

**NEWS FROM CARR VALE NATURE RESERVE  
AND SURROUNDING AREA.**

**AUGUST 2009.**

August was a poor month with just 92 species being recorded, the equal lowest August total this century. Nevertheless two species were added to the year-list taking it to 140, the highest end of August total ever. Our daily visits continued and we have now completed over 3,400 consecutive visits. Despite the low monthly total a number of notable species were recorded although the rarest species was a dragonfly with the second area record of **Common Hawker**. The last was a single observer record in 1998 so this insect was well received. Other notable species were **Shelduck**, **Hobby**, **Peregrine**, **Water Rail**, **Ruff**, **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Whimbrel**, **Greenshank**, **Black Tern** (7th record), **Tree Pipit** and **Spotted Flycatcher**.

**Little Grebes** were seen daily with a maximum count of eight on the 29th and one or two **Great-crested Grebes** were also seen daily with three on the 20th, 24th and 25th. **Cormorants** were recorded daily with a peak count of 15 on the 26th and double figure counts on a further four dates from the 18th. **Hérons** too were seen daily with a maximum count of 11 on the 3rd. Four **Mute Swans** were present throughout the month with an extra bird on three dates. **Grey Lag Geese** were recorded on 16 dates with a peak count of six on the 20th and 22nd whilst three-figure counts of **Canada Geese** were made on 25 dates with a high of 570 on the 20th.

Three **Shelduck** were seen on the 4th, **Gadwall** were recorded daily and numbers peaked at 54 on the 12th whilst **Teal** were seen on 23 dates (daily from the 14th) with a maximum count of 23 on the 21st. **Mallard** peaked at 198 on the 31st and three **Shoveler** were present on the 4th, 5th and 20th with two on the 1st and 27th and singles on six other dates. A female **Pochard** was seen on the 1st and the female **Tufted Duck** with seven young, reducing to six was present all month.

**Sparrowhawks** were logged on 24 dates (38 bird / days) whilst **Common Buzzards** were logged on 22 dates (91 bird / days) with a peak count of 16 visible at once over the mound (including a single flock of nine) on the 27th. **Kestrels** were logged on 26 dates (50 bird / days), single **Hobbies** were seen on three dates (2nd, 4th and 10th) with two on five dates (17th, 22nd, 25th, 26th and 27th) and single **Peregrines** were seen on 12 dates, although more often than not they were seen from the mound to the south of the recording area.

A **Water Rail** was heard calling on seven dates during the month, an **Oystercatcher** was seen on the 3rd and single **Ringed Plovers** were seen briefly on the 24th and flying north on the 27th. It's been a poor autumn for **Lapwings** and the maximum count was just 120 on the 2nd. A **Dunlin** was present on the 1st (and one was present at Sutton Scarsdale Flash on the 29th). The only record of **Ruff** so far this year was on the 17th when a juvenile was present briefly before departing north-west at 1040. **Snipe** were seen on 20 dates but the maximum count was only six on the 14th and three **Black-tailed Godwits** flew south-east on the 12th. Three **Whimbrel** flew south on the 1st (two at 1050 and one at 1300), two **Greenshank** flew south on the 14th and one was present for five minutes before it flew off north on the 15th. Single **Green**

**Sandpipers** were seen on 20th and 26th and two **Common Sandpipers** were present on the 14th with singles on nine other dates.

The highest count of **Black-headed Gulls** was 150 on the 31st, **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** peaked at 149 on the 28th and single **Herring Gulls** were seen on 19th, 26th, 27th and 30th but we still haven't had a Yellow-legged Gull yet this year. The last **Common Tern** records were two on the 1st with one on the 2nd whilst a flock of four **Black Terns**, present for just 27 minutes on the 25th was the largest flock seen at Carr Vale, although not the highest count. One or two **Little Owls** were seen on 28 dates with three recorded on seven dates and a **Tawny Owl** was heard on the embankment on the 18th. **Swifts** were still present on 31st, single **Kingfishers** were seen on 15 dates with two on the 8th and single **Green Woodpeckers** were seen on seven dates.

**Sand Martins** were recorded on 23 dates mainly in small numbers, less than ten, but 115 flew south on the 27th and 43 flew south on the 30th. 100 **Swallows** were present on the 22nd and 26th and 250 **House Martins** were over the sewage works on the 10th. A **Tree Pipit** flew north-west on 22nd and three (singles) flew south on the 27th whilst five **Meadow Pipits** south on the 30th were rather early. One to three **Yellow Wagtails** were recorded on 16 dates but the highest count was six on the 24th and one to three **Grey Wagtails** were seen on eight dates with four on the 30th and five on the 27th and 29th.

11 **Mistle Thrushes** were counted on the 1st, a **Sedge Warbler** was noted on the 10th and two **Lesser Whitethroats** were seen on the 19th. Two **Common Whitethroats** were seen on the 30th and a **Garden Warbler** was present on the 25th. Two **Spotted Flycatchers** were found on the 26th following a day of constant rain. Unusually one to three **Jays** were present on 13 dates, normally this species doesn't arrive in these numbers until September. 500 **Rooks** were seen from the mound on the 1st and a flock of 17 **Carrion Crows** was counted on the 21st. A count of 25 **House Sparrows** was made on the 27th, 110 **Greenfinch** left their roost on the 8th, there was a count of 30 **Goldfinch** on the 14th and there was a count of 25 **Linnets** on the 10th.

12 species of Butterfly were noted during the month with single **Brimstones** on the 6th and 22nd and single **Commas** on the 6th, 18th and 19th. **Painted Ladies** were logged on six dates with a high of three on the 22nd and single **Red Admirals** were seen on the 6th and 27th. Nine species of dragonfly were also seen with the undoubted highlight being a male **Common Hawker** on the top pool on the Peter Fidler Reserve. Found by Jim Alder it was present on at least the 21st and 22nd and often showing well it allowed many of the site regulars to catch up with what was only the second record for the area. Peak counts of some of the other species were 30 **Emerald Damselflies** on the 21st, six **Southern Hawkers** on the 22nd when three **Brown Hawkers** were also seen. The first **Migrant Hawker** of the year was seen on the early date of the 6th with singles on four other dates and the last date for an **Emperor** was the 8th. 25 **Common Darters** were counted on the 6th. One or two **Hares** were seen on six dates and a **Fox** was seen on the 2nd. A **Weasel** was seen on the 25th, a **Stoat** was seen on the 30th, a **Roe Deer** was recorded on the 13th and a dead **Common Shrew** was found on the 22nd. After an absence of sightings for over two months one of the **Red-eared Sliders** made an appearance on the 30th and the **American Bullfrog** continued to make itself heard until the 17th. Mark Beevers