

Stocker's Lake Bird Report 2016

The year started mild with a single **Goosander** and breeding **Great Crested Grebes**. At the end of January a **Yellow legged gull** was seen. February produced a **Peregrine** and **Wigeon** numbers increased. March produced few migrants. April was more productive with **Lesser spotted woodpecker** and various waders. In May a **Cuckoo** arrived and on Springwell Lake a female **Goldeneye** had 7 juveniles. Hirundines increased in June along with hunting **Hobbys**. July had breeding **House Martins** at Stocker's House and in August **Kingfishers** were breeding. September provided mixed hirundines and a **Great White Egret**. In October a party of **Bearded tits** showed on the Colne side of the lake for one lucky observer. Early in November a party of 8 **Whooper swans** arrived briefly and 4 **Water Rails** were present. In December there were up to 140 **Wigeon**, a **Little Owl** on Stocker's farm and a scattering of Winter **thrushes**. A late Christmas treat was the red head **Smew** at close quarters.

A species by species report for the year now follows:

Mute Swan – common breeding resident. normally 2 pairs on Stockers supplemented by non-breeders on Bury lake.

Whooper Swan- Rare winter visitor. 8 birds seen from causeway on the 7th of November left early the next day.

Greylag Goose- no significant winter count 1st June breeding pair with 6 juveniles

Canada Goose- Common breeder

Brent Goose- one on the 9th of November

Barnacle Goose- a single bird sighted by heronry mid-September possible escape.

Egyptian Goose- Four was the highest count, have bred locally nearby.

Shelduck- Two birds on Stocker's farm in March

Wigeon- Winter visitor highest count 120 birds average around 80 seen grazing on Stocker's farm

Gadwall- No significant counts although present.

Mallard – common resident. No reports this year

Shoveler – fairly common winter visitor. No significant counts this year.

Red-crested Pochard – well-established and colourful resident. Virtually a year-round resident of the lake, but there no reports of breeding this year. The peak counts were: 12 on New Year's Eve, 9 in January, then 12 were logged in March.

Common Pochard – fairly common resident. A female was seen with a brood of 5 ducklings in July.

Tufted Duck - common resident and regular breeder. No significant counts two adults and two juveniles on 12th of August.

Common Goldeneye – fairly common winter visitor. This is my favourite winter duck. The first winter peaks were: 17 on December 29th, 18 on Xmas eve, 14 on

the 22nd of December, During the summer a female was seen on the 25th of May with seven juveniles on Springwell lake.

Smew – scarce and declining winter visitor in small numbers. A single Red head obliged arriving around 26th of November till December 29th.

Goosander – scarce and declining winter visitor. Two birds seen on the 7th of Jan, one on March the 7th and 5 birds on the 26th of November, present most of December.

Pheasant – uncommon resident. A few birds are resident in the meadow on the Mill End side of the River Colne, but there were no reports this year.

Little Grebe – occasional winter visitor. No reports this year

Great Crested Grebe – a common resident and breeder. 3 broods as early as 26th of February, one on nest on Springwell on 2nd of January.

Cormorant – all year-round resident. No significant counts this year

Little Egret – all year round fairly common resident and scarce breeder. This small heron is now a permanent resident throughout the year and a substantial breeding colony is now becoming established. Peak counts during the year were up to 21 in June At least ten pairs bred this year, but this figure is probably an under-estimate of the true total and it is not known how many young were fledged. Roost counts were: 66 on January 10th.

Great White Egret –Seen from Tern hide on the 26th of September.

Grey Heron – common resident and breeder. An ever-present sight around the lake from dawn until dusk! The BTO Heronries survey count in April to assess the number of nests reached a total of 23 (down from 27 in 2014), most of which were undoubtedly successful. Much the same data this year no observer count

Red Kite – fairly common resident. Nowadays a regular sight over the reserve, with a peak count of thirteen over scrubby area behind River Colne on the 26th of June.

Sparrowhawk – regular visitor throughout the year. Single sightings generally nesting in Alder wood on March 13th.

Marsh Harrier – one sighting on 17th of January

Common Buzzard – fairly common resident. Single birds mostly 5 on March 11th

Peregrine Falcon- 4 sightings February, April, May and June

Kestrel – local resident. NO RECORDS for this common raptor it nested on the causeway some years ago in a nest box perhaps another one should go up.

Hobby – scarce summer visitor. The first record of the year was on the 2nd of June. Further sightings (of single birds) followed on the 15th and 27th of June with the last sighting of the year on September 30th of a juvenile hawking.

Water Rail – uncommon winter visitor, more often heard than seen. Singles were seen on four dates in Jan Feb March and November, however 4 birds heard on the 4th of March.

Moorhen – common resident and breeder. No records of this common species received.

Coot – common resident and breeder. The peak counts were estimated at 400.

There was no assessment of the number of pairs breeding.

Lapwing – regular visitor throughout the year, scarce breeder. Biggest count of 150 on the 21st of December, once bred on Stocker's farm.

Oystercatcher – occasional visitor and possible breeder. The first sighting of the year was of three birds on April 5th, with regular sightings after that. One pair probably bred on one of the islands four birds seen on the 4th of May. The only other sightings were two birds on June 11th and one on July 14th.

Little Ringed Plover – uncommon passage migrant. Single birds at Stocker's Farm from 2nd of April till the 4th of May.

Common Snipe – rare winter visitor. No sightings reported unusual but skulking birds hard to detect

Greenshank – scarce and irregular visitor. One on April 20th was the only sighting of the year on Stocker's farm a five-minute wonder.

Common Sandpiper – scarce passage migrant. One bird on the 5th of July, 3 on the 8th and 4 on the 9th of July on the raft.

Green Sandpiper- One record on the 21st passage migrant.

Black-headed Gull – common resident and breeder. At least eight juveniles on the raft opposite the Tern hide on the 28th of May but no further reports were forthcoming, but it is likely that more pairs did actually breed. There were no winter counts again this year.

Common Gull – regular visitor in small numbers. Three on December 9th and eight on December 11th and one on 2nd of January.

Lesser Black-backed Gull – common visitor and nearby breeder. No reports for this species I find strange, however possibly overlooked with Greater Black-backs reported some could be erroneous.

Yellow legged Gull – rare. One on 30th of January also from the 2nd till the 21st of February, a second winter bird on the 30th of March.

Herring Gull- common winter visitor 4 birds on the 12th of October.

Great Black-backed Gull – uncommon visitor. A more regular visitor this year with single birds present on three dates in December, one date in February.

Black Tern – One from Tern hide on the evening of the 10th of May

Arctic Tern – A passage of 15 birds on the 10th of May preceded by one a day earlier.

Common Tern – regular passage migrant and breeder in small numbers. The first sighting of the year was on July 9th, then 15 on the 7th, 15 on the 15th including 6 nests and 6 juveniles, on the 20th 16 including 8 juveniles. Then 3 birds on August 21st.

Stock Dove – common year-round resident and breeder. A pair on the 7th of August. Disappointingly there were very few reports of this common resident.

Woodpigeon – common resident and breeder. There were no reports this year.

Collared Dove – fairly common nearby, but infrequent visitor to the lake. There were no reports this year.

Ring-necked Parakeet – common resident. This gaudy introduction has now become very much part of the avifauna around the lake and their screeching

calls can be heard almost daily! Highest count 16 on the 2nd of December, 2 on the 31st of December severely under recorded.

Cuckoo – increasingly scarce summer visitor. One on the 12th and 14th of April. Two in May the 5th and the 10th. Not as disappointing as last year.

Tawny Owl – scarce breeding resident. One was heard calling on the 21st of September.

Little Owl – uncommon resident and breeder. All sightings were at Stocker's Farm: one on January 6th, then a pair on February 16th and a pair on the 1st of April. and 18th and then one on February 16th. There were no more sightings until October 19th to the 24th, then single birds were seen. Three sightings in November and five sightings in December.

Bearded Tit – rare visitor. On the 9th of October one lucky observer saw 4 birds diving and ping-ponging in tall vegetation by the River Colne a first for Stocker's possibly.

Common Swift – summer visitor in small numbers. One on the 18th of April, 3 one on the 23rd and 4 on the 30th. Highest count 100 on the 2nd of June decreasing to 30 on the 18th and 8 on the 15th of July.

Kingfisher – common year-round resident; subject to cold weather fluctuations. At least one pair bred again this year – adults were observed carrying fish to a nest-hole between the 1st and 16th of August. Other winter sightings were 7th, 19th and 20th of November singles and two on December 15th.

Green Woodpecker – fairly common resident, most often seen at Stocker's Farm. No reports strange as they call frequently obviously under recorded.

Great Spotted Woodpecker – common resident and breeder. Only one record on 6th of December next year's feeder records should be better.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker – very scarce resident. Stocker's Lake proved very popular this year when a male selected a tall oak tree on one of the islands adjacent to the Bury Lake causeway as one of its drumming posts. The first sighting was April 4th a drumming male and again on the 14th and 15th of April.

Sand Martin – uncommon summer visitor. – Just two sightings this year was disappointing: three on July 15th were the first of the year, followed by three on September 17th at Stockers Farm Clearly this is not an accurate representation of its true status on the reserve.

Swallow – common summer visitor and nearby breeder More often seen at Stocker's Farm where quite a few pairs breed in the stables and farm buildings. The first spring arrival was at Stocker's Farm on April 1st, then 100 on April 16th followed by 275 on the 22nd The peak count of the year was of over the causeway. then 75 on August 18th over the farm, the last observations of the year were back at the farm where six were seen on October 9th.

House Martin – common summer visitor and nearby breeder. Up to 50 birds in April. 4 active nests at Stockers House 28 birds present on the 15th of July. The last sightings were at the farm: fifteen on September 1st and 40 on October 1.

Yellow Wagtail – scarce summer visitor. Three records in April five on the 19th and one on the 24th of seven and one on the 30th on the farm.

Grey Wagtail – scarce visitor, occasional breeder. Just a few rather scattered sightings this year: one on the 19th of Feb and a pair on the Colne on September 29th.

Pied Wagtail – scarce resident and occasional breeder. One on April 16th was the only

Robin – abundant resident and breeder. Under recorded mostly at feeding station

Northern Wheatear – uncommon passage migrant. Just April records this year: all at Stocker's Farm on April 6th and another April 20th, two on the 23rd and four on the 24th.

Whinchat - One on Stocker's farm on 21st of April

Dunnock – abundant resident and breeder. There were no reports this year.

House Sparrow – common nearby resident and breeder. A very frequent sight around Stocker's Farm where at least 20 birds live and breed, but only occasionally seen around the lake.

Fieldfare – common winter visitor. There were no impressive counts at Stocker's Farm this year just two on the 15th of November six on the 18th and six on the 13th of December.

Song Thrush – common resident. No reports this year.

Redwing – common winter visitor. Only one record 6 on the farm on Dec 13th.

Mistle Thrush – fairly common resident. No records this year

Blackbird – abundant resident and breeder. No counts this year.

Cetti's Warbler – scarce resident. – The first report of the year was of some singing birds on the 26th of April, 3 birds on 4th of May, but strangely there were no more reports until August 27th, then again from the 3rd to the 8th of October, then 1 on November 3rd and 2 on December 17th.

Sedge Warbler – summer migrant. The first arrival was on Apr 10th, followed by one on the 13th, then two on the Apr 14th, and 26th.

Reed Warbler – summer migrant and breeder. One on 25th and 26th and two on April 30th 4th were the only reports.

Blackcap – common summer visitor and breeder. – One on 16th of Jan then 5 on the 1st of April followed by 5 on the 4th and 8 on the 14th of April.

Garden Warbler – summer visitor and breeder. One on April 12th and one on the 25th of April.

Common Whitethroat – summer visitor. Disappointingly there was just one sighting this year: one on April 26th.

Lesser Whitethroat – scarce passage migrant. Two sightings this year one on the 24th and one on the 26th of April.

Common Chiffchaff – scarce winter visitor, summer migrant and breeder. A single on 23rd of January, one on the 14th of March then 8 on the first of April and 3 along the Colne on the 20th of December.

Willow Warbler – uncommon passage migrant. One singing on the 29th of March followed by 12 on April 1st and 3 on the 7th of April.

Goldcrest – uncommon visitor, usually in winter. There were a few records this

year 3 on the 18th of January and 4 on the 24th of August.

Spotted Flycatcher – scarce passage migrant. One on the 8th of May canal side of lake.

Blue Tit – common resident. There were no reports this year.

Great Tit – common resident. There were no reports this year.

Coal Tit – uncommon visitor. There were no reports this year.

Long-tailed Tit – common visitor. 18 on the 17th of November

Nuthatch – uncommon resident. One on 18th of Feb and one on the 2nd of November.

Treecreeper – uncommon resident and breeder. One record on the 3rd of Feb.

Wren – abundant resident and breeder. Two birds on the 6th of December.

Starling – common resident. No reports this year

Magpie – common resident and breeder. There were no reports this year.

Jay – irregular visitor. One on the 3rd of November.

Jackdaw – common, non-breeding, resident. Roosting count 500 on December 8th.

Rook – scarce visitor, although nearby breeder. No counts

Carion Crow – common resident. This opportunistic predator is seldom missed on a walk around the lake. There were no reports this year.

Raven – 3 reports of this rare bird - two on the 21st of March, two on the 17th of September and one on December the 4th.

Chaffinch – common resident and breeder. There were no reports this year.

Bullfinch – uncommon resident. Pleasingly, a pair were seen on March 25th.

Greenfinch – uncommon resident. There were no reports this year.

Lesser Redpoll – uncommon winter visitor. First on the 3rd of February with Siskins then another on the 26th followed by three March records including a Mealy, (pale plumage) lastly one on December 4th.

Goldfinch – fairly common resident. A fairly regular sight around the lake, the only count being 5 on November 17th.

Siskin – common winter visitor. There were 140 on the 7th of Jan 50 on the 25th, 40 on the 2nd of February and 6 on the 22nd of March and 40 on two dates Nov 27th and December 17th.

Reed Bunting – scarce resident and breeder. There was one report of one male on

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