



NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 2000

FROM THE CHAIR

As my first year as chairman draws to an end I would like to thank all the members and committee for their words of help and encouragement throughout the year. My biggest thanks must go to our secretary who has carried and prompted me through several meetings.

Please note that 2001 sees a new day for our monthly meetings, from the AGM on Thursday the 11th January all further meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month.

As I write this I know Dave Pitman is busy preparing another excellent mixed programme for the coming year. I look forward to seeing you all at next years meetings and out in the field and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Paul Slade

Recent Reports

August

The month was fairly settled with some high pressure and generally light winds, although some westerlies with rain were recorded in our area.

3 Little Grebes were at Marton Mere on the 8th, whilst on the 24th a juvenile Black – necked Grebe was found at the same site and stayed into September. On the 18th there were 2 pairs of Great Crested Grebes with young at Presall pits. 488 Manx Shearwaters were noted off South Prom on the 12th in 2 hours. 2 Spoonbills frequented the Naze area on various dates with 2 Little Egrets on the Naze pool on the 21st and 1 at Little Singleton on the 30th. On the 28th a Leucistic Grey Heron at Naze Point may have been responsible for claims of a Great White Egret in the area.

The 16th saw 220 Common Scoter off St Annes Beach whilst a Water Rail was at the Mere on the 28th. Peregrines were reported at Pressall Sands on the 13th and at Staining on the 29th. 2 juvenile Marsh Harriers near Poulton on the 16th may have been the same birds reported at the Naze 4 days later. A Spotted Redshank was on the Wyre at Little Singleton on the 1st with 2 at the Naze on the 12th, when there were 1300 Black – tailed Godwits at Granny's Bay. Next day 3500 Oystercatchers were at Pressall Sands with 1000 Dunlin moving through. The 14th saw 4 Greenshank and 6 Common Sandpipers at Shard Bridge. A juvenile Curlew Sandpiper was at Lytham on the 28th with 14 Ruff at the Naze next day. On the 24th a Green Sandpiper was at Freckleton entrance pool.

Terns were on the move during the month with 155 Sandwich and 138 Common moving South off South Prom on the 12th. Next day a mixed flock of 245 Common and Sandwich Terns were at Knott End. On the 14th 79 Sandwich Terns were in the river Wyre near Arm Hill when an Arctic Tern was at Little Singleton. An adult Pomerine Skua off North Prom on the 14th was a good record with an Arctic Skua seen off Anchorholme the same day. The only owl reported was a Barn Owl at the Mere on the 28th. The same day a Yellow Wagtail was seen at Clifton Marsh – a good record these days. An amazing 3000+ Sand Martins were on St Annes beach on the 3rd and by the 30th there were 500 Swallows at the Marton Mere roost. Warbler records were thin on the ground but there were 3 Willow Warblers and a Whitethroat at LSANR on the 13th. The 30th saw a good flock of 100 Goldfinches at Chain Lane, Staining.

September

The month was dominated by low pressure systems bringing unsettled conditions with westerlies and moderate rainfall to the North West, with average temperatures.

A Little Grebe was at Little Singleton on the 12th whilst the long staying Black – necked Grebe at the Mere was still present on the 17th. Leach's Petrel records were thin on the ground so 2 off Anchorholme on the 7th and 3 moving south off North Prom the next day were welcome. Little Egrets were noted again at Little Singleton and the Naze pool on the 14th and 17th respectively. The first returning Pinkfeet reported were 130 at Stalmine on the 18th with 100+ over Little Singleton the next day. At month end 188 moved south over the Mere on the 30th. A male Mandarin of doubtful origin was at the Mere on the 1st with a Common Scoter at the same site on the 29th. On the 16th a juvenile Garganey was at Rossall whilst perhaps the best find on the 25th was a male American Wigeon at Lane Ends.

Recent Reports

A Water Rail at Warton Bank on the 28th probably bred there whilst on the 30th 4 were heard calling at the Mere. Perhaps the most remarkable event for many years was the huge passage of Honey Buzzards through Britain towards the end of the month. Several sightings were reported from our area. The 22nd saw 1 at Naze Point and the Mere, where birds were reported on 4 different days. 2 were reported on the 24th at Singleton and South Shore and on the previous day 2 flew south out of the Fylde over Southport. Also during this period 2 Ospreys were seen by lucky observers at the Mere on the 21st and 23rd. Other raptors reported during the month included Peregrines at Warton Bank, Staining, Lane Ends and Little Singleton and 2 Marsh Harriers – 1 at Warton Marsh on the 17th and 1 moving south over Lane Ends on the 30th.

Wader passage continued with Curlew Sandpipers noted at Little Singleton – 2 on the 9th and 1 each day from the 12th – 18th. 2 were at Lytham on the 9th and 5 at Lane Ends with a Little Stint on the 2nd. The next day 7 Little Stints were at Little Singleton. Greenshank were noted daily at the same site with a maximum of 6 on the 3rd. 28 Ruff were at the Naze on the 15th with 72 noted 2 days later. Other good wader records were 28 Black – tailed Godwits at the Mere on the 1st, a Wood Sandpiper at the Mere on the 29th and 204 Grey Plover on St Annes Beach on the 13th with 4500 Knot there on the 17th.

Kingfishers were reported at Lane Ends on the 17th and Naze Point on the 28th. On the 2nd a Tree Pipit was at Warton Bank with a Grey Wagtail in a Staining garden on the 16th. 4 of this species flew over the Mere on the 29th. A Spotted Flycatcher was at the Mere on the 23rd with a late Swift there on the 29th. On the 22nd 2 Lapland Buntings were at Fluke Hall with 2 Ravens over the wood there on the 24th. Finally Bob Danson rung an amazing 725 Tree Sparrows Over Wyre, making it probably the best area in Britain for this declining species.

October

The weather was dominated by low pressure systems coming in from the Atlantic producing mainly South – westerlies and frequent bands of rain.

10 Little Grebes were on the pool at Pilling Lane Ends on the 16th. Strong winds saw 2 Leach's Petrels off Cleveleys on the 27th. By the 15th a Bittern had returned to the Mere being seen occasionally towards dusk. What appeared to be the first Whooper Swan of the winter was on the Wyre at Little Singleton on the 13th with 4 at Lane Ends the next day and 5 at the Mere on the 23rd. 8 Bewicks were at the same site on the 15th. 2000 Pinkfeet were at England Hill on the 7th, with a Barnacle at Lane Ends on the 16th and 3 Brents there on the 28th. A Green – winged Teal found at the same site on the 26th created more interest now it has been decided that it is a separate species. An immature Shag on the Mere on the 6th was a good record as were 3 Scaup at Fairhaven Lake on the 17th, where the maximum count of Coot on the 13th was 120. Another Ruddy Shelduck was seen at Lane Ends on the 16th – are we wrong to assume they are of doubtful origin? On the 22nd a remarkable 550 Razorbills flew past Rossall into Morecambe with a Black Guillemot flying out in only one hour.

2 juvenile and 1 adult Marsh Harriers seen at various sites in the Fylde during the month were probably the same birds. On the 12th a Peregrine was at Fairhaven Lake whilst Buzzards were seen on the 10th and 15th at Singleton and Marton Mere respectively. On the 22nd 2 Water Rails were at the Mere. Few waders were reported – the last Greenshank appeared to be at Little Singleton on the 6th. There were 99 Black – tailed Godwit at the Mere on the 15th and 750 Oystercatchers were on Pontins

Recent Reports

roof on the 15th. A Mediterranean Gull was at the Mere on the 26th whilst Barn Owls were noted at Amounderness Way on the 12th and Lytham Moss on the 26th.

The last Swift reorted was at Pilling on the 1st when a Yellow Wagtail was at Fairhaven. Black Redstarts were noted at Cleveleys on the 12th to 14th with 1 in Blackpool on the 25th. The last migrant passerines were on the move during the month – probably the best record being of a Yellow - browed Warbler in a Cleveleys garden on the 4th / 5th.

On the 1st of the month visible migration at Fairhaven, late morning saw 1 Grey Wagtail, 21 Pied Wagtails, 137 Meadow Pipits, 12 Chaffinch, 13 Swallows, 3 House Martins, 13 Skylarks and 9 Siskin on the move. On the 6th 2 pairs of Whinchats were at Jameson Road, Fleetwood with 3 Willow Warblers and 7 Goldcrests at Fairhaven and a Pied Flycatcher at the Mount. The 13th saw a pair of Stonechats at the Mere and the reappearance of the elusive Cettis Warbler. A Stonechat was at Rossall on the 7th with 40 Fieldfare at Eagland Hill the same day. On the 10th a Brambling was in a garden at Little Singleton whilst the 29th saw 10 Twite at Pilling Lane Ends.

A.J.H

WYRE WALKS 2001

SUNDAY 25/2/01

WINTER BIRDWATCH

Start: 11.00am. Duration 2 ½-3 hrs
Join members of Fylde Bird Club to observe the waders, divers and sea duck off Rossall Point.
Meet at: Rossall car park opp Sea Cadets

SATURDAY 5/5/01

SUMMER MIGRANTS

Start: 8.00am. Duration 3–3½ hrs.
Join Fylde Bird Club and Rangers to see some of the recently arrived birds that come here from Africa to breed.
Meet at: Grizedale Valley

SUNDAY 8/4/01

UPLAND BIRDS

Start: 9.00am. Duration 3– 4 hrs
A fell walk with Fylde Bird Club and Ranger to observe some sought after moorland species.
Meet at: to be advised

SUNDAY 16/9/01

MIGRATING WADERS

Start: 9.15am Duration 2 – 3 hrs
Birdwatching in Morecambe Bay with Fylde Bird Club to observe the waders en route from their Arctic breeding grounds.
Meet at: Lane Ends picnic area near Pilling

It would be much appreciated if a couple of members would volunteer to assist with each walk. Please let the Chairman or Secretary know if you are able to help.

A.J.H



FYLDE BIRD CLUB
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 21:13 ON WEDNESDAY
THE 18TH OF OCTOBER AT BLACKPOOL CRICKET CLUB

Present

Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and 24 members. Apologies were received from Stephen Dunstan.

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last business meeting on 19th July were agreed to be a true and fair record.

Matters arising

1) *Black-tailed Godwit Wardening*

The Secretary reported that he had received a set of minutes from the RSPB covering the meeting with the Club, which set out the joint strategy for future action.

Action: Complete

2) *Marton Mere L.N.R.*

The Secretary read out a letter, which he had received from Iain Valentine (the Zoo and LNR Manager). The letter sought to explain that Mr Valentine was experienced in the management of nature reserves and to assure the members that he was committed to improving matters at the reserve with the co-operation of the Bird Club.

A follow up e-mail message had also been received which addressed specific issues. Importantly he stated that mink traps were now in use.

Members stated that a number of important issues had still to be resolved. Sealant had still not been applied to the new hide and now it was too wet to do so. The broken Perspex front to the display board at the west entrance to the reserve had not been repaired and the content material had now deteriorated.

No contact had been made with the voluntary wardens.

The Chairman reported that the Club's Committee had agreed to monitor progress and review the situation at the end of March 2001. He added that contact would be maintained with the Zoo Manager.

Action: Chairman and Secretary

4) *Breeding Bird Atlas*

A number of copies were available at the meeting. The members were reminded to make themselves known if they required a copy.

Action complete

5) Bird Race 2000

The Secretary reported that he had received a letter from the Lancashire and Cheshire Fauna Society thanking the Club for its donation, which included the Bird Race proceeds.

Agenda (where not covered above)

1) Meeting Night

The Chairman reported that it would be possible to switch the Club's meeting night to the SECOND THURSDAY of the month. Tuesdays were no longer available for 2001. It was proposed that the Club should change to the second Thursday of each month effective from January 2001. The members present voted overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal.

2) Reality Birding League

The Secretary distributed copies of a scheme proposed by Stephen Dunstan. It was explained that while the nature of the concept was competitive the intention was to stimulate local recording. It was stated that in the Lancaster area the scheme had been very successful.

The current intention was to gauge support for the proposal to determine if there would be sufficient interest to run the project. Those present requested that a newsletter article should be prepared to allow wider consideration.

Action Secretary

3) 1999 Bird Report

The Secretary reported that the records were almost ready for editing and appealed for assistance with this task. Maurice Jones offered to edit waders, Pauline McGough offered to edit warblers, Mike Shaw offered to edit owls and Barry Dyson offered to edit finches and buntings. Alan Dawe had already agreed to edit seabirds. Kinta Beaver offered to type up the report ready for printing. It was reported that Alan Hinchliffe had taken on the task of securing advertisers.

The Chairman offered the thanks on behalf of the Club to everyone who had agreed to help.

It was noted that the report was still without a sponsor and would be issued late. The Secretary opined that in unless the size and quality of the report were reviewed, a significant financial loss might result. Members expressed the view that any loss in quality would be regrettable.

The Chairman stated that next year production of the report should run more smoothly and it should be out much faster. Mike McGough reported that he had already input to computer all Marton Mere records to date.

A.O.B.

- 1) Frank Walsh suggested that the Club should consider seeking charitable status as it now seemed clear that it would offer the Club tax benefits. No one present knew the steps, which would need to be followed to achieve Charitable status, however Mike Shaw offered to provide the address of an organisation, which could provide assistance. It was agreed that the committee should investigate the issue.
- 2) The Treasurer requested members to remind everyone who had not paid yet, that subs were long overdue.
- 3) Frank Walsh announced that the Lancs. & Cheshire Fauna Society were running a scheme where for £10 an individual may sponsor a species in the Breeding Bird Survey and have their name recorded in the publication against the species account. He added that this was aimed at individuals rather than organisations.

Announcements

1) Date of next meeting 15th November.

There being no further business the meeting closed at approx. 22:20 hrs.



Fylde Bird Club

LANCASHIRE

FYLDE BIRD CLUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 7:56 PM ON MONDAY THE 11th OF SEPTEMBER AT THE PLOUGH AT STAINING

Present

Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; Mike McGough; Alan Hinchliffe. Apologies were received from Stephen Dunstan and Dave Pitman.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 14th of June were agreed to be correct.

Matters Arising

1) 1980's Breeding Birds Survey

Mike McGough brought 10 copies to the meeting and reported that he had another 10 almost ready. Mike agreed to continue low rate production of copies until demand was satisfied and Paul Slade agreed to make paper available to Mike.

Action: Closed

2) Newsletter

Mike McGough reported that he would be unable to arrange to get copies made in time for the next Club meeting. It was agreed that the Secretary should pay to have 20 copies produced for the meeting. The cost was estimated to be less than £20. Mike agreed to arrange to produce the balance at a later date.

Action: Secretary

3) 1999 Bird Report

Owing to the unexpected absence of the President (Report Chief Editor) progress on his various actions could not be reported. The Secretary reported that the input of records was well over 90% complete and that collated records for editing would probably be available in October.

Action: Secretary to complete data input.

The Secretary reported that editors were required. Currently only Alan Dawe, Len Blacow and himself were known to have committed to do this work. The Chairman offered to do a modest number of species and agreed to approach other members to contribute.

Action: Chairman to secure editors

Alan Hinchliffe offered to contact all last year's advertisers and potential new advertisers with a view to securing orders.

Action: Alan Hinchliffe to secure advertisements.

It was again noted that a typist was still required and that no artwork had been procured. Mike McGough offered to track down the Marton Nightjar photograph and to approach Richard Dale to discuss provision of artwork. The Chairman offered to approach Tony Disley to discuss use of old and new artwork.

Action: Mike McGough and Chairman to secure artwork.

The Chairman offered to approach the printers used by the Lancashire Report for a quote for the production of 250 copies.

Action: Chairman to secure printing quote.

The Secretary reported that the approach for support from the Lottery (under the Awards for All Scheme for Local Groups) had been rejected. The Secretary also announced that the request for corporate sponsorship from BAE Systems had also been declined. Therefore the report was still without any sponsors.

4) Important Unprotected Bird Sites

Progress on the preparation of the President's newsletter article was unknown. Mike McGough offered to make an enquiry.

Action: Mike McGough

5) Club Meeting Dates and Venue

The Secretary reported that the 1st Tuesday of each month was available for next year. It was noted that in order to move the AGM to January an EGM would need to be called and that the October meeting would be the best date for one. It was agreed to include a notification of an EGM in the forthcoming newsletter.

Action: Secretary

6) Godwit Protection at Newton Marsh

The Secretary reported that following the meeting with the RSPB he had received a set of minutes from the RSPB, which set out the joint strategy for future action.

Action: complete

7) Rossall Coast Guards Tower

Mike McGough reported that it should now be possible to gain access to the Tower. The door key was held at the Wyreside Ecology Centre at Stanah and could be borrowed for the day if signed for. It was agreed that this information should be included in the forthcoming newsletter.

Action: Secretary

8) Membership Renewal Reminders

The Treasurer reported that all last years' members who had not paid had received reminders and that he had followed up most by telephone. He stated that we now had 52 paid up members and promises from a further 9 to pay. He added that this compared with a total of 59 paid up members in 1999

Action: complete

9) Bird Race 2000

The Treasurer reported the he had now received all the Bird Race proceeds and the amount promised to the Lancashire Bird Club was £778.50. The cheque was signed at the meeting and the Treasurer agreed to forward it.

Action: Treasurer

10) Marton Mere Management

The Chairman and Secretary reported they had attended a meeting with the Zoo Manager, (Iain Valentine) on the 25th July. Mr Valentine accepted the points raised by the members of the Club and had agreed to address them. It had further been agreed that the Club and Mr Valentine should remain in regular contact via e-mail to communicate progress.

The Committee members present welcomed this commitment but reported that to date, there had been little tangible improvement. It was agreed that the Secretary should contact Mr Valentine relaying this message while specifically reviewing all outstanding points. The Committee agreed to give this process a chance and monitor the results.

The Chairman reported that he had taken time off work to attend a meeting at the Zoo with the management and English Nature. However when he arrived, he was informed that EN had cancelled the meeting without notice. It was noted that while this was not the fault of the Reserve Management it was an unhelpful incident.

Action: Secretary

Agenda (where not covered above)

1) **Constitution**

The Secretary reported that Stephen Dunstan had produced a draft of the revised constitution, which was considerably simpler than the current document. The Committee members requested time to consider the draft and compare it with the original. The Secretary agreed to furnish the committee members with copies of both versions and to collate any resulting revisions to the draft. The resulting second issue of the draft including options could then be presented to the members at the EGM for consideration.

Action: Committee to review constitution and Secretary to collate amendments

2) **Lytham Hall Breeding Birds Survey**

The Secretary relayed a message from Stephen Dunstan repeating his request for data in order that he could produce a report. He also reported that he had provided Lytham Town Trust with a short account and list of the butterflies recorded at the site this year.

Action continuing: Secretary and Mike McGough to forward records
Action pending: Stephen Dunstan to produce report

3) **Reality Bird League**

The Secretary relayed a message from Stephen Dunstan proposing such a project together with copies of the proposed format. Stephen noted that if adopted, such a scheme would increase the quality of local recording and in that Lancaster this had been proven. Most of the Committee members present felt that the idea would be unlikely to be popular with the members. However it was agreed that the proposal should be put before the membership on the understanding that Stephen was prepared to organise and run the scheme.

A.O.B.

- 1) Mike McGough noted that at the last Club meeting the start of a slide show had been delayed owing to the absence of the Club's projector. It was agreed that the Secretary should request that the President should transfer responsibility for the projector to one of the other committee members before the next meeting.

Action: Secretary

- 2) It was agreed that the Club's projector screen was worn out and would need to be replaced very shortly. Mike McGough offered to make enquires about the cost of a replacement.

Action: Mike McGough

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22:36 hrs.

GUINNESS AND GULLS

In recent years the North and West coasts of Ireland have held the premier sites for seeing scarce gulls in late Winter and early Spring. With this in mind I was keeping a keen eye on the pagers and phoning the Irish Birdlines on a regular basis. By early to mid February 2000 it became apparent that very large perhaps record numbers of Iceland Gulls were being regularly seen in the counties of Donegal, Galway and Clare. After speaking to Dave Pitman he informed me that very reasonably priced flights were available from Liverpool to Belfast with Easyjet (you can always rely on Dave to hunt out a bargain!) Through Easyjets internet site I found return flights for about forty five pounds each. Several phone calls later I managed to convince Paul Ellis, Pete Scholes and Jonathon Williams (a Cheshire birder with a sharp eye for gulls) that we could have an excellent long weekends birding for a very reasonable price (most important for Pete !!)

Friday the 3rd of March arrived and we all met up at Liverpool's Speke airport about 5pm. Less than an hour later we were in the air Belfast bound and about forty minutes on we were landing and hunting out our hire car which we had pre booked. From Belfast we headed over to the west coast fishing town of Killybegs in County Donegal where three hours later we booked in to our B&B. Myself Pete and Johnno were ready for an early night and lots of sleep but our very own club secretary insisted on dragging us kicking and screaming to the Sail Inn, a local pub with live folk music and draught Guinness which he forced us to drink in rather large quantities for the next few hours.

Saturday morning arrived with a few bleary eyes but a cold crisp dawn soon woke us up. We wandered down to the quay and managed to see 14 Iceland gulls, 4 Glaucous gulls and a black guillemot before a superb late breakfast in the bar above the Sail Inn. By late morning we were heading west to Mount Charles where we located at least a dozen Great Northern Divers and 5 Light Bellied Brent Geese before heavy rain stopped play. Early afternoon we arrived at Rathlyn in County Sligo where we quickly found the Lesser Canada Goose which has spent the last few winters with about 3000 Barnacle Geese in the area.

A quick stop with a loaf of bread in Sligo Town helped us to see another 7 Iceland Gulls and an adult Ring Billed Gull, moving swiftly south we arrived in Galway City by late afternoon and the gull hot spot of Nimmo's Pier where we soon caught up with a stunning first winter Ross's Gull, 2 Ring Billed Gulls a Glaucous and 3 more Icelands at close range. At dusk we again headed South to County Clare where we booked in to an excellent B&B at the small town of Kilrush. Whilst getting changed to again be dragged to the nearest watering hole by our very thirsty secretary to drink that awful looking black beer, a call to Birdline informed us of a white phase Gyr Falcon at nearby Poulmasherry Bay(the site we would be visiting the very next morning).

Early morning dawned very windy (no not a reference to our sec.s Guinness intake of the previous evening) but outside where it was a typical Irish winters day, cold damp and very breezy. Poulnisherry Bay did not disappoint, one of the first birds we saw was a close adult Kumliens Gull with lots of Iceland Gulls nearby. During the next few hours in the bay we managed to see many Icelands, a Glaucous, a Mediterranean, a Glaucous/Herring hybrid, Spoonbill, Little Egret, 2 Greenshank, Whimbrel, Bonxie and 150+ Light Bellied Brent Geese. In the afternoon we decided to visit other nearby sites and caught up with 10 Chough and a single Raven at Loop Head before moving on to Clahane Beach where we soon located the Bonapartes Gull returning for its second winter feeding in the surf with Black Heads and nearby 2 Little Gulls bringing the weekends Gull tally to 13 species ! We returned to Poulnisherry to check out the gulls prior to dusk and managed to see 36 Iceland Gulls in the same large flock bathing in the bay, what an end to the day?

Monday morning again dawned very wet, very windy and very cold but not to be beaten by the weather we had a quick look in the bay before breakfast, which also helped Johnno's hangover. Moving North after breakfast we decided to follow the coast road back to Galway occasionally stopping to check the sea for Divers. Great Northern's were fairly common and we saw at least one Red Throat before seeing 5 Black Throats together giving superb views just below us in a small sheltered area beneath the road. We reluctantly left the Divers and the coast and started the long drive back to Belfast for our late evening flight back to Liverpool.

The whole trip from start to finish was one of the best birding trips I have ever done in Britain or Ireland, excellent birding, excellent company and I have to reluctantly admit the Guinness was rather good.

I am already looking forward to doing a return trip in 2001 and I would thoroughly recommend the same or a similar trip to anyone.

Paul Slade.

FYLDE "REALITY BIRDING LEAGUE"

I suggested this idea at Committee a couple of months ago. It was then put before the membership and I was asked to put something down in writing for the consideration of members.

The following two pages explain the mechanics of how it might work.

The benefits as I see it are:

- 1) Improved recording of some under-recorded species
- 2) Some of the fun of the annual bird race at all times of the year.
- 3) Ultimately if people do more birding within the Fylde perhaps one or two scarce birds might get found which might not otherwise (remember Citrine Wagtail was found on a bird race).
- 4) There will be opportunity to describe personal highlights and "low lights" in the newsletter, giving recent reports more of a personal feel.

If nobody is interested in doing this then that is fine. If we can get a minimum of five people to have a go in the first year then we will give it a go, with reports of progress in newsletters. If you are interested then hopefully I will be at the December meeting, otherwise ring me on Blackpool 301009 to register interest.

Stephen Dunstan

Proposed Rules (adapted from Lancaster version)

All sightings must be within the defined Fylde RBL area, which will be explained to all participants.

Open to all members, but no new entrants after the end of June.

Scoresheets will be provided to participants. Scores will be published in the newsletter and, hopefully, by E-mail for those requesting it.

Sight records only with four allowable exceptions - Quail, Spotted Crake, Corncrake and Nightjar.

Points can only be scored for species recognised in categories A, B and C. Known escapes and clearly sick or injured birds do not score.

Long-staying birds from the previous year do not count as a find in the current year. 'See' scores can be upgraded to 'Find' scores subsequently if the species is found later in the year.

Rare or Extremely rare birds must either be seen and identified by at least three club members or be accepted by the BBRC or Lancashire Records Panel as appropriate.

Birds discovered in a trap / mist nest do not count as finds.

Scoring

	<u>Found</u>	<u>Seen</u>
C - common	3	3
L - less common	5	5
S - Scarce	9	6
R - Rarities	12	7
ER - Extremely rare	15	8

Score list (may need some modification for Fylde)

RT Diver	L	Hen Harrier	L	Sabine's Gull	ER
BT Diver	R	Goshawk	ER	Black-headed Gull	C
GN Diver	R	Sparrowhawk	C	Ring-billed Gull	R
Little Grebe	C	Buzzard	S	Common Gull	C
GC Grebe	C	Osprey	R	LBB Gull	C
RN Grebe	R	Kestrel	C	Herring Gull	C
Slav Grebe	S	Merlin	L	Yellow-l Gull	S
Bl-necked Grebe	S	Hobby	R	Iceland Gull	R
Fulmar	L	Peregrine	L	Glaucous Gull	R
Manxie	L	Red-legged Partr.	L	GBB Gull	C
Storm Petrel	R	Grey Partridge	C	Kittiwake	L
Leach's Petrel	S	Quail	R	Caspian Gull	R
Gannet	L	Pheasant	C	Arctic Tern	L
Cormorant	C	Water Rail	L	Little Tern	S
Shag	R	Spotted Crake	R	Black Tern	S
Bittern	L*	Corncrake	ER	Guillemot	L
Little Egret	S	Moorhen	C	Black Guillemot	R
Grey Heron	C	Coot	C	Razorbill	S
Spoonbill	R	Crane	ER	Little Auk	R
Mute Swan	C	Oystercatcher	C	Puffin	R
Bewick's Swan	L	Avocet	ER	Feral Pigeon	C
Whooper Swan	L	Little Ringed Plov.	S	Stock Dove	L
Bean Goose	R	Ringed Plover	C	Woodpigeon	C
Pink-foot	L	Dotterel	ER	Collared Dove	C
Euro WF Goose	S	Golden Plover	C	Turtle Dove	R
G'nd WF Goose	S	Grey Plover	L	RN Parakeet	R
Greylag	C	Lapwing	C	Cuckoo	L
Snow Goose	R	Knot	L	Barn Owl	L
Canada Goose	C	Sanderling	L	Little Owl	C
'vagrant' Canada	R	Little Stint	S	LE Owl	S
Barnacle Goose	S	Temminck's Stnt	ER	SE Owl	S
DB Brent Goose	L	Pec Sand	ER	Nightjar	ER
LB Brent Goose	S	Curlew Sand	S	Swift	C
Shelduck	C	Purple Sand	R	Kingfisher	S
Ruddy Shelduck	R	Dunlin	C	Gn Woodpecker	R
Mandarin	S	Ruff	L	GS Woodpecker	C
Wigeon	C	Jack Snipe	L	Skylark	C
Gadwall	L	Snipe	C	Shorelark	ER
Teal	C	Woodcock	L	Sand Martin	C
GW Teal	ER	Bl-tailed Godwit	C	Swallow	C
Mallard	C	Bar-tailed G'wit	C	House Martin	C
Pintail	C	Whimbrel	L	Tree Pipit	L
Garganey	S	Curlew	C	Meadow Pipit	C
Shoveler	C	Spotted Redshank	S	Rock Pipit	L
Pochard	C	Redshank	C	Water Pipit	S
Tufted Duck	C	Greenshank	L	Yellow Wagtail	S
Scaup	L	Green Sand	S	Grey Wagtail	C
Eider	C	Wood Sand	R	Pied Wagtail	C
Long-tailed Duck	R	Common Sand	C	White Wagtail	S
Common Scoter	L	Turnstone	C	Blue-headed Wag	R
Velvet Scoter	R	Grey Phalarope	ER	Waxwing	R
Goldeneye	C	Pomarine Skua	R	Dipper	S
Smew	S	Arctic Skua	S	Wren	C
RB Merganser	C	Long-tailed Skua	R	Dunnock	C
Goosander	L	Great Skua	S	Robin	C
Ruddy Duck	L	Med Gull	S	Black Redstart	R
Marsh Harrier	S	Little Gull	S	Redstart	S

Whinchat	L	Jay	L
Stonechat	S	Magpie	C
Wheatear	C	Jackdaw	C
Ring Ousel	R	Rook	C
Blackbird	C	Carrion Crow	C
Fieldfare	L	Raven	R
Song Thrush	C	Starling	C
Mistle Thrush	C	House Sparrow	C
Redwing	L	Tree Sparrow	L
Cetti's Warbler	R	Chaffinch	C
Grasshopper W	L	Brambling	S
Sedge W	C	Greenfinch	C
Reed W	L	Goldfinch	C
L Whitethroat	L	Siskin	L
Whitethroat	C	Linnet	C
Garden W	C	Twite	S
Blackcap	C	Redpoll	L
Wood W	S	Crossbill	R
Chiff-chaff	C	Bullfinch	S
Willow W	C	Lapland Bunting	ER
Goldcrest	C	Snow Bunting	S
Firecrest	R	Yellowhammer	L
Sp. Flycatcher	S	Reed Bunting	C
Pied Flycatcher	S	Corn Bunting	L
Bearded Tit	R		
Long-tailed Tit	C		
Marsh Tit	S		
Willow Tit	R		
Coal Tit	C		
Blue Tit	C		
Great Tit	C		
Nuthatch	L		
Treecreeper	L		

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Status of Garganey at Marton Mere.



Garganey are unusual among our ducks, being as much a Summer visitor as the well known Swallows or Cuc
Status in the U.K.

They winter in Africa and move north in Spring. The United Kingdom is on the Northern edge of their breeding range and they are a rare breeding bird here.

In the period 1986 to 1997 inclusive, the most recent for which figures are available, only 8 to 16 confirmed breeding pairs were located. Possible/probable breeding pairs were much higher and varied from 37 to 149 pairs in the same period.

Local Occurrences.

They were first recorded at Marton Mere in the Summer of 1951 by a Mr. Stoyel who happened to be my Maths teacher at Palatine School. It is a reflection of the very poor coverage of the Mere by bird watchers that there are no known records in the previous 50 years. I can remember he stated that they bred on the Mere and he took a friend and I to see them on the 7th of June when we saw one in flight.

My next encounter will stay with me all my life. As Arthur Sharrock and I walked across the meadow that at that time formed the South side of the Mere, out from a thin fringe of reeds swam nine Garganey. The date 15th March is still one of the county's earliest while nine is still unprecedented for a Spring flock.

A male was present later on the 2nd to the 12th of May, and in 1953 from the tenth to the 24th of May. In 1954 there was an early pair on the 19th and 20th March.

Strangely, perhaps because of the high disturbances and small size of the open water (~15 acres) there were only two records from 1055 to 1067 inclusive, though a pair bred on a pond near Weeton in 1964. There was a female on 19th August 1959 and a pair 7th to 23rd May 1965. A female was again seen 22nd April 1968 followed by two more blank years. In 1971 a pair were seen on 1st May and the female on the 3rd.; again followed by two blank years.

In 1974 the Mere was allowed to flood to its present size by excavating land to the east of the Mere to create the present island, and open water more than doubled. This has given all duck species greater security and shooting and other disturbances have been much reduced in the last decade. As for Garganey, for whatever reason, there has only been one blank year in the past 26 years. This was in 1980, but three years recorded none in Spring (1985, 1987, 1991). Particularly good Springs have been:-

- 1974 9th April to 2nd June 2 pairs in April and one pair well into May
- 1982 6th to 10th April 2 pairs (additional female to 17th May and pair to 16th June)
- 1983 1 pair 22nd April, male in May. 1 pair 25th June-19th July. Female late July.
- 1984 1 pair 13th April to June and female 5th July.
- 1990 1 pair 2nd to 24th May, second male 25th and display flight seen. Male to 31st May.

Typically pairs or singles have been seen in April to June with an early female from 18th March in 1995, a male on 20th March 1996 and a pair on 22nd March 1998.

There have been 9 records in the period late July to late September and one very late male 21st Oct. 1991.

In all I can trace 36 arrivals in Spring of singles or up to five with the exception of the 1952 flock. In total these came to at least 68 birds and a further 11 birds in Autumn.

To date breeding at the Mere has not been conclusively proved

Maurice Jones.