

Berwick Wildlife Group

www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk

Monthly Review March 2009



WILDLIFE REPORTS.

Weather. Like last month, March seemed to 'blow hot and cold'. Frosts were recorded at the beginning and end, with a warm spell in the middle, peaking at 14.5°C (58.1°F) on the 15th. The coldest night was on the 29th with -3.0°C (26.6°F) recorded, killing off a lot of early spring blossom. Rainfall was once again low with only four days of rain recorded, most of that came on the 8th with 15mm (0.6 ins). Total rainfall for the month was 26mm (1.0 ins).

Birds. This month saw Winter migrants moving north, while the first early Spring migrants appeared on the last few days. A gale from the north-east on the 22nd saw a good sea-bird movement. Highlights of the month include 6 **Slavonian (Horned) Grebes** in Spittal Bay (16th), 64 **Sanderling** in the Estuary (20th) and the first 3 **(Northern) Wheatears** at Cocklawburn (30th).

Date	International English species name	No.	Location	Grid reference	Comments
<u>Birds</u>					
01/03/2009	Mute Swan	4	Shoreswood	NT941465	
01/03/2009	Whooper Swan	17	Shoreswood	NT941465	
01/03/2009	Pink-footed Goose	174	East Ord	NT979514	Flying north
01/03/2009	Pink-footed Goose	90	Horncliffe	NT9249	Flying north
01/03/2009	Common Shelduck	2	Yarrow Slake	NT984529	All month. Pair
01/03/2009	Eurasian Wigeon	4	Middle Ord Pond	NT969506	
01/03/2009	Eurasian Teal	8	Middle Ord Pond	NT969506	
01/03/2009	Eurasian Teal	5	Oxford Pools	NU0046	
01/03/2009	Tufted Duck	8	Oxford Pools	NU0046	
01/03/2009	Northern Fulmar	4	Union Bridge	NT914511	All Month. 2 pairs.
01/03/2009	Great Cormorant	1	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	Continental race, <i>sinensis</i>
01/03/2009	Common Buzzard	2	Billylaw	NT980495	
01/03/2009	Red-legged Partridge	2	Allerdean	NT9646	Pair
01/03/2009	Common Moorhen	10	Middle Ord Pond	NT969506	
02/03/2009	Long-tailed Duck	6	Cheswick	NU0346	
02/03/2009	Black Scoter	62	Cheswick	NU0346	Brit. name Common Scoter
02/03/2009	Common Snipe	2	Cocklawburn Pnd	NU036475	
02/03/2009	Sanderling	18	Cheswick	NU0346	
06/03/2009	White Wagtail	40	Tapee Fen	NT995537	Poss. Brit. ssp., "Pied"
06/03/2009	Grey Partridge	2	Mill Farm	NT989529	
07/03/2009	Eurasian Nuthatch	1	Castle Terrace	NT991538	On peanut feeder
12/03/2009	Purple Sandpiper	16	Cheswick Blk Rks	NU037476	
12/03/2009	Barn Owl	1	Burnmouth	NT9561	
13/03/2009	Eurasian Stonechat	2	Little Beach	NU006528	
13/03/2009	Common Reed Bunting	1	Little Beach	NU006528	Female
13/03/2009	Common Goldeneye	152	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
13/03/2009	Common Merganser	7	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	Brit. Goosander. WeBS
13/03/2009	Common Redshank	348	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count

13/03/2009	Grey Wagtail	1	Toddles Shiel	NT980523	Male
13/03/2009	Mute Swan	68	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	WeBS count
14/03/2009	Grey Heron	5	Best not divulged	NT95	At nest site
14/03/2009	Little Grebe	3	Royal Border Brg.	NT992533	
14/03/2009	Mixed flock	300	Mill Farm	NT989529	Linnet+green-gold-chaff-inch
16/03/2009	Horned Grebe	6	Spittal Bay	NU009517	Brit. Slavonian Grebe
16/03/2009	Eurasian Wigeon	1	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	Male
16/03/2009	Red-throated Loon	2	Meadow Haven	NU012526	Brit. Red-throated Diver
16/03/2009	Eurasian Oystercatcher	72	Bucket Rocks	NU006534	
16/03/2009	Bar-tailed Godwit	5	Bucket Rocks	NU006534	
16/03/2009	Eurasian Curlew	26	Bucket Rocks	NU006534	
16/03/2009	Ruddy Turnstone	38	Bucket Rocks	NU006534	
16/03/2009	Pink-footed Goose	40	Railway Station	NT994534	Overhead, heading north
17/03/2009	Eurasian Siskin	2	Tweedmouth Gdn.	NT989515	
17/03/2009	Bar-tailed Godwit	4	Little Beach	NU006528	
17/03/2009	Dunlin	1	Little Beach	NU006528	
17/03/2009	Sanderling	9	Little Beach	NU006528	
17/03/2009	Eurasian Oystercatcher	10	Little Beach	NU006528	
18/03/2009	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	1	Toddles Shiel	NT980523	
18/03/2009	Common Shelduck	2	Toddles Shiel	NT980523	
18/03/2009	Common Redshank	70	Toddles Shiel	NT980523	
18/03/2009	Eurasian Curlew	18	Toddles Shiel	NT980523	
18/03/2009	Common Goldeneye	77	Toddles Shiel	NT980523	
18/03/2009	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	3	Sewage Works	NT982525	
18/03/2009	Redwing	2	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
18/03/2009	Long-tailed Duck	14	Cheswick	NU0346	
18/03/2009	Red-breasted Merganser	12	Cheswick	NU0346	
18/03/2009	Red-throated Loon	8	Cheswick	NU0346	Brit. Red-throated Diver
18/03/2009	Northern Gannet	7	Cheswick	NU0346	Close inshore
18/03/2009	Purple Sandpiper	8	Cheswick Blk Rks	NU037476	
18/03/2009	Black Scoter	102	Cheswick	NU0346	Brit. name Common Scoter
19/03/2009	Eurasian Bullfinch	4	Burnmouth	NT9561	Burnmouth Dene
19/03/2009	Common Murre	3	Spittal Bay	NU009517	Brit name Guillemot
19/03/2009	Lesser Black-bkd Gull	3	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	
20/03/2009	Common Ringed Plover	8	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	
20/03/2009	Bar-tailed Godwit	3	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	
20/03/2009	Common Murre	5	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Brit. name Guillemot
20/03/2009	Razorbill	6	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
20/03/2009	Black-legged Kittiwake	3	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Brit. just Kittiwake
20/03/2009	Sanderling	64	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	
20/03/2009	Black Scoter	44	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Brit. name Common Scoter
20/03/2009	Common Goldeneye	79	Castle Hills	NT987535	On Estuary.
20/03/2009	Common Shelduck	1	Yarrow Slake	NT984529	
20/03/2009	Common Redshank	220	Yarrow Slake	NT984529	
20/03/2009	Eurasian Siskin	5	Cot Hill	NT759498	On peanut and seed feeders
22/03/2009	Dunlin	4	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	
22/03/2009	Eurasian Siskin	4	East Ord	NT979514	
22/03/2009	Fieldfare	110	Billylaw	NT980495	
22/03/2009	Dunlin	3	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	
22/03/2009	Northern Gannet	800	Berwick Pier	NU0052	800 in 1 hour flying south
22/03/2009	Eurasian Teal	16	West Ord	NT953518	
22/03/2009	Eurasian Wigeon	1	Tweed Estuary	NT9952	Female
22/03/2009	Whooper Swan	5	West Ord	NT953518	
25/03/2009	Common Shelduck	2	Cheswick	NU0346	Pair
25/03/2009	Grey Partridge	2	Cheswick	NU0346	Pair

25/03/2009	Common Ringed Plover	5	Cheswick Blk Rks	NU037476	
25/03/2009	Eurasian Curlew	60	Cheswick	NU0346	
25/03/2009	Red-throated Loon	1	Cheswick	NU0346	(R T Diver). No. not given
25/03/2009	European Shag	1	Cheswick	NU0346	No. not given
25/03/2009	Horned Grebe	1	Cheswick	NU0346	(Slavonian G). No. not given
25/03/2009	Common Murre	1	Cheswick	NU0346	(Guillemot). No. not given
25/03/2009	Common Shelduck	1	Cheswick	NU0346	No. not given
25/03/2009	Northern Gannet	1	Cheswick	NU0346	No. not given
28/03/2009	Northern Fulmar	230	Berwick Pier	NU0052	230 in 1 hour, going north
28/03/2009	Northern Gannet	550	Berwick Pier	NU0052	550 in 1 hour, going north
28/03/2009	Razorbill	3	Berwick Pier	NU0052	
28/03/2009	Black-legged Kittiwake	670	Berwick Pier	NU0052	670 in 1 hour, going north
28/03/2009	European Goldfinch	100	Hiveacres	NT985514	100+
29/03/2009	Tufted Duck	2	Cheswick Pond	NU035475	
29/03/2009	Common Buzzard	1	Cheswick Pond	NU035475	
29/03/2009	Common Shelduck	4	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
29/03/2009	Common Goldeneye	2	West Ord	NT953518	
29/03/2009	Red-breasted Merganser	2	West Ord	NT953518	
29/03/2009	Common Merganser	4	West Ord	NT953518	Brit. name Goosander.
30/03/2009	Chiffchaff	1	Cot Hill	NT759498	First of the year
30/03/2009	Whooper Swan	17	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Resting on the sea
30/03/2009	Black Scoter	122	Cheswick	NU0346	Brit. name Common Scoter
30/03/2009	Black Scoter	40	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Brit. name Common Scoter
30/03/2009	Common Buzzard	3	Cocklawburn	NU0347	
30/03/2009	Northern Wheatear	3	Cocklawburn	NU0347	Males
31/03/2009	Common Goldeneye	17	Toddles Shiel	NT980523	
31/03/2009	Red-throated Loon	1	Fishermans Cove	NU003538	Brit. Red-throated Diver
	<u>Amphibians</u>				
12/03/2009	Common Toad	100	Cocklawburn Pnd	NU036475	"100s"+ spawn smaller pond
12/03/2009	Common Frog	1	Cocklawburn Pnd	NU036475	Frog spawn in smaller pond
	<u>Butterflies</u>				
10/03/2009	Peacock	1	Tweedmouth (W)	NT989515	Greenhouse. Overwintered.
13/03/2009	Peacock	1	Riverdene	NT992530	
17/03/2009	Peacock	1	New Road	NT991535	
17/03/2009	Small White	1	Hiveacres	NT985514	Very early.
18/03/2009	Peacock	1	Pier Road	NU005527	
18/03/2009	Small Tortoiseshell	1	Pier Road	NU005527	
	<u>Bees</u>				
12/03/2009	Buff-tailed Bumblebee	1	Castle Terrace	NT991538	Sunning on fence post
15/03/2009	Red-tailed Bumblebee	1	Tweedmouth (W)	NT989515	Around Witch-hazel
17/03/2009	Buff-tailed Bumblebee	1	Cot Hill	NT759498	On ornamental heather

Butterflies. The first butterflies of the year were recorded mid-month with a 'tatty' **Peacock** flying around a greenhouse on the 10th and a free flying individual seen on the New Road on the 17th. The next day both **Peacock** and **Small Tortoiseshell** were seen here. A **Small White** was on the wing around Hiveacres on the 17th. Lets hope they survived the late frosts!

With many thanks to Malcolm Hutcheson and the other recorders. Please send us your records for April, and photos (digital or prints/slides to be scanned). Use our form on the Sightings page (www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk/Sightings.html), phone 01289 309046 or e-mail mail3@berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday April 19th. Walk with Berwick Save our Squirrels in Detchant wood looking for signs of squirrels. Meet at **1.30 pm** at entrance to the wood opposite bungalow called Detchant Park, on minor road between Detchant and Fenwick (NU 082 373). Limited parking (car share if possible). Probably muddy in wood - boots or wellies and weather-proof clothing, all welcome.

May 9th/10th/11th . The Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI) are having their **Spring Conference in Berwick**. This will focus on the alien trees and shrubs that are now part of the British landscape, and how to recognise and record them. There will be talks and exhibitions in the Guildhall, Berwick on Saturday and excursions to Cheviot Trees and Kyloe Woods on Sunday, St Abbs Head or Holy Island on Monday. The Chairman has kindly invited BWG members to all the events, and we will have a small exhibition of the Group's work. For further details and a booking form, please phone 01289 330591 or e-mail (see above).

Surveys.

Many new and repeat projects are being organised for this summer. These include surveys of **bats** (data for Northumberland Bat Group and others), **town trees** (for Council and Forestry Commission), **Whin Sill grasslands** (for Northumberland Wildlife Trust), **beach litter** (for Marine Conservation), **fixed point photography** at Cocklawburn, the **bioblitz on Holy Island** on 12th/13th June and **butterfly transects** for Butterfly Conservation.

Butterfly transects take place in Tommy-the-Miller's Field and at Cocklawburn, from April to October, always when it's nice and sunny! Ideally we need to have more surveyors – beginners are welcome (we were all beginners until very recently).

Banded snail survey. The Open University are examining the distribution of colour variants of the Banded Snail. The aim is to compare modern and historical records of shell-colours, to gauge the effects of a lower Song Thrush population and higher temperatures. We will carry out a survey at Cocklawburn Dunes (where they are particularly abundant) and also ask people to examine snails elsewhere. For more details see http://evolutionmegalab.org/en_GB/ .

Survey of reptiles and amphibians in gardens. This is being organised by Froglife, the Herpetological Conservation Trust and the British Trust for Ornithology. Details at http://www.bto.org.uk/gbw/herps/2009_survey/index.htm . Again we will begin with a group search of a suitable habitat (Cocklawburn?), then we can continue the project in gardens.

Bumblebee survey. Records are required to establish the changing and shrinking distribution of bumblebees in gardens and in the countryside. Beewatch is being organised by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust (<http://www.bumblebeeconservationtrust.co.uk/surveys.htm>). Bumblebees can be tricky to identify "on the wing", so we intend to have a couple of outings in Tommy-the-Miller's field in June, and see if together we can get the local bumblebees sussed.

N.B. Apparent "gaps" in the web addresses above are underscores, obscured by the underline.

If you are interested in any of the above events and projects, or would like to know more about the Group see our website or ask (e-mail mail3@berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk or phone 01289 330591) . No previous knowledge is needed, together we can learn. Butterfly surveys have started already. Dates and times of other surveys will be announced shortly.