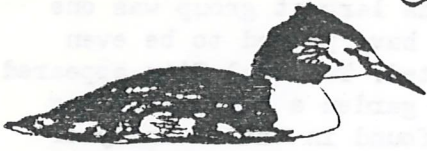


Fylde Bird Club



NEWSLETTER No. 25

NOVEMBER 1986

The early part of the month saw a few birds in places where one might not normally expect to find them - a Great Spotted Woodpecker at Lane Ends on the 1st, 5 Tree Sparrows on L.S.A.N.R. on the 2nd (a new species for the Reserve), and a Grey Wagtail, a Coal Tit and a Goldcrest, all in the same Cleveleys garden on the 5th, 6th, and 7th respectively.

Observers at Lane Ends on the 2nd reported the first Whooper Swan of the winter, along with 440 Shelduck, 300 Wigeon, and 3 Great Crested Grebes. On the 2nd at the Mere a Curlew Sandpiper flew west at 15.40, giving itself away by its' distinctive call. Eight Ruddy Duck, 5 Little Grebes and a Woodcock, were also at the Mere on the 2nd.

An adult Mediterranean Gull was found on Knowle School playing field on the 6th, and was still there on the 25th and 26th. A second adult Mediterranean Gull was found at Squires Gate on the 15th, almost certainly last winter's bird returning to the favoured haunt near the Blind Home. Some care had to be exercised with the Knowle School bird when an albino Black Headed Gull was amongst the roosting gulls on the 24th. The Fleetwood Promenade Glaucous Gull, which returned in September, could be seen regularly throughout the month, either on the sea or perched on the dome of the Marine Hall, or patrolling its' beat along the Promenade. During the month the Cormorant roost on the banks of the R.Ribble at Freckleton held up to 90 birds.

A Barn Owl in flight near Queensway on the 13th was the only record of that species, whilst an interesting Tawny Owl sighting was that of a bird on a television aerial in St.Annes Square on the 19th. Short Eared Owls appear to be thin on the ground so far this winter, the only November report being a bird on L.S.A.N.R. on the 30th - surprisingly there were no reports from the Mere or Over Wyre.

Regular counts of the Teal on Newton Marsh saw numbers increase from 90 early in the month to 250 on the 30th. Similarly, Shoveler numbers increased at the I.C.I. Pool from 20 to 52. A small influx of Goldeneye saw 4 at I.C.I Pool, 5 on Fleetwood Marine Lake and 4 at the Mere. Fifty one Mute Swans were in the Fleetwood area on the 23rd, and up to 6 Great Crested Grebes on the sea off Central Prom on the 30th.

Flooded fields alongside Anchorsholme Lane proved attractive to waders which had been forced off the seashore at high tide on the 16th - 30 Ringed Plovers, 144 Dunlin, and 360 Redshanks. The same day 5000 Lapwings were with 2500 Golden Plover on Newton Marsh at Freckleton, and up to 130 Black Tailed Godwits were on the wet fields by Rossall School playing field.

The ringers were active throughout the month, and amongst their records was that of a male Blackcap in the nets at Clifton Hall on the 16th, and a local rarity, a Nuthatch on the 29th at Singleton Hall. This is the second record of Nuthatch in the area in as many months - are we seeing the beginning of the colonisation of the Fylde by birds from inland sites, or are these just birds spending the winter here. Extra vigilance during the next few years might prove the odd pair to be breeding in some little watched woodland. Yet another reason why as many members as possible should take part in our Fylde Breeding Bird Survey.

DECEMBER 1986

The Nuthatch ringed at Singleton Hall in November was seen regularly throughout December by the ringers working the Chaffinch roost, they also added a male Blackcap to their tally for Singleton on the 14th. The Greenfinch roost on the island at Fleetwood Marine Lake, another of the ringing sites, held 190 birds on the 7th.

Surprisingly, very few Fieldfares have been reported, the largest group was one of 120 birds at Cartford Bridge late in the month. Redwings have proved to be even more elusive, not a single record of the species was submitted. Two Coal Tits appeared in a Cleveleys Garden on the 12th and 13th, and in the same garden a male Brambling came to stay for Christmas. Up to 6 Snow Buntings could be found in the vicinity of Fleetwood Marine Lake for most of the month, with a further group of 3 turning up at the South Prom Go-Kart track on the 10th. A Green Woodpecker was seen in the grounds of Lytham Hall on the 9th, and a Bullfinch at Ribby on the 17th, both these species are somewhat uncommon in the Fylde. The Power Station site at Fleetwood, although now flat and apparently uninteresting, occasionally attracts some interesting birds - during December, a flock of up to 20 Twite were regular visitors, as was a female Stonechat and a flock of 15 Goldfishes. A cock Stonechat appeared on L.S.A.N.R. on the 21st.

At least 5 Glaucous Gulls were identified in the Fleetwood area during the month, these were , the Fleetwood Prom adult, 2 adults in the area of Fleetwood Tip/I.C.I. Pool, and single 2nd and 3rd winter birds also in the vicinity of the Tip. A "yellow legged" Herring Gull was seen near the Power Station site on the 19th. The 2 South Shore Mediterranean Gulls were also seen regularly throughout the month, one at Squires Gate, the other on Knowle School Playing Field. Three Little Gulls were seen feeding from the sewage slick on the sea off Manchester Square Pumping Station on the 18th, a single was at the I.C.I. Pool on the 20th, and an immature and an adult at the Mere on the 24th and 30th respectively.

On the sea off Rossall on the 6th at least 280 Guillemots and 2 Razorbills were counted, and on the 21st one of each species was on the Marine Lake at Fleetwood - the Razorbill having been released there by the ringers. The 6th was also an excellent day for divers off Rossall, with 58 Red Throated and a Great Northern amongst the auks offshore. Twenty two Red Throats were still at Rossall on the 13th along with 13 Great Crested Grebes and 9 Pintail. Up to 100 Eiders could be seen regularly off Rossall early in the month, and by the month end these had increased to at least 200. The nearby Marine Lake was the regular haunt of 11 Red Breasted Mergansers, and the wintering flock of Mute Swans at the same site peaked at 55 early in the month.

Some good counts of Teal came from a few sites throughout the month - maxima were, 30 at Bispham Marsh, 63 at the Mere, 100 on Newton Marsh and 200 at I.C.I. Pool. Wigeon peaked at 300 on Newton Marsh and Mallard at 300 at the Mere, whilst another 250 Mallard were on Fairhaven Lake. The I.C.I. Pool held up to 82 Shoveler, strange habitat for a species one might normally associate with more attractive reed fringed pools. A drake Goosander was seen in flight over the Mere on the 28th.

Late in the month the Pinkfeet at Moss Edge started to show something of an increase, when on the 26th at least 2000 were present. Accompanying the Pinkfeet were 10 Whooper Swans.

The Fleetwood area proved popular with wader species. Rossall School was the favoured haunt of some 220 Black Tailed Godwits and the I.C.I. Pool held up to 150 of the same. Rossall Point held up to 400 Turnstones, 115 Ringed Plovers, and up to 5 Purple Sandpipers. The I.C.I. Pool provided the most unusual wader record of the month when 2 Spotted Redshanks were reported there on the 29th.

Elsewhere, Newton Marsh had the largest gatherings of Lapwings and Golden Plover, with 3000 and 1500 respectively at mid-month.

The most unexpected sightings of the month involved two very late departing summer visitors. The first, a Ring Ousel which was found at the Mere on the 13th and was still there the following day, and second, a Swallow seen at 09.27 outside the Guardian Royal Exchange building at Lytham on the 31st - a very pleasant end to one observers year.

Contributors:- C.Band L.Blacow B.Dyson F.Ellis I.Gardner P.Guy M.Jones
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G.Smith E.Stirling

FYLDE RINGING GROUP

During November the Fylde Ringing Group concentrated most effort on the two Chaffinch roosts, at Singleton Hall and Clifton Hall. By the month end 355 birds had been ringed, the largest single catch being 57 at Singleton on the 15th November. The following day at Clifton Hall the first bird found in the nets was a female Blackcap, whilst the Chaffinch catch of 37 birds was swelled by 2 Brambling, the first of the Autumn.

Two or three Jays were regulars at both sites as were the usual Sparrowhawks, but unfortunately none came to the nets.

An early morning visit to Singleton on the 29th proved fruitful when a Nuthatch was found in the net which was nearest the bird table. This bird (or another) had been reported to us by one of the members of staff as visiting the bird table some ten days earlier. "Experts" were somewhat sceptical, although it is difficult to imagine what else it may have been, however the evidence lay there in the net. The same day another 34 Chaffinch were taken from the nets.

During the month only one Chaffinch was controlled, a young bird ringed at Hackensall (Bob Danson) in the Summer of 1986.

Once we obtain some recoveries from these large numbers of birds ringed we may be able to answer some of the questions now being asked, such as, are the Chaffinch found in the Fylde during Winter local, British, or Continental birds. It is possible that the Chaffinch belong to all three, but in what percentages?. Another question which is a constant mystery is, why do we have so few retraps from one visit to the next, are the birds using other roosts and if so, where are they?. These are a few of the problems we are trying to resolve - we will be continuing our efforts for the foreseeable future

November Totals:- Chaffinch 355 Robin 10 Blackbird 42 Goldcrest 2 Blue Tit 31
Great Tit 33 Coal Tit 5 Wren 5 Treecreeper 1 Dunnock 5
Song Thrush 4 Brambling 2 Blackcap 1 Nuthatch 1

Ringers:- Patrick Davies Peter Scholes Paul Slade Phil Slade

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 17 DEC 1986.

Election of Committee.
Phil Slade - Chairman
Alan Hinchliffe - Secretary
Malcolm Evans - Treasurer

Pat Bartley
Len Blacow
Roy Leeming
Peter Shakeshaft

FUTURE EVENTS - CLUB EVENING MEETINGS

15th APRIL 1987 - Tim Dean will be talking about the South Walney Reserve.

16th September 1987 - Jeff Kirby of the B.T.O. talking about Estuaries and their Conservation.

18th November 1987 - Derek Bunn, co-author of "The Barn Owl", will be providing an insight to this sadly, declining species.

"BIRDS OF ESTUARIES" Count - 16th November 1986.

R. Ribble at Freckleton	Little Grebe 2, Cormorant 90, Grey Heron 1, Wigeon 24, Teal 93, Mallard 47, Shoveler 3, Golden Plover 2500, Lapwing 5000, Dunlin 16, Curlew 16, Redshank 11, Mute Swan 1.
Rossall Point	Eider 100, Merganser 6, Oystercatcher 566, Ringed Plover 19, Grey Plover 1, Knot 23, Sanderling 124, Dunlin 40, Redshank 42, Bar T. Godwit 16, Turnstone 513.
I.C.I. Pool	Oystercatcher 105, Lapwing 550, Dunlin 38, Black T. Godwit 74, Redshank 64, Turnstone 7.
Lane Ends	Cormorant 1, Shelduck 641, Wigeon 80, Teal 50, Mallard 510, Shoveler 2, Merganser 1, Oystercatcher 3000, Grey Plover 100, Golden Plover 12, Lapwing 12, Knot 4000, Sanderling 3, Dunlin 3500, Snipe 3, Bar T. Godwit 2000, Curlew 7, Redshank 45, Whooper Swan 2, Common Scoter 1 (drake).

"The Partridge" by G.R. Potts

Included with this current issue of the Newsletter is a Publishers Leaflet advertising "The Partridge" by G.R. Potts. The book is published by Collins Professional and Technical Books, and provides a detailed insight to a species which has declined from something in the region of 120,000,000 in the 1960's, to less than 20,000,000 in the mid 1980's.

"The Partridge" has been written in an attempt to achieve a better understanding of Partridge ecology, and thereby to promote methods of conservation which could arrest this enormous tide of decline.

