

Frylde Bird Club



NEWSLETTER No. 34

MAY 1988

May's weather was generally warm with winds from the southerly quarter. These winds became somewhat stronger during the 22nd and 23rd, but unfortunately, this year we didn't get the sprinkling of migrants from the Mediterranean we have had in recent years. In fact May was strangely quiet this year.

Migrant warblers were well represented early in the month, with up to ten species noted and some of these in unusual places. At the Mere, at least 25 Sedge Warblers were singing, along with Grasshopper Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat and Whitethroat, and late in the month at least 2 Reed Warblers. Birds found in unusual locations included, 2 Sedge Warblers singing from a field of Oil Seed Rape on Marton Moss and 2 on St. Annes Promenade, whilst Watson Road Park saw Blackcap, Chiff Chaff, Lesser and Common Whitethroat, Wood Warbler and Garden Warbler. A Wood Warbler was at Weeton from the 4th to the 14th, raising hopes of possible breeding, whilst others were at Thurnham, Watson Road Park, Stanley Park and Lytham Crematorium. Two Garden Warblers were in Revoe Park on the 14th.

The Club's Bird Race was held on the 8th of the month and teams were out early to make the most of the day. Early visitors at Rossall Point found large numbers of Swifts and Swallows moving north just after dawn, 600 - 700 passing in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, but other than this movement little else was reported regarding Hirundines during May. Cuckoos appeared to be more plentiful this year, with singles reported from at least eight sites and 2 together at Warton Bank on the 1st. Wheatear passage was light during the month, a count of 12 at the Airport on the 6th being the only one of significance. Two Wheatears were seen on rooftops near the Pleasure Beach on the 13th, and singles were still about on the 29th, on Marton Moss and L.S.A.N.R.. A Redstart, the only one recorded, was in Watson Road Park on the 14th, and the same day 8 Whichats were on L.S.A.N.R. and 8 more at the Mere. A notable passage of Redpolls through our area is well worth a mention - it started on the 7th with 5 birds at Salwick and 8 at Lytham Hall, the next day 4 were at Lytham Crematorium and 9 flew north over the Mere; a few days later 2 were in Watson Road Park and a few more passed over L.S.A.N.R.. A late Fieldfare was at the Mere on the 15th.

Amongst breeding successes for the month were, Grey Wagtails and Kingfishers at St. Micheals, Stonechats near L.S.A.N.R., a pair of Little Grebes with 5 young at Ribby (a first for the Kirkham area), and a pair of Great Crested Grebes with 2 young at the Mere. The ringers also had a successful month with their nest box scheme at Clifton Hall, with 78 Blue Tit pulli and 20 Great Tit pulli in the boxes.

Two pairs of Mute Swans were also well into their incubation of eggs - one pair having built a nest out on the meadow of Newton Marsh, which was in grave danger of being trampled by grazing cattle, and another pair with a nest beside a garden pond at Singleton. Ruddy Ducks were in residence at the Mere and Bispham Marsh, so hopefully we may see successes at both sites again this year.

Southerly winds in May can usually be relied upon to bring a scattering of Black Terns to the Mere. On the 1st 3 of these delightful visitors were patrolling the Mere, whilst 2 more were over the sea at Lane Ends. Two more Black Terns appeared at the Mere for three days at mid-month. The Mere also had a few Common and Arctic Terns early in the month, whilst up to 3 Little Gulls could be seen on most days throughout the month.

Very few raptors were noted during May, the most noteworthy being a Short Eared Owl at the Mere on the 6th and a Merlin at Cockerham on the 22nd.

Passage waders at coastal sites followed the usual pattern for May, many birds having moved on in April to be followed by birds from further south in the shape of Dunlin, Sanderling and Ringed Plovers. Amongst other species Whimbrel were fairly plentiful, with up to 40 in the Eagland Hill/Cogie Hill area and odd birds moving north at several sites. A Greenshank and a Spotted Redshank on Newton Marsh on the 2nd were the only reports of those species, single Little Ringed Plovers at the Mere on the 1st and Newton Marsh on the 15th, and 2 Wood Sandpipers at Cockerham on the 22nd. Two Dotterels, found at Eagland Hill on the 1st, were the only birds one could call rarities for the month - for those who thrive on rarities, May in the Fylde was a disappointing month.

JUNE 1988

Most locally breeding summer migrants were well established by the beginning of the month, and the few migrants still moving through were few and far between. However, at this time the opportunity arises for some industrious fieldwork on the breeding populations of our local birds!

Amongst late migrants noted to mid-month were, a Wheatear at Fluke Hall on the 4th, a Greenshank and a Ruff at Cockerham on the 10th, a Little Stint at I.C.I. Pool on the 11th, and a Common Sandpiper at Lytham Hall on the 12th. A Wood Warbler at Ribby on the 16th was very late if still on passage. The Redpoll passage noted in May continued into June, with singles over the Airport and the Mere on the 11th and 3 at Fairhaven on the 19th.

The few notes on breeding birds included one of a pair of Yellow Wagtails struggling to feed their young in a strawberry field, the field being open to the public to pick their own strawberries.

Unusual reports for the month were, a Peregrine at Lane Ends on the 12th, a

Short Eared Owl at the Mere on the 20th, a Quail on Lytham Moss from the 13th to the 20th, and a White Stork soaring on thermals over Lytham Hall on the 15th.

Return passage of birds was noted by the 13th when 3 drake Teal were back at Lane Ends and 4 Pochard at the Mere on the 19th. Wader passage was heralded by a single Common Sandpiper at Lane Ends on the 23rd and 3 more at Cockerham on the 26th.

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Members attention is drawn to the fact that many of the sites used by the Fylde Ringing Group are on private land. It must not be assumed that access is available to everyone, permission must be obtained from the relevant landowners.

A Chance in a Million

In January of this year, I received a phone call from Mr Alan Ashton of the Lytham Heritage Trust, asking if I would like to help organise a conservation event, to be sponsored by Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance, in Lytham. The main theme of the event was to be Barn Owls, and as Mr.Ashton had just read an article I had written for the local paper on the re-introduction of captive bred Barn Owls, he was asking if I was interested in helping. It was at one of the many meetings to discuss the event, that I was approached regarding the need for a Warden at Lytham Hall. The grounds of the Hall are currently being developed as a Nature Reserve. I expressed an interest in the post of Warden, and to my amazement an interview was arranged for the following day. I attended the interview with my wife, the opening was for a Reserve Warden and Housekeeper.

To cut a long story short, I got the job, and started my new career on the 25th April.

If someone had told me at the beginning of the year that I would be a Warden of a Nature Reserve by Easter, I would probably have told them to get lost, or words to that effect.

The first phase of the Reserve was officially opened on Saturday 9th July, but a further two years work is planned before the project is complete. Local specialities such as Jay, Redpoll, Goldcrest and Bullfinch, have all bred on the Reserve this year, and Green Woodpeckers are regular visitors.

I consider myself fortunate to be involved in such an exciting project from its' outset. I have also realised my life long ambition in the process.

Monty Myerscough
(Warden - Lytham Hall)

"BIRDS OF ESTUARIES"

15th MAY 1988

	ROSSALL POINT	F.C.I. POOL	LANE ENDS	COCKERSANDS	TAUNHAM
GT. CR. GREBE					
CORMORANT			1	2	2
MALLARD		45	17	4	4
TEAL			1		
WIGEON					
GOLDENEYE					
MERGANSER					
SHELDUCK		20	116		25
OYSTERCATCHER	10	2	6		69
LAPWING		3	4		
RINGED PLOVER	26	2	400	84	161
GREY PLOVER			5		1
GOLDEN PLOVER					
TURNSTONE	107	16		1	
SNIFE					
CURLEW			10		7
WHIMBREL					
BLACK T. GODWIT					
BAR T. GODWIT	1				
REDSHANK			10		7
KNOT					
DUNLIN	100	8	3000	50	1
SANDERLING	6150		2000	270	13

12th JUNE 1988

	ROSSALL POINT	F.C.I. POOL	LANE ENDS	COCKERSANDS	TAUNHAM
GT. CR. GREBE				1	1
CORMORANT			1		
MALLARD		22	150		4
TEAL					
WIGEON					
GOLDENEYE					
MERGANSER					
SHELDUCK		12	113	2	17
OYSTERCATCHER			40	2	104
LAPWING		54	22		29
RINGED PLOVER	7	12			
GREY PLOVER					
GOLDEN PLOVER					
TURNSTONE	31				
SNIFE					
CURLEW			12		67
WHIMBREL					
BLACK T. GODWIT					
BAR T. GODWIT					
REDSHANK		12	20		9
KNOT	16				
DUNLIN	31	8			
SANDERLING	183				

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