



Welcome to the LBC eNewsletter - July 2023

LBC eNewsletter content;

Lincolnshire Bird Report (1)
Wilder Lincolnshire Festival, LBC Summer BBQ (4)
SOMEWHERE along the line, the corncrake fell out of love with Lincolnshire. (6)

Breeding Bird of the Month! (7)
Bird of the Month! (8)
Lincolnshire Bird News - June 2023 (9)

Lincolnshire Bird Report 2021

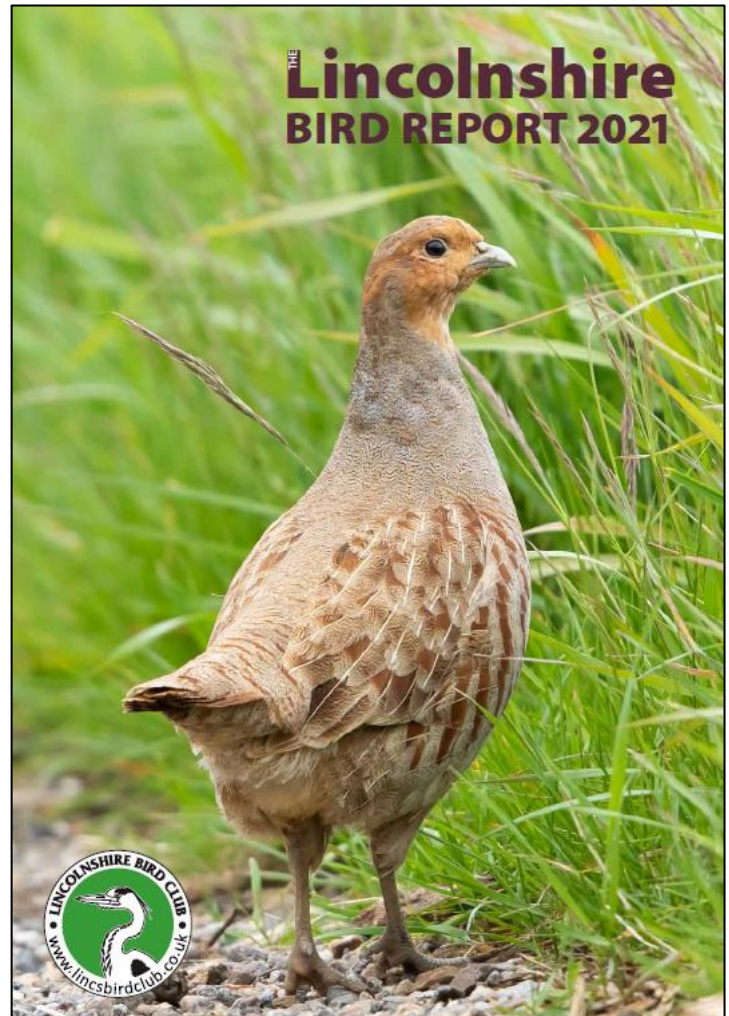
The report is now fully written and has been assembled by our printers Swallowtail of Norwich.

256 pages of data and information... 100's of colour photographs from some of the best photographers in the country... Written by a dedicated team of county experts...

In the next month the report will be sent to our membership... PLEASE CHECK your membership is up to date by logging onto the website, if it lapsed after March 2023 you will not receive a copy.

Highlights

First British record of **Egyptian Vulture** to be reviewed by BOURC
First record of **Baillon's Crake** at Alkborough Flats for three days
First record of **White-tailed Lapwing** on New Year's Eve at Halton Marshes
Third record of **Bonaparte's Gull** at Gibraltar Point
5th record of **White-billed Diver** at Gibraltar Point
6th record of **Lesser Scaup** initially at Chapel Pit
6th-8th records of **Pacific Golden Plover** at Frampton (two) and Deeping Lakes
8th record of **Gull-billed Tern** at Cress Marsh
First record of **Great Shearwater** since 1977 tracked between three locations



The highest count was made during a census of territories from GPC who found 70 pairs on territory at Alkborough Apr-Jun; no census was possible at Barton Pits in 2021. The Humber bank is the centre of the breeding area of Water Rail in Lincolnshire, but the species is widespread along the coast and inland wetland areas of the county. Reports came from 69 sites/subsites up from 36 in 2019 and 54 in 2020. Calling birds were logged at several sites but confirmed breeding reports came from Far Ings NR, Jun 23rd (adult with two juveniles); Huttoft, Pit Jul 31st (mature juveniles, presumed first brood); Baston Fen Aug 19th (juvenile); Baston & Langtoft GP (adult with young); East Halton Skitter Aug 20th (three juveniles).



Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* Louth November 29th 2021
© JOHN CLARKSON

Baillon's Crake *Zapornia pusilla* Vagrant, Europe.

A superb calling adult male was found on Jun 5th during a late evening search for Spotted Crakes at Alkborough Flats, the first record for the county and hopefully not the last given the increasing acreage of wetlands across Lincolnshire; it was photographed and sound-recorded (ND, W&C Gillatt) and last reported on Jun 7th. Accepted by BBRC (*British Birds* 115:551-612). See Finder's report on p196.

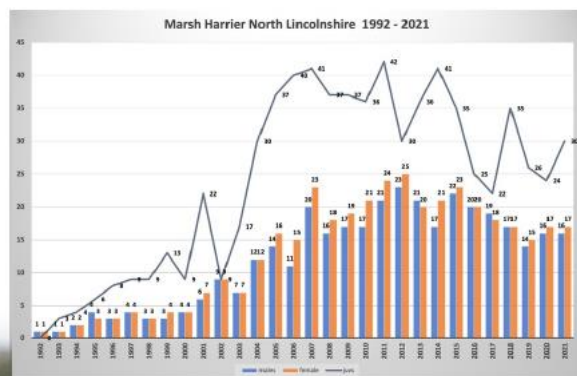


Baillon's Crake *Zapornia pusilla* Alkborough Flats June 5th 2021 © NEIL DRINKALL

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Fairly common passage migrant and summer visitor, increasing in winter. Amber List. RBBP.

In the two winter periods c40-50 birds were present in Humber roosts spreading out during daytime to cover a large part of North Lincolnshire with birds known to travel at least 15 miles from roosts. Elsewhere up to six birds wintered along the northeast coast with 1-2 at Gibraltar Point, 1-3 along the Wash to Frampton Marsh and 1-6 between there and the Nene Mouth but the only roost counts submitted being 10 at Sutton bridge Dec 9th. With no comprehensive roost counting in The Wash, it is impossible to ascertain how many birds were actually in that area. Inland 1-2 were at Willow Tree Fen, Thurlby Fen, Dunston Fen, Baston Fen; up to five were at Baston Pits and in the Woodall Spa area plus Crowle Moors in the northwest.



Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*
(Female) Alkborough Flats October 1st 2021
© GRAHAM CATLEY

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Very common resident and partial migrant. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 20000; for national importance: 3000.

| Site | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Whisby | 24 | 31 | 23 | 19 | 10 | 6 | 27 | 39 | 49 | 21 | 29 | 1 |
| Frampton Marsh | 41 | 18 | 21 | 18 | 20 | 18 | 6 | 7 | 18 | 11 | 12 | 35 |
| Middlemarsh Farm | 16 | 28 | 16 | 23 | 11 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 12 | 11 | 8 | 13 |
| Tattershall | 10 | 7 | 16 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 17 | 12 | 11 | 29 | 18 |
| Cleethorpes | 10 | 7 | 20 | 15 | 7 | 4 | - | 6 | 8 | 10 | 14 | 18 |
| Gibraltar Point | 6 | 6 | 6 | 13 | 7 | 9 | 12 | 13 | 19 | 18 | 112 | 8 |
| Boultham, Lincoln | 50 | 14 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 12 | 16 | 10 | 10 | 20 |
| Kirkby on Bain | 6 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 12 | 6 | 11 | 9 | 9 |
| Messingham SQ | 6 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 12 | 12 | 9 | 14 |
| Baston Fen | 10 | 12 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 16 | 6 |

The highest count of the year was 112 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 2nd, lower than the peak 2020 count of 143 at Frampton Marsh on Dec 20th. The table shows the top 10 sites which held cumulative annual maximum monthly counts of more than 85 birds. There were no other counts of more than 50 that are not shown in the table. Recorded in 33% of BBS squares (2020 27%, 2019 34%) with an average of 2.1 birds per occupied square (2020 2.1/sq., 2019, 1.5 /sq.). It was 39th most widespread species in the county, as it was in 2020.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 15000; for national importance: 2000.

| Site | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Deeping Lakes | 25 | 49 | 15 | 12 | 11 | 33 | 81 | 196 | 345 | 286 | 353 | 84 |
| Whisby | 221 | 181 | 70 | 61 | 41 | 46 | 150 | 113 | 400 | 75 | 121 | 1 |
| Covenham Reservoir | 120 | 100 | 55 | 20 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 80 | 226 | 188 | 163 | 200 |
| Baston | 60 | 25 | 25 | 14 | 21 | 50 | 163 | 215 | 107 | 30 | 175 | 190 |
| Kirkby on Bain | 95 | 70 | 21 | 19 | 9 | 19 | 66 | 60 | 60 | 105 | 150 | 150 |
| Boultham Mere | 90 | 85 | 25 | 12 | 20 | 81 | 90 | 68 | 20 | 96 | 120 | 80 |
| Messingham SQ | 14 | 78 | 28 | 20 | 25 | 46 | 68 | 104 | 120 | 130 | 100 | 51 |
| Barton Pits | 99 | 88 | 36 | 11 | 9 | 19 | 45 | 24 | 131 | 56 | 23 | 142 |
| Bagmoor Floods | 200 | 200 | 120 | 10 | 10 | - | - | - | - | 130 | - | - |
| Tallington Lakes | 211 | 120 | 20 | 10 | - | - | 10 | - | 5 | 26 | 91 | 127 |

The highest count of the year was 400 at Job's Lane, Whisby on Sep 19th down from the peak count of 500 at Deeping Lakes in Aug 2020. The table shows the top 10 sites which held cumulative annual maximum monthly counts of more than 600 birds. Outside the table there were counts of 100 at Toft Newton Reservoir on Nov 13th and 133 on Dec 30th. Recorded in 18% of BBS squares (2020 16%, 2019 14%) with an average of 2.9 birds per occupied square (2020 4.1/sq., 2019, 3 /sq.). It was 55th most widespread species in the county, down from 54th in 2020.

Common Crane *Grus grus*

Scarce but increasing migrant, recorded most months. Former breeding species and a common migrant to 16th/17th centuries but has bred again 2020 and 2021. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 3500; for national importance: 2. RBBP, LBRC.

Willow Tree Fen is where the Crane action in Lincolnshire is centred these days and the year started with eight flying over on Jan 22nd. What was almost certainly the same flock of eight birds was seen flying

With a large wintering and summering population it has become impossible to gauge any sensible idea of passage through the county. In the long running study of breeding birds in North Lincolnshire the number of breeding males (16) and females (17) was the same as 2020 but a total of 30 juveniles fledged compared to 24 in 2020 (chart). A comprehensive survey of the remainder of the county is needed to gain an insight into the total breeding population, as records submitted from the remainder of the county in 2021 were limited. These included five pairs fledging nine young along the coast; southern inland fens three males and four females but no reports of young fledged; just three pairs reported in the Wash hinterland and no reports of young (surely a gross underestimate); one pair in central inland fens fledging four young, plus one pair Boultham Mere and male and two females at Marston where no young fledged.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-May; rare in summer. Bred to 1872. This species has become less numerous since the 1990s. Former roosting sites on The Wash used to hold double figures throughout the winter periods. Red List. RBBP.

| Site | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Gibraltar Point | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Friskney Flats | 4 | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Frampton Marsh | 3 | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Holbeach Range | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Saltfleet-Mablethorpe coast | 2 | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Witham Mouth | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |
| Freiston Shore | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Wainfleet All Saints | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |



Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* Thorpe Tilney Fen February 5th 2021 © JAMES PORTER

Two detailed articles – Rough-legged Buzzards and Pigeon and Doves in Lincolnshire



**Rough-legged Buzzards *Buteo lagopus*
in Lincolnshire**
Graham Catley

A cool afternoon of December 15th 1974 saw the late Derek Robinson and myself sat in his car at the foot of the Wolds escarpment at Bonby anticipating the predicted afternoon arrival of what would be my first county Rough-legged Buzzard. Resident for most of the year in Norwich at the University of East Anglia I had been privileged to encounter Rough-legged Buzzards from the notable late 1973 influx seeing a total of five birds in Norfolk - Suffolk that winter. The following winter was even more productive with a larger arrival and East Anglia held the bulk of the subsequent wintering population during which I bumped into a minimum of 24 different individuals with a notable 11 in the air at one time, at the then raptor mecca that was Walberswick, on November 10th 1974. The Bonby bird did appear en cue that afternoon and later in the month Mick Mellor found two birds in the adjacent Ancholme Valley that has since proven to be a notable site for wintering birds in the county. Personally, having seen a minimum of 71 birds in Britain with 31 in Lincolnshire between 1973 and 2020 it would appear that Rough-legged Buzzard is not that scarce a bird in the county but occurrences have always been rather sporadic and tied to the cyclical variation in vole and lemming numbers in their Arctic and sub-Arctic breeding areas. In recent years records have become less frequent in spite of the increasing number of active observers in addition to which the now regular appearance of pale Common Buzzards has served to increase the potential for mistaken identification. This short paper attempts to present the history of Lincolnshire records, to suggest preferred wintering habitats and to offer tips on the identification of this species and its separation from Common Buzzard.

Three races of Rough-legged Buzzard have been identified in Eurasia, nominate *lagopus* breeding from Scandinavia, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia to the centre of Siberia, the River Yenisey, where it overlaps with *menzbieri* breeding across North East and eastern Siberia while further east *kamtschatkensis* breeds across most of Eastern Asia, Kamchatka and the Kuril Islands. Currently also regarded as a race of the same species *B. l. sanctijohannis* the Rough-legged Hawk, a suggested taxonomic split, breeds across Arctic America from Alaska to north-east Canada. In Britain the

Plate 1 1cy Rough-legged Buzzard, October 2011, Bonby – Worlaby Carrs. Shows some features noted for *menzbieri*. Note diffuse dark terminal tail band seen from below, pale - but streaked - head, mainly pale underwings with narrow, dark trailing edge and dark carpal patches and belly patch. In characteristic hovering profile.

nominate race is the usual visitor but there have been a few confirmed and other suspected records of Rough-legged Hawk in Ireland, the Scilly Isles and Cornwall and this form has occurred on a number of occasions in Iceland and on ships in the North Atlantic. The race *menzbieri* has apparently been identified in winter in Eastern Europe.

Breeding birds are found in the tundra and taiga regions between 61° and 76° N where their breeding success is highly dependent upon the variation in the number of voles and lemmings that formerly occurred in four-year cycles but in recent years the effects of climate change have disrupted these cycles and warmer winters have had a detrimental effect upon rodent populations in the Arctic as winter snow melt has led to high mortality of hibernating rodents. In the past, years of high breeding productivity led to higher than normal numbers of juvenile birds migrating in the ensuing autumn and subsequently wintering in areas out with their typical range. Most Scandinavian and western Russian birds winter in central and Eastern Europe with Britain always being on the western fringe of their range. The majority of birds that reach Britain are juveniles with full adults being extremely unusual but there are records of birds returning to winter territories in subsequent years including in Lincolnshire a bird first recorded as a juvenile in the Turnby Woodside area from November 9th 2004 to March 23rd 2005 that was relocated in the same area as a 3cy bird from January 12th to March 21st 2006.

Although a real mammal / rodent specialist Rough-legged Buzzards also feed on birds and other invertebrate prey when their favoured food is unavailable or in short supply. A recent development described by Pokrovsky et al documented how a small population of Rough-legged Buzzards has colonised a rodent free island, Kolguev Island, in Arctic Russia where they bred successfully during 2006 – 2013 feeding on goslings and Willow Ptarmigan.

Various authors have attempted to connect large influxes into Britain with breeding success in the Scandinavian breeding range and that of 1966 occurred following a notable southerly shift of the Norwegian breeding population that was linked to a poor year for voles and lemmings further north and east. The bulk of the palearctic population though, is found in Russia an estimated 100,000 pairs compared to the 5000-10,000 in Norway, 3000 – 5000 in Sweden and 50 – 4000 in Finland (Gensbol 2004). In the large influx of 1974 – 1975 a large proportion of the population moved west with few birds wintering in Denmark but there was a big passage through the Baltic and Finland. This suggests that large arrivals in Britain rely upon a good breeding season to produce large numbers of young over a large part of the species' range but are perhaps also in part tied to weather systems producing suitable conditions for North Sea crossings during the key migration period.

Status in Lincolnshire

The first county avifauna, Smith and Cornwallis 1955, described the Rough-legged Buzzard as 'A rare and irregular autumn and winter visitor. Until the 1920's it occurred fairly regularly on the coast in autumn, (mainly during October) in variable but usually very small numbers, and less frequently inland then and later in the winter. During the last thirty years, however, there have been very few records'. Writing in the early 1980's Atkin and Lorand noted its status as 'A rare or very scarce coastal passage migrant and winter visitor, chiefly in October and November and occasionally between December and early May. Inland occurrences are not infrequent and mainly in winter, but these birds appear to wander quite at random and seldom remain in one area for any considerable period. In some years it may be absent but influxes are noted at irregular and sometimes long intervals. It was rather more numerous than usual in the autumns of 1839, 1875, 1880, 1891, 1903, 1915, 1962, 1966, 1973, 1974, 1982 and 1985.' 'The biggest arrivals were in 1915 and 1974 when there were about 20 records each year'.

All Lincolnshire records fall in the period October 4th 1998, Gibraltar Point to May 17th 1996, Naughton Forest a second calendar year bird with the exception of a bird reported as found dead at Ulceby near Alford within 15 days of September 17th 1977 having been ringed as a nestling in

Pigeons and Doves in Lincolnshire

Andrew Henderson
Photographs © Graham Catley

Introduction

Pigeons and doves (Columbidae) are often ignored by birdwatchers. There are exceptions: attention was focused on Collared Dove in the 1950s and 1960s when they first arrived in Britain, and it's now focused on Turtle Dove as they seem destined to disappear. They are, though, an interesting group with diverse behaviours and habitat preferences. In this article, I am looking at the status up to 2021 of the five species in Lincolnshire: Feral Pigeon, Stock Dove, Woodpigeon, Turtle Dove and Collared Dove.

Sources of information

I've used, as my main sources, the Lincolnshire Bird Reports (LBRs) from 1979 onwards and digital data held by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership for the years with no published LBRs (i.e. 1997-2007 and, at the time of writing, 2021). I am aware that this hybrid approach is somewhat unsatisfactory but doubt that more complex approaches would be sensible. My analyses have been fairly simple, and trends should be illustrated reasonably accurately. Some obvious gaps in data sets exist; for example, the digitised data for 1997 relate only to Gibraltar Point with nothing for the rest of the county, while the 2007 LBR does not contain any dove information for Gibraltar Point. Given the generally patchy nature of count reporting for these species, I doubt that those omissions affect conclusions. I have included a handful of additional Feral Pigeon counts supplied by Graham Catley.

The seasonal charts presented here are derived from the years for which I obtained full digitised data



Plate 1 Feral Pigeons, from Scunthorpe steelworks, feeding on arable land at Brumby, February 2023



Plate 2 In autumn and winter, Woodpigeons often feed on hawthorn berries, Barton, December 2010

(i.e. 1998-2007 and 2021). Ideally, I would have analysed a more recent and continuous set of, say, ten years. However, having already obtained the data for the years with no LBRs, I concluded that the work required to check and manipulate additional years' data was not justified, as the pattern for each species in 2021 was similar to those in the earlier years.

The charts of long-term trends, covering 1979-2021, show the highest single count anywhere in the county each year, plus in a paler shade the sum of the next two highest counts. Gaps in sequences exist for years when LBRs do not contain enough information for three high counts (or sometimes even one, in the case of Feral Pigeon). I applied a convention that I excluded from the analysis successive high counts made at the same site in the same month (for LBR data) or made at the same site less than about a month apart (for digitised data). This was to avoid bias from the inclusion of repeat reports of a single large flock. It is not entirely satisfactory, as large flocks present for over one month may have been counted twice and, conversely, only one of a succession of high counts of migrants on different days (and thus different birds) in the same month will have been included. However, I suggest it's as good a way as possible with the available data to illustrate trends. I have included tables of the highest counts of each species. Except for Feral Pigeon, these tables show information colour-coded by season. Autumn (brown) has been defined as September-November, winter (blue) as December-February and spring (green) as March-May. The only tabulated count during June-August was one for Turtle Dove on 1st June which has been treated as spring. Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) data for Lincolnshire were kindly supplied by the British Trust for Ornithology. Graphs of Lincolnshire population index trends included here are shown as smoothed lines together with a shaded area extending to the 85% confidence limits. The BBS is run by the BTO and is jointly funded by the BTO, the JNCC (on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs - Northern Ireland, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, and Scottish Natural Heritage), and the RSPB. Additional information, including downloaded data from the BBS and its predecessor the Common Birds Census (CBC), has been obtained from the BTO/JNCC BirdTrends 2021 report (Massimino et al. 2022).

Wilder Lincolnshire Festival

Lincs Wildlife Trust have written to us to invite LBC to attend their birthday party. I won't be able to attend as I will be abroad but LWT and LBC are closely linked and I would like us to be there as a club. We need someone to take the lead in organising this and preferably a group of people to assist. Please read below and if you would like to help please contact me, Phil Espin on email chairman@lincsbirdclub.co.uk.

"We're holding a special event to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and you're invited!

The **Wilder Lincolnshire Festival** will be on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 September 2023, times to be confirmed, at Doddington Hall.

The aim is to bring together the organisations, communities and individuals who are working to make Lincolnshire Wilder. It's part networking, part raising awareness and part celebration of what has and what can be achieved. We're also inviting some of the community groups that we work with to have stands and to attend. Hopefully it will help the communities, visitors to the event and all of us, feel that we're all making valued contributions and take inspiration from each other. There will be marquees with stands, interactive elements, activities, guided walks and workshops.

We would like to invite you and the Lincolnshire Bird Club to have a stand and provide an activity or something interactive relevant to how your organisation helps nature and/or communities. Perhaps you would like to lead some bird walks around Doddington and help to promote the Lincolnshire Bird Trail, alongside anything else you might like to cover?

There is space in a marquee where we can provide a table but, if you have your own gazebo you are welcome to bring that instead. We'd like the stands to be as interactive as possible, however please note there's no electricity on site. It's an opportunity to share what you've achieved and how you're making a difference.

Initially, we'd just like to know if you're able to come - preferably for both days but you're still very welcome to attend if it's only for one day (please let us know which day). If you could let us know before 16 June at the latest please so that we can start to plan the space."

LBC Summer BBQ FRAMPTON MARSH RSPB RESERVE Sunday September 3rd at 5.00 pm

The committee are delighted that North Thoresby based member Sally Prescott has offered to take on the role of Events Organiser with her debut event being the summer barbecue that has proved so popular over the last two years since it was first held in 2021 as a memorial event for late members Steve Keightley and Colin Casey.

Members will be leading guided walks at 09.00 and 14.00 for anyone who wants to make a day of it. There is no obligation to attend these if you just wish to attend the barbecue and you can do the walks without the barbecue too. Site manager John Badley of RSPB has very kindly offered us the use of the picnic area, toilets and Visitor Centre in the event of inclement weather.

Catering will be by Dunmores of Boston and an excellent choice of meats, salad, bread rolls and hot buttered potatoes will be available, followed by Cheesecake or Lemon tart and cream. Special dietary requirements catered for. Soft drinks included.

Price per head : £20 payable in advance

This event is open to all members and partners, but numbers will be limited to 30 on a "first come, first served" basis

To book contact Sally Prescott sally.prescott142@btinternet.com to confirm a place is available or Telephone: 01472 840142 and then pay by PayPal/credit card/debit card on the Sales section of the website at www.lincsbirdclub/sales

Bookings by July 31st please.

Our conservation organisations are too timid, says author

AUTHOR and blogger Mark Avery (**pictured**) is sure to ruffle a few feathers with his new book to be published later this month.

Dr Avery, a past speaker at a Lincs Bird Club AGM, takes fire at the country's main conservation organisations, accusing them of "growing stale and less effective than they once were".

He says: "We have a conservation movement that is too timid in its criticism of governments across the UK for their inaction and failure. Such timidity reduces the movements ability to have any leverage with political events.

"Too much energy is spent commenting on what government is doing rather than telling government what it ought to be doing.

"Our wildlife organisations used to set the agenda for government action. They were once leaders but now, too often, they are mere followers."

The controversial comments of the Northamptonshire-based writer, who used to be Director of Conservation at the RSPB, will come in a 256-page paperback, *Reflections*, to be published on July 4 by Pelagic Publishing.

Even before it hits the bookshelves, it has earned plaudits from his friend, celebrity naturalist Chris Packham.

Says he: "If I were king for a day, Avery would be installed as the benign dictator of conservation in the UK."

The book also has a pre-publication endorsement from the LBC's president, Prof Ian Newton, who commends the author's "wit, verve and clarity of prose".



Somewhere along the line, the corncrake fell out of love with Lincolnshire.

The introduction of mechanical mowing of hay meadows in the late 19th Century scarcely helped the cause, but the decline of what, in summer, was once probably a fairly common farmland bird may have set in before then.

There has been no reported breeding in the county of this mysterious migratory species since as far back as 1920.

Because so little is known about *Crex crex*, especially after it has left our shores to spend winter in Africa, it is almost like a bird of myth.

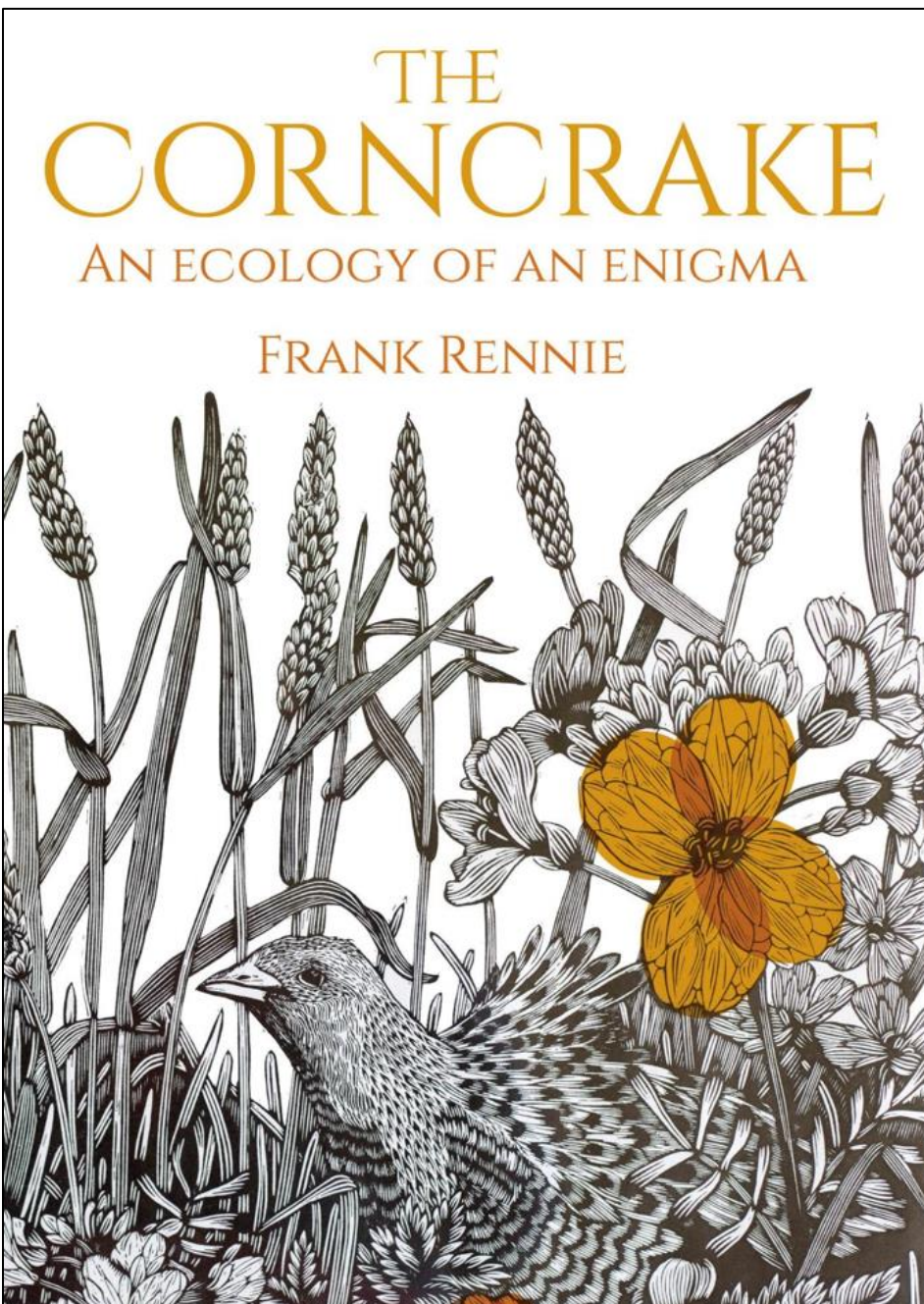
Credit, therefore to Prof Frank Rennie, who lives in the Outer Hebrides, its last British stronghold, for the many decades he has spent researching the species, both first hand and by poring through countless academic studies.

He has now collated his findings which have been published in a fascinating book, *The Corncrake - An Ecology of An Enigma*.

Prof Rennie does not pretend to have discovered all the answers, but he has come up with many precious insights about the species - plumage, habitat preferences diet, breeding, migration, distribution, population fluctuations, folklore and vulnerability to a range of predatory threats (perhaps even including hedgehogs!)

He also explores how best we can seek to conserve a species with what probably remains a very uncertain future and how 'corncrake tourism' might also contribute to its welfare.

This excellent book is the latest ornithological title from a go-ahead Scottish publishing house - it can be purchased at £18.99 from <http://www.whittlespublishing.com>



Breeding Bird of the Month! - Black-winged Stilt at Frampton Marsh RSPB; the first breeding record in Lincolnshire

This May, RSPB Frampton Marsh saw the arrival of four fluffy chicks in addition to the three young adults who had made their way over on 1 May. The female chose her partner out of the two adult males that accompanied her and the pair began building a nest out of mud and vegetation before the first egg was laid on 11 May. Three more eggs were laid on subsequent days and after an incubation period of 22-26 days, they all hatched successfully around the same time on 6th June 2023..

Black-winged Stilt bred only four times in the UK between 1945 and 2005. In more recent years, however, we have seen an increase; 2017 was deemed a 'record year' with 13 chicks fledging across Kent, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk.

Not one pair but two... the second pair hatched on 20th June



Black-winged Stilt at Frampton 20th June 2023 © Toby Collett

This is the first time ever they've bred in Lincolnshire though. 'Black-winged Stilts have been expanding their breeding range to the south of the UK, and more tend to arrive in spring when their favoured wetlands in south-west Europe dry out due to drought.

'Much of Spain and France have been experiencing severe drought conditions, which has doubtless caused the influx of stilts to the UK this spring, alongside other species like Night Heron, Purple Heron and Great Reed Warbler.'

Frampton Marsh provides the perfect habitat with freshwater wetlands and reedbeds, pools and grasslands. The reserve is next to The Wash – the UK's most important estuary for wildlife.

Interestingly, the first documented breeding pair of Black-winged Stilts in the UK nested in a sewage farm in Nottingham in 1945. Nowadays, they are taking advantage of purpose-built protective spaces in RSPB nature reserves.

Vulnerable to predation and human disturbance, they need somewhere quiet and protected to build a nest. The breeding pair chose to settle in a fenced-off protective zone of Frampton Marsh, proving just how valuable and important it is for us to provide these spaces. "Our staff and volunteers work incredibly hard to protect all the species here at the reserve, and by taking steps such as putting up protective fencing, we're doing everything we can to see nature flourish here." - John Badley, Site Manager at RSPB Frampton Marsh.

Bird of the Month! - Little Swift – Alkborough, 3rd Lincolnshire record

On Thursday June 29th at 8.05 am Simon and Tim Jump came across a **Little Swift** feeding over the reedbeds at Alkborough. Unfortunately, it only stayed for a few minutes and was lost never to be seen again. The sighting echoes the first Lincolnshire occurrence at Barton on Humber on June 26th 1998 and the second at Gibraltar Point on June 25th 2002 so late June is clearly the time to hope for this rare vagrant of which there have been only 27 UK records to the end of 2021



Little Swift at Alkborough Flats NR 29th June 2023 © Tim Jump



Lincolnshire Bird News - June 2023

Compiled by Chris Grimshaw

This Lincs Latest Bird News is available on the LBC Website and is updated on a regular basis, to provide a convenient news service to scarce & rare birds found within Lincolnshire. This is a free service and members wishing to get more up to the minute information should check commercial news services. The Sightings page and @Lincsbirding Twitter feed are intended to alert birders to rare (RED) and scarcer (BLUE) species that they might be interested in seeing within the County.

If your sightings are missing from the list, then please let us know by emailing recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk. Records of more common species are still very important and should be submitted to the county Recorder (again, send all records to recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk) or submitted online using the **BTO BirdTrack** or **eBird Apps**. ALL records will then be added to the Lincolnshire Bird Club data-base, to be included in the Annual Reports. **PLEASE NOTE** that none of these reports have been verified or checked by the Lincolnshire Bird Club Records Committee. Please note that the close off date for records for the 2019 Lincs Bird Report is 1st May 2020, after this we cannot guarantee inclusion.

30/06/2023

Frampton Marsh

5 Spoonbill, 6+ Black-winged Stilt

Huttoft Pit

Wood Sandpiper

29/06/2023

Alkborough Flats

Little Swift

Donna Nook

Cuckoo, 16 Sandwich Tern

Frampton Marsh

Spotted Redshank, 5 Spoonbill

Gibraltar Point

10 Spoonbill

Manby Wetlands

80 Black-tailed Godwit, Wood Sandpiper

Trent Port

Little Egret, Jay, 2 Common Sandpiper

28/06/2023

Frampton Marsh

Corn Bunting, 6 Barnacle Goose, 2 Marsh Harrier, Red Kite, Water Rail, Black-winged Stilt 3 adults seen but up to 11 in total)

27/06/2024

Holywell

Osprey

Manby Wetlands

Greenshank, Osprey, 13 Green Sandpiper

26/06/2023

Frampton Marsh

2 Spotted Redshank, Wood Sandpiper, 3 Spoonbill, 10+ Black-winged Stilt (c7 chicks)

Trent Port

5 Buzzard, Little Egret, Red Kite, 10 Lapwing, 28 House Martin, Raven, 2 Sparrowhawk, Treecreeper, 3 Green Woodpecker

Whisby

Wood Sandpiper

25/06/2023

Bottesford

Red Kite

Gibraltar Point

Montagu's Harrier, 4 Spotted Redshank, Spoonbill

Manby Wetlands

Wood Sandpiper

Wolla Bank

Long-tailed Duck

24/06/2023

Anderby Creek

Marsh Warbler

Frampton Marsh

Spotted Redshank

Manby Wetlands

Wood Sandpiper

Hill Holt Wood

Spotted Flycatcher



Spotted Flycatcher at Hill Holt Wood - Image © Oliver Woodman

Welton le Wold

Red Kite

23/06/2023

Frampton Marsh

6 Black-winged Stilt

Gibraltat Point

Wood Sandpiper, 3 Spoonbill

Manby Wetlands

Wood Sandpiper

Messingham

3 Chiffchaff, **Cuckoo**, **Hobby**, Lapwing, 12 Sand Martin, Oystercatcher, 10 Shelduck (6 young), Common Tern 4 (2 young), **Cetti's Warbler**, 2 Reed Warbler

22/06/2023

Freiston Shore

Wood Sandpiper

Gibraltar Point

Short-eared Owl, 3 Spotted Redshank, Spoonbill

Manby Wetlands

38 Avocet, 4 Black-tailed Godwit, Oystercatcher, Redshank, 4 Green Sandpiper, **5 Wood Sandpiper**, 2 Snipe

Frampton Marsh

Cattle Egret, Corn Bunting, Cuckoo, 2 Common Tern, Mediterranean Gull, 2 Spoonbill, 6 Black-winged Stilt (second brood) At least two Adults from 1st brood - unclear how many chicks though

21/06/2023

Alkborough Flats

3 Avocet, c15 Little Egret, c 8 Marsh Harrier, **2 Spoonbill**, **3 Bearded Tit**

Frampton Marsh

3 Spotted Redshank, Spoonbill, 4 Black-winged Stilt (this is a second pair that had young hatch today), Bearded Tit

Walesby

Turtle Dove

20/06/2023

Gibraltar Point

6 Spoonbill

Huttoft Pit

White-winged Black Tern

Sutton on Sea

4 Common Crowsbill, Eider, 9 Gannet, 17 Common Scoter, **8 Arctic Tern**, 6 Sandwich Tern

19/06/2023

Frampton Marsh

4 Black-winged Stilt (two adult & two chicks)

Gibraltar Point

5 Spoonbill

Laughton Forest

4 Grey Heron, **3 Nightjar**, Woodcock

Mablethorpe

Honey Buzzard

Messingham

3 Buzzard, 49 Lapwing, 70+ Sand Martin, Red-crested Pochard, Water Rail, 2 Redshank, 2 Common Tern, Great Spotted Woodpecker,

18/06?2023

Alkborough Flats

Marsh Warbler

Gibraltar Point

8 Spoonbill

17/06/2023

Apex Pits

Cuckoo

Digby

Little Owl

Frampton Marsh

c 250 Avocet, c 800 Black-headed Gull, 2 Mediterranean Gull, 3 Marsh Harrier, 20 Oystercatcher 5 Little Ringed Plover, 4 Linged Plover, Water Rail, 3 Spoonbill, 2 Black-winged Stilt (chicks not visible)



Black & White with a hint of red , Mediterranean Gull, Avocet and Black-headed Gull at Frampton Marsh - Image © Chris Grimshaw

Manby Wetlands

Wood Sandpiiper

16/06/2023

Baston & Langtoft Pits

Kittiwake

Frampton Marsh

Little Gull, Spotted Redshank, 6 Black-winged Stilt

Freiston Shore

Spoonbill

15/06/2023

Baston & Langtoft Pits

Spotted Redshank

Churchill Lane

Marsh Warbler

Gibraltar Point

Spoonbill

Market Deeping

3 Night Heron over and towards Langtoft Pits

14/06/2023

Anderby Marsh

Curlew Sandpiper

Frampton Marsh

Spotted Redshank, 6 Black-winged Stilt (including 4 young)

Grimsby

2 Night Heron (possible over Laceby Road)

Langtoft Pits

Purple Heron

Red Hill NR

2 Common Quail

Scopwick

Common Quail

13/06/2023

Ancaster

Black-crowned Night Heron

Anderby Marsh

Curlew Sandpiper

Baston & Langtoft Pits

Osprey

Frampton Marsh

3 Barnacle Goose, Greenshank, 9 Mediterranean Gull, Red Kite, Osprey, 4 Spoonbill, Arctic Tern

Langtoft

Honey Buzzard

Messingham SQ

Hobby, 4 House Martin, Sparrowhawk, Swallow, Cetti's Warbler

Nebraska Wetlands

3 Reed Bunting, 3 Buzzard, 2 Little Grebe, 2 Skylark, 6 Shoveler, 4 Swift, Song Thrush

12/06/2023

Ancaster

Black-crowned Night Heron

Frampton Marsh

Osprey, Little-ringed Plover, 6 Black-winged Stilt

Manby Wetlands

Wood Sandpiper

11/06/2023

Frampton Marsh

6 Black-winged Stilt, Spoonbill

Manby Wetlands

Wood Sandpiper

Wellingore Churchyard

Spotted Flycatcher

Whisby

Garganey

10/06/2023

Frampton Maesh

Cuckoo, 2 Marsh Harrier, Green Sandpiper, Spoonbill, 6 Black-winged Stilt, Whooper Swan, Black Tern

Gibraltar Point

Montagu's Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Spoonbill

Messingham SQ

Lapwing, 10 Pochard, Redshank, Little Stint, 2 Common Tern, 3 Cetti's Warbler, 2 Reed Warbler

Red Hill

Common Quail

RAF Woodhall

Black Tern

09/06/2023

Anderby Marsh

Spoonbill, 2 Little Stint

Baston & Langtoft Pits

Caspian Tern

Denton Reservoir

Osprey

Frampton Marsh

Spoonbill, 6 Black-winged Stilt

Gibraltar Point

Short-eared Owl, Spoonbill

Red Hill NR - Stenigot

2 Common Quail

Willow Tree Fen

Common Crane

08/05/2023

Anderby Marsh

Little Stint

Gibraltar Point

Night Heron, Short-eared Owl

Manby Wetlands

Lesser Yellowlegs



Lesser Yellowlegs at Manby Wetlands - Image © Mark Johnson

Willow Tree Fen

3 Common Crane

07/06/2023

Anderby Marsh

Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint

Baston & Langtoft Pits

Avocet

Boultham Mere

c88 Gadwall

Canwick

Red Backed Shrike



Red-backed Shrike at Canwick Sewage Works on 5th, 6th and 7th - Image © Tony Todd

Covenham Reservoir

2 Buzzard, 15 Great-crested Grebe, Green Sandpiper, 40 Swift, 2 Yellow Wagtail

Deeping Lakes

Whimbrel

Denton Reservoir

90 Lesser Black-backed Gull, Common Sandpiper

Frampton Marsh

6 Black-winged Stilt

Gibraltar Point

Red-backed Shrike, Spoonbill

Grainthorpe Haven

3 Buzzard, 20 Little Egret, Marsh Harrier, 2 Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, 30 Swallow, 4 Swift

Swanholme Lakes

2 Song Thrush, Garden Warbler, Great Spotted Woodpecker

06/06/2023

Anderby Marsh

Curlew Sandpiper, 2 Little Stint

Frampton Marsh

Spoonbill, 6 Black-winged Stilt (4 chicks), 2 Black Tern



A proud parent with two of its offspring, first breeding Black-winged Stilts in Lincolnshire - Image © Andy Sims

Gibraltar Point

Spoonbill

05/06/2023

Frampton Marsh

Pair of Black-winged Stilt (with four newly fledged young)

Grainthorpe Haven

Red-backed Shrike

Thorganby

Serin (in private garden)

Willow Tree Fen

Rough-legged Buzzard (possible)

RAF Woodhall

Garganey

04/06/2023

Anderby Marsh

Spoonbill, Curlew Sandpiper

Bain Valley

43 Sand Martin (trapped & ringed)

Covenham Reservoir

2 Common Sandpiper, 2 Yellow Wagtail

Cress Marsh

Buzzard, Chiffchaff, 4 Lesser Black-backed Gull, 11 Lapwing, 2 Sand Martin, Oystercatcher, Little Ringed Plover, Common Sandpiper

Frampton Marsh

Wood Sandpiper, Jack Snipe

Gibraltar Point

Short-eared Owl

Thorganby

Serin (private garden)

03/06/2023

Anderby Marsh

6 Avocet, **Cuckoo**, 10 Dunlin, 4 Little Egret, Greenshank, 12 Lapwing, Grey Plover 75 Ringed Plover, 14 Redshank, **Curlew** Sandpiper, Spoonbill, **Little Stint**, 4 Cetti's Warbler

Bourne

Montagu's Harrier

Chapel Six Marshes

2 Oystercatcher, **1 Marsh Warbler**, 2 Cetti's Warbler

Frampton Marsh

Garganey, Wood Sandpiper

Gibraltar Point

Marsh Warbler

Lincs Wolds

4 Quail

Messingham

2 Avocet, 3 Buzzard, **Hobby**, 10 Sand Martin, 6 Pochard, Redshank, 6 Shelduck, 2 Swallow, 6 Common Tern, Cetti's Warbler, 4 Reed Warbler

Thorganby

Serin (private garden)

02/06/2023

Baston & Langtoft Pits

Black Tern

Chapel Six Marshes

2 Marsh Warbler

Deeping Lakes

Garganey

Gibraltar Point

2 Short-eared Owl, Common Rosefinch

01/06/2023

Anderby Marsh

Little Stint

Baston Fen

Cattle Egret

Chapel Six Marshes

Marsh Warbler

Covenham Reservoir

3 Black Tern

Deeping High Bank

Harrier sp

East of Lincoln

3 Curlew, 2 Egyptian Goose, 2 Kestrel, 3 Ringed Plover, 2 Oystercatcher, **2 Black-winged Stilt**

Gibraltar Point

Glossy Inis, Short-eared Owl

Nocton Fen

3 Buzzard

RAF Woodhall Spa

5 Black Tern

Wolla Bank

Marsh Warbler

Lincs Bird Club Website

Website: <http://www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk>

Twitter [@Lincsbirding](#)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/LincolnshireBirdInformation/>

LBC County Bird Recorder

Phil Hyde recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk

BTO - <https://www.bto.org>

RSPB - <https://www.rspb.org.uk/>

Birdguides - <https://www.birdguides.com/>

Rarebird Alert - <https://www.rarebirdalert.co.uk/>

Recording

BTO Birdtrack - <https://app.bto.org/birdtrack/login/login.jsp>

eBird - <https://ebird.org/home>

iRecord - <https://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/>

Nature Lister - <http://www.naturelister.co.uk>

Wildlife Recorder - <https://www.wildlife.co.uk>

Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union Website

<http://lnu.org/>

LNU e-mail: info@lnu.org

Love Lincs Plants <https://www.lincstrust.org.uk/what-we-do/love-lincs-plants>
Love Lincs Plants Twitter feed
[@LoveLincsPlants](#)

Sir Joseph Banks Society

<http://www.joseph-banks.org.uk>

enquiries@joseph-banks.org.uk

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

<http://www.lincstrust.org.uk/>

Lincolnshire Bat Group website

<http://www.lincsbatgroup.co.uk/>

Butterfly Conservation Lincolnshire Branch

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/300/lincolnshire-branch.html>

FIGHTING WILDLIFE CRIME

Rural Crime Officer

Pc 160 Nick Willey

Force Wildlife, Rural Crime Officer

Force Dog Training Establishment

Lincolnshire Showground.

Grange-De-Lings.

Lincoln

nicholas.willey@lincs.pnn.police.uk

OFFICE: 01522-731897

MOBILE :07768-501895

PAGER : 07654-330877

Rural Crime News - <https://www.lincs.police.uk/news-campaigns/news/2019/rural-crime-news/>

STAYING SAFE

EasyTide

<http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/EasyTide/index.aspx>

Met Office Severe Weather E-mail Service

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/guide-to-emails>

Environment Agency Flood Information/Floodline

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/default.aspx>

Lyme Disease

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>

SPECIES IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDING

Botany

Botanical Group in South Lincs

Contact: Sarah Lambert - sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com

Also see: <http://bsbi.org/south-lincolnshire-v-c-53>

LNU Sawflies, Bees, Wasps and Ants Recorder

Dr. David Sheppard - d.a.sheppard@btinternet.com

Lincolnshire Mammals

Chris Manning, Chris.LincsDeer@gmail.com

Mammal Atlas

You can download and print off a hard copy or view it online.

[http://www.glnp.org.uk/our-](http://www.glnp.org.uk/our-publications/biodiversity/projects-and-reports.php)

[publications/biodiversity/projects-and-reports.php](http://www.glnp.org.uk/our-publications/biodiversity/projects-and-reports.php)

Lincs Amphibian and Reptile Group

The Lincolnshire ARG (Amphibian & Reptile Group)

Ashley Butterfield - learningoutdoors@btinternet.com

Local Bat Helpline

Grounded bats, bat problems, advice and information.

Contact Annette and Colin Faulkner on

01775 766286 or e-mail: annettefaulkner@btinternet.com

Confidential Bat Records

You may send confidential bat records direct to Annette

Faulkner on: annettefaulkner@btinternet.com

USEFUL WILDLIFE CONTACTS

Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership

<http://www.glnp.org.uk/>

Contact: charlie.barnes@glnp.org.uk

or for more general queries:info@glnp.org.uk

Natural England

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

Lincolnshire Environmental Awards

www.lincsenvironmentalawards.org.uk

Life on the Verge and Wildflower Meadow Network Project

<http://www.lifeontheverge.org.uk/>



Lincolnshire Bird Club
Follow us on twitter @lincsbirdclub
<http://www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk>

The Lincolnshire Bird Club, supporting the recording & conservation of wildlife in Lincolnshire

