

## BIRD NEWS FROM CARR VALE NATURE RESERVE AND SURROUNDING AREA

**September 2010.**

Our daily visits continued unabated but produced nothing outstanding. However we did record a massive 110 species, which set a new monthly record beating the previous highest total for a month by four. We added four species to the year list taking that to 142, which is the second highest end of September tally for the year. Notable records included another **Little Egret** (still rare in the north-east of the county), the first **Pink-footed Geese** of the autumn, a record flock of **Grey Lag Geese**, **Pintail**, an excellent series of **Hobby** sightings, **Peregrine**, **Jack Snipe**, **Black-tailed Godwit** (two), **Spotted Redshank** (two, 5th record), **Caspian** (two) and **Yellow-legged Gulls**, an early **Rock Pipit**, the latest **Sand Martin** since 1999, **Whinchat** (two), **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Brambling** and **Common Crossbill** (two, 9th record). No incidents of note occurred apart from a naked man walking out to the flashes for a bath one Sunday morning!

**Little Grebes** were seen daily with a maximum count of seven on 3rd and 4th and after a six week absence a juvenile Great-crested Grebe turned up on the 13th remaining to the month end and being joined by a second bird between the 25th and 28th. **Cormorants** were also recorded daily with a maximum count of nine on 26th and 28th. A juvenile **Little Egret** was present for most of the day on the 2nd and **Grey Herons** were present daily with peak count of ten (including a flock of five high west) on the 23rd. Other **Grey Herons** flying high to the south-west were a flock of three on the 30th. The first **Pink-footed Geese** of the autumn were 80 (50 and 30) south-east and 40 (west) on the 18th whilst three **Grey Lag Geese** were present daily between the 6th and 12th. A single flock of 36 **Grey Lag Geese** flew north on 30th, which is a record count for the site. **Canada Goose** numbers were low as a result of shooting with a maximum count of 94 on 9th.

The first two **Wigeon** of the autumn were seen on the 3rd and by the 29th they had increased to 38. **Gadwall** were recorded in high double-figures for most of the month with three-figure counts on four dates, the highest of which being 113 on the 15th. **Teal** peaked at 57 on 3rd and the highest count of **Mallard** was 166 on 24th. Two **Pintail** found on the 4th were the second earliest arrival date and **Shoveler** were seen daily with a maximum count of nine on seven dates. A male **Pochard** was present on the 22nd and 30th and a pair was seen on the 29th whilst **Tufted Duck** peaked at 12 on 20th.

**Sparrowhawks** were recorded on 22 dates during the month (30 bird / days) with a maximum of three on 19th and **Common Buzzards** were logged on 27 dates (85 bird / days) with a peak count of 18 viewable from the mound on the 21st including one group of 14 drifting slowly south. **Kestrels** were recorded on 17 dates (25 bird / days) but the highlight amongst the raptors was the appearance of a family group of **Hobbies**. Up to three were recorded daily between 2nd and 23rd with a total of 42 bird / days, a very impressive series of sightings. Two **Peregrines** were seen on the 2nd with single birds on nine dates. **Red-legged Partridges** have been released on the Deepdale Farm shoot and some impressive counts of 70 on the 6th and 55 on the 25th clearly relate to these birds. Four **Grey Partridge** were seen on 2nd and single **Water Rails** were recorded on six dates with both an adult and a juvenile seen.

A juvenile **Ringed Plover** was present between the 4th and 12th but there were just two **Golden Plover** records with a maximum of 13 on 18th. **Lapwings** peaked at 142 on the 7th and **Dunlin** records were two on the 3rd, two on the 26th, one on 28th and 29th. A **Jack Snipe** on the 29th was a very welcome addition to the year list and one to three **Snipe** were recorded on 13 dates. Two **Black-tailed Godwits** were found on the 29th, a **Whimbrel** was present on the 5th but the best waders of the month were two juvenile **Spotted Redshanks** that were present for just 15 minutes on the 21st. These are only the fifth record for Carr Vale, the first since 2005 and the first multiple

sighting. Interestingly four of the five records have occurred in September with three of the records in the period 19th-21st September. A **Greenshank** dropped in on the 7th and single **Green Sandpipers** were seen on the 3rd and 28th.

The highest count of **Black-headed Gulls** was 350 on the 11th, **Common Gulls** were seen on six dates from the 13th with a maximum of four on the 28th. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** were seen on most dates with a peak count of 300 on 6th and single **Herring Gulls** were noted on six dates. The rarest gulls though were a juvenile / first winter **Yellow-legged Gull** on the 30th and two different first summer **Caspian Gulls** on the 6th and 10th. Three late **Common Terns** were seen on the 22nd, which is the second latest date for this species. **Collared Doves** peaked at 48 on the 15th, single **Little Owls** were seen on 14 dates with two on the 30th whilst a **Swift** on the 22nd was the latest since 2004. Single **Kingfishers** were recorded on 12 dates, two **Green Woodpeckers** were seen on the 17th and 30th with singles on 11 dates and two **Great-spotted Woodpeckers** were recorded on the 26th with singles on 11 dates.

48 **Sand Martins** flew south on the 4th whilst the last of the year flew south on the 30th, the latest last date since 1999. A total of 1604 **Swallows** flew south over 19 dates with notable counts of 450 on the 18th and 375 on the 21st. Other counts of this species moving south included 140 on the 19th, 170 on the 22nd, 130 on the 23rd and a late push of 91 on the 30th. 75 **House Martins** flew south on the 23rd and during the month a total of 418 **Meadow Pipits** flew south over 16 dates with a high counts of 127 on both the 12th and 30th. A **Rock Pipit** was present on Middle Flash on 28th but it was very elusive and three **Yellow Wagtails** flew south on the 6th, with last of the year on the 21st. One or two **Grey Wagtails** were logged on 16 dates with four on the 5th and four more south on the 23rd. A total of 50 **Pied Wagtails** flew south over five dates from 21st with a maximum count of 21 on the 23rd.

Single **Whinchats** were found on the 2nd and 5th and the first **Redwings** of the autumn were 18 on the 26th, followed by one on the 27th and two on the 30th. Last dates for warblers were as follows: **Sedge Warbler** 4th, **Reed Warbler** 18th, **Lesser Whitethroat** 7th, **Whitethroat** 8th and **Garden Warbler** 7th. **Blackcaps** were present all month with a maximum of four on the 18th as were **Chiffchaffs** with a maximum count five on the 22nd. A **Spotted Flycatcher** was a nice find on the 5th, **Long-tailed Tits** reached a peak count of 21 on the 28th, whilst **Willow Tits** were a daily feature and **Coal Tits** were logged on eight dates. One to three **Jays** were seen on 21 dates, 47 **Jackdaws** and 171 **Rooks** were counted on the 1st whilst a pair of **Ravens** flew west on the 26th. A **Tree Sparrow** flew north on the 25th and four were present in the breeding area on the 30th whilst the first **Brambling** of the autumn was heard on the 30th. **Goldfinches** were another species that was recorded daily reaching a peak count of 40 on 14th. The first **Siskins** for the autumn were two on the 13th but they were scarce thereafter with one or two on five dates from the 21st. The first **Lesser Redpoll** of the autumn was one on the 12th followed by records on four other dates including a flock of 20 on the 26th and nine south on the 30th. Two **Common Crossbills** that flew south on the 6th were unusual and small numbers of **Yellowhammer** peaked at 15 on the 30th.

A **Fox** was seen on the 15th and a **Grass Snake** was found on the 5th. The three **Roe Deer** that had been present for most of the summer were last seen on the 12th having probably been disturbed by either farming activity or shooting. The **Red-eared Terrapin** was seen on the 2nd and 10th.

Mark Beavers.