



THE NEWSLETTER

July 2008

www.glamorganbirds.org.uk



Kenfig's Black-winged Stilt (Photo:Richard Smith)

You've got to admit it - if it's rare or scarce birds you're looking for, well, Glamorgan wouldn't be top of most birders' lists of counties to visit. We're used to lean times down here. But, we're a tough lot and I'd say we more than deserved the run of luck we got at the end of April and into the beginning of May. For a brief few days the events at Kenfig sent us into birding heaven!

First up was a **Black-winged Stilt** – a county first. It was first seen flying over the Pool by Martin Bevan and Phil Hill. Neil Donaghy soon got on it and Steve Moon re-found it the following day. It was to return to Kenfig on and off until the 4th of May. Next up was one, or possibly two, **Whiskered Terns**. Neil Donaghy found one on May 4th flying over the Pool and it was soon relocated by Dean Bolt over Kenfig Rivermouth. It remained until the next day. A few days later Nigel Addecott and Judd Hunt saw a Whiskered Tern over the Pool. Photographic evidence suggests that this may have been a different bird to the one found a few days earlier. And then, on May 8th, a **Greater Short-toed Lark** – yet another county first – was found by Alan Rosney and John Wilson at Haul Road on a GBC mid-week trip to Kenfig! You can read the full story of that discovery later on in the newsletter. Thanks to all the 'finders' for making it such a fortnight to remember.

Glamorgan Bird Club Special General Meeting

Kenfig NNR Reserve Centre – Monday, September 8th at 7:30pm
Followed by Members' Own and refreshments

More details on p.2

News

Membership News

Welcome to the following who have recently joined the club: Jacqueline Broomer from Bridgend, Helen & Neil Campodonic from Penylan, Adrian Meredith from Penrhiwfer, Colin Harvey from Porth, Donald & Janet Ribeiro from Radyr, Wayne Stainthorpe from Porthcawl, Craig & Rebecca Furlong from Nantyffyllon, Brian Tregembo from Swansea, John Duffy from Thornhill, David Barraclough & Melanie Gould from Llangynwyd and Stephen Campbell from Don Mills, Ontario. We hope that you enjoy your association with the club.

Membership renewals were sent out with the last newsletter. If you have not renewed a further reminder is included with this edition. Please note that this will be your final reminder.

I'd also like to remind you that you need to be a current member to have access to the Forum on the www.glamorganbirds.org.uk website.

P.S. Many of you pay your subs by standing order. Every year a couple of these fail to go through due to a change of bank account. I shall be chasing these up in the near future.

GBC Library

Wayne Morris – a professional librarian himself – has kindly volunteered to help run a new GBC Library. He's currently sourcing a secure cabinet to safely house the books at Kenfig Reserve Centre.

As was reported in the last newsletter, it was decided to set up a library after Stefan Golaszewski, a founder member of GBC who sadly passed away last year, very kindly left many of his bird books to the Club.

We're glad to say that Peter Faber has generously donated some books to the library and Merlin Biosurveys, run by Geri Thomas, has also donated a copy of the recently published *Birds of Gwent*. If you too would like to donate bird/natural history books to this library we'd love to hear from you.

Quarry Extension Threat to Dartford Warblers

An extension to a quarry in the Vale of Glamorgan which was planned for this summer threatened Dartford Warblers breeding in its vicinity. The extension was halted when GBC notified the relevant authorities that these Schedule 1 birds were nesting nearby. Sadly, the planning permission to extend the quarry was granted back in the 1980's and remains in force until 2042. Once the breeding season is over it is likely that the quarry owners will continue with the extension work.

AGM

The AGM was held at Kenfig NNR reserve centre on April 22nd. Pat and John Everett stood down as Club Secretary and Treasurer. They both showed great dedication to the Club – travelling all the way from Gloucestershire every month for committee meetings. Our thanks to both of them for all the hard work they put in over the last couple of years. The new Secretary is Richard May and the new Treasurer is Adrian Murch. Matt Evans also joins the committee.

After suggested amendments from the floor to the draft revised constitution the members present at the AGM voted in favour of the following two motions:

"This AGM instructs the Committee to call a General Meeting to adopt a revised constitution that will meet the present and foreseeable needs of the Club and which would allow the Club to seek Charitable status if a future General Meeting so decides."

"This AGM instructs the Committee to bring forward proposals for seeking charitable status to a General Meeting."

Full minutes of the AGM and the Chairman's Address have been published on the Club website or are available from Richard May.

Special General Meeting

This revised constitution (with amendments) now needs to be presented to a General Meeting for approval. To do this, a Special General Meeting will be held at Kenfig NNR reserve centre on **Monday, September 8th at 7:30pm**.

You can see the revised constitution on the website www.glamorganbirds.org.uk or once again please contact Richard May who will gladly send you a copy. If it is approved then a proposal for GBC to seek charitable status will also be proposed on the same evening. The meeting will be followed by a Members' Own – a chance to bring along your photos, videos, CDs, DVDs etc - and refreshments.

GBC Merchandise

You can still get your hands on *The Birds of the Caerphilly Basin* (£6) and *The Birds of Cardiff* (£6 – discounted from £10). Contact John Wilson for more details.

And don't forget that you can also get GBC T-shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces from Alan Rosney. Contact details can be found at the back of this newsletter.

Honorary Memberships

Congratulations to Steve Moon and Richard Smith. At the recent AGM the members present voted unanimously that they should both receive honorary membership of the Glamorgan Bird Club in recognition for their long standing contribution to the club since its formation.

Both Steve and Richard are founder members of GBC and have been actively involved in running the club since the very beginning. Steve was on the committee continuously until his retirement as Recorder a year ago – a position he'd held for 14 years. At one time or another, he's held most of the positions on the committee. He's also been editor of the Bird Report. His knowledge of the workings of local councils and planning matters has also been invaluable to the Club.

Similarly, Richard was also a founding member of GBC and was on the committee continuously until he retired as Secretary 2 years ago. Like Steve he has held most of the main jobs on the committee and has also been editor of the Bird Report. He recently took on the role of Colour Photo Editor of the Report and was instrumental in making great improvements to this publication's colour sections.

The Glamorgan Bird List

Barry Stewart and David Gilmore have recently updated the Glamorgan Bird List and it has been uploaded onto the website. It is available as a download complete with tick-boxes. The list currently stands at 327.

Committee News

The committee has met on 3 occasions since the publication of the last newsletter. Most of the subjects discussed appear as items in this newsletter. In addition:

Alan Rosney attended the RCT *Love Where You Live* event in Ynysangharad Park to promote the club.

John Wilson, Geri Thomas and Alan Rosney attended a BTO Atlas meeting in Thetford, Norfolk. This was a forum for bird clubs involved with the collecting data for the Atlas. Ideas were exchanged, questions answered and problems solved. Advice was also given on how to seek sponsorship to pay for the expensive undertaking of publishing Local Atlases.

It was decided to end the website Photo of the Month Competition and replace it with a more easily accessed way to showcase members' photographic talent.

Full copies of the meetings' minutes are available on request from Richard May.

Glamorgan Farmer Short listed for Prize

A Glamorgan farm is on the verge of becoming the first ever winner of the Nature of Farming Award led by RSPB and BBC Countryfile magazine. Peter Davies of Slade Farm in Southerndown, Vale of Glamorgan, is one of four UK finalists vying for public votes to take the prestigious new award and the top prize of £1000. And you can help him win this prize by visiting www.rspb.org.uk/farmvote

Peter Davies is an example of how to manage a farm that is both commercially productive and a vital habitat. Slade Farm is farmed organically and includes a mixture of arable land, cattle and sheep farming and outdoor pigs, all managed in a way that encourages wildlife to thrive. Feeding and breeding areas have been provided for some of the most threatened farmland bird species in Wales such as choughs, yellowhammers and tree sparrows.

Other important Welsh wildlife can be found on the farm too, such as great-crested newts, brown hares, lesser horseshoe bats and a variety of moths, butterflies and rare plants - Slade Farm is one of the only sites in the UK for some plant species.

'Wildlife corridors' have been created to link up the different habitats, wild bird cover crops have been planted to provide food and nesting cover and the animal grazing is carefully managed in order to provide a mixture of grass lengths, vital to attract a range of nesting bird species.

SEWBRc Glamorgan Biodiversity Blitz Day - Southerndown

And you can visit Peter Davies' Slade Farm (SS8873) as part of a *Biodiversity Blitz Day* organised by South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc) on behalf of the biological recording community in Glamorgan.

The day will start with an introduction to the site by the farm owners, and the aim is to record as many species, over as wide a range of taxa as possible!

The event will be held on Saturday, August 16th and is being run in conjunction with the Heritage Coast Project. Slade Farm has some public footpaths, but also some land which would not normally be accessible to the public.

This event is free, and open to anyone with an interest in biological recording, but we request that people register their interest by contacting SEWBRc (029) 2064 1110 / info@sewbrec.org.uk

Bird Report 2007

Section writers have until the end of July to complete their section and return them to the Editor. The 2007 ringing reports have already been received.

Cardiff Coastal Path

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has commissioned an All Wales Coastal Path (implemented by the Countryside Commission for Wales) linking through all local authority areas with the target for completion at 2012 (to tie-in with Olympics).

The Coastal Path is to link in with other paths and trails. In Cardiff this includes the Taff, Ely and Rumney.

Naturally, GBC has grave concerns about the disturbance this path would cause to birds and other wildlife in such an environmentally sensitive area – particularly along the eastern part of this section of path – along Rumney Great Wharf, around the Rhydney Estuary and along the Cardiff foreshore.

Therefore, the committee had a meeting recently with Tricia Cottnam, Coastal Access Officer, Cardiff Borough Council so that we could put forward our views. Here is a summary of what she had to say:

Cardiff has around 15km of coastline.

The footpath can be within a 2km buffer zone from the actual coastline to allow it to move inland for special restrictions. There is an emphasis on the creation of linked circular paths.

WAG is promoting bridleways rather than footpaths. For this stretch around Cardiff the only part planned as bridleway will be the link to Monmouth (and here will be behind the seawall)

It is not intended to incorporate bylaws as the scheme will not be a national trail (and as such will be managed by the Council).

Tricia Cottnam has now produced 'desire line' showing the ideal (but not definite) route of the path.

Vaughan Grantham (Cardiff Borough Council County Ecologist) is now carrying out appropriate assessment which will need to show no negative effect. The issue of disturbance is not just a case of moving birds from one single area – it has a knock-on effect, pushing birds to sub-optimum sites where they will then compete with/displace or be displaced by those birds already present at secondary site. It is important to ensure all available data is incorporated into appropriate assessment.

A country park could potentially be established once Lamby Tip closes.

A business plan will be completed by end of June and a workshop is planned for the future to discuss plans with interested bodies.

Cardiff Coastal Path (cont)

The meeting went well and many ideas were discussed as to ways of avoiding disturbance to birds and other wildlife. The Club will submit relevant biodiversity records in its possession to enable appropriate assessment of the environmental impact of the proposed path and we have also sent a GBC 'position statement' to Ms Cottnam. This statement has been published on the website or you can receive a copy of it by contacting the Secretary.

We will organise another meeting with Ms Cottnam once there have been further developments regarding this path.

GBC Nestbox Scheme

The nestboxes built with the timber kindly donated by Robert Price Builders' Merchants have been put to good use. Cosmseton, Lavernock Point Nature Reserve, Kenfig NNR and on farmland around Maesteg. Seven nestboxes were erected at Tŷ Hafan, the children's hospice near Sully, and we're glad to say that 4 of them were occupied by Blue Tits this year. Sadly, nestboxes erected at Cwm Dinbath were immediately stolen. Replacements were built and erected in their place.

Dead Bodies Wanted!

Dan Forman is in need of **carcasses** of **weasel**, **stoat**, **mink** and **polecat** for his research. Please keep an eye out for those mustelids, especially when traveling on the road: any donations will be gratefully received!

Dr Dan Forman, Behavioural, Physiological & Molecular Ecology Group, Institute of Environmental Sustainability, Swansea University, Singleton Park. Swansea, SA2 8PP
Tel: (01792) 295 445.

In the event of finding an **otter carcass**, please telephone (0800) 807 060 (Environment Agency) or (0845) 130 6229 (Countryside Council for Wales) with details of the location. Otter carcasses will be forwarded to the Cardiff University Otter Project.

Newsletters by Email

Yes, here's another plea. The costs of publishing the newsletter are rising. You can help by having your newsletters delivered by email. This not only saves the Club some money, it's also the 'green' option and you'll receive your newsletter up to a week sooner than those who receive it by snail-mail! If you'd like to receive your newsletter this way in the future please contact the Editor. Thank you very much!

Bird Sightings – Paul Roberts

April

Highlights: A **Black-winged Stilt** from (from 27th) constituted a 1st county record. Wintering **Spotted Sandpiper** at Lisvane Reservoir, **Ring-billed Gull** at Lamby Lake, **Water Pipit** at Llwyn Onn Reservoir and **Great Grey Shrike** at Perthcelyn all remained into April. A 'new' **Great Grey Shrike** was found at Mynydd Bwlfa. A **Marsh Harrier** was spotted over Nantyfyllon. Ospreys were noted at Culverhouse Cross and Cwmbach. Three *littoralis* **Rock Pipits** turned up at Ogmores Estuary.

Other sites: Little Egrets were recorded at six sites, maximum four at Rhymney Great Wharf. A Bittern was reported from Llanishen Reservoir. A Scaup was in Cardiff Bay. A Hen Harrier stopped off at Kenfig, with Hobbies at two Cardiff localities. Migrant waders included Little Ringed Plover at Ogmores Estuary, two inland Grey Plovers at Llanilid, Knot at Ogmores Estuary, Ruff at Kenfig, Greenshanks at Llanilid and Rhymney Great Wharf, and maximum four Green Sandpipers at Llanilid. An Arctic Skua passed offshore at Cardiff Barrage. A Little Gull was at Cardiff Bay and a Yellow-legged Gull was at Ogmores Estuary. A Little Tern and three Arctic Terns dropped in at Aberthaw, with another Arctic Tern at Barry Docks. Two Short-eared Owls lingered at Llanilid. An impressive flock of over 3000 Sand Martins gathered at Cardiff Bay. A Black Redstart visited Ogmores-by-Sea. Ring Ouzels were seen at Lamby Lake and Nantyfyllon. Seven Grasshopper Warblers were near Garn Wen, Maesteg. A Wood Warbler called in at Ogmores Est.

May



Kenfig's Short-toed Lark (Photo: Steve Hinton)

Highlights: A purple patch at Kenfig saw a **Short-toed Lark** (8th – 10th, the first county record) one or two **Whiskered Terns** (4th - 5th and 11th - 12th), plus last month's **Black-winged Stilt** still about (until the 4th). A **Cattle Egret** was seen near Miskin (23rd). The long-staying **Ring-billed Gull** was sighted at its regular haunt of Lamby Lake and at Green Point, Cardiff. A **White Stork** was reported by farm workers in a field near Welsh St Donats. Two **Dotterel** stopped off at Mynydd Eglwysilan (2nd - 3rd). A **Wryneck** was heard calling at Lavernock (9th). A **Honey Buzzard** came "in off" at Cardiff Heliport (19th). An immature male **Garganey** arrived at Cosmeston (14th). A possible *transitiva* race **Swallow** frequented Dunraven, seemingly paired with a nominate bird.

Other sites: A Storm Petrel was off Porthcawl. A Red Kite flew over Whitchurch. A Sanderling was inland at Llanilid. A Curlew Sandpiper was at Kenfig Pool. A Great Skua flew down channel at Cwm Nash. Cardiff Bay held a Little Gull. Little Terns were observed at Aberthaw and Kenfig Sands. Black Terns comprised eight at Kenfig, three at Aberthaw and one at Lamby Lake. Turtle Doves were recorded at Rhymney Great Wharf (2), Kenfig and Cwm Nash. A Short-eared Owl lingered at Kenfig. A Pied Flycatcher was at Llangynwyd, although the species has been scarce locally this year.

June

Highlights: Ospreys were seen at Aberthaw and Mynydd Eglwysilian. Up to nine Choughs frequented the Heritage Coast.

Red Kites were over Sarn and Whitchurch. Storm Petrels and Manx Shearwaters were regularly recorded off the coast, most notably at Porthcawl. Return wader movement commenced with five Common Sandpipers at Ogmores Estuary and a Redshank at Llanilid, where several Cuckoos were noted. A nocturnal visit to Cwmdau, Maesteg produced two Grasshopper Warblers and a Nightjar, as well as flyover Redshank and Oystercatcher.



Kenfig's Whiskered Tern (Photo: Steve Hinton)

"Description" species listed above which haven't been ratified by the British Birds Rarities Committee, the Welsh Records Panel or the Eastern Glamorgan Records Committee appear in 'bold'.

Future Club Events

Field Trips

Please contact John Wilson on (029) 2033 9424 or john_wilson@glamorganbirds.org.uk at least seven days before the trip date. The meeting point for non-local trips is normally at St. Margaret's Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff – just off junction 32 of the M4. Departure times vary, but John will be able to give you the information for each trip. These trips are suitable for birders of all levels.

Thursday, August 21st

Lavernock

A local trip in search of early autumn migrants

Sunday, August 24th

Dale and Gann Estuary (2 ½ hrs from Cardiff)

A variety of waders should be present along with other autumn migrants.

Thursday, September 18th

Goldcliff, Gwent Levels

A return trip with autumn migration in full swing. Species such as Little Stint and Wood Sandpiper could be present.

Monthly Walks (Kenfig NNR)

These take place on the third Saturday of each month. Meet at the Reserve Centre at 9.00am. Contact Dave Carrington on (01656) 743 386 for details.

Monthly Walks (Cosmeston Lakes and Lavernock Point)

These take place on the first Saturday of each month. Meet in the car park at Cosmeston at 9.30am. Contact John Wilson (see contacts page in newsletter) for details.

Monthly Walks (Forest Farm - joint walk with the Friends of Forest Farm and Cardiff RSPB group)

These take place on the third Saturday of each month. Meet in the car park at Forest Farm Nature Reserve at 10.00am. Contact Alan Rosney (see contacts page in newsletter) for details.

Indoor Meetings

There are no indoor meetings during the summer months. They resume again in October but please note the following important meeting:

Monday, September 8th

Special General Meeting, Kenfig NNR, Reserve Centre, 7.30pm

To discuss suggested amendments to update the Club constitution and whether GBC should try and gain charitable status. The meeting will be followed by a Members' Own – a chance to bring along your photos, videos, CDs, DVDs etc - and refreshments. Please contact Paul Denning to book your slot pgdenning.naturepics@virgin.net

British Dragonfly Society: National Dragonfly Atlas Project (2008 - 2013)

The National Dragonfly Atlas Project was launched in April 2008. The aim of this project is to update the known distribution of British dragonfly and damselfly species over the next five years, culminating in the publication of a new national atlas in 2013.

A new national atlas is urgently required. Climate change is contributing to increasingly earlier spring emergence and change in the range of a number of our species. In addition, new species are becoming established in Britain. We are living through a dynamic change in our dragonfly fauna and need to record this information, thereby providing evidence for future assessment of the impact climate change and other environmental factors are having on our dragonfly fauna.

To succeed in this ambitious project good national coverage is needed. The more people that get involved, the more information on the status of our dragonfly and damselfly species can be gathered. This will not only allow the production of a high quality national atlas but also provide a good baseline of information that can be used for the future benefit of dragonfly conservation. Recording needs lots of keen people, so please get in touch with Mike Powell, vice county recorder for V.C.41 Glamorgan to volunteer your time and enthusiasm and he will then be able to keep you informed. **(029) 2076 2182** Mike.Powell2@coorsbrewers.com For more information please see the British Dragonfly Society website www.dragonflysoc.org.uk/nationalatlas

A training event has been organised across the border by the Gwent Wildlife Trust on **Thursday 7th August 2008 at Parc Bryn Bach** and surrounding area. **10am - 4.30pm** at Cost: £40 non-members £25 members. Booking essential. (01600) 740 600 for more information.



Aliens and an anniversary, veterans and trainees



Aliens and Introduced Species – records wanted

There are a number of familiar species which we think of as part of our British birdlife but which did not find their way here naturally – Canada Goose, Egyptian Goose, Ruddy Duck and Little Owl come to mind. In the official British List these are in Category C, having established self-sustaining breeding populations from birds originally introduced by man, either deliberately or accidentally. Others beginning to appear locally include Ring-necked Parakeet, while species such as Cattle and Little Egrets have colonised naturally. Greylag Geese present another scenario, with a wild breeding population existing only in Scotland; birds further south in summer are from feral/introduced stock.

Introduced species of animals and plants are one of the biggest threats to biodiversity. Wildfowl seem particularly prone to inter-breeding between similar species - the threat to the native and already vulnerable White-headed Duck in Spain from hybridisation with Ruddy Ducks is well known. Other undesirable effects include introduced Ruddy Shelducks in Switzerland competing with Barn Owls and Kestrels for hole nest boxes provided for the latter. Numbers of Egyptian Geese in the Netherlands recently exploded by a factor of 12 in just over 10 years, and both WeBS data and the current British Atlas reveal similar expansion of range here.

So it's important to monitor introduced and escaped species, hybrids and exotics – as long as they are free flying. Please submit records of such sightings so that the current national and local atlas projects will reflect the situation and provide the basis for future conservation and classification. Our birdlife is ever changing!

WeBS (Wetland Bird Survey) 60th anniversary

WeBS has its origins in two previous schemes, the National Wildfowl Counts and the Birds of Estuaries Enquiry, which date back to 1947. This continuity means that the UK's waterbirds are among the best monitored populations in the world. Monthly counts are made at around 2,000 UK sites in a variety of wetland habitats, ranging from large estuaries of international importance such as the Severn to smaller lakes and pools supporting wildlife of local significance. Around 20 sites are monitored regularly in East Glamorgan, and although rarely making the annual "Sites of (inter)national importance" charts, the data contribute to the annual statistics. They also feature prominently in our annual report and provide evidence for the value of such sites in maintaining local biodiversity. So a big "Thank you" to our regular volunteers who brave all weathers to continue to count the waterbirds each month.

Survey veterans – are you the East Glamorgan champion?

Amazingly, there are two well known ornithologists, Bryan Sage and Frank Gribble, who between them have been taking part in WeBS for over 119 years! That set me wondering who our survey veterans are. So step forward if you think you have a claim to be the record holder for WeBS or any other survey. Linda started doing the Common Bird Census, the forerunner of the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), in 1977 when we lived in the East Midlands, where, in those days, Corn Bunting, Yellow Wagtail and Tree Sparrow were all regular breeders, but Buzzard was only a scarce winter visitor. We've been doing WeBS (or the National Waterfowl Counts as it then was) locally since 1993, but I'm sure others can beat that – so nominations please!

Ringling courses

The BTO organises the British and Irish Ringing Scheme, under which around 800,000 birds are ringed annually. The skills necessary to become a ringer can only be learnt by practice under the close supervision of experienced ringers, most of whom are volunteers. From time to time I'm contacted by keen (usually) young birders who want to train as ringers and I refer them to the BTO ringing office and/or to our local ringers whose capacity to train ringers is limited. Courses organised by the Field Studies Council and BTO based at Flatford Mill in Suffolk and Slapton Ley in Devon could help fill that gap. They cater for newcomers who want their first experience of bird ringing, providing one to one tuition on safely handling and ringing birds and also a variety of catching techniques. More details at www.bto.org/ringing/ringinfo/ringcourse.htm or contact enquiries.fm@field-studies-council.org.

Rob Nottage (*BTO Regional Representative and WeBS organiser for East Glamorgan*)

email : rob_nottage@glamorganbirds.org.uk or phone: (01446) 781 423

GBC to the Rescue!

As most of our members will know, Peregrines nested again this year on the clock tower of Cardiff's City Hall. Three chicks were believed to have hatched in May.

On June 10th, GBC member Janet Dewes and myself were on our way to a jazz gig in the City centre. We parked at the side of the City hall and got out of the car. I was astonished to see a young peregrine on the pavement a few feet away, watched by a concerned lady and her partner. "Don't worry, I'm a Glamorgan Bird club committee member", I said to reassure her, while having little idea how to handle the situation. But I thought I could find someone who would.



The Female Peregrine (Photo: Dr Peter Howlett)

My first thought was to contact Geri Thomas, who was at Porth but promised to head straight down. The bird seemed quite quiet and calm, and our concert was due to start, so I gave Geri precise information as to its whereabouts and said we'd go. But as soon as we moved a few metres away, Lesser Black-Backs came in to attack. A couple of Magpies also arrived to investigate the commotion. The young falcon flapped in panic and hit a parked car. Clearly, we would have to stay. Geri called to say he had tried to contact Colin Richards (of South Wales Peregrine Watch) but Colin couldn't get down to Cardiff any time soon

We had been joined by a couple of the local homeless people, who had watched the birds nesting and growing up and were quite concerned. So we stood some distance either side of the chick, and made sure that no one approached too closely. At one point, it climbed through some railings and flapped uncertainly on the edge of a drop down to the old cellars. This was a major concern for us – if it got down there, we'd never get hold of it. However, we encouraged it to move back to a grassy area next to the building. During this period, I discovered that one of our new friends was not, in fact, one of the homeless. He was Peter Howlett, curator of vertebrates at the National Museum, and a man who knows far more about birds in general, and falcons in particular, than I do. He had modestly said nothing, as I seemed to have the situation under control. We had met briefly a few years ago. Peter was pretty sure this was a young female as it was quite large.

It was now standing again on the railings wall, with the drop on one side, but was perfectly calm and relaxed. Geri arrived, put on his tough gloves, and strode purposefully towards the chick with a towel Janet had taken from her car. Most of you will know that our County Bird Recorder is an imposing figure, particularly wearing his habitual broad rimmed hat. The bird took one look at this rapidly approaching giant and dived into the abyss. Now we had a problem.

Janet and Geri went to find the security man. Then we left Peter and Geri to carry out the actual rescue so that we could see what was left of the gig. Geri later told me: "I got the security man from City Hall involved but he didn't have a key for the door to the well so I climbed down the corner of the wall. The homeless guy dropped my leather gauntlets and the towel to me and I cornered the chick easily. Once I had her feet and wings grasped, I wrapped the towel around her and used my belt to fasten around the towel, feet and wing tips. Once covered, it stopped struggling. Grasping the belt end in my teeth, I was able to climb far enough up the wall to pass the bird to Peter Howlett. I then threw my gloves up to the homeless gentleman and climbed out.



The Young Male (Photo: Dr Peter Howlett)

Pete and the security guard then went into the City Hall and the security guard let Peter out onto the roof to release the bird with one of its siblings and the parents." Geri very modestly omits to mention that the well was perhaps 4 metres deep.

The next day, Peter received reports that another youngster was flapping around the Police Station and Alexandra Gardens. This turned out to be a female and was assumed to be the same bird that had been rescued the previous evening. She could fly quite well but didn't seem interested in going back onto the roof of City Hall. That evening the story took another turn as Peter reports:

"At about 7.30, just about to settle down and watch the footie, I got a call from the security lodge at the Museum. There was a young Peregrine in the courtyard behind the Museum, could I help? Thinking it was going to be the female again, I headed up to the Museum but was rather surprised to be confronted by a tiny (in comparison) male. I easily cornered the bird and in the hand it was obvious that it still had some growing to do. The primary feathers were still in 'pin' – still growing and it had yet to bulk up its wing muscle. The same security guard as the previous evening let me onto the roof of City Hall and I left the bird in a sheltered spot on the roof".

A few days later, the South Wales Echo had details of yet another rescue, this time involving three of the homeless people and the RSPCA. Next time you see homeless people on the city streets, you might look at them in a different light.

I had started to think that Peregrines haven't evolved the smartest development strategy in the bird world. I subsequently looked up some facts. At around six weeks old, Peregrine chicks attempt their first flight. While some manage to fly almost immediately, others take a few days to get enough power to regain height. On the ground at this time, they are very vulnerable to predators, and, in the city centres, to traffic and people. We certainly didn't feel we could leave it to the tender mercies of gulls, cats, urban foxes and the local youths overnight.

The story doesn't quite end there though. The latest news from Peter (via the RSPB team based in the Museum) is that two different birds were picked up on the 12th June. One was released the following day but the other, a female, had been involved in a minor road accident – she appeared uninjured but the member of the public who found her called the RSPCA – and she was taken to the RSPCA's animal centre at West Hatch in Somerset. He also realised with some surprise that there must actually have been four chicks when he saw three together on the clock tower while the other was in care. This fourth youngster was released on Thursday 19th June. Before being released she was ringed and also fitted with a blue colour-ring with the letters AH in black.

For anyone concerned that we are releasing details of a protected bird's nest, I should say that this site has been widely publicised by the RSPB and local media and there has been a live web cam on the nest throughout. I am also aware of the need for licences to deal with peregrines, but in some situations, you do what you need to do to protect the bird.

Let's hope all four Cardiff birds survive.

Paul Seligman (with help from Geri Thomas and Peter Howlett).

In Pursuit of the Birds (Book Reviews)

The Big Twitch, by Sean Dooley, 322 pp, paperback, Allen & Unwin (2005)

In Quest of the Unicorn Bird, by Oliver Greenfield, 210 pp hardback, Michael Joseph, (1992)

I started Dooley's book with high hopes. It was very well reviewed by birding and more general magazines. The cover quotes the Sydney Morning Herald, presumably in relation to this volume: "If you write really well, you can write about anything". The two Amazon reviews both give it 5 stars.

It certainly starts well, with a Foreword for Birders and another for Non-Birders. Of course, everyone will read both and laugh at how he sells himself to both groups. As he describes his background, and how he sets out to break the Australian twitching record of 700 birds in 12 months, I thought I was really going to enjoy it.

However, I felt the humour evaporated like a billabong in a heat wave. It became more and more, well, twitchy. Which, fair dinkum, is what it says on the cover.

I got as far as Chapter 9, Norfolk Island. Dooley is desperate to add Red-crowned Parakeet to the list. For days he watches a cage of them in the Botanic Gardens, having been told free-flying birds would visit. At the very last possible moment before leaving the island, he realises one of the birds is clinging to the outside of the cage, and can therefore be counted according to the rules of the twitch.

I'm sure many newsletter readers will thrill to this last-minute success and hasten to read how he sees (or not) the remaining 500 or so species he needs. I felt I had better things to read.

One of which was Oliver Greenfield's little gem. It's a travelogue about a young man who quits an office job to spend a period in Bolivia, looking for the Horned Curassow (*Pauxi unicornis*). Greenfield also travels around other South American countries. The writing is unpretentious, but highly readable and very funny. I laughed out loud several times and smiled repeatedly. Though, as an arachnophobe, I had to suppress a few shudders as well.

It isn't really a book about birds, or even a book about the Curassow. It's more about sex (seeking the experience), drugs (trying to avoid), and the rocky roads of South America.

The last few chapters tail off a little, but overall I enjoyed this book immensely.

So - two very different books about birding quests. I hope I've given enough description for you to decide if you'd like one or both.

Both are available used for a few pounds (try Amazon). The first person who contacts me can have my copy of "The Big Twitch" for the cost of the postage.

Paul Seligman

GBC Field Trip to Kenfig NNR – May 8th, 2008

Fourteen club members gathered at the Kenfig Reserve Centre for one of our increasingly popular mid-week outings (dubbed the Last of the Summer Wine outings by some). The weather was fine but very blustery. The wind however was from the east, holding the promise of some interesting migrants. We began by checking the bushes behind the Reserve Centre. The wind meant that the birds were generally keeping low. **Willow Warblers** and **Chiffchaffs** were the most obvious birds in this area. Graham Powell set up his scope and immediately got on to some **Black Terns** over the Pool. Initially there were four birds but this swelled to seven or eight within the next hour. All were in their smart breeding plumage and were actively hunting over the pool. They spent much of the time over the northern part of the Pool. This was part of a large influx along the South Wales coast. Birds were reported from Penclacwydd and Newport Wetlands on the same day. There was little else of note around the Pool. A **Common Sandpiper** was seen briefly and a **Cetti's Warbler** was heard near the South Pool hide. We had hoped for Cuckoo and Grasshopper Warbler but sadly neither put in an appearance. Cuckoo, in particular, seem to be in rapid decline.

Lunch was taken by the Reserve Centre. Some of the crew decided to call it a day but the remainder then set off across the dunes towards Sker. Birds were rather thin on the ground. We searched in vain for the Short-eared Owl that had been reported hunting over the dunes. As we reached the Haul road my attention was immediately drawn to a very sandy coloured bird in the company of a **Meadow Pipit**. I had made the classic mistake of leaving my scope in the car. John Wilson however was quickly on to the bird and noted that it was unstreaked on the breast. Fortunately the bird stayed on the road, affording reasonable views. It kept its distance from us, eventually ending up adjacent to Sker Point. Much debate as to its identity took place. Tawny Pipit was dismissed fairly early on. The bird was far too squat in appearance. Detailed notes on the plumage were taken and reference was made to field guides. Thanks to Glyn Roberts for remembering to pack his book. We suspected we were on to a Short-toed Lark – a species never recorded in Glamorgan before. Doubts were expressed as the bird did not appear to have any black shoulder marks. A few rushed phone calls were made to get some others to check out the ID.

The bird however flew off over our heads giving a couple of "prit prit" flight calls as it did so. David Carrington and the troops arrived and a systematic search began. Paul Roberts eventually re-located the bird a few hundred metres west of the original site but it still favoured the road. The ID was confirmed as a **Greater Short-toed Lark**. The news had got out and several more birders arrived and most got a cracking view.

The appearance of birds such as Black-winged Stilt, Whiskered Tern and Short-toed Lark has meant that springtime in Kenfig was more like the Mediterranean, rather than gloomy South Wales.

Why not come along on one of our trips – you never know what will turn up!

Alan Rosney

GBC Trip to Turkey 24th May > June 4th, 2008 – John Wilson

“Turkey - where east meets west” - so read the title of the Celtic Bird Tours trip to Turkey which became the latest GBC trip to foreign lands, enjoyed by myself, Alan Rosney, Clive Ellis, Chris Jenkins, Chris Hodgson, Chris[tine] Bamford, Fiona Grant and additional guest Terry Foxtan, led enthusiastically by Steve Cale, the well known Norfolk-based artist. What a great trip this turned out to be, in this huge, fascinating and friendly country. We flew from London Heathrow to Istanbul and then connected to an internal flight to Ankara and thence by minibus to our first destination near the huge wetland area known generally as Kulu Golu in central Anatolia. A full days birding around here on 25th produced a long list of birds with impressive numbers of **Slender-billed Gull** [500+], **Gull-billed Tern** [400+], and **Greater Flamingo** [300]. Waders were not numerous but we found 6 **Collared Pratincole**, **Spur-winged Plover**, an **Oystercatcher**, **Curlew Sandpiper**, **Ruff**, **Redshank**, 40+ **Avocet**, **Black-winged Stilt**, 20+ **Little Stint**, and a **Red-necked Phalarope**. Drier areas produced **Asian Short-toed Lark** [a bit of an ID challenge] and **Calandra** - and **Crested Lark** were common, as were **Isabelline Wheatear**, plus **Lesser Grey-** and **Red-backed Shrike**. One wetland area produced a nearby lone **Rosy Starling**, spotted by Chris Bamford. In a dry hilly area near Eskil we were treated to the spectacle of 7 **Steppe Eagles** flying over and circling low over our heads, and then the magnificent sight of an **Eastern Imperial Eagle** which dropped down into a bare field to give superb views. In the same spot we saw 2 fem and 1 male **Montagus Harriers** and 5 **Lesser Kestrels**. All this while making our way south along the borders of the wetland to the town of Sultanhani.

The following day pre-breakfast at Sultanhani we added [Greater] **Short-toed Lark** and a couple of **Stone-curlew** to the list. We then moved on further east and a stop near the inactive and impressive Hassandag volcano found the hoped for **Bimaculated Larks** together with the ever present **Calandras** for comparison. A couple of **Tawny Pipits**, **Golden Oriole**, **Ortolan Bunting** and other goodies added to the interest. Further on at the Akkaya reservoir, top of the highlights was the male **White-headed Duck** picked out at considerable distance in the heat haze by hawk-eyes Fiona, plus 20 **Black-necked Grebe**, 40 **Ruddy Shelduck**, 20+ **Whiskered Tern**, a pair of **Great Spotted Cuckoos** and our first **Upchers Warblers** with their distinctive monotonous song. Half a dozen **Rock Sparrow** were apparently new for the site. We finally reached our accommodation at Camardi in the shadow of the snow-capped Taurus mountains. Our guest Hassan made us very welcome and we settled into the delightful guest house accommodation with a wonderful balcony view of the Taurus, whilst we ate a delicious home-cooked meal, serenaded by a Nightingale in the garden.

Highlight of this stay was rising at 3:30 a.m. the following morning for a quick sweet black tea followed by 1½ hours being towed up the mountain in the pitch dark in a tractor drawn trailer lined with mattresses! [Interrupted briefly by a desperate plea from me to disembark in the pitch dark to answer a call of nature on account of the exceptionally early cup to tea!]. By daybreak we were up on the high Demirkazik plateau not far below the snow line, where the effects of altitude could be felt. What an arena - jagged snow-covered peaks all around, the village of Camardi miniscule below us. Main target here was **Caspian Snowcock** - not easy to find, being a greyish, large partridge like bird which struts around on the vast areas of grey rocky scree. Our host Hassan was skilled at imitating the curlew like call and before long we had increasingly good views of 5 birds. Also seen were 6 **Raddes Accentor** [related to Dunnocks for those who've never heard of them], **Snow Finch** around us while we picnicked, **Shore Lark**, delightful **Red-fronted Serins**, **Crimson-winged Finch**, **Rock Bunting**, both species of **Chough**, **Golden Eagle**, and **Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush** to name but a few. A small herd of **European Ibex** provided added interest. The two ladies travelled back down on the trailer whilst the rest of us had an adventurous 3000ft descent down the steep and awesome Demirkazik gorge, with sadly no Wallcreeper on the way, but aching thighs the following day! An outing to a neighbouring valley in the afternoon gave us a pair of **White-throated Robins** although they were very skulking, and **Isabelline Wheatears** feeding young. Chris Hodgson on one of his pioneering forays ☺ saw a **Barred Warbler**.

The following day we visited a nearby valley with rock-strew hillsides where 2 pairs of **White-throated Robins** gave excellent views, plus several **Turtle Doves**, **Wood Lark** and fly-through **European Bee-eaters**. A stop outside the town of Pozanti had us scouring the ridges and we were soon rewarded with 2 **Booted Eagles**, [1 pale 1 dark], a **Peregrine**, 30 **White Stork**, a **Black Kite**, **Steppe Buzzard**, **Lesser Kestrel**, a **Golden Eagle**, 5 **Griffon Vultures** and then the jewel in the crown, a **Lammergeier**. Steve our leader was ecstatic as he hadn't seen one for about decades! A woodland stop on the way back produced a number of common species and **Olivaceous** and **Upchers Warbler**, **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** and **Syrian Woodpecker**.

A long transfer day followed, down to the huge Gocsu delta on the eastern Med coast near the town of Tasucu. A coffee stop on the way produced an **Egyptian Vulture** flying over. We arrived at the accommodation with sea views and a swimming pool in time to unpack and do some afternoon birding at the delta. Plenty of birds were on show and new ones added to the list included plenty of **Marsh Harriers**,

White-spectacled Bulbul, a pair of **Rufous Bush-robins** nest building, **Woodchat Shrikes**, **Red-rumped Swallows**, **Little Terns**, **Great White Pelicans**, 3 **Black Francolin**, **Roller**, **Grey-headed Swamphen** [an eastern race of Purple Swamphen], **Graceful Prinia** and **Marbled Teal**. An observation tower gave views over the marsh with **White-winged Black Terns** plus plenty of other marshland species.

The following day we explored another area of the delta. It appeared that we were not going to connect with White-throated Kingfisher, whose range is retreating eastwards. However we had good views of **Moustached Warbler**, a small colony of **Spanish Sparrow**, 6 **Great White Egrets** and a few other new birds including **Hobby**. In the afternoon we visited a forest above the Silifke Gorge, inland from the delta and added **Krupers Nuthatch**, 4 **Masked Shrike**, 2 **Olive Tree Warblers**, 3 **Sombre Tits**, 3 **Little Owl**, **Cretzchmars Bunting**, another **Egyptian Vulture** and a pair of **Eastern Black-eared Wheatear**.

Because we failed on White-throated Kingfisher and had done well on the other species we decided to try another delta area south of Adana, the next town east. Hence on 31st we set off early. This area is even bigger than Gocsu and devoted almost entirely to the growing of melons. A roadside stop before reaching Adana produced **Short-toed Eagle** to add to the raptor list. We took a by-road suggested by our Turkish 'fixer' Memet and it proved a good choice as we soon saw a pair of Kingfishers fly off as we drove along. A quick stop and walk back along the road and we had good views of a **White-throated Kingfisher** on a roadside wire. We continued on worsening and more rural dirt roads through tiny villages where we were obviously of great interest, and eventually came out at an extensive sandy area by the sea, with large brackish pools. Whilst our picnic was being prepared we marvelled at the numbers of **Little Tern** [500+], and **Kentish Plover** [150+], many of which were nesting or had chicks, and we also added **Dunlin** and observed large numbers of other aquatic species. The area looked very promising for species such as **Greater Sandplover**, but in view of the long journey ahead there was no time for extensive exploration. We finally arrived at our most easterly destination, Biricek on the river Euphrates, 15 miles north of the Syrian border, in the evening.

We arose pre-breakfast to explore the area in the complex of gravel workings and reedy pools by the town and adjacent to the Euphrates. Passing trucks made it very dusty but we were soon rewarded with excellent views of 2 **Iraq Babblers** - these were discovered on an exploratory Celtic Bird Tours trip a couple of years ago, by Neil Donaghy - an amazing discovery of a small breeding population of a species which had never before been recorded in Turkey! We also saw 70 or so of the rare **Northern Bald Ibis** feeding on the grass and **Dead Sea Sparrow** and also **Menetries Warbler** were additions and lifers for some. Together with the Bald Ibises we saw on the Morocco trip last year, and the numbers we saw here, most of the participants, who were on both trips, have probably seen 90% of the world population of this species! There was plenty of other interest including a couple of **Pygmy Cormorant** and 2 **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** flew over as did a **European Honey-buzzard**. The beautiful red cliffs by the town provided a wonderful spectacle of 20+ **Little Swift** at their breeding site, and 40+ **Alpine Swift** too. Some time was spent in the Blue Fountain café in a park in the town where initial frustrating views of a roosting **Striated Scops Owl** were obtained. Yours truly was beckoned away rather insistently by a weather worn elderly local man uttering something I didn't understand, and I eventually reluctantly followed him, wondering what I was letting myself in for. After getting me over to the other side of the park he pointed up to a tree uttering something like "bashook, bashook". I looked up and there in full view was a stunning **Striated Scops Owl**! Later in the afternoon we headed out to some pistachio orchards and after some diligent searching found a few **Yellow-throated** [a.k.a. **Chestnut-shouldered**] **Sparrows**, and on a very dry and hot roadside hill, a pair of **See-see Partridge** sheltering under the only shade available by a very small bush. Another target species in the bag. A brief stop in a Wadi near the town produced another pair of **Menetries Warbler**, 60 more **Northern Bald Ibis** and some glimpsed a **Golden-backed Jackal**. A further visit to the gravel pits the following day produced a **Little Bittern** and the wonderful sight of 40 **Pin-tailed Sandgrouse** flying around, and eventually settling giving excellent views on the ground. A **Desert Finch** gave a brief unsatisfactory fly-by view. On a hillside above Birecik, at Boglurken we finally connected with a pair of **Finschs Wheatear**, and farther along the same road some **Pale Rock Sparrow** and a **Lesser Short-toed Lark**. Nearby at Halfeti Gorge and reservoir 5 **Short-toed Eagles** put in an appearance, plus the targeted **Eastern Rock Nuthatch**, bigger and more strikingly marked than its western cousin which we had seen at Demirkazik. **Long-legged Buzzard** were also much in evidence as they had been throughout the trip.

3rd June and we were almost 'birded out', but we visited Iskili, near Gaziantep a relatively short drive west from Biricek, and at a classic 'dripping tap' location, with patient waiting, had good views of **Cinereous Bunting**, **Desert Finch**, **Cretzchmars Bunting**, and plenty of other by now common species coming to drink. A nearby small stream produced similar birds and a good variety of Butterflies and Dragonflies - indeed all wetland areas had produced a huge variety of Lepidoptera and Odonata. We finally made our way into Gaziantep for an excellent lunch arranged by Memet, thence to our last hotel. A

couple of hours was spent exploring the old part of town after a siesta, after which we had an excellent last supper in the hotel before retiring in preparation for an early start for the airport next morning.

An excellent and thoroughly absorbing trip enjoyed immensely by all. It was well organised and well led and excellent value for money. If you have the chance to go, go for it, you won't be disappointed.

Group total 208 species; mine 195 with 29 lifers of which 2 were subsp or races of birds seen elsewhere. Record for lifers was Chris Jenkins with 45!! Many thanks to Neil Donaghy, Steve Cale, Memet and our 2 excellent and patient drivers who coped well with the sudden demands to stop! Thanks also to my fellow travellers - we gelled well and made a good team [as usual!].

Birding Panama in Central America The Canopy Tower and the Canopy Lodge – Adrian Hopkins

Have you considered birding in Panama? Those of you, like my wife and I, who have been fortunate to bird Panama will know what a superb place it is to add hugely to your life list, and to get close up to some spectacular birds.

We have recently (May 10th) returned from our third birding trip to Panama and it is still one of our favourite destinations, made much easier to visit since the recent introduction by KLM of direct flights from Amsterdam to Panama City, avoiding Heathrow and the USA altogether. By using the KLM flight from Cardiff to Amsterdam, we were able to get to Panama in just one day instead of the 3 days it has taken us in the past.



The Canopy Lodge (Photo: Adrian Hopkins)

You may already be familiar with The Canopy Tower and The Canopy Lodge in Panama as Raul Aria de Para, the owner of both, is a regular exhibitor at the annual Bird Watching Fair at Rutland Water, sending over his top English speaking guides, Carlos and Jose, and this year, Tino. If you have not considered Panama, I would invite you to log onto Raul's most impressive websites:

www.canopytower.com and www.canopylodge.com - and I am sure you will be impressed by what is available and on offer, whether for a group from the Club, or for independent travellers - as we were on this our last visit. Raul's operations at The Canopy Tower and The Canopy Lodge are highly professional and he is able to offer a package of your choosing, whether at one or other of his lodges or split between the two.

In fact we arranged our own flights with KLM and the rest we booked with Raul's office. Let me also add that from the moment you arrive at Tocumen International Airport in Panama until you depart, if staying at either or both the Tower and the Lodge, EVERYTHING is included – collection at the airport and transfer by air-conditioned vehicle to your accommodation, all transport during your stay, two guided bird trips per day to local birding hotspots, professional local English speaking dedicated bird guides equipped with some of the best binoculars available, telescopes and tripods, with field guides and libraries at both The Tower and The Lodge, all food and more!

Sir Richard Attenborough has been a recent visitor to The Lodge and The Tower, staying while filming for the BBC, and other important visitors have included President Carter and the brother of the Emperor of Japan.

Due to my wife's limited mobility from Multiple Sclerosis, we were restricted to the immediate surroundings of The Canopy Lodge, but nonetheless managed to see an impressive 180+ species of birds, and several mammals. A lady birder with an English birding group dividing their stay between The Tower and The Lodge had topped the 290 mark - and she was still counting!



*Female White-necked Jacobin
(Photo: Adrian Hopkins)*

I could go on, but if anyone is interested in making a visit or just exploring the possibility of a visit, and would like more information, I would be delighted to speak to any members or friends. Just give me a call on (029) 2084 2041 or email me at adrian@wales1.me.uk. I can also email images of the accommodation and some of the birds we saw.

Oh, and by the way, Malaria has been eradicated in all the areas visited while staying at The Tower (which is located 45minutes from Panama City, high up in the Soberania National Park overlooking the Panama Canal) and The Lodge (some 2 hours from The Tower and located at higher elevations surrounded by lush rain and cloud forests)! Also you can drink the water from the taps, though bottled water is available for those who prefer it.

The new KLM service, leaving from Cardiff, has made the world of difference, making Panama a very accessible exotic birding destination (whether for a long weekend, a week or two or even more) for us here in South Wales, and we cannot recommend too highly this destination to members of the Club. Panama is one of the best birding destinations in the world – where birds from both North and South America migrate and swell the resident populations. Depending on when you visit, imagine watching tens of thousands of Black and Turkey Vultures, Mississippi and Swallow-tailed Kites, Swainson's, Broad-winged, Short-tailed and Zone-tailed Hawks rising out of the forests around you spiralling in "kettles" on the thermals before heading for North America. Also our favourite "T"s (Trogons, Tanagers, Toucanets and Toucans) are a delight to watch and are relatively easy to find, especially with Raul's highly trained guides. Give me a call - I would love to speak to you.

By the way, Raul's guides are arriving early for this year's Bird Watching Fair as Carlos will be staying in the Norfolk area to deliver a presentation to the Norfolk Bird Club. If there is a demand for the same, Raul is prepared to "divert" them to Cardiff in 2009 to give a free presentation to the combined Glamorgan Bird Club and the RSPB - but why wait, visit Panama now while the dollar is so weak against the pound.

And Finally . . .

Many thanks as always to everybody who contributed articles for this newsletter. Deadline for submissions for the next edition is **Saturday, September 20th**. I'd love to hear from you!

Best wishes

Daniel

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