

TITTESWORTH BIRD NEWS
Winter 2011 issue
(Covers the period – October to December 2011)

Welcome to the 35th quarterly newsletter in the current series.

Weather

OCTOBER: The month began with a southerly air stream resulting in some exceptionally high temperatures for the time of year. Locally it was 20°C on the 2nd. The rest of the month was generally mild but the first frost of the winter period occurred overnight on the 17-18th. The day temperature then dropped to 7°C but picked up again on the 21st. It was sunny most days until the end of the month. The mean temperature for England was 2°C above the 1971-2000 average. Rainfall was heavy locally on the 18th but apart from that there was just drizzle on the 10th, 11th and 19th and a few cloudy days.

NOVEMBER: There was a southerly airflow in the first 3 weeks of the month. Overall it was a cloudy month with fog and mist at times but little sunshine. Nationally the mean temperature was 2°C above the 1971-2000 average resulting in the 2nd warmest November for 100 years. Only November 1994 was warmer. Locally the highest day temperature was 15°C on the 3rd. The number of air frosts was among the lowest for 50 years. In this area only one frost was logged, which was over night on the 6/7th when a temperature of -3°C was recorded at Woodford near Macclesfield.

DECEMBER: A persistent Atlantic air stream brought changeable weather but was mostly mild except for cold snaps on the 9/10th and on the 16/17/18th. On these days the daytime temperature remained at zero, which is not surprising because it snowed on and off but the depth was only just over 1cm on each occasion. Nationally the mean temperature for the month was about 1°C above the 1971-2000 average, making it the mildest December since 2006, and it was 6°C warmer than December 2010. It was the Winter Solstice on the 22nd. The highest day temperature for the month was 13°C on Boxing Day and it was also noted that the reservoir was full.

WMBC meetings

Stafford Branch indoor meetings as usual at Perkins Engines Sports & Social Club (ST16 3UB), Tixall Rd, Stafford, starting at 7.30 pm.

Tuesday, 7th February: Antarctica – presented by Phillip Mugridge.

Tuesday, 6th March: Branch AGM – followed by a presentation entitled Seasons of Wildlife by Tony Hamblin.

Thursday, 19th April: **WMBC AGM** at the Haling Dene Centre, Penkridge. Room 1.

Other branch indoor meetings in 2012 will be on the following Tuesdays: 2nd October, 6th November and 4th October.

The first Stafford Branch field trip will be at Cannock Chase on Sunday 11th March. Leader Scott Petrek. Meet 10 am at The White House car park (SJ995 162).

Other field trip dates: Saturday 23rd June – Cannock Chase Nightjars; Sunday 14th October Berry Hill. Contact 01889 880100 for full details of other visits with SWT. Dates remaining for joint meetings are 12th May, 28th July and 6th October. Booking is essential for these meetings.

Future newsletters and bird reports

This was meant to be my last newsletter but at the moment I am considering a way of continuing by cutting down the work load of producing the newsletter and supplying data to the WMBC for display on their website. Brenda has said that she will do a site report for 2011 but it is likely to be her last unless help with compiling the sightings data is forthcoming. The **2010 Bird Report** is available for purchase from the Tittesworth visitor centre. Ask at the desk. It is still priced at **£3**.

BIRD and other nature news.

This time the data is displayed a little differently. The appropriate day date in each month is shown first followed by the sightings and comments. As usual only selected data are given.

Where days are missing, then this means that no entries were made in the logbook or only very common resident species were logged. Some of these common species are flagged up from time to time so that we have some idea of their site status. In the appropriate season young bird numbers are reported in the newsletters whether resident or migrant.

OCTOBER:

4th: 7 Teal, 3 Lapwings, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Coal Tit, Common Buzzard, Kestrel and several Siskins.

6th: Kingfisher, Grey Wagtail, 2 Buzzards, Siskin, Song Thrush, Long-tailed Tit and a Red Admiral butterfly.

12th: A Kestrel, 2 Wrens and a Pheasant.

15th: A Grey Heron, 50 Lapwings and 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers.

16th: 43 Teal, 6 Wigeon, 85 Lapwings, a Song Thrush, a Coal Tit and a Nuthatch.

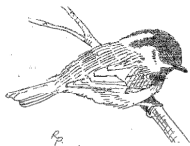
18th: 5 Great Crested Grebes, 2 Grey Herons, 2 Mandarins, 56 Wigeon, 65 Teal, 73 Lapwings, 2 Sparrowhawks, a Common Buzzard, a Kestrel, 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers, a Stock Dove, 8 Pheasants, a Nuthatch, 8 Fieldfares, a Tawny Owl, 3 Goldcrests, a Willow Tit and a Siskin.

21st: 3 Long-tailed Tits and 3 Common Buzzards.

23rd: 83 Teal, 3 Mistle Thrushes, 4 Skylarks, 6 Meadow Pipits, 2 Treecreepers, 65 Redwings, 23 Fieldfares, 2 Grey Wagtails, 20 Long-tailed Tits, 2 Goldcrests, 12 Siskins, 5 Lesser Redpolls, 2 Reed Buntings, a Jay, 2 Collared Doves and a Barn Owl.

29th: A female Pintail, 25 Wigeon, 91 Teal, 2 Cormorants, a Snipe, 2 Goldcrests, a Treecreeper, 56 Fieldfares, 8 Redwings, a Mistle Thrush, 3 Common Buzzards, a female Sparrowhawk, a pair of Kestrels, 10 Long-tailed Tits and a Dipper.

30th: A female Common Pochard, a female Pintail, 4 Great Crested Grebes, a Snipe, 4 Collared Doves, a Tawny Owl, Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, common Buzzard, a Kingfisher, 75+ Fieldfares, a Song Thrush and 2 Tree Sparrows – very rare at Tittesworth.



Coal Tit

NOVEMBER:

5th: Pink-footed geese flew over in waves early in the morning in the following approximate numbers: 360, 170, 210 and 300. Also seen: 83 Teal, 34 Wigeon, a male Common Pochard, a female Pintail, 75+ Lapwings, 2 Ravens, 12 Long-tailed Tits, 6 Goldcrests, 2 Nuthatches and 12+ Siskins.

7th: Of note: a pair of Gadwall and a Jay.

8th: 40 Wigeon, 74 Teal, 2 Common Pochards, a pair of Gadwall, a Dunlin, 2 Goosanders, 43 Lapwings, 4 Snipe, 3 Song Thrushes, a Mistle Thrush, a Willow Tit, a Kestrel, a Common Buzzard and a Meadow Pipit.

10th: 6 Great Crested Grebes, 10 Tufted Ducks, a female Pochard, 42 Wigeon, 65 Teal, 74 Lapwings, 2 female Kestrels, a Nuthatch, 6 Long-tailed Tits, 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 3 Mistle Thrushes, a Barn Owl and 6 Lesser Redpolls.

12th: 57 Teal, 2 Common Pochards, 9 Goosanders, 190 Black-headed Gulls, 2 Coal Tits, a Snipe and a Sparrowhawk.

13th: 3 Common Pochards, 31 Wigeon, a female Goldeneye, 98 Teal, 2 Grey Herons, 3 Pheasants, a Coot, 4 Herring Gulls, 80+ Jackdaws, 130+ Rooks and several large flocks of Woodpigeons flying SW.

15th: The best observation of the day was of 2 WHOOPER SWANS flying over the reservoir at about 1245 hrs. Also Noted: 2 Shelducks, 84 Teal, 61 Wigeon, 7 Common Pochards, a female Goldeneye, a Peregrine, a Treecreeper, 11 Long-tailed Tits, 2 Collared Doves, a Barn Owl, 3 Coal Tits, a female Reed Bunting plus Sparrowhawk, Kestrel and Common Buzzard.

18th: There were 140 Lapwings present – a high count for this species.

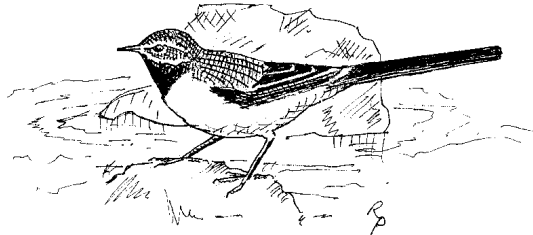
19th: There was a reduction in the number of ducks, thus – 27 Wigeon, 2 Tufted Ducks 2 Goosanders and 74 Teal. Also of note: 228 Black-headed Gulls, 2 Common Gulls, 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, 2 Grey Herons, a Willow Tit, a Bullfinch and 16 Long-tailed Tits.

21st: Of particular note: 18 Lesser Redpolls, a Barn Owl and a Starling flock in excess of 400 birds.

23rd: A Pink-footed Goose was found on the water.

26th: The number of Teal had risen to 82. There were 11 Cormorants present. Also of note: 5 Goosanders, 74 Lapwings, 2 Pied Wagtails, 200+ Rooks, 8 Goldfinches, about 150 Chaffinches, 8 Bullfinches, 3 Goldcrests, 3 Nuthatches, 4 Coal Tits, 2 Willow Tits, 45 Fieldfares, 6 Redwings, 2 Song Thrushes, a Mistle Thrush and a Barn Owl.

28th: 65 Teal, 4 Snipe, 2 Nuthatches, 3 Reed Bunting, 6 Greenfinches, a Willow Tit and 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers.



Grey Wagtail

DECEMBER:

3rd: The following duck species were noted: a female Goldeneye, a female Pintail, 2 female Common Pochards, a female Tufted Duck, 13 Wigeon, 4 Goosanders and 61 Teal. The Mallards were not counted. In addition there were – 10 Cormorants, 4 Great Crested Grebes, a Grey Heron, a Grey Wagtail, 2 Coal Tits, 3 Willow Tits, 13 Long-tailed Tits, 2 Tawny Owls sitting side-by-side, 150 Chaffinches, 5 Bullfinches, a Mistle Thrush, 12 Fieldfares, a Nuthatch, a female Kestrel, a female Sparrowhawk and 5 Common Gulls.

4th: 4 Great Crested Grebes, 55 Teal, 15 Wigeon, 3 Common Pochards, 3 Snipe, 11 Lapwings, 2 Collared Doves, a Stock Dove, a Common Buzzard, a Nuthatch, a Willow Tit, 43 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, a Siskin and a Reed Bunting.

7th: The best find of the day was an over wintering Blackcap.

8th: The star of the day was a KITTIWAKE, a rare find at Tittesworth. Also noted: 114 Teal – quite a high count, 4 Mandarins, 5 Goosanders, 14 Lapwings, 7 Common Gulls, a pair of Kestrels, 8 Greenfinches and a single Goldfinch.

9th: 6 Siskin, a Song Thrush, a Pheasant, 2 Common Buzzards, 5 Bullfinches, 2 Willow Tits, 3 Coal Tits a Great Spotted Woodpecker and 2 female Reed Buntings.

11th: A Grey Heron, a new high of 188 Teal, 29 Wigeon, 16 Lapwings, 234 Black-headed Gulls, 5 Common Gulls, 17 Long-tailed Tits, 2 Willow Tits and a Lesser Redpoll.

12th: 27 Wigeon, 137 Teal, 5 Tufted Ducks, 42 Fieldfares, 5 Mistle Thrushes and a Willow Tit.

14th: Of note: 7 Great Crested Grebes, 4 Goosanders, 75 Teal, 9 Snipe, 24 Lapwings, 8 Meadow Pipits, about 450 Fieldfares, a Willow Tit, 2 Pied Wagtails, a female Sparrowhawk and a male Kestrel.

18th: 8 Great Crested Grebes, 9 Goosanders, a significant rise to 202 Teal & 62 Wigeon, 3 female Common Pochards, 3 Tufted Ducks, the long staying female Pintail, 2 female Mandarins, 3 Snipe, 7 Common Gulls, 15 Meadow Pipits, 10 Pied Wagtails, a Common Buzzard, a pair of Kestrels, 35 Fieldfares, 3 Jays, a Nuthatch, a Stock Dove, a Great Spotted Woodpecker and 5 Reed Buntings.

22nd: Of note: 17 Tufted Ducks, 2 Snipe, a Willow Tit and 7 Lesser Redpolls.

24th: The Kittiwake was reported to be present again.

26th: A summary of main sightings: 130 Teal, 35 Wigeon, 3 female Common Pochards, 3 female Goosanders, 21 Tufted Ducks, 5 Snipe, only one Lapwing, a Song Thrush, 42 Fieldfares, 10 Redwings, a Mistle Thrush, 2 Stock Doves, 4 Collared Doves, 3 Meadow Pipits, 4 Jays, a pair of Bullfinches, 11 Long-tailed Tits, 2 Willow Tits, 25 corvids on feeders and bird

table, a Siskin, 5 Goldfinches, a Herring Gull plus birds of prey – Common Buzzard, Sparrowhawk and Kestrel.

27th: Ducks present: 31 Tufted Ducks, 72 Teal, 75 Wigeon, 15 Goosanders – 6 more than the 18th, 3 Common Pochards + uncounted Mallards. Also seen: 5 Snipe, 41 Common Gulls – an increase in numbers, a Herring Gull, ~ 400 Black-headed Gulls, a Lesser Black-backed Gull, 4 Mistle Thrushes, + the presence of uncounted Fieldfares and Redwings, 22 Siskins – a very good number, the usual 2 Willow Tits, 5 Long-tailed Tits, a Jay, a Raven, a Reed Bunting and a Lesser Redpoll.

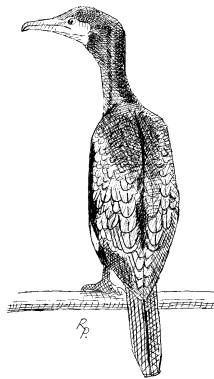
29th: A single BRAMBLING was recorded plus the following were of note: the “resident” female Pintail, 134 Teal, 62 Wigeon, the 3 long staying female Common Pochards, 21 Tufted Ducks, 5 Goosanders, a female Mandarin, 5 Snipe, 32 Common Gulls, 3 Meadow Pipits, a Willow Tit, Sparrowhawk, Great Spotted Woodpecker, a Siskin, a Nuthatch and 3 Reed Buntings.

30th: The female Pintail remains + 51 Tufted Ducks, 85 Teal, 56 Wigeon, 4 Snipe, a Herring Gull, 12 Fieldfares but just 2 Redwings, 3 Mistle Thrushes, 2 Nuthatches, a Jay, a Coal Tit and a Great Spotted Woodpecker.

31st: The best find on the last day of the year was a Daubenton’s Bat!



Rook



Cormorant



Blackcap

Images not to scale!

Mink!!

Steve Gibson has seen and photographed Mink on the site. If you see one inform the Rangers. Tell them the exact location so they can set traps. Thanks Steve.

And finally!

As usual the above data were selected by me to, hopefully, present a range of interesting species found on the site during the last three months. The observations represent but a small fraction of the total recorded during the quarter.

Just in case this is my last newsletter I thank ALL those who have contributed to the logbook records over the last ten years, most particularly Steve Gibson and John Oakes – recording stalwarts over this long period.

Ray Perry
2012

4th February

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