

# Birding Surrey



No. 126



Winter 2019

# Photograph Gallery



*Fig 1. Black Tern, Lambeth Res., 1 Aug 2019*

*(Dave Harris)*



*Fig 2. Black-tailed Godwit, Chelsea Res., 3 Sep 2019*

*(Dave Harris)*

# Birding Surrey

The Newsletter of the Surrey Bird Club

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## From the Chairman

### **An uncertain time for Tice's Meadow**

As most of you will be aware by now, there is uncertainty over the future of Tice's Meadow following the decision by Hanson, the gravel extraction company, to put the site up for sale. I understand that Hanson have now sold the site, but the buyer has not yet been named.

Tice's is largely managed by the Tice's Meadow Bird Group (TMBG), who have worked with Hanson to produce a first class reserve with public access and ever-improving facilities. The latest development is the installation of a new hide on the edge of the Workings, a task accomplished by TMBG, Hanson and the Blackwater Valley Countryside working together. This history makes the recent development all the more surprising. Hanson told TMBG that they would make no assessment of the prospective purchaser's ability to manage a reserve; there would be no certainty that TMBG or the public would be allowed access to the site; and there is a risk that all the facilities that have been installed (which the Club has helped finance) could be removed.

TMBG has led a campaign to retain the status quo, with great success. Support has come from, amongst others, Jeremy Hunt MP, local authorities and conservation organisations, including

SBC. TMBG also organised a petition with an initial target of 700 signatures, but as I write this letter in early December, the total was approaching an impressive 4,700. If, perchance, you haven't yet signed the petition, I urge you to do so now. While the site has been sold, the petition will hopefully send a strong message to the purchaser. It can be accessed via the Tice's Meadow website.

### **Subscription rates**

Your General Committee is planning to put a motion to the next AGM in June for an increase in subscription rates. The Club has been - and still is - in a healthy financial position, so we have been able to keep subscription rates at a very low level. Since subscriptions form the main source of income for the Club, this has however meant that our income has remained constant over the last few years while costs have increased, in some cases significantly. We also have to bear in mind that any increase agreed at the next AGM won't come into effect until the 2021/22 financial year.

We think that even with increased rates, membership will represent good value for money since the benefits include a copy of the Surrey Bird Report and four excellent newsletters each year. Subscriptions also fund the Club's website, and we now have a very good one. To give you some idea

of costs, the annual Surrey Bird Report currently costs about £3,000 to produce while the cost of the four quarterly newsletters is similar. Postage is another major item, currently running at about £1,500 per annum. The new website costs about £400 per annum to maintain and keep secure, and we also have a number of administrative costs such as insurance. This expenditure has to be borne by what is by county bird club standards a fairly small membership of just under 400.

It might of course be possible to keep increases in subscriptions to a minimum if we could find other sources of income and if we can reduce costs. We would like to explore the possibility of income from sponsorship and advertising, but it would help greatly if we had a publicity officer who could take this forward. **If you would like to help the Club in this way please get in touch.**

On costs, and since postage is a major source of expenditure it would help if you elected to receive the newsletters as pdf files. To receive the newsletter electronically as a pdf just email [membership@surreybirdclub.org](mailto:membership@surreybirdclub.org) saying "newsletter can be pdf".

Before putting a proposal to the AGM we plan to consult members over the coming months. We will be seeking your views, for example, on how we structure subscriptions in future, and

how we might reduce costs.

### **Field meetings officer**

The position of field meetings officer still remains vacant, so we would very much like to hear from anyone who might be interested in taking on the task. Taking on the role does not have to involve leading any of the field trips.

### **The 2020 AGM**

Here's a date for your 2020 diary. The Club's AGM will be on Friday 26 June at East Horsley Village Hall. It will be at the usual time - 7.45pm for an 8.00pm start - and it will follow the usual format, with the (hopefully brief) formalities being followed by time for coffee, biscuits and the opportunity to meet other members. We then have a talk lasting about an hour. Please come along. It's free and I think I can speak for all of the General Committee when I say that we welcome the opportunity to talk to members and get your views.

*Eric Soden*

◆ Highlights of the quarter

These included a **Ring-necked Duck**, a **Red-throated Diver**, a **Storm Petrel**, a **Gannet**, a **Cattle Egret**, two or three **Great White Egrets**, two **White Storks**, a **Black Kite**, a **Spotted Crake**, two **Cranes**, a **Stone-curlew**, two **Golden Orioles** and a **Rosy Starling**. In addition, unseasonably warm weather in late February produced several very early summer migrant arrivals, with the county's earliest ever **Little Ringed Plover**, **Sand Martin** and **Swallow** recorded.

**Brent Goose** One was at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) from Apr 16th-May 12th.

**Shelduck** Birds were seen at Beddington SF, Burpham Court Farm, Capel, Holmethorpe SP, Island Barn Res, the London Wetland Centre, Morden Hall Park, QE2 Res, Richmond Park, Thorpe Water Park, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea), Walton Res and Worplesdon, with the largest number 12 at Beddington SF on Apr 10th.

**Pintail** There were two males at Walton Res on Apr 13th which were joined by a third the next day.

**Garganey** A poor spring with five birds recorded. At the London Wetland Centre a pair was present from Mar 25th-28th with another pair present from Apr 16th-30th. A male was at Beddington SF on Apr 25th.

**Ring-necked Duck** A female at Frensham Great Pond on Mar 23rd-

24th then moved to Frensham Little Pond, where she remained until Apr 29th.

**Common Scoter** A male was at QE2 Res on Mar 22nd, a pair were at Holmethorpe SP on Mar 28th and two pairs were at Walton Res on Apr 9th. In addition a number of birds were sound recorded flying over Thorncombe Street on the night of Mar 18th/19th, with at least two at 2059hrs, at least six at 2336hrs and at least two at 0434hrs.

**Red-breasted Merganser** A female was at Walton Res on Apr 28th.

**Red-throated Diver** One at QE2 Res from Mar 18th-21st then moved to Island Barn Res, where it remained until Mar 23rd.

**Storm Petrel** One was at Beare Fishery, near Newchapel, on Apr 27th.

**Gannet** An adult flew NE over Unstead Water Meadows on Mar 26th.

**Cattle Egret** One was at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 1st.

**Little Egret** Around 25 were reported from 15 sites. The only report involving more than three birds was of four at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 5th.

**Great White Egret** Single birds were at Beddington SF on Apr 6th and 12th and Walton Res on May 6th.

**White Stork** Single birds flew over Addlestone on Apr 15th and Redhill Station on Apr 18th.

**Honey Buzzard** One flew NE over Richmond Park on May 20th and another flew west over Allden's Hill (Thorncombe Street) on May 23rd.

**Black Kite** One flew north over Capel on Apr 10th.

**Marsh Harrier** A poor spring with just four seen. A male flew north over QE2 Res on Apr 2nd, a female flew ENE over Capel on Apr 3rd, a female flew over Beddington SF on Apr 11th and a female was at the London Wetland Centre on Apr 28th.

**Hen Harrier** A ringtail flew over Thundry Meadows on May 13th.

**Osprey** An average spring with six seen between Mar 31st and May 20th. They were at Leith Hill and Shalford Water Meadows on Mar 31st, Addington on Apr 5th, Bramley on

Apr 6th, Thursley and Hankley Commons on Apr 22nd and Bookham Common on May 20th.

**Merlin** A female flew north over Frensham Great Pond on Mar 25th.

**Hobby** The first were early birds at Holmethorpe SP on Apr 2nd, Capel the next day and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 6th. The next was not until Apr 15th, when one was at Banstead.

**Spotted Crake** One was at Shalford Water Meadows on Apr 10th.

**Crane** Two flew over Tice's Meadows on May 4th.

**Oystercatcher** A total of 17 was reported from eight sites between Mar 24th and May 26th. There were two at Thorpe Water Park on Mar 24th. At the London Wetland Centre there were single birds on Mar 27th, Apr 15th and May 1st, with two on May 18th. Single birds were at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 6th and May 24th-26th, Stoke Lake on Apr 22nd, Richmond Park on Apr 30th, the Thames at Rotherhithe on May 16th and Frensham Great Pond on May 21st. There were two at Beddington SF on May 19th and 22nd.

**Avocet** One was at Beddington SF from Apr 23rd-25th and another flew west over South Norwood CP on Apr 29th.

**Stone-curlew** One was at Beddington SF on Mar 31st.

**Little Ringed Plover** The first was at the London Wetland Centre on Feb 16th. This constitutes the earliest ever arrival in the county by nearly three weeks! The next were on more typical dates with birds at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Mar 13th, Beddington SF on Mar 17th, Holmetherpe SP on Mar 23rd and Unstead SF on Mar 25th.

**Ringed Plover** Birds were reported from Beddington SF, Holmetherpe SP, the London Wetland Centre, QE2 Res, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) and Walton Res, with the largest number four at Beddington SF on May 10th.

**Grey Plover** Single birds were at Morden Hall Park on Mar 17th and Beddington SF on Apr 10th and May 16th, whilst there were four at QE2 Res on May 8th and three there on May 13th, and three at Walton Res on May 8th.

**Knot** On May 8th there were four at QE2 Res and one at Walton Res, whilst another was at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) from May 12th-14th.

**Sanderling** A very poor spring with just four recorded. Single birds were at QE2 Res on Apr 9th and May 5th, and two were at Walton Res on May 22nd.

**Dunlin** Birds were reported from Beddington SF, Holmetherpe SP, Island Barn Res, the London Wetland Centre, QE2 Res, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) and Walton Res, with the largest numbers four at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Mar 17th and five at QE2 Res on Apr 9th.

**Ruff** One was at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 4th, whilst at Walton Res there were five on Apr 21st and single birds on May 17th and 19th.

**Black-tailed Godwit** An excellent spring with 32 recorded between Mar 18th and May 13th. At Walton Res there were three on Mar 18th, two on Mar 27th, one on Apr 1st-2nd and four on Apr 8th. At the London Wetland Centre there were two on Mar 21st, one on Mar 23rd, one on Apr 14th and one from May 2nd-13th. At Beddington SF there were eight on Mar 31st, one from Apr 3rd-9th and four on Apr 10th. At Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) there was one from Apr 27th-May 9th and three on May 10th.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** At Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) there were two from Apr 23rd-24th and single birds on Apr 25th and 29th. Further single birds were at QE2 Res on May 6th, Walton Res on May 8th and Beddington SF on May 8th.

**Whimbrel** An average spring with 38 recorded between Apr 14th and May 16th. Birds were reported

from Beddington SF, Crooksbury Common, Frensham Great Pond, Island Barn Res, the London Wetland Centre, QE2 Res, Richmond Park, Thorncombe Street, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) and Walton Res. Most records involved one or two birds, with the only larger numbers five at Beddington SF on Apr 27th and three at QE2 Res on Apr 27th.

**Curlew** Single birds were at Beddington SF on Mar 20th, Walton Res on Mar 23rd, Island Barn Res on Mar 23rd, Chobham Common on Mar 25th, the London Wetland Centre on Mar 27th and Apr 26th and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on May 31st.

**Greenshank** An average spring with 21 recorded between Mar 13th and May 21st. Birds were reported from Beddington SF, Holmethorpe SP, Island Barn Res, the London Wetland Centre, QE2 Res, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) and Walton Res, with the only records involving more than one bird two at Walton Res on Apr 23rd, two at Holmethorpe SP on May 8th and two at Beddington SF on May 18th.

**Green Sandpiper** Birds were reported from Beddington SF, Capel, Cudworth Lakes (near Newdigate), Holmethorpe SP, the London Wetland Centre, Morden Hall Park, Richmond Park, Shalford Water Meadows, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) and Walton Res, with the largest numbers coming on Apr 19th when there were

nine at Beddington SF and four at the London Wetland Centre. The last of the spring was at Capel on May 1st.

**Wood Sandpiper** Three of the four birds recorded were seen on Apr 30th and they were at Beddington SF, the London Wetland Centre and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea). The other was at the London Wetland Centre on May 12th-13th.

**Common Sandpiper** The first of the spring was at the London Wetland Centre on Apr 11th. Birds were reported from 21 sites with the largest numbers (and only counts above five) coming on May 16th when there were ten at QE2 Res and eight at Richmond Park. The last of the spring was at Richmond Park on Jun 6th.

**Turnstone** Two were at Walton Res on May 8th and single birds were at the London Wetland Centre on May 16th and Beddington SF the next day.

**Mediterranean Gull** High numbers were at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) in late March and early April, peaking at 16 on Apr 1st. There was also a notable passage during mid-April, particularly from Apr 19th-21st. On Apr 19th there were 12 at Frensham Great Pond, five at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea), four at Beddington SF and four at Walton Res. Then, on Apr 20th there were six over Frensham Common, four at Beddington SF, four over Millbridge and two at the London Wetland Centre, whilst on

Apr 21st there were seven at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea), two at Walton Res and two over Weybourne.

**Little Gull** A good spring with at least 47 recorded between Mar 10th and Apr 19th. As usual, the majority were seen at Island Barn/Walton Res where there were one on Mar 10th, four on Mar 12th, one on Apr 5th and 7th, nine on Apr 8th and 20 on Apr 9th (14 at Walton Res and six at Island Barn Res). Elsewhere, single birds were at Beddington SF on Apr 2nd and 19th, the London Wetland Centre on Apr 8th, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 9th and Pen Ponds on Apr 17th, whilst at Frensham Great Pond two on Apr 15th had risen to 12 the next day.

**Iceland Gull** A second calendar year bird was at the London Wetland Centre on Apr 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th. Presumably the same bird was at Beddington SF on Apr 13th.

**Glaucous Gull** A second calendar year bird was at Beddington SF on Apr 6th.

**Kittiwake** Single adults were at Island Barn Res on Mar 10th, Walton Res on Mar 25th and May 24th, the London Wetland Centre on Apr 4th and Beddington SF on Apr 20th.

**Sandwich Tern** One was at Beddington SF on Apr 4th, two at Island Barn Res on May 19th, three at Pen Ponds on May 20th and one at QE2 Res on Jun 1st.

**Common Tern** The first was at Island Barn Res on Apr 1st, followed by others over Thursley Common the next day, Frensham Great Pond on Apr 5th and Beddington SF and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 9th..

**Arctic Tern** A poor spring with just eight recorded between Apr 10th and May 23rd. Single birds were at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 10th, Apr 18th and May 8th and Beddington SF on May 8th and May 23rd. An unusually long stayer at Walton Res from Apr 27th-May 8th was joined by a second individual on Apr 28th and May 4th.

**Little Tern** One was at Walton Res on Apr 30th.

**Black Tern** A good spring with 45 recorded between Apr 25th and May 18th, with May 8th the peak day (producing 26 birds). At Walton Res there were one on Apr 25th, 15 on May 8th, six on May 9th, one on May 10th, five on May 15th, one on May 17th and three on May 18th, whilst another was nearby at Island Barn Res on May 8th. At Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) there were one on May 4th and two on May 8th, whilst at Frensham Great Pond there were eight on May 8th and one on May 17th.

**Turtle Dove** One was at Thursley Common on May 1st.

**Cuckoo** The first was at Duke's Warren (Leith Hill) on Apr

8th, followed by others at Thursley Common and Worcester Park on Apr 10th, Crooksbury Common on Apr 14th, Capel on Apr 16th and Canon's Farm (Banstead), Frensham Common and Leigh on Apr 17th.

**Swift** The first was an early bird at South Norwood Lake on Apr 2nd. There were no further reports until Apr 24th when birds were at Beddington SF, Frensham Great Pond, the London Wetland Centre and Walton Res. These were followed by others at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 26th and Holmethorpe SP and Wimbledon Common on Apr 28th.

**Sand Martin** The first was an early bird at the London Wetland Centre on Feb 25th (the earliest ever arrival in the county by four days), which was joined by a second on Feb 27th. These were followed by other early birds at Canon's Farm (Banstead), Richmond Park and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Mar 1st. There were no further reports for a fortnight when another was at Richmond Park on Mar 15th. This was followed by others at Frensham Little Pond on Mar 17th and Beddington SF on Mar 20th

**Swallow** The first were two early birds at Richmond Park on Mar 1st (the earliest ever arrival in the county by two days). No more were seen until Mar 11th when two were at QE2 Res and then Mar 17th when one was at the London Wetland Centre. These

were followed by others at South Norwood Lake and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Mar 20th and Crooksbury Common on Mar 26th. There was a widespread arrival from Mar 29th-31st with 'firsts' reported from a further 11 sites.

**House Martin** The first was at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Mar 30th, followed by others at Frensham Great Pond the next day, Stoke Water Meadows on Apr 1st, Beddington SF, Holmethorpe SP and the London Wetland Centre on Apr 2nd and Canon's Farm (Banstead), Hedgecourt Lake and Newdigate on Apr 3rd.

**Tree Pipit** The first was at Crooksbury Common on Apr 6th, followed by others at Frensham Common the next day and Thursley Common on Apr 15th. Migrants reported away from breeding areas involved single birds over Seale on Apr 21st, Beddington SF on Apr 26th and May 3rd and Richmond Park on Apr 30th.

**Rock Pipit** Single birds were at Beddington SF on Mar 17th and Walton Res on Mar 20th.

**Yellow Wagtail** The first was at the London Wetland Centre on Apr 4th. Passage was light with mainly ones and twos recorded and no gatherings in to double-figures. Only May 3rd produced a small fall with seven at Beddington SF and six at both the London Wetland Centre and Tice's

Meadow (Badshot Lea). The last of the spring was at the London Wetland Centre on May 30th.

**Blue-headed Wagtail** Single birds were at Beddington SF on May 3rd and the London Wetland Centre on May 3rd and 19th.

**White Wagtail** An average spring with 17 reported. At Beddington SF there were single birds on Mar 19th and 31st, Apr 9th and 27th, and May 11th and 18th, with three on May 9th. There were two at Fair Oaks Airfield on Mar 24th. At the London Wetland Centre there were single birds on Apr 4th and May 8th and two on Apr 7th. Further single birds were at Holmethorpe SP on Apr 9th and Richmond Park on Apr 10th.

**Nightingale** The first was an early bird at Capel on Apr 5th. There were no further reports until mid-April with a second bird at Capel on Apr 16th and others at Oaken Wood (Chiddingfold) on Apr 18th and Crowhurst Brickworks and Holman's Grove on Apr 19th.

**Black Redstart** A very poor spring with just two recorded, which were at Frensham Little Pond on Mar 24th and Riddlesdown Quarry on Mar 27th.

**Redstart** The first was at Morden Hall Park on Apr 3rd, followed by others at Thursley Common on Apr 5th and Crooksbury Common and Witley Common on Apr 10th.

Migrants were recorded at four non-breeding sites between Apr 10th and May 7th, with single birds at Beddington SF on Apr 10th and 26th, Shirley Park GC (Croydon) on Apr 20th, Sanderstead Cemetery on Apr 27th and Richmond Park on May 7th.

**Whinchat** It was a poor spring with just 21 birds recorded at 11 sites. The first were two at Wimbledon Common on Apr 19th. Further April birds were at South Norwood CP on 22nd, Canon's Farm (Banstead) on 23rd (two), Beddington SF on 26th, the London Wetland Centre on 28th and Beddington SF on 30th. In early May just the 2nd, 5th and 7th produced birds, with two at Richmond Park and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) and one at Hollow Farm (Worplesdon) on May 2nd, one at Tice's Meadow on May 5th and single birds at Brockwell Park, Clandon Wood, the London Wetland Centre and Richmond Park along with two at Thursley Common on May 7th.

**Wheatear** The first were at Richmond Park and Worcester Park on Mar 19th. Passage was fairly light during the rest of the month with a further 46 birds reported from 16 sites and eight at Beddington SF on the 25th the largest count. During April and May birds were reported from 26 sites with a small fall on Apr 18th which produced 23 birds at nine sites, including seven at Richmond Park and five at Weybridge. The only significant count, though, was of 15 at

Beddington SF on Apr 9th. The last of the spring were at the London Wetland Centre and Richmond Park on May 14th.

**Ring Ouzel** An average spring with ten recorded between Mar 30th and Apr 21st. Single males were at Richmond Park on Mar 30th, Beddington SF and Island Barn Res on Apr 6th, Dover House Playing Fields (West Putney) from Apr 12th-14th, Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 17th, the London Wetland Centre and Woldingham on Apr 19th and South Norwood CP on Apr 21st, whilst there were two males at Burpham Court Farm on Apr 15th.

**Grasshopper Warbler** What now amounts to an average spring with four birds recorded, which were at Unstead SF on Apr 4th, Broadford Bridge on Apr 19th, the London Wetland Centre on Apr 21st and Dungeon Hill (Woodmansterne) on May 3rd.

**Sedge Warbler** The first was at the London Wetland Centre on Apr 1st, followed by others at Holmethorpe SP the next day, Beddington SF and South Norwood CP on Apr 9th and Frensham Great Pond on Apr 14th.

**Reed Warbler** The first was at Frensham Little Pond on Apr 2nd, followed by others at the London Wetland Centre on Apr 6th, Holmethorpe SP on Apr 7th, Papercourt Marshes on Apr 8th,

Beddington SF on Apr 9th and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 13th.

**Lesser Whitethroat** The first was at Chobham Common on Apr 13th, followed by others at Capel, Morden Hall Park and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 16th, Priest Hill (Ewell) on Apr 18th, South Norwood CP on Apr 19th and Beddington SF on Apr 20th.

**Whitethroat** The first was at Ockham Common on Apr 3rd, followed by others at Capel on Apr 8th, Beddington SF and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 11th, Canon's Farm (Banstead) and Capel on Apr 16th and Bankside and South Norwood CP on Apr 18th.

**Garden Warbler** The first was at Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Apr 13th, followed by others at Holmethorpe SP on Apr 17th, Beddington SF and Palmer's Cross on Apr 18th, the British Wildlife Centre (Newchapel), Capel, Richmond Park and Witley Common on Apr 19th and the London Wetland Centre on Apr 20th.

**Wood Warbler** Single birds were at Tooting Common on Apr 15th, Ranmore Common on Apr 21st and Richmond Park on Apr 24th.

**Willow Warbler** The first was at Dulwich Park on Mar 21st. There were no further reports until the end of the month when birds were at the

London Wetland Centre and Tice's Meadow (Badshot Lea) on Mar 31st. These were followed by others at Beddington SF, Rotherhithe, Shackleford and Worcester Park on Apr 1st, Fetcham on Apr 2nd, Holmethorpe SP on Apr 3rd and Stoke Park on Apr 4th.

**Spotted Flycatcher** The first was at Beddington SF on May 7th, followed by others at the London Wetland Centre the next day, Frensham Little Pond on May 11th and Frensham Common on May 12th.

**Golden Oriole** Singing males were at Richmond Park on May 20th and Thursley Common on May 26th.

**Rosy Starling** One was at Mitcham Common on May 18th.

**Crossbill** Numbers were generally low throughout the period. Reports came from six sites in April with 11 at Winterfold on Apr 2nd, one east at Hascombe on Apr 13th, six at Hurtwood on Apr 14th, 16 at

Crooksbury Common on Apr 16th, one at Witley Common on Apr 19th and six at Thursley Common on Apr 30th. In May birds were reported from just three sites with 20 at Farnham Heath RSPB on May 11th, 23 at Crooksbury Common on May 20th and one over Rushett Farm (Malden Rushett) on May 24th. Then, in June birds were reported from four sites with ten at West Horsley on Jun 4th and single birds at Blackheath on Jun 2nd, Clandon Wood on May 19th and Hascombe on Jun 20th.

• *Some records are subject to final check by the county or national records committees.*

#### ◆ Contributors

*Barn Elms Bird Group/WWT,  
Beddington Farm Bird  
Group,  
Doug Boyd,  
Croydonbirders website,*

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Dave Harris,  
Haslemere Natural History  
Society,  
Gordon Hay,*

*David Knight,  
Londonbirders website,  
Tice's Meadow Bird Group  
and the 'twittersphere'.*

**Note: July to October 2019 news to Shaun Peters ASAP please at:  
'Glendeven', School Rd, Rowledge, Farnham, GU10 4EJ.  
Tel. 01252 793887 Email: recbirds@yahoo.co.uk**

## Woking Peregrine Project Update - 2019

We're lucky to have had another successful breeding season with five eggs laid and five fledged juveniles. Since the current nest box was installed in January 2016, the total number of fledged Woking juvenile peregrines totals 16; 2016 = 2, 2017 = 5, 2018 = 4, 2019 = 5. The adult pair that were first recognised in 2015 have remained very loyal to the nest site on Export House and, at the time of writing (November/December 2019), can be seen most days near the nest box or on different window ledges of the building.

There has been on going building construction during 2019, very close to the south end of Export House. This hasn't deterred the peregrines and has offered many new perching sites for the always inquisitive juveniles. One adventurous juvenile was found in Tower 2 / level 26 by a Sir Robert McAlpine team and Getjar Striking crew on the 5th June. An escape plan was quickly implemented by Helen Denham (Site Sustainability Manager / Sir Robert McAlpine Ltd); an exit route was made for the juvenile and an exclusion area was set up. Shortly after 11.45, the young peregrine made a bid for freedom and was seen to fly back towards Export House. The construction company (Sir Robert McAlpine Ltd) has made considerable efforts to ensure the on going success of the WPP and this was highlighted by a Peregrine Falcon Site Action Plan which was displayed on hoardings near the building site.

I've been receiving updates from Cedric Robert (Hospital & Collection Manager), Louise Cox (Marketing & Communications Manager) and Hannah Shaw (Conservation & Research Liaison) who work for the The Hawk Conservancy Trust in Andover. The Woking juvenile falcon that was injured last year (2018) at Export House was sent to the Trust for expert care and rehabilitation training. Cedric has done excellent work with our juvenile and it was hoped she would be released during 2019. It's worth looking at; <https://www.hawk-conservancy.org/2019/07/10/rehabilitation-of-a-female-peregrine-falcon-in-our-national-bird-of-prey-hospital/>

Craig Denford (WPP webmaster) has kindly provided some interesting Google Analytics for the Woking Peregrine Project website 01/02/2019 to 31/07/2019; Visitors to the website;

Users = 27,436 / new users = 27,158 / viewing sessions = 174,446

Viewing behaviour;

Page views = 334,532 / unique page views = 236,523 / average time on a page = 3 minutes (The nest cam had 250,176 views, north end cam 23,783 views and



*North End Webcam, 28 May 2019*

*(WPP / Woking Borough Council)*

the overhead cam 21,091 views).

The number of WPP website views from (top 10);

UK-25,267, USA-723, Poland-337, Germany-169, Spain-163, Netherlands-110, Belgium-108, France-104, India-91, Finland-81

Craig has managed and replied to many email enquiries made via the Contact page on the website. An interesting request was received in October from a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Animal Behaviour in Germany. The researcher is currently working on a project which is looking at peregrine hunting behaviour using webcam streams of peregrine nests. He's in the process of collecting more data and requested if we could supply recordings of the WPP website streams to help his on going peregrine behaviour research. The Institute will provide acknowledgement of the WPP as a data source in any of their future publications. Watch this space....

For the fourth year, Surrey Bird Club had a stand in Jubilee Square and Charlotte Gray did another excellent job at recruiting Club members who were keen to show our local peregrines to many interested members of the public. Engagement dates were arranged for; Saturday 18th May, Tuesday 28th May, Saturday 8th June and Saturday 15th June. Two shifts were required; 10.00 am to 1.00pm and 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm. At least three volunteers were needed for

each shift. I find this a very rewarding experience made even more special when you're able to give outstanding views of adult / juvenile peregrines, via a telescope, to an unsuspecting visitor to Woking. There were many younger people (and a few older ones...) totally amazed at seeing the world's fastest known bird from Jubilee Square! There was a keen interest shown in Surrey Bird Club's conservation work and two new members were recruited. On behalf of the WPP Group, I'd like to thank the following Surrey Bird Club volunteers; Charlotte Gray, Penny Williams, Eric Soden, Simon Stacey, Marilyn Frame, Carolyn Prior, Debbie Hodges, Richard Denyer, Carey Lodge, Steve Chastell, Brian Scammel, Clare Harrington, Margo Scott, Phil Delamont, Tony Cummings, Ken Anckorn and Peter Hambrook.

It would be very helpful if we could receive more sightings / records of interesting behaviour seen of the Woking peregrines. This can be submitted via; <https://www.wokingperegrines.com/contact/> I try to keep an on going record as I'm able to see the local peregrines during the week. The main high lights can be seen via; <https://www.wokingperegrines.com/timeline/> - my diary notes also include;

- 03/01/2019 - First web cam screen grab of the year sent by Craig showing the resident tiercel making a depression in the nest box substrate.
- 17/01/2019 - Both resident adults seen (from the Peacocks car park) going into the nest box together.
- 11/02/2019 - Both resident adults seen on the north end stairwell ledge when a third peregrine observed flying in from the S/West - circled over E/House then dropped to roof level. The resident falcon took off, gave chase and made numerous stoops at the interloper. Both peregrines were last seen locking talons and descending rapidly near the WWF Living Planet Centre!
- 12/02/2019 - Both resident adults seen again near the nest box - original falcon seems in good shape!
- 07/03/2019 - The Bath peregrine site reported their first laid egg - will ours be soon?? (See Timeline...)
- 20/03/2019 - 14:00 another peregrine interloper seen off by both of the resident Woking peregrines - 5th egg laid at 21:59!
- 08/04/2019 - Another (same??) peregrine interloper seen circling over Export House (from the car park) before making several stoops at the resident falcon who was perched on the north end stairwell ledge. The intruder then landed on a top floor/west side window ledge-head markings were notably different to 'our' resident falcon. (Unable to see any leg ring/s) Resident falcon then chased off third peregrine.

- 21/04/2019 - Still 5 'whole' eggs but definite chirping heard via the nest cam audio. Falcon very restless - constantly repositioning 5 eggs.
- 20/05/2019 - 2 juveniles seen perched outside nest box.
- 24/05/2019 - 16:00 all 5 juveniles & both adults seen via webcam on the ledge outside the nest box.
- 08/06/2019 - Helped with the SBC stand in Jubilee Square - all 5 juveniles seen on the north end stairwell ledge with both adults. 1 juv. seen in flight. 16:30 to 19:00 - photos taken of juv.s perched on the new buildings being constructed at the south end of Export House!
- 14/06/2019 - Racing pigeon seen in nest box (via nest cam) on numerous occasions during the afternoon! All of the peregrines were outside the nest box....
- 15/06/2019 - Helped with the SBC stand in Jubilee Square - food pass seen & shown to visitors! 13:30 to 17:00 - managed to photograph two food passes from the top floor of the Peacocks car park.
- 02/07/2019 - Took WWF colleagues to Peacocks car park - all 5 juv's seen in flight and perched on Export House.
- 19/07/2019 - 3 juv.s and adult falcon seen from car park.
- 05/08/2019 - 2 juv.s seen from car park.
- 19/08/2019 - Possible last remaining juv. seen trying to harass pigeons on a nearby car park roof!
- 23/08/2019 - Good views of the remaining juv. seen from car park - very vocal!
- 12/10/2019 - Met Nick Dixon (<https://urbanperegrines.co.uk/>) on Peacocks car park - mission to collect the peregrines' prey remains from the nest box ventilation room, roof / base of Export House. I tried to photograph the adult tiercel from inside the north end stairwell-very close view but not quick enough with my DSLR!
- 08/11/2019 - Good views of sparrowhawk seen flying near Export House. Both adult peregrines appeared to see it but let it pass....
- 19/11/2019 - Great views of adult tiercel seen flying above car park then retrieving cashed prey from a top floor window ledge on Export House.
- 26/11/2019 - Craig Denford reported another food pass between both adults - seen from his office in Export House.
- 06/12/2019 - Good views of both resident peregrines on the north end stairwell ledge.

If you're in Woking town, it's always worth looking up at Export House!

*James Sellen*  
*Woking Peregrine Project*

# A Survey of Chiddingfold Forest

## **An opportunity to contribute to the management of an important woodland site.**

In spring 2020 the Club is planning to work with Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS) and the Forestry Commission on a survey of key species in Chiddingfold Forest, but we will need volunteers to assist in the survey. This article describes how the proposal for a survey came about, why it is needed and what is likely to be involved.

Chiddingfold Forest is an area of woodland straddling the Surrey/West Sussex border about 840 hectares (2075 acres) in extent. At a rough estimate, about 60% of the Forest lies within Surrey, with the remainder lying in West Sussex. Some parts are owned by the Forestry Commission, while others are privately owned but leased and managed by the Commission. There is open access to the parts of the Forest owned by the Commission, but public access to the privately owned areas is limited to public footpaths. The Forest has long been known as a good area for Nightingales and was formerly a good place to find Turtle Doves, but both species are under threat, and records of Turtle Dove in Surrey are now few and far between.

If the Forestry Commission was known in the past for planting large areas of uniform conifer woods, that is no longer true. They have drawn up a plan for Chiddingfold Forest with the stated aim of maintaining and increasing the area of ancient semi-natural woodland, as well as initiating the restoration of ancient woodland sites. The intention is to increase the amount of broadleaf woodland from 65% in 2016 to 97% in 2026. Another aim is to 'Maintain and enhance the favourable conservation status of a nationally important wildlife site'. The plan can be viewed on line - just search on Chiddingfold Forest.

As part of the planning process the Commission is consulting with interested bodies, and invited the Club and SOS to a meeting in late July. The Commission sent a strong and enthusiastic team and the meeting proved very productive. Steve Chastell and Eric Soden attended on behalf of the Club.

The main focus of the meeting was how the Forest might best be managed to provide suitable habitat for key species, notably Nightingale and Turtle Dove. Surprisingly, the Forestry Commission said that 'several' Turtle Doves had been heard in one part of the Forest, in West Sussex. It quickly emerged, however, that both the SOS and ourselves have

only casual records from the area, and these give no clear idea of the current size and distribution of key species. There is a pressing need for better data as a baseline against which to measure progress with the Forestry Commission's plan.

The proposal that emerged from the meeting was that in spring 2020 the SOS and SBC would conduct surveys of our respective parts of the Forest. The Commission would assist by providing maps and by arranging access to the privately owned parts of the Forest.

This is a welcome opportunity for the Club to contribute to the management of what is arguably the most important area of woodland in Surrey and, hopefully, to encourage the return of key species that are in decline. But we will need volunteers to carry out the survey work so it may be helpful to set out what we think is likely to be involved.

The survey will pay particular attention to the key species we discussed with the Commission - Nightingale and Turtle Dove - but we may well decide to include some other species of interest. The methodology will have to be agreed with SOS but it will probably be based on the Nightingale survey carried out by the BTO in 2012, which many members will no doubt recall. This asked surveyors to make at least two early morning visits to their survey area

during the early spring, with optional additional visits at night. We may need to look at the pairing of surveyors for those who are willing to venture out at night. The BTO survey was based on tetrads, but if sufficient volunteers come forward it may prove possible to base our survey on smaller areas.

Members may be aware that the Club was planning a Sand Martin survey in spring 2020. We don't have the resources to run two surveys at the same time and the Club's General Committee has concluded that the Sand Martin survey should be postponed because the Chiddingfold Forest Survey is targeted at species which are under greater threat. However, members are asked to submit any records of confirmed or possible breeding of Sand Martins again this spring.

We hope that a sufficient number of volunteers will come forward to enable a comprehensive survey of Chiddingfold Forest to be carried out. If you think you may want to participate, pending further information, please contact Steve Chastell (surrey.recorder@btinternet.com) or Eric Soden (ericsoden@aol.co.uk).

*Eric Soden*

## BTO Matters Autumn 2019

### English Winter Bird Survey 2018/19

Although the focus of the survey was on England, the BTO was keen to allow all volunteers to take part. The survey was based on existing BBS squares especially those within farmland. The BTO have decided that the survey in any form, nor indeed data entry into the software created for the survey, will be possible over the 2019/2020 survey period. However the BTO realises the importance of having such a survey in order to provide information about terrestrial birds in winter as this remains a major gap in knowledge. Accordingly the BTO will use the data collected from the English Winter Bird Survey to inform future roll-out, and will plan to seek funding for a properly resourced project in the future.

However the BTO have had a number of enquiries to ask if there is anything volunteers can do to help collect data over the winter so here are two suggestions if you would like to get involved:

1. Submit records to BirdTrack ([www.birdtrack.net](http://www.birdtrack.net)). Ideally this should be a 'complete list' recording all the species you see and hear on your site. Lists from all habitats will help build up a better picture of distribution in winter, and 'complete lists' will contribute to the reporting rate graphs, and of course will provide valuable data for Surrey bird club.
2. Make up to four visits to a BBS square (see below) between

December and March to record birds only, and enter the data into BirdTrack. If you do this it is important that you follow the BBS transects and record the combined total for each species seen from them. Create a site in BirdTrack that is a 1-km square and carry out your visit as you would for BBS. When you enter your total counts in BirdTrack, in the comments box for EACH SPECIES, enter WINBS. If you record additional species in the walk between your transects then do not add WINBS in the comments box as the BTO does not count these in BBS methods.

The BTO cannot commit to analysing these records, but welcomes additional information and the club will, of course, get the records as the County Recorder receives all BirdTrack records.

So far as visiting a BBS square is concerned, you do not have to be the summer surveyor to visit the square (indeed more than one person could, in theory cover a square). If you would like to get involved but are not the surveyor allocated the square for the BBS survey then contact me and I can let you have the map showing the route. Here is a list of all the accessible BBS squares. I have shown which squares were covered for last year's Winter Bird survey (as you can see only about 50% of BBS squares were covered) in case that information is helpful.

Table: List of all the accessible Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) squares

BBS Name	BBS Grid Ref	EWBS	10 km
Powderham Castle	SU8046	yes	SU84
N E Farnham	SU8447	yes	SU84
Tongham	SU8949	yes	SU84
SE of Haslemere	SU9231	no	SU93
SE of Haslemere	SU9430	no	SU93
Ramsnest Common	SU9533	no	SU93
South of Chiddingfold	SU9534	no	SU93
Pot Common (S of Elstead)	SU9042	yes	SU94
Elstead	SU9043	yes	SU94
Elstead	SU9143	no	SU94
A3 SW of Milford	SU9240	no	SU94
Norney (W of A3)	SU9344	yes	SU94
South of Wanborough Common	SU9446	yes	SU94
S Godalming	SU9742	yes	SU94
South of Bramley	SU9842	yes	SU94
Guildford College of Law	SU9848	yes	SU94
Frimley Ridge	SU9059	no	SU95
Fairlands (W of Guildford)	SU9651	yes	SU95
Knaphill	SU9658	no	SU95
North-east of Fox Corner	SU9755	yes	SU95
Jacobs Well	SU9853	yes	SU95
Goldsworth Park	SU9958	no	SU95
South Ascot	SU9267	no	SU96
Ascot Racecourse	SU9269	no	SU96
North of Windlesham	SU9365	no	SU96
N of Sunninghill	SU9368	yes	SU96
SE of Windlesham	SU9463	yes	SU96
Chobham Common	SU9665	no	SU96
Chobham	SU9761	yes	SU96
Longcross/Wentworth	SU9866	no	SU96
Oxoncroft Copse (on Sussex Border path)	TQ0232	no	TQ03
Cranleigh	TQ0539	no	TQ03
Massers Wood (S of Cranleigh)	TQ0735	yes	TQ03
SE of Cranleigh	TQ0837	no	TQ03
The Windbreak (S of Ewhurst)	TQ0937	no	TQ03
East of Winkworth Arboretum	TQ0041	no	TQ04
Shalford (central)	TQ0047	yes	TQ04
Chantry Wood (SE of Guildford)	TQ0048	yes	TQ04
Shalford (east )	TQ0146	no	TQ04
SE of Guildford	TQ0148	yes	TQ04
Palmers Cross (S of Woneresh)	TQ0240	yes	TQ04
Rooks Hill (SW of Shamley Green)	TQ0242	yes	TQ04
East Guildford	TQ0249	no	TQ04
Albury Downs	TQ0549	no	TQ04
Fowls Copse (N of Cranleigh)	TQ0641	no	TQ04
Shere - Albury	TQ0647	yes	TQ04
Gomshall	TQ0848	no	TQ04
Coverwood (SE of Peaslake)	TQ0943	yes	TQ04
N of Holmbury St Mary	TQ0945	yes	TQ04
East of Jacobs Well	TQ0053	no	TQ05
Woking	TQ0059	no	TQ05
SE of Woking	TQ0258	yes	TQ05
Pyrford Court	TQ0358	yes	TQ05
North of West Clandon	TQ0453	yes	TQ05
Norcott Wood (N of E Clandon)	TQ0552	no	TQ05
Ripley	TQ0556	no	TQ05
North of Ripley	TQ0557	yes	TQ05
North of West Horsley	TQ0655	yes	TQ05
East Clandon	TQ0751	no	TQ05
North of Gomshall	TQ0850	no	TQ05

BBS Name	BBS Grid Ref	EWBS	10 km
Ockham	TQ0857	yes	TQ05
E of West Horsley	TQ0952	no	TQ05
Stroude	TQ0069	yes	TQ06
North of Lyne	TQ0167	no	TQ06
Chertsey Meads	TQ0566	no	TQ06
North Weybridge	TQ0765	no	TQ06
E of Ewhurst	TQ1040	yes	TQ14
Sutton Abinger	TQ1046	yes	TQ14
North east of Gomshall	TQ1049	yes	TQ14
Leith Hill	TQ1343	yes	TQ14
Coldharbour	TQ1344	no	TQ14
South of Leith Hill	TQ1441	yes	TQ14
South of Westcott	TQ1547	no	TQ14
South west of Brockham	TQ1848	no	TQ14
Highbridge Wood (SE of Dorking)	TQ1947	yes	TQ14
South of Brockham	TQ1948	no	TQ14
M25 south of Cobham	TQ1157	yes	TQ15
South of Effingham	TQ1252	yes	TQ15
West of Great Bookham	TQ1353	yes	TQ15
Westhumble	TQ1451	yes	TQ15
South Bookham	TQ1453	yes	TQ15
East of Dorking	TQ1750	no	TQ15
M25 south of Ashstead	TQ1856	yes	TQ15
Walton on Thames	TQ1066	no	TQ16
Hampton	TQ1369	no	TQ16
NE of Claygate	TQ1664	yes	TQ16
Long Ditton	TQ1666	yes	TQ16
Epsom	TQ1961	no	TQ16
Surbiton	TQ1967	yes	TQ16
Leigh	TQ2246	yes	TQ24
NW of Horley	TQ2344	yes	TQ24
W of Reigate	TQ2449	yes	TQ24
Reigate	TQ2649	no	TQ24
Gatwick Airport	TQ2741	no	TQ24
St Johns (Reigate)	TQ2749	no	TQ24
Betchworth	TQ2050	yes	TQ25
Betchworth	TQ2150	yes	TQ25
Banstead Heath	TQ2354	yes	TQ25
Se of Kingswood	TQ2555	no	TQ25
Gatton	TQ2753	no	TQ25
N of M25 & N of Mersham	TQ2854	no	TQ25
Woodmansterne	TQ2858	no	TQ25
South Mersham	TQ2952	no	TQ25
M23 SE of Chaldon	TQ2954	no	TQ25
South of Coulsdon	TQ2957	yes	TQ25
East of South Nutfield	TQ3048	no	TQ34
Smallfield	TQ3343	yes	TQ34
Lower South Park (SW of Godstone)	TQ3447	yes	TQ34
South of Godstone	TQ3647	no	TQ34
Netherne on the Hill	TQ3156	no	TQ35
Paddock Barn - SE of Caterham	TQ3554	yes	TQ35
North west of Oxted (access impossible)	TQ3752	no	TQ35
Barrow Green Court	TQ3753	yes	TQ35
S of Woldingham	TQ3755	no	TQ35

## Hérons

I also need someone to cover the heronry at Newdigate Grid Ref TQ20573 42483. If you can help please get in contact. This survey involves 2-3 visits if possible, to repeat the count and get the best, most accurate, estimate for the year. Visits should ideally be made between March and May. Nests should be counted in the second half of April, with this count being supplemented (if possible) by an earlier and a later visit. You can visit a heronry at any time of day, although the birds may be more active in the morning.

## Swan Census

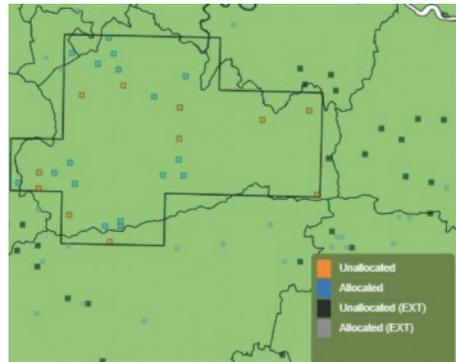
On 11th/12th January 2020 the International Swan Census will take place counting both Whooper and Bewick Swans. I know it is unlikely we will have either of these species in the county over that weekend but, if by chance you do see either species, please can you let me know.

## JNCC Seabird Count 2015/19

This year volunteers in some areas have been making visits to 1-km squares to look for rooftop nesting gulls, as part of the JNCC Seabird Count project. Fieldwork has also been undertaken by volunteers and professionals on all seabird species over the last few years. If you are interested in helping out with seabird counts in 2020, please contact Daisy Burnell at JNCC (Email: [seabirdscountcoordinator@jncc.gov.uk](mailto:seabirdscountcoordinator@jncc.gov.uk)) or find out more online <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-7413>

## Woodcock Survey

The last national Woodcock survey in 2013 showed a marked decline in the number of sites occupied by Woodcock, so the BTO is trying to get annual coverage of a number of key sites. I have taken over responsibility for this survey now from Greg Conway at the BTO so please contact me if you are interested in taking part. Here is a map showing the approximate location of squares needing coverage:



I know that the survey will not be starting until May next year but you could go and carry out the first visit now in order to work out the location and habitat of the count point. The survey methodology is as follows: Between 1st May and 30th June three visits to the count point at dusk, at least one week apart. The count period is 75 minutes compared to 60 minutes from earlier surveys. Counts commence 15 minutes before sunset and finish 60 minutes after sunset, giving total survey duration of 75 minutes. Times of individual Woodcock passes will be recorded so that data for 60 minute and 75 minute

counts can be compared at the analysis stage. Some basic information on Habitat and Deer presence will also be collected between mid-May and mid-June.

### **Wader Survey**

I have just had news that, next spring, BTO and RSPB plan to run a repeat survey for Breeding Waders of Wet Meadows in England, including coverage of existing sites in Wales.

The 2020 survey will include:

1. Re-visits of the sites covered in the last full survey in 2002 (the preliminary list I have received shows 22 sites in Surrey)
2. New sites covered in the RSPB survey during 2009/10.
3. A sample of new sites, where wet grassland breeding wader habitat has been created/improved through agri-environment schemes.
4. A sample of farms with Lapwing plots.

I do not have details yet of the methodology but the proposed timetable is as follows:

Mid-Feb 2020 - online site allocation available for all volunteers to sign up  
15th Apr 2020 - fieldwork starts.

30th June 2020 -fieldwork ends.

As the next newsletter will not be sent to you until near the start date for this survey, if you might be interested in helping, please do let me know.

### **Training**

Next spring I will run another BBS Practice Course at Sheepleas nature reserve in East Horsley. It is going to take place at 9.30 am on Saturday 21st March. You not only get a chance to get some tips on this survey but meet up with like-minded people. Places are limited so, if you would like to come along, please book a place with me by e-mailing me or give me a ring.

*Penny Williams*

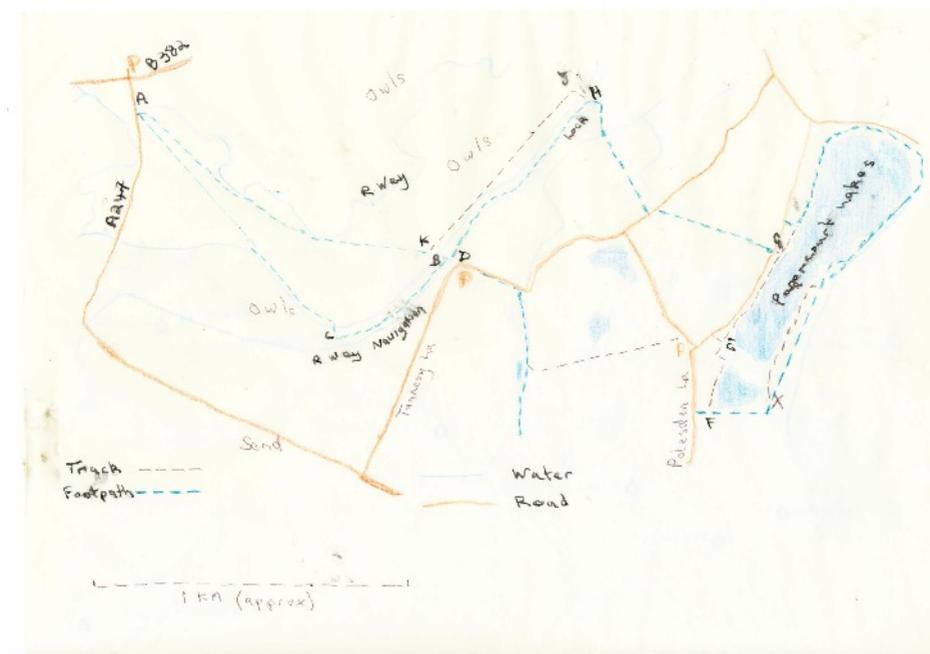
## **Surrey Sites No.3: Papercourt, Send**

Here are some circular walks around the Papercourt area which can be combined to make into a longer walk. Papercourt is an enjoyable place to walk at any time of year but can be particularly good in the winter months for seeing owls. In the summer the water meadows are good for Reed and Sedge Warblers and Grasshopper Warbler is occasionally found. In winter Snipe are usually present in the wetter areas, but difficult to spot. Apart from crossing the bridges over

water and a couple of stiles the walks are also entirely flat. However, as the walks are on floodplain, in the winter it is likely to be muddy so Wellington boots may be needed.

Walks 1 and 2 are about 2 km long and probably will take about an hour (assuming no long stops). Walk 2 is about 4 km and will take a couple of hours.

References to Points refer to points marked on the map.



### *Papercourt Route Map*

#### **Walk 1 (from Point A via Points B and C)**

At the junction of the B382 and the A247 is a free car park (Grid Ref TQ019569). Cross the road, after parking, and walk south down the A247 past the signpost for Send. After crossing the River Wey, and passing three houses on the left, turn left and join a public footpath at Point A. At the time of writing there is no public footpath sign. After about 75 metres a barbed wire fence appears. Take the path that leaves the barbed wire fence to the left. This is a good place to look for Stonechat (present in summer and winter). Although, on the OS map the footpath is straight, the footpath bends slightly past some willows and small oak trees as it follows the curves of

the River Wey (listen here for warblers in the phragmites in the summer). At this point another public footpath goes off to the left following the River Wey but remain on the main, wide track (walking in the direction of office buildings). Look out here for Kestrel (which often perches on the high tension cables) and occasionally one of the Woking Peregrines may be seen hunting here. In winter you can usually see flocks of Meadow Pipit and Linnet.

At a junction of paths (Point K) bear right and cross the river/canal called the Broadmead Cut using the footbridge. Here there is the option of continuing straight on and crossing the River Wey Navigation Canal too

and joining Tannery Lane at Point D in order to combine Walk 1 with Walk 2. To remain on Walk 1 turn right at Point B and follow the River Wey Navigation towpath. This is a good place to look for Kingfishers. When a footbridge crosses the River Wey Navigation Canal, turn left down a short steep slope and follow a path that winds through a small area of woodland. Then cross a very small wooden footbridge and then a much larger footbridge across the Broadwater Cut. Check the fields to the left on crossing this footbridge because this area gets very wet in the winter and may hold a wader or ducks. After crossing the footbridge the public footpath sign points off to the left. Follow this public footpath to return back to point A.

### **Walk 2 (from Point D via Points E, G and H or J)**

Park in Tannery Lane (Grid Ref TQ030563). Some of the area is office parking but there is space for vehicles where Tannery Lane runs East (by the P on the map). At the end of the parking area (away from the offices) a public footpath runs alongside Tannery Lane (about 3 metres in). Either follow this public footpath or walk along the road. At the left hand bend, if walking along the road, turn right onto the public footpath. Walk along a public footpath with a brook to the left and a cultivated field to the right (usually maize). This can be a good field for wintering Thrushes. Just before a copse ahead of you the path splits in

two. Take the left hand path which goes into the copse and past a smallish lake, which usually has a few ducks on it. Just before the end of the lake take the path (not the public footpath) which goes off to the left crossing the brook. Cross the brook and follow the track for about 30 metres through a small plantation. At a junction with a much wider track turn left onto the wider track (again not a public footpath) which passes alongside the part of the Papercourt Reserve managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust which is entry by permit only. This wide track has hedges on both sides and is good for mixed flocks and wintering Thrushes. In the winter there can be a few gaps in the hedges leading to restricted views into the ponds in the Papercourt Reserve. Be warned that ringing takes place sometimes on the Reserve so you may hear a lot of birdsong if the ringers are playing a tape to attract the birds in! Check the fields too for wintering Geese sometimes there are good numbers of Pied Wagtail. At the end of the track, just after it has become tarmac, re-join Tannery Lane. Turn right and, after 15 metres, at a road T-junction, turn left and walk another 50 metres to the entrance of the Papercourt Sailing Club. Walk through the first set of gates of the sailing club and walk down the drive, as though going into the sailing club, to Point E.

Here is the option of turning right and walking around both the Papercourt Lakes in order to combine Walk 2

with Walk 3 but, for Walk 2, turn left at Point E and follow the track which runs alongside the sailing lake. There are some good views of this lake. The club is usually sailing on a Sunday but, even when sailing is taking place, the lake is usually good for both Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Cormorant and Mute Swan plus lots of Coots. Occasionally, in winter, a rarer diving bird might be present such as Red-breasted Merganser or Great Northern Diver. These days the wintering ducks are generally on the sailing pit, unless a lot of sailing is taking place, and whilst the Goosander flock has diminished to zero there are usually a few Gadwall, Pochard, Tufted Duck and gulls and often Wigeon as well as the Coots and Grebes and increasing numbers of Egyptian Geese. Common Tern are regular in summer.

After approximately 300 metres, just before reaching a parking area, turn left down a track, for 10 metres, to the road (Point G). Cross the road and join a public footpath (although again there is no public footpath sign) however there is a sign on the gate saying "No parking 24 access required". After approximately 100 metres bear left onto a narrow path as the right-hand track is a private track. The public footpath has woodland on the left and brambles on the right and can be good for Goldcrest and Bullfinch. After approximately 500 metres the footpath meets a road. Turn left and walk 25 metres on the road, passing a red brick building on your

right. At the end of this building, turn right into the yard, then bear left down a track (there will be a blue container on your left) between a wooden hut and an old brick cottage and go through a gate. Check the old oak trees to the right carefully as they have had Little Owls present. Keep an eye out for Little Egret, Grey Heron and wintering thrushes. At the end of the track, cross a stile and head across the field towards the river and Papercourt Lock.

Shortly afterwards cross another stile (or open the gate and walk through it) and enter National Trust property. Cross the River Wey Navigation Canal and there is a choice of paths now. Whichever path you choose, check the trees running along the water for wintering flocks of Siskin and Redpoll. The drier path (but less likely to give views of owls) runs alongside the River Wey Navigation Canal, starting in front of the lock-keeper's cottage, and is sign-posted "tow path". Alternatively continue straight on across the Broadmead Cut, then go through a gate (with a Surrey Wildlife Reserve sign beside it), turn left and follow the track which runs alongside Broadmead Cut (and parallel to the River Wey Navigation Canal tow path). There is one gate to go through on this track, which, when it is wet, has a very large puddle in the middle of it hence needing Wellington boots alternatively climb over the fence. Continue walking for about 750 metres until a T junction of paths (Point K on the map). Turn right and

cross the 2 footbridges to return to the car parking area in Tannery Lane.

**Walk 3 (from Point E via Points F, X and G)**

There is space for about four cars to park at the end of Tannery Lane at its junction with Polesden Lane (Grid ref TQ037562).

At the road T-junction, turn left and walk 50 metres to the entrance of the Papercourt Sailing Club. Walk through the first set of gates of the sailing club and walk down the drive, as though you were going into the sailing club, to Point E.

At the second set of gates (Point E) turn right and walk approximately 100 metres with a hedge on the left. When the hedge does a 90 degree left turn do the same and continue to follow the hedge. When some shipping containers (in the sailing club car park) appear on the left turn right onto a track leaving the small Papercourt lake to the left. Within a few metres the view of the lake opens up and there is a small seat to sit and enjoy the birds. On this lake, if sailing is taking place on the main lake, there could be good numbers of ducks including Gadwall, Mallard and Tufted. Occasionally there may be Shoveler and Pochard. Kingfishers are sometimes seen too.

For the walk, continue along the small lake (at the moment there is a fallen tree which is a slight obstruction on

this path) and, at the end of the lake, turn left to join a public footpath. After approximately 100 metres there is an oak tree and a public footpath sign. Turn left and there is a choice of paths. The public footpath goes off to the right through the woodland. Alternatively there is a track going to the left (in the direction of the boat masts) going between the lake and the woodland therefore giving a better view of the birds on the larger of the two Papercourt Lakes. These two alternative paths meet up again about 1/3 of the way down this larger Papercourt lake.

After the two paths have met up again the public footpath continues for approximately 800 metres around the end of this larger lake. However the public footpath leaves the lake just after leaving three houses on the right. Do not turn right and follow the public footpath but continue straight on along the track, which continues running parallel to the lake. After reaching a Brownie hut, walk through a car parking area, rejoin the track and walk for a further 10 metres to reach point G on Walk 2. Either turn right and join Walk 2 or, alternatively, continue straight along the track running parallel to the lake. This track will bring you back to the gates to Papercourt sailing club (Point E) where you can return to your vehicle in Tannery Lane.

*Penny Williams*

## New Webmaster

I'm Julie Drewett and I was elected on to the committee as Webmaster at the AGM in June. It's the perfect role for me as in my working life I've managed websites and I've been a bird watcher for many years.

My interest started at an early age watching the birds in the garden, especially the antics of the starlings that nested in our roof. I enjoy trying to identify any birds I see, as well as being interested in other areas of natural history, especially invertebrates.

I prefer to get to know the wildlife in my local area and living in South West London, I'm lucky to have many places that I can visit regularly where there is a good variety of birds and other wildlife. This includes having a little egret spending the winter about half a mile from my house. I can still remember my excitement when I saw my first little egret about 20 years ago and the first sighting of the winter always makes me smile. My favourite sites include Morden Hall Park, the London Wetland Centre and the Hogsmill River Local Nature Reserve.

I think it's important to record my sightings whether they are of a



*Julie Drewett (Penny Williams)*

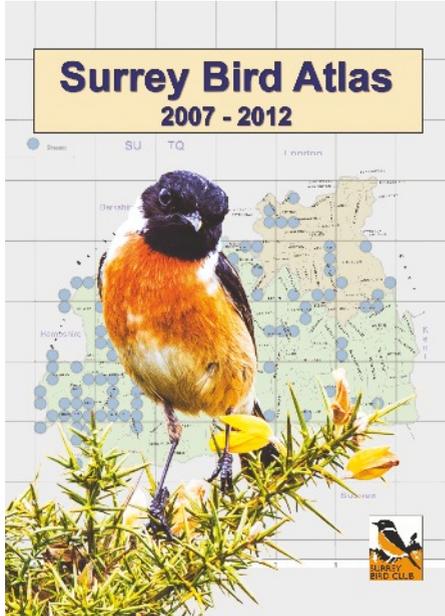
common species or a rarity. For the last few years, I've regularly recorded the birds at the lake in a local park as part of the British Trust for Ornithology's Wetland Bird Survey. It's a good way to really get to know an area and to contribute information to assist with conservation. It's also a great way to spend a Sunday morning once a month and gets me out birding, come rain or shine.

My other hobbies include photography, gardening and botanical art.

*Julie Drewett*

## Notes

● **Welcome to rejoining members -** John & Alison Daniels - Dunsfold, and new member - Alan Stoney - Yateley



● **Surrey Bird Atlas 2007-12 -** Available from Penny Williams, price £20 or £25 including postage and packing. Great value for an A4 size, hardback book with 400 full colour pages!

● **Birds of Surrey -** Our county avifauna and good background reading to complement the Bird Atlas. Available from Penny Williams. Great value at £25.

● **New Club Website -** If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the website please email [webmaster@surreybirdclub.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@surreybirdclub.org.uk)

● **New Committee Email addresses.** Please note the new email addresses listed on the back page should you wish to contact a member of the committee. These have been introduced to reduce spam issues that we were having.

● **Notes, Articles, Photographs -** Anything that you think may be of interest to the members of the Club would be gratefully received for publication in *Birding Surrey*, the Surrey Bird Report or on our website.

● **Archive Appeal.** As newsletter editor, I am custodian of a collection of newsletters / Quarterly Bulletins going back to the Club's formation in 1957. However there are a few issues that are missing, these being: Quarterly Bulletin numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 12 (all 1958/9), 22 & 23 (1962); and, Newsletter number 3 (1987).

I would really like to complete the Club's archive of it's old newsletters. So may I ask that when you are putting the Christmas decorations back in the loft, that you just check what old Bird Club newsletters you might have kept? Please contact the editor if you do find any of the missing issues.

## From your Membership Secretary

### Membership renewal

Renewal forms (for those who have not told me they have set up a standing order) will be coming out with the next newsletter. It is only a standing order, not a direct debit, with the sum taken out of your account set by you and so the club cannot increase the amount it takes. If you know you do not currently pay by standing order please do set one up (either through online banking) or by completing a form that I can let you have.

You may think cheques are simple but they give me (and my husband who kindly takes them to the bank for me) a considerable amount of extra work. Anything you can do to reduce that workload would be much appreciated by me. If you are not sure if you have a standing order in place you can check with your bank or with me.

*Penny Williams*

## Field Meetings Officer vacancy

We are very keen to find a volunteer to join the committee and take on organising Field Meetings for the club, aiming at one per calendar month. It is not necessary to have expert bird knowledge; it is more of a sales job, convincing skilled birders to lead walks either on their local patch or some other place that is good for birds. The meetings do not have to be within Surrey, for example we do

go down to Pagham Harbour and Farlington marshes on the coast.

Committee meetings are held on a weekday evening roughly every 3 months at various committee members homes.

If you would be interested in this opportunity to help the Surrey Bird Club, please contact Penny Williams in the first instance.

## Field Trip Reports

### Papercourt Meadows, Saturday 23rd November 2019

Despite an unfavourable weather forecast fifteen of us met at the Tannery Lane car park. Eleven were

members of SBC and we also welcomed four guests who hope to join. The main focus of the walk was to view some of the owls that reside on the patch. It is sometimes possible to see or hear four species of owl here

in a visit with Tawny, Barn and Little Owls being resident and Short-eared a welcomed winter visitor. One has already been recorded several times this autumn.

Our walk started by heading around the maize-stubble field towards Surrey Wildlife Trust's (SWT) Papercourt Marshes reserve and a light rain began almost immediately. The intention was to locate one of the Chaffinch flocks feeding on the fields here and find the Brambling that are accompanying them. Pied Wagtails, corvids and Egyptian Geese were amongst the first birds seen.

Approaching the reserve, a flock of small passerines were seen on the edge of the field opposite, with birds dropping down to feed then going back up into the hedge. After getting a bit closer several 'scopes were set up allowing a closer view of the flock containing mostly Chaffinch with Goldfinch. Two Bramblings were quickly spotted and everyone had a chance to get a view of them through the 'scopes. Fieldfares and Redwing were in trees on the reserve and around the field. We continued on our walk along the lane with finches being pushed ahead of us. A Lesser Redpoll was briefly seen here before the flock moved onto the reserve.

We followed Tannery Lane down to Papercourt Farm. Although no Little Owl could be seen in the willows there was a small flock of Greylag

Geese and singles of Green Woodpecker, Buzzard and Little Egret. We continued across the bridge and onto the meadows. Due to the very wet and muddy conditions here a few people decided to head back to their cars by the drier canal path. The rest of us took up station at the fence-line that borders the SWT Papercourt Meadows reserve to await the owls and as we did so the rain became heavier. Kestrel and Great spotted Woodpecker were observed here. Gulls were flying across the meadows on their way to roost, mostly Black-headed with a couple of Herring Gulls amongst them.

With the chance of seeing any owls fading fast more of our group decided to call it a day. The last hardy four were finally rewarded by a Tawny Owl calling by the canal behind us. The visibility was getting dark and murky by this point and so we retreated back to our cars.

Despite the rather poor conditions thirty-nine species were seen, Brambling being the most notable. My thanks to everyone who attended.

*Carey Lodge*

## Future Field Meetings

If you have a local patch you know well and would like to lead a field trip to show others what is there please contact a member of the committee.

**Saturday 11 January 2020 – Farlington Marshes** Hampshire Wildlife Trust reserve. Meet at the main car park, halfway along the entrance road, at 09:30 (Grid ref SU676043). Leader Dudley Cox. If you're coming down the A3(M) take the left hand lane for Southsea just after you join the A27. Keep in the left hand lane down the slip road and turn sharp left immediately after the traffic lights under a height barrier into the entrance road. Finish about 1pm.

**Saturday 15 February 2020 – Tice's Meadow Nature Reserve.** Meet by the reserve entrance at the Pea Bridge on Badshot Lea Road (B3208), at 09:30, map ref SU86759 49018. Leader Tice's Meadow Bird Group. Waterproof footwear recommended.

**Saturday 14th March 2020 – Horsell Common.** Meet at Heather Farm Cafe at 09:30 (GU21 4XY, map ref TQ992606). Leader Tony Cummins.

All the walks are FREE (except for travel costs, car park or entrance fees). Everybody is welcome, from beginners to experts. However any children aged 16 or under must be accompanied by an adult. Most sites visited are, unfortunately, not suitable for wheelchairs with rough, and often muddy, footpaths.

The latest trip details are on the website [www.surreybirdclub.org.uk](http://www.surreybirdclub.org.uk)

*The Surrey Bird Club hereby gives notice that all arrangements made by the Club for any person taking part in any meeting, visit or other activity are made by the Club as agents for that person and that consequently the Club accepts no responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience arising from his or her participation in Club activities.  
Passengers accept lifts in private cars at their own risk.*

**The copy date for the next issue of *Birding Surrey* is 31 January 2020**

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**Field Meetings: Vacant**

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*Figs 3,4,&5 Adult & Juvenile Peregrines, Woking, 15 Jun 2019 (James Sellen)*



*Fig 6. Juvenile Peregrine, Woking, 15 Jun 2019*

*(James Sellen)*



*Fig 7. Hobby, Lambeth Res., 10 Sep 2019*

*(Dave Harris)*