

# LODMOOR AREA REPORT 2019

Between us we recorded 193 species. No new additions to the bird list this year. So the Lodmoor area list remains at 308.

There were, however, several other additions.

Green hairstreak, Keeled skimmer and Lesser emperor were all new. In addition Red veined darters and Corn buntings were discovered breeding just outside the area. More worryingly Mink was recorded on the reserve, probably for the first time.

## BREEDING BIRDS

Surprise of the year was the discovery of a pair of **Firecrest** breeding in Two Mile Copse. **Jay** and **Buzzard** also bred again in the wood. And 2MC and Lodmoor CP also played host to nesting pairs of **Treecreeper**, **Goldcrest** and **Coal tit**.

Success story of the year was the renaissance of the **Common tern** colony. Fencing finally deterred predatory **Herring gulls** and after several years of struggles the colony enjoyed a bumper year. Tern chicks jostled with a record number of **Black headed gull** young, and a pair of **Oystercatcher**, on increasingly congested islands.

One pair of **Marsh harrier** were predated but a second pair raised three young. Elsewhere in the reed bed the populations of **Bearded reedling**, **Reed** and **Cetti's warblers**, and **Reed bunting** seemed in rude health. **Water rails** bred again, a **Bittern** boomed and **Sedge warblers** showed some signs of recovery. Small numbers of **Pochard**, **Tufted duck**, **Gadwall** and **Shoveler** all produced broods.

Around the reserve one pair of **Stonechat** maintained the species status as a breeding bird, and several pairs of **Lesser whitethroat** remain established. Everyone noticed the continued increase in **Bullfinches** and the continued decline in **Chaffinches**. Among the every day species **House sparrow**, **Great**, **Blue** and **Long tailed tits** all appeared to experience excellent summers.

## WINTER

Another dank, dreary January was enlivened by the returning **Lesser yellowlegs**, the long staying **Ruff** and a lingering **Yellow browed warbler**. But for some the stars of the show were undoubtedly the overwintering **Short eared owls**.

February featured a brief cold snap that triggered a brief spike in **Lapwing** numbers, and an even briefer influx of **Fieldfare**, **Redwing** and **Golden plover**. The most popular bird of the month was Lodmoor's first **Eurasian penduline tit** for 15 years. The one that got away -- from us anyway -- was a fleeting **Glossy ibis**. Later in the year a major arrival of **Snipe** in Nov pulled in Lodmoor's best influx of **Jack snipe** for a very long time. Wildfowl highlights in the month included **Whooper swan**, Lodmoor's biggest ever flock of **Mandarin** and the reserve's first overwintering **Garganey**. But arguably the most dramatic moments of November were provided by two parties of potentially wild **Barnacle geese**.

Nov. also produced the autumn's second **Yellow browed warbler** and, in the bay, another record count of **Mediterranean gulls**.

Things starting getting a bit samey in Dec but the month did include two more records: a flock of up to 760 **Pochard** and 126 **Tufted ducks**.....as well as up to 5 **Scaup**.

## SPRING/SUMMER

Spring comes early in Dorset...but rarely as early as 2019! March featured Lodmoor's earliest ever first arrival dates for **Sand martin** and **Reed warbler**, as well as historically early dates for both **Swallow** and **House martin**.

And it's not just the dates that are changing. Once **Cattle** and **Great egrets** were rarities on Lodmoor. Now the first arrivals, in Apr, were just the first of many.

Lodmoor's share of up Channel wader passage fluctuates from spring to spring. This was one of the better springs....despite another poor year for **Dunlin**. By contrast **Whimbrel**, **Bar tailed godwit**, **Greenshank**, **Little ringed plover** and **Grey plover** all graced the reserve in better than average numbers. Star waders

included the **Lesser yellowlegs**, because it stayed long enough to show off its summer plumage, and a partial breeding **Curlew sandpiper**. Misfit of the spring award goes to the returning **Ring necked duck**. Best butterfly award went to the **Green hairstreak** in early May.

Other rarities came late...but were worth the wait -- if you caught up with them! A **Honey buzzard** drifted over in the last week in May and June held everyone's attention with a calling **Little bittern**, a singing **Marsh warbler** and a summer plumage **White winged black tern**.

This was also one of the best year's ever to enjoy repeated views of **Little gull**. At least two immatures appeared to over-summer in the area.

## AUTUMN

A **Pied flycatcher** in late July signalled the start of passerine passage. More **Pied** and **Spotted flycatchers** followed, along with two **Wrynecks**. But a good run of scarcer birds wasn't matched among a number commoner species. Generally numbers of migrants, particularly **Lesser whitethroats** and **Garden warblers**, were below average.

The stand out passerine of the autumn was, quite literally, an amazing looking leucisitic **House martin**.

Wader highlights included a flock of 6 **Wood sandpipers**, three different **Spotted redshanks** and another long staying **Grey phalarope**. They provided the support acts to another autumn of Nearctic vagrants in the form of **Long billed dowitcher** and **White rumped sandpiper**. 12 individuals of 8 different species of American waders have now turned up in just nine years. In contrast this was amazingly, and disappointingly, the second autumn in a row that remained a Little stint free zone.

In late summer and autumn water levels again dropped dramatically. And careful scanning of the exposed mud was rewarded with **Spotted crane**, followed by the second **White winged black tern** of the year hawking over the pools.

## VIS MIGGING....

...deserves its own section. During what wasn't by any stretch a vintage autumn there were some memorable moments. They included several **Crossbill**, two flocks of **Lesser redpoll**, a **Ring ouzel**, a **Short eared owl**, two **Brambling**, a smattering of **Yellowhammers** and three **Woodlarks** over. Much harder to explain were two **Woodlark** over on New Year's Eve. **Wood pigeon** passage was relatively modest but the species most frequently conspicuous by its absence was **Siskin**, with overhead numbers at an all time low.

## WEYMOUTH BAY.....

...often gets ignored. And it often deserves to be! But in 2019 dedicated effort paid off with plenty of quality action. January provided multiple opportunities to see both **Eider** and **Red necked grebe**. February and March produced **Great skua**. May included the genuinely rare spectacle of a **Pied flycatcher** in off. June featured a summer **Great northern diver** and the **White winged black tern** on a fly by. Three species of skua, two species of shearwater, five species of grebe and three species of diver were recorded. They included a **Red throated diver** with a red throat in September. October turned up trumps with a 30 minute sea watch that included **Velvet scoter**, **Eider** and **Goldeneye**.....followed three days later by **Long tailed duck**. Late on the bay also played host to a **Bottle nosed dolphin** and her calf, a long staying flock of **Common scoter** and a maximum count of 8 **Great northern divers**, as well as the daily novelty of a flock of wintering **Gannets**.

The systematic list in this report includes birds recorded on the reserve and the immediate surrounding area -- incl. Preston beach/Weymouth Bay, Southdown Estate/Horselynclych slope, Lodmoor Country Park, Bowleaze-Redcliff Point, Lorton Valley.

The list follows IOC order. For the most part I've followed the English names now used by IOC.

**OBSERVERS** Geoff Lightfoot, Richard Morris, Geoff and Sheila Barlow, Jon White, Dave Chown, Paul Harris, Nevil Fowler, Brett Spencer, several uncredited visitors and me.

Daragh Croxson 10/02/2020

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

+ all records Weymouth Bay unless stated

\* all records given

PHOTO, in the case of rare/scarce birds, indicates a photograph was taken

Red denotes national/Dorset rarities.

Blue denotes birds rare to Lodmoor, but not Dorset. There are a number of species that are borderline blue or black (Great egret).

WB: Weymouth Bay. 2MC: Two Mile Coppice. CP: Lodmoor Country Park. pb: post box

### Greylag goose *Anser anser*

2 records of feral wanderers:

1 ne Mch 19<sup>th</sup>.

2 s Jun 5<sup>th</sup>.

### Canada goose *Branta canadensis*

Breeding: about 7 pairs bred again. The first goslings appeared Apr 21<sup>st</sup>. Minimum of 23 goslings in May. Usual autumn/early winter influx of feral flocks incl. 450+ early Oct.

### Dark bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

In the first half of the year a total of 21 on 10 dates Jan 5<sup>th</sup> - Apr 16<sup>th</sup>.

In the autumn no big counts but a pretty strong showing featuring an accumulated total of about 90 on many dates Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> - Dec 31<sup>st</sup>. Mainly WB but occasionally reserve. Max 11 w Oct 17<sup>th</sup>.

*\*Pale bellied brent goose *Branta bernicla hrota**

*2 records of singles both unusually on reserve itself: May 9<sup>th</sup> and juv Spt 26<sup>th</sup> - Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>.*

*No flocks this year.*

### Barnacle goose *Branta leucopsis*

The undoubted highlight was an influx of wild birds...presumably on their way to The Fleet.

6 went over Oct 29<sup>th</sup>, followed by the wonderful sight of 50 in off and w following gales Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Earlier 1 -2 feral jobs on 9 dates Feb 20<sup>th</sup> - Jun 29<sup>th</sup>.

### Mute swan *Cygnus olor*

Breeding: the usual tale of early promise, followed by a lot of disappointment. 3 pairs again bred. The first 5 cygnets appeared May 17<sup>th</sup>, followed by a second brood of 4 25<sup>th</sup>. The third pair may have abandoned.

Two sets of 3 cygnets survived until at least Jun. AAU and ZOU bred again nr the bridge on Beachdown.

But subsequently just one set of 3 seemed to make it to the autumn. This is a familiar tale of low survival

rates on Lodmoor. The sight of an ad struggling to free itself through dense vegetation in Aug might

indicate the incredibly low water levels didn't help. It is possible adults took freshly fledged cygnets

elsewhere to feed up in the autumn.

Fly overs incl. 8 imms s May 6<sup>th</sup> and a pair of adults and 4 immatures over Jly 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The last locally bred bird had departed by Oct 24<sup>th</sup>.

Winter: early on the first birds were back by Jan 4<sup>th</sup>, and incl. a brief influx of 9 later in the month. Later in

the year this species is often entirely absent in Dec. But after 1 returned Nov 24<sup>th</sup> birds were regularly

present to the year's end and incl. 8 22<sup>nd</sup> and an imm 27<sup>th</sup>, as well as what looked like a returning resident

pair.

*\*Whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus**

1 record:

1 spent much of the day on the reserve Nov 17<sup>th</sup>.

Only the second record in the last 6 years.

*\*Egyptian goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus**

3 records:

2 May 20<sup>th</sup>.

8 nw Nov 28<sup>th</sup> and 3, probably of same, 30<sup>th</sup>.

Possibly part of the feral breeding colony at Silverlake/West Knighton.

### **Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna***

Breeding: 2 pairs bred. Adults with 3 duckling May 28<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently a brood of 6 who survived to adulthood. It's not clear if this was a creche of 3 & 3 or different from the original 3 ducklings.

Movements: as usual more birds than breeding pairs! Early on numbers were very low but slowly swelled to a max. of 21 in May. There was usual gap in records when the nesting birds departed in Aug. The first returning bird appeared Oct 17<sup>th</sup>. Numbers briefly peaked at 15 in early Dec but fell back to single figs by the year's end.

### **\*Mandarin Aix *galericulata***

1 record:

a flock of 5, incl. 3 drakes, Nov 6<sup>th</sup>.

Appears to be Lodmoor's biggest ever count!

### **Gadwall *Anas strepera***

Breeding: 7 well grown chicks appeared with their mum early Jly and all 7 made it to adulthood. This species breeds annually on Lodmoor but...despite the number of over summering birds....only in very low numbers.

Counts: overall numbers were quite low for much of the year. Like Pochard and Tufted duck another summer of incredibly dry conditions didn't seem much to their liking. The loafing/non breeding flock peaked at 112 in late June but many subsequently cleared off.

There was a distinct arrival from Sept onwards with numbers peaking at about 60/70 to the end of Dec. Occasional in WB and over flying CP/Weymouth College.

### **Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope***

Early on: numbers were very poor again Jan-Mch. A group of up to 5 early Jan and 1 Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> was as good as it got. For the second year in a row there was a summer record: 1 Jun 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Autumn: first returning birds not until Spt 14<sup>th</sup>. As usual late Spt/Oct is the best time of year to enjoy this species on Lodmoor. Birds were continually present from late Sept - Nov 10<sup>th</sup> and incl. max. of 53 Spt 29<sup>th</sup>. After a brief break 1-4 birds were logged on a number of dates Nov 20<sup>th</sup> - Dec 30<sup>th</sup> with a final flurry of 17 on 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos***

Breeding: the sort of everyday species that often fails to get the attention it deserves. The resident population appears stable and the reserve supports healthy numbers. The first chicks appeared Apr 10<sup>th</sup>. Some of the bigger broods incl. counts of 12 & 10. Once again predation by Grey herons, Carrion crows etc seemed a big factor in limiting numbers.

Max. count of 92 Dec 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata***

Breeding: two different broods represents a good year on Lodmoor. A female with 7 ducklings was present early Jly, followed by a different -- newly hatched -- clutch of 6 Jly 15<sup>th</sup>. As is often the case the fate of all or any of the 13 ducklings is unknown.

Early on a max. of 31 pb pool Jan. Later post breeding numbers built up to a fairly predictable max. of 42 in Oct. After that numbers tailed off but at least 16 were still present late Dec.

### **\*Northern Pintail *Anas acuta***

Early on: drake Jan 26<sup>th</sup>.

Spring: an unseasonal drake hung around on many dates Apr 8<sup>h</sup> - Jly 9<sup>h</sup>.

Autumn/winter: 1 over Spt 19<sup>th</sup>, 7 over Oct 8<sup>th</sup>, 2 15<sup>th</sup>, 2 Nov 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>, drake Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 4 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **\*Garganey *Anas querquedula***

4 records:

2 drakes Mch 28<sup>th</sup>.

pair May 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>.

drake May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

first winter female Nov 20<sup>th</sup> - into 2020.

The Nov/Dec record was Lodmoor's latest...indeed the dates make it among the very few mid winter records in Dorset. It seemed to feed mainly at night and spend most of every day asleep with Teal by the Hump.

### **Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca***

Winter: wintering flocks never matched the spectacular totals of early 2018. But Lodmoor again provided an important feeding area for respectable numbers. Early on 270 were present in the second half of Jan.

Later in the year numbers in late Nov/early Dec peaked at around 270 again. Some departed during Dec but an influx on 31<sup>st</sup> saw numbers climb again to 290+. Incl. an unseasonal mating record on Jan 8<sup>th</sup> !

Spring; 100+ still present early April, with 30+ lingering into the beginning of May, with the last bird of spring logged 24<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: returning birds appeared -- for this species -- very late. The first wasn't noted until Jun 19<sup>th</sup>.

Numbers stayed low until gradually building up to 120+ late Spt. Small numbers also occasionally noted going past WB.

### **Common Pochard *Aythya ferina***

A record breaking year.

Breeding: 3 pairs definitely bred. The first turned up in an unexpected setting: an adult with 5 ducklings in the CP ditch. On the reserve two different broods of 4 & 3 were recorded in late May. These sightings seem to confirm that Pochard -- like Shoveler and Tuftie -- remains a regular breeding bird, albeit in very small numbers.

Winter/non breeding: a year of two halves. Early on there was a brief influx of 100+ in late Jan. But generally wintering numbers 2018/19 were really low. And for a spell in Jan there were none at all. But at the other end of the year the narrative was transformed during what turned out to be a record breaking Dec. The usual autumn arrivals(148 Oct) climbed to a very respectable count of 304 Dec 1<sup>st</sup>. But on 6<sup>th</sup> a huge arrival from Abbotsbury swelled the flock 740+ -- by some distance Lodmoor's highest ever count. But it wasn't a record that stood for long. On Dec 26<sup>th</sup> at least 760 birds -- overwhelmingly drakes -- were present.

At one point the entire flock got spooked out of the middle pools and staged a spectacular *Aythya* murmuration in the winter sunshine. Quite a sight.

### **\*Ring necked duck *Aythya collaris***

1 record:

the by now adult male from 2018 returned from Radipole Mch 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and Apr 22<sup>nd</sup> - May 14<sup>th</sup>. PHOTO. It got into the spirit of spring by repeatedly displaying to a female Tuftie. The object of its desire, however, was already paired up with a male of its own species.

### **Tufted duck *Aythya fuligula***

Breeding: just 2 confirmed broods....a female with 4 ducklings May 31<sup>st</sup> and another with 8 Jly 5<sup>th</sup>. At least 7 made it to 7<sup>th</sup>!

For the second summer in a row nearly all the dabbling ducks, incl. Tufties, deserted the reserve when water levels fell during the drought.

Winter: another species of dabbling duck....another record count! Numbers were already high for this species in Nov and during Dec's Pochard influx Tuftie numbers also increased to a total of 126...Lodmoor's highest.

### **\*Greater Scaup *Aythya marila***

Basically two sets of records:

female and imm Oct 24<sup>th</sup> - Nov 6<sup>th</sup>.

Up to 5 birds -- 2 sub ad males, 2 females, imm -- Dec 5<sup>th</sup> - into 2020.

Two of the 5 looked very much like the original Oct birds. Indeed all of them had almost certainly been part of the Abbotsbury flock and appeared with the Pochards from the Swannery.  
Recorded in every winter bar one since 2004.

**\*+Common Eider *Somateria mollissima***

Multiple records in WB but probably featuring no more than 5/6 birds:

1 -2, incl. imm drake, on many dates Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> - Feb 13<sup>th</sup>.

drake e Oct 30<sup>th</sup>.

first winter drake on a number of dates Nov 17<sup>th</sup> - Dec 5<sup>th</sup>. ...usually near harbour wall and almost certainly from Portland Harbour.

imm drake w Dec 20<sup>th</sup>. Possibly same as above.

female/imm e with Brents Dec 28<sup>th</sup>.

This species used to be really hard to come by in WB but has now been recorded 5 years in a row. And 2019 was without doubt the best chance of catching up with one.

**\*+Velvet scoter *Melanitta fusca***

1 record:

1 e with Common scoter Oct 30<sup>th</sup>.

Less than annual WB: only the 4<sup>th</sup> record in the last 7 years.

**+Common scoter *Melanitta nigra***

A quiet start to the year, followed by an excellent autumn.

Early on singles on just 6 dates Jan 6<sup>th</sup> - Feb 10<sup>th</sup>. In spring confined to 1 Apr 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>.

The autumn started equally poorly with a total of just 6 noted Jly 30<sup>th</sup> - Spt 29<sup>th</sup>. But things then took an unexpected upturn when birds were noted continuously from Oct 12<sup>th</sup> into Dec. The vast majority of these sightings turned out to relate to a dispersed flock of at least 48. This total appears to be a WB record for this species. These birds spent a lot of time feeding between WB and Ringstead Bay. By the second half of Dec the majority seemed to have finally moved on with just the odd sightings of 1-2 birds. But a spectacular while it lasted.

As a bonus counts of 44 e during gales Oct 30<sup>th</sup> and 6 w Dec 20<sup>th</sup> were almost certainly additional.

**\*+Long tailed duck *Clangula hyemalis***

1 record of probably 2 birds:

1 e gales, followed by 1 briefly by tern islands, Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>.

It is possible only one bird was involved but probably two: the fly by went e past Overcombe in a westerly gale at least 20 minutes before the reserve bird turned up. The first records since 2013.

**\*+Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula***

1 record:

1 w Oct 30<sup>th</sup>.

Clocked on the same morning as Velvet scoter and Eider!

**\*Goosander(Common merganser) *Mergus merganser***

1 record:

drake on post box pool Jan 6<sup>th</sup>. No sign next morning and no encores.

**Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus***

Breeding: pair bred Overcombe end of reserve again. 3 imms seen there in autumn. Also nested on the west bank area: 2 juvs seen on the west path in Aug. May also have bred in Horselych area....although endless disturbance by dogs poses a problem to any ground nester there.

**\*+Red throated diver *Gavia stellata***

A vintage year that incl. a wonderfully confiding summer plumage bird, as well as 2 multiple counts.

Basically 5 groups of records:

1 regularly Jan 4<sup>th</sup> - Feb 1<sup>st</sup> and 4 together Jan 10<sup>th</sup>.

1 Mch 20<sup>th</sup>.

summ. plum. Spt 6<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>.

1 winter plumage on a number of dates Oct 13<sup>th</sup> - Nov 28<sup>th</sup>, possibly relating to more than one bird.

3 together Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, with 1 to 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Spt bird was almost gormlessly tame...fishing just off Preston Beach for long periods.

**\*+Black throated diver *Gavia arctica***

1 record:

1 Dec 5<sup>th</sup>.

**+Great northern diver *Gavia immer***

Generally disappointing again. Early on only erratically present but incl. 1 -3 regularly in the first half of Jan.

Spring passage poor, apart from a few singles Mch, although partially redeemed by a summer plumage bird Jun 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>.

In autumn first returning bird Oct 11<sup>th</sup>. From late Oct fairly regular with 1 - 4 birds to the end of the year, and incl. a brief influx of 8 Dec 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis***

The second poor year in a row.

Just 12 singles on widely scattered dates Jan 26<sup>th</sup> - Jly 30<sup>th</sup>. Incl. 1 over reserve.

**\*+Manx shearwater *Puffinus puffinus***

1 record:

2 feeding Apr 27<sup>th</sup>.

**\*+Balearic shearwater *Puffinus mauritanicus***

3 records is excellent by WB standards:

1 w Jun 4<sup>th</sup>.

1 Jly 30<sup>th</sup>.

2 w and entering harbour Aug 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Little grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis***

Breeding: at least 4, perhaps 5, pairs were in territory around the main reed bed, with another pr in the ponds by 2MC and 1 Charlbury Basin. Confirming breeding is never easy. An adult with 1 chick pb pool on 2 dates in Jly and another with a chick east of Beachdown was as good as it got.

Winter: up to 8 frequented the reserve in Jan and up to 6 Nov/Dec. Interestingly birds were already singing in the mild weather late Dec.

**\*+Red necked grebe *Podiceps grisegena***

For the second winter in a row WB has played host to long staying birds:

the bird from late 2018 was present on a number of dates Jan 1<sup>st</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> and was joined by a second bird 1<sup>st</sup>. one of these, or possibly a different individual, Feb 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus***

Breeding: a familiar narrative of plenty of activity followed by only modest outcome. Once again 3 pr were in territory, incl. 1 nesting amazingly close to w path.

2 chicks appeared Jun 18<sup>th</sup>, although only 1 seemed to make it to fledging. A second pair also produced at least 1 chick, but its fate is unknown. So 3 pairs may have reared no more than 1 chick between them

Winter: once again no sign of a return to the really big counts of 6 or 7 years ago. In Jan up to 25 birds had gathered and incl. several displaying pairs in Feb. Later in the year numbers were lower with no more than 14 --and often single figures -- in Dec.

**\*+Slavonian(Horned) grebe *Podiceps auritus***

Basically what look like 2 sets of records of 2 birds:

1 Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>.  
1 Dec 20<sup>th</sup>. It or another Dec 29<sup>th</sup>.

**\*+Black necked grebe Podiceps nigricollis**

1 record:  
1 Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**\*Glossy ibis Plegadis falcinellus**

1 record:

1 by tern islands Feb 25<sup>th</sup>. PHOTO.

We should all have gone to Spec savers. Not only did we miss it but so did the vast majority of twitchers on Beachdown hunting the Penduline tit. Just as well two visiting birders were on the ball.

6<sup>th</sup> Lodmoor record....4 of them in the last 10 years.

**\*Eurasian Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia**

4 sets of records involving 7 birds:

4 Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> with 1 to 19<sup>th</sup>.

ad Mch 5<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>.

1 May 6<sup>th</sup>.

ad Jly 15<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Bittern Botaurus stellaris**

A generally average year redeemed by two boomers.

1 was booming on the early date of Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>, with what was probably a different bird booming on several dates May 7<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>. On one occasion noted doing no fewer than 22 “whumps”.

Otherwise distinctly hit and miss. Early on 1 on a number of dates Feb, 3 leaving at dusk Mch 18<sup>th</sup>, and singles leaving 24<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>.

Later on what may have been same post breeder Jly 5<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, Aug 2<sup>nd</sup> & Aug 8<sup>th</sup> was followed by just a smattering of singles Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> - Dec 25<sup>th</sup>.

**\*Little bittern Ixobrychus minutus**

1 record:

male singing Jun 1<sup>st</sup>.

Initially picked up by the finder on call/song just after dawn this bird showed briefly, but well, to a second observer....never to be seen again.

Lodmoor's second record....but the first male, following the much watched female in 2008.

**\*Western Cattle egret Bubulcus ibis**

5 records featuring about 9 birds:

3 Apr 15<sup>th</sup>.

1 summer plumage Apr 23<sup>rd</sup>.

3 e May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

1 Spt 20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>.

1 Nov 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Grey heron Ardea cinerea**

Ever present. Incl. one in spring regularly seen flying north carrying reed stems and other nesting material...presumably on its way to the Nottingham colony. Max.: 9 Aug 26<sup>th</sup>.

Also occasional Redcliff Point.

**Great egret Ardea alba**

Another bumper year. Probably best divided into 4 groups of records, although who knows how many different birds involved. Safe to say at least 10 -- and possibly more than a dozen -- as follows:

summer plumage bird on a number of dates Apr 10<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>. possibly more than 1 involved but probably same.

1 in off May 21<sup>st</sup>. Perhaps same Jun 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, joined by 2<sup>nd</sup>, yellow billed, bird on 11<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>.  
1 - 2 from Jly 9<sup>th</sup>. Continually present -- with numbers rising to up to 6 from Aug -- Spt 30<sup>th</sup>. Then 2 Oct 8<sup>th</sup>. A minimum of 7 different birds involved.  
1 Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, 2 20<sup>th</sup>, 1 21<sup>st</sup> and in off Dec 7<sup>th</sup>. This could have been 4, 3, or 2 different birds...and involve some of the earlier birds in autumn or be entirely new! Who knows.  
How things change. Easy to forget that before 2017 this was a notoriously short staying -- and therefore fairly hard to catch up with -- bird on Lodmoor

#### **Little egret *Egretta garzetta***

The usual late summer/autumn arrivals peaked at 11 on Aug 25<sup>th</sup>. Less predictably this was matched by a brief influx of 10 Nov 19<sup>th</sup>.  
At both ends of the year birds were hard to come by during flooding in Jan and Dec but are otherwise now a daily and familiar presence on Lodmoor.  
Incl. one individual that regularly hunted early mornings in the ditch alongside Preston Beach Road. Also occasional Redcliff Point.

#### **+Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus***

It wasn't that long ago that Gannet was a hard bird to come by in winter.  
So the sight of daily feeding flocks of up to 35 in both Jan and Dec, for the second winter in a row, represents a real change in status. Most of our birds come on feeding forays from colonies on the Channel Islands. But these birds show every sign of wintering in the bay, rather than just visiting. They are clearly attracted by the shoals just off the beach and watching them plunge diving close in or just doing their sea goose impersonations enlivened mid winter.  
Otherwise no really big counts this year. But, apart from a brief gap in late Jun/early Jly, Gannet is now becoming as familiar a daily presence as they are off the Bill and Chesil.

#### **+European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis***

A pretty typical year. This species is massively outnumbered by Cormorants in the bay. But 1-4 could be regularly logged from Jan to Apr 10<sup>th</sup> and again from Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> to the end of the year.

#### **Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo***

It may just be coincidence but the increase in Gannets in the bay was matched by growing counts of Cormorants on and over the reserve.  
23 settled birds, with another 8 over on Dec 14<sup>th</sup> was the highest count. But thickets of up to 20 loafing birds on the seaward side of the reserve and the pb pools are an increasingly frequent sight.  
Up to 50 could be counted commuting in and out of the harbour as well as feeding in the bay itself early mornings in winter.

#### **\*Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus***

2 records:

1 n Apr 10<sup>th</sup>.

a young bird attempting to fish over the reserve Oct 17<sup>th</sup>, before heading off w. PHOTO.

#### **\*European honey buzzard *Pernis apivorus***

1 record:

1 ne Overcombe May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Watched by two eagle eyed observers...and missed by the idiot who lives in the flat it flew over.

Outside of invasion years genuine records are rare over Lodmoor. This was the first since 2015.

#### **\*Red kite *Milvus milvus***

Pretty poor year by recent standards. Just 6 records of singles, possibly involving no more than 4 birds:

Mch 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>.

Apr 3<sup>rd</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Jly 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Western Marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus***

Breeding: the 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row a pair has successfully bred...but not before a few finger nails got bitten! Two pairs nested. But the one near the pb pool deserted in mid May. There is circumstantial evidence that the sitting female was predated -- possibly by Fox.

That left a different female and probably a different male, who showed interest in the original breeding territory up the northern end. For a while, however, it didn't look like very much was happening. Then a single perched juv appeared briefly Jly 6<sup>th</sup>. There was then a gap of a month before 3 juvs appeared on Aug 4<sup>th</sup>. All 3 appeared to make it to fledging and, as ever, fairly quickly dispersed along with the female.

However, one or more juvs were occasionally present with other birds until the end of the year.

Winter: one of the pleasures of this species revival locally is that they are now very much every day birds over Lodmoor. One of the pitfalls is that there are so many different individuals around it is often impossible to sort them all out. What is for sure is that early in the year 2 pairs held territory -- and were displaying from Jan -- and went on to breed. But they were sometimes joined by at least 3 other individuals. Later it got even more confusing. Three birds could be seen daily Nov and Dec...constantly interacting and calling...but at least 6 different individuals, incl. 4 males, were involved.

### **Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***

Presumed to have bred again. Certainly, judging by the number of sightings of hunting adults and immatures early Aug and Spt this is a species that seems to be thriving locally.

House sparrows taken on at least 4 occasions.

### **Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo***

Breeding: 1 pair nested 2MC. A single freshly fledged juv. sitting around just below the canopy there in Jly. This species is quite common in the wider area. In spring and summer up to 9 birds could be seen soaring over the Ridgeway.

But outside the breeding season only erratically present. Max. 7 Feb 19<sup>th</sup> but generally a harder bird to see on Lodmoor these days than Marsh harrier.

### **Water rail *Rallus aquaticus***

Breeding: for the second year in a row a juvenile -- without a fully formed bill -- was recorded...along Beachdown in late Jly and early Aug. In addition territorial birds were calling on both sides of the reserve in May. And what was probably a breeding bird, rather an early migrant, was on the mud round pb pool mid Jly.

Winter: at least 6 could be heard/seen daily Jan, Feb. Later up to 3 were regular were regular from Aug, with 6 23<sup>rd</sup>. And at least 10 birds were present Nov/Dec...incl. 4 together on occasions by the new bridge.

### **\*Spotted crane *Porzana porzana***

1 record:

1 on mud by post box pool Aug 29<sup>th</sup>.

No singers this year but recorded for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row.

### **Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***

Breeding: not counted/surveyed but a species that in the past was never particularly common as a breeding bird now seems to have enjoyed a modest increase. A minimum of 12 pairs bred in the wider area. First chicks May 2<sup>nd</sup>. New, presumably second broods, appeared throughout the summer.

### **Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra***

Breeding: the usual flurry of newly hatched chick records in May.

The only counts this year were 36 in Jan, 39 in Jun, and 35 in Nov. This is less of an accurate comment on Coot numbers and more of a comment about how lazy all but one of us is about logging this species.

Nevertheless max. counts have significantly declined on Lodmoor compared to 10/20 years ago.

### **Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus***

Breeding: 1 pair successfully raised 2 chicks. Oystercatchers are notoriously fickle breeders so the usual "will they won't they" saga was no surprise.

For the first time 4 pairs were in territory. Competition was so fierce that a fight between 2 males actually drew blood! Three of the four pairs gave up and the 4<sup>th</sup> on the tern islands deserted first time but returned for a second attempt and eventually hatched their chicks Jun 27<sup>th</sup>.

Since they first colonised Lodmoor Oystercatchers have managed to rear 1-3 chicks in 15 of the last 17 years.

Winter/passage: 1 back Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1 Redcliff 5<sup>th</sup>, then 1 Preston beach occasionally until the first breeding pair arrived Feb 9<sup>th</sup>. Later in the year very few records but incl. 1 in off Nov 28<sup>th</sup> and 1 Dec 30<sup>th</sup> which could have been an early returning bird.

#### **Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta***

3 records of singles, incl. another long staying individual:

Apr 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Spt 15<sup>th</sup>.

many dates Oct 31<sup>st</sup> - Dec 14<sup>th</sup>, incl. daily Dec. Eventually pushed off by rising water levels.

#### **Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus***

Early winter: for the second year in a row a freeze produced some spectacular influxes. Just 325 mid Jan had jumped to 1150 by the end of the month as temperatures plummeted. In addition 200 went over w during the cold snap Feb 1<sup>st</sup>. Subsequently the settled flock peaked at around 1800 Feb 11<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>.

Numbers tumbled as quickly as they'd climbed. Just 70 were left by the end of Feb with the last obvious wintering bird Mch 11<sup>th</sup>.

Spring: single(s) 6 dates May 16<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> could have been late migrants or the first returning/non breeding birds.

Autumn: as ever just single figures Jun, Jly. The autumn flock didn't top 20 until Spt and didn't hit 100 until the end of Oct.

Late winter: 360 by Nov 10<sup>th</sup> had increased to about 570 during floods in second half of Dec.

#### **\*European Golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria***

Early on: a total of around 180 over during the freeze Feb 1<sup>st</sup> and another 16 nw and 50 Redcliff Point 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Late on: 44 Dec 11<sup>th</sup>, 14 12<sup>th</sup> and 41 13<sup>th</sup>...incl a number of settled birds...something of a Lodmoor rarity these days! These birds were undoubtedly part of a much bigger flock that frequented to fields between CVR and Came Down/White Horse Hill from Nov 24<sup>th</sup> to 2020. Up to 650 were there early Dec....when very few were being seen at Maiden Castle.

#### **\*Grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola***

5 sets of records featuring about 12 birds is a good showing by Lodmoor standards:

1 winter plumage Apr 4<sup>th</sup>.

1 Apr 13<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup>, with 2 15<sup>th</sup>.

1 May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2 14<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>, with 3 on 16<sup>th</sup>.

1 May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2 21<sup>st</sup>.

5 Oct 21<sup>st</sup>.

The spring records were fairly typical....the Oct flock wasn't.

#### **Common Ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula***

An underwhelming year.

Winter: 1 Jan 13<sup>th</sup>.

Spring: 1 - 5 on 12 dates Mch 30<sup>th</sup> - May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Autumn: max. 11 Aug 13<sup>th</sup> otherwise 1 - 4 on 11 dates Jly 26<sup>th</sup> - Nov 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **\*Little ringed plover *Charadrius dubius***

A reasonable spring but the first entirely blank autumn.

Spring: about 8: 1 Mch 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1 24<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 2 30<sup>th</sup>, 4 31<sup>st</sup>, 3 Apr 1<sup>st</sup>, 1 14<sup>th</sup>, 1 May 24<sup>th</sup>.

The May bird was very late for what is mainly a late Mch/early Apr migrant.

#### **Jack snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus***

A genuine influx in Oct made it one of the best years ever to see this species on Lodmoor.  
Early on: what may have been the same bird on three dates at Overcombe Jan 14<sup>th</sup> - Feb 13<sup>th</sup>.  
Late on: from Oct 7<sup>th</sup> 1-3 could be regularly observed, both in flight and on the deck with the Snipe flock, all the way through Nov. Birds became noticeably harder to come by in Dec, with the last 17<sup>th</sup>, suggesting that most had moved on. Goodness knows how many there actually were. But you could on occasions see 3 in the air together.

### **Common snipe *Gallinago gallinago***

Some years top winter counts don't get far past 30. So counts of 300+ towards the end of the year were exceptional. For whatever reason there has been a clear trend towards high counts in recent winters.

Early on: the high counts from Dec 2018 continued into the New Year and peaked at around 175 late Feb.  
Spring: still 20+ Apr 12<sup>th</sup>, slowly dwindling to just one by early May. 1 May 12<sup>th</sup> one of Lodmoor's latest ever records.

Autumn/winter: singles Jly 3<sup>rd</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, with 2 28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>. Just a tickle Aug, Spt and double figures not recorded until early Oct. Then a distinct arrival (see also Jack snipe) saw numbers surge to 100+ by mid Oct. By late Nov/early Dec you could count up to 150 in the air at once...thanks to the persistence of the harriers! And total number peaked at around 300. During the subsequent floods some birds clearly moved out but at least 200 lingered until the year's end.

### **\*N Long billed dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus***

1 record:

juv. Spt 11<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>. PHOTO.

Lodmoor's 4<sup>th</sup> record (involving 5 birds).

### **Black tailed godwit *Limosa limosa***

Winter: early on in the year the clear out in Dec 2018 meant just 1-8 were around. But numbers had swelled to 48 in late Feb. In Mch counts of up to 62 may have incl. some early spring migrants. Later in the year only a few lingered. And after the flooding none at all were left in the last 3 weeks of Dec.

Passage: in spring a flock of 91 in early Apr incl. at least one Continental race bird. The Apr counts weren't matched in May, although up to 36 birds were present daily. A flock of up to 22 had finally moved through by late Jun leaving just a handful of stragglers/non breeders in Jly.

During the autumn numbers gradually increased from 23 in Aug to 38 Spt and at least 60 by Oct. But, unlike recent years, the majority had moved on by Nov.

### **Bar tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica***

Spring: a return to form after a modest showing in 2018. From Apr 15<sup>th</sup> - May 29<sup>th</sup> up to 25 were passing through/over more or less daily, with a max of 92 Apr 22<sup>nd</sup>. Last of spring Jun 2<sup>nd</sup>.

A promising spring was followed by an entirely blank autumn...the first on Lodmoor for some time.

### **Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus***

Spring: Lodmoor enjoyed its fair share of up Channel passage of both Barwit and this species. A total of more than 250 passed through over daily from Apr 13<sup>th</sup> - May 13<sup>th</sup>, followed by a few stragglers to Jun 6<sup>th</sup>. Max. 40 Apr 16<sup>th</sup> and 49 nw 27<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: 8 on 4 dates Jly 6<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>, then 4 w Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1 Spt 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Eurasian curlew *Numenius arquata***

Never a very common species on/over Lodmoor and 2019 was no exception!

Spring: 16 on 11 dates Feb 5<sup>th</sup> - May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Autumn: one of the poorest autumn ever: 3 singles Jun 10<sup>th</sup>, Jly 10<sup>th</sup>, Nov 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **\*Spotted redshank *Tringa erythropus***

3 records of winter plumage singles:

w Aug 26<sup>th</sup>.

Spt 8<sup>th</sup>.

Oct 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Spt and Oct birds both appeared early morning on the west scrape, looked settled and flew off calling in about as long as it takes to send texts saying they're looking settled!

#### **Common redshank *Tringa totanus***

Spring: just 7 on 11 dates Mch 4<sup>th</sup> -- May 15<sup>th</sup>. Distinctly sub-optimal by recent standards.

Autumn: about 55 on many dates Jun 13<sup>th</sup> - Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>. The usual Jly/Aug peak. Max. 9.

#### **Common greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

Spring: 1 Apr 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1 May 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup>, with 2 to 7<sup>th</sup>, 1 13<sup>th</sup>, 3 14<sup>th</sup>, 1 16<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: late appearing but 1 Aug 15<sup>th</sup>, then Aug 27<sup>th</sup> onwards, with 3 from Spt 1<sup>st</sup>. They lingered to 15<sup>th</sup>, with 2 of them to 19<sup>th</sup> and 1 to Oct 14<sup>th</sup>.

Genuine spring migrants -- as opposed to late wintering birds in Poole Harbour -- are often scarce across Dorset. So a minimum of 6 different birds on a single site is good going.

#### **\*N Lesser yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes***

1 record:

returning bird from 2018 as first winter and eventually first summer Jan 1<sup>st</sup> - Apr 21<sup>st</sup>. PHOTO.

It had left Lodmoor when the water levels rose in Dec 2018, only to return. Where it went in the mean time is a mystery. Ironically when it had moulted into its brightest, spangliest summer plumage in Apr it was, at last, being ignored by the tphotographers.

#### **Green sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***

Winter: none at all early on(although 1 wintered just outside the area at the Jurassic roundabout pools Feb-Apr). Later 1 Beachdown/Hump area Dec 4<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>.

Spring: 1 Apr 25<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: first back Jun 25<sup>th</sup>. Then 1 -8 regularly present through to Spt 30<sup>th</sup>, followed by a gap until 3 appeared on the west scrape before flying n Oct 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### **\*Wood sandpiper *Tringa glareola***

3 sets of records:

1 Jly 15<sup>th</sup>...a relatively early date.

1 Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>.

1 Aug 8<sup>th</sup>, 6 9<sup>th</sup> & 5 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Aug flock was the best count for 7 years and follows several disappointing autumn, so a welcome return to form. There were a number of other claims but most, if not all, sound dodgy....see Redshank!

#### **Common sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***

Spring: about 12 on many dates Apr 10<sup>th</sup> - May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: from Jun 19<sup>th</sup> - Spt 28<sup>th</sup>. Max 8.

#### **Ruddy turnstone *Arenaria interpres***

Early on: up to 14, but usually single figures Jan -- Mch 4<sup>th</sup>, mainly Preston beach and occasionally reserve.

Spring: singles Apr 22<sup>nd</sup>, and summer plumage May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: 8 Jly 30<sup>th</sup>, 18 Aug 21<sup>st</sup>. Then 4 Spt 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 1 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Late on: up to 11 rather erratically Preston Beach Oct/Nov. Increase in Dec to peak of 22...clearly part of wandering flock in Weymouth/Portland Harbour area.

It's a shame we don't see more that live up to their Ruddy name. The May migrant was smart enough to be chosen by one observer as his bird of the year.

#### **\*Red knot *Calidris canutus***

8 records of about 17 birds:

1 winter plumage Apr 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>.

juv by Hump Aug 18<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>

5e WB Spt 7<sup>th</sup>.

4w WB Spt 8<sup>th</sup>.

4 west scrape Spt 13<sup>th</sup>.

1 Spt 17<sup>th</sup>.

single(s) Oct 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, perhaps same.

A terrific year for a species that usually pretty scarce on/around Lodmoor. Present for a total of more than 2 weeks. Knot and Wood sand provided an obvious contrast to the noticeably poor autumn passage of a number of other waders.

#### **\*Sanderling *Calidris alba***

A disappointing year.

Spring: 2 Preston beach Apr 11<sup>th</sup>, then just 13 on 7 dates, mainly beach, Apr 30<sup>th</sup> - May 24<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: 1 Jly 26<sup>th</sup>, 2 reserve Aug 13<sup>th</sup>, 1 beach Oct 20<sup>th</sup>, 3w, 7 e and 3 reserve in gales 30<sup>th</sup>, 3w Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **\*White rumped sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis***

1 record:

juv Oct 13<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup>. PHOTO.

4<sup>th</sup> Lodmoor record, the second for Oct and the first since 2013.

#### **\*Curlew sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea***

4 records:

Spring: partial summer plumage adult May 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Autumn: single juvs Spt 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Spring records are rare.. there have been fewer than a handful in the last 20 years.

#### **Dunlin *Calidris alpina***

Three figure flocks of migrating Dunlin are becoming a distant memory on Lodmoor.

Winter: 1 - 12 Jan/Feb rose to 18 by late Feb. 1-2 to Mch 14<sup>th</sup>. Later on 1 -4 lingered through Oct to early Dec. Records were then interrupted by the flooding but 1 - 2 persisted off and on.

Spring: frankly rubbish. Single figures in Apr eventually rose to 22 24<sup>th</sup>. What used to be the May rush in records just never happened. Max of just 25 11<sup>th</sup>. Last Jun 8<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: 3 Jun 29<sup>th</sup> marked the start of return passage. Numbers remained almost as poor as the spring, with a modest max of 31 Jly 15<sup>th</sup> and Aug 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Ruff *Philomachus pugnax***

Winter: the confiding white headed male from 2018 lingered -- apart from brief trips to The Fleet -- until Apr 18<sup>th</sup>.

Spring: the wintering bird was joined by a second Mch 26<sup>th</sup>, then 11 Mch 28<sup>th</sup> brightened an early spring morning.

Autumn: 1 Aug 16<sup>th</sup>, 5 w WB Spt 2<sup>nd</sup>, then a white headed male(perhaps the returning bird) Spt 10<sup>th</sup> - Oct 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### **\*Grey(Red) phalarope *Phalaropus fuscicollis***

1 record:

juv. Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>. PHOTO.

Another relatively long stayer, following the 2018 bird. This one spent a lot of time out of the water feeding, Sanderling style, with the Teal flock.

#### **+Black legged kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla***

Generally poor year.

Exceptions incl. 32 past WB Apr 30<sup>th</sup> and 6 during unseasonal summer gales Jun 7<sup>th</sup>. Otherwise just a scattering of records, mainly singles Jly through to Dec.

#### **Black headed gull *Larus ridibundus***

Breeding: the newly established colony on the tern islands goes from strength to strength. Taking advantage of arriving ahead of the terns at least 12 pairs produced a minimum of 30 chicks. Counting them proved surprisingly challenging in the thick vegetation.

Winter/passage: incl. 3,000 in the pre roost and WB roost in mid Feb and at least 1,000 on the reserve in mid Mch.

### **Little gull *Larus minutus***

A long sequence of records, featuring about 21 different birds, made it a brilliant year to enjoy this wonderful gull -- in a variety of plumages -- up close and personal. Present on the reserve for an accumulated total of more than 8 weeks:

1e WB Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>.

ad Mch 15<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup>.

ad Apr 15<sup>th</sup>.

14 adults e WB May 7<sup>th</sup>.

1<sup>st</sup> summer birds on many dates May 6<sup>th</sup> - Jun 24<sup>th</sup>. Two different birds seemed to be involved.

1<sup>st</sup> summer Jly 15<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>. Probably one of above.

adult Aug 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>.

1<sup>st</sup> summer(s) on a number of dates Aug 27<sup>th</sup> - Spt 20<sup>th</sup>...probably refers to one of the above.

Juv/1<sup>st</sup> winter Spt 29<sup>th</sup> - Oct 6<sup>th</sup>. A new bird.

An exceptional year. The May flock isn't unprecedented in spring. What looks like at least 2 over summering birds in the Weymouth area is.

### **Mediterranean gull *Larus melanocephalus***

More record counts. At least 1450 were clocked in the WB roost Nov 14<sup>th</sup>. Earlier 1200+ were counted Jan 4<sup>th</sup>. Even 10 years ago it would have sounded daft if you'd predicted that this species could sometimes outnumber Black headed on and around Lodmoor.

In spring 200+ daily were passing through/over the reserve late Feb/early May. This species is also becoming commoner -- or at least less scarce -- later in spring. 30+ were still being noted daily through Apr with 10+ still in early May, with single figs until the end of the month.

In Jun 8 non breeding sub adults appeared 2<sup>nd</sup>, with 18 past 7<sup>th</sup>, rising to 57 on reserve by 9<sup>th</sup> and increasing to 100+ regularly by mid month.

Post breeding/autumn proper began when the first juv appeared Jly 6<sup>th</sup>. Flocks hit the 500 by the end of the month and into Aug and incl. a count of at least 52 juvs among a total of 452 birds Jly 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Common gull *Larus canus***

Early on: incl. a count of 650 in the WB roost Mch 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Spring: the usual early spring passage of 100+ daily late Feb/early Mch. Not so usual was an excellent run of records through Apr with 1-6 regularly to May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: the mid summer gap came to an end Jly 24<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>. There was then another hiatus until Spt 19<sup>th</sup>.

Winter: as usual numbers didn't really start building up until Nov. And when they did the vast majority of birds roosting in WB left before day break and frequently arrived only at sunset...so were hard to count.

But at least 900 had flown into the bay Dec 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **Great black back gull *Larus marinus***

Ever present WB and Lodmoor.

### **Herring gull *Larus argentatus***

Breeds nearby in Weymouth. So birds displaying and carrying nest material were a common sight. But the one thing we didn't see this year was any Common tern chicks being predated. See account for that species.

### **Yellow legged gull *Larus michahellis***

About 20 birds from Feb - Nov, with the usual late summer/autumn peak: 5 in Jly, 2 in Aug, and 6 in Spt.

Nearly all juv/1<sup>st</sup> winters.

### **Lesser black backed gull *Larus fuscus graellsii***

Usual passage of about 40 daily late Feb/Mch and again Oct/Nov...incl. smattering of *intermedius* birds.

Incl. a max. of 55 WB roost Mch 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis***

Winter: 1 Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>.

Spring: 1- 5 daily from Apr 1<sup>st</sup> with up to 8 a day in May and 7 still around early Jun.

Summer/autumn: first family parties began appearing Jly 18<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently good numbers of juvs passing through with parents to Oct 18<sup>th</sup>. A total of 18 on the reserve Aug 18<sup>th</sup> is a good count. Finally a 1<sup>st</sup> winter bird Nov 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **\*Little tern *Sternula albifrons***

6 records, all but one in WB:

Singles Apr 15<sup>th</sup> (by tern islands), May 12<sup>th</sup>, Jun 15<sup>th</sup>.

8 Jly 14<sup>th</sup>, 2 15<sup>th</sup>, 5 Aug 1<sup>st</sup>.

As ever almost certainly from the Ferrybridge colony.

### **\*Roseate tern *Sterna dougallii***

2 records:

1 May 20<sup>th</sup>.

2 Jun 7<sup>th</sup>.

The area round the tern islands remains one of the more reliable places in Dorset to see this species.

Recorded on Lodmoor/WB in 14 of the last 16 summers.

### **Common tern *Sterna hirundo***

Breeding: the netting was never going to win any design awards and the upturned plastic milk bottles on poles were just an eyesore. But the efforts to protect the tern islands from predatory Herring gulls paid off big style. The result was the best tally of fledged chicks for at least five summers....a success story to celebrate.

The first returning birds appeared Apr 20<sup>th</sup> and by mid May around 40 pairs had settled down to nest, mainly on the two protected islands. The first chicks arrived Jun 9<sup>th</sup> and -- safe from the gulls -- an impressive total of at least 70 made it to fledging. Nearly all had gone by the beginning of Aug with the last record of the year 10<sup>th</sup>.

One interesting change this year was the feeding pattern of the adults. Normally they collect Sand eels either from WB or over the Chesil. This year many were fishing much further east....towards Ringstead Bay. Now that the colony is back in rude health it'll be intriguing to see how they cope in 2020 with the growing number of Black headed gulls competing for space.

As ever the colony continues to pull in immature non breeders. A 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> summer bird was around on a number of dates May 13<sup>th</sup> - Jun 21<sup>st</sup>, with 2 Jun 9<sup>th</sup>. The parental instinct is so strong an adult was seen presenting a fish to one of the imms, which gratefully accepted a free meal.

### **\*+Arctic tern *Sterna paradisaea***

2 records of singles WB:

1e Apr 15<sup>th</sup>.

1w Spt 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **\*White winged black tern *Chlidonias leucopterus***

2 records:

summer plumage adult Jun 26<sup>th</sup>. Reserve and WB. PHOTO.

juv Spt 1<sup>st</sup>.

Lodmoor's 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> records...but, perhaps surprisingly, only the second in Spt. The juv. was watched hawking over the reed bed pools before flying n, where it was seen again going over the parkride, before it relocated to Abbotsbury.

### **\*Great skua *Stercorarius skua***

2 records of singles:

Feb 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mch 16<sup>th</sup>.

The Feb bird may have been pulled in by the unusual number of Gannets feeding in the bay. The Mch bird

was flying over the holiday camp at Bowleaze with gulls!

**+\*Pomarine skua *Stercorarius pomarinus***

1 record:  
imm w Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**+\*Arctic skua *Stercorarius parasiticus***

5 singles:  
1 e in a se gale Jun 7<sup>th</sup>.  
1 harassing gulls Jly 30<sup>th</sup>.  
1 w Spt 25<sup>th</sup>.  
1 w Spt 27<sup>th</sup>.  
1 w almost over beach in gales Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
A “three species of skua” year in WB. Doesn’t happen very often.

**\*+Common guillemot *Uria aalge***

In contrast to Skuas 2019 was yet another deeply disappointing year for alcids.  
Early on: 2-3 Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>.  
Late on: singles Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Also incl. a dead bird Preston beach Nov. It looked unharmed but was washed up following gales, so may have starved.

**\*+Razorbill *Alca torda***

2018 was arguably the worst ever year for Razorbill in WB. This year wasn’t much better.  
Early on: 1 - 2 Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup>.  
Late on: singles Oct 13<sup>th</sup>, Nov 10<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>, 3 24<sup>th</sup> and singles Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>.  
There were also the usual mega distant “auk sp.”

**Stock dove *Columba oenas***

Breeding: 2 pairs almost certainly bred again in Horselynch, with at least 1 more pair Lorton Valley. In the summer/autumn 2/4 regularly visited the reserve to drink.  
Autumn passage: not as pronounced as last year. Nevertheless a minimum of 65 went over -- mainly in the Woodie flocks -- on 12 dates Oct 19<sup>th</sup> - Nov 11<sup>th</sup>. Doubtless more were overlooked.

**Common wood pigeon *Columba palumbus***

Breeding: ever present.  
Autumn passage: incl, about 7,500 over Oct 28<sup>th</sup>, 4,000 Nov 4<sup>th</sup>, 1500 daily to 8<sup>th</sup>. The main direction of travel was sw but interestingly many birds were also watched going in the opposite direction at the same time. Are these birds reorientating? From the ground it looks as though some flocks are taking stock of the lie of the land before cracking on.

**Eurasian collared dove *Streptopelia decaocto***

Ever present breeding species and wintering bird, mainly west side/CP/Weymouth Bay Ave. area. Max. 18. Incl. a really striking albino in Apr. Only seen the once...so presumably didn’t last!

**\*Common cuckoo *Cuculus canorus***

Just 2 sets of records:  
1 May 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>.  
1 on several dates Jun 13<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Western barn owl *Tyto alba***

Bred: the pair that nest in the roof space of the Lorton Visitor Centre hatched the first of their two eggs on Apr 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Strangely rare around Lodmoor. But one hunting over Preston Beach Road in the early hours Jan 4<sup>th</sup> may well have been one of the Lorton birds.

### **Tawny owl *Strix aluco***

Resident in general area incl. Horselynych, so presumably bred, although no proof of nesting. Visited birders' gardens on a number of occasions.

### **Short eared owl *Asio flammeus***

Winter: 1 - 3 continued -- albeit erratically -- to grace the Jordan's Hill and Redcliff areas Jan to Apr 7<sup>th</sup>. Great value. Sadly there was no repeat of the spectacular later in the year.

Passage: the only other record of the year was a migrant over Lodmoor Nov 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Common swift *Apus apus***

Spring: in an increasingly familiar pattern migrants arrived in more of a trickle than the rush of even a few summers ago. First Apr 22<sup>nd</sup>. But subsequently just single figs. until 12 30<sup>th</sup>. Even in May numbers were relatively low: max. counts of 80+.

Summer: passage numbers were eclipsed by an influx of 600+ Jun 12<sup>th</sup>, probably the result of a local feeding movement. Later 150+ Jly 19<sup>th</sup> & 200+ 22<sup>nd</sup> were impressive counts for so late on.

Autumn: double figures were still present most days well into Aug. And, in keeping with recent years, there was a late bird Spt 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Common kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***

Early on: 1 -2, from Dec 2018, wintered into Jan with at least 1 through to Mch 12<sup>th</sup>.

Spring/summer: 1 May 31<sup>st</sup>, Jun 3<sup>rd</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> was an unusual set of records. A failed breeder maybe?

Autumn: post breeding dispersal began at Lodmoor Jly 26<sup>th</sup>. There were then the usual series of records of 1 - 2 birds through the autumn. Ringing elsewhere suggests it's a mistake to think we are watching the same birds. Its more likely we are seeing a turn over of different birds passing through.

Late on: 2 lingered through Nov, with at least 1 to mid Dec which returned for the last 3 days of the year.

### **\*Eurasian wryneck *Jynx torquilla***

2 records:

1 by west path Aug 26<sup>th</sup>.

1 west bank Spt 20<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>.

Remarkably the Spt bird turned up in exactly the same bush as the bird in Spt 2018.

### **Great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major***

Breeding: again nested CP, Horselynych, 2MC, where at least 2 pairs.

Fairly regularly recorded flying over various parts of the main reserve in the autumn. Tempting to think some might be passage birds...but are more likely local breeders/juveniles foraging ahead of winter.

### **European green woodpecker *Picus viridis***

Breeding: 1 pair nested in the CP, where parent could be watched feeding at least 1 juv. Another pair bred Horselynych again, with at least 2 juvs around Jun/Jly.

Also recorded Jordan Hill.

### **Common kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

Breeding: nested Lorton Valley again. Pairs also regular Horselynych area and Bowleaze Cove.

Surprisingly erratic over/around the reserve itself this year.

### **\*Merlin *Falco columbarius***

3 records:

male Apr 10<sup>th</sup>.

1 hunting over west bank Oct 20<sup>th</sup>.

1 Bowleaze Oct 21<sup>st</sup>....perhaps same as bird 20<sup>th</sup>.

Typical set of records: you can count them on the fingers of less than one hand and none of them hang around.

### **Eurasian hobby *Falco subbuteo***

Another poor year, although the Jun records beg a few questions about potential breeding.  
Spring: 3 singles May 8<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>, 1 - 2 on 4 dates Jun 3<sup>rd</sup> -- 28<sup>th</sup>.  
Autumn: singles on 11 dates Jly 17<sup>th</sup> - Spt 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Peregrine Falco peregrinus**

Bred in the Coombe Valley/Bincombe area again...a female was still feeding 3 fledged young on the pylons near Jurassic roundabout in Jly. So a series of sightings of both adults and imms over Lodmoor in the spring and again late summer/autumn probably relates to this family.  
Otherwise only a fairly erratic visitor...but did incl. an impressively huge female which terrorised the Lapwing flock in Dec.

#### **Eurasian jay Garrulus glandarius**

Breeding: at least 2 newly fledged juvs in 2MC in Jly, where probably only 1 pair nests.  
Occasional sightings elsewhere incl. one that frequented the bottom of Horselynch in Nov/Dec.

#### **Eurasian magpie Pica pica**

Breeding: common and conspicuous. Birds building nests again from Jan onwards and again on New Year's Eve! Max. 41 in corvid roost northern end Jan.  
Has adapted to habitually perching on the backs of Sika at Overcombe...presumably to get a better view.  
But one perched on a stag's antlers was just taking the piss!

#### **Western jackdaw Corvus monedula**

Breeding: common and conspicuous. Juvs evident from Jly.  
Passage: few migrants going high west Oct.  
Winter: early on a max. of 500 going to roost northern end in Jan. But this figure was dwarfed by 900 gathered around Horselynch at dusk Nov 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Rook Corvus frugilegus**

Breeding: the Preston Road rookery seems to be in some decline....although hundreds of birds can still be counted in late summer/autumn just up the road in Coombe Valley. Another 80 were feeding on the rugby club in Spt. Surprisingly patchy on/over Lodmoor itself.  
Passage: in common with other corvids small groups of high flying birds going west in Oct looked a lot like migrants rather than just locals.

#### **Carrion crow Corvus corone**

Breeding: at least 3 pairs nested in the bushes immediately bounding the reserve and raised a minimum of 11 young.  
Winter: a frequent scavenger on Preston beach. One of the most impressive of all the species accounts this year was a murder of 185 crows on the beach at Greenhill Feb 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Northern raven Corvus corax**

An increasingly common local breeder in the wider area. So has become a much more regular winter and post breeding visitor on and over Lodmoor. Incl. a pair engaged in proper display by Hump in Feb. Later in the year the recycling centre was a favourite hang out.  
These incl. a family party of up to 6 in late summer and autumn.

#### **Coal tit Parus ater**

Breeding: at least 1 pair nested in 2MC again. A freshly fledged bird was being fed by a parent Jly 2<sup>nd</sup>. Also regularly recorded in CP conifers and a pair seemed to be in territory in the rugby club leylandii in May/Jun. Also seen/heard in evergreens around Preston Road surgery/Charlbury Corner.  
Wanderers incl. 1 nr the old tip Aug 27<sup>th</sup>, and 1 by Hump Spt 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Great tit Parus major/Eurasian blue tit Parus caeruleus**

Breeding: another mainly mild winter helped set up another highly productive summer for both species.  
According to BTO both species had excellent years. Great tit in particular appears to be on the increase at

Lodmoor recently. In Jly and Aug juvs seemed to be everywhere and really good numbers were noted to the end of the year.

**\*Eurasian penduline tit *Remiz pendulinus***

1 record:

male Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, then many dates Feb 15<sup>th</sup> - Mch 17<sup>th</sup>. PHOTO.

Almost certainly the bird first at Radipole. Lodmoor's second record, following the two birds Oct 2003/ Mch 2004.

**Bearded reedling *Panurus biamicus***

Breeding: going from strength to strength. At least 3 and maybe 5 pairs successfully bred. Once again brood survival rates seemed really high. Adults could be seen feeding young by late Apr and between May and Aug there appeared to be really good numbers of fledged juvs. Max count of 32 probably an underestimate of late summer population.

Winter/passage: early in the year present in small numbers. Later showed clear signs of erupting in autumn. But a minimum of 10 remained until the end of the year.

**\*Woodlark *Lullula arborea***

4 records of 5 birds:

singles s Nov 4<sup>th</sup>, w with Skylarks 6<sup>th</sup> and e 13<sup>th</sup>.

2 ne Dec 31<sup>st</sup>.

Difficult to work out where the Dec birds had come from or were going to. The only previous mid winter records have been, predictably, during severe weather. There was no sign of that New Year's Eve.

**Eurasian skylark *Alauda arvensis***

Breeding: 1 pair seem to be clinging on in the dog infested fields between Redcliff/Bowleaze.

Autumn: more of a trickle than a torrent this year. Passage was protracted -- from Spt 15<sup>th</sup> - Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> -- but steady rather than spectacular. The highest day count was 52 on Oct 5<sup>th</sup> and a total of about 400 were noted altogether.

Winter: 8 were in the top fields late Jan and 15 went over Feb 1<sup>st</sup>. None late in the year.

**Sand martin *Riparia riparia***

Spring: 2 Mch 3<sup>rd</sup> Lodmoor's earliest ever! Followed by singles 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, & 3 13<sup>th</sup>. Then about 150 23<sup>rd</sup> -- an exceptional count that early in the spring. Later about 60+ by the first week of Apr. As usual just the odd singles passing through by mid May, followed by a three week gap in records in Jun.

Autumn: first Jun 24<sup>th</sup>. Numbers slowly building up to 100 daily by late Jly. Good numbers passed through/roosted Aug, Spt followed by two relatively late birds Oct 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Barn swallow *Hirundo rustica***

Spring: another really early hirundine. 1 Mch 12<sup>th</sup>, 2 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> were 3 weeks earlier than the first in 2018! But still a long way from being Lodmoor's earliest ever (Mch 3<sup>rd</sup>).

And one Swallow doesn't make a spring. Numbers subsequently were once again worryingly low. We had to wait until mid May until flocks reached three figures.

Breeding: birds were feeding locally fledged young on the west side of the reserve in Jun.

Autumn: like 2018 a poor spring was followed by a surprisingly good return passage. There were some big movements, particularly in late Aug and Spt, incl. 3,500 on Spt 13<sup>th</sup>. Last Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Common house martin *Delichon urbica***

One of the most striking birds of the year was a stunning leucistic individual hawking over the post box pools Spt 23<sup>rd</sup>. A snow flake with wings!

Spring: first Mch 22<sup>nd</sup>...another very early hirundine arrival date (Lodmoor's earliest 19<sup>th</sup>). Up to 8 a day had arrived early Apr. But, like Swallow, passage was generally underwhelming, peaking at just 40/day in mid May.

Autumn: 50+ a day were moving through/fattening up by late Jly. Some fairly big numbers subsequently incl. 300+ on several dates in mid Spt and Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>. Finally 1 late bird Nov 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Cetti's warbler *Cettia cetti***

Breeding: despite the cold snap in Feb the number of singers in spring appeared to be only slightly down on the previous year. And there was plenty of evidence of adults feeding young by mid May.

Subsequently there seemed to be enough birds around in the second half of the year to suggest that the resident population is pretty stable at the moment.

It's not unusual to find wanderers in CP and Lorton Valley....but one singing in a hedgerow near Bincombe village Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> had wandered a fair way from Lodmoor.

### **Long tailed tit *Aegithalos caudatus***

Breeding: like Blue and Great tit this was another species that appeared to enjoy a bumper summer. Lots of post breeding flocks in the autumn. The Feb cold snap obviously didn't do a number of normally vulnerable species much harm. Perhaps short freezes are more survivable than we might think. And maybe the increasing popularity of bird feeders is making a key difference in winter.

### **Willow warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus***

Spring: 1-3 from Mch 23<sup>rd</sup> onwards...increasing to 10 a day by Apr 12<sup>th</sup>. Overall numbers tailed off sharply by late Apr. There were singers May 6<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>. But they were almost certainly stragglers on the way elsewhere. But two other records: Jun 1<sup>st</sup> and a worn ad. 28<sup>th</sup> are harder to explain. They may just have been failed breeders. But the odd birds have remained in territory before, so nesting is always a possibility.

Autumn: first returning bird Jly 27<sup>th</sup>. Autumn passage this year seemed a trifle light and had really fizzled out by the end of Aug/early Spt. Last Spt 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Common chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita***

Spring/breeding: singing birds arriving by Mch 10<sup>th</sup>, with 12 in by 18<sup>th</sup>. At least 8 pairs in territory round reserve, Horselynch, 2MC. Fledged young being fed in Jly.

Autumn: pretty steady passage with several obvious arrival days in Oct.

Winter: up to 5 regularly Jan/Feb. Later up to 9 around Nov, early Dec, although only about half that number by the end of the year.

#### ***\*Siberian chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis****

*1 record:*

*1 Beachdown Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

*A phyllosc at Overcombe in early Nov looked good for tristis but remained stubbornly silent.*

#### ***\*Yellow browed warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus****

3 records of singles:

The 2018 bird stayed on Beachdown to Feb 14<sup>th</sup>.

1 Oct 8<sup>th</sup> in a birder's garden round the back of Weymouth College.

1 near the new bridge Nov 16<sup>th</sup> - Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Three different Yellow broweds have now turned up in the sallows by the bridge. .

### **Sedge warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***

Some signs of recovery.

Spring/breeding: first Mch 30<sup>th</sup>. After last year's virtual blank good to see/hear 8 in territory May, with at least one pair feeding young Jun 9<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: only small numbers noted. Last Spt 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Eurasian reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus***

Spring/breeding: 1 Mch 29<sup>th</sup> Lodmoor's earliest ever. A second remarkably early migrant was singing away at Redcliff 31<sup>st</sup>. This species is now regularly arriving as early, or even earlier, than Sedge. Good numbers present throughout Apr with many birds in territory in May. A conservative estimate puts the number of pairs at 50+ . Impossible to distinguish breeders from migrants but one singing all day in a birder's garden May 18<sup>th</sup> was surely destined for elsewhere.

Autumn: a trickle of records though Spt with a late bird by the west path until Oct 24<sup>th</sup>.

**\*Marsh warbler *Acrocephalus palustris***

1 record:

2019: singing male Jun 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup>. PHOTO.

A terrific find. In the late 70s this species promised to colonise Weymouth and a pair almost certainly nested on Lodmoor in 1977, with a male singing again the next year. But there have been no other records before or since...until now! This bird showed brilliantly well...until the photographers arrived. On its second and third day they decided to climb up on the fence with the predictable result that the bird retreated down into the reeds giving everyone a poorer view.

**\*Common grasshopper warbler *Locustella certhiola***

3 records of reblers:

1 Apr 19<sup>th</sup>.

1 May 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>

1 Lorton Meadows Jun 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Records up the Lorton Valley are quite regular and they may breed up there most years.

**Eurasian blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla***

Spring/breeding: 6+ daily by end Mch and really good numbers in/passing through by mid Apr. Birds in territory (and presumably bred again) Horselyncch and 2MC (3 pairs).

Autumn: not quite as spectacular as last year but nevertheless a strong showing in contrast to some other *Sylvias*. Peak of 30+ Spt 8<sup>th</sup>. Trickle of what were probably still migrants through Oct.

Winter: regular records of singles Jan and 1 singing Mch 5<sup>th</sup> very likely an overwintering bird. Later up to 4 visited a birder's garden Nov/Dec and odd singles elsewhere round the reserve may have related to these.

**Garden warbler *Sylvia borin***

Third poor year in a row.

Spring: singer Overcombe May 6<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: a below average smattering of singles Jly 25<sup>th</sup> - Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Lesser whitethroat *Sylvia curruca***

Spring/breeding: arrived in a rush with 5+ from Apr 18<sup>th</sup>. At least 5 pairs bred...incl. 2 Lorton Valley, 1 feeding young by Hump, another west side, and 1 by 2MC ponds. Several singing again late Jun, Jly, suggesting second broods. This species seems well established now as a nesting bird.

Autumn: like Garden warbler not a vintage autumn. Last Spt 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Common whitethroat *Sylvia communis***

Spring/breeding: 6+ from Apr 16<sup>th</sup> and good numbers were moving through by early May. 9 singing males May 7<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently nesting/singing birds also incl. Overcombe(2).

Autumn: migrants appearing from late Jly. Steady passage incl. up to 8 daily late Aug/Spt. Last Spt 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Common firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla***

What a year! The first Lodmoor breeding records AND a terrific autumn. One of the nicest looking passerines you can see on Lodmoor.

Breeding: pair discovered feeding at least 3 fledged young 2MC in early Jun. Interestingly the male continued singing and confirmation of a second brood came in the form of a newly fledged youngster being fed in the same area in early Spt. With hindsight records of Firecrest here Jan/Feb may well have been resident birds. The nearest known breeders are at Abbotsbury Gardens but this species seems to be increasing in Dorset and these birds may be part of that spread. So a singing male at the end of Southdown Ave Jly 25<sup>th</sup> was quite the off the wall record it would have been a few years ago.

Spring: 1 Beachdown Mch 20<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: Lodmoor had its share during a Dorset wide influx in Oct. 1-2 birds were regularly logged on many dates to Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, after which they became vanishingly rare again! But a crestfest that was hugely enjoyable while it lasted.

**Goldcrest *Regulus regulus***

Breeding: at least 3 pairs in territory 2MC, with at least another 2(poss. 3) pairs nesting in CP. In addition 1 was singing in the conifers again by Weymouth Rugby Club. For the second spring running a bird was singing on Beachdown for a week. Intriguingly another was singing along the west path in mid May. Passage/wintering: early on rather thin on the ground -- outside of 2MC -- with just 3 - 4 around the main moor in Feb. The first autumn migrant appeared Spt 30<sup>th</sup>. But passage was generally fairly average. By Nov/Dec up to 8 were dotted round the reserve, with another 12 or so 2MC/Lorton Meadows .

#### **Eurasian wren *Troglodytes troglodytes***

Breeding: an abundant and omnipresent species. Many newly fledged birds evident by Jly.

Passage: not a category normally needed for this species. But 1 was watched coming in off and over Preston beach Oct 29<sup>th</sup> ( see also Dunnock).

#### **\*Eurasian nuthatch *Sitta europaea***

1-2 records:

1 on 6 dates Jan 7<sup>th</sup> - Feb 6<sup>th</sup> 2MC.

1 Coffin Plantation Feb 24<sup>th</sup>. Possibly same as above.

Almost certainly one of the birds that was knocking around in the second half of 2018. Where do they come from? Probably not far. They appear to breed in Came Down Wood among other nearby locations.

#### **Eurasian treecreeper *Certhia familiaris***

Breeding: regular sightings in 2MC and CP again suggested that at least 1 pair nested in each place. Fairly regularly recorded through the year but remains a much sought after rarity on the reserve itself.

#### **Common starling *Sturnus vulgaris***

Ever present. First locally bred juvs appeared May 17<sup>th</sup>, with a good ratio of young birds in the flocks late Jly.

Passage: incl. 80+ high w Nov 4<sup>th</sup>.

No big murmurations this year.

#### **\*Ring ouzel *Turdus torquatus***

1 record:

1 feeding on bushes along Beachdown before flew off e Nov 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Common blackbird *Turdus merula***

Breeding: Common and widespread.

Autumn/winter: usual influxes incl. obvious arrivals Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. At least 60 were around the reserve and surrounding area in early Nov. But, as ever, many had moved on by Dec....probably because there were no more berry trees to strip.

#### **Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris***

Once again the headline event of the year for this species on Lodmoor was a short, sharp cold snap.

Winter: snow and plunging temperatures elsewhere produced movements of 700 Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, with another 300 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Autumn: a total of 22 on/over on 8 dates Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> - Nov 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Redwing *Turdus iliacus***

Winter: like Fieldfare susceptible to hard weather movements. In Feb an arrival of 350 1<sup>st</sup> was followed by 1,000 3<sup>rd</sup>. Also, like Fieldfare, birds moved through very quickly. Otherwise just 8 CP Jan/early Feb. Last 3 2MC Feb 19<sup>th</sup>. Later in the year up to 20 seemed settled in the general area around Lodmoor in Dec.

Autumn: compared to 2018 a real let down. A protracted movement Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> - Nov 26<sup>th</sup>, but only ever involving small numbers.

#### **Song thrush *Turdus philomelos***

Breeding: about 5 birds were singing on the western side/CP areas in Apr, with another 4 round the rest of the reserve/Overcombe, 2 Horselynch and 5 more 2MC/Lorton Valley. A healthy population.

Winter/autumn: nothing like the numbers that appeared last year...see other thrushes. There was an obvious arrival of Continental type birds Oct 31<sup>st</sup> -- along with Blackbirds/Redwings -- but a generally uneventful autumn.

**\*Mistle thrush *Turdus viscivorus***

3 records:

1 e Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>.

2 over with other thrushes during hard weather movement Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>.

1 n Nov 24<sup>th</sup>.

**\*Spotted flycatcher *Muscicapa striata***

9 records of 11 birds is good going by Lodmoor standards:

Spring: 1 CP May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1 west path 18<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: 2 Lorton Meadows Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 1 Beachdown 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2 west path 26<sup>th</sup>, singles CP 28<sup>th</sup>, reserve Spt 8<sup>th</sup>, and CP 17<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>.

**European robin *Erithacus rubecula***

Breeding: fledged young by early May.

Autumn: usual arrival of autumn migrants from Spt...in unremarkable numbers.

**\*Common nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos***

**1 record:**

**singing Bowleaze/Preston on a number of dates Apr 29<sup>th</sup> - May 12<sup>th</sup>.**

**\*European pied flycatcher**

3 records of singles:

in off May 19<sup>th</sup>.

July 27<sup>th</sup>.

Aug 26<sup>th</sup>.

Never an easy bird on Lodmoor. The Jly bird was a particularly early record for autumn.

**\*Black redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros***

several records of what were almost certainly just 2 imm/fem types:

1 Overcombe Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>.

1 Southdown/Hazeldown Aves Nov 4<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & Dec 1<sup>st</sup>.

There was a Dorset wide influx in the autumn, so actually two birds represents quite a poor return considering how many were around.

**\*Common redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus***

Back to normal after last year's bumper crop.

Spring: males Apr 16<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: female/1<sup>st</sup> winters Lorton Meadows Aug 28<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup>, CP Spt 17<sup>th</sup>.

**\*Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra***

One of the better years by Lodmoor standards...although strangely it was one of the worse years for Wheatear.

Spring: male Apr 18<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: 14 on 9 dates Aug 8<sup>th</sup> - Spt 14<sup>th</sup>.

**European stonechat *Saxicola torquata***

Breeding: a pair successfully bred in scrub between the parkride and reed bed. They raised at least 2 fledged young. An obvious juv. on the west path Jun 29<sup>th</sup> may very well have come from here. Breeding around Lodmoor has been pretty hit and miss since as long ago as 2006 so good to know that at least 1 pair made it. Colonisers don't have to come far. Two pair still hold territory in the Riviera/Redcliff area, another 2 pairs successfully nested in Coombe Valley and a pair bred near the Jurassic roundabout pools.

Passage: in the spring singles Mch 15<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>. In the autumn first migrant Spt 6<sup>th</sup>. 2/3 around by late Spt with 4 - 10 around daily throughout Oct.

Winter/Autumn: up to 4 were around Feb. Later many of the Oct birds had moved on by late Nov. By the end of the year there were just 2 left at Overcombe and 2 on the Horselynch slope/reed bed.

#### **Northern wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe***

The third pretty disappointing year in a row.

Spring: about 45 Mch 23<sup>rd</sup> - May 10<sup>th</sup>. To put that in perspective, in the record year of 2007 54 turned up in a single day.

Autumn: no better than the spring. About 45 Aug 21<sup>st</sup> - Spt 19<sup>th</sup>, the majority of them in just 6 days from Spt 10<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **House sparrow *Passer domesticus***

Breeding: a species that's all too easy to walk past. A pity because even casual observations suggest they are doing really well. The noisy colony along Southdown Avenue seem as numerous -- and thanks to bird tables -- as well fed as ever. In addition there are thriving groups on the west side, Overcombe and towards Bowleaze.

An indication of just how many there are was a flock of 200+ around the old tip in Aug.

#### **Duncock *Prunella modularis***

Remains an abundant resident.

Record of the year featured 2 in off from WB Spt 30<sup>th</sup> that certainly gave the impression of migrating. Disappointing they were just Hedge and not Siberian accentors.

#### **Western yellow wagtail *Motacilla flavissima***

Spring: 1 with cattle Overcombe May 6<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: one very early bird Jly 13<sup>th</sup>. Then a trickle from mid Aug into Spt culminating in a settled flock of 15 - 30 daily 13<sup>th</sup> - Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **Grey wagtail *Motacilla cinerea***

Winter: noted occasionally Jan-Mch and again late Nov/Dec.

Autumn: singles started appearing late Jly, with scattered records Aug. Then 1- 3 daily from Spt 11<sup>th</sup> through Oct. 1 -2 settled birds early Nov but subsequently harder to come by.

#### **Pied wagtail *Motacilla yarely***

Locally bred juvs started appearing late Jun.

Regular passage in mainly small numbers from Spt. Finally modest roost flocks of 100+ Oct and 120+ Dec. *Alba(White) wagtail: incl. singles May 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 1 - 5 Spt 20<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>, with at least 1 to Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>.*

#### **Meadow pipit *Anthus pratensis***

Breeding: at least 1 and maybe 2 pairs in territory Bowleaze to Redcliff.

Winter: generally single figure flocks were transformed briefly during Feb's cold snap when 100+ appeared by the Hump 1<sup>st</sup>. Later in the year back to fewer than 20 again in Dec.

Spring: modest numbers. Max. 30 a day passing over late Mch to mid Apr.

Autumn: first Spt 3<sup>rd</sup>. Passage subsequently pretty hit and miss but did incl. several good day counts: 1,000+ Spt 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, "a significant movement" 30<sup>th</sup> and 600+ n Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **\*Tree pipit *Anthus trivialis***

A grand total of 4 records.

Spring: a rare record of a spring bird actually on the deck Redcliff May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Autumn: confined to just 3 singles overhead Spt 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>.

Really poor.

#### **Water pipit *Anthus spinoletta***

Really low numbers again...this is becoming something of a theme. Birds are still using the wet meadows

at Overcombe and in the middle of the Moor but in lower numbers than they used to.  
Early in the year: just 1 - 2, and then only erratically noted, Jan - Mch 30<sup>th</sup>. Then 4...probably passage birds...Apr 1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>. At least 1 in really smart plumage.  
Autumn/winter: similar story really. Singles Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, may have been migrants. Subsequently confined to occasional single(s) Nov/Dec.  
The Overcombe end is harder to watch than it once was but it does seem like there is a genuine decline in wintering numbers.

**\*Eurasian rock pipit *Anthus petrosus***

Probably best described as a local -- mainly autumn -- wanderer. Birds winter as close as The Nothe.  
So singles Preston beach area Spt 30<sup>th</sup>, Oct 15<sup>th</sup>, with 2 near the Oasis café Nov 13<sup>th</sup> shouldn't be too much of a shock.

**Common chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs***

Breeding: a once common bird has now become relatively scarce. Nesting pairs seem to be confined to 1 or 2 pairs rugby cub/Weymouth Bay Ave area, and around 2MC(2 pairs). A male was singing by the post box but it is not clear if any actually bred around the reserve.  
Passage/wintering: wintering numbers mirrored the summer. Apart from flocks of 12+ CP and Oakbury Drive sightings confined to ones and twos round reserve. Not a vintage year for vis. miggling either but incl. 150 e Nov 8<sup>th</sup>.

**\*Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla***

2 records:  
1 calling e Nov 17<sup>th</sup>.  
1 over Nov 24<sup>th</sup>.

One of the poorest autumns for a while. But, to be fair, outside the influx year of 2005, never normally a particularly common bird over Lodmoor.

**Eurasian bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhoea***

One of Lodmoor biggest recent success stories...now sometimes easier to see/hear than Chaffinch!  
Breeding: at least 2 pairs bred successfully again somewhere on the western side. And foraging family parties were a familiar part of the autumn and winter months. In addition at least 3 more pairs bred up the Lorton Valley/2MC, as well as 1 pair in the less expected setting of Redcliff Point.  
Vis. miggling: 1 high w calling Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**European greenfinch *Carduelis chloris***

Breeding: signs of continued, if slow, recovery. At least 5, perhaps more, pairs were displaying/nest building on the western side in spring. Evidence of how well they are now doing was provided by a count of 14 fledged juvs in Jun. See also Bullfinch, Goldfinch.  
Passage: incl. an excellent count of 240+ e Oct 14<sup>th</sup>. One of the better single day counts of recent years.  
Winter: up to 12 birds were around in Jan and Dec.

**Common linnet *Carduelis cannabina***

Breeding: 5/6 pairs again nested in the gorse on the west bank. In addition 20 migrants went over Apr 9<sup>th</sup>.  
Autumn: fairly quiet. First over Spt 14<sup>th</sup> but not noted in numbers until 80+ through Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>. Otherwise rather erratic with 80+ Oct 14<sup>th</sup> the only other notable day count and no big off passage flocks this year.  
Winter: as usual more miss than hit. Incl. 5 Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 3 Feb 1<sup>st</sup> and 2 over Mch 13<sup>th</sup> but long gaps in between. Later on a few were hanging around until late Nov but very hard to come by Dec, apart from a brief appearance of 15 n 30<sup>th</sup> and 40 around the old tip 31<sup>st</sup>.

**\*Lesser redpoll *Carduelis cabaret***

2 records:  
2 n Spt 15<sup>th</sup>.  
At least 10 w Oct 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Spt birds were very early by Lodmoor standards and the Oct flock was an exceptional count for a

species that normally goes over in ones and twos.

**\*Red crossbill *Loxia curvirostra***

1 record:

1 and then 2 n in the space of ten minutes Oct 28<sup>th</sup>.

**European goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis***

Breeding: a regular flock of up to 38 juvs on the west side late Jun was exceptional for Lodmoor and indicates an outstanding summer for this species. And a flock of 150 Jly 25<sup>th</sup> were surely a local post breeding gathering rather than autumn migrants.

Passage/winter: present year round and incl. a total of 170 e Oct 14<sup>th</sup> and a settled flock of 80 Overcombe Nov.

**Eurasian siskin *Carduelis spinus***

A bit of an odd year for a species that is normally a common overhead autumn migrant but decidedly tricky to connect with in other months. By contrast in 2019 autumn passage was a non event but there were several winter records and a spring bird.

Winter: 5 n Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, and singles over during hard weather movements Feb 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Spring: 1 in off Apr 9<sup>th</sup>.

Autumn: just 22 on 10 dates Oct 14<sup>th</sup> - Nov 29<sup>th</sup>. By some distance the worst autumn for 15 years or more.

**\*Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella***

5 records of 7 birds:

1 w Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>.

1 e Oct 20<sup>th</sup>.

3 settled Oct 21<sup>st</sup>.

1 Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>.

1 w Nov 29<sup>th</sup>.

Another species that breeds, and sometimes winters, just outside the area but remains a scarce visitor to Lodmoor itself.

**Common reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus***

Breeding: at least 6 singers round reed bed and edges in spring. Fledged young were around from late Jun. Several family parties foraging around late summer and incl. 3 juvs in nearby gardens Jly.

Winter: about 20 birds on Lodmoor and the surrounding area at both ends of the year. This species often frequents the Horselync slope and fields and the hedgerows up Lorton Valley in winter.

**((Corn bunting ))**

Not recorded in the Lodmoor Area and not included in the totals. But worth noting that for the first time birds both wintered and bred just beyond the eastern edge of the area in Coombe Valley.

Remains a rare and elusive species on/over Lodmoor itself.

**ESCAPES etc**

**Black swan *Cygnus atratus***

Up to 3 appeared in Dec. They arrived accompanied by an amazing looking hybrid : Eider x (Aussie?)shelduck sp. Anyway, the swans caused a major stir among the grockles. People were even turning up to photograph them for their Facebook pages.

**Feral pigeon *Columba livia***

**MAMMALS**

12 species recorded but no records of Stoat or Water vole this year.

**American mink**

**Neovision vison**

Off Beachdown Spt 30<sup>th</sup>. One of the most worrying records of the year.

<b>Weasel</b>	<b>Mustela nivalis</b>	Fairly regularly encountered.
<b>European badger</b>	<b>Meles meles</b>	A thriving local population.
<b>Sika</b>	<b>Cervus nippon</b>	Max. 11.
<b>Roe deer</b>	<b>Capreolus capreolus</b>	Bred again.
<b>Red fox</b>	<b>Vulpes vulpes</b>	Bred again.
<b>Brown rat</b>	<b>Rattus norvegicus</b>	Max. count of 12.
<b>Grey squirrel</b>	<b>Sciurus carolinensis</b>	
<b>European wood mouse</b>	<b>Apodemus sylvaticus</b>	
<b>Short tailed field vole</b>	<b>Microtus agrestis</b>	
<b>Rabbit</b>	<b>Oryctolagus cuniculus</b>	
<b>Common bottle nosed dolphin</b>	<b>Tursiops truncatus</b>	Incl. an ad. and calf Oct.
<b>Seal sp.</b>		
<b>Pipistrelle sp.</b>		

### BUTTERFLIES

A total of 24 species...incl. a first for Lodmoor

<b>Green hairstreak</b>	<b>Callophrys rubi</b>	1 perched in bushes by Beachdown May 6 <sup>th</sup> . Never previously recorded.
<b>Large skipper</b>	<b>Ochlodes venata</b>	
<b>Small skipper</b>	<b>Thymelius sylvestris</b>	
<b>Brimstone</b>	<b>Gonepteryx rhamni</b>	Incl 1 Feb 26 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Clouded yellow</b>	<b>Colias croceus</b>	Several records in Spt.
<b>Large white</b>	<b>Pieris brassicae</b>	
<b>Green veined white</b>	<b>Pieris napi</b>	
<b>Small white</b>	<b>Pieris rapae</b>	Incl. a count of 26 Aug 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Orange tip</b>	<b>Anthocaris cardemines</b>	
<b>Brown argus</b>	<b>Aricia agestis</b>	Lorton Meadows only.
<b>Common blue</b>	<b>Polyommatus icarus</b>	
<b>Holly blue</b>	<b>Celastina argiolus</b>	
<b>Comma</b>	<b>Polygonia c-album</b>	
<b>Painted lady</b>	<b>Cynthia cardui</b>	Quite a good summer. From late Jun to early Spt.
<b>Peacock</b>	<b>Inachis io</b>	First of the year Jan 25 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Red admiral</b>	<b>Venessa atalanta</b>	A marked arrival/increase from late Jun onwards. Recorded from Jan 1 <sup>st</sup> to mid Nov.
<b>Small tortoiseshell</b>	<b>Alais urticae</b>	First Feb 26 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Gatekeeper</b>	<b>Pyronia tithonus</b>	Incl. a count of 21 Jly 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Marbled white</b>	<b>Melanagia galathea</b>	Horselync slope/Lorton Valley
<b>Meadow brown</b>	<b>Manida jurtina</b>	
<b>Ringlet</b>	<b>Aphantopus hyperantus</b>	
<b>Wall brown</b>	<b>Lasiommata megara</b>	
<b>Speckled wood</b>	<b>Pararge aegeria</b>	
<b>Small copper</b>	<b>Lycaena phlaeas</b>	

### ODONATA

Highlights incl. Lesser emperor and Keeled skimmer.

<b>Southern hawker</b>	<b>Aeshna cyanea</b>	
<b>Migrant hawker</b>	<b>Aeshna mixta</b>	
<b>Emperor dragonfly</b>	<b>Anax imperator</b>	
<b>Lesser emperor</b>	<b>Anax parthenope</b>	Beachdown Jly 9 <sup>th</sup> . Part of a national influx but still an exciting and unexpected encounter.
<b>Hairy dragonfly</b>	<b>Brachytron pratense</b>	Just 2 records, off Beachdown, May/June. This isn't for want of trying, so suggests this sp. is still a Lodmoor rarity.
<b>Small red eyed damselfly</b>	<b>Erythomma viridulum</b>	Now known to breed locally. But singles in birder's gardens Southdown Estate and by CP Jly 20 <sup>th</sup> , 21 <sup>st</sup>

were memorable records.

<b>Large red damselfly</b>	<b>Pyrrhosoma nympha</b>	
<b>Golden ringed dragonfly</b>	<b>Cordulegaster boltonii</b>	Beachdown Jun 29 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Emerald damselfly</b>	<b>Astes spona</b>	Lorton Valley ponds again.
<b>Common blue damselfly</b>	<b>Emallagma cyathigerum</b>	Nowhere near as common as Blue tailed.
<b>Blue tailed damselfly</b>	<b>Ischura elegans</b>	Incl. 27 May 30 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>Broad bodied chaser</b>	<b>Libellula depressa</b>	
<b>Four spotted chaser</b>	<b>Libellula quadrimaculata</b>	Horselyynch slope Jun 21 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Black tailed skimmer</b>	<b>Orthetrum cancellatum</b>	
<b>Keeled skimmer</b>	<b>Orthetrum coerulescens</b>	1 Lorton Meadows Jly 27 <sup>th</sup> . Top find.
<b>Ruddy darter</b>	<b>Sympetrum sanguineum</b>	Pools in Lorton Valley.
<b>Common darter</b>	<b>Sympetrum striolatum</b>	
<b>(Red veined darter</b>	<b>Sympetrum fonscolombii</b>	Newly discovered colony just outside the ne edge over the area on the pools by Jurassic roundabout).

#### DAY FLYING MOTHS

Scarlet tiger

Six spot burnet

Narrow bordered five spot burnet

Incl. 38 Charlbury Basin Jun 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Hummingbird hawk moth

Graced at least two birders' gardens.

Mint moth

Silver y

#### MISCELLANEOUS LIFE FORMS

Grass snake

Thick billed mullet

Shoals of up to 300 on occasions in the sluice.

Golden rudd

Common frog

Eel

Violet ground beetle

Red legged shield bug

Cockchafer

Hornet

Dotted bee-fly

Dark bordered bee-fly

Hornet hoverfly

Great green bush cricket

Three banded garden slug

