	-	-	1	18	788	75	4	972
Spotted Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Robin	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	17	-	-	24
Pied Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Meadow Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Tree Pipit	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	6	-	-	-	8
Chaffinch	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4
Brambling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2
Snow Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Reed Bunting	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

Table 3 Minimum numbers of individuals of 47 species identified flying at night at Sandwich Bay, Kent: 2021. Some species, such as Mallard, Herring Gull, and Owls are omitted.

Sandwich Bay 2021	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<i>No. of nights</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>42</i>
Brent Goose	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	2	-	15
Greylag Goose	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	7	-	72
Pink-footed Goose	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Mute Swan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Shelduck	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Gadwall	7	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	-	20
Wigeon	2	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	6
Teal	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Common Scoter	7	-	-	-	-	1	7	-	-	15
Water Rail	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	4
Moorhen	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	4
Coot	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	9
Little Grebe	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Oystercatcher	7	3	-	2	13	1	-	-	-	26
Avocet	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Lapwing	-	-	-	-	13	27	45	10	6	101
Golden Plover	4	-	-	-	-	3	1	3	-	11
Ringed Plover		1	-	-	8	18	1	-	-	28
Little Ringed Plover	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	3
Whimbrel	-	-	-	-	7	3	-	-	-	10
Curlew	2	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	5
Bar-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Knot	-	5	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	10
Sanderling	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	3	-	8
Dunlin	-	-	-	-	3	14	6	2	1	26
Snipe	2	-	-	-	3	4	4	2	1	16
Common Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
Green Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Redshank	-	-	-	-	1	12	1	-	-	14
Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Greenshank	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	3
Black-headed Gull	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	3
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sandwich Tern	-	-	-	-	9	9	-	-	-	18
Common Tern	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Grey Heron	1	-	-	-	2	11	6	3	1	24
Skylark	-	-	-	-	1	3	11	1	-	16
Swallow	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	3

Blackbird	1	-	-	-	-	-	45	24	-	70
Redwing	28	-	-	-	-	-	850	478	1	1357
Song Thrush	5	-	-	-	-	13	425	35	-	478
Spotted Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Robin	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	5
Pied Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Meadow Pipit	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Brambling	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	3
Siskin	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	5

By Martin Sutherland



Ringed Plover spectrogram by G.Lee

The House Sparrow RAS Project so far

House Sparrows are a red-listed species of conservation concern. Studies suggest they have declined by 71% between 1977 and 2008. They are often difficult to study as they tend to be sedentary, and aware of nets and traps after they have been caught once. With this mind, here at Sandwich Bay we have added colour rings to the birds we catch as part of the Retrapping Adults for Survival (RAS) national project run by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). SBBOT have colour-ringed 1,127 House Sparrows from 2015 to 2021, and also sent in historical data going back to 2001.

Our first House Sparrow was ringed under the RAS scheme on 8th April 2015. We have since ringed 451 pullus in the nest, 306 birds known to be in their first year, and 370 others, including 154 known to be female and 210 known to be male.

As they readily come to feeders and tend to be regular in gardens and other habitation, the reporting of sightings of birds with colour rings is a huge part of our project. A small band of colour ring recorders have been watching the feeders outside the Observatory windows and have resighted many birds which have not been retrapped by the ringers.



Ringed House Sparrow by A.Lipczynski

Everyone can support us by keeping an eye out for our colour ringed House Sparrows and reporting this to the Ringing Team at the Observatory at ringing@sbbot.org.uk or speaking to us. The RAS season covers the period 1st April to 31st August each year but colour ring sightings are valuable throughout the year.

The furthest recorded have been seen at Blue Pigeons in Worth and down by The Chequers Kitchen on the Ancient Highway. Many have been identified via a photograph.

Below is a picture of one of our early “star” birds. BAZ was reported 57 times between May 2015 and April 2018 and we know that he fathered several broods of chicks in nest boxes around the Observatory buildings.



Male House Sparrow by A.Lipczynski

The longest series of information was on BVA. He was first ringed as a bird of the year in July 2013. A colour ring was added in March 2017. He was reported 30 times, always around the Observatory buildings or in the Whitehouse area, until last encountered in August 2019 when he was six years old.

BV4 was ringed at the Observatory as a nestling in May 2017. He was reported at the feeders six times until March 2018. He was also reported twice at feeders at a house in Sandown Road in that month and then from April until December 2018 he was again recorded at the Observatory 12 times. Several individuals were recorded from both the Observatory and Sandown Road. Although many birds are never reported again or only once or twice, we have recorded over 50 examples of birds recorded at least 12 times and five individuals have been recorded 30 or more times.

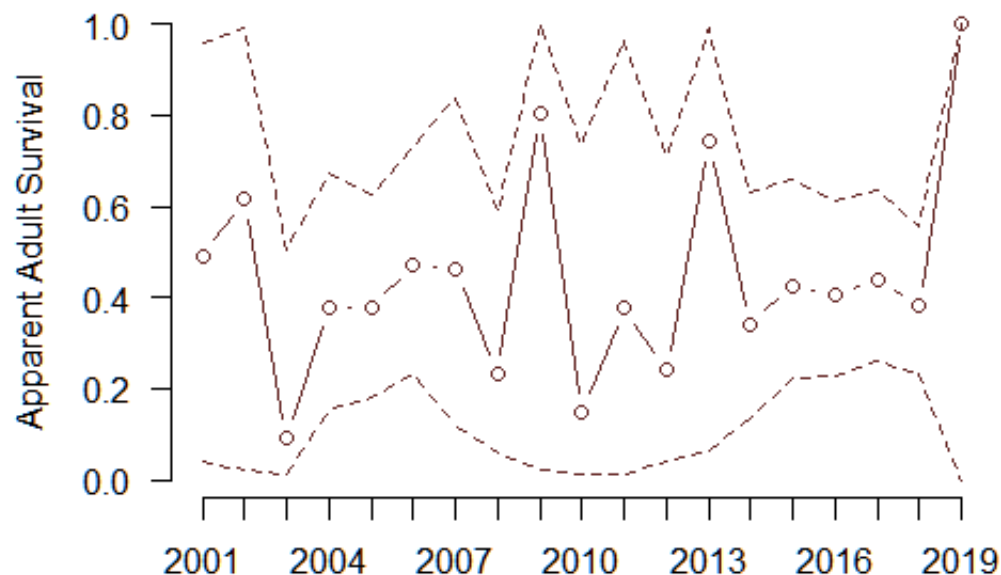
These two birds (below) are C6V and DDX. C6V was ringed as an adult male in April 2020 and was recorded visiting the feeders outside the Observatory windows six times until September 2021. DDK was ringed in October 2020 and recorded at the feeders twice until September 2021.



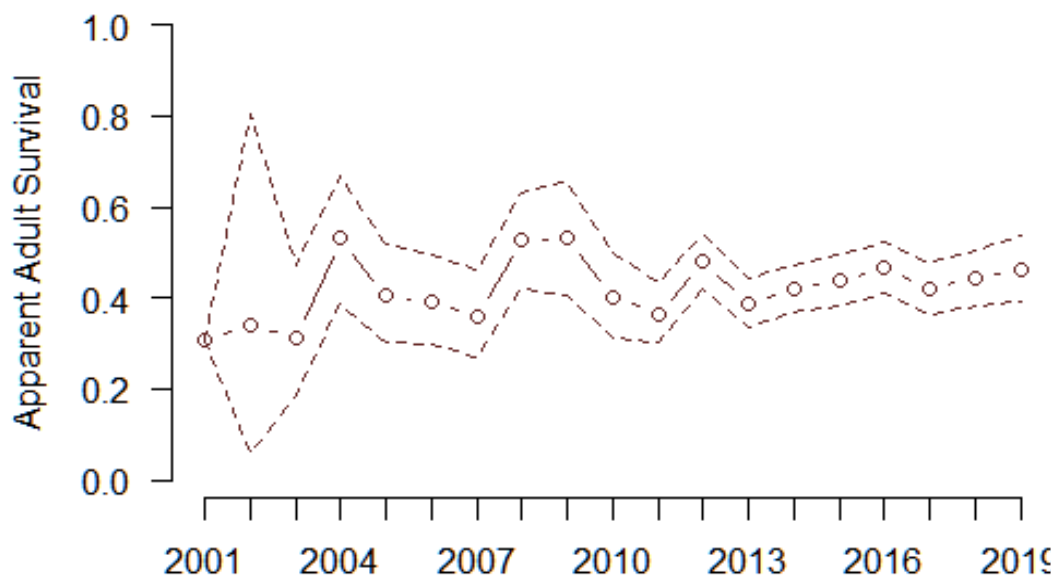
House Sparrows by A.Lipczynski

The results of our study are presented here, from the 2020 annual analysis of RAS results provided by the BTO, alongside the latest national trends for comparison. National survival trends are published as part of the BirdTrends report (www.bto.org/birdtrends) and on the RAS website (www.bto.org/ras-results).

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trend (below)



National Trend (below)



Notes

* The graphs show “Apparent Adult Survival”, defined as the probability that an adult bird alive in the previous year survives and returns to the study area. The analysis accounts for the fact that birds which are present may not be seen every season, but birds permanently emigrating from the study area will be presumed dead, thus the true survival rate may be slightly higher than the figures presented here.

* The dotted lines show the upper and lower 95% confidence limits around the average estimate (solid line and points). The closer these lines are to the solid line, the more confidence we have in the accuracy of the survival rates. As can be clearly seen, and indeed expected, the results from the 18 projects amalgamated into the national results have a much higher level of confidence than the results from our single project.

Summary of Results

Estimate of average adult survival across all UK House Sparrow RAS projects:

Male annual adult survival rate: 47%

Female annual adult survival rate: 43%

Estimate of average adult survival from our project:

Male annual adult survival rate: 44%

Female annual adult survival rate: 43%

Estimate of our average annual recapture probability:

Male recapture probability: 36% Female recapture probability: 36%

Please treat the apparent 100% survival rate for 2019 as interim data as the BTO did not have our information for 2020 at the time of publication.

National Trend Analysis

Over the past 20 years the population decline had begun to level off, a result of increasing chick and adult survival. Recent RAS results show a slight increase in the survival rate for this species, although the CBC/BBS trend indicates a very slight decline over the same period. The mean survival rates for House Sparrow are 47% for males and 43% for females. Our project results mirror the national trend very closely although our males appear to be very slightly less robust than the national mean. The mean re-encounter rates vary greatly between projects but are similar between the sexes.

RAS is supported by a partnership between the BTO and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) on behalf of the country agencies (Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland). It is also part of the BTO Ringing Scheme which is funded by the BTO/JNCC Partnership, The National Parks and Wildlife Service (Ireland) and the ringers themselves.

References

BTO Retrapping Adults for Survival

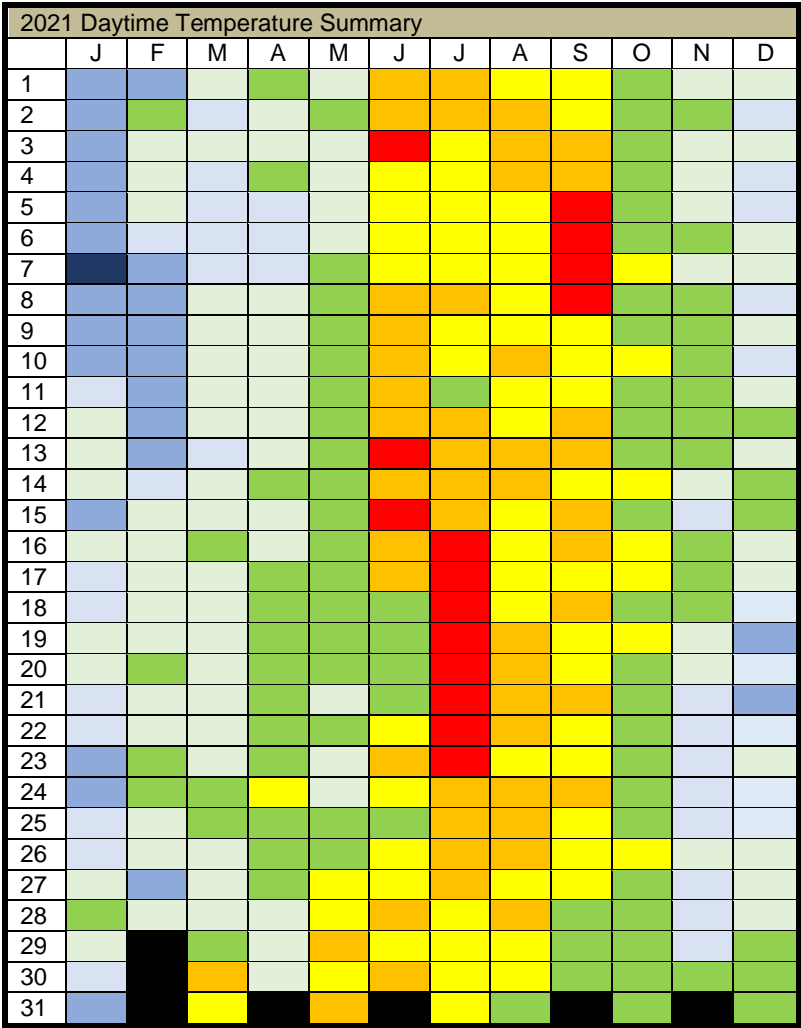
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By Ian and Sally Hunter

Weather in 2021



Non-avian Reports



Wrinkled Peach *Rhodotus palmatus* by S.North

Butterflies in 2021

There was poor coverage of the BMS Transect in 2021 due to the persistent cold weather at the start of the season. This in turn created a bias in the data towards the later emerging species. Apart from a small influx of Painted Lady's in May there were few migrants noted, including just 13 Clouded Yellows all year. However, there were excellent numbers of *Vanessids* in July and August. This was pleasing considering how badly Small Tortoiseshell has fared in recent years. More were recorded in one week around the Observatory building than recorded across the entire Sandwich Bay area over the last two years. On the flip side it was another poor year for Large Skipper and Green-veined White.

FEBRUARY

At the end of February there was a brief sunny spell which tempted out a few **Small Tortoiseshells**, a **Red Admiral**, and a **Peacock**.

MARCH

The beginning of this month saw cold northerly conditions and butterflies went back into hiding. It took until the 20th to finally have another butterfly; a Small Tortoiseshell was on the Green Wall. Like buses, another butterfly appeared. This time a Peacock on Worth marshes on the 22nd. Our first **Brimstone** of the year was seen along the Worth track on the 24th and a Peacock was at the Observatory. Records began to come in thick and fast with the first **Comma** of the year in the Whitehouse on the 25th.

There was no sign of any Orange-tips in the lovely sunshine on the 30th but there were plenty of *Vannessids* around, including 15 Peacocks and two Small Tortoiseshells on Worth marshes and a separate six Peacocks and a Small Tortoiseshell on the Estate. The first **Green-veined White** of the year was on the Green Wall and our first three **Small Whites** were on Worth marshes. The next day another 12 Peacocks, three Small Tortoiseshells, and a Green-veined White were on Worth marshes.

APRIL

The weather had been way too cold to even attempt the BMS transect. However, a Small White did briefly appear on the Estate in the wind on the 7th. The following day a Green-veined White took advantage of the slightly better conditions on the Green Wall. The carpets of blooming Red and White Dead-nettles looked good for invertebrates and I'm sure a specific trip late morning when the conditions were warmer might have been productive.

There were singles of **Speckled Wood** and **Orange-tip** on Worth marshes on the 9th, both new for the year. Four Peacocks, one Small Tortoiseshell, and eight Small Whites were out on the Green Wall on the 16th and a Speckled Wood was on the Estate. Conditions were still far colder than normal on the 22nd. There were a few butterflies on the wing in sheltered spots. An Orange-tip and seven Small Whites were on the Green Wall and a few Speckled Woods in The Elms.

Two Brimstones were along the Worth track on the 23rd, the first Green Hairstreaks were out in Stonelees on the 26th, and **Small Copper** and **Small Heath** both put in their first appearances on the 27th. At least six Small Coppers were on Prince's Beach on the 29th

MAY

Even by the 7th the weather was still unseasonably cold. A Red Admiral was at the Observatory and a Brimstone on the Green Wall. The change to southerly winds on the 11th brought with it a little influx of **Painted Ladies**. There were at least nine on Worth marshes and some spread around the Estate on the previous day. There were also some Orange-tips around the Great Wood on Worth, a few Red Admirals, Peacocks, and a Speckled Wood.

It was good to see Orange-tips on the Estate on the 12th, they had been few-and-far-between. **Large White**, Small White, Red Admiral, and Painted Lady were also around with five Painted Ladies on New Downs the following day. Our first **Wall** of the year was on the path between The Elms and Restharrow Scrape on the 16th. A Painted Lady was also on the Green Wall. Worth on the 18th produced a Small Copper, three Painted Ladies, two Peacocks, four Orange-tips, three Green-veined Whites, two Small Whites, and a Speckled Wood.

The Wall (from the 16th) was present again on the 21st, hunkering down in the grass in the strong winds. A new Wall was seen on Worth marshes near the Great Wood on the 26th. On the Estate there were a few butterflies on the wing, namely Orange-tip, Small Heath, and Small Copper. The weather gods finally allowed the BMS Transects to begin on the 27th. The wander around the Estate in sunshine and a light breeze brought five Small Heaths, two Holly Blues, and a Red Admiral. Over on Worth marshes there were three Painted Ladies, three Peacocks, one Wall, three Orange-tips, seven Green-veined Whites, and a Small Heath. The first **Brown Argus** of the year was on New Downs the next day. The 30th saw our first **Common Blue** of the year in the Haven and the last day of the month saw at least 19 Small Heaths on Worth marshes.

JUNE

A late morning walk along the Green Wall on the 1st produced one Wall, nine Holly Blues, one Red Admiral, three Small Heaths, one Brown Argus, five Green-veined Whites, two Orange-tips, and one Large White. A few Holly Blues and Common Blues were also on the Estate. On the 3rd there were only three Common Blues, compared to seven Brown Argus, plus 18 Small Heaths, one Peacock, and one Red Admiral, all on New Downs. The BMS Transect on the 6th produced 34 butterflies. Small Heath was most numerous with 16, followed by Common Blue with ten. A Wall made it onto the transect too, which doesn't happen every year.

On the 10th there were two Speckled Woods, one Small White, three Small Coppers, eight Common Blues, one Brown Argus, three Red Admirals, six Painted Ladies, and 18 Small Heaths on the Estate. A fair number of Painted Lady's and Red Admirals were around on the 15th, seen in all subsites of the Recording Area. The year's first **Meadow Brown** was also on New Downs, as well as at least 75 Small Heaths. Our first two **Large Skippers** of the year were bouncing around near Restharrow Scrape on the 17th and **Marbled Whites** put in their first appearance on the 20th with at least three on the Estate, plus five Painted Ladies, four Small Tortoiseshells, five Speckled Woods, and 15 Red Admirals.



Marbled White by H.Willis

JULY

A small walk around the Estate on the 2nd produced Meadow Brown, Large White, Red Admiral, 19 Marbled Whites, and 11 'small skippers'. A walk through Restharrow Dunes late in the afternoon the next day produced six Meadow Browns, five Marbled Whites and 11 'small skippers' against the lovely orange dusky sky. The 5th was a bright and sunny day and brought out a couple of Small Heaths and another generation of Small Coppers around Royal St. George's Golf Course and the Whitehouse.

Red Admirals were out in force in the sunshine on the 7th, basking on any dusty path that lay ahead of you around the Estate and Mary Bax. More Meadow Browns were around than in the past few days. Two **Ringlets** were flitting around the Gullies on the 13th. A sunny New Downs on the 15th produced a good variety. There were 28 Red Admirals, two Painted Ladies, three Peacocks, two Small Tortoiseshells, 20 Small Whites, one Comma, one Green-veined White, two Large Whites, 46 Marbled Whites, one Small Copper, three **Gatekeepers**, 46 'small' Skippers, seven Meadow Browns, and three Small Heaths.

A few Commas were among the many Red Admirals in the area on the 19th. The BMS transect on the 20th had over 200 butterflies. There were 85 'small' Skippers, five Small Whites, five Small Coppers, six Brown Argus, one Common Blue, eight Red Admirals, ten Marbled Whites, 54 Meadow Browns, 47 Gatekeepers, six Small Heaths, and two Ringlets. Worth marshes was busy with Red Admirals on the 21st with at least 34 seen mid-morning. A few Painted Ladies were also present. A Ringlet was in Little Gully and a **Clouded Yellow** was at Sandilands. A second Clouded Yellow was at the Point on the 25th. Despite windy conditions on the 29th one Clouded Yellow, two Peacocks, six Meadow Browns, 13 Gatekeepers, 22 'small' Skippers, 24 Common Blues, five Brown Argus, one Marbled White, and six Small Whites were seen on Prince's Beach. On the last day of the month two Clouded Yellows and four Painted Ladies were at the Point and a Wall was on the Estate.

AUGUST

Three Walls were on the Estate on the 10th and the *Buddleia* around the Observatory was heaving with *Vanessids*. The BMS Transect on the 11th was good and recorded almost 200 butterflies. Three Walls were notable (including different individuals from the previous day). It was pleasing to note seven Small Tortoiseshells as this species had fared badly the last few years. Small Tortoiseshell was again really noticeable on the 14th with at least 11 on the *Buddleia* around the Observatory. I imagine more were recorded in this week around the Observatory than recorded across the entire Recording Area for the last two years.

Two Walls were on the beach front on the 16th and another was on Worth along the path by the Great Wood. A quick whizz around the Observatory building on the 19th looking at the *Buddleia* produced 31 Red Admirals, three Peacocks, three Painted Ladies, 11 Small Tortoiseshells, one Comma, and one Wall. The BMS transect was a little breezy on the 25th but thankfully sunny enough to see plenty of butterflies. Ninety-nine butterflies were recorded with 32 Common Blues and 24 Gatekeepers the most numerous. Seven Brown Argus and a Holly Blue were notable.

SEPTEMBER

A Clouded Yellow was at Sandilands on the 5th. The next day there were 56 butterflies on the BMS Transect: one Large White, two Small Whites, one Green-veined White, 11 Small Coppers, eight Common Blues, one Holly Blue, nine Red Admirals, four Speckled Woods, three Meadow Browns, and 16 Small Heaths. Two Clouded Yellows were on the raised walkway on New Downs on the 9th. This is a usual spot for the species though numbers have declined somewhat in the last few years.

An afternoon wander along Prince's beach on the 12th produced small numbers of Common Blue and Small Heath and a few Small Coppers. The latter continued to dwell in the area with lots found sunning themselves on the various paths in the area or nectaring on the flowering Ragwort on the 16th. A good mix on Worth included 22 Red Admirals, two Holly Blues, six Speckled Woods, one Small Heath, three Green-veined White, two Small Whites, three Peacocks, and a Clouded Yellow. The BMS Transect the next day produced 40 butterflies. Small White came top of the list with 11 followed by Small Copper with six. Holly Blue and Comma were notable.

The end of the month was a little quiet but the Ivy blossom on the Estate proved attractive to *Vannessids* on the 21st, particularly Red Admirals. Four Commas were also of note. An after dark wander around The Elms with an ultraviolet torch on the 25th was a bit different but revealed at least ten fluorescing Holly Blue larvae.

OCTOBER

A decent variety of species was on Worth on the 5th considering the lateness of the season. The daytime temperatures were actually quite good. Red Admirals were most numerous with eight, followed by Comma with two, and then singles of Small Tortoiseshell, Small Heath, Small White, and Peacock. On the Estate a Clouded Yellow was on the footpath behind the asparagus fields. Painted Ladies then appeared on the 8th and 10th as southerly winds dominated. Sightings were harder to come by afterwards, however. The weather was a breezy on the 19th but a Small White and a Red Admiral appeared during a warm spell late morning. Singles of Small Copper and Speckled Wood were in the Whitehouse on the 25th. A handful of sightings of Red Admiral followed.

NOVEMBER

The month started off with three Red Admirals on the 1st, with two more and a Peacock the following day. A Clouded Yellow on the 3rd was a nice surprise, and one of the last butterflies of the year, with only singles of Red Admiral and Painted Lady on the 9th to follow.



Painted Lady by S.Reynaert

The following species were recorded in 2021:

Small Skipper *Thymelicus sylvestris*

Essex Skipper *Thymelicus lineola*

These two species are treated together for the purposes of the BMS transect. The first Small Skipper of the year was seen on the Estate on 23rd June. The BMS transect recorded fewer 'small skippers' than last year, yet they still managed to contribute their highest percentage of the overall total since 2010. Peak counts were 46 on New Downs on 15th July and 85 on the Estate on 20th July.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	597	652	866	674	307	192	256	505
% of total	21	20	16	20	15	9	9	15
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	385	562	523	348	320	299	241	
% of total	13	15	14	12	17	17	18	

Large Skipper *Ochlodes sylvanus*

All in all, another poor year for the species. There were only six Large Skipper sightings this year; two on 17th June, three on 9th July, and one on 13th July. There were no records away from the Estate. It still remains to be seen whether these reduced numbers observed in recent years are representative of actual declines, or whether a more targeted survey over the next few years can reveal more information.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	-	-	5	5	5	1	11	8
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	4	13	11	8	-	1	6	

Clouded Yellow *Colias croceus*

There were 13 'butterfly-days' recorded, a sizeable decline from last year. The first of the year was on the Estate on 21st July with peak counts of two at the Point/Princes on 31st July and two at New Downs on 9th September. All other records were singles with the last of the year seen on the Estate on 3rd November.

Brimstone *Gonepteryx rhamni*

The year saw six 'butterfly-days', a slight decrease on last year. The first record was a single on Worth on 24th March. This was followed by two on Worth on 23rd of April, and singles on 7th May on the Green Wall and 5th June on the Estate. The last of the year was a single on the Estate on 2nd August.

Large White *Pieris brassicae*

A poor year to follow last year's success with only 22 'butterfly days', five of which were on the BMS Transect. Most records were singles, with only a handle of larger records, the peak count being three on the Estate on 11th August with the best elsewhere two on New Downs on 15th July. The first of the year was on the Estate on 12th May and the last on the Green Wall on 22nd September.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	15	29	244	72	14	24	48	20
% of total	1	1	4	2	1	1	2	1
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	30	19	14	21	50	25	5	
% of total	1	1	-	1	3	1	-	

Small White *Pieris rapae*

The Small White year started off with three on Worth on 30th March and went on to have 166 'butterfly days'. Early peaks of eight and seven on the Green Wall on 16th and 22nd April, respectively, preceded a lull in numbers, with only 12 records from the end of April until July, when they picked up again with 20 on New Downs on both the 8th and the 15th. The highest counts elsewhere were ten on Worth on 21st July and 11 on the Estate on 17th September. The BMS Transect provided the lowest total in recent years. The last of the year was seen on the Estate on 19th October.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	298	331	290	370	295	137	349	163
% of total	10	10	5	11	14	7	12	5
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	363	254	182	85	117	165	39	
% of total	12	7	5	3	6	9	3	

Green-veined White *Pieris napi*

The year began with two singles on 30th and 31st March, one on the Green Wall and the other on Worth marshes. A month with no records then passed until the next single on 1st May. Peak counts in this period included seven on the Estate on 27th May and five on the Green Wall on 1st June. Two on Worth on 2nd June were the last sightings before another long gap, the first record of the second brood being a single on the Estate on 13th July. The last record of the year was six on the Green Wall on 22nd September. It was another poor year for the Green-veined White on the BMS Transect, equalling last year's low index.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	37	62	40	22	42	10	16	76
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	37	47	32	69	19	5	5	

Orange-tip *Anthocharis cardamines*

There were 43 'butterfly-days' this year, a decrease from last year. The first of the year was on Worth on 9th April, with Worth seeing high counts of four on both 11th and 18th May. The highest count of the year was six on the Estate on 12th May, and the last record was of three on Worth on 2nd June. There were no records on the BMS Transect this year.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	4	8	7	7	10	9	3	5
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	4	3	8	5	4	2	-	

Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*

One on the Estate on 27th April was the first of the year. The 85 'butterfly-days' were well spread from then until 25th October, when there was a final single on the Estate. Peak counts in that period included six at the Point/Princes on 29th April, seven on the Estate on 13th July, nine on the Estate on 25th August, and 11 on the Estate on 6th September. Elsewhere, records rarely reached above two butterflies. The BMS Index was lower than last year's but was still an improvement from those of 2017-2019.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	116	90	123	62	54	85	88	122
% of total	4	3	2	2	3	4	3	4
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	63	111	39	26	24	70	48	
% of total	2	3	1	1	1	4	4	

Brown Argus *Aricia agestis*

Brown Argus got off to a good start with the first sighting of two on New Downs on 28th May, followed closely by an early peak of seven on New Downs on 3rd June. Other peak counts included six on the Estate on 20th July, five at the Point on 29th July, ten on the Estate on 11th August, and seven on the Estate on 25th August. The last of the year was on the Estate on 18th September. It seemed to be an OK year for the species on the BMS Transect too, with a slightly higher index than last year.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	22	23	77	39	54	43	44	71
% of total	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	2
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	11	95	110	50	59	22	26	
% of total	1	3	3	2	3	1	2	

Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus*

The first record of the year was a single on the Estate on 30th May and the last record was of three on the Estate on 17th September. Peak counts were 12 on the Estate on 9th June, 24 at the Point on 29th July, 30 on the Estate on 11th August, 34 on the Estate on 25th August, and 19 at the Point on 12th September. The BMS Transect saw one of the lowest indices on record but was affected significantly by the weather at key emergence dates.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	130	324	488	334	150	199	333	183
% of total	5	10	9	10	7	9	12	5
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	116	287	223	396	86	163	106	
% of total	4	8	6	14	5	9	8	

Holly Blue *Celastrina argiolus*

The first of the year on the Estate on 18th April was followed by a large gap until 23rd May when there was a single on the Green Wall. A bunch of records (peaking at nine on the Green Wall on 1st June) preceded another gap before another trickle of records from 10th August. There were eight on the Estate on 24th August and the last of the year was a single on the Estate on 18th September.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	7	5	10	18	2	-	4	3
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	4	12	4	17	5	6	8	

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

One on the Estate on 24th February was the first butterfly of the year and the start of some scattered records over the first few months of the year. Eight 'butterfly-days' were recorded until numbers began to pick up, beginning with two on the Green Wall on 31st May. In June the increase in numbers was originally slow with only two double-figure counts but July saw a few good counts, with 28 on New Downs on 15th July and 34 on Worth on 21st July, and this continued into August with 22 on New Downs on the 4th, 29 on the Estate on the 11th, and 31 on the Estate on the 19th. Totals of 22 on Worth on 16th September and 13 on the Estate on 21st September were the last double figure counts of the year, and the last individual was seen on the Estate on 9th November.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	108	33	30	28	58	26	12	56
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	24	80	37	24	13	25	58	

Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui*

One on the Green Wall on 9th May started off a small flurry of records from around the Recording Area, with up to four on the Estate on the 10th, nine on Worth on the 11th, and five on New Downs on the 13th. There were no further double figure records though. Other peaks included six on the Estate on 10th June, five on the Estate on 20th June, four at the Point on 31st July, and seven on the Estate on 10th August. The last of the year was on the Estate on 9th November. The BMS Index saw a large increase from last year but still not close to the species' success of 2019.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	23	2	593	11	3	2	10	2
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	9	17	18	10	30	1	13	

Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*

There were 78 'butterfly-days' over the course of the year and an increase in BMS Index from the past two years, suggesting that things may be getting better. The first of the year was a single on the Estate on 27th February, followed by singles on the Estate and Worth on 28th February. Two and three on Worth on 30th and 31st March were early peaks, before a gap after two on the Estate on 19th April. The next record wasn't until 14th June, when there was one on Worth, followed by one on New Downs on 15th and four on the Estate on 20th. Numbers reached their highest in August when the Estate saw 11 on the 14th and 19th, and 17 on the 24th. There were only three more counts after this with the last on Worth on 5th October.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	17	12	24	53	70	24	68	259
% of total	1	0	0	2	3	1	2	8
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	60	50	64	9	0	3	4	
% of total	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	

Peacock *Aglais io*

The Green Wall had the first of the year on 27th February. This was followed by a few singles until numbers increased at the end of March, with Worth having 15 on the 30th and 12 on the 31st. Seven on the Estate was the best count of April and numbers from then on stayed low until 28th July when there were six on Worth, then seven, eight, and eight, on the Estate on 3rd, 10th, and 11th August, respectively. The highest count for the rest of the year was five on the Estate on 18th September and the last of the year was on the Estate on 2nd November. The BMS Index was the lowest on record.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	149	54	113	92	89	26	47	73
% of total	5	2	2	3	4	1	2	2
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	51	45	64	27	20	35	8	
% of total	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	

Comma *Polygonia c-album*

There were 24 'butterfly-days' for the species in 2021. The first sighting was on the Estate on 25th March. It was a few months until the next record, a single on New Downs on 15th July. Very few records were of more than one butterfly, the larger records all being on the Estate – two on 10th August, three on 17th September, four on 21st September, and two on 8th October (which was the last record of the year). There were only two more records away from the Estate, singles on the Green Wall on 13th September and Worth on 5th October. The species had another poor year on the BMS Transect.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	7	8	10	14	7	6	-	10
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	8	9	10	4	4	1	1	



Comma by C.Hill

Speckled Wood *Pararge aegeria*

A single on Worth marshes on 9th April started the season, and the species went on to have 91 'butterfly-days', with the last being a single on the Estate on 25th October. The only counts that reached double figures were 12 on 24th August and ten on 25th August, both on the Estate. Other peaks were eight on the Estate on 31st August, six on Worth on 16th September, and five on the Estate on 20th June, 11th, and 16th August. Most other counts were of singles.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	41	56	50	18	27	12	35	90
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	56	37	53	53	16	19	21	

Wall Brown *Lasiommata megera*

22 'butterfly-days' began with a single on the Estate on 16th May and finished with a single on the Estate on 27th August. The highest count was three on the Estate on both the 10th and 11th August, with most other records being singles.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	2	1	3	5	5	3	2	4
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	8	1	1	0	0	4	4	

Marbled White *Melanargia galathea*

The first sighting of the year was of three on the Estate on 20th June. Counts quickly rose to 19 on the Estate on 2nd July, then up to the highest count of 46 on New Downs on 15th July. There was one on Worth on 8th July, and other peaks for the Estate were 13 on 5th July and ten on 20th July. A single on New Downs on 4th August was the last of the year.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	126	188	424	289	219	224	242	367
% of total	5	6	8	9	10	11	9	11
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	177	282	201	202	250	130	79	
% of total	6	8	5	7	14	7	6	

Gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus*

Three on New Downs on 15th July kicked off the season and the species went on to have 551 'butterfly-days'. Peak counts were 70 on the Estate on 2nd August, 180 on the Estate on 3rd August, 63 on New Downs on 4th August, and 98 on the Estate on 11th August. Elsewhere, there were 15 each on Worth on 21st July and the Point on 25th July. A sudden end to the season came on 27th August, with 24 on the Estate and, surprisingly, no more records afterwards.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	303	349	554	442	240	234	432	381
% of total	11	11	10	13	11	11	15	11
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	614	561	863	563	404	477	334	
% of total	20	15	23	20	22	26	25	

Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*

A single on New Downs on 15th June was the first of the year, followed by two at the Point on the 24th. It took a few weeks for counts to reach double figures, and there were no triple figure records at any point in the season. Peak counts were 27 on the Estate on 13th July, 54 on the Estate on 20th July, 20 at the Point on 25th July, and 34 on the Estate on 3rd August. Totals on Worth remained low, with the peak count there being ten on 8th

and 21st July. A few records carried on into September with the season ending with two on the Estate on 17th September.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	465	734	1010	281	188	381	460	559
% of total	16	22	18	8	9	18	16	17
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	570	776	629	454	271	171	179	
% of total	19	21	17	16	15	9	14	

Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*

One on the Green Wall on 27th April was the first of the year but it was a few weeks until the next was to be seen; two on the Estate on 19th May. Numbers slowly increased to the first peak of 19 on Worth on 31st May, followed by peaks of 18 on New Downs on 3rd June, 18 on the Estate on both 6th and 10th June, and the highest count of the year, 75 on New Downs on 15th June. The high count for the Point came on 24th June with 16 present. Numbers then began to fall before picking up again at the end of August for 12 on the Estate on 25th, then 16 on the Estate on 6th September, and 15 at the Point on 12th September. The season ended with one on Worth on 5th October.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Index	360	349	496	490	266	455	374	388
% of total	13	11	9	15	13	22	13	12
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Index	462	390	718	422	148	173	130	
% of total	15	11	19	15	8	10	10	

Ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus*

Just the five records this year, all from the Estate. In July there was one on the 9th, two on the 13th, and two on the 20th.

By Carla Hill and Steffan Walton



Brown Argus by A.Lipczynski

Dragonflies and Damselflies in 2021

Records were broken when 29 species were recorded in the SBBOT Recording Area during 2021 (Erratum: 27 in 2020 and 2019). The highlights were the fourth to sixth records of Lesser Emperor (including an ovipositing pair) and the second and third records of Vagrant Emperor. However, the start of the flight season was significantly delayed by a cold and dry spring dominated by incessant easterlies which resulted in late starts for many species. Bucking the trend we saw our earliest ever record for Southern Migrant Hawker. As the season progressed there were record day counts of Southern Emerald, Scarce Emerald, Dainty Damselflies, Norfolk Hawker, and Red-veined Darter, nearly all of which are recent colonists. Improved overall counts were seen for Banded Demoiselle and Scarce Chaser. On the debit side the overall number of Brown Hawker were down, Willow Emerald Damselfly continues to make only a slow recovery, while Southern Hawker just about hangs on. The cold spring may also have been responsible for the premature end and/or compressed flight seasons of Banded Demoiselle, Variable Damselfly, Red-eyed and Small Red-eyed Damselflies, Hairy Dragonfly, and Norfolk Hawker. Finally, the latest ever records were equalled for Azure Damselfly but well and truly smashed for Willow Emerald Damselfly, Emperor Dragonfly, and Black-tailed Skimmer.

MAY

The first *Odonata* of the year was even later than last year and unusually it was a **Common Blue Damselfly** glimpsed on Worth on the 7th. Despite searching around the various dykes and ditches on Worth marshes on the 11th, the best we could find was one Common Blue Damselfly and one **Hairy Dragonfly**. The summer weather on the 12th tempted a handful of **Azure Damselflies** to emerge in Middle Field, plus four **Large Red Damselflies** and a **Variable Damselfly** on Worth. A Hairy Dragonfly in the Oasis on the 16th was the first on the Estate whilst a wander along Roaring Gutter on the 18th produced 12 Variable Damselflies and nine **Blue-tailed Damselflies**.

A Variable Damselfly was in The Elms on the 24th and our first **Broad-bodied Chaser** was in the Haven on the 25th. On Worth on the 27th there were three Azure, three Blue-tailed, nine Common Blue, and 20+ unidentified teneral Damselflies plus three Hairy Dragonflies and two Broad-bodied Chasers. A few Azures were also on the Estate. Two **Banded Demoiselles**, five Azure Damselflies, 13 Variable Damselflies, 40 Blue-tailed Damselflies, four Common Blue Damselflies, one Large Red Damselfly, one Hairy Dragonfly, one Broad-bodied Chaser, and our first **Black-tailed Skimmer** of the year were seen on Worth marshes on the 29th. The first **Dainty Damselflies** were also seen at a private site. It was much the same on Worth again on the last day of the month but with at least 20 Variable Damselflies and nine Hairy Dragonflies.

JUNE

The warm daytime conditions aided the dragonfly survey work and produced some impressive counts. The month started with the first **Red-eyed Damselfly** of the year on the 1st. A particular effort was made to survey the Banded Demoiselles and 11 on the 2nd was a good start. The next species to appear was **Red-veined Darter** with six on the path to Restharrow Scrape on the 3rd. This increased to at least 16 around the Estate on the 6th but they were eclipsed by two **LESSER EMPERORS** in front of the first hide on the Scrape, our fourth and fifth records and the first since 2014. They showed there for at least a week.

Norfolk Hawker is a recent colonist to the area and there were six on Worth marshes on the 9th. The 10th was significant for confirming the ovipositing of the **LESSER EMPERORS** on Restharrow Scrape. There were at least 16 Red-veined Darters and the first **Scarce Chaser** of the year. Records continued to be broken the next day when at least **380** Dainty Damselflies were counted. A further 12 species were counted on Worth. The first **Ruddy** and **Common Darters** were noted on New Downs on the 12th and 17 Banded Demoiselles were along the North Stream. Although there were 17 Norfolk Hawkers on Worth on the far side of the railway track, the exciting news was that there were seven on the Estate side of the line – indicating a spread in this species.



Lesser Emperor by S.Reynaert

Our next speciality to appear was **Southern Migrant Hawker** by the Observatory on the 17th while the first **Emerald Damselflies** were found near the Dragonfly Pond on the 19th. The final sighting of note was on the 24th at the north end of the Recording Area. The total of 26 **Southern Emerald Damselflies** was the highest count since 2014 and 114 **Scarce Emerald Damselflies** was a new record. Not to be outdone there was also a Norfolk Hawker there too.

JULY

At least 180 Common Darters were on Worth on the 8th. Scarce Chaser and Hairy Dragonfly were still going strong. A brief stroll up to Restharrow Scrape on the 12th produced around 45 Common Darters along the way. Two Four-spotted Chasers and singles of Ruddy Darter, Emperor, and Broad-bodied Chaser were on the Estate on the 13th. Black-tailed Skimmers were by far the most numerous with 15. A **Southern Hawker** in the Observatory car park area on the 19th was new for the year and an unusual site for this species. A Southern Migrant Hawker was on Worth the next day. There was good diversity on the Estate on the 22nd with 12 Black-tailed Skimmers, 12 Emperors, four Ruddy Darters, 87 Common Darters, three Brown Hawkers, 23 Common Blue Damselflies, nine Emerald Damselflies, 20 Blue-tailed Damselflies, three Azure Damselflies, and six Red-eyed Damselflies. A Southern Migrant Hawker was at the Point on the 25th and on the 29th one Southern Migrant Hawker, three **Migrant Hawkers**, four Emperors, eight Black-tailed Skimmers, one Southern Emerald Damselfly, and 18 Scarce Emerald Damselflies were seen in breezy conditions in the northern parts of the Recording Area.

Another spell in the northern parts of the Recording Area produced six Migrant Hawkers, one Southern Migrant Hawker, four Emperors, three Ruddy Darters, seven Common Darters, six Black-tailed Skimmers, two Blue-tailed Damselflies, 12 Scarce Emerald Damselflies, 18 Southern Emerald Damselflies, and four Common Blue Damselflies. There were at least 25 Small Red-eyed Damselflies, 40 Common Blue Damselflies, and 15 Migrant Hawkers on the Estate.

AUGUST

Three Southern Migrant Hawkers were flying around and ovipositing on the Dragonfly pool on the Estate on the 3rd. The next day two Brown Hawkers, nine Migrant Hawkers, 15 Ruddy Darters, one Common Darter, and three Black-tailed Skimmers were on New Downs. Three Southern Migrant Hawkers, two Scarce Emerald Damselflies, and ten Southern Emerald Damselflies were seen on private land in the northern parts of the Recording Area. The first six **Willow Emerald Damselflies** of the year were seen around the Haven/Oasis area on the 15th. Four Willow Emerald Damselflies were sheltering from the breeze in the Gullies the following day. A Southern Hawker was posing on the foliage between King's Avenue and Middle Field on the 24th.

The Estate was busy with Migrant Hawkers patrolling the edges of every hedgerow and tree line on the 25th. A few Emperors and Brown Hawkers were still around and the odd Willow Emerald Damselfly. A late-ish Azure Damselfly was on Royal St George's Golf Course. Willow Emerald Damselflies were also in Big Gully and along the Guilford Rd on the 31st.

SEPTEMBER

Willow Emerald Damselfly was along the track that runs inland from the Great Wood on Worth on the 4th. This was followed by another on the 7th hanging around on Willows near the Oasis. These proved to be the only records of the month in a poor season for this species. A late Black-tailed Skimmer was seen around Royal Cinque Ports Golf Course too. A Southern Hawker was in the Observatory carpark on the 13th whilst double-figures of Ruddy Darter and Migrant Hawker were on New Downs. On the 16th five Brown Hawkers, 30 Migrant Hawkers, one Emperor, one Black-tailed Skimmer, 100+ Common Darters, and three Common Blue Damselflies were seen in good conditions on Worth marshes. Sightings were sporadic thereafter but a Brown Hawker was around the Observatory on the 23rd and 45 Common Darters and 15 Migrant Hawkers were counted on the Estate in good conditions on the 27th.

OCTOBER

On the 5th at least 20 Migrant Hawkers and 24 Common Darters were on Worth when the sun came out. A single Willow Emerald Damselfly was the first sighting for a few weeks. A walk to the Point in the afternoon on the 9th produced a few expected Common Darters, a single Migrant Hawker, a very late Emperor Dragonfly, and a stunning male **VAGRANT EMPEROR**. This was only the second record for Sandwich Bay and presumably fresh in on the southerly winds. Most days were quite cool for the rest of the month but when the sun did appear a few species were still on the wing. Common Darters were most prevalent, followed by Migrant Hawker. On the 26th there were six of the former and one of the latter on New Downs, followed swiftly by 12 Common Darters on New Downs on the 28th.

NOVEMBER

There was just the one Migrant Hawker on the Estate on the 1st. The following morning was livened up by finding a deceased **VAGRANT EMPEROR** near the Whitehouse paddock. At least seven Common Darters were hanging on around the Estate and at the Point on the 3rd. A few potential reports of Vagrant Emperors followed, with 'large dragonflies' seen briefly in Waldershare Gully on the 7th and Worth marshes on the 10th. Neither could be confirmed though. After a little gap, one last Common Darter of the year was on the Green Wall on the 19th.

Species recorded in 2021 were:

Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*

After noting a steady decline over recent years, a more conscious effort to survey this species in 2021 resulted in an increase to 92 ‘demoiselle-days’ recorded. The first sighting was two on Worth marshes on a late date of 29th May with peak counts of 21 and 26 on 12th and 14th June, respectively. The season ended very early with two on 16th June. All records were from either on or in the near vicinity of the Delf and North Streams on Worth apart from pairs on the Green Wall on 5th and 13th June; there were no records on the Estate. A mixed year with an encouraging recovery apparent in the primary population on Worth but a compressed season and scarcity of records from elsewhere.

Year	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Damselfly-days	9	18	14	9	10	11	48	132	136	74	83	44

Southern Emerald Damselfly *Lestes barbarus*

Following the re-appearance of this colonising species in 2020 after a gap of six years, 26 were counted at the Point during the first survey on 24th June. Several were again seen on the new pools on Prince’s Golf Course and, together with the expansion of Scarce Emerald Damselfly, this represents an excellent outcome for the Golf Courses’ partnership with Natural England. Seven were recorded on the second survey on 5th July followed by one on the 29th and 18 on the 31st with ten during the final visit on 4th August. The total of 62 ‘Damselfly-days’ is a record for the area.

Scarce Emerald Damselfly *Lestes dryas*

An amazing start to the season for this GB Near Threatened species with a record-shattering day count of 114 (previous highest 23 in 2020 and 2019) at the Point during the first survey of the year on 24th June. It was very encouraging to again see many on the new scrapes on the northern boundary of Prince’s Golf Club. At least 63 were present on the second visit on 5th July with 18 on the 29th and 12 on the 31st, and a final record of two on 4th August.

Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa*

An unremarkable year with the firsts (a female and a teneral) found in long grass near the Estate’s Dragonfly Pool on the late-ish date of 19th June. There was a peak count of only 11 on the Estate on 13th July while 15 on Worth on 28th July is more noteworthy. The last sightings of the year were six on the Estate on 29th August.

Willow Emerald Damselfly *Chalcolestes viridis*

The first six of the year were seen around the Haven/Oasis area on the late date of 15th August. Four were in the Gullies on the 16th with the last on the Estate on 7th September. The first on Worth marshes was on 4th September with singles on the southern edge of the Great Wood on 5th and 14th October. These are the latest ever dates, previously 2nd October in 2017. Results indicate the species continues to make only a slow recovery after its local collapse in 2018, most likely due to a prolonged icy spell during the 'Beast from the East'.

Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella*

The first sightings of the year were on 10th May from the Estate and the 26th on Worth. Single digit numbers were recorded in both areas until a count of 46 was recorded on the Green Wall on 1st June. There were 18 on the Estate on 9th June and 11 were counted at the Point on the 24th. There were a few records during July with a high count of ten on the Estate on the 13th. There was only one sighting during in August which was from the Estate and the last of the season on 25th equalling the latest-ever record set in 2010. Otherwise, another so-so year for one of the two most common and widespread UK species.

Variable Damselfly *Coenagrion pulchellum*

The first sighting of the year was on 12th May which was not bad considering the cold/dry Spring. Nearly all the sightings during May were from Worth marshes, reaching a high of 20 on the 31st. The same pattern was seen during June with a high of 13 from Worth marshes on the 14th. The last sightings of the year were three from the Estate on a very early 19th June, with no records in July and August. A strange year for this 'GB Near Threatened' species.

Dainty Damselfly *Coenagrion scitulum*

This colonising species continues its remarkable increase and with the easing of Covid-19 regulations we could organise guided walks in addition to site surveys. The first sighting of the year was of two females found sheltering from the cold in long grass near the natal pool on 29th May. Counts increased to 30 on 5th June with adult pairs in tandem egg-laying while teneral emerged. A thorough survey on 11th June recorded an incredible day count of 380, more than doubling the maximum count of 180 seen in 2020. Counts of 30 and 45 were noted on 19th and 23rd June. On 2nd July at least 155 were recorded in the vicinity of the natal pool although this is an under-estimate as teneral were continually emerging to rise high and drift away in balmy conditions. It was very encouraging to record 25 at a second pool plus individuals were to be found at several sites elsewhere. The season concluded with 31 on 13th July.

Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma najas*

The first records of the year were late, from Worth on 1st June and the Estate on the 10th, with highs of ten on Worth on the 14th and 12 from the Estate on the 23rd. In July there was a single sighting on Worth on the 8th, while on the Estate there were seven on the 13th and a final six on the Middle Field Pond on the 22nd. Another early close to a species' flight season.

Small Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma viridulum*

All records were from the Estate's ponds and scrapes. The first sightings of the year were 11 on 13th July followed by 25 on the 31st and a last five on the early date of 16th August.

Large Red Damselfly *Pyrrhosoma nymphula*

All records were from Worth marshes. The first sightings of the year were four at Roaring Gutter on 12th May followed by four (inc. a *fulvipes* red form at Great Wood) on the 26th and then singles at the Great Wood on the 29th and nearby on 1st June. An ephemeral and unpredictable species at Sandwich Bay.

Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*

The first, an immature female, was found on the sheltered southern edge of Great Wood on Worth on 7th May. The next was a single, again on Worth, on the 26th while the first four from the Estate were on the 29th. Numbers quickly built with 40 on Worth on 1st June, 68 on the Estate on the 9th, and 105 on Worth on the 14th. Six were on New Downs on 3rd June. In July there were highs of 75 on Worth on the 8th and 40 on the Estate plus four at the Point on the 31st. In August there was a single record of ten on the Estate on the 24th while the final sightings of the year were three on Worth on 16th September.

Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans*

The first sightings of the year were nine on Worth on 18th May with numbers increasing to 40 on the 29th. Away from Worth, the first from the Green Wall was on 1st June, followed by New Downs and Estate on the 3rd. During June, the bulk of records were on Worth with a maximum of 455 on the 14th and local highs of ten on New Downs on the 15th, ten on the Estate on the 19th, and 14 at the Point on the 24th. Numbers dropped in July with highs of 50 on Worth on the 8th, 33 on the Estate on the 13th, followed by 20 there on the 22nd. There was a final record of two on the Estate on 24th August (the same date as in 2020). A better year for this species and, together with *E. cyathigerum*, the most widespread and abundant of the zygopterans at Sandwich Bay.

Southern Migrant Hawker *Aeshna affinis*

After an outstanding 2020, numbers this year were disappointing. The first was surprisingly in the Observatory carpark on 17th June, our earliest record (previously 23rd June 2020). Two were patrolling the usual pools at the Point on 5th July. The only sighting from Worth was one along the track south of Great Wood on 20th July while singles were seen at the Point on three occasions in late July. In August three were on the Estate on the 3rd and the last of the year were three at the Point on the 4th.

Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea*

The species continues to hang on at Sandwich Bay at very low density with only three sightings, all from the Estate (nine in 2020 and three in 2019). The first was almost a month late and, unusually, in the Observatory car park on 19th July. We had to wait for more than a month for the second on 24th August and the last of the year was on 13th September, again in the 'Obs' car park.

Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis*

After an excellent season in 2020 numbers were lower this year. The first three of the year were on Worth on 20th July, with six there on the 21st, and three on the Estate on the 22nd. During August two were seen on the Estate on the 4th and three on the Green Wall on the 10th. The final sightings were from Worth with one on the 12th and five on the 16th. The table below shows how numbers have fluctuated over recent years and probably reflect the species' reproductive biology. Eggs deposited hatch the following spring and can take 2-4 years before adults emerge. Consequently, the numbers observed will depend on both seasonal variation and anthropogenic factors, such as the dredging of the streams and ditches in the area.

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
Dragonfly-days	50	13	95	24

Norfolk Hawker *Aeshna isosceles*

Bucking the trend seen with many other species, the first adults were flying on schedule with six on Worth on 9th June followed by four on the 11th, seven on the 13th, and a record day count of 24 on the 14th (previously 11 on 13th June 2020). There were 17 counted in the area around the Great Wood, along the Delf Stream, and to the ditches south and east of Roaring Gutter, plus an additional seven on the other side of the railway, indicating that the species continues to expand its local range. Four were on Worth on the 16th but the last sighting of the year was an individual at the Point on 24th June, the first record from this area.

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*

The first records of the year were two-three weeks late with three on 29th July followed by six on the 31st, all at the Point. The first sightings on the Estate were 15 on 31st July. During August highs of 18 were counted on the Green Wall on the 18th and 24 on the Estate on the 24th. In September 35 were on New Downs on the 13th and the first records from Worth were 30 on the 16th. Good numbers continued into the first half of October with 20 on Worth on the 5th and 14 on the Estate on the 7th. Thereafter numbers dropped quickly with just a couple of individuals seen in the second half of the month and a final sighting of one on the Estate on 1st November.

Vagrant Emperor *Anax ephippiger*

A walk to the Point on 9th October produced a stunning male, only the second record for Sandwich Bay (the first 17th-22nd November 2019) and presumably fresh in on the southerly winds. On 2nd November a dead male (identified by the secondary genitalia under the base of the abdomen) was found near the Whitehouse paddock. The specimen has been sent to Johanna Hedlund at Exeter University for Stable Isotope Analysis. There were further reports in November of 'large dragonflies' seen briefly in Waldershare Gully on the 7th and on Worth marshes on the 10th which may well have also been this species.



Vagrant Emperor by S.Walton

Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*

The first sightings of this conspicuous species were one on the Estate on 3rd June, seven on Worth on the 11th, and two on New Downs on the 15th. Ten were on New Downs during the first site survey on the 24th. In July there were highs of six on Worth on the 21st, 12 on the Estate on the 22nd, and four on New Downs on the 31st. There were just three sightings during the rest of the year with singles on the Estate on 25th August, from Worth on 16th September, and finally at the Point on an extraordinarily late date of 9th October. It was clearly a male Emperor and showed well in close proximity to the male Vagrant Emperor; both were probably continental migrants. There have been only a few previous sightings at the Bay in September, the latest record being on the 23rd in 1994. A quick trawl of the literature did not find any other October records in UK.

Lesser Emperor *Anax parthenope*

Two were found on Restharrow Scrape on 6th June. These were the fourth and fifth SBBOT records and the first confirmed since 2014. The Lesser Emperors showed there for at least a week making occasional sorties over the bund. On the 10th the pair were photographed in tandem ovipositing on the Scrape. It takes one-two years before adults emerge so we may have to wait until 2023 for any evidence of successful breeding. A lone male on Worth on 22nd July was the only other sighting of the year and is the sixth record for the Bay.

Hairy Dragonfly *Brachytron pratense*

The first sightings of the year were on Worth on 11th May, a week or so late, and from the Estate on the 16th. Nine were on Worth on the 31st and 1st June and two were on New Downs on the 3rd. Apart from one-two individuals on the Estate, most sightings were from across Worth marshes with a maximum of 16 on 11th June. The flight season ended again abruptly with the last individual on Worth on 8th July.

Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa*

The first were on the Estate on 25th May and on Worth the day after, approx. three weeks late. Two were on Worth marshes on the 27th and there followed the usual scatter of individuals from across the Recording Area until a peak of six was recorded on the Estate on 9th June. There was one on Worth on the 11th and then a gap until the last of the season on the Estate on 13th July. An unremarkable year with a total of 17 'chaser-days'.

Scarce Chaser *Libellula fulva*

Recently we have come to expect *fulva* to be flying at the Bay in the last week of May but this year the first was on 10th June. A survey across Worth marshes the next day found 19 emerging tenerals and immatures followed by counts of 13 on the 14th and eight on the 16th. There were one-two individuals on the Estate but the final sighting of the year was on Worth on 8th July. A total of 51 'chaser days' is down from 78 in 2020 but much better than the ten in 2019.

Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata*

Very late emerging this year. The first of the year were two on Worth on 31st May. They were followed by individuals on the Estate and New Downs on 3rd June. There were one-three on the Estate and New Downs but the best counts came from across Worth with highs of 11 on the 11th and 13th June. Numbers tailed off in the second half of June and one was seen the Point during the first site survey on the 24th. The final two were on the Estate on 13th July.

Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*

The first was out on Worth on 29th May, increasing to five on 2nd June. Elsewhere, the first on New Downs was on the 3rd and the Estate on the 6th. Numbers steadily increased with local highs of nine on New Downs on the 12th, 35 on Worth on the 13th, and 28 at the Point on the 24th. Good numbers continued throughout July with highs of 13 (Worth, 8th), 15 (Estate, 13th), 15 (New Downs, 15th) and ten (New Downs, 29th). However, numbers quickly fell with just a single record in August (three on the Estate on the 4th). In September there was one on the Estate on the 7th and a final sighting of one around Royal Cinque Ports GC on the 16th. This is the latest ever record at the Bay. There have been few previous September records and Hodgson (2011) reports a latest date of 14th September but not the year. Along with *S. striolatum*, *cancellatum* is the most abundant and widespread of the 'anisopterans' at Sandwich Bay both of which have benefitted greatly from the creation of many new pools on the Golf Courses and RSPB Lydden Valley reserve.

Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*

An excellent season started with six crimson males patrolling Restharrow Scrape on 3rd June, quickly increasing to 16 on the 6th, and a record day count of 27 across the Estate on the 10th. The first on New Downs was on the 12th and three were on Worth on the 13th. Numbers then fell with two-three on the Estate on the 16th and 19th. There were no reports in July, and only two sightings in August, with a single on Worth on the 20th and the last of the year on the Estate on the 24th.

Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*

Bucking the trend seen with nearly all other species, the first of the year were four on New Downs on 12th June, equalling the second-earliest record set in 2014. The first on Worth on the 13th was against the run of play as most records came from the species' strongholds in the northern half of the Recording Area, with a maximum count of 24 at the Point on 24th June. In July most sightings were again at the Point with ten on the 5th and the 29th. In August all sightings were on the Estate with a peak of 15 on the 4th. In September there was only one record; 15 on New Downs on the 13th and these were the last of the year.

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

The first sightings were about a week late with four on Worth on 11th June, one on New Downs on the 12th, two on the Estate on the 19th, and one at the Point on the 24th. Numbers increased rapidly in July with 180 counted on the pools and ditches around the Great Wood on Worth on the 8th. On the Estate there were 45 on the 12th and 87 on the 22nd, of which 70 were teneral disturbed from the edge of the Dragonfly Pond. There were 15 on New Downs on the 15th and seven at the Point on the 31st. In August there was a lull with reports only from the Estate peaking at 26 on the 24th, until the second half of September when there were 100 on Worth on the 16th and 45 on the Estate on the 27th. Numbers dropped in October but local highs of 24 (Worth, 5th), 15 (Estate, 8th), eight (Point, 9th) and 12 (New Downs, 28th). During November there were single digit counts at the Point, New Downs, and on the Estate, but the very last *Odonata* of the season was a Common Darter on the Green Wall on the 19th.

By Andrew Lipczynski

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Emerald (above) and Scarce Emerald (below) by S.Reynaert

Moths in 2021

The weather will always be the major factor influencing what is recorded. This year there were long spells of weather which reduced moth activity. Despite this, 363 species of macro moth and 285 species of micro moth were recorded. There were thirteen species of micro and three macros new for the Recording Area. These were: *Stigmella tityrella*, *Phyllonorycter platani*, *P. comparella*, *Agonopterix liturosa*, *Cosmopterix zieglerella*, *Coleophora potentillae*, *C. otidipennella*, *C. alticolella*, *Ptycholoma lecheana*, *Acleris laterana*, *Gynnidomorpha vectisana*, *Elegia similella*, *Sciota rhenella*, Small Yellow Underwing *Panemeria tenebrata*, Waved Black *Parascotia fuliginaria* and Scarce Silver Y *Syngrapha interrogationis*.

There were two significant records from 2020 which were confirmed this year. The first was *Isophrictis anthemidella* which was confirmed by DNA analysis and is a new species for the UK. The second was Small Scabious Plume *Stenoptilia annadactyla* which is a new species for Kent. Thank you to the determiners of these two for putting the time and effort in.

The main trap was operated from late February until mid-December whenever conditions allowed. These records were supplemented by a second trap by the bird feeders, a trap on Sandown Road, a regular visitor who trapped mainly at the south end of the Estate, and a variety of other traps operated by staff and visitors to the area.



Sciota rhenella by S.Walton

Table 1. Monthly totals of regular immigrants.

	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	T
Diamond-back Moth	0	0	0	1	103	32	26	17	3	9	0	191
Rusty-dot Pearl	0	0	0	2	2	1	16	18	77	26	0	142
<i>Palpita vitrealis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	5
Rush Veneer	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	14	12	0	0	36
Convolvulus Hawk-moth	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	4
Humming-bird Hawkmoth	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Vestal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Gem	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	5	7	0	15
Silver Y	0	0	0	7	76	228	156	227	9	4	0	707
Bordered Straw	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarce Bordered Straw	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Tree-lichen Beauty	0	0	0	0	0	9	33	2	0	0	0	44
Small Mottled Willow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delicate	0	0	0	0	4	1	1	53	77	4	0	140
Pearly Underwing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
Dark Sword-grass	0	0	0	3	8	17	18	6	8	2	0	62
Langmaid's Yellow Underwing	0	0	0	0	0	23	13	0	0	0	0	36

January - April

The first suitable trapping conditions were on February 21st when seven moths of five species were caught: Common Quaker, Satellite, Dark Chestnut, March Moth, and Early Moth. It was not operated again until a slightly milder spell on March 22nd when 28 moths were caught, increasing to 58 moths of 13 species on the 31st.

April was dominated by cold, clear and frosty nights and catches remained in single figures until 13 on 30th. Early examples of Dark Sword-grass on 5th and 8th were unexpected. Singles of Emperor were seen on the 23rd and the 27-28th.

May

These conditions continued. Despite this there was a Dark Sword-grass on the 4th and a Diamondback on the 11th. Slowly but surely the number of moths and species crept up from the 19th, and included the first Bird's Wing of the year. This included the first Bird's Wing of the year. There was another Dark Sword-grass on the 22nd and a White Colon on the 31st.

June

Overnight temperatures increased and catches crept up. There were 95 moths of 58 species on the 2nd including the year's first Silver Y. There were five Diamondbacks the next night plus our third ever record of *Nascia ciliaris*. Daytime searches revealed a small colony of **Small Yellow Underwings**, the first ever recorded in our area, on the 5th. By 11th the catch was much better with 303 moths of 71 species. This was made up of our resident species but a Beautiful Marbled on the 18th may have been a new arrival. Conditions then cooled rapidly with an overnight minimum of just 6.3°C on the 23rd yielding just five moths of five species. The next night the minimum was back up to 15.6°C and there were 15 Diamondbacks and a Silky Wainscot. The first of five Convolvulus Hawk-moths was caught on the 29th.

July

The month started with a catch of 507 moths of 105 species. There was an early Gem on the 11th along with a Clancy's Rustic. Catches of 300+ became the norm along with some interesting arrivals. This started with our eighth record ever of the pyralid *Anania lancealis* on the 13th (followed by singles on 19th and 25th). A **Scarce Silver Y** and a **Waved Black** on the 16th were our first ever records. This was followed by our first record of ***Sciota rhenella*** on the 18th. The interesting records continued apace including our second *Recurvaria leucatella* on 20th, our third Sussex Emerald and a Dewick's Plusia on the 21st, *Acrobasis tumidana* on the 24th, our second ever Brussel's Lace on the 25th, seven Dark Sword-grasses on the 29th, and a Four-spotted Footman on the 31st. Although we have not recorded the adults in the trap, the larvae of Toadflax Brocade were found on the 15th.

August

Catches diminished until 11th and then increased. Jersey Tiger is spreading rapidly across the southeast and our first of several records this year was on the 9th, along with our second ever record of *Anania verbascalis*. The first of three records of the migrant tortrix *Cydia amplana* was caught on the 13th and there was another Sussex Emerald on the 20th. Gypsy Moth is a species establishing itself in Kent and there were four males on the 22nd followed by another the next day. There was a Pearly Underwing on the 25th.

September

Warm conditions improved the catch from up to 300 moths to around 500. A Clifden Nonpareil on 4th was a great start. This was followed by a *Palpita vitrealis* the next day, Gypsy Moth on the 6th, *Cydia amplana* on the 7th, Dewick's Plusia on the 8th and a Beautiful Marbled on the 9th, with another the next day along with the first and only Vestal of the autumn.

Setaceous Hebrew Character is usually the most numerous species at this time of year and 246 in one trap on 10th was a good example. There were Convolvulus Hawk-moths on both 13th and 16th, despite the temperature cooling down to single figures. It is not possible to differentiate adult Grey Dagger from Dark Dagger without dissecting them and so it was good to find the distinctive larva of Dark Dagger in the Observatory carpark on the 14th. Two Gems on the 18th and Pearly Underwings on the 19th and 26th were the last migrant arrivals of the month.



Dark Dagger larva by S.Walton

October

Conditions became more unsettled and it was not possible to run the trap every night. The most significant records of the month were three Radford's Flame Shoulders on the 10th, 11th, and 20th. This species might be colonising. Of local specialities, a Pale Lemon Sallow on the 11th was notable.

November - December

After last year's excellent showing the only record of Golden Twin-spot was on November 7th. There was a fourth Radford's Flame Shoulder on the 9th along with two Gems and a *Palpita vitrealis*, with another of this species the next day. Migrant related activity did not stop and there were five Gems, a Silver Y, and three Diamondbacks on the 15th followed by four more Diamondbacks and a Dark Sword-grass the next day. The last Silver Y and Diamondback were recorded on November 18th.

By Ian Hunter

Some Other Noteworthy Observations in 2021

Lizard Orchids *Himantoglossum hircinum* numbered only 362 on the yearly Estate census but the interesting variant *H.h.albiflora* was seen again. **Springbeauty** *Claytonia perfoliata* was re-found on the Estate, **Adder's-tongue** *Ophioglossum vulgatum* persisted at a low level in the Whitehouse paddock, **Neapolitan Garlic** *Allium neapolitanum* spread near the Pegwell Bay area, as did **Soapwort** *Saponaria officinalis* around the Estate, and there were lots of flowering **Dittander** *Lepidium latifolium* along the river on New Downs. There were 224 **Man Orchids** *Orchis anthropophora* on the Pegwell Bay Hoverport site and an exceptional flowering of **Sand Catchfly** *Silene conica* with 700+ on the Estate beach. The new colony of **Marsh Helleborine** *Epipactis palustris* in Middle Field increased to 24 plants and one in Big Gully was new. Thanks as always to Sue Buckingham and Ken Chapman for their help and botanical knowledge.

Time spent looking at Ladybirds on the Estate produced **Kidney-spot Ladybird** *Chilocorus renipustulatus* on 28th February, **22-spot Ladybird** *Psyllobora 22-punctata* and **Orange Ladybird** *Halyzia 16-guttata* on 21st May, **14-spot Ladybird** *Propylea 14-punctata* on 24th May, **16-spot Ladybird** *Tytthaspis 16-punctata* on 27th May and 2nd June, and **24-spot Ladybird** *Subcoccinella 24-punctata* on 10th October. A small population of **Triangulate Cobweb Spiders** *Steatoda triangulosa* was found at the Observatory and confirmed as a new species for Kent and an **Ornate Shieldbug** *Eurydema ornata* on 8th July was a second for Kent. **Horse Leeches** were seen on New Downs on 29th January and Green Wall on 2nd February. Good populations of **Niemelä's Cuckoo Wasp** *Hedychrum-niemelai*, **Kirby's Sand Wasp** *Podalonia affinis*, **Four-banded Weevil Wasp** *Cerceris quadricincta*, **Square-jawed Sharp-tail** *Coelioxys mandibularis*, and **Fallén's Leatherbug** *Arenocoris fallenii* were found in coastal areas at the end of July, plus a **Shrill Carder Bee** *Bombus sylvarum* on Prince's Beach on the 31st. Thank you to Paul Brock for these latter records.

There was just the one sighting of a **Beaver** *Castor fiber* on 8th April. It was an excellent spring for **Brown Hares** *Lepus europaeus* with sightings of up to five on New Downs, eight on Worth, three on the Estate, three on the Green Wall, and two at the Point. Worryingly there was not a single **Stoat** reported all year. Away from the Green Wall, **Grey Squirrels** *Sciurus carolinensis* are usually scarce so singles on the Estate on 17th and 21st September and 7th October, plus two on New Downs on 22nd April and singles there on 26th October and 7th November, qualify as an above-average year for Squirrel vagrancy. There were single **Harbour Porpoise** *Phocoena phocoena* sightings offshore on 4th and 6th October. **Common Seals** *Phoca vitulina* were on the river on the Green Wall on 8th April, and on New Downs on 15th (two) and 19th December. A male **Sand Lizard** *Lacerta agilis* was observed at the Point on 24th June.

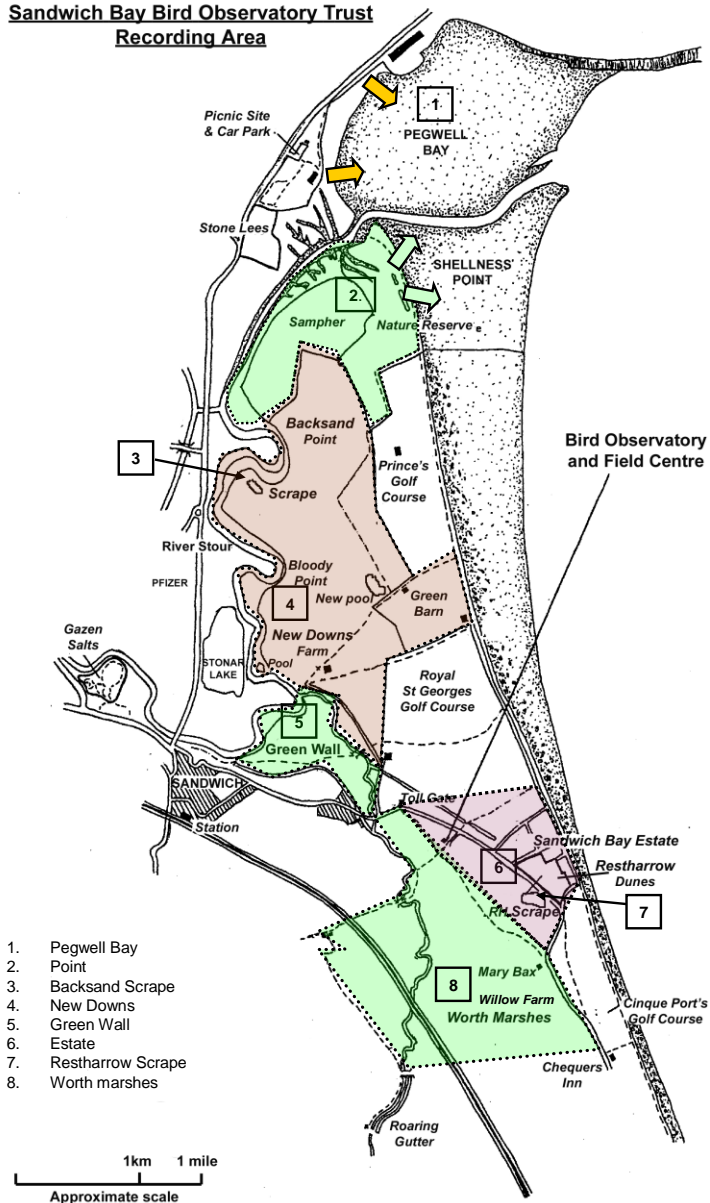
By Steffan Walton



Common Lizard by R.Johnson

Map of SBBOT Recording Area

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust Recording Area



Activities

As well as our conservation and monitoring work we aim to entertain and educate our members and the general public. To this end we hold weekly guided walks, birdwatching classes, illustrated talks about wildlife, and educational courses. Our activities are open to all and refreshments are provided at our events.

Our regular guided walks from the Field Centre occur throughout the year on Sunday at 09:00. They are informal, relaxing and aimed for all ages and abilities. Talks are given on Wednesday and Thursday evenings at 19:30, either online or at the Observatory, on a wide range of topics. Wednesday talks are often educational to learn hints and tips on all aspects of natural history whilst Thursday illustrated talks are from guest speakers, exploring wildlife or specific projects near and far. In the summer months Thursday evening talks are often replaced by evening walks instead.

Throughout the year there are various additional Natural History events such as Bee Identification Courses, Fungal Forays, Bat walks, and Moth nights. Day-trips and Holidays are organised and offered by SBBOT. Recent trips include Costa Rica, North Wales, Bulgaria, Isle of Scilly, Spain, Islay, Northumberland and Norfolk, and past reports can be read on the website.

SBBOT runs two youth groups in conjunction with the RSPB. Wildlife Explorers is a group for ages 8-12 and the Phoenix group for ages 13-18 years old. The aim is to bring nature to life by having fun with lots of hands on activities. Events take place in and around the Field Centre (unless otherwise indicated) on the last Saturday of the month from 10.00 till 14.00.

Our annual Open Day is held every bank holiday weekend in August with also regular Photographic Competitions, Quiz nights, In Focus optics days, Exhibitions, and more. In most years SBBOT organises over 240 different events. You can find the latest on all our events at **www.sbbot.org.uk/activities** or pick up an events leaflet in person from the Field Centre.



For all the latest news, photos and sightings follow us on social media:



@Sandwichbirdobs



@Sandwichbirdobs



SBBOT Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust



Sandwichbirdobs

Membership of the Trust

Membership is open to everyone interested in the aims of the Trust. Members receive discounted accommodation, monthly updates, a quarterly newsletter, an annual report and exclusive access to our trips and holidays.

Members are vital to the continuing success of the Observatory and our conservation work and monitoring. To help us with the work of the Trust please complete an application form available from the Field Centre or from our website www.sbbot.org.uk/support-us

Bookings and General Enquires

The Field Centre has modern and comfortable self-catering accommodation for up to 18 people which includes a Family Room and six Twin Rooms. The spacious lecture hall seating up to 80 people is also available for hire. Information regarding upcoming events and courses can be found on our website: www.sbbot.org.uk

For all enquires or bookings please contact the Field Centre by e-mail: info@sbbot.org.uk.



Stock Dove by S.Ray

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

for

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

**Contents of the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

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Balance Sheet	5
Notes to the Financial Statements	6

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

**General Information
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

ADDRESS:

Guildford Road
Sandwich Bay
Sandwich
Kent
CT13 9PF

ACCOUNTANTS:

MPH Accountancy and Business Advisors Ltd
99 Canterbury Road
Whitstable
Kent
CT5 4HG

Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2022

Accountants' Report to

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

In accordance with instructions given to us we have prepared without carrying out an audit the annexed financial statements from the accounting records of Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust and from information and explanations supplied to us.

MPH Accountancy and Business Advisors Ltd
99 Canterbury Road
Whitstable
Kent
CT5 4HG

15 June 2023

Client Approval Certificate

I approve the financial statements and confirm that I have made available all relevant records and information for their preparation.

Mr R Crombet-Beolens

15 June 2023

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

Trading and Profit and Loss Account for the year ended 31 December 2022

	£	£
Income		
Donations	44,139	
Grants	36,598	
Fundraising events	7,914	
Shop income	7,384	
Room lettings	19,438	
Holidays & trips	28,464	
Solar panel income	4,725	
Subscriptions	22,411	
Courses	4,256	
Talks	1,207	
Walks	2,560	
Clubs income	1,244	
		180,340
Cost of sales		
Opening stock	2,193	
Shop expenditure	1,561	
Educational expenditure	8,655	
Fundraising expenditure	4,263	
Shop purchases	4,045	
Trips & holiday expenditure	27,630	
Activity expenditure	2,943	
Accommodation expenses	240	
	51,530	
Closing stock	(2,500)	
		49,030
GROSS PROFIT		131,310
Other income		
Deposit account interest		2,380
		133,690
Expenditure		
Rent & rates	5,914	
Light and heat	4,270	
Wages and pensions	43,507	
Office expense & phone	1,493	
Printing, postage & stationery	4,009	
Conservation vehicle costs	706	
Licences and insurance	4,482	
Repairs and renewals	16,384	
Waste collection	1,139	
IT & internet	4,500	
Sundry expenses	333	
	86,737	
Carried forward		133,690

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

Trading and Profit and Loss Account for the year ended 31 December 2022

	£	£
Brought forward	86,737	133,690
Accountant & bookkeeper	1,690	
Legal fees	4,021	
		<hr/>
		92,448
		<hr/>
		41,242
Finance costs		
Bank charges		576
		<hr/>
		40,666
Depreciation		
Freehold property	8,513	
Improvements to property	4,894	
Plant and machinery	886	
		<hr/>
		14,293
NET PROFIT		<hr/>
		26,373
		<hr/>

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

Balance Sheet 31 December 2022

	Notes	£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	1		624,015
CURRENT ASSETS			
VAT		1,070	
Stocks		2,500	
Prepayments		339	
Lloyds 5982		540	
Virgin Money 7182		347,222	
Bank account no. 3		237	
Virgin Money 2047		1,484	
		<hr/>	
		353,392	
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Social security and other taxes		2,407	
Accruals and deferred income		8,144	
		<hr/>	
		10,551	
		<hr/>	
			342,841
NET ASSETS			<hr/>
			966,856
FINANCED BY			<hr/>
RESERVES AND FUNDS			
Reserves	2		940,483
Capital account	3		26,373
			<hr/>
			966,856
			<hr/>

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022

1. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £	Improvements to property £	Plant and machinery £	Totals £
COST				
At 1 January 2022	601,918	32,847	-	634,765
Additions	-	-	3,543	3,543
At 31 December 2022	601,918	32,847	3,543	638,308
DEPRECIATION				
Charge for year	8,513	4,894	886	14,293
At 31 December 2022	8,513	4,894	886	14,293
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 December 2022	593,405	27,953	2,657	624,015
At 31 December 2021	601,918	32,847	-	634,765

2. RESERVES

	Other reserves £
At 1 January 2022	940,483
At 31 December 2022	940,483

3. CAPITAL ACCOUNT

	£	£
Net profit		26,373
		26,373



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

SANDWICH BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

On accounts for the year
ended

31 DECEMBER 2022

Charity no
(if any)

289343

Set out on pages

1-2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2022.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

15/06/2023

Name:

JOE HEAD

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address:	MPH ACCOUNTANCY & BUSINESS ADVISORS LTD
	99 CANTERBURY ROAD, WHITSTABLE, KENT
	CT5 4HG

Section B	Disclosure
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Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.