

BIRD NEWS FROM CARR VALE NATURE RESERVE
AND SURROUNDING AREA

FEBRUARY 2014

Once again it was down to Ian Swain to maintain the daily coverage as I was away twice during the month and during the month we logged 79 species with the year list rising to 81. On the 17th work recommenced on the Sand Martin bank, which had been put on hold during the winter because of the ground conditions. One or two Grey Lag Geese were present on 11 dates, small numbers of Pochard were present daily, Cormorants were logged in single figures on 24 dates, Sparrowhawks were seen on nine dates, Buzzards on 23 dates but only in single figures, Snipe were also recorded in single figures on 24 dates, one or two Common Gulls were present on 12 dates, good numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls present daily, a Green Woodpecker was present on 17 dates. One or two Common Chiffchaffs were seen on eight dates, a single Grey Wagtail was noted on seven dates and Bullfinches were seen daily as were Reed Buntings.

The two Pink-footed Geese from the end of January were still present on the 1st, remaining to the 3rd when Grey Lag Geese peaked at four, 63 Teal was the highest count of the month and a female Goosander flew south. 204 Wigeon and ten Cormorants on the 2nd were the highest counts of the month but numbers of Wigeon had reduced to around 100 by the month end. A Kingfisher was also seen on the 2nd as was a male Great-spotted Woodpecker and a Siberian Chiffchaff (also seen on 3rd). Six Whooper Swans flew north and a flock of 30 Sky Larks was still present on the 4th when two Common Chiffchaffs were seen and the Linnet flock numbered 200. A male Shelduck was present from the 5th when two Lesser Redpolls were present (with singles on the 3rd and 4th). The male Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen again on the 6th, Shelduck increased to two (a pair) from the 7th after which they were present on 13 further dates. Nine Siskin on the 9th was the highest count of just three records during the month.

Three Golden Plover were seen on the 11th one of only two sightings during the month, six male Pochard were present for six dates from the 12th whilst 11 Red-legged Partridges were counted the same day and 120 Fieldfare on the 15th was the highest count of the month. A single Pink-footed Goose was present from the 16th (until the 23rd) when there was a count of eight Common Buzzard, a Water Rail was heard calling (also 18th) and the first Oystercatcher returned. Also on the 16th there were counts of 250 Herring Gulls and 268 Great Black-backed Gulls, 30 Magpies, a Kingfisher was also seen as were two Common and two Siberian Chiffchaffs. Snipe peaked at eight on the 17th when Black-headed Gulls reached 600 (also on 18th when a leucistic bird was also present), a Great-spotted Woodpecker was seen, more counts included 139 Jackdaws and 250 Rooks whilst the bird of the day was a male Brambling. 32 Golden Plover were counted on the 18th when Lapwings peaked at 205 and two Common Chiffchaffs were seen again, one of which was singing. One of the Siberian Chiffchaffs was seen on the 19th and 46 Goldfinch were counted on the 20th.

A Little Owl on the 22nd was the only sighting of the month and the same day six Hares were counted, 12 Redwing on the 24th was the only double-figure count of the month and a

Siberian Chiffchaff was seen again on the 26th when a very early Brimstone was seen. Two Tawny Owls were found roosting on the 27th. The second half of the Oystercatcher pair and the first Dunlin of the year appeared on the 28th whilst there was a report of a woodcock during the last week.

Mark Beevers