

BIRD NEWS FROM CARR VALE NATURE RESERVE AND SURROUNDING AREA.

NOVEMBER

Heavy rain early in the month caused water levels in the flashes to rise to 30" but otherwise November was a month without incident that was until the 30th when six inches of snow fell during the morning making access very difficult.

Nine **Shoveler** on the 1st was the highest count of the month and the same day 250 **Wood Pigeons** flew south-west, two male **Great-spotted Woodpeckers** were seen and 450 **Starlings** flew west. In the evening 200 more **Starlings** roosted as did 33 **Reed Buntings**. A **Migrant Hawker** and four **Common Darters** were seen on the 2nd and then on the 6th 2,450 **Pink-footed Geese** flew south-east. A male **Goldeneye** was present on the 7th, 50 **Pink-footed Geese** flew west on the 8th when a **Dunlin** was seen and six **Grey Lag Geese** and a **Dunlin** were present on the 11th.

40+ **Skylarks** and 80 **Yellowhammers** were in fields to the west of the reserve on the 13th and the last **Comma** and **Common Darter** of the year were also seen on that date. The afternoon of the 14th was excellent with two adult **Whooper Swans** south-east, a female **Merlin** over the South Marsh, three calling **Water Rails**, the elusive **Cetti's Warbler** was heard and two **Brambling** flew around the area whilst in the evening the day ended with great views of a **Barn Owl**. 20 **Grey Partridge** were counted on the 15th when the **Cetti's Warbler** was seen briefly in flight and the **Barn Owl** was seen again. Three **Goldeneye** were seen on the 18th and the **Barn Owl** was present on the 20th. A first winter **Mediterranean Gull** was found on the 24th when there was a count of 40 **Stock Doves**.

50 **Pink-footed Geese** flew east on the 21st when two male **Goosander** flew north and four more were reported, the **Barn Owl** again showed as it did on four other dates until the 28th and the **Cetti's Warbler** was heard calling again. Three **Roe Deer** were also recorded on this date. Three **Whooper Swans** were present briefly before flying north and the **Cetti's Warbler** was still calling by the north hide on the 22nd. 18 **Cormorants** were present on the 25th along with a pair of **Goosanders** and 16 **Red-legged Partridges**. The last three **Cormorants** of the year were recorded on the 26th when **Wigeon** peaked at 136, a female **Goosander** flew north and 20 **Lesser Redpoll** were on the Peter Fidler Reserve. 80 **Teal** were counted on the 27th and the **Cetti's Warbler** was seen again briefly on the same date when 43 **Reed Buntings** were counted into roost.

DECEMBER

Things got worse on the 1st when another nine inches of snow fell and then commenced a prolonged cold spell with all the ponds covered by thick ice for the whole month. This had a detrimental effect on bird recording but despite the hardship, daily coverage, albeit limited was maintained throughout the month and once again we completed a full year of recording.

Five **Tree Sparrows** were seen on the 5th but the main ornithological event of the month was the arrival of **Waxwings** on New Station Road on the 8th when 46 were seen with birds being seen most days until the 20th when four were seen. 41 **Waxwings** were seen on the 10th, a **Shoveler** was seen on the 13th and remained to the 14th and the **Waxwing** flock increased to 84 on 13th when six **Willow Tits** were present. 167 **Waxwings** were counted on the 15th, two **Goosander** were present on the 16th and 100 **Waxwings** were still present on the 17th. 120 **Waxwings** were present on the 18th when 44 flew west over the reserve and a **Shelduck** was present on the 21st.

A **Bittern** showed well on the 26th when 80 **Herring Gulls** flew south and the **Bittern** was still present on the 27th. A **Mistle Thrush** was singing on the 29th. A **Goosander** flew north on the 31st when amazingly the only **Coot** of the month was seen. 50 **Goldfinches** were also seen on the last day of the year when 22 **Reed Buntings** were counted into roost.

Mark Beavers

