



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2014

www.glamorganbirds.org.uk

Registered Charity 1129684

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Yellowhammer at Monknash © Haydn Lack



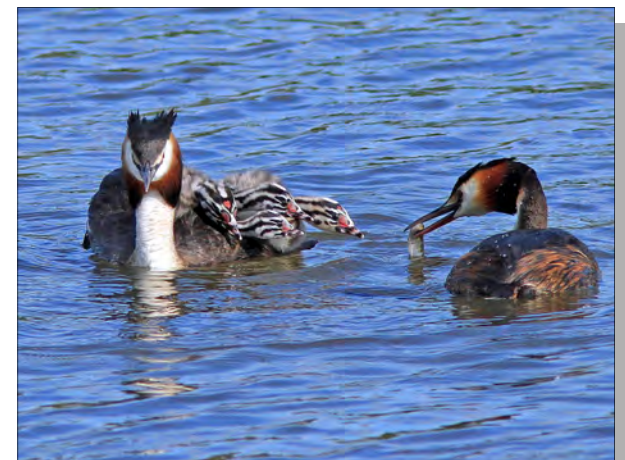
Stock Dove at Newbridge Fields, Bridgend © Mike Cram



Green Woodpecker at Forest Farm © Cliff Woodhead



Spotted Flycatcher at Pontsarn viaduct © Barbara Brown



Great Crested Grebes at Hendre Lake © Cliff Woodhead

SUBMISSION DEADLINE for the next newsletter is **Saturday 27th September**

EDITORIAL NOTES

Welcome to the summer edition of the GBC newsletter. The winter deluge seems such a long time ago now. The Spring weather has been unremarkable, however it was exceptionally mild. Let's hope that the mild conditions have helped our breeding birds have a successful season.

Following the AGM there have been a couple of changes to the committee. Martin Bailey-Wood was finding that his work and family commitments meant that he couldn't dedicate as much time as he would have liked to his role as Secretary and he therefore decided to relinquish the post. Fortunately, Graham Powell was willing to step into the breach and was subsequently elected as the new Secretary at the meeting. Following a discussion at the AGM, Graham has set up an email list to keep members informed of forthcoming events/changes to the programme etc. Details are on page 5.

In early May, Carys Solman of the WTWSW got in touch concerning a new volunteer group in RCT. They meet every other Tuesday. Activities initially are to be based at Pwll Waun Cynon Nature Reserve, Mountain Ash, tackling tasks such as Himalayan Balsam clearance, litter picking, surveys etc (11am-3pm). If you're interested in helping, call Carys on 07896 798371. I attended the first session where volunteers set out sheets for amphibian/reptile monitoring, cleared some Balsam and started a litter pick. Unfortunately a tremendous thunder storm with pea-sized hail stones put paid to activities in the afternoon.

Some time ago I suggested that bird club members with smart phones might like to try the BirdTrack app from the BTO. They have added to the app recently. You can now click on a species listed in the Year and Life targets to reveal a map of any recent nearby sightings. (An Apple version is in development). While this tool is primarily for fun, it could act as a useful reminder of any species you've encountered this year but haven't yet recorded in BirdTrack.

As many of you are aware the club runs a farmland feeding programme at Ty'n-y-Caeau Farm, thanks to the generosity of farmer, John Evans. In past winters Adrian Murch has topped up the feeders which have attracted species such as Yellowhammer and Grey Partridge. Unfortunately Adrian hasn't been very well recently and consequently the feeding has been rather erratic. We are looking for a volunteer (or volunteers) to help with topping up the feeders (usually once a fortnight - December to March). If you are able to help, please call David Carrington (contact details at the back of the newsletter).

Past editions of the newsletter have been added to the club website. Go to the GBC home page - click on *Resources* - click *Documents* and scroll down to the bottom of the page.

Many thanks to all those that responded to my plea for photos for inclusion in the newsletter. I received quite a few, too many to include, as it happens. I'll keep the outstanding ones on file for a future edition. I try and keep the images seasonal and from within Glamorgan. If you think you may have suitable material, please get in touch. Similarly, I'm always on the look out for articles, please contact me if you are able to contribute.

Finally, best wishes to Andrea Rowe, Assistant Ecologist in the Vale of Glamorgan, who is moving on after two years in post.

Alan Rosney

RECENT BIRD SIGHTINGS

April 2014

Highlights: A male Woodchat Shrike graced Gileston (28th - 29th). A White Stork was seen over Lisvane and Cyncoed, Cardiff (22nd). Kenfig had a good month, the pick of the bunch being Green-winged Teal (5th), Purple Heron (30th) and Hooded Crow (30th), but also featuring several Garganey, Osprey, Ruff (4) and Ring Ouzel. Ogmores Estuary scored with a remarkable flock of seven Garganey - with a singleton of this species later in the month - as well as an Avocet and a Pink-footed Goose. Another or the same Pink-footed Goose was briefly at Llanilid, where a Spotted Redshank was additionally present. Ospreys passed through over Bridgend and Caerau. A Glaucous Gull continued to frequent Mynydd Tylwyn and was also recorded over Parc Slip. A wandering group of five - six Common Cranes that was observed over Cardiff and St Athan were assumed to originate from the Somerset Levels reintroduction project.

Other Sites: Little Egrets were at Rumney Great Wharf (4), Llanilid and Sker. A pair of Shelducks at Llanilid was unusual. A Red-crested Pochard arrived at Kenfig. Two Hen Harriers - male and female - commuted between Llanilid and Cefn Hirgoed. Migrant waders included Little Ringed Plover, Greenshank and Green Sandpiper at Ogmores Estuary; Jack Snipe, 21 Purple Sandpipers and 11 Bar-tailed Godwits at Kenfig; plus a further two Jack Snipe at Llanilid. A Little Gull lingered at Cardiff Bay. Yellow-legged Gulls were at Cosmeston and Lisvane Reservoir. Early arrivals were Sedge Warbler at Llanilid (1st) and Grasshopper Warbler at Merthyr Mawr Warren (9th).

May 2014

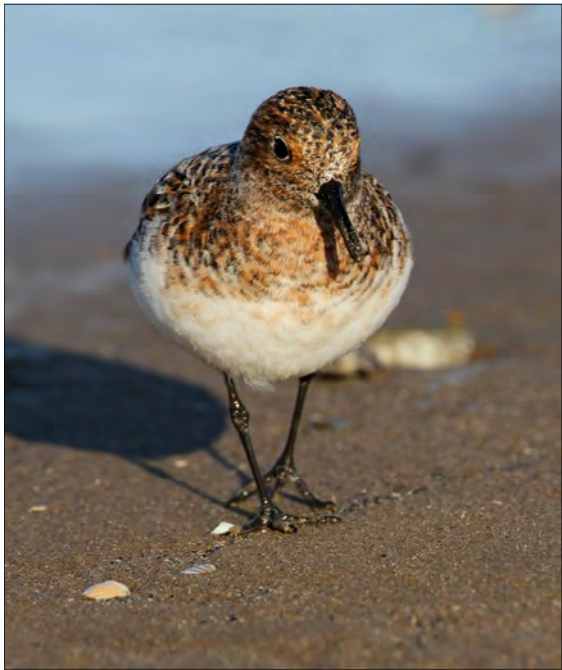
Highlights: A Temminck's Stint was a brief visitor to Hendre Lake (29th). A Great White Egret turned up at Kenfig Saltmarsh (12th), where several Garganey were also logged. In a good spring locally for the species, a further two Garganey were at Cosmeston. A Pomarine Skua was off Lavernock. Common Cranes - presumed to be from the Somerset Levels reintroduction project - were noted over Lanishen Reservoir (4), Cosmeston (3) and Leckwith (3).

Other Sites: Porthcawl was the favoured seawatching location during a period of high winds. The daily maximum Storm Petrel count was 45 (10th), with Little Gull, six Arctic Skuas, three Great Northern Divers and 20+ Arctic Terns also recorded during the gales. Additional Arctic Skuas, Storm Petrels and Arctic Terns were sighted variously from Lavernock, Cardiff Heliport and Sker. Little Egrets were at Rumney Great Wharf and Kenfig. Hobbies were seen at Bridgend, Flatholm (2), Kenfig, Llanilid and Nash Point. Waders included 128 Sanderling at Kenfig Sands and 124 Whimbrel at Rumney Great Wharf. Two Little Gulls were noteworthy at the threatened Rhaslas Pond. A Yellow-legged Gull was observed on Flatholm. The only Black Tern of the spring was at Cardiff Bay. Four Cuckoos were together at Llanilid. A Tree Sparrow was near Marcross. In Coed-y-bedw, a male Pied Flycatcher held territory from 29th April to 15th May inclusive, before moving on, a Wood Warbler was also recorded during the latter half of May but also seems to have moved on. Last but not least, a Turtle Dove was seen in Porthkerry Park at the end of the month.

June 2014

A Night Heron was found at Cosmeston's west lake conservation area (12th), being seen intermittently for a week or so thereafter. A Great White Egret at Kenfig was initially noted in flight near the pool, but subsequently relocated to the saltmarsh, where it associated with Grey Herons. Common Cranes from the Somerset reintroduction project were again in evidence, including four over Flatholm from the Cardiff direction. Nightjars were recorded at Llanwonno and Ogmores Forest. Up to five Cuckoos were at Llanilid. Choughs bred successfully on the Heritage Coast. Seven Common Sandpipers at the month end at Ogmores Estuary was the first reported return wader movement.

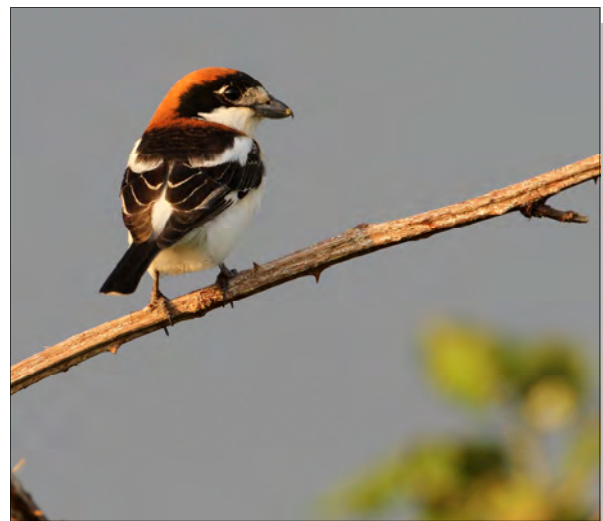
Paul Roberts



*Summer plumaged Sanderling at Blackpill
© Jeff Slocombe*



*Great Spotted Woodpecker & chick at Forest
Farm © Cliff Woodhead*



A couple of shots of the Gileston Woodchat Shrike © Richard Smith and Jeff Slocombe

CLUB NEWS

Members' News

Thanks to all the club members that have renewed for this year. I've already processed well over 200 memberships, however there are still 50 who haven't yet renewed. If that applies to you it would be appreciated if you could send your renewal off a.s.a.p. (the form is again at the back of this newsletter), Many thanks to those that have signed the gift aid form.

Only two new members to welcome this time; Chris Hawes from Cardiff and Gerald Edwards from Llantrisant.

Alan Rosney

Committee News

The Committee has met twice since the last newsletter:

- Committee agreed to sponsor two of the new scrapes at Parc Slip, at a total cost of £2000. The scrapes are to be named after Steve Moon in recognition of the outstanding work he has done for the club over the years.
- Donation received from Cardiff Nats. for talk given by Paul Denning.
- Monthly walks at Cosmeston removed from programme as John Wilson has other commitments.
- Members continue to attend LBAP meetings at each of the local authorities.
- The club will make nest boxes in the autumn with a local Brownies Group.
- Face Book Page currently has 174 likes and 406 people follow the club on Twitter.
- It was agreed to continue the excellent Farmland Feeding Project. If the NRW grant is not available this year then funding for this will be made by the club itself.

AGM

The AGM was held at Kenfig on April 29th. The minutes are available on the club website. It followed the traditional format with contributions from the chair; Adrian Murch and the treasurer; Anne Wilson. 24 members attended. Brief notes follow:

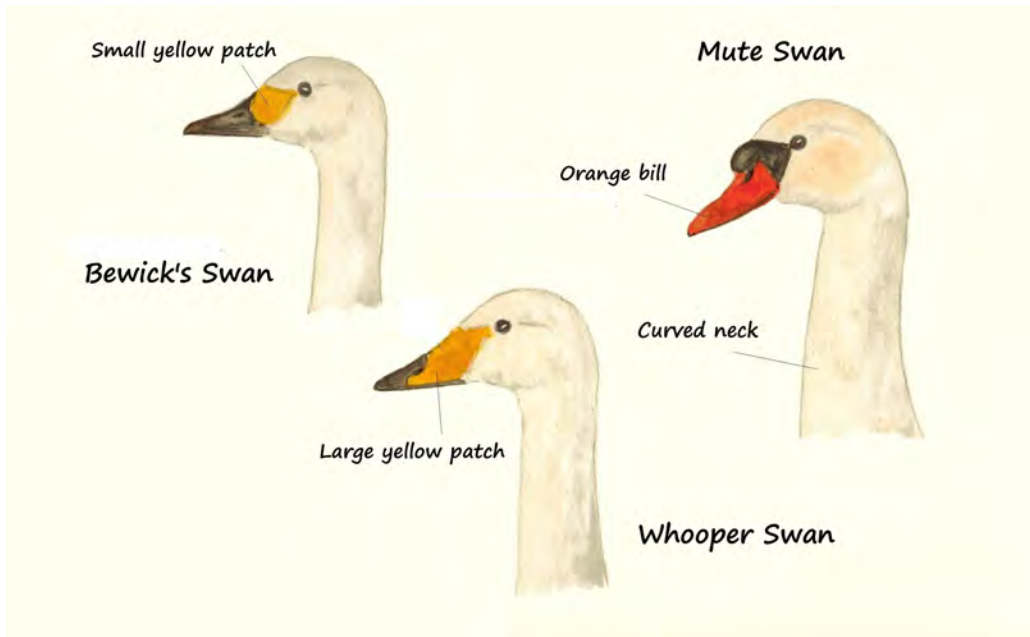
- Fall in membership to 263 categories.
- £917 Gift Aid received.
- Graham Powell appointed as Club Secretary.
- Strinda Davies re-elected to Committee for another three year term.
- Malcolm James confirmed as Club's Auditor.
- New 'Events Update' distribution list to be set up to keep members informed of last minute changes to 'Events Programme' (see below).

***** Keep updated with any last minute changes *****

At the AGM in April it was asked if members could be informed by email of any last minute changes to the club's events calendar. In order to facilitate this, a distribution list has been set up of members who wish to be kept updated on any changes. If you would like to receive these updates please send an email to the club's secretary from the email address that you wish to receive the updates. Emails should be sent to glambirds@gmail.com

Graham Powell

CONFUSION SPECIES – SWANS



The Mute Swan is of course a resident breeder and can be found throughout our area. It is larger than the other two. Perhaps the two best diagnostic features are bill colour and neck shape. It has an orange bill with a black knob on the forehead and the neck is often bent in an S shape, although when swimming it can appear straight necked. Despite their name they do occasionally “grunt” and of course they can hiss when in aggressive mood.

Whoopers are winter visitors and tend to have a northerly U.K. distribution. They have long, straight necks. They are best separated from Bewick’s by the bill pattern. The yellow extends beyond the nostrils. Both Whooper and Bewick’s tend to “bugle” regularly. Adult Whoopers often show orangey head staining.

Bewick’s are the smallest of the three. They are also winter visitors but generally have a more southerly U.K. distribution than Whoopers. Their neck is slightly shorter than Whoopers. However, once again, the best feature to separate them from Whooper is bill pattern, with much less yellow on the Bewick’s. Juvenile birds can cause ID problems, although the adult bill pattern is usually discernible with the black of the adult being pink and the yellow is ivory coloured. They usually associate with adults so should be easy to ID.

Where can you see them? The biggest herds of Mutes can be found at Cosmeston, Cardiff Bay, Ogmore, the Knap and Kenfig. In recent years there have been more records of Whoopers than Bewick’s in Eastern Glamorgan. (Surprising as there is a sizeable population of Bewick’s at Slimbridge.) Both Whoopers and Bewick’s often associate with Mutes and records back this up with most records being from Cosmeston, Ogmore and Kenfig. In recent winters Whoopers have also been located at Llwyn-on Reservoir and Dowlais.

Footnote: There have been recent records of Whistling Swan in the U.K. If you see a black-billed Bewick’s, take care when observing the bill to eliminate the possibility of discolouration.

Alan Rosney

RESERVE SPOTLIGHT

Bute Park

Bute Park is an area of 146 acres of mature parkland and woodland running alongside the River Taff from Cardiff Castle to Western Avenue. Despite its central location in Cardiff it offers a surprising range of wildlife.

Bute Park contains three Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC areas), the **Gabalfa woodlands** to the north, a linear area of secondary broadleaved woodland on the banks of the **River Taff** and the **Blackweir and Dock Feeder**, which supports similar habitat. The park gates to the south of Blackweir weir are open between 7:30 a.m. and half hour before dusk, whilst the northern section is open access. A stile at the Blackweir gates provides additional access. Parking at the northern end, close to the riding stables or Tesco, enables a circular 4 mile walk, most of which is accessible by wheelchair or bike.

The river is important for migratory fish, which in combination with the bankside vegetation, act as a wildlife corridor. Indeed, after heavy rains in autumn both Trout and Atlantic Salmon can often be seen battling upstream at Blackweir. Improvements to the quality of the Taff mean that Grey Wagtail, Kingfisher and Dipper are resident on this stretch of the river despite the inevitable disturbance.

Beginning a walk from the riverside path below Western Avenue bridge allows good views of the commoner gull species, which can be numerous in winter. Dipper sing under this bridge in the winter. Grey Heron and Kingfisher frequent this stretch, while the loafing Mallards are occasionally joined by other wildfowl. Goosander are particularly fond of this section (as well as the rocks opposite Sophia Gardens). The occasional Common Sandpiper is seen on migration, which particularly like the horse paddocks on the opposite side of the river. In the winter, large flocks of thrushes also use these paddocks, along with city centre Buzzards.

Once at the weir, it is worth looking for Dipper, which nest in the fish pass. Grey Wagtail and Cormorant are also common in this area. The woodland to the south east of the weir contains a large stand of Wellingtonia trees that are worth checking for Treecreepers. Continue your walk along the riverside path which takes you through Blackweir woods, a good area for Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs in spring/summer, when Swifts, Swallows, Sand Martins and House Martin are also present in the park. Great Spotted Woodpeckers drum along this stretch.

From this path there are several access points to the river Taff providing opportunities for sightings of Goosander. In the winter these duck can reach double figures, while smaller numbers of Goosander are now remaining almost right through the year. As you approach the arboretum to the rear of the park nursery it is worth checking the evergreen trees for Goldcrest and Coal Tit. Redwings frequent this area in the winter months.

Particularly during winter months, a glance across to the central sports field may produce large numbers of Black-headed, Herring and Lesser black-backed Gulls plus various corvids, with counts of Mistle Thrushes sometimes reaching double figures in the winter months. Ravens regularly fly over, as do Sparrowhawks and the nearby nesting peregrines.

The southern part of the park plays host to Redwings in winter, with Rays common throughout the year but most easily seen in the arboretum areas during autumn. Nuthatches and Long-tailed Tits are present throughout the park. Numerous bat boxes have been erected in the park for the 6 – 8 species which have been recorded along this stretch of the river. Both Otter and Mink have been seen on the Taff.

Alas, there are no particularly unusual birds seen regularly in the park (Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers stopped breeding a few years back). That said, the Sorbus trees in the east of the park near the new road bridge over the dock feeder are always worth a look during a Waxwing year. A cold snap will also bring more Redwings and Fieldfares into the same area, along with flocks of the commoner finches. Because of its ease of access and contrast from the adjacent city it is always rewarding to visit Bute Park. Not surprisingly, given all the other people enjoying the park, early morning is typically best.



Aerial view of Bute Park



Long-tailed Tit chick



Treecreeper

*Barbara Brown & John Aggleton of the Friends of Bute Park Group.
Photos © Barbara Brown*

TRIP REPORTS (all compiled by Alan Rosney)

Craig Cerrig Gleisiad – 13th April 2014

Eighteen club members attended this one on a glorious spring day. The first birds of the day for me were a Swallow and a Kestrel passing overhead. En route to the foot of the cwm, a few pipits were seen, all of which appeared to be Meadows. A Stonechat was perched up on top of a Hawthorn bush, it was too early for Whinchat. A Peregrine was observed circling below the cliffs and it eventually settled on top of a crag. Very shortly Graham Powell and Tim Adcock got us all on to a pair of Ring Ouzels on the top of the slope. I believe everyone got good views.

In the distance a Willow Warbler and a Redstart were heard. Both were eventually located. Indeed we were treated to the sight of two male Redstarts, which appeared to be involved in a heated territorial dispute. Other birds seen in the cwm were Sparrowhawk, Raven, Wren, Goldcrest and Chaffinch. Red Kite and Buzzard were seen in the distance. Some butterflies were on the wing with Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell and Green-veined White seen.

We decided to try the YHA wood below the A470 but weren't too hopeful as it was rather early for flycatchers. We did however have cracking views of a Marsh Tit taking moss in to a nest hole. Other species here were Nuthatch, Treecreeper, Green Woodpecker (heard – although Gary Light did see two), Long-tailed, Blue and Great Tits. Stuart Hardcastle also saw a Song Thrush. In the afternoon we decided to go to the Garwnant Forestry Centre. Birds were very thin on the ground here, although we got splendid views of a pair of Dippers.

Silent Valley – 11th May 2014

Only seven members for this one, possibly due to the poor weather forecast. We set off for Ebbw Vale in driving rain but luckily it stopped just as we arrived at our destination. Silent Valley is a Gwent Wildlife Trust site just outside Cwm, Ebbw Vale which is reported to be the highest Beech woodland in the British Isles. Birds were initially thin on the ground due to the blustery conditions, however a singing Blackcap was heard not far from the car park. A pair of Redstarts was a lovely find. Other “early” birds were Willow Warbler, Peregrine, Raven, Nuthatch plus both Mistle and Song Thrush. As we walked through the woods there seemed to be plenty of Great Tits, Wrens and Robins around. Eventually the sun made an appearance and the birds duly obliged too. On the hillside a Tree Pipit showed well, as did a Stock Dove and a Chiffchaff. Both Great Spotted and Green Woodpeckers were seen. On the hillside two Cuckoos were heard but not seen and a Buzzard was floating in the wind.

After lunch we decided to go on to Trefil. Here we saw plenty of Wheatears, one of which was performing an elaborate hovering action before pouncing on its insect prey. On the stream were at least five Common Sandpipers performing courtship rituals. A Buzzard was observed bringing prey to its mate, which was later seen sitting on a nest. Unfortunately there was no sign of any Ring Ouzels. Rain then stopped play.

Cwm Claisfer – 29th May 2014

As we arrived at Cwm Claisfer there was a thick blanket of fog enveloping the area. Visibility was poor so we decided to head down to Llangorse lake, hoping that things would clear up. At Llangorse we headed for the Llangasty area. The first bird here was a real surprise.

Andrew Bevan picked out a rather distant Gannet on the lake. Is this the bird that was storm driven some weeks earlier? With both Oystercatcher and Curlew on the lakeside it was more like a visit to the seaside rather than an inland lake. There were plenty of hirundines skimming across the lake. A group of five Great Crested Grebes were successfully avoiding the yachts, which are based on the far side of the lake. In the lakeside woods we saw Garden Warbler, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Spotted Flycatcher, Tree Pipit and Redstart all carrying food to their hungry broods. En route to the hide (which is remarkable – probably the only hide with a stained glass window) we heard Cetti's Warbler in the bushes. In the reeds, Reed Bunting, Reed Warbler and Sedge Warbler were all seen. Perhaps the last birds seen at this site were two Little Egrets.

As the weather had lifted somewhat we headed back up to Cwm Claisfer. Here we saw a good selection of Welsh upland birds - Wood Warbler, Pied Flycatcher, Cuckoo, Redstart, Stonechat, Tree Pipit, Buzzard, Peregrine. I haven't visited this area before but will certainly visit again, hopefully with better weather.

Llanwonno 11th June 2014

Twenty two participants met outside the Brynffynnon Arms for our annual Nightjar walk. Given that the weather was good and there was a full moon, we were hopeful of good views of this enigmatic species. En route to the viewing area we saw Tree Pipit and Buzzard. The first churring was quite late – around 10.20 p.m. Most had a brief view as a male Nightjar crossed the path, showing its white wing flashes. In all there were three males churring (Gareth Jenkins heard two more on the other side of the road). Disappointingly, we didn't have great views, although the eerie sound of the churring males is always fascinating. Other birds seen included Swift, Kestrel and Meadow Pipit.

Somerset Levels – 15th June 2014

Having gathered at Ashcott Corner, we headed up the track to Ham Wall. We immediately got on to two Cuckoos flying over, quickly followed by Marsh Harrier and Bittern – not a bad start. There appeared to be loads of Cuckoos about. I think we heard/saw at least six. Three Hobbies being bombed by the local hirundines were spectacular, as was the Lapwing v. Marsh Harrier dispute.

Warblers were represented by Whitethroats feeding young, a Garden Warbler showing really well in a trackside Willow and several Blackcaps in full song. Both Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler were present, although the former greatly outnumbered the latter. In the reeds a few Reed Warblers were heard scratching away. Perhaps the highlight was the number of Bitterns seen - possibly twelve. A fly-by Kingfisher wasn't seen by all but we couldn't miss the Great White Egret that slowly flapped past us.

After lunch we headed for Shapwick. Ducks here included Gadwall (with young), Pochard, Tufted Duck, Teal and Mallard. Waders weren't that obvious but Black-tailed Godwit in summer plumage was a great sight. Unfortunately we couldn't find the Bearded Tits found by Len and Edna Murley earlier in the day. Dragonflies were everywhere with Four-spotted Chaser, Black-tailed Skimmer and Emperor on show. Damsels included Common Blue, Blue-tailed and Red-eyed (also a description of some of the participants after staying up half the night watching football). A super days birding.

Are you up to the 'Patchwork' Challenge?

In the last issue Paul Roberts wrote about the "Foot it Challenge". This time, Graham Powell looks at a different approach - "Patchwork Challenge". Most birders keep a list (or is it a "man" thing?") Ed.

With the rise in fuel prices over recent years there has been a trend with many birders turning their attention from twitching towards rarity finding on their local 'patch'. The advantages of watching a local patch are obvious. Low fuel costs and travel time aside, great pleasure can be derived from getting to learn a place inside out, observing how the seasons change, even getting to know individual birds. There is a Curlew on my patch in Ogmore that has a limp and a uniquely marked Mallard, both of which I regularly see and usually know where to find them.

At the end of 2012 'Birdguides' came up with an idea of running a national 'Patchwork Challenge' for birders all over Britain. This started on January 1st 2013 and attracted numerous competitors. After a very successful year in 2013, lots of new competitors joined up to take part in this year's Challenge, several of which are in Glamorgan or in adjacent areas.

The rules are pretty simple. Your patch must have an area of 3 km² maximum (3 x 1km squares). It doesn't have to be rectangular, or comply with any OS grid lines; it can be any shape you want it to be. It just has to be 3 km² or smaller. This is where the imagination really kicks in. I'm extremely lucky that my full time job is working with mapping systems, so I was able to come up with a really designer patch, from the Watermill to Dunraven Bay and still coming in under the 3 km² allowance.

My Designer Patch



The birds that contribute to your score must be within the boundaries of the patch (i.e. you don't need to be), or, seen or heard while you are on your patch. So, heard only birds count, distant passing seabirds count, flyovers count, and birds flushed from the patch while you approach your site count. There is also nothing in the rules mentioning the size of equipment that you can use but I'm not sure I would get planning permission for putting up a scope big enough in Southerndown that lets me look over to the Somerset Levels.

So how do you score points, well each bird has a value related to its rarity. The rarity is decided by using the 'Birdguides' rarity categories, which gives every species on the BOU British list a rarity value (common, local, scarce, rare and mega). These categories score 1 – 5 respectively. Those species categorized as scarce or rarer, if self found, will have their points doubled, so, for example, a Radde's warbler will be worth 3 points if you twitch it, but 6 if you find it yourself on your 'patch'.

Each month 'Birdguides' publish the National & Local League Tables. The Welsh League has nineteen participants, stretching from Cardiff Bay in the South to RSPB Conwy in the north of the country. If you look carefully you will notice several well known GBC members are taking part.

April League Table

Wales - Points								
Position	Name	Patch	Species	Points	%	Comp	NGB	PPB
1	Barry Stewart	Burry Inlet	122	166	N/A	No	No	1.360655738
2	Ben Porter	Bardsey	113	151	60.15936255	251	Yes	1.336283186
3	Matt Meehan	Newport Wetlands	120	140	62.5	224	No	1.166666667
4	Steve Stansfield	Bardsey	107	139	44.83870968	310	No	1.299065421
5	Darren Coombs	Kenfig Saltmarsh and Rivermouth	108	128	N/A	No	No	1.185185185
6	David Carrington	Kenfig and Sker	108	126	N/A	No	No	1.166666667
7	Henry Cook	Conwy RSPB	105	115	70.98765432	162	No	1.095238095
8	Peter Howlett	Cardiff Bay	90	108	N/A	No	No	1.2
9	Henry Cook	Little Orme	87	101	73.1884058	138	No	1.16091954
10	Julian Hughes	RSPB Conwy	93	100	70.42253521	142	No	1.075268817
11	Paul Parsons	Parc slip NR, Tondy	80	87	N/A	No	No	1.0875
12	Mark Hipkin	Crymlyn Burrows to Tennant Canal	73	86	N/A	No	No	1.178082192
13	Graham Powell	Ogmore to Southerndown	73	83	76.14678899	109	No	1.136986301
14	Terry Wells	Johnstown/Carmarthen	70	74	N/A	No	No	1.057142857
15	Rob Jones	Neath estuary	61	66	N/A	No	No	1.081967213
16	Angie Jones	Fendrod Lake to Swansea Vale	49	52	N/A	No	No	1.06122449
17	Alun John	Pennard Golf Course	40	43	N/A	No	No	1.075
18	Adam Tilt	Cefn Drum and Bryn-bach-common	37	38	58.46153846	65	No	1.027027027
19	AlisonC	LlanfairTH	29	30	83.33333333	36	No	1.034482759

So what is there to stop someone from 'stringing' a bird? There isn't, but we're an honest lot aren't we? - so it isn't a problem!

Graham Powell



BTO News

Garden Rook Survey

If you have ever watched crows or Jackdaws in your garden, you'll know that they are clever birds. However, did you know that Rooks have been shown to be one of the most astute members of the corvid family? The BTO is running a *Garden Rook Survey* this year, to find out more about these fascinating birds. Studies done with Rooks in the lab have shown that they are extremely intelligent and able to solve complex puzzles using objects and teamwork. However, apart from their social behaviour, little is known about the behaviour of Rooks in the wild, and especially in gardens.

Gardens provide the perfect opportunity to study the behaviour of Rooks as there are new problems for them to solve, such as how to feed from bird feeders. Anecdotal evidence shows that Rooks can quickly learn to how to unhook feeders in order to drop them on the ground, or how to pull up food dangling by a string with their feet. The BTO Garden Rook Survey will be building on previous studies and will be looking at a range of behaviours including feeding, social and object manipulation to try to learn more about how common these behaviours are in the wild. There might even be new discoveries! All that is needed to take part is a garden that is visited by Rooks. The survey will take part between 1 July and 31 December 2014 and anyone can take part, <http://www.bto.org/rooksurvey>.

Nesting Season So Far

One of several blogs run by BTO has reported a mid-season report on the breeding. At present, it seems the season started earlier than in recent years, with both resident and migrants birds underway a week or so earlier in this warm year. Barn Owls are doing well, but tits have been hampered by wet weather in mid-late May as chicks are being fed. More details at <http://btoringing.blogspot.co.uk/2014/06/mid-season-nesting-update.html>.

Join BTO for £1

BTO are currently offering membership for just £1 as part of a member get a member deal. New members will enjoy BTO membership right through until the end of the year. BTO membership subscriptions provide valuable unrestricted income that helps to fund survey and research work into the changing fortunes of wild birds. If you think BTO membership is for you, then please consider joining, quoting either Wayne, Dan or another BTO member's name, <https://www.edirectdebit.com/BTOMembership/form.aspx>.

Events

The Royal Welsh Show : 21 – 24 July 2014, Llanelwedd, Builth Wells
BTO Cymru will have a stall at this year's show, situated in the Countryside care section.

WOS / BTO / RSPB National Conference 2014
8 November 2014, Ysgol Brynhyfryd, Mold Road, Ruthin, Denbighshire, LL15 1EG
More details will follow later in the summer.

Wayne Morris BTO Regional Representative in East Glamorgan
eastglambto@gmail.com



BTO Garden BirdWatch

I'm one of two Ambassadors for the BTO's Garden BirdWatch Scheme in South Wales.

House Sparrow

Young birds are leaving the nest and becoming independent this month, so you may well see fledgling House Sparrows among the birds visiting your garden. Pairs of this species mate for life and often return to the same nest site each year. As the name suggests, House Sparrows are closely associated with human habitats, often living close to (or even in) the homes of people. Whilst the stout bill is designed for eating seeds, young birds are fed on insects. The crown and nape of adult males is grey, the sides of the head are brown and a wide black bib extends down onto the chest (dominant males have larger bibs). The back is a warm brown, streaked with black, with a few white wing feathers. Adult females, and the juveniles of both sexes, are a light sandy brown with brown and grey streaks on the back and wings. Look out for House Sparrows enjoying a dust-bath; the precise reason for dust-bathing is unclear but it probably removes stale preen-oil and other debris from the plumage.

Did you know?

- House Sparrows have been recorded living and breeding in coal mines.
- The more feathers there are in the nest, the more eggs the female will lay.
- They are adaptable at finding new food sources and have been seen plucking insects from spiders' webs and dead insects from cars.
- The Welsh name is Aderyn y To, literally 'bird of the house-top'.

How to attract them to your garden:

This is one species which doesn't turn its beak up at cheap seed mixes as they have a preference for grain. They feel more comfortable feeding as a group, so hang your feeders close together. They will also eat peanuts (always feed from a metal mesh feeder) and kitchen scraps.

Conservation status: Red

The House Sparrow population has roughly halved in recent decades in both rural and urban areas. Various causes for the decline in urban areas have been suggested such as loss of nest sites under roof tiles, increased predation, increased competition for food from species such as Woodpigeon and fewer insects due to increased use of pesticides in gardens. House Sparrows never move very far, so the reasons for their decline in rural areas could be quite different. BTO Garden BirdWatch data show that the rate of decline has been more pronounced in London and South-East England than in Wales and Scotland.

Make Your Garden Count!

If you enjoy watching birds and other creatures in your garden, and want to help track their fortunes, then BTO Garden BirdWatch could be perfect for you. Please contact me for a free enquiry pack or to book a talk (Swansea and surrounding areas).

Amanda Skull, Garden BirdWatch Ambassador 07952 758293 (evenings & weekends only)
gbw@hiafi.co.uk www.bto.org/gbw Follow me on Twitter @amanda_skull

FUTURE EVENTS

Field trips

Sunday 27th July	Goldcliff & Uskmouth
Sunday 17th August	Burry Port & Kidwelly
Sunday 14th September	Blackpill & Rhossili
Thursday 25th September	Goldcliff

Contact John Wilson at least seven days before the due date. Departure times vary but John will be able to give information for each trip. These trips are suitable for birders of all levels.

* Please note - there is an error in the programme card. The Whiteford trip in December is on **Sunday** 14th December, not Saturday as stated.

Monthly walk - Kenfig NNR

This takes place on the third Saturday of each month. Meet at the Reserve Centre at 9 a.m. For details please contact David Carrington, 01656 743386

A couple of dates for your diary

- The club hopes to be represented at an event in Bute Park. On August 17th the Out of the Woods Festival will be held in the park. No doubt you've already read the reserve spotlight on pages 7 & 8.
- Big Birding Day will return in the Autumn to Kenfig. Keep your eyes and ears open for further news

CONTACT DETAILS

See the GBC website for further e-mail addresses etc.

Chair	Secretary	Treasurer	Bird Report Editor/Field Trips
Adrian Murch 30, Lewis Avenue, Bridgend CF31 4JJ 01656 768155/0785156287	Graham Powell 13, Clos Penglyn, Pencoed, Bridgend CF35 6NX 07414813853	Anne Wilson 122, Westbourne Road, Penarth VoG CF64 3HH 02920 339424	John Wilson 122, Westbourne Road, Penarth VoG CF64 3HH 02920 339424/07999801645
Membership Secretary/Newsletter	Indoor Meetings Organiser	Publicity Officer	Mapmate Hub
Alan Rosney 10, Parc-y-Nant, Nantgarw, RCT CF15 7TJ 01443841555/07906558489	Paul Denning 17, Maes Maelwg, Beddau, RCT CF38 2LD 01443 202607	Graham Powell 13, Clos Penglyn, Pencoed, Bridgend CF35 6NX 07414813853	David Carrington Kenfig National Nature Reserve Tonkenfig, Bridgend CF33 4PT 01656 743386
BTO Representative	BTO WeBS Organiser	Bird Recorder (East)/Chair of GRC	Bird Recorder (West)
Wayne Morris, 8, Hughes Street, Pen-y-Graig, RCT CF40 1LX 01443 430284 eastglambto@gmail.com	Daniel-Jenkins Jones 18, St. Margaret's Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff CF14 7AA 02920 621394 eastglamwebs@gmail.com	David Gilmore 116, Donald Street Cardiff CF24 4TN d.gilmore2@ntlworld.com	Mark Hipkin 6, Holly Road, Neath 01639 638475/07875431917

GLAMORGAN BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Name :

Address :

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Postcode : Telephone :

E-mail :

Additional family members :

Do you wish to receive your newsletters by e-mail or by post ?

The membership year runs from 1st April. If you join between 25th December and 31st March, your first year's membership will be extended to include the following full year. E-mail addresses may be used for the purpose of sending newsletters, club notices etc., unless requested otherwise. We will not share your details with any third parties without your permission.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Categories: Single £12 Family £15 Concession £7

Payment method: Cash Cheque/PO Standing Order Bank transfer

If you opt to pay by Standing Order, please contact the Membership Secretary. To pay via bank transfer the club account number is 91395351 at HSBC bank plc, Aberdare Branch, sort code 40-08-03

GIFT AID

If you haven't already done so, please consider donating Gift Aid to the club.

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Gift Aid makes every £1 you give worth 25p more to the GBC at no extra cost to you.

I want the Glamorgan Bird Club (Reg Charity 1129684) to treat all gifts of money or subscriptions that I have made since April 22nd 2008 and all donations and subscriptions made from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise. I confirm that I am a UK tax payer.

Signature Date

Print name

Return to Membership Secretary: Alan Rosney, 10, Parc-y-Nant, Nantgarw, RCT CF15 7TJ