

# Alnwick Wildlife Group



Promoting awareness of the countryside and its flora and fauna

www.alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

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## NEWSLETTER 182 NOVEMBER 2016

### Review of October 2016

#### MEETING WEDNESDAY 14TH DECEMBER A VOYAGE AROUND THE ISLANDS SPEAKER: DR RICHARD BEVAN

Wednesday 14th December 2016 – A voyage around the islands. Dr Richard Bevan is an eminent Zoologist at Newcastle University. Richard and his students carry out research on a variety of different fauna ranging from Arctic terns and their feeding behaviour on the Farne Islands, Habitat use by Brent Geese at Lindisfarne to monitoring the improvements of biodiversity through the use of goats and cattle in the College Valley. Richard's talk on 'A voyage around the islands' should be a fascinate insight into the habitats and fauna of this domain.

Wednesday 14th December 2016 – The Christmas quiz will be a light hearted look at the flora and fauna of our area. This year the questions will be set by George and will include a picture round. Please remember to bring along nibbles for our Christmas get together.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Remember that subs are due in January. Still no increase - £10 single, £17.50 for two or more at the same address. Reduced rates for existing members for 2017 (£6 and £10). Please make cheques to Alnwick Wildlife Group and bring to any meeting from November onwards or post to:

Richard Poppleton, Greystone Cottage, Titlington Mount, Alnwick NE66 2EA

Please try not to forget. Chasing subscriptions is a thankless task.

**Please send sightings reports** for November, no later than 6th December 2016 to: Ian & Keith Davison, The Bungalow, Branton, Powburn, NE66 4LW or Tel: 01665 578 357 or email to [redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk](mailto:redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk) Copies of the monthly Newsletter and sightings will be made available on the web site one month after the paper publication.

**AWG welcomes contributions** for the newsletter and items for inclusion should be submitted by the 12th of the month to [redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk](mailto:redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk)

### OCT 2016:

I have gone on before about this year's late Barn Owls and how some young will not be fledging until the autumn; well they have and I can report that my study indicates the total number of breeding owls was low (but slightly better than 2015) with 23 successful nests and 73 owlets being ringed although seven nests failed (the highest figure I have recorded in 10 years). I will hold over a fuller report until next month when there will be a lot less to say about migration.

Ringling at Howick has continued this month with a Garden Warbler (on its way to east and South Africa); Song, Mistle Thrush, Redwing and lots of Blackbirds coming in from Scandinavia and the continent (but no Fieldfares?) and lots of Goldcrest and Robins travelling in every direction possible! Last month's Yellow Browed Warbler being eclipsed by a Pallas's Leaf Warbler at Howick on the 7th (see pic.). Unlike the Yellow Browed this bird, from Siberia, is probably a little lost. However, it was a very healthy bird carrying lots of fat and clearly making its way south. The same morning produced a surprise amongst the Blackbirds – a beautiful Ring Ouzel, on its way to Morocco but stopping to feed up on the exotic fruits available at Howick (including the Turkish Hawthorn Berries!) see pic. We also captured a local Jay that took great delight in injuring both ringers and helpers with its sharp beak! (see pic. on next page) Jays are very clever and rarely ringed.



Ring Ouzel

More well behaved resident birds; Treecreeper (see pic.) and Long Tailed Tits (adults from 2014) were captured on the 8th; along with Chiffchaffs on their way south to Senegal. Bramblings turned up on the 21st (see pic.) along with large numbers of Blackbirds (many with dark rather than yellow bills, tending to confirm their continental origins).

Goldcrests were common and always give ringers a problem in determining their age – as almost all seem to have sharply pointed tails indicating birds of the year. Now they can't all be juveniles and so with some difficulty I am starting to recognise those birds with slightly different tail shapes – that are adults. See if you can tell the difference in the attached photo.



Ringling at Low Newton has also generated many similar birds but also two Willow Tits on the 2nd (part of a very small population that seems to live in the area and have links to Craster) and a Woodcock which came in off the North Sea on the morning of the 16th. Looking at the attached picture I find it quite unbelievable that it's still permitted to shoot these birds. I should say that I am quite agnostic when it comes to Pheasant and Grouse shooting but why anyone would ever think it was acceptable to shoot such a beautiful wild bird is quite beyond my understanding.

*Thanks to volunteer photographers, especially Mick McMahon for some of the pictures.*

*Phil Hanmer  
A Ringer & Trainer  
Natural History Society of Northumbria Ringing Group  
(Hancock Museum)  
E-mail: tytoalbas@btinternet.com*



Brambling



Tree Creeper



Jay



Pallas Warbler



Snipe

## PLANT CORNER

It's tempting to assume, after you've been looking for and at plants for some years in a given area like Northumberland that you've seen all there is to see, other than perhaps an occasional newly arrived casual species. Wrong!

In late October I was with a botany group at Fontburn Reservoir, between Rothbury and Scots Gap. This is a site owned by Northumbrian Water and probably its main claim to fame is for its fishing. On the several occasions I've been there have always been water-side anglers set up on the banks, sheltered by their fishing umbrellas. The idea of this static coarse fishing pastime isn't something that appeals to me, but there are clearly many enthusiasts happy to sit in the same place all day hoping something will take their lures or worms.

This time the reservoir was in what Northumbrian Water calls a 'draw-down' state with the water level very low. Perhaps this is linked to the new flood defences for Morpeth, with the reservoir being readied for high autumn rainfall so it can act to catch a lot of the water and control its flow down the River Wansbeck. Anyway it has obviously been at low water levels for some time because the exposed banks have had time to allow quite a population of annual plants to grow and flower.

Amongst these were the star-shaped rosettes of a species called Shoreweed (*Littorella uniflora*) which is



Shoreweed, as at Fontburn

a tiny relative of the Plantains. The small rosettes of leaves at Fontburn don't look at all like the illustrations in the books where the leaves are shown much more upright, so I had to be shown what I was looking at.

Then there are the Water-peppers. At various points



Shoreweed in a more idealised state round the shore there was plenty of the common Water-pepper (*Persicaria hydropiper*) which I've seen before, but in some places was a second species with rather pinker flowers and lacking the little glands on the outside of the sepals. This is called Tasteless Water-pepper (*Persicaria mitis*). My picture is from Google images.

One of the key ways to tell the two very similar plants apart is to bite a small piece off a leaf and chew it at the front of the mouth. Water-pepper tastes peppery, but the other one doesn't. However, the state of the water and the mud at Fontburn meant that no-one was willing to risk the taste test, so I'm left with just a tiny seed of doubt about the identification of the Tasteless species – particularly as, if it was correct, this is only the third ever record of the species for Northumberland.



Tasteless Water-pepper

On the other, north, shore was another surprise. I've often read about New Zealand Pigmy-weed (*Crassula helmsii*). It's an invasive alien and when it gets into slow-moving waterways or canals or natural ponds and lakes it can spread so rapidly that it chokes them and totally out-competes native species. This has happened a lot in the South of England since the plant was first recorded in Hampshire in 1976. It was originally brought to the UK as a plant for aquaria and



*Crassula helmsii*

garden ponds, but it has been an offence since 1981 to deliberately allow it to grow in the wild and its sale has been banned by law since 2014.

At Fontburn there were some smallish rather yellow-looking patches growing flat on the mud. They didn't look at all threatening, but they were flowering, although you really needed a lens to see the small flowers. This is a plant that is just as happy growing submerged as on the mud and it grows continuously throughout the year, so presumably Northumbrian Water will be keeping a careful eye on it.

Just as I was about to leave the shore I spotted another plant I hadn't seen before. Armed with my photo I checked it out when I got home. It was clear that it was a Liverwort, but not one I knew. To get an idea of size,



The Liverwort, *Riccia subbifurca*

the rosette in the photo was only about the size of a 1p coin and the book says they don't get much bigger than this. It was a species that has no valid English name so you'll have to put up with the Latin – *Riccia subbifurca* – which would be easier to pronounce if there was a hyphen between the sub and the bifurca.

So, a day on which I was able to add four new species to my records for our county proves that I'm still a distinct amateur at this botany stuff and have a lot to see and a lot to learn.

*Richard Poppleton*

## MICRO-MOTHS – PYRALIDAE (1)

The Pyralidae are a very large group of moth that have often been treated separately from 'micro' and 'macro' moths but are now generally regarded as micros. There are approximately 300 British species with about a third recorded in Northumberland. With such a large group I will split this into two instalments, starting with the Crambidae, Scopariidae and China-marks.

The Crambidae are often called Grass Moths, both because of the habit of the adults of resting along grass stems and because the larvae generally feed in the stems and roots of grasses. Some are extremely common, flying by day and at dusk in any grassy area. The wingspan is generally in the range of 22 – 28 mm: note also the characteristic long palps on the head.



*Crambus lathoniellus*

Very common: Main flight period June-July



*Agriphila straminella*

Very common: Main flight period July-August



*Crambus perlellus*

Fairly common: Main flight period July-August



*Agriphila tristella*

Very common: Main flight period July-August



*Catoptria margaritella*

Local in marshy areas  
Main flight period July-August



*Catoptria pinella*

Rare in Northumberland  
Main flight period July-August



*Scoparia ambigualis*  
Very common: Flight period June-August



*Scoparia pyralella*  
Common: Flight period June-July



*Edonia lacustrata*  
Very common: Flight period June-August



*Edonea angustea*  
Fairly common: Flight period September-May  
(Hibernates as an adult)

The Scopariidae are a group of moths whose larva feed on mosses and lichens. The adults sit flat with a characteristic delta shape. They have a fast and erratic flight and are often disturbed if you walk close to a wall or tree-trunk where they are resting by day. They fly freely after dark and come to lights. Many are very common but are difficult to separate at species level because they have similar patterning and can be quite variable. Average wingspan is again about 22 – 28 mm

Finally the China-mark moths, whose larvae feed underwater on various water-plants from a case made from leaf fragments. The adults also tend to rest in a delta shape like the Scopariidae and mostly fly in the evening and at night, coming to light. There are only a dozen native species, but in recent years a number of tropical species have established themselves briefly in greenhouses growing water-plants for aquariums. The Acentria ephemerella species below is the mayfly of the moth world, with the adults living for less than 48 hours. Some of the females are wingless and never leaves the surface of the water, while some have wings allowing dispersion to new sites. They are rarely seen, but when they are it is often by the dozen.

*Alan Fairclough.*

## MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2016

There were 33 people present for the meeting, including Andrew and Meg Keeble who we welcome back as members after their foray down to Herefordshire for a couple of years. We started with a display of all the wildlife equipment that AWG has accumulated over the last couple of years and which is available for free loan to members. [A list of the equipment and how to get hold of items to borrow can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.]

Then, after our usual sharing of sightings, Kevin Redgrave gave his presentation on "The National Trust Coast". Kevin has been a Coastal Warden for the National Trust (NT) for many years.

Stretching from Lindisfarne in the north to Druridge Bay in the south, the NT coastline includes SSSIs, the AONB, SDA, SAC and RAMSAR designations (try Googling these acronyms if you're not sure what they are). The coastal geography and geology developed over the period from 300 million to 60 million years ago and we enjoy a great variety of coastal features. Our sandy beaches and bays suffer very little 'longshore drift' of sand because the frequent rocky headlands help to keep the sand in place. The impressive dune systems, however, undergo ebb and flow as is seen from the way WW2 features such as tank traps and pillboxes are buried and later re-exposed.

Holy Island has Lindisfarne Castle, but also a special range of habitats. There is acid grassland with unusual plants like Adder's-tongue Fern; marshy ground near the castle and excellent coastal habitat, both in the tidal zone and offshore.



Intertidal organisms include Sea Slugs, Sea Lemons, Sea Hares (pictured) and Beadlet Anemones, with Common Jellyfish and Sea Gooseberries (see Dudley Williams' Invertebrate Corner article in the September newsletter) often stranded on the sandy tide-line.

Occasionally there are spectacular discoveries such as the young Greenland Shark washed up near Dunstan Steads in October 2013. This specimen was 3m long, but adults can reach 7m and because they grow very slowly, a big adult is likely to be over 100 years old. Adults caught in fishing nets off Greenland have been found with large seals in their stomachs and in one amazing case, a reindeer. Offshore there are often Bottle-nosed Dolphins and, further out, sometimes White-beaked Dolphins.

The Farne Islands represent a major 'bird city' in the breeding season. Guillemots, Razorbills, Kittiwakes, Shags, Arctic Terns and Puffins are present in large numbers. Eider Duck are also common here, but not so elsewhere in the UK, and even here numbers are declining. Britain has 60% of the world's Grey Seal population and the Farnes are one of its breeding strongholds. One of the major annual tasks for the wardens on the Farnes is the counting and marking of the young seal pups.

Elsewhere on the coast the winter bird specialities are Purple Sandpipers, Turnstones (some of which breed in the Canaries where they can behave almost like foraging sparrows around the tourist areas), and Snow Buntings.

The Long Nanny, north of Newton, is a good place to see advancing dunes at the moment. Amazingly, in the sand at the seaward edge of the dunes you can sometimes come across fungi – waxcaps, Morrels and Subterranean Cup Fungus. They must be able very rapidly to develop a mycorrhizal system, perhaps associated with the Marram Grass roots, from which their fruiting bodies arise. The Little Tern colony here has had well documented problems in recent years and may well only be hanging on because of the work of the NT Wardens. This year one particular female Stoat had a litter of six young inside the tern area fencing and proved impossible to shift, so numbers of birds and their young were lost.

5 and 6-spot Burnet Moths can be found along with good butterflies such as Dark-green Fritillary and Small Skipper. There used to be a Greyling colony but that has now gone. There are regular Common Lizards. Northern Marsh Orchid is here and it regularly hybridises with Common Spotted Orchid. Another speciality is Bee Orchid, although you won't find it in flower every year because each plant has an 8 to 12 year development phase after which it flowers and then dies. Newton Links has great numbers of Purple



Milk Vetch (pictured) which is a dune speciality of this coast.

Ragwort is an issue because of its toxicity to cattle and horses, but it is very good for insects. Pirri-pirri is a real invasive problem and the Wardens try to operate a zero-tolerance policy. In controlling plant pest species, as well as many other tasks, the volunteer groups are invaluable.

The salt marsh area at the Long Nanny has Sea Wormwood and Sea Aster as specialities, as well as various Oraches and Samphire. In recent years there have been increasingly regular sightings of Little Egrets, but no sign yet of any breeding attempts.

Newton Point shows the importance of the interface between the coastal grassland and the rocky shore. Spring Squill is a speciality here and the hayfield which is managed largely by the volunteers is a fine example of hay meadow habitat. Chimney Sweeper moths have benefitted and can now be found in numbers. When vegetation is cut there will sometimes be heaps which are deliberately left and rare Earth Star fungi have been found taking advantage. Another comparatively rare species, Twayblade is found amongst the vegetation at Newton Pool.

Altogether the National Trust Coast provides a very rich mosaic of habitats.

**“What have we got and how can I borrow something?”**

At our recent October meeting we had a display of the equipment and materials that AWG has bought over the last couple of years. But all of it is rather pointless unless members borrow them and use them.

The table shows what we have and who you can contact to arrange to borrow one or more items.

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Who's got it?</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
2 Bat Detectors	George Dodds	07702 492 229 <a href="mailto:george@georgedodds.co.uk">george@georgedodds.co.uk</a>
2 Trail Cameras	George Dodds	07702 492 229 <a href="mailto:george@georgedodds.co.uk">george@georgedodds.co.uk</a>
Pooters & Bug Pots (for catching and studying small organisms)	Richard Poppleton	01665 578346 <a href="mailto:rich.titlington@btinternet.com">rich.titlington@btinternet.com</a>
Field Studies Council laminated identification guides (See list of titles on next page)	Richard Poppleton	01665 578346 <a href="mailto:rich.titlington@btinternet.com">rich.titlington@btinternet.com</a>
Telescopic pond dipping net	Stewart Sexton	07944 072 423 <a href="mailto:stewchat@btinternet.com">stewchat@btinternet.com</a>
Folding butterfly net	Stewart Sexton	07944 072 423 <a href="mailto:stewchat@btinternet.com">stewchat@btinternet.com</a>
Large and small sweep nets	Stewart Sexton	07944 072 423 <a href="mailto:stewchat@btinternet.com">stewchat@btinternet.com</a>
Sampling trays	Stewart Sexton	07944 072 423 <a href="mailto:stewchat@btinternet.com">stewchat@btinternet.com</a>

**Borrowing arrangements:**

- Normal loan period is one month
- Arrange collection and return by contacting the relevant person from the list above
- No charge for loans
- For Trail cams and Bat detectors – if batteries run out, please replace them

## **FSC Laminated Guide Titles (in no particular order)**

Guide to Wetland Birds  
Guide to British Bats  
Guide to Ladybirds of the British Isles  
Guide to Insects of the British Isles  
The Freshwater Name Trail  
The Tree Name Trail  
The Woodland Name Trail  
The Woodlouse Trail  
Guide to British Grasshoppers and Allied Insects  
Bugs on Bushes  
Sphagnum Mosses in Bogs  
Guide to Common Grasses  
Guide to Orchids  
Guide to Mosses and Liverworts of Woodlands  
Guide to Mosses and Liverworts of Towns and Gardens  
Key to Common Ferns  
Guide to Commoner Water Plants  
Guide to Hedgerows  
Guide to Day-flying Moths of Britain  
Guide to Harvestmen of the British Isles  
Guide to Shieldbugs of the British Isles  
Guide to Bees of Britain  
Guide to the Butterflies of Britain  
Garden Bugs and Beasties  
Guide to House and Garden Spiders  
Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies of Britain  
Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Britain and Ireland  
Guide to the Caterpillars of Butterflies of Britain and Ireland  
Guide to British Mammal Tracks and Signs

If there is a group of organisms you are interested in but which is not covered by our existing list it is certainly worth looking on the FSC website. Check out both the list of laminated guides and at the series of AIDGAP Guides which cover difficult groups, such as Slugs and Snails, and all of which have been extensively field-tested before publication.

Now that Autumn is coming to a close and the dark nights of winter are upon us, I am going to reflect on what has been happening since my last piece in September.

I ended it with this –

‘The August Bank Hols often sees the start of rarer passerine migrants making an arrival so lets hope this year isn’t any different. Watch this space...’

Well, at the time no one knew just exactly what was in-store for birdwatchers in the county. To put it in a nutshell, this autumn has been the best on record for the number and variety of rare species being recorded. Every year we hope that the wind will swing to the east and bring a few good birds from the continent and beyond, and oh how it delivered in 2016.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> September came my first lifer, a new species I had not seen anywhere in the world. On a little watched bit of beach on the north side of Holy Island, a **Thrush Nightingale** was found. Usually these birds, from northern and eastern Europe, are very skulking and nigh on impossible to see, but this one was hopping about the beach for all to see.



Figure 1: Thrush Nightingale.

This is a very rare bird on the UK mainland and Northumberland is no different with this being the first easy to see bird in memory.

On 27<sup>th</sup> September a totally different bird arrived over the border into Fife at Anstruther Harbour. This time our goal came from the high Arctic, a **Brunnich’s Guillemot**. Even rarer than the Thrush Nightingale, the majority of these are found dead on beaches

after northerly storms in winter. This was the first September record in the UK. A flexi day leave was had and off we went, the bird showing well the whole time we were there. Unfortunately, as expected this poor creature spent 5 days here, only to succumb on the Saturday morning.



Figure 2: Brunnich’s Guillemot

As October arrived there was to be no let up, with rare birds arriving from all quarters. On the 1<sup>st</sup> an American Wader, a **Baird’s Sandpiper** showed very well on the beach north of the pub at Boulmer. It remained until the end of the month, spending its time between Boulmer and Low Newton scrapes.

From the 4<sup>th</sup>, things became more exciting as the wind swung into a long easterly airflow all the way from Siberia and remained there all month.

On 5<sup>th</sup>, I had just arrived at work when word came through of one of the most sought after birds on the British list. A **White’s Thrush** all the way from eastern Siberia was on the end of the straight lonnen, Holy Island! Due to work commitments ( yes some of us have to 😊) I couldn’t get away until 3pm, so a mad dash from Ashington, up the A1 and a run from the car found me, a beaten, sweating man, out of breath but watching a superb White’s Thrush in the scope! Wow!

I’m so pleased I went up, because it was gone the following morning...

Surely it can’t get any better than that... can it?

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October myself and my friend John took the long journey down to Humberside to see a second for Britain and to be part of one of the most amazing events to happen in birding in living memory. On 4<sup>th</sup>, a very rare **Siberian Accentor** was the first British record on Shetland resulting in people chartering planes and boats to get to see it. Little did they know that this

was the start of an unprecedented influx into Europe and the UK of this tiny Dunnock like bird. As I write this there have now been 13 in the UK.

So we saw the bird at Spurn but even better one arrived on Holy Island (where else) but remained elusive to those who couldn't get on day 1. Still, it had been joined by another great rarity, the first in the county since 1980, an **Isabelline Wheatear**. This was also a new British bird for me so it made up for missing the Accentor.



Figure 4: Isabelline Wheatear from the middle east.

The month ended with a real crescendo. On 30<sup>th</sup> another Siberian Accentor turned up at Newbiggin where I finally caught up with it. Not only did we see it, it almost ran to within touching distance of me. Just superb. To think until a few weeks ago no one had even laid eyes on one in Britain and now I've seen two.



Figure 5: The fantastic, Siberian Accentor! What a bird... this one at Newbiggin.

Just to be greedy, after seeing this amazing rarity, we took a short trip to South Shields where another rare bird, and another Isabelline, this time an **Isabelline Shrike** was present. A very rare bird again, just another in this fantasy autumn for birders.

For me, this autumn ended with an unbelievable haul of 5 new species in the UK, with four of them being in Northumberland. Pinch me, I must be dreaming...

Till next time...

Stewart Sexton, Howick.



Figure 3: White's Thrush from field notes...

## WHAT WILDLIFE TO LOOK FOR IN DECEMBER

It has been a fantastic autumn with exuberant colours and plenty of interesting wildlife and one to remember. As I write this, we have had a very wet weekend with cold winds coming from a northerly direction. I think we can say that winter has truly arrived.

Migration has been very impressive this year. Birds from the east have been particularly in evidence. A new species for Britain this year was the Siberian accentor – excellent descriptions and photos can be found on the Alnwick Wildlife Group and Stewchat Blogs.

These days, I am not a rarity chaser but I have enjoyed searching through flocks of thrushes and warblers for something a little rarer. A Yellow-browed warbler found at Fenham Mill on the day of my WeBs count brought a warm glow as has the Robin in our garden that has taken up residence. Flocks of Fieldfares, Skylarks and geese are still arriving on suitable winds. It has not just been birds, as there has been a good passage of butterflies which continued well into October with my last Peacock butterfly being seen on the 5th November.

## SPECIES OF THE MONTH: WAXWING

As the clocks change and the winds turn to a northerly direction. There can be an air of anticipation – will it be ‘a Waxwing year’? This bird, which is slightly smaller than a Starling, is a real stunner. I remember vividly seeing my first birds in Berwick-upon-Tweed. I had searched all day around all of the berry bushes in the town and beyond but to no avail! Dispirited, I returned home to be told that there were two strange birds in our garden on the cherry tree – I thought this was a cruel joke. Sure enough sitting on top of the cherry tree were two Waxwings. Their subtle red-brown colours, with black throat, small black mask around the eye and the prominent crest were a sight to behold. Closer inspection revealed the yellow and white in the wings with the droplets of red on the on the shafts of their wing feathers that extend beyond the barbs. The tail was also ‘dipped’ in yellow with a deep red on the underside of the tail. Years later I remember watch a party of Waxwings bathing in a pool on the flat roof – the array of colour was magical.

One of the easiest ways to find Waxwings is to listen for their high-pitched trilling call or looking in a large car park where there are plenty of berries. These birds of Scandinavia and beyond nest in scrub next to water and are often seen fly-catching in their breeding habitat but revert to a fruitarian diet over-winter.

Waxwings have already arrived in Northumberland-  
happy searching

*Jack Daw*



## SIGHTINGS OCTOBER 2016

### BIRDS

Slavonian Grebe	1 at Branton Ponds on 17 <sup>th</sup> until end of month
Great-crested Grebe	2 at Branton Ponds on 17 <sup>th</sup>
Little Egret	3 at Beal Point on 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1 South of Beal on 30 <sup>th</sup>
Whooper Swan	4 at Branton Ponds on 19 <sup>th</sup> and 10 on 20 <sup>th</sup>
Pink-footed Goose	90 over Branton on 20 <sup>th</sup>
White-fronted Goose	1 at Branton Ponds on 17 <sup>th</sup>
Brent Goose	650 at Fenham Flats on 16 <sup>th</sup>
Pochard	2 at Branton Ponds on 17 <sup>th</sup>
Wigeon	2800 at Fenham Flats on 16 <sup>th</sup>
Pintail	9 at Branton Ponds on 1 <sup>st</sup>
Goosander	31 at Branton Ponds on 1 <sup>st</sup>
Shoveler	1 at Branton Ponds on 27 <sup>th</sup>
Common Buzzard	4 at Smeafield on 11 <sup>th</sup>
Peregrine	1 at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> 1 over Branton on 13 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Fenham Flats on 16 <sup>th</sup>
Osprey	1 at Hedgeley Lakes on 17 <sup>th</sup>
Woodcock	1 at Holy Island on 12 <sup>th</sup> and 2 on 15 <sup>th</sup>
Jack Snipe	1 at Holy Island on 15 <sup>th</sup> and 4 on 29 <sup>th</sup>
Greenshank	1 at Beal Point on 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1 at Branton Ponds on 4 <sup>th</sup>
Spotted Redshank	1 at Beal Point on 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Bairds Sandpiper	1 at Boulmer on 1 <sup>st</sup> 1 still at Low Newton flash on 25 <sup>th</sup>
Golden Plover	2500 at Holy Island on 9 <sup>th</sup> 250+ at Low Newton flash on 25 <sup>th</sup>
Lapwing	300 at Fenham Flats on 16 <sup>th</sup>
Knot	350 at Fenham Flats on 16 <sup>th</sup>
Oystercatcher	410 at Fenham Flats on 16 <sup>th</sup>
Curlew	300 at Smeafield on 28 <sup>th</sup>
Curlew Sandpiper	1 at Boulmer on 1 <sup>st</sup>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	123 at Branton Ponds on 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 48 on 28 <sup>th</sup>
Tawny Owl	2 near Lilburn on 14 <sup>th</sup>
Short-eared Owl	1 at Holy Island on 9 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Seaton Point on 11 <sup>th</sup>
Long-eared Owl	1 at Holy Island on 5 <sup>th</sup>
Kingfisher	1 at Branton Ponds all month
Sand Martin	9 at Hedgeley Lakes on 17 <sup>th</sup>
Swallow	4 at Branton on 10 <sup>th</sup>
Yellow Wagtail	1 at Branton Ponds on 31 <sup>st</sup>
Siberian Accentor	1 at Holy Island on 18 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Newbiggin on 30 <sup>th</sup>
Common Redstart	1 at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> and 1 on 12 <sup>th</sup>
Isabelline Wheatear	1 at Holy Island on 19 <sup>th</sup>
Wheatear	1 at Holy Island on 12 <sup>th</sup>
White's Thrush	1 at Holy Island on 5 <sup>th</sup>
Ring Ouzel	1 at Holy Island on 29 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Howick on 7 <sup>th</sup>
Redwing	14 over Branton on 4 <sup>th</sup> 50+ at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> and 100+ on 12 <sup>th</sup> 250+ at Branton Ponds on 21 <sup>st</sup>
Fieldfare	4 at Holy Island on 12 <sup>th</sup> 30 at Smeafield on 20 <sup>th</sup>
Blackcap	1 at Holy Island on 12 <sup>th</sup>
Lesser Whitethroat	1 at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> and 2 on 12 <sup>th</sup>
Dusky Warbler	1 at Tynemouth on 15 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup>
Yellow-browed Warbler	1 at Fleetham NWT on 1 <sup>st</sup> 1 at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Beal C.P. on 23 <sup>rd</sup> 1 at Howick on 8 <sup>th</sup>
Pallas's Warbler	1 at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Low Newton on 11 <sup>th</sup>
Goldcrest	100+ at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup>

Firecrest	1 at Holy Island on 20 <sup>th</sup>
Long-tailed Tit	8 at Branton Ponds on 28 <sup>th</sup>
Red-breasted Flycatcher	2 at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> and 1 on 15 <sup>th</sup>
Great Grey Shrike	2 at Holy Island on 8 <sup>th</sup> and on 12 <sup>th</sup>
Isabelline Shrike	1 at Holy Island on 19 <sup>th</sup>
Jay	3 at Smeafield on 14 <sup>th</sup>
Raven	2 in College Valley on 16 <sup>th</sup>
Starling	6000+ over Holy Island on 26 <sup>th</sup>
Common Redpoll	3 at Holy Island on 15 <sup>th</sup>
Twite	35+ at Holy Island on 29 <sup>th</sup>
Brambling	2 at Holy Island on 12 <sup>th</sup> and 4 on 15 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Branton on 15 <sup>th</sup> 4 at Lesbury on 10 <sup>th</sup>
Lapland Bunting	1 at Beal Point on 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2 at Holy Island on 29 <sup>th</sup>
Snow Bunting	1 at Holy Island on 19 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Budle Point on 24 <sup>th</sup>
<b>INVERTEBRATES</b>	
Southern Hawker	1 at Branton Ponds on 1 <sup>st</sup> and 1 on 21 <sup>st</sup>
Common Darter	5 at Branton Ponds on 17 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Painted Lady</b>	
Peacock	1 at Belford Churchyard on 20 <sup>th</sup>
Small Tortoiseshell	1 at Belford Churchyard on 20 <sup>th</sup>
Red Admiral	2 at Branton Ponds on 17 <sup>th</sup> 2 at Belford Churchyard on 20 <sup>th</sup>
Feathered Thorn	1 at Branton on 26 <sup>th</sup> and 29 <sup>th</sup>
Chestnut	1 at Branton on 29 <sup>th</sup>
Spruce Carpet	1 at Branton on 29 <sup>th</sup>
<b>MAMMALS</b>	
Red Squirrel	2 at Branton on 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1 at Branton Ponds on 3 <sup>rd</sup> 1 at Newton on the Moor on 17 <sup>th</sup> 1 at Belford on 10 <sup>th</sup>
Fox	1 at Holy Island on 29 <sup>th</sup>
<b>FUNGI</b>	
Shaggy Inkcap	At Branton Ponds on 17 <sup>th</sup>
Sulphur Tuft	At Branton Ponds on 28 <sup>th</sup>
Grooved Bonnet	At Branton Ponds on 29 <sup>th</sup>
Geoglossum sp(earthtongue)	At Branton on 27 <sup>th</sup>
Shaggy Scalycap	At Branton on 31 <sup>st</sup>
<b>RAINFALL</b>	63 mm

**OBSERVERS:**

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