

Berwick Wildlife Group

www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk

Monthly Review April 2007



WILDLIFE REPORTS

Weather

April seems to be turning out to be the driest for many years. Usually recording 20 to 60 mm of rain, this month we have only recorded 5mm (0.2 inches). It has also been pleasantly warm with plenty of sunny days, the hottest day being the 24th with 20C (70F). On the down side with the wind in an easterly direction the sea mist or "fret" appeared on several days, although no frost was recorded.

Birds

Always a busy month with migrants moving in both directions and some Spring surprises.

- April 1st Still 32 **Goldeneye** and 4 **Goosander** at Yarrow Slake. A pair of **Buzzards** high over East Ord.
- 2nd A **Red-throated Diver**, 19 **Kittiwakes** and 4 **Wigeon** on the Estuary. 2 **Puffins** at Needles Eye.
- 3rd A fresh NE wind saw a heavy northerly passage of seabirds off Berwick Pier with **Gannets** (1,530 in an hour), **Kittiwakes** (440 in an hour), 3 **Red-throated Divers**, 26 **Goldeneye** and 4 **Common Scoter**; 6 **Razorbill**, 8 **Guillemot** and 9 **Goldeneye** in Meadow Haven.
- 4th 124 **Turnstone**, 18 **Purple Sandpiper** and 26 **Sanderling** were on Little Beach, 2 **Sand Martins** at Cocklawburn; and a **Chiff-chaff** at Berwick Castle.
- 5th 3 **Goldcrests** in gardens at Ness Bridge.
- 6th c.20 **Sand Martins** over the Tweed at West Ord.
- 7th A northerly movement of 26 **Redwings**, 5 **Fieldfares** and 28 **Greylag Geese** over East Ord with a **Blackcap** in song.
- 8th A **Red Kite**, without wing tags over Billylaw, Ord and 46 **Greylag Geese** flying north with 9 **Fieldfare**. A female **Peregrine** with prey over Meadow Haven and 4 **Sandwich Terns** in the Estuary.
- 9th 160 **Sand Martins** at West Ord; 2 **Long-tailed Ducks**, 5 **Common Scoter** with 460 **Meadow Pipits** an hour, flying north at Cocklawburn; 2 **Swallows** flying north at Cheswick.
- 11th 11 **Teal** and a pair of **Coot** at Middle Ord pond.
- 16th 6 **Shelduck** and 2 **Teal** at Yarrow Slake.
- 17th The WeBS count saw 12 **Ringed Plover**, 6 **Dunlin**, 12 **Goldeneye** and 21 **Goosander** in the Estuary.
- 19th 9 **Tree Sparrows** were at Letham Shank with a pair of **Bullfinch**, 5 **Chiff-chaff** and a **Gt. Spotted Woodpecker** in woods at Chateau Pedro; 2 **Pink-footed Geese** and a **Whooper Swan** in the Estuary; c.360 **Sand Martins**, 40 **Swallows** and 5 **House Martins** over the Tweed at West Ord.
- 20th 6 **Red-throated Divers**, 5 **Guillemots**, 5 **Sandwich Terns** and 2 **Arctic Terns** in Spittal Bay.

- 22nd A fine **Kentish Plover** with 30 **Ringed Plover** only stayed at Little Beach for the morning. Also there, were 16 **Purple Sandpipers**, 82 **Sanderling**, 116 **Turnstones** with 2 **Wheatears** and 4 **White Wagtails**. At West Ord a drake **Gadwall**, 2 **Common Sandpipers** and a **Green Sandpiper**.
- 23rd 7 **Wheatears** (2 of the Greenland race), 3 **Willow Warblers** and 16 **Guillemots** were at Cocklawburn. The first 4 **House Martins** returned to Royal Border Bridge.
- 24th 16 **Sandwich Terns** in the Estuary with a further 24 roosting on Sandstell Point, Spittal.
- 25th A pair of **Shelducks** nest prospecting at Cocklawburn. Also there 47 **Sanderlings**, 6 **Dunlins** with 13 **Pink footed Geese** flying north overhead.
- 26th A **Grasshopper Warbler** heard and seen at Cocklawburn.
- 27th A **Sedge Warbler** and a **Canada Goose** at the mouth of the Whiteadder.
- 29th Another large flock of 130 hirundines at West Ord, held c.40 **House Martins** and a single **Swift**
- 30th A **Sedge Warbler** on Cocklawburn pond with 80 **Swallows** seen in an hour flying north; 3 **Red-throated Divers** and 12 **Guillemots** off Cheswick. A **Garden Warbler** was singing at Ord House.

Other regional sightings

A **White Stork** was seen going to roost in a tree at South Moors Farm, Barmoor on the 5th with possibly the same bird seen from a train, circling a field near East Fortune airfield on the 12th. A **Black necked Grebe** was seen on Folly Loch on the 15th, near Maxton.

Butterflies The warm dry conditions have tempted out up to seven species on the wing, often with earlier "first sightings" than last year, most noteworthy being good numbers of **Orange Tips** and **Commas** in several new localities.

With many thanks to those who have contributed wildlife records – do please send in yours.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 5th May. Guided Walk at Paxton House with Richard Wales (Red Squirrel Conservation Officer for the Scottish Borders). Meet at 2.00 pm in the Paxton House Car Park (near the shop). Special entrance fee (£2.50) for members of the party. Wear strong footwear and weatherproof clothing. All welcome.

Wednesday 9th May. Illustrated talk on Alpine Plants by Ron McBeath of Lamberton Alpine Nursery. This will be preceded by our AGM. 7.30 pm, Berwick United Reformed Church, Main Street, Spittal. Again everyone welcome.

Our AGM (see above) includes Election of Officers, and as ever we are hoping a few more people will **volunteer to help** with the day-to-day running of the Group (we particularly need a Newsletter editor) or with events, surveys and our lobbying activities. Do please let us know now (as soon as possible, but just before the AGM is not too late!) if you think this might suit you. We'd be most grateful for assistance.

Contact us. Phone 01289 330591, e-mail mail2@berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk or just come to an event (non-members very welcome).