



# NEWSLETTER

## OCTOBER 2016

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Registered Charity 1129684



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Wryneck in Dunraven © Stephen Gunter



Spotted Flycatcher at Coed Craig Ruperra  
© Sue Pryce



Above : Juv. Baird's Sandpiper at Kenfig © Paul Roberts

Right : Juv. Little Ringed Plover on the Ogmore © Paul Roberts



**SUBMISSION DEADLINE** for the next newsletter is **Friday 16th December**

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

Welcome to the autumn edition of the GBC newsletter. The long, hot summer days are behind us ☺ and we look forward to the arrival of our winter visitors. For me, this is one of the joys of bird watching. You can visit a site at different times of year and have a completely different experience. The Swallows of summer are replaced by winter thrushes. Warblers may give way to roving tit flocks etc.

There are a couple of “my” regular contributors that I’d like to mention in this edition. Firstly, Jeff Slocombe, whose photos have graced the pages of the newsletter on many occasions, has been recognised by the RSPB, by providing the cover photo for Y Barcud. His photo of a hunting Short-eared Owl was a stunner. Many congratulations, Jeff. Secondly Amanda Skull, who has provided us with lots of interesting BTO Garden BirdWatch articles, has decided to step down from her rôle as Garden BirdWatch Ambassador, after a seven year stint. She has undertaken the rôle with enthusiasm and expertise. We wish her well with future projects. The good news is that she has a stock of articles that we can continue to share with you.

Whilst much of the bird news we receive can be rather depressing (have a look at the recently published State of Nature report), it is nice to get some good news for a change. Back in 2003 a programme was started on Lundy to eradicate rats (not good news for the rats) from the island. It was thought that the rats were devastating the island population of Puffins. Manx Shearwaters and Storm Petrels. By 2006 the island was declared rat-free and since then the population of burrow nesting birds has increased dramatically. Puffin numbers have climbed from a low of five pairs, ten years ago to over a hundred pairs today. It is a similar story with Manx Shearwaters and Storm Petrels. Keep your eyes peeled next spring, these birds could well be seen on our side of the Bristol Channel. Also the White-tailed Eagle re-introduction scheme in southern Ireland has at last had some success, following a number of setbacks. A chick was successfully reared in Cork. Was the juvenile bird seen in West Wales at the end of August one of the Irish birds? Perhaps we could be seeing more of these impressive raptors around our coast in future.

Our winter programme of talks is under way. If you haven’t been to one of our indoor events before, please come along. They are held at Kenfig on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.45 p.m. The talks are always interesting and you will have a chance to meet fellow club members. All we ask is that you purchase a raffle ticket to help cover the cost of room hire. Whilst on this topic, there is a change to the club programme. Unfortunately Paul Seligman, who was due to give a talk on Antarctica on December 6th, is unavailable on that date. He will now speak on January 10th. The Members’ Own night will now be held on 6th December.

As I’ve indicated in past issues, I’m struggling to find anything for the Reserve Spotlight. I haven’t had any submissions this time. As a result, I have decided to introduce a new section - “Where can I see...” (see page 7) I realise that many of our more experienced birders will be aware of these sites but we recruit lots of newcomers, who might find this useful.

We’ve got a new County Bird recorder. Dave (Jake) Gilmore has stepped down after eight years. Many thanks Jake for all your hard work over the years. Phil Bristow has taken over the role. His details can be found at the back of this newsletter. Best wishes, Phil.

*Alan Rosney*

P.S. The photo competition attracted no entries - back to the drawing board.



## RECENT BIRD SIGHTINGS

### July 2016

A seawatch from Porthcawl produced an early Leach's Petrel, an Arctic Skua and 1,952 Manx Shearwaters. A deceased Gannet was found well inland at Clydach Vale Country Park. Sightings at Ogmores Estuary included Great Crested Grebe, three Little Egrets, Little Ringed Plover, Greenshank, two Sandwich Terns and a Cuckoo (Pant Norton). A Little Egret was at Bendrick Rock, Barry. A maximum of nine Green Sandpipers was on the River Ely, with up to four at Llanilid. Two Black-tailed Godwits were noted at a very quiet Kenfig. Ten Goosanders were on the River Taff, Blackweir. A Common Redstart was in a Bridgend garden. A flock of six Choughs at Southerndown included one fledged juvenile.

### August 2016

Kenfig: A Sooty Shearwater was noted off Sker in a movement of 427 Manx Shearwaters (3rd). Two Garganeys were at the river mouth. At least one juvenile Marsh Harrier frequented the reserve. A Dartford Warbler was trapped for ringing. A Little Stint was in a mixed flock on the beach. A Hobby flew through. Five Sandwich Terns were at Sker.

Ogmore Estuary: A Wryneck was found in Pant y Cwteri (28th); other sightings here and in the adjacent Pant Norton included Osprey, Marsh Harrier, Hobby, Grasshopper Warbler, Pied Flycatcher and up to five Spotted Flycatchers. A Garganey lingered at the Watermill. Pick of the waders were Ruff, Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Greenshank, maximum three Green Sandpipers and ten Black-tailed Godwits. Three Kingfishers and a Dipper ventured down onto the estuary. Several Little Egrets were around. Whinchat and Yellow Wagtail were also observed.

Other Sites: Sea watching efforts at Porthcawl were rewarded with two Balearic Shearwaters, four Storm Petrels and three Little Terns. Elsewhere Storms Petrels were off Cardiff Barrage (minimum six) and Lavernock. Two Black Terns were at Lisvane Reservoir, where Osprey and Little Egret were also noted. Little Egrets were reported from Aberthaw, Bendrick Rock (Barry) and Cosmeston. A Nightjar was at Llanwonno. A Black-tailed Godwit was an unusual record for Cosmeston. Aberthaw held both Curlew Sandpiper and Knot. In an above average passage of Pied Flycatchers, records were received from Rudry (maximum three), Cardiff Bay, Cosmeston, Forest Farm and Lavernock, where Grasshopper Warbler and Reed Warbler were also logged.

### September 2016

Wrynecks were at Grangemoor (Cardiff), Pant y Cwteri (Ogmore), Dunraven Bay and at nearby Trwyn y Witch. Further records from the Ogmore locale included Garganey (lingering at the Watermill), Pied Flycatcher (Ogmore-by-Sea), Shag, Hobby and two Greenshanks. A Grey Phalarope turned up at Lisvane Reservoir, where a Hobby was also noted. An Osprey was over north Cardiff. A juvenile Gannet was plunge diving at Kenfig Pool. A male Han Harrier graced Cwm Cadlan. Both Little Gull and Arctic Tern were observed at Cardiff Bay.

*Paul Roberts*



## CLUB NEWS

### Members' News

Welcome to two new members and one returning member; Matthew Joyce from Swansea and Ian Hartrey from Penarth, plus Ian Nicholas from Roath Park.

### Committee Update

The committee has met three times since the last newsletter:

- John Wilson announced that the Bird Report was ready for printing and that Richard Smith has also submitted the photos for inclusion.
- A thorough review of the club H & S policy was undertaken. Ceri Jones has purchased a couple of first aid kits, to be taken on club outings.
- A pop-up banner for use at open days, events etc. has been considered.
- Ceri Jones has been keeping abreast of developments with the Cardiff lagoon and Nant Lesg open cast proposals. It remains to be seen how governmental changes will affect the former development. There have been over 9,000 objections lodged to the latter.
- Paul Denning has had to make an alteration to the indoor programme (see the note on page 2) The Members' Own night will now be in December, so get your pictures, videos etc ready.
- A sub-committee has been set up to oversee any potential bids for lottery funding for the Swift project
- A report on the Swift project has been sent to the Welsh Ornithological Society
- A response to the BTO questionnaire on improvements to Bird Track was discussed

*Alan Rosney*

### Christmas is coming

.....Well almost. How about a GBC fleece, hoodie, sweatshirt, polo or T shirt as a Christmas present? They come in bottle green with a gold GBC logo on the left breast.

T shirt	£8	<u>Sizes</u>	
Polo	£10	Small	36"
Sweatshirt	£15	Medium	38"
Hoodie	£18	Large	40 - 42"
Quarter zip fleece	£20	X Large	44 - 46"
Full zip fleece	£20	XX Large	48 - 50"

Add £3 p & p

Contact Alan Rosney (details at the end of the newsletter). Allow at least 2 to 3 weeks for delivery.





## SPECIES OF CONSERVATION CONCERN

I'm sure that most of you have heard of the red, amber and green lists. But what are they? These lists are reviewed every six years, with the latest lists having been published in December 2015.

244 species with breeding, passage or wintering populations in the UK were assessed and assigned to the Red, Amber or Green lists of conservation concern. The assessment uses the most up-to-date evidence and includes conservation status at global, European and UK levels. The lists now exclude three former breeding species, two previously red-listed, now considered to no longer breed in the UK: **Serin**, **Temminck's Stint** and **Wryneck**. Only one new species, **Caspian Gull**, was entered on to the Amber list.

This update shows that many bird species are increasingly at risk. Nineteen species were red-listed for the first time, due to worsening population status and **Merlin** returned to the Red list.

Two species moved directly from the Green to Red list: **White-fronted Goose**, on account of the non-breeding population decline and **Long-tailed Duck**, due to it being classified as globally threatened. In addition to **White-fronted Goose**, three other species: **Red-necked Grebe**, **Ringed Plover** and **Pochard** are red-listed for the first time, due to increasingly marked declines in wintering populations, the latter also classified globally as vulnerable. **Woodcock** joins the Red List, as a consequence of severe declines in breeding range. The Red List now has 67 species, over 25% of those assessed.

Despite no new additions, farmland birds are still causing concern (12 of 26 on the Red List). Wetland species have the smallest proportion (4 of 31). Five upland birds: **Curlew**, **Dotterel**, **Grey Wagtail**, **Whinchat** and **Merlin**, were added, bringing the total for this habitat to 12. Three more woodland birds: **Woodcock**, **Nightingale** and **Pied Flycatcher**, were added to the Red list, bringing the total of woodland birds to 16. With the addition of **Kittiwake**, **Shag** and **Puffin** to the Red list, the number of seabirds on the list has nearly doubled and it now includes four of the UK's sea ducks. **House Sparrow** and **Black Redstart** are the only two urban species on the list. The Red List now includes eight globally threatened species, 16 long distance migrants, three of the UK's four game birds and five of the UK's six larger thrushes.

It's not all doom and gloom however. There is also some good news. Two previously red-listed species: **Nightjar** and **Bittern**, have shown improvements in population status, probably due to sustainable forest management and targeted conservation action have moved to the Amber list. The **Red Kite** has moved from Amber to Green. Former red-listed species such as **Stone-curlew** and **Marsh Harrier** have shown modest recoveries, yet remain amber-listed. Overall, the Amber list has been reduced from 126 to 96, as a consequence of both negative changes (moves to the Red list) and positive changes (moves to the Green list). The Green list, now 81, includes a range of common garden species such as **Blue Tit**, **Blackbird**, and **Robin** and saw an increase of 14 species such as **Little Egret**, **Little Grebe**, **Firecrest**, **Woodlark**, **Whitethroat**, **Wheatear** and **Bearded Tit**.

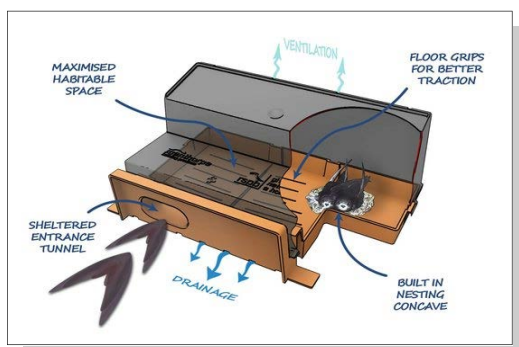
Full lists can be downloaded from the BTO website



## SWIFT PROJECT UPDATE

Now that the Swifts have left our shores, it's time to evaluate the project. (Indeed it is a condition of our grant from the Welsh Ornithological Society).

- A database of known Swift nest sites has been set up, thanks to the work of our dedicated Swift Champions. If you can add to our list, please submit your findings. We need this information to decide where to concentrate our efforts next spring. Swifts nest in loose knit colonies and are more likely to occupy boxes that are close to other nest sites.
- A number of nest boxes have been constructed. Particular thanks to Howard Driver and Lyn Evans for their efforts. We are likely to need more next spring.
- Julia Barrell has bought some call systems (similar to MP3 players with a timer attached). Swifts find "new" nest sites by listening for the calls from nearby nests.
- A meeting has been held to discuss a potential HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) bid for a Swift tower.
- Mike and Jackie Pointon held a Q & A session with the children from Bedwas Junior School. Swift nest boxes have been put up, alongside a small Swift colony in the school roof space. Apparently the children asked lots of "interesting" questions, such as "How many feathers does a Swift have?" Mike and Jackie were glad they did some research in advance of the meeting, although I think they passed on that one.
- A meeting was held with a Cardiff resident (Roath), who is keen to help Swifts. He was having some work done on his roof and thought that while the scaffolding was up he might be able to erect some boxes. This gave us another potential avenue of approach. The major cost involved in putting up Swift boxes is the hire of scaffolding or a cherry picker. Keep your eyes peeled for buildings with scaffolding. We might be able to persuade the owners to fit some boxes.
- In late August we were contacted by the RSPB who are proposing to include Cardiff in their Swift Cities scheme. No doubt we'll be able to report on this in more depth later.
- Manthorpe Engineering along with the RSPB and Barratt Homes have developed a new low cost Swift brick (around £15). These can be fitted in new builds as well as retro-fitted in refurbishments.



Pictures © UK Construction website



## WHERE CAN I SEE .....

A new section for the GBC newsletter. I thought I'd include a section on where to see specific species. We've all got that bogey bird that we've never seen or a species that we see rarely. There are of course some species that are quite sensitive to disturbance and I'll avoid these. Some of the species featured don't occur in Eastern Glamorgan, so I may reference areas outside our region. *Ed.*

### PURPLE SANDPIPER

Purple Sandpipers are winter visitors to our area. (We were lucky enough to see several in breeding plumage on our visit to the Outer Hebrides last May). They rarely stray from the coast, preferring rocky outcrops that are washed over by the incoming tide, picking food from seaweed covered rocks. They are usually found in small flocks. There are two or three sites where you may see them, however they have perfect camouflage and can be very difficult to spot. The first site where you might encounter them is the rocky shore at Ogmores-by sea (SS 8673). Look on the tide-line as they creep about searching for food. Further west are the rocks at Sker Point (SS 7879). I have also seen them on the Mussel Beds (Gwely'r Misgl), a little further up the coast (SS 7880).

### SHORT-EARED OWL

A favourite of many birders, the Short-eared Owl is another winter visitor to our region. They occur in most winters but numbers vary greatly. We have been blessed with a couple of "good" owl years recently. The main arrival period is October and they tend to congregate on coastal marshes, seeking their main food source - voles. They can be found on Kenfig Dunes (SS 7981), although the hummocky landscape doesn't make viewing easy. The coastal marshes at Wentlooge are perhaps the best site. The stretch from Maerdy Farm (ST 2378) to Sluice Farm (ST 2579) can be productive. The All Wales Coastal Path passes through the area. Boots are recommended as parts of the coastal path can get very muddy, especially in the Lamby area.

### BLACK REDSTART

The last of our trio of winter visitors is the Black Redstart. A long while ago they actually bred in Central Cardiff but you are most likely to encounter them in the winter on rocky coasts, either overwintering or on passage. They could occur anywhere on our coast but are likely to be found at three local sites. The first is at Gileston/Limpert Bay (ST 0166). They can be encountered on the rocks in the lee of Aberthaw Power Station. Further east there are a couple of sites in the Cardiff area where they can be found. Penarth Marina (ST 1872) has been regular in recent years. Look for them on the roof tops of the marina buildings. Nearby, the Cardiff Barrage can be a fruitful area to investigate. Try the rocks below Penarth Head or the rocks on the barrage itself (ST 1972).





### PHOTO GALLERY



No apologies for including another Wryneck - from Pant y Cwteri, Ogmere © Gary Light



Not your average garden tick - Nightjar. Paul Bowden had this one in his Gwaelod-y-Garth garden



A couple from Sarah Bevan; a Cetti's Warbler on the GBC trip to Portland and a young Swallow family



Juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker in Barry © Hayden Lack



Another from the Portland trip - Convolvulus Hawk Moth at the Obs. © Alan Rosney

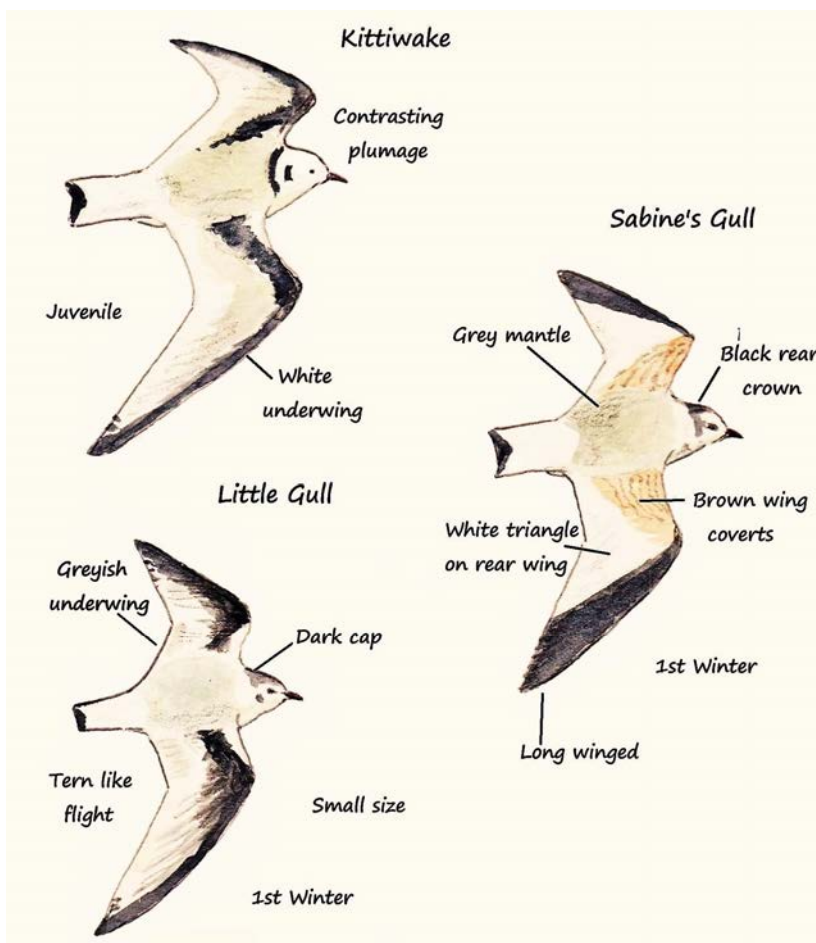




## CONFUSION SPECIES - "W" WINGED GULLS

In this edition we are looking at what are colloquially known as "W" winged gulls - that is juvenile and 1st winter Kittiwake, Little Gull and the very rare Sabine's Gull.

The one most likely to be encountered in our area is the Kittiwake (they breed on Mumbles in Gower). They are somewhat larger than Black-headed gulls and have a slightly notched tail. Their flight pattern is also different from Black-heads with quick, stiffer wing beats. Adults are relatively straightforward to ID with their "dipped in ink" wing-tips but in juvenile plumage they can be confused with Little Gulls. In this plumage Kittiwakes show a black W pattern across the wings and a black terminal tail band. Note the white head, black collar and ear spot. The overall impression is of clean, contrasting plumage with a crisp grey-black-white colouration. The W pattern tends to fade as they achieve 1st summer plumage.



Little Gulls are a lot smaller than Kittiwakes. (Kittiwake L 37-42 cm, WS 93-105 cm cf. Little Gull L 24-28 cm, WS 62-69 cm), although the size difference isn't always easy to ascertain at a distance. Their flight is very buoyant, being more reminiscent of a tern than a gull. In this plumage always look for the dark cap, which the Kittiwake doesn't have. They are less *contrasty* than Kittiwakes, with less clear cut black on the primaries. The under wing is grey, compared with the white under wings of the Kittiwake. They are quite scarce in our area. You are most likely to encounter them after strong winds. Try Porthcawl or Lavernock after strong south-westerly storms. They have recently been encountered on Kenfig Pool, the Ogmore Estuary and Cardiff Bay. I noticed that they bred in Scotland this year.

Sabine's Gulls are very rare in our area. (I've only ever seen one in Wales but saw quite a few when on the Bay of Biscay ferry). They are smaller than Black-headed Gulls and are intermediate in size between Kittiwake and Little Gull. In flight they appear quite long-winged. In this plumage ,probably the two major diagnostic features of *Sabs* are the dark cap and the bright white triangle on the rear wing. The wing coverts are actually brown, not black, as in Kittiwake.

Alan Rosney

Apologies - my pictures were very faint and when I used some editing software to increase the colour saturation it made the background darker too. Ed



## TRIP REPORTS

### \*\*\*\*\* PROPOSED TRIP TO EASTERN SCOTLAND \*\*\*\*\*

Following the successful trip to the Outer Hebrides last May, we are hoping to run a similar trip next spring. The plan is to visit eastern Scotland, hoping to see Ptarmigan, Crested Tit, Scottish Crossbill, Capercaillie, Slavonian Grebe, Golden Eagle, Osprey etc. As per last May, travel will be by minibus and accommodation will be in a hostel/bunkhouse. If you are interested, please contact Alan Rosney. Numbers will be limited.

### Cotswold Water Park - Sunday 10th July

A poor turn out for this one, nevertheless the birding was good. We began at the Waterhay car park and investigated the Cleveland Lakes area. Here Tim Adcock and John Duffy quickly got on to two Lesser Whitethroats. Other warblers here included Common Whitethroat, Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Reed Warbler and a very obliging Cetti's Warbler. Both Grey Heron and Little Egret were seen on the edge of one of the lakes and Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers were in the lakeside trees. A very distant pair of Hobbies were seen here too.

At Twitcher's Gate we saw Common Tern, Greylag Goose and Lapwing plus two Green Sandpipers. A Brown Hawker dragonfly was seen here too plus lots of Azure damselflies. Our first Red Crested Pochards (a female with ducklings) of the trip were found on Somerford Lakes.

Our last port of call was Lower Moor Farm. Here we had much closer views of Hobby. (Our raptor count for the day was four; Buzzard, Kestrel and Sparrowhawk were also seen). The dragonflies here included Emperor, Black-tailed Skimmer and Common Darter. Butterflies were quite scarce, although we did see Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Small Tortoiseshell, Gatekeeper and Large White.

### Lanlay Meadows - Wednesday 20th July

A glorious summer's day greeted the eight participants. As we gathered at the meeting point two Dippers flashed past down the River Ely. In the meadows we came across a family party of Spotted Flycatchers, plus several Blackcaps and Whitethroats. Bullfinch and Goldfinch were also in this area. Both Great Spotted Woodpecker and Buzzard flew overhead. As we watched the Buzzard, Colin Stevenson pointed out a second raptor above it, which turned out to be a Hobby - fantastic. All three common hirundines were seen, plus a few fly over Swifts.

It was lovely to see Glyn Roberts out and about again after his recent illness. He spotted some Otter tracks and picked up some pellets, which may well have been from a Little Owl. As we walked alongside the river, we disturbed a Green Sandpiper. We found two Pheasant chicks dead on the side of the path, neither of which appeared injured. A case for NCIS I think. The bird total for the day was 32 species. One unusual dragonfly sighting was of a Four Spotted Chaser with black wing tips. Looking it up later we decided that it was probably the praenubila form.



Unfortunately the Kenfig outing on 14th August was cancelled .

### **Collister Pill - Wednesday 21st September**

This was a new destination for GBC and 7 participants met in the car park at Undy Pound. We set out for the sea wall, following country lanes initially and then a footpath through fields alongside Collister Pill reen. Along the lanes we had very good views of Swallow and Starling on power lines, with House Martin and a single Sand Martin also present. Walking through the fields raptors were the main interest, with 2 Peregrines on a pylon and Buzzard and Kestrel also present. A Stonechat was in brambles at the side of the reen. At the coast there were Pintail, Shelduck and Wigeon close inshore and lots of Little Egrets on the saltmarsh. Waders proved elusive though Curlew and Black-tailed Godwit were seen. A Sparrowhawk gave fine views as it flew over the saltmarsh and Colin Stevenson got us on to a Wheatear near the sea wall. Other migrants included Chiffchaff, Meadow Pipit and Skylark. After lunch at the sea wall we took a different route back to the lanes, following stone tracks. However the weather deteriorated with rain for part of the way and just a few new species for the day list. In total, 44 species seen.

*Ceri Jones*

### **Portland weekend - Friday 7th - Sunday 9th October**

Another enjoyable weekend spent at the Obs. Brisk easterly winds meant that we were hoping for a good selection of migrants. On our way down, we heard that they had just trapped and ringed a Blyth's Reed Warbler in the Obs. garden - wow! A brief stop at Maiden Castle saw some Corn Bunting (see photo on page 8) and a flock of Golden Plover. When we arrived at the accommodation, we immediately saw a Ring Ouzel and a Little Owl in the Obs. quarry. The BRW had been released and we were not able to re-locate it.

Saturday morning began with a bit of sea watching. It was rather disappointing with only Eider Duck, Common Scoter and a few auks of note. There were several Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps in the Obs. garden. Later at Church Ope Cove, Tim Adcock had a brief view of a Yellow-browed Warbler, but couldn't get anyone else on to it. Our next port of call was the "hump" in Avalanche Road, which has been completely fenced off, so no success there. News reached us that the BRW had been re-trapped and released - missed it again, doh!

In the afternoon we split in two groups, one group going to Lodmoor, seeing Curlew Sandpiper, Marsh Harrier, Water Rail, Cetti's Warbler (see photo on page 8) etc. The other group went to Coombefield Quarry, where A Yellow-browed Warbler and a Lesser Whitethroat (eastern race) showed well. There were six Ring Ouzels feeding on Cotoneaster berries.

On Sunday, we searched Culverwell, with no luck, although a Bearded Tit was in the Obs garden. A return to Coombefield Quarry saw five YBW's in one tree. There had been a tremendous fall of these little stripy beauties. We stopped off at Ferrybridge and saw Sandwich Tern, Curlew Sandpiper, Wheatear, Brent Goose and Sanderling there. We then decided to visit Winterbourne Down RSPB Reserve on our way home, in the hope of seeing Stone-Curlew. Sharp-eyed Wayne Strong got us on to two birds amongst the thistles. A cracking end to the trip. The group saw over 100 species.



## INDOOR MEETINGS

### The Atlantic Rainforests of Brazil - Tuesday 4th October

Our indoor season opened with a talk from Paul Bowden on his recent trip to S.E. Brazil. As ever, Paul's skills with the camera were evident, especially his use of video. (His current kit films at 120 x optical magnification!). He covered two sites - the first was the area around Nova Friburgo, in the foothills of the coastal ranges and the second was the Regua wetlands in the lowlands. A variety of colourful birds were illustrated with Tanagers and Hummingbirds especially evident. As well as the birds we were treated to some lovely shots of dragonflies and butterflies. Many thanks for all the hard work put in to your presentation Paul — much appreciated.

## WOS CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the Welsh Ornithological Society will take place on Saturday, 5th November in Myddfai, Carmarthenshire. The poster advertising the event is included below. GBC members Rob Thomas, Wayne Morris and Dan Jenkins-Jones are amongst the contributors.

National Conference 2016  
Cynhadledd Genedlaethol

WOS  
CAC

*Outstanding in our field*  
Amlwg yn ein Maes

Saturday 5 November  
Dydd Sadwrn 5 Tachwedd

**Myddfai, Sir Gâr  
Carmarthenshire**

Iolo Williams  
Tony Cross  
Adrienne Stratford  
Rob Thomas  
Emily Scragg  
Jon Cryer  
Steve Smith  
Dan Jenkins-Jones  
Wayne Morris  
Gavin Vella

Visit [birdsinwales.org.uk](http://birdsinwales.org.uk)  
for full programme and  
booking details

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ffurflen ar  
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in association with/gyda

BTO  
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fyd natur  
giving  
nature  
a home





## BTO NEWS



### Online Ringing and Nest Recording Report 2015

The latest Ringing and Nest Recording Report has been published in full. As ever, the report can be browsed by species or county and the accounts for Glamorgan make interesting reading, <https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2015/ringGBGM2015.htm>. Note, BTO does not divide Glamorgan into east and Gower for ringing and nest record purposes.

A total of 5752 birds were ringed in 2015, with oystercatcher, blue tit, swallow, greenfinch and goldfinch all exceeding 400 individuals processed. Some selected controls (recoveries) were:

- A young Swallow discovered dead in Orange Free State, South Africa just 7 months after leaving its nest in Pontcanna, Cardiff.
- Continued observation of Gloucestershire Herring Gulls in Cardiff and Bridgend UAs
- A 1995 nestling Lesser Black-backed Gull from Flatholm discovered dead almost 20 years later in Oviedo, Spain
- An adult male Lesser Redpoll caught in 2012 was trapped on the Isle of Man in November 2015
- A total of 788 nest were monitored across Glamorgan in 2015, with Kittiwake, Blue Tit and Great Tits all exceeding 100 nest records. Some selected highlights include: 1 Honey Buzzard, 1 Kestrel, 1 Nightjar, 9 Barn Owls and 27 Pied Flycatchers

### State of Nature Report, 2016

The latest State of Nature report was published in September, and once again draws heavily on data collected by our BTO volunteers involved in surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, <https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/publications/state-of-nature-report-2016-wales-english.pdf>. Key findings for Wales include over the long-term 40% of birds species are in decline, with 60% in long-term increase. In contrast 58% of species are in decline, with only 42% increasing. The report also highlights the important contribution volunteers can make through recording species of all taxa and submitting records to their Local Records Centre, such as SEWBReC.

### Events

Welsh Ornithological Society Annual Conference

5 November 2016

Myddfai

Cardiganshire <http://www.birdsinwales.org.uk/activities/conference.htm>

BTO Annual Conference

4-6 December 2016

Swanwick

Derbyshire <https://www.bto.org/news-events/events/2016-12/bto-annual-conference>

Wayne Morris

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## BTO GARDEN BIRDWATCH - COAL TIT

The Coal Tit is the smallest of our true tits, weighing a mere 8-10 g. For me, it's a sign that autumn has arrived when this little bird reappears in my garden after the summer. However you'll have to be quick to spot one! Unlike the more familiar Blue and Great Tits which happily hang about the feeders, Coal Tits dash in and away in a flash. Whilst most birds peck at food to break it up and then swallow, Coal Tits grab a seed and fly off with it, often returning every minute or so. This helps them to avoid competition from the bigger birds and allows them to cache their supplies for later consumption, although they don't always remember their hiding places! The widespread establishment of conifer plantations has been to the liking of Coal Tits; BTO surveys show an increase in this species where such plantations mature. They feed in the upper branches and are very agile, often hanging upside down. Coal Tits are particularly drawn into gardens in years when Beech and Sitka Spruce seeds are in short supply in the countryside. So, how do you identify a Coal Tit? Look out for a small black-headed bird with white cheeks and a white stripe down the nape (always reminds me of a badger). There is a distinctive white double wing bar, which, when viewed at close range, is actually made up of separate spots. The Coal Tit's underside is buff coloured and the back is an olive grey.

### Did you know?

Coal Tits typically live for two years; the maximum recorded age is eight years, nine months. The 'coal' of Coal Tit probably just refers to the black head. The Welsh name is *Titw Penddu* which translates as Black-headed Tit.

### How to attract them to your garden:

Coal Tits will readily take small seeds, such as sunflower hearts, or peanuts (provide in a metal mesh feeder so that only small bits of peanut can be taken). They also feed on insects and spiders.

**Conservation status:** Green (no cause for concern).

Garden BirdWatch data show that Coal Tits move back into gardens this month, following the summer. Coal Tits are reported in 79% of Neath Port Talbot gardens, 49% of Swansea gardens, and 32% of Pembrokeshire gardens taking part in the scheme.

### 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 visit [www.bto.org/gbw](http://www.bto.org/gbw) for more information.

Amanda Skull Follow me on Twitter @amanda\_skull

### Happy Garden Bird Watching!

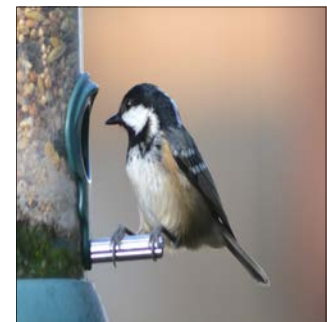


Photo © David Manning



## FUTURE EVENTS

**Field trips** Contact John Wilson at least 7 days before the due date.

- Wednesday 9th November - Goldcliff
- Sunday 27th November - Chew & Blagdon
- Sunday 11th December - Labrador Bay & Dawlish
- Wednesday 4th January - Ogmore & surrounds

**Indoor meetings** Held at the Kenfig Reserve Centre at 7.45 p.m.

- Tuesday 1st November - Finland - Cate Barrow
- Tuesday 6th December - Members' Own

\* **Note change in programme - Paul Seligman's talk on Antarctica will now be on January 10th, 2017**

## 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 743386/07779978738

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE** for the next newsletter is **Friday 16th December**

## CONTACT DETAILS

See the GBC website for further details—email addresses etc

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