

THE **Lincolnshire** **BIRD REPORT 2019**



Welcome to the 2019 Report



Red Kite *Milvus milvus*
Lincolnshire Wolds Jan 2019
© Graham Catley

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FRONT COVER: As the Lincolnshire Bird Report went to press, news reached us that former County Bird Recorder Steve Keightley passed away on February 4th 2021. A full obituary will appear in LBR 2020. The cover photo is his photo of the **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni* Frampton Marsh Jun 18th 2019 © STEVE KEIGHTLEY



Contents

Preface	5
Professor Ian Newton, OBE FRS FRSE, President of LBC	
The Lincolnshire Bird Club 2019 Report	6
Andrew Chick and Phil Espin	
2019 Annual Review	10
James Siddle	
Systematic List 2019	19
Collated and edited by Phil Hyde, Phil Espin, John and Nicky Clarkson Contributing Authors: Graham Catley, Andrew Chick, John Clarkson, Phil Espin, Vin Fleming, Chris Grimshaw, Phil Hyde	
Ringing Report 2019	197
Phil Hyde	
Selected recoveries and related news in 2019	200
Lincolnshire Rare Breeding Birds Panel Report Summary 2019	203
Phil Espin	
Water Pipit influx at Baston Fen NR	205
John Redshaw	
‘Mandt’s’ Black Guillemot <i>Cephus grylle mandtii</i> in Lincolnshire: new to Britain	206
Dave Roberts	
Finder’s Reports	
Black-winged Pratincole, Frampton Marsh, June 18th 2019	208
Terry Barnatt	
Pallid Swift, Gibraltar Point NNR, November 7th 2018	210
Kev Wilson	
Isabelline Wheatear <i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>, Gibraltar Point, September 22nd 2019	212
John Clarkson	
Iberian Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus ibericus</i>, Gibraltar Point, May 7th 2019	214
K M Wilson	
Bobolink at Crook Bank – a first for Lincolnshire	216
Tom Hibbert (Birklands Ringing Group, Notts.)	
Contributors	218
Index	220
Publications for sale	223
BBS Trends 2019	225



Knot *Calidris canutus* at Frampton March on 7th March 2019 © STEVE KEIGHTLEY



Preface

Professor Ian Newton, OBE FRS FRSE
President of LBC

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the 40th Annual Report of the Lincolnshire Bird Club, covering the pre-covid year 2019. Our club was founded in 1979 by a handful of pioneers, and in the early years contained only around 200 members. Its initial aims have remained unchanged – to promote an interest in local birds, to foster organised fieldwork and to provide a friendly welcome to all, from beginner to expert. In more recent years, emphasis has also grown to encourage the conservation of the wildlife, and to provide impartial information on which both local and national conservation policies can be based. Since the early years, member numbers have doubled to around 400. Over the same 40 years, the Annual Report has changed out of all recognition, with recent editions being much more information-packed than earlier ones, and illustrated by top-quality digital photographs, taken locally. The report now contains not only the records supplied by members, but also other information relating to Lincolnshire (including ring recoveries) supplied by the BTO, along with records from Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory, and from popular Nature Reserves across the County. To great mutual benefit, the club enjoys excellent relations with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, the Lincolnshire Naturalists Union, and at national level with the BTO, the RSPB and the Rare Birds Breeding Panel. The annual LBC report is the one place where all this most recent information on local birdlife is brought together.

Like previous reports, the present one contains a systematic list summarising the status and recent records of each species which has appeared in the county, followed by a number of articles written by members on topics which interest them. These are generally articles which would not find a permanent home in the scientific literature, but fit comfortably within the pages of a local report. As most members will know, the club also publishes a regular eNewsletter, giving recent sightings and details of forthcoming talks, and has a website where local and recent records can be posted, and where other useful information can be found.

Few can doubt the value of local bird clubs in bringing together people with common interests. Many who are among the most active locally do not necessarily join the bigger and more remote national organisations. The opposite also seems to be true, as many Lincolnshire-based members of the RSPB, BTO and other national and county organisations do not belong to LBC, although happily this gap seems to be lessening as the years go by. The periodic reports of local societies provide a depository for local information of interest to current and future generations of ornithologists living in the same areas, and provide a place for local people to write about their own pet projects. Without this depository, much valuable information could easily be lost. Local societies, such as the LBC, also provide the opportunity to assemble periodically, to socialise and to hear talks from invited speakers, from both within and without the county. In the LBC, as in many other county bird clubs, the audience is sufficiently big and informed to attract well-known ornithologists. Few would doubt the value of local bird clubs in promoting interest, and in producing annual reports, serving as a record of the ups and downs of local bird populations, and generally contributing to the national data-base. And as always, the organisation of club activities, and the production of a written record, is ably accomplished by those members who give up their time and energy to the benefit of us all. We all owe them a heartfelt gratitude for their efforts, and also acknowledge the contributions of the much larger number of members who supplied their records, photographs and other material that make up this report.



The Lincolnshire Bird Club 2019 Report

Andrew Chick and Phil Espin, January 2021

Welcome to the 2019 Lincolnshire Bird Report

On behalf of the Lincolnshire Bird Club (LBC) we are pleased to present our annual report on the birds of Lincolnshire. This 40th anniversary Bird Report has taken a huge amount of work, with many individuals involved in its publication and we thank our Honorary President Professor Ian Newton FRS for his encouraging comments in the Preface. Thanks are due to the observers and organisations who submit and share records to LBC, to our County Recorder, Phil Hyde, who oversees our records process and the team that processes them into the Wildlife Recorder 4 database. He also solicits, checks and edits much of the other material in the report. The Lincolnshire Birds Records Committee (LBRC), chaired by James Siddle, vets our records and Roy Harvey provides support as secretary. Colin and Sheila Jennings convert raw data from members into a format that can be loaded into the database. Colin Casey, our database manager, brings together records from a range of sources and makes them available in a suitable format for report entry writers. He has also continued to improve our Wildlife Recorder database most especially by developing automated means to convert external data into our database which continues to radically improve our data management for the purpose of report writing. We are extremely grateful to him and Jack Levene of Wildlife Recorder for the work they have done. We are also grateful to John and Nicky Clarkson for proof reading this report.

Contributing Authors

The LBC would like to thank all of the authors who volunteered their time to complete species write-ups or articles for the 2019 report:

Graham Catley
Andrew Chick
John Clarkson

Phil Espin
Vin Fleming
Chris Grimshaw

Phil Hyde
Steve Keightley

One former writer, Richard Jackson, wasn't able to write for us this year having relocated to Scotland, but we thank him for his past contributions.

Photographers

LBC is very grateful to the following photographers for supplying images for the 2019 report. All images included in the report have been obtained in Lincolnshire during 2019 and many are referred to in the text. All images are labelled with the photographer's name;

Chris Atkin
Owen Beaumont
Graham Catley
Andrew Chick
John Clarkson
Paul Coombes
Neil Drinkall
Gary Fenwick

Chris Grimshaw
Roy Harvey
Russell Hayes
Tom Hibberts
Phil Hyde
Mark Johnson
Steve Keightley
Paul Neale

Steve Nesbitt
Christine Parker
James Siddle
Neil Smith
Simon Spavin
Ben Ward

Records and contributions

The Lincolnshire Bird Report is an annual publication of records, articles and photographs relating to all aspects of Lincolnshire ornithology. We are very keen to hear from anyone who is interested in volunteering to help produce future bird reports, please contact chairman@lincsbirdclub.co.uk.



Submissions of Records

All observers are encouraged to submit records on a regular, at least monthly, basis as this helps considerably with managing the workload and speeding up production of the annual report. If it isn't possible to submit records until the end of the year, the deadline is by the end of February of the following year. Late records cause serious problems in drafting the systematic list and may be omitted. The names of all contributors will be published, unless individuals ask us to omit their names. There are several ways of submitting records to LBC, and below we list some of the best. Please remember that, as a small, volunteer-run organisation, we are unable to monitor and extract records from the many personal blogs and similar online sources that now exist. Your records are valuable, so please make sure that they are sent somewhere secure and accessible.

Twitter: For short messages, to get the news out to others, you can tweet @lincsbirding.

LBC rare bird Whatsapp group: This is used as a primary source for tracking LBRC species and is open to all members to join.

LBC Forum: For LBC members, you can post sightings of what you have seen, where and when you saw them, on our forum (with an image if you have one). Go to the LBC website www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk, log in and follow the links to the forum.

LBC Template: Twitter and Forum records have to be transferred to the LBC database, which takes a lot of time. Submitting records using the LBC Excel spreadsheet template saves a lot of that work. You can either fill records into the spreadsheet yourself or export data into the spreadsheet from your recording software package and email it to info@lincsbirdclub.co.uk. Download the template from www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/media/LBC_Template_import.zip.

BirdTrack: Many birders are now using BirdTrack (www.bto.org/birdtrack) to maintain their personal records online. All such records (barring confidential ones) for Lincolnshire are passed to us by BTO and are published in this report, subject to our usual checking procedures. LBC supports BirdTrack and a single submission to BirdTrack will suffice; there is no need for you to send duplicate records direct to LBC. Please ensure your BirdTrack sites have a clear geographic place name in them and an accurate OS grid reference or we cannot use the data. Site names like "Home", "Patch" or "A52" are unusable.

National Rarities

Nationally rare birds are indicated as such by the identifier BBRC (British Birds Rarities Committee) after the species name in the Systematic List in this report. Consideration of these records is by the BBRC and submission of details should be made directly to BBRC at www.bbrc.org.uk and a copy sent to the county recorder at recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk.

Records of all such rarities will only be published in our report once assessed and accepted by BBRC. The submission of descriptions of national rarities is important. Bird news providers do not assess records passed to them and without full submission to BBRC such records cannot be published and will be lost.

County Rarities

Species or races considered rare at county level are dealt with by the LBRC and are indicated as such by the identifier LBRC after the species name in the systematic list in this report. The committee currently comprises: Steve Keightley, Nigel Lound, James Siddle and Andy Sims. The chairman of the 2019-20 LBRC is James Siddle and Roy Harvey is secretary (roy.harvey100@btinternet.com).

Details and descriptions of LBRC species can be submitted by emailing them to the LBRC secretary or using the online form (visit www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/sightings and click on the green 'Submit a record' button). In most cases a decent photo will be sufficient for submission. All records of LBRC species should be submitted as soon as possible after the sighting and not left until the end of each year. County rarities accepted by the LBRC will be published in the report, together



with the initials of the finder/identifier. The submission of a description of county rarities is important. A systematic approach to the verification of all rare bird records is essential to the production of an accurate and meaningful annual report.

From time to time the LBRC will reserve the right to seek additional details of other records deemed exceptional by virtue of, for example, date, location, or number. For further information on the treatment of county rarities, please contact the county recorder.

Lincolnshire recorder

Phil Hyde

The Hawthorns, Manor Close, Legbourne, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 8NH

Email: recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk

LBC Data

LBC has a data sharing agreement with the Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre of the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP) based at the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT) headquarters, Banovallum House, Horncastle. All our bird data from the late 1990s onwards can be accessed by requesting a search from the Information Officer.

Searches are free for members of LBC and students undertaking scientific research. Commercial organisations and others may need to pay a fee. There are restrictions on access to confidential data for rare breeding birds. Further details can be obtained from Charlie Barnes, Information Officer, GLNP on 01507 528381 and charlie.barnes@glnp.org.uk. Searches can be made online at www.glnp.org.uk

Data Sources used in the 2019 Bird Report

LBC offers their thanks to the following individuals and organisations for supplying and letting us use their data in the 2019 bird report. Apologies to anyone we have missed off the list.

BTO BBS Data. Neil Calbrade, the Data Requests Coordinator of the Breeding Birds Survey (BBS), provides the Lincolnshire-specific data. The BTO/JNCC/RSPB BBS is a jointly funded partnership with fieldwork conducted by volunteers.

BTO BirdTrack. Data supplied by BirdTrack has been used in the production of the 2019 bird report. BirdTrack provides free online bird recording software for Britain and Ireland and is being developed in a partnership between the BTO, RSPB and Birdwatch Ireland. All Lincolnshire records are available for download by the LBC. Further details can be found at www.birdtrack.net.

BTO Heronry. LBC is grateful to Barrie Wilkinson, our county organiser, for supplying data on breeding Grey Heron and Little Egret in Lincolnshire. This long running dataset is extremely important for the monitoring of herons in Lincolnshire, and we would encourage all LBC members to submit data to this survey.

BTO WeBS. Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) data are used; kindly made available by the WeBS partnership, a joint scheme of the BTO, RSPB and JNCC (the last on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Natural England (NE), Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Northern Ireland) in association with The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT). Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated. Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org).

eBird. Data supplied by eBird has been used in the publication of the 2019 bird report. Further details on how to input your records to eBird can be found at www.ebird.org/. It is important that ebird users check their settings after recording species lists on the mobile app to ensure the site name and location is correctly entered.

Gibraltar Point. Kev Wilson for supplying data from Gibraltar Point NNR and Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory (GPBO), and for answering queries about records.



Grimsby Area Members Group. Bill Sterling for submitting data from the Grimsby Areas Members Group.

Kestrel, Barn Owl and Little Owl Project. Alan Ball and Bob Sheppard for supplying data from their extensive ringing project in Lincolnshire.

LBC Database Team. Our database manager Colin Casey oversees the entry of all records into the database. All records that are submitted on the LBC Forum and via the online records system are collated by Colin and Sheila Jennings. We are grateful to Chris Grimshaw and Carl Annall for helping Colin and Sheila with data input.

LBC website. A major revision of the LBC website (www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk) was made during 2017, and work on it is continuing. The website contains a section summarising the status of all bird species recorded in Lincolnshire (the Lincs List); this section is an ongoing project being coordinated by Phil Hyde.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. LWT including Dave Bromwich, Grahame Hopwood and Barrie Wilkinson.

North Lincolnshire Marsh Harrier Monitoring. Graham Catley for access to his Marsh Harrier monitoring data. For more details contact Graham Catley at gpcatley@gmail.com or via his website at grahamcatley.com

Rare Bird Alert. Data supplied by Rare Bird Alert (RBA) has been used in the production of the 2019 bird report. Further details can be found at <https://www.rarebirdalert.co.uk/>.

Ringing Groups. The Online BTO Ringing Report, the Boston Ringing Association, the Mid-Lincs Ringing Group, Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory (GPBO), Wash Wader Group and the Birkland Ringing Group for submitting their annual ringing reports.

RSPB. For supplying data from their reserves at Frampton Marsh, Freiston Shore, Read's Island and Tetney Marsh. We are especially grateful to Anthony Bentley and Toby Collett for resolving queries concerning the Wash reserves.

Whisby Nature Park. Grahame Hopwood for supplying data from Whisby NP.

Wildlife Recorder. Thanks to Jack Levene who is very generous with his time assisting with programming issues.



2019 Annual Review

- First record of **Iberian Chiffchaff**
- First record of **Isabelline Wheatear**
- First record of **Bobolink**
- Second record of **Black-winged Pratincole**
- Second (or third) record of **Eastern Subalpine Warbler** (records subject to review)
- Sixth record of **Squacco Heron**
- Tenth record of **Arctic Warbler**
- First **Ortolan Bunting** for 27 years

January

The year kicked off in fine style with a roadside **Dusky Warbler** at Huttoft Bank and this bird remained until Feb 3rd. The **Long-billed Dowitcher** at Frampton Marsh from 2018 remained in situ until the May 1st. Two **Waxwings** at Frampton Marsh on New Year's Day were part of a poor showing of this species over the year. The male **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** at Swanpool/Boultham from the 2nd was one of only three birds reported across the county during 2019.

On the 4th one of only five **Siberian Chiffchaffs** reported during the year was at Alkborough and there were two redhead **Smew** at Deeping Lakes; there were only two other records in the first half of the year. An **Iceland Gull** at Middlemarsh Farm had lingered from 2018 and was one of 15 birds noted in 2019. The same day a **Glaucous Gull** at Gibraltar Point was the first of 13 birds during the year.

The only record of **Tundra Bean Goose** in the first half of the year was with **Pink-footed Geese** at Gibraltar Point on the 7th. On the same date a drake **American Wigeon** was noted at Kirkby GP. On the 8th there were 170 **Yellowhammers** at Scamblesby. At Reads Island 17,000 **Golden Plover**





Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* Frampton Marsh Jan 1st 2019 © NEIL SMITH

were noted on the 19th. Small numbers of **Shorelarks** were recorded at sites along the coast with up to 17 birds at Brickyard lane through into April. A count of 2110 **Eider** off Wrangle on the 26th was by far the highest count of the year when six **Long-tailed Ducks** were off Butterwick – also the highest count of the year.

February

The Deeping Lakes **Long-eared Owl** roost peaked at seven birds on the 2nd. On the 4th there were 15 **Water Pipits** at Baston. The fifth county record of **Ring-billed Gull** was an excellent find at Trent Port Wetlands, Marton on the 5th. A **Richard's Pipit** at Alkborough from the 6th and remained into Apr. A **Little Auk** off Gibraltar Point on the 8th was the only sighting in the first half of the year.

At Donna Nook there were five **Hooded Crows** on the 15th – the highest count of the year. **Bewick's Swan** numbers peaked at 17 at Freiston Shore on the 24th. The two **Red-necked Grebes** at Gibraltar Point on the 21st was the only double figure count of the year. Two **Barn Swallows** at Alkborough on the 24th were exceptionally early. A **Green-winged Teal** was at Frampton from the 25th.

March

The month started as February has ended – with a **Green-winged Teal** - this one was at Alkborough on the 3rd. Signs of spring were in the offing with the first returning **Osprey** at Freiston Shore on the 5th on which date the first **Sand Martin** was at Freiston Shore. The first **Northern Wheatears** were noted from the 19th. Three **Garganey** at Alkborough on the 23rd were also the first of the year. Raptors were on the move on the 23rd including 46 **Common Buzzards** over Gibraltar Point. A **Serin** flying south at Gibraltar Point on the 29th was one of six at this site through to Jul. The last day of the month produced an immature female **Goshawk** – as with the 2018 record this was a satellite tracked bird (and just one day earlier in the year than in 2018) – in the south of the county.



Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*
Gibraltar Point Mar 29th 2019
© PAUL NEALE



April

A count of 34 **Cetti's Warblers** at Barton Pits on the 1st was the highest of the year and breeding territories were up over a quarter compared to 2018. On the 16th a flock of nine **Garganey** arrived at Huttoft Pit – the highest count of the year. The next day the first **Cuckoo** of the year was noted at Trent Port, Marton in what proved to be a better year for records of this species than 2018. A **Red-**

rumped Swallow was at Barton Pits on the 17th heightened expectations of rarer spring visitors.

The first **Temminck's Stint** of the year – at Frampton Marsh on the 23rd – was an early record in a reasonable year for the species. Following the first **Turtle Dove** at Frampton on the 25th, the number of probable and possible breeding pairs declined again this year. Also, on the 25th the 27 **Black Terns** noted at Baston was the highest count of the year. A **Hoopoe** added a splash of colour at a Laceby garden on the 26th. A **Blue-headed wagtail** at Toft Newton Reservoir on the 28th was one of three spring records. The month was rounded off nicely with an **Eastern Subalpine Warbler** trapped at Gibraltar Point on the 29th which gave observers an opportunity to catch up with this newly elevated species.

May

The 3rd was a busy day with a **Black Kite** at Alkborough and the first **Nightjar** of the year flushed in the ringing hollow at Gibraltar Point with a **Red-necked Phalarope** noted at the latter site which was one of three May records this year. Next day 293 **Little Terns** were noted at Gibraltar Point with a distinct northward passage during the first half of May; unfortunately, only a single chick was fledged at this site this year. The **Iberian Chiffchaff** singing in the early morning fog near Mill Hill at Gibraltar Point from the 7th was a county first. One or two **Wood Warblers** were at Gibraltar Point from the 10th, the only spring records, and were part of nice arrival of migrants at the site which also included eight **Pied Flycatchers** and five **Common Redstarts**. A **Kentish Plover** was seen from Millennium Ridge at Gibraltar Point on the 14th.

On the 15th a wing-tagged **Montagu's Harrier**, which had been tagged in Germany in 2017, joined a female which had been present since the 1st May. Unfortunately, the birds failed to breed. On the same date two **Dotterel** were noted at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe – the only record of another poor spring. On the 16th a **Stone Curlew** was noted in the Moulton Marsh area and was the first county record since 2014.

A **Golden Oriole** was at Wyberton Roads on the 18th; this bird was followed by singles at Gibraltar Point on the 23rd and Freiston Shore on the 25th. On the 19th the run of interesting shorebird records continued with a **Broad-billed Sandpiper** – the 16th county record – noted at Frampton Marsh. On the same date a fine male **Red-backed Shrike** was in a North Somercotes garden. A late flurry of **Red-rumped Swallows** at Gibraltar Point started with a single on the 24th followed by further records on the 27th and the 29th.

June

A **Nuthatch** at Gibraltar Point on the 1st was an excellent record for this site. A male **Little Bittern** was at North Thoresby on the 4th occasionally showing well for many observers. A moth trapping session at Gibraltar Point was enlivened on the 7th when two early morning **Bee-Eaters** flew south. An elusive singing **Icterine Warbler** inland at Swanpool, Lincoln on the 11th was a superb find.

One of the highlights of the year was the **Black-winged Pratincole** – the second county record – which took up residence at Frampton Marsh from the 18th. An exclusive singing **Marsh Warbler** was at Frampton Marsh from the 20th with a second record from Gibraltar Point on the 28th.

The run of good birds continued when a **Purple Heron** flew over Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the 21st with another at Gibraltar Point on the 24th. These two records were then followed, more accessibly, by one and then two juveniles discovered at Carlton Marshes – an excellent run of what has been a rare bird in the county in recent years. On the 30th some 10,094 **Common Swifts** passed Gibraltar Point. A **Lesser Yellowlegs** at Middlemarsh Farm on the 28th was the first county record since 2016. Across the county **Marsh Harriers** were having another drop in breeding numbers.

July

Continuing its excellent year (and the excellent year for rare herons), Frampton Marsh held a **Squacco Heron** on the 5th, with this bird moving to Freiston Shore next day where many birders caught up with it. On the 7th the pair of **Black-necked Grebes** were seen with two chicks at Frampton Marsh. In the north of the county four confirmed pairs of **Bittern** were noted. The summer plumage **Grey Phalarope** at Langworth on the 17th was truly exceptional, even more so than the **Hawfinch** that flew in off the sea at Chapel Six Marshes the same day. The sixth and final **Serin** of the year at Gibraltar Point was in the East Dunes on the 19th.

The presumed returning adult **Long-billed Dowitcher** was at Frampton Marsh from the 19th, staying into September. Two adult **White-rumped Sandpipers** appeared at Frampton Marsh on the 20th and after moving to Freiston Shore from the 28th, were present until the 9th August. A memorable



Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina* Lincoln Feb 2nd 2019 © CHRIS GRIMSHAW



Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* adult North Somercotes May 19th 2019 © MARK JOHNSON



feature of the second half of the month was the superb influx of **Wood Sandpipers** – high counts included 41 at Freiston Shore, 35 at Gibraltar Point and 34 at Huttoft Pit. A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Freiston Shore on the 24th. A **Roseate Tern** off Chapel Point on the 27th was the first of just four records during 2019. A **Wood Warbler** was at Gibraltar Point on the 28th. The month ended with an incredible 31,350 **Common Swifts** passing south at Gibraltar Point on the 31st.

August

A singing **Common Rosefinch** was near Mill Hill at Gibraltar Point on the 2nd. Also on the 2nd there were 3030 **Avocets** were at Reads Island and 120 **Little Egrets** were at Frampton Marsh on the 4th. On the 5th the second **Kentish Plover** of the year was noted at Gibraltar Point. Frampton Marsh continued another good year for waders with an adult **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** from the 15th. On the 12th a **Goshawk** furtively hunted amongst the dune slack at Gibraltar Point. Continuing the raptor theme on the 19th an adult male **Honey Buzzard** was at Chambers Farm Wood and was followed by another at Raithby cum Maltby on the 29th.

The dunes at Gibraltar Point were alive with **Willow Warblers** on the 20th with 309 noted. A juvenile **Dotterel** was noted at Killingholme from the 22nd and next day the fifth and final record of **Red-necked Phalarope** was seen – this bird at Frampton Marsh. A **Common Rosefinch** was at Crook Bank on the 26th. Passage at Gibraltar Point on the 27th included 3,827 **Sand Martins**. On the 28th there were 187 **Common Whitethroats** at Gibraltar Point with a **Wood Warbler** at Tetney next day the last of a poor year for this species. However, the highlight of the 29th was the **Ortolan Bunting** at Grimsby – incredibly the first county record for 27 years!

September

The second **Hoopoe** of the year – again in a garden – was at Swineshead on the 4th. There were 28 **Spoonbills** at Frampton Marsh on the 7th. The count of 7,000 **Bar-tailed Godwits** at Gibraltar Point on the 13th was the highest of the year. The **Leach's Petrel** off Gibraltar Point on the 16th was one of five autumn records. The only **Pectoral Sandpiper** of the year was noted at Frampton Marsh from the 17th – a poor year for this species. Also on the 17th the first of only four **Long-tailed Skuas** was noted off Gibraltar Point along with the first of four autumn **Sabine's Gulls** and - rarer still – two **Balearic Shearwaters**.

A **Common Rosefinch** was at Gibraltar Point on the 20th and a **Grey Phalarope** was at Toft Newton on the 21st. Next day the first **Yellow-browed Warbler** of the autumn arrived at Gibraltar Point in what proved to be a fairly ordinary year by recent standards for this eastern waif. However, this bird was overshadowed by the county's first **Isabelline Wheatear** on the beach out from Mill Hill at the same site. However, the bird was not conclusively identified until late on the following day.

An **American Golden Plover** was noted at Frampton Marsh from the 22nd. Visible migration included 6,686 **Meadow Pipits** south at Gibraltar Point on the 27th along with 2,190 **Linnets**. The first **Lapland Buntings** of the autumn – three at Gibraltar Point and a single Marshchapel – were also noted on the 27th. A juvenile **Red-footed Falcon** flying south over Mill Hill at Gibraltar Point on the 30th was the third autumn juvenile at this site in the last five years.

October

A good start to the month began with two **Richard's Pipits** which arrived at Gibraltar Point on the 2nd and were followed by three more birds at this location during the month. A **Barred Warbler** was at Tetney on the 3rd and an elusive **Little Bunting** was vocal at Gibraltar Point on the 4th. A **Great Grey Shrike** at Brickyard Lane, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the 5th was overshadowed by an **Arctic Warbler** nearby at Crook Bank. A late **Honey Buzzard** was over Far Ings on the 10th. On the 12th some 607 **Rock Pipits** were noted south at Gibraltar Point when 781 **Chaffinches**, 4,005 **Goldfinches**, 1,530 **Linnets** and 1,689 **Reed Buntings** moved south. On the afternoon of the 15th **Ring Ouzels** started arriving at in the East Dunes at Gibraltar Point and then heading off south – by the end of the day a site record of 54 had been noted. Single **Barred Warblers** were at Donna Nook



on the 15th - along with a *blythi*-type **Lesser Whitethroat** - and at Crook Bank next day. Also, on the 15th **Redwings** arrived in significant numbers with 7,000 in the Huttoft area, 4,258 at Gibraltar Point and 3,000 at Donna Nook. The same arrival produced counts of 410 **Robins** at Gibraltar Point and 200 at Crook Bank. The same evening a brief **Pallas's Warbler** was in the halfway sycamores at Gibraltar Point and was one of five birds at this site during the autumn with two more occurring at Crook Bank. Visible migration along the coast on the 17th included 772 **Skylarks** past Gibraltar Point. Undoubtedly one of the highlights of the year was the superb **Bobolink** at Crook Bank on the 18th. Often elusive amongst the buckthorn many observers did eventually get a decent view. This county first was only the second east coast record in the UK and the first British record since 2012. A **Richard's Pipit** was at Alkborough from the 20th.

Scarce migrants continued to be found with a **Bluethroat** trapped at Gibraltar Point on the 22nd. A **Great-Grey Shrike** was at Frampton Marsh on the 28th. North-easterlies produced five **Black-throated Divers** off Gibraltar Point on the 29th which was the highest count for the year. The same date also produced a late **Wryneck** at the same site – the only record of the year - and the autumn's only **Red-backed Shrike** at Seaview farm. A **Black Guillemot** was seen at Chapel Point on the 30th and nearby a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** was trapped at Anderby Creek and went on to show well occasionally.



Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* Messingham SQ Jun 5th 2019 © SIMON SPAVIN



Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* Gibraltar Point Aug 20th 2019 © PAUL NEALE



November

On the 3rd there were 585 **Siskins** at Gibraltar Point. A showy **Barred Warbler** was in the Plantation at Gibraltar Point on the 4th when 55 **Brambling** were noted at Broughton. The 949 **Kittiwakes** off Huttoft on the 5th was the highest count of the year. On the same date there were 42 **Pomarine Skuas** off Sutton on Sea with 27 off Gibraltar Point. Later in the month an adult joined the Donna Nook seal colony and remained in Dec.

An exceptional 24 **Tundra Bean Geese** flew over Covenham Reservoir on the 6th. On the 7th a **Rough-legged Buzzard** appeared at Gibraltar Point with further sightings there next day and on the 13th – the only records of 2019. On the 8th an **Olive-backed Pipit** showed briefly to four fortunate observers at Gibraltar Point. The count of 10,505 **Black-tailed Godwits** at Freiston Shore on the 16th represented a British record count. Also, on the 16th a **Dusky Warbler** was found at Anderby – by the same observer who found the other 2019 record on the Jan 1st! On the 18th a **Grey Phalarope** was off Gibraltar Point. On the 24th at Gibraltar Point the fifth and final **Pallas's Warbler** of the autumn at this site flitted its way around the Plantation.

December

A **Ring Ouzel** at Seaview farm on the 3rd remained until the 29th. Six **Common Cranes** at Wroot on the 5th was the highest count of the year. A **Little Bunting** found at Middlemarsh on the 7th was the county's 20th record and just reward for the local observer. A drake **Ring-necked Duck** was at Baston GP from the 27th. A dozen **Water Pipits** were at Alborough Flats on New Year's Eve.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*
Wyberton Dec 21st 2019
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Systematic List 2019

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Abbreviations used in the report

BB	British Birds
BBRC	British Birds Rarities Committee
BBS	Breeding Birds Survey
BoCC	Birds of Conservation Concern
BOU	British Ornithologists' Union
BOURC	British Ornithologists' Union Record Committee
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CP	Country Park
GC	Golf Course
GP	Gravel Pit(s)
GPBO	Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory
GWCT	Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust
IOC	International Ornithological Congress
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Council
LBC	Lincolnshire Bird Club
LBRC	Lincolnshire Birds Records Committee
LWT	Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NP	Nature Park
NR	Nature Reserve
RBBP	Rare Breeding Birds Panel
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SQ	Sand Quarry
STW	Sewage Treatment Works
WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
WWT	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

References

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JNCC (2016) Seabird Population Trends and Causes of Change: 1986-2015 Report. Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Updated September 2016. <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/seabird-population-trends-and-causes-of-change-1986-2015-report-category/>

Wintering waterbirds thresholds. Frost, T., Austin, G., Hearn, R. *et al.* (2019). Population estimates of wintering waterbirds in Great Britain. *British Birds* 112: 130-145.

Wetlands Bird Survey Report 2018/19. Frost, T.M., Calbrade, N.A., Birtles, G.A., Mellan, H.J., Hall, C., Robinson, A.E., Wotton, S.R., Balmer, D.E. & Austin, G.E. 2020. Waterbirds in the UK 2018/19: The Wetland Bird Survey. BTO, RSPB and JNCC, in association with WWT. British Trust for Ornithology, Thetford

Bird names used in this report

From 1 January 2018 the BOU voted to adopt the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) World Bird List. The LBC followed this recommendation in full and first used the new taxonomy in its 2017



annual report. There has been much debate about the vernacular names most familiar to British birders and the BOURC decided to use those in current usage within Britain. The vernacular names differ from those used by IOC even though the scientific names are as the IOC recommend. **However, note that the species order does follow IOC.** In the LBC reports there has been some variation in the usage of common names and following discussion by the LBC Committee it was decided to follow the BOURC. So in this LBC report and others in the future, 'Eurasian Teal' and 'Northern Shoveler' become plain 'Teal' and 'Shoveler' and so on. A full discussion of this issue can be found at <https://www.bou.org.uk/british-list/bird-names/>.

Tables

Tables are provided to convey information in a minimum of space. The sites included vary between species and are selected to include areas holding significant numbers (sometimes defined in the text), usually with counts in several or many months. The figures shown are the highest counts for each month.

WeBS data

For waterfowl (wildfowl, waders and other waterbirds), tables use data from the LBC database plus that from GPBO and RSPB Reserves, to whom we are grateful for sharing this information. In addition, WeBS data are used, kindly made available by the WeBS partnership, a joint scheme of the BTO, and JNCC (the last on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland) in association with the WWT. Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated. Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org). The tables for some species also give the sums of Lincolnshire WeBS sector totals for the Humber (which extends to Mablethorpe) and The Wash. WeBS counts extend systematic coverage away from more intensively watched areas but are, in most cases, made on a single date near the middle of the month, and thus may miss higher counts made on other dates. Note that there may occasionally be overlap between sites in the table; we try to avoid it, but occasionally it is preferable to omitting important data. An example of this concerns the Witham Mouth WeBS sector, which includes part of Freiston Shore RSPB reserve and is used by birds from both Freiston and Frampton reserves.

WeBS thresholds for international or national (Great Britain) importance are given for all species where numbers approach, match or exceed one or more thresholds. International importance signifies that 1% of the birds of a particular flyway or which regularly use a site during their annual cycle (in Frost, T., Austin, G., Hearn, R. et al. (2019). *Population estimates of wintering waterbirds in Great Britain*. *British Birds* 112: 130-145).

BBS data

The BTO kindly supplies the data from the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) which it runs, and jointly funds, with the JNCC (on behalf of the statutory bodies listed above) and the RSPB. Each year, we choose a few species to illustrate population trends in Lincolnshire with comparable data for the East Midlands region (which includes most of Lincolnshire) and for England as a whole. In most cases, we use the smoothed indices for East Midlands and England, so as to draw attention to long-term trends rather than to year-on-year changes. Because the Lincolnshire data are unsmoothed, and because of the relatively small sample size (about 80 out of over 3,500 squares are in the county), the lines showing Lincolnshire trends tend to be more variable. Lincolnshire indices are available for only a limited number of species, for which adequate county data are available. We also show a few charts illustrating changes in numbers counted on BBS squares for other, less common, species. It should be stressed that these are less reliable as guides to population trends than the indices calculated by the BTO, but they may provide an indication of how species are faring. They show the average number



of individuals of a species counted in each BBS square in the county, and the percentage of squares in which that species occurred each year. Additional BBS coverage is desirable and anyone wishing to help with this valuable and straightforward survey should contact their local BTO representative (see inside front cover) or visit the BTO website.

Ring recovery data

A selection of the more interesting recoveries or sightings of ringed birds affecting Lincolnshire are often included with the species entries. These should be fairly self-explanatory, with the recovery data included in either a summary table or as additional comments in the text. A summary of recoveries is also presented in a later section.

Rare and scarce species

Where appropriate the following abbreviations are used in a species' strapline:

LBRC – Lincolnshire Birds Records Committee. Inserted after a species name indicates it is rare or scarce in Lincolnshire. Description and/or photograph required for consideration by the LBRC.

BBRC – British Birds Rarities Committee. Inserted after a species name indicates it is a national rarity: Description and/or photograph required for submissions to this committee. Records in this category are not published in the annual report or input to the database if they have not been accepted by BBRC.

RBBP – Rare Breeding Birds Panel, which monitors nationally scarce and rare breeding species. Any breeding season sighting in suitable habitat should be reported to the RBBP representative as soon as possible.

Many reports of rare and scarce species are submitted each year without documentation, in some cases even without a named observer. This poses difficulties, because we cannot be certain that mistakes have not been made, something that is important for understanding of species' status now and, even more so, in the future when patterns of occurrence are reviewed and analysed. However, because of the numbers of records now coming without supporting details, we continue to take a pragmatic approach for this report. Records have been included in the systematic list if the LBRC was confident that a mistake was unlikely, taking into account the experience of observers, the circumstances of the sighting and any verbal information received, and how the record fits into the known pattern of occurrence of the species. Information is actively sought by LBRC when possible. This approach will be kept under active review for future reports. If a significant record is missing from the report and documentation is available, please let the editorial team know. Records, including those from national information services, which have no named observer, may often be excluded. Please note that this can apply to reports of commoner species that are out of season or in atypical locations, as well as to LBRC species.

Website

The recently revised LBC website includes a section describing the status of species in the county. Brief summaries are available to all but only LBC members can see more detailed information (please join!). Population trends and seasonal patterns of occurrence are described, with detailed listing of the records of the rarest species. This can be found at:

<https://lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/information/the-lincs-list>

Information on how to submit records to LBC are provided at:

<https://lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/sightings>

Conservation status

The species header indicates whether the species/sub-species is in the Red, Amber or Green List of the BOCC4 (britishbirds.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/BoCC4.pdf). Those in the 'Red List' are 'Globally Threatened'. Those in the 'Amber List' are those with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe and those on the 'Green List' are those that don't meet the criteria for inclusion in the Red or Green Lists (see BoCC4 for further definition of these terms).



Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

A common species of arable farmland, with a resident population augmented each year by releases for shooting.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 587 observer sightings reported from 100 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8.3	10.7	12.8	17.7	19.3	9.7	3.6	3.1	4.3	5.1	3.1	2.4

The highest count for the year was 105 at Marton on Oct 12th. It is unclear whether these were wild or released birds, but the date suggests the latter. According to the RSPB, some 10 million birds of this species are released in the UK annually and, if Lincolnshire's share is 3% (in line with land area) that is 300,000 birds. This swamps the local population that the LBC Atlas (2020) put at 4,000-8,000 pairs in the late 1980s (although this was subsequently halved per the BBS index). The species was found in 46% of BBS squares (2018, 51%) with an average of 2.8 birds per occupied square (2018, 2.3%).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix* ■

Common but declining resident, especially in the southern half of the county. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 52 at Sturton by Stow on Dec 2nd. Recorded in all months of the year there were 481 observer sightings from 97 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8.1	10.2	7.5	12.3	16.4	6.4	4.2	8.5	8.7	7.3	5	5.4

The table below shows the top sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 30 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sturton by Stow	9	14	6	6	5	9	14	26	40	46	36	52
Tetney	7	26	-	5	4	4	3	5	11	23	22	15
Toft next Newton	14	8	2	5	3	5	1	7	8	17	6	-
Baumber	13	-	-	-	-	-	2	11	11	7	18	11
Marton	4	-	2	-	2	2	-	12	7	5	3	14
Woodhall Spa	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	4	4	2	2	-	2	-	1	8	8	7
Normanby	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	2	8	1	11	3
Scunthorpe	-	-	2	2	-	-	14	-	12	-	-	-

Grey Partridge was recorded in 26% of BBS squares (2018, 25%) with an average of 1.7 birds per occupied square (2018, 2.5/sq.). It is the 45th most widespread species in Lincolnshire (2018 46th) but only the 64th most frequently encountered breeding bird. With an average clutch size of 14-15 eggs, Grey Partridge has the largest clutch size of any bird species in Britain so when breeding conditions are favourable large coveys can occur. However, in Sep 2019 GWCT reported that 2019 was the poorest season since 2012 across England and advised shooters not to shoot this species if numbers were below 20 per 100 ha or if they fell to this level as the shooting season progressed. Some estates in Lincolnshire do not shoot Grey Partridges at all and they are to be commended for their restraint. Mel Thorn, who had the high count of 52 on a 200ha farm at Sturton by Stow on Dec 2nd, reports he walked 14km over eight hours to reach that total which included two coveys of 14 birds and three of six to 10. The farm has no shooting and there had been very little disturbance from farming activity in the previous quarter because of adverse wet conditions. This snippet suggests that, as the highest count reported of around 25 per 100 ha is only just over the shooting threshold, there should be very little shooting of Grey Partridges in Lincolnshire.



Quail *Coturnix coturnix* ■

Scarce summer visitor Apr-Sep, rare in winter. Probably much under-recorded. Amber List. RBBP

The highest count for the year was four at Withcall on Jul 18th. Recorded in five months of the year. There were 28 observer sightings recorded from 15 sites, up from eight records from four sites in 2018. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
21.4	21.4	42.9	10.7	0	3.6

A much better year for Quail than the exceptionally poor year of 2018. Of the 28 records received, six related to migrant birds and 22 to birds which probably or possibly bred. The first arrivals were at Terrington Fen and Donna Nook on May 25th, there having been no reports of coastal migrants in 2018. Night migrants flying over calling were reported from Boston on Jun 8th and Gibraltar Point on Jun 26th. Other birds reported as migrants from Gibraltar Point were recorded on Jul 1st and coming in off the sea on Jul 11th. The latest report of the year also came from there on Oct 5th.

In the breeding category there was also a much better showing. There was a total of 16 singing birds of which 13 probably bred and three possibly bred. For the purposes of record classification birds singing inland are treated as possibly breeding. If there is more than one bird on one occasion, or two or more reports of a single singing bird one week apart, it is treated as probably breeding. There was one bird possibly breeding which was not heard to sing. It was flushed by a Montague's Harrier in possible breeding habitat on the Wolds near Barton upon Humber. In fact, the majority of probable/possible breeders came from the Wolds with four at Withcall during Jul-Aug, one at Stenigot, three at Benniworth and one at Cabourne Parva. Elsewhere in the Fens at Thurlby Fen there were six reports of up to two singing males from May 26th-Jul 31st and a possible breeder at Heckington Fen on Jul 24th. On the coast potential breeders were at Tetney Marsh, Donna Nook and Frampton Marsh. In total there were 13 probable breeders and four possible breeders. Confirmed breeding is an extremely rare occurrence for Quail in Lincolnshire and observers are challenged to attempt to establish such an event, if they are able to do so without disturbing breeding birds.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Very common feral resident: huge numbers released for shooting annually.

The highest count for the year was 40 at Stickney on Sep 7th, although it is difficult to be certain whether these were wild, or birds released for shooting. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 2,825 observer sightings from 193 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8.6	7.9	9.1	16.8	15	7.9	4.9	3.9	5.8	6.9	6.5	6.6

The species was found in 93% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 88%) with an average of 5.2 birds per occupied square (2018, 5.4). It was the 5th most widespread species in the county (2018, 9th). Most records arise in Apr-May when adult males are displaying, or do some birders not bother to count them from Jul-Aug onwards when captive bred birds are released for shooting? It is reported that 47 million Pheasants are released for shooting in the UK each year. If Lincolnshire has a 3% share (in proportion to its land area) that is 1.5 million birds, of which it is said only 25% are shot. The impact this has on our native wildlife and ecosystems is unknown. The recent success of Wild Justice in forcing DEFRA to review the question of licencing and banning Pheasant releases near SSSI's may impact as much as 10% of the countryside. It remains to be seen what impact will be felt in Lincolnshire.



Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* ■

Winter visitor. Three distinct races occur. Amber List (nominate and *hrota*).

Black Brant *B.b.nigricans*

Former vagrant, first seen in 1982 with just three records to 1991. Very scarce but annual in small numbers, with Dark-bellied flocks. **LBRC**

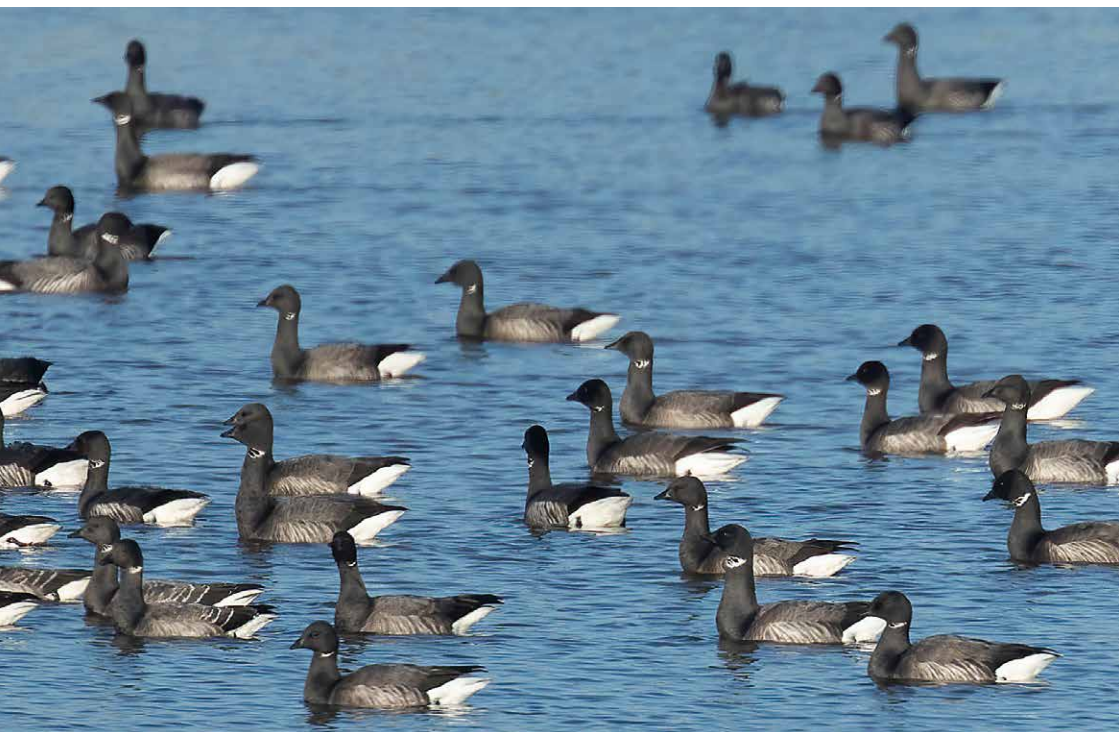
An adult was back at Donna Nook on Jan 11th (CA et al) and seen again on Jan 15th (RL). Presumably the same bird was at Horseshoe Point on May 15th (HB) pre-departure with a flock of 150 Dark-bellied Brent. In the autumn, possibly the same adult was at Donna Nook on Oct 12th (CA) and later at Horseshoe Point on Nov 11th (CA). What was presumed to be a different adult was at Gibraltar Point on Dec 7th and 27th (GPBO).

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B.b. bernicla* ■

Very common coastal winter visitor Sep-May, mainly to The Wash and outer Humber. Scarce but regular in summer, especially on The Wash. Occasional inland. Threshold for international importance 2,100; for national importance 980. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was 5,000 at Frampton Marsh on Feb 21st. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 1,101 observer sightings from 42 sites. The table shows all sites where counts exceeded the WeBS threshold for national importance in at least one month. All of these are sites on the Humber or The Wash.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	4000	5000	2100	2000	1210	4	10	50	30	2000	2500	5000
Freiston Shore	1200	1000	520	600	225	1	-	-	62	2700	280	1200
Witham Mouth	1200	350	400	-	30	1	-	1	1	2000	1500	2200
Donna Nook	800	700	10	50	-	-	-	-	-	600	1000	1000
Gibraltar Point	500	377	317	164	126	5	9	7	23	695	518	731



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tetney	550	2	120	133	94	2	1	1	73	650	900	500
Terrington	-	-	1620	795	-	5	2	-	-	150	329	-
Welland Marsh	900	-	-	900	300	-	-	-	-	120	-	350
Wainfleet	904	637	255	17	17	-	-	-	-	-	535	-
Kirton Marsh	1200	-	51	800	-	-	-	-	-	130	-	120
Friskney	1412	517	231	35	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grainthorpe	96	84	529	63	-	-	-	-	-	800	488	34
Saltfleet	376	600	27	1	-	-	-	1	-	148	207	550
Butterwick	336	208	380	37	-	15	-	-	-	690	70	72
Benington	210	280	130	220	180	-	-	-	-	-	300	200
Wrangle	1020	-	270	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

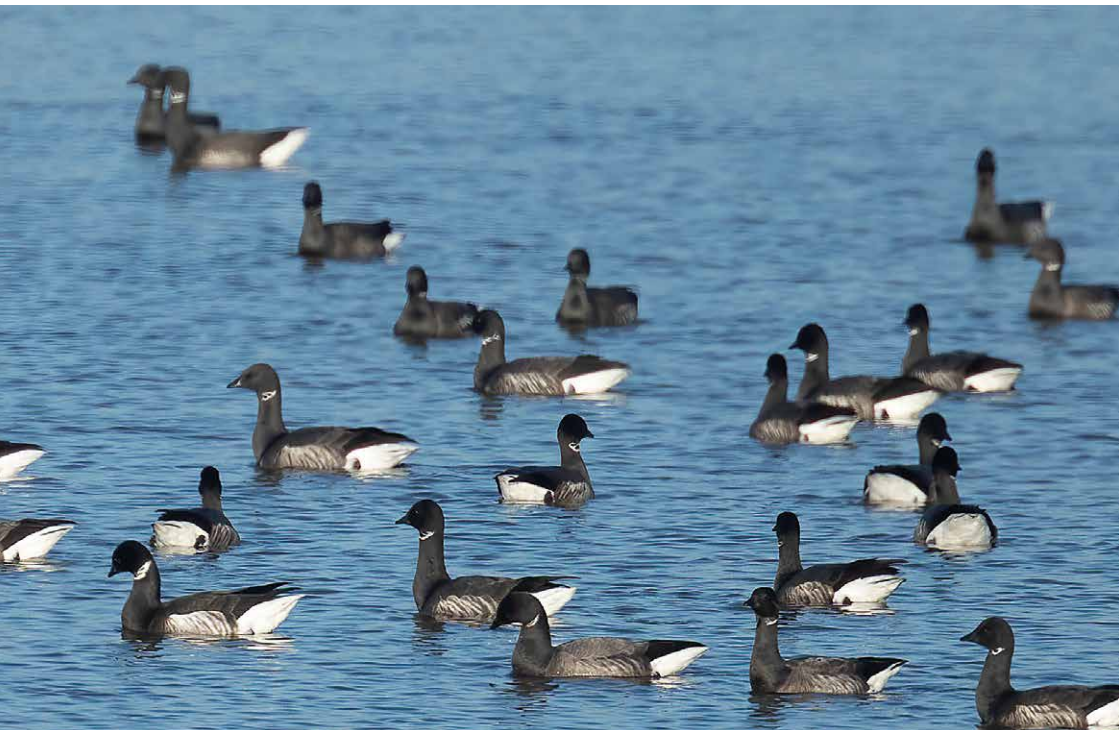
Brent are very occasional inland visitors. Singles were seen at Marston STW on Feb 19th, the first record for that site, and at Toft Newton Reservoir on Oct 23rd.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *B.b.hrota* ■

Scarce coastal winter visitor, in variable numbers. Threshold for international importance 100 (Svalbard population) and 400 (Nearctic population); national importance 34 (Svalbard) and 16 (Nearctic). Amber List.

The highest count for the year was five at Kirton Marsh on Jan 2nd. Recorded in nine months of the year, there were 60 observer records coming from six sites. Two groups of Pale-bellied Brent winter in the British Isles. The group from Canada winters mainly in Ireland while that from Svalbard winters in Denmark and Britain, largely around Lindisfarne. In Lincolnshire and elsewhere on the east coast it remains a scarce winter visitor except in years with severe winter weather in Denmark which pushes them westward.

Dark-bellied Brent Geese *Branta bernicla bernicla* and **Black Brant** *B. b. nigricans* Donna Nook Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY





Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3	2	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Freiston Shore	1	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Frampton Marsh	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Kirton Marsh	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Donna Nook	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Common resident introduced from North America in the 18th and 19th centuries. The taxonomic status of Canada geese has recently changed with Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* and Cackling Goose *B. hutchinsii* now being recognised as two distinct species. Only Canada Goose occurs as a feral resident in Britain.

The highest count for the year was 804 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 5th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 2,172 observer sightings recorded from 90 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	50	37	73	22	53	69	82	419	576	804	400	234
Frampton Marsh	350	50	50	40	50	40	66	200	610	200	250	32
Reads Island	-	272	60	31	76	120	500	300	6	21	-	5
Saltfleetby	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	134	588	50	152	200
Theddlethorpe												
Middlemarsh Farm	17	100	50	30	20	10	9	200	37	300	10	25
Freiston Shore	200	5	2	1	-	-	-	5	1	1	340	124
Covenham	16	10	12	-	2	7	23	9	236	297	26	-
Reservoir												
Saltfleet	1	180	-	-	-	-	-	180	90	175	-	-
Saltfleetby St	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	250
Clement												
Whisby NP	8	24	7	15	14	22	60	108	126	39	1	14

The table shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 400 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The only other count of more than 300 was one of exactly 300 at Grimsthorpe on Dec 15th. The highest total monthly count across all sites in Lincs was 2,749 in Sep. The species was found in 8% of BBS squares (2018 18%) with an average of 12.3 birds per occupied square (2018 3.3).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* ■

Fairly common localised feral population. Has bred as a feral bird since the late 1980s, with a large population established on the Humber (most nesting in Yorkshire). Wild birds are scarce but erratic winter visitors, mainly to the coast. Amber list.

The highest count for the year was 1,960 at Alkborough Mar 13th. Birds are present in all months of the year with 329 observer sightings from 20 sites. Those having at least one double-figure count are tabulated:

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough	220	1150	1960	1	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
Cleethorpes	45	121	80	21	24	31	106	40	50	108	120	119
Whitton	350	-	66	66	-	26	-	8	-	-	-	17
Tetney	-	60	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	3	-	-



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	3	6	5	7	8	7	-	2	2	20	-	2
Chapel St Leonards	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Humberston	-	5	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anderby	24	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Freiston Shore	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
Barton Pits	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9

The mobile feral flock on the Humber regularly visits pastures at Alkborough but nests at Whitton Sand (Yorks.) hence the low numbers through the summer. The other feral flock frequenting the Buck Beck area in Cleethorpes are resident throughout the year; six goslings were recorded there in Jun.

In other areas it is still a fairly scarce bird. A flock of 24 were at Anderby Creek on Jan 14th and 45 flew high north over Chapel Observatory on Jan 15th. Presumed feral birds were present throughout the year in the Frampton-Freiston area with up to eight birds; 20 were present on Oct 29th increasing to 25 at Freiston Dec 28th, assumed to be the same mobile flock. Small numbers were seen elsewhere on the Wash with 10 at Sutton Bridge on Feb 18th. Singles were recorded inland at Branston (Feb-Mar), Tattershall Thorpe (May-Jun) and Ruskington (Dec). There was no real evidence that any of these resulted from movements of wild birds.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Very scarce. Most if not all are assumed to come from feral stock in the Netherlands. RBBP

First of the year was one at Middlemarsh Farm on Feb 2nd. The long-staying individual at Cleethorpes boating lake was seen again on Jun 12th, Jul 18th and Jul 30th. Another was at Manby Wetlands Jul 29th-30th and on August 3rd, 4th and 18th. Given the two records on Jul 30th at different sites, at least two birds were involved. The record at Middlemarsh might have been either of these two, or a third individual.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* ■

The nominate form is a fairly common but localised feral resident and has bred since the late 1980s, with a widespread population established throughout the county. Wild birds from the Scottish population are likely to be scarce but erratic winter visitors mainly to the coast but are difficult to detect. Icelandic and northern European/Russian birds may also occur but are likewise difficult to detect. Amber list (nominate form).

The highest count for the year was 852 at East Halton on Aug 31st. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 3243 observer sightings recorded during the year from 138 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	350	150	150	25	40	40	50	254	600	700	400	217
Baston	240	220	201	105	35	553		400	300	4	505	340
Tattershall Thorpe	120	97	70	48	28	182	189	72	462	333	388	500
Covenham Reservoir	280	44	44	6	19	7	139	194	483	332	458	168
Kirkby on Bain	170	125	80	70	60	350	110	200	310	350	210	60
Manby Wetlands	10	354		1	2	1	220	630	706	81	12	1
East Halton	76	38	1	23	48		56	852	622	113	95	30
Alkborough Flats	656	35	38	43	60	44	480	101	110	185		20
Branston	320	300	200	15	8	1	5		130	134	183	198
Cleethorpes	160	60	95	71	76	275	60	30	49	200	122	169

The table above shows the top 10 sites holding annual accumulated counts of more than 1,365 birds ranked from highest to lowest. The only other count of 500 or more birds was 650 at Langtoft on Jan 20th. The highest monthly total across all sites was 6,538 in Sep. The species was found in 41% of BBS squares (2018 41%) with an average of 5.8 birds per occupied square (2018 5.0).



Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* ■

Rare winter visitor with occasional larger influxes. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 520; for national importance: 2. **LBRC**

No records in 2019.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* ■

Very common winter visitor Sep-Apr, mainly to the Humber and The Wash, but many coastal and inland movements. A few injured birds remain in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 5,400; for national importance: 5,100.

The highest count for the year was 7,000 at Reads Island on Oct 3rd. Recorded in 11 months of the year there were 1,020 observer sightings coming from 97 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3490	700	20	11	2	2	-	-	2837	3905	4053	2340
Goxhill	2500	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	2241	2200	3600
Reads Island	1200	1000	-	11	-	-	-	-	900	7000	70	110
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	4120	2000	20	-	-	-	-	-	300	1190	100	1000
Bonby	4000	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2100	-	1000
Wingland Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7000	-	-
Frampton Marsh	200	600	2	1	5	-	-	1	50	3000	1500	900
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	3000	2500	200
East Halton	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	119	2500	2200	-
Frithville	-	650	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	1000	1300	100

The top 10 sites in terms of cumulative monthly peak counts are tabulated. Read's Island on the Humber and Wingland Marsh at Sutton Bridge both attracted the highest count of the year of 7,000, with other sites on the Humber and The Wash also seeing flocks of 2,000-4,000 or more. Movements of these geese were regularly noted at a considerable number of inland sites, presumably as birds moved between roosting and feeding areas, at other times disturbed by shoots. Mostly these were sites in the Wolds to the south of the Humber such as the Bonby/Elsham/Wressle area and over the fens and other inland sites in the centre and south of the county in the Lincoln area, Ruskington, Frithville, East Keal, Stickford among others. Regular sightings of skeins numbering up to 1,500 birds were reported. No records of colour-ringed or neck-collared birds were received.

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* ■

Scarce winter visitor, mainly coastal, in variable numbers. Amber List. Threshold for national importance: 3. **LBRC**

A poor year for this species with just a single recorded in the first quarter on Jan 7th, associating with Pink-footed Geese at Gibraltar Point. In the last quarter all records occurred in Nov-Dec with the first an exceptional flock of 24 on Nov 6th which came in from the north-east at Covenham Reservoir, circled several times, and headed off to the west. Thereafter two were seen on The Wash on fields between Gibraltar Point and Wainfleet marsh on several dates between Nov 29th- Dec 2nd. Inland two were at Crowland on Dec 1st, and presumably the same two at Holbeach St John's Dec 3rd. Finally, two were at Donna Nook on Dec 17th.

The pattern in the five years to 2019 has been of small numbers, with occasional flocks of 10 or more. In 2017 a mobile flock of 10 or more were present along the Humber Bank in what was an exceptional year for the species in the county. Most are usually coastal with a few penetrating as far as The Wash, usually at Gibraltar Point.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *A. a. albifrons* ■

Scarce winter visitor Sep-Apr. Northern Eurasia. Threshold for international importance: 12,000; for national importance: 21.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	7	8	-	-	-	20	2
Baston	-	15	13	-	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	17	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	3
Wainfleet	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-
Worlaby (Brigg)	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Saltfleetby St Clement	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
East Halton	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Goxhill	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Tattershall Thorpe	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
West Halton	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Eurasian White-fronted Goose

A. a. albifrons Gibraltar Point

Mar 17th 2019

© PAUL NEALE



Recorded in six months of the year there were 64 observer sightings from 14 sites all of which are tabulated (note truncated table). The species remains a scarce winter visitor prone to influxes following severe weather in the near continent. The first of the year was one at RAF Woodhall on Jan 10th followed by other single birds at West Halton (Jan 17th) and Gibraltar Point (Jan 30th). A few more arrived in Feb with 13 at Baston Feb 1st and 15 Feb 2nd, and a maximum of seven at Gibraltar Point Feb 6th. The flock at Baston remained until Mar 4th and that at Gibraltar Point until Mar 19th. In the last quarter of the year the first returning birds were 17 at Frampton Marsh on Oct 28th with an arrival across the county Nov 21st-28th. These included the highest count of the year, 20 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 21st, and on the same date two families totalling eight birds were at Worlaby Carrs. Covenham Reservoir had one to two on Nov 21st-22nd and at Anderby Creek five were present on the 22nd. Elsewhere, all on Nov 24th birds were at Saltfleet St Clement (3), Goxhill Marsh (2), East Halton Skitter (2), Freiston Shore (19) and Gibraltar Point (4). Sixteen remained at Freiston Shore until Nov 28th and most birds had left the county by Dec when there were just two reports from Gibraltar Point on Dec 16th (2) and Alkborough Flats on Dec 30th (3), the last of the year.



Greenland White-fronted Goose *A. a. flavirostris* ■

Rare winter visitor. Greenland. Threshold for international importance: 190 (flavirostris); for national importance: 120. **LBRC**

No records of this scarce subspecies were received in 2019.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* ■

Fairly common resident and partial migrant. Amber List. Threshold for international and national importance: 500.

The highest count for the year was 223 at Deeping St James on May 18th. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 3577 observer sightings recorded during the year from 137 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cowbit	81	154	165	166	76	-	-	-	123	75	145	176
Deeping St James	17	44	15	75	223	160	170	130	144	15	80	13
Branston Booths	142	46	56	78	-	2	-	-	-	62	75	75
Crowland	120	13	64	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	175
Norton Disney	7	52	-	7	35	31	-	36	77	81	43	29
Frampton Marsh	20	28	17	34	47	54	50	40	36	30	7	15
Kirkby on Bain	35	20	16	16	21	42	50	50	39	16	14	14
Bardney	60	40	57	12	13	32	6	13	3	1	10	7
Tattershall Thorpe	6	14	26	30	49	20	16	22	17	15	10	20
Baston	7	43	47	15	21	25	-	12	21	3	6	41

The table above shows the top 10 sites holding annual accumulated counts of more than 240 birds ranked from highest to lowest. The only other count of 100 or more birds was 188 at Fosdyke on Apr 27th. The highest monthly total across all sites was 1,146 in April. The species was found in 20% of BBS squares (2018 23%) with an average of 5.6 birds per occupied square (2018 2.6).

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* ■

Scarce passage migrant and very scarce winter visitor, mainly Oct-Mar, exceptional in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance 220; for national importance: 44.

The highest count for the year was 17 at Freiston Shore on Feb 24th. The species was recorded in five months of the year with 124 observer sightings from 14 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
59.7	35.5	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.2	0.8

Birds were reported from 11 sites in Jan with one to five present at Freiston Shore, Crowland, Wainfleet, Gibraltar Point, Deeping St Nicholas, Kirton Marsh, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe, Huttoft and Cowbit. A flock of eight was at Wroot on Jan 10th and 10 at Frampton Marsh on Jan 3rd. Apart from singles at Baston Fen and Bourne Fen in Feb, and five at Deeping St Nicholas on Feb 1st, the remaining winterers were concentrated around The Wash. Up to six were at Frampton Marsh until Feb 23rd and a passage flock of 17 were at Freiston Shore on Feb 24th. A family flock of five remained at Gibraltar Point-Wainfleet Marsh until Feb 25th. The last bird of the first quarter was a single at Covenham Reservoir on Mar 24th.

Returning birds in the autumn were few and far between with the first being two birds at Frampton Marsh on Nov 17th and Freiston Shore Nov 19th. A flock of 10 at Crowland on Dec 1st was the only other record of the last quarter of the year.



Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* Frampton Marsh Jan 20th 2019 © NEIL SMITH

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* ■

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, with a notable increase since the late 1990s. Occurs mainly Oct-Apr, exceptional in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 340; for national importance: 160.

Whooper Swans were recorded in 10 months of the year with 671 observer sightings from 82 sites, the bulk between Oct-Mar. There was some variability between observers' counts on the same dates at the same sites, but there were records of more than 100 birds in 32 flocks from 10 areas. Ten of these counts came from Frampton Marsh, eight from Huttoft, five from Gibraltar Point and two each from Wyberton Roads and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe. The table below shows the main wintering and some of the passage sites (no counts Jul-Aug).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	95	120	205	-	1	-	9	48	138	147
Gibraltar Point	90	42	46	12	-	-	-	397	108	13
Huttoft	202	-	10	-	-	-	-	87	46	28
Anderby	180	-	10	-	-	-	-	51	25	19
Marton	-	10	180	-	1	-	-	1	15	8
Donna Nook	11	-	-	2	1	1	-	30	50	47
Freiston Shore	1	8	50	-	-	-	-	16	18	5
East Halton	1		42	-	-	-	-	50	2	1
Alkborough		1	29	-	-	-	11	23	-	6
Boultham Mere	3	6	1	-	-	-	-	18	-	6
Whisby NP		4	12	8	1	-	1	-	-	-

The flocks recorded in winter 2018 remained into 2019 with 12 counts of 100-202 from Huttoft, Anderby and the Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe areas. Although numbers began to decline in Feb there were still 14 counts of more than 50 and two of more than 100 at Frampton Marsh and nearby fields at Wyberton Roads.



On Mar 19th, 205 were still at Frampton Marsh and another 200 went north over Branston. More quickly went north during Mar with a rapid drop-off at key sites such as Frampton Marsh with just seven there on Mar 29th. There were notable counts at many sites as birds passed through and by Apr few remained. Late birds included seven at Witham Mouth on May 23rd, three at Millennium Green on Jun 1st, one at Donna Nook Jun 2nd and another there Jun 6th.

The first returning birds of the autumn were 11 at Alkborough Flats on Sep 18th. A trickle of passage birds was observed in various locations in the rest of the month. Eighty at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd heralded a number of good counts culminating in the highest count of the year, 397, going south over Gibraltar Point on the 29th; 30% were estimated to be 1CY birds. The reserve also had three other counts of more than 100 during the month. In November there were 11 counts of 50-138 birds, all from coastal locations. Flocks of more than 100 were seen three times at Frampton Marsh and once in fields at Wyberton Roads.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

A scarce feral resident. Numbers concentrated in the Tattershall/Kirkby on Bain area, but recent increases have seen a spread of records, including breeding, more widely across the county.

The highest count for the year was 32 at both RAF Woodhall on Sep 15th and Kirkby on Bain on Dec 9th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 429 observer sightings from 31 sites, two fewer than in 2018. The top 10 sites with the highest cumulative sightings during the year are tabulated below.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tattershall Thorpe	2	2	4	14	16	-	10	15	32	19	3	1
Kirkby on Bain	5	3	6	12	8	11	16	3	2	7	-	32
Woodhall Spa	15	3	5	2	2	-	-	11	12	2	-	2
Whisby NP	2	2	2	4	2	5	9	9	7	2	2	-
Messingham	2	8	4	2	5	7	6	3	3	2	3	-
Frampton Marsh	4	3	-	-	-	2	2	3	2	2	9	-
Deeping St James	4	1	2	3	2	-	2	3	3	2	2	2
Tattershall	1	3	3	3	1	2	4	1	2	2	-	2
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	4	2	2	2	-	11	-	-	-
North Hykeham	2	2	2	-	2	2	1	1	-	2	-	2

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* Frampton Marsh Nov 13th 2019 © STEVE NESBITT



Other sites with less regular counts but significant numbers included Covenham Reservoir eight on Dec 12th, Tunman Wood (Thorpe on the Hill) seven May 5th, West Common, Lincoln seven over Oct 8th and Cleethorpes six on Nov 2nd. Confirmed breeding occurred at Kirkby on Bain, Messingham SQ, and RAF Woodhall, where a pair with 12 goslings were present on Apr 24th, reduced to nine on May 12th. The post-breeding flock on Sep 15th numbered 32.

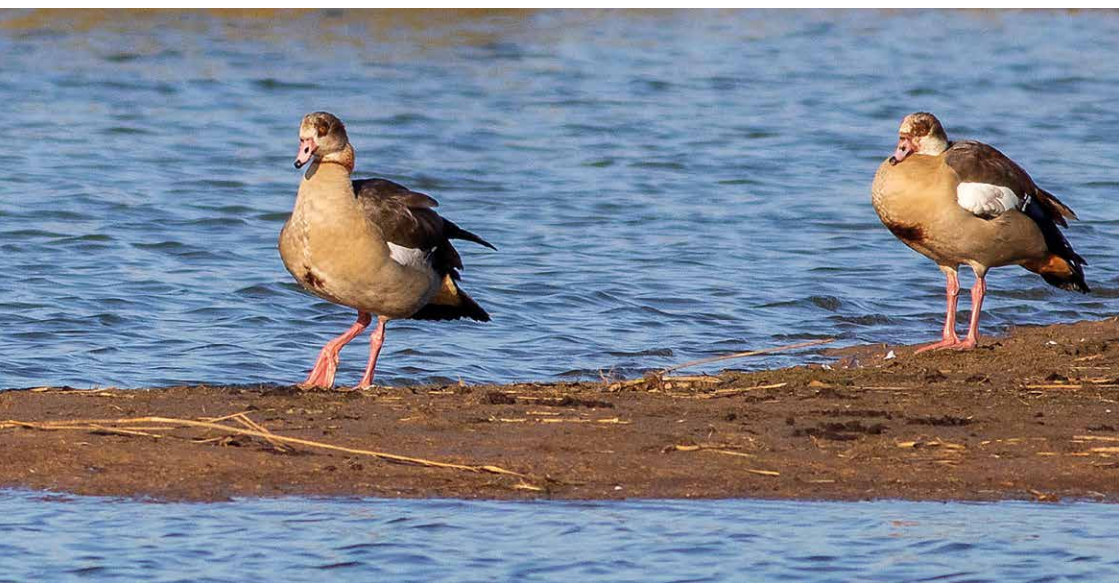
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* ■

Common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor, with concentrations mainly in the Humber, on the north-east coast and in The Wash. Fairly common as a breeding species in estuaries and coastal areas, scarcer inland. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 2,500; for national importance: 470.

The highest count for the year was 2,150 at Grimsby on Oct 10th. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 2,488 observer sightings recorded during the year from 84 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Grimsby	920	1380	910	640	250	100	1360	800	500	2150	100	200
Reads Island	425	1920	321	332	312	850	2000	400	58	199	64	250
Grainthorpe	26	1	351	239	377	670	5	735	660	860	320	149
Tetney	380	20	5	30	53	98	360	42	198	1200	800	538
Donna Nook	128	80	16	28	60	18	42	1	9	400	590	812
Gibraltar Point	108	220	83	60	93	75	150	59	275	169	167	58
Saltfleet	275	314	32	42	25	-	-	27	48	83	185	210
Terrington	-	-	126	16	3	9	20	8	37	185	630	-
Frampton Marsh	60	79	200	62	96	36	100	25	40	100	25	10
Witham Mouth	39	4	30	-	9	8	6	-	25	2	500	25

The table above shows the top 10 sites holding annual accumulated maximum counts of more than 600 birds ranked from highest to lowest. The only other count of 300 or more birds was 342 at Wainfleet on Feb 24th. The highest total monthly count across all sites was 6,538 in April, well up from 4,795 in Nov 2018. This suggests Lincs holds more than 10% of the UK Shelduck population. The species was found in 8% of BBS squares (2018 13%) with an average of 6.0 birds per occupied square (2018 2.9).





Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Very scarce. Birds are recorded in most years, mostly in late summer/early autumn. Most if not all are assumed to come from feral stock in the Netherlands. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was two at Freiston Shore on Jul 31st. They were recorded in eight months of the year and there were 35 observer sightings from six sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8.6	0	0	0	2.9	0	5.7	2.9	65.7	5.7	5.7	2.9

One was resident on Whitton Sand throughout the year and flew over Alkborough Flats on Aug 8th, Oct 19th and 23rd. On The Wash two turned up on Jul 31st at Freiston Shore and they or another two were at Frampton Marsh from Sep 1st-15th. Inland, two were at Blackmore Bridge, Aurbourn on Nov 22nd-23rd and another was at Baston GP on Dec 27th.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Scarce and increasing feral resident or visitor and local escapee.

The highest count for the year was six at Witham on the Hill on Apr 16th and at Grimsthorpe on Dec 15th. They were recorded in all months of the year and there were 72 observer sightings from 19 sites; all sites recording at least two birds are tabulated below.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Grimsthorpe	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Belton (Grantham)	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	-	1	-	-	-
Witham on the Hill	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grantham	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hagnaby	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marston	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tattershall Thorpe	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Banthorpe Gravel Pit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

There was no confirmation of breeding in 2019. Unsurprisingly sightings were approximately 2:1 in favour of males. The six birds at Witham on the Hill on Apr 16th consisted of two pairs and a further two males; the six at Grimsthorpe on Dec 15th were unsexed.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula* ■

Scarce passage migrant and very scarce summer visitor. Exceptional in winter. Amber List. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was nine at Huttoft Pit on Apr 16th-19th. Recorded in eight months of the year. There were 327 observer sightings recorded from 17 sites, down from 25 sites in 2018. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0.6	24.8	35.2	3.7	7.6	19.3	7	1.8	0	0

The table below shows the top 10 sites with records of four or more birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The first spring records were a duck and two drakes at Alkborough Flats on Mar 23rd followed by a pair at Biscathorpe Lake on Mar 30th and a single at Gibraltar Point on Apr 2nd. A total of 10 pairs were reported from seven sites in April with an exceptional record of five drakes and four ducks





at Huttoft Pit Apr 16th-19th (possibly the birds photographed flying past Portland Dorset on Apr 15th). In May there were 12 pairs from 11 sites, though most of these were migrants. Four pairs were confirmed breeding: two at Frampton Marsh, one at Alkborough Flats and one at Middlemarsh Farm. At Frampton Marsh a pair with four juveniles was reported on Jul 28th and a female with five juveniles was reported on Aug 20th; a further three pairs probably bred there. At Alkborough Flats there was a female with two juveniles on Jul 20th and Middlemarsh Farm, which had a pair through spring, had two juveniles on Aug 8th. There was also a probable pair at Gibraltar Point which were seen displaying on May 2nd. In all a total of four confirmed and four probable pairs compared to a total of five probable pairs in 2018. It would be helpful if all reports of this species could record the sex of birds seen. The latest birds reported were single juveniles at Gibraltar Point and Marston SF on Oct 12th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh				3	4	2	6	7	2			
Gibraltar Point				3	3		2	2	1	1		
Alkborough			3	2	2		3					
Huttoft				9								
Deeping St James				2				3	2			
Middlemarsh Farm				2	2		1	2				
Whisby NP					2	2		1	1	1		
Biscathorpe Lake			2	3								
Barton Pits				1	2			1	1			
Freiston Shore					2		2					

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata* ■

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, and very scarce breeding species. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 650; for national importance: 190. RBBP

The highest count for the year was 300 at Freiston Shore on Nov 25th. There were 2,608 observer sightings during the year from 70 sites. The table below shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 230 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The only other counts of more than 75 birds came from Barton Pits where there were 84 on Jan 29th, Huttoft Pits 92 on Jul 29th and Gedney Drove End 84 on Sep 23rd. The maximum monthly total across all sites was 1,241 in Nov compared to 988 in Dec the previous year. Twelve sites held two or more birds through May and Jun with two reporting confirmed breeding as follows:

Alkborough female with brood of five Jul 2nd, Middlemarsh Farm females with broods of seven and five on Jul 23rd. A further 10 sites held a total of 44 probable breeding pairs as follows: Frampton Marsh (33), Manby Wetlands (2) and single pairs at Barton Pits, Deeping St James, Freiston Shore, Gibraltar Point, Huttoft Pit, Kirkby on Bain, Messingham SQ, Whisby NP and Willow Tree Fen. In total there were 47 reported pairs compared to 46 in 2018.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough	85	16	85	13	27	17	5	72	70	102	236	200
Frampton Marsh	100	100	60	77	35	26	60	40	61	98	66	84
Freiston Shore	12	38	64	24	2			2	6	1	300	170
Bardney	30	70	84	13				9	4	20	218	
Gibraltar Point	52	37	14	31	25	7	7	42	43	66	54	58
Middlemarsh Farm	14	31	61	34	14	13	33	18	32	37	7	3
Whisby NP	22	42	48	9	4	3	1	9	35	52	14	51
Willow Tree Fen	15	56	50	59	3	2	2			5	40	27
Killingholme	41		12	8	2				93			91
Kirkby on Bain	14	14	28	16	8	2	6	20	46	42	24	15



Gadwall *Mareca strepera* ■

Fairly common though localised breeding species and winter visitor. Numbers have increased since the 1980s. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 1,200; for national importance 310.

The table below all 14 sites with a count of 100 birds in at least one month. Gadwall were recorded in all months of the year with numbers being supplemented by winter visitors from Iceland and Europe. There were 3,101 observer sightings recorded from 94 sites. A count of 350 at Kirby on Bain on Feb 13th exceeded the threshold for national importance. Counts at Whisby NP, RAF Woodhall and Barton Pits exceeded 200 in the first quarter of the year. Another 37 counts amounting to 100 or over came from nine sites. From the beginning of Apr to the end of Aug there were nine counts in excess of 100 from just five sites and 200 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 21st. Between Sep-Dec there were 20 counts of a hundred or over from eight sites with the highest total of 200 at Freiston Shore on Nov 25th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kirkby on Bain	250	350	100	67	38	110	96	49	80	160	184	150
Whisby NP	285	207	39	57	35	28	50	20	84	152	36	71
Frampton Marsh	120	40	100	50	50	26	50	200	100	150	75	45
Alkborough	132	176	50	136	64	80	5	-	44	88	-	120
Tattershall Thorpe	215	224	90	30	20	-	1	6	17	21	70	89
Boultham Mere	7	16	33	46	33	78	34	140	160	86	35	53
Barton Pits	140	86	254	4	1	10	1	-	44	30	43	13
Gibraltar Point	77	70	20	11	14	26	24	20	65	40	84	112
Middlemarsh Farm	9	21	15	36	26	118	63	59	60	22	22	27
Lincoln	150	114	5	10	3	-	-	-	4	12	28	44
Bardney	104	58	36	20	18	2	12	17	23	3	7	17
Freiston Shore	-	3	42	4	4	2	-	1	1	1	200	22
Kirkstead Bridge	104	38	23	18	18	2	-	-	15	2	5	17
Immingham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	100

Falcated Duck *Mareca falcata*

Vagrant. E. Asia

The first and only accepted county record is of a drake that was present at Kirkby on Bain Feb 19th-21st 1995 (DMJ *et al*). This follows an extensive review of British records of Falcated Duck by the BBRC after which the species was admitted to Category A of the British List in Feb 2019. The first acceptable British record was the drake present at Welney, Norfolk Dec 9th-27th, 1986. (Accepted BBRC; *British Birds* 113, p585-655). There were no records in 2019.

Wigeon *Mareca penelope* ■

Common or very common winter visitor and passage migrant, especially to The Wash and the Humber. Scarce in summer and occasionally suspected of breeding. Threshold for international importance: 14,000; for national importance: 4,500. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 5,000 at Frampton Marsh in Jan, Feb, Nov and Dec and Freiston Shore in Nov. Recorded in all months of the year there were 2,270 observer sightings from 96 sites. The table below shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 2,300 birds ranked from highest to lowest. Other counts of more than 500 birds came from Short Ferry 1,000 Nov 24th, Witham Mouth 800 Dec 16th, Kirkby on Bain 750 Feb 13th and 600 Dec 9th, Reads Island 700 Oct 18th and Covenham Reservoir 520 Jan 3rd. There was the usual sprinkling of summering birds principally at Alkborough Flats, Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh but no evidence of breeding was reported. Significant autumn movements at sea were reported from Gibraltar Point Sep 30th 189 south, 218 west in off sea, Oct 15th 730 south, Nov 5th 157 north and 243 south and Mablethorpe Oct 21st 172 south.



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	5000	5000	600	1000	22	4	19	59	600	4000	5000	5000
Freiston Shore	1000	2500	300	38	4	-	-	1	1500	1	5000	350
Alkborough	380	850	1265	1	1	10	-	-	34	450	760	71
Gibraltar Point	390	400	400	30	2	1	11	5	607	830	418	404
Baston	550	364	350	6	-	-	-	-	23	-	58	1500
Tetney	260	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	102	750	1000	500
Bardney	156	6	21	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	2400
Welland Marsh	1600	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	600	-	350
Tattershall Thorpe	293	350	280	37	6	-	-	2	18	36	1000	400
Middlemarsh Farm	400	600	350	30	2	1	-	7	7	50	300	600

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

Rare. N. America. **LBRC**

A drake was present at Kirkby on Bain from Jan 7th-27th (JRC et al) the 18th record for Lincolnshire. This was possibly the same bird reported there on Dec 14th 2018.



American Wigeon *Mareca americana* Kirkby GP Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* ■

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 6,700.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 5,384 observer sightings from 201 sites. BBS results show Mallard was our commonest breeding waterfowl species found in 73% of BBS squares (2018 69%) with an average of 6.7 birds per occupied square (2018 5.6).

The table below shows monthly maximum counts for the top 10 sites holding a cumulative annual maximum count of more than 750 birds. The highest count for the year was 400 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 21st up from 250 at the same site in Aug 2018. The highest total monthly count across all sites was 4,289 in Jan, indicating the county falls well short of national importance for this species.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	200	74	100	40	56	50	200	400	376	150	50	74
Covenham Reservoir	292	152	79	78	53	98	56	119	119	187	231	220
Alkborough Flats	63	53	126	27	95	150	69	53	5	200	144	335
Gibraltar Point	180	49	40	15	27	66	112	200	121	88	101	135
Goxhill	140	160	43	26	28	55	50	26	190	86	117	142
Boultham	79	102	55	74	68	54	76	110	115	52	45	61
Middlemarsh Farm	50	40	20	20	20	22	45	200	170	100	80	80
Cowbit	126	188	4	16	38	-	-	-	30	85	210	141
East Halton	98	85	21	7	10	-	19	125	300	59	46	39
Woodhall Spa	109	59	48	59	31	47	-	47	107	129	-	148

Pintail *Anas acuta* ■

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 600; for national importance: 200. **RRBP**

The highest count for the year was 400 at Freiston Shore on Nov 25th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 674 observer sightings from 39 sites. The table below shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 12 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. In addition to these sites there were 10 at Tetney on Oct 3rd. The highest peak monthly total across the county was 482 in Feb compared to 277 in Feb 2018 and 365 in Dec 2018. There was no evidence of breeding activity though a pair summered at Frampton Marsh. Autumn seawatching at Gibraltar Point produced max counts of 25 south and 10 west in off the sea on Sep 30th and 37 south on Oct 3rd.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	300	300	316	5	2	2	2	8	100	20	7	2
Freiston Shore	40	160	60	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	400	100
Alkborough Flats	-	2	7	2	-	-	-	4	10	114	12	22
Gibraltar Point	5	8	3	2	1	1	2	5	47	59	8	14
Witham Mouth	28	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	-
Goxhill	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	1	6	1
Covenham Reservoir	2	-	2	3	-	-	-	4	4	2	1	1
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-
Donna Nook	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	2	-
Messingham	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	1	8	-	-	-



Teal *Anas crecca*

Common migrant and winter visitor. Scarce in summer, and very scarce and localised as a breeding species. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 5,000; for national importance 4,300.

The highest count for the year was 4,000 at Frampton Marsh on Jan 30th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 3,300 observer sightings coming from 104 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	4000	1000	200	500	40	20	25	200	240	569	426	3000
Alkborough Flats	834	173	479	350	96	102	12	135	600	780	980	124
Reads Island	1200	246	16	26	1	-	-	50	230	1800	-	900
Freiston Shore	300	450	150	125	-	5	5	35	16	1	2000	175
Gibraltar Point	380	380	68	23	21	19	81	133	284	400	606	486
Killingholme	428	1050	80	41	-	-	-	6	67	66	22	192
Donna Nook	410	62	15	26	2	-	6	9	94	600	320	238
Willow Tree Fen	116	320	45	154	10	2	1	6	8	85	500	500
Carlton & Manby Washlands	73	132	76	60	30	1	15	42	150	90	720	300
Kirkby on Bain	500	86	65	30	16	3	8	30	264	340	150	160

The count of 4,000 at Frampton Marsh in Jan exceeded the threshold for national importance and indeed also surpassed the five-year moving average (2,905) from the BTO WeBS data. Birds were present in every month of the year and pairs were noted at Gibraltar Point Apr-Jun and on the wet heath in Laughton Forest in Apr representing 'possible' breeding status but there was no evidence of confirmed breeding. Wintering birds come from a wide area of northern and eastern Europe spanning Iceland in the north-west and eastern Russia.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

Very scarce. N. America. First record in 1984 and a regular visitor in the last 10 years. **LBRC**

There were three records in 2019, the first at Frampton Marsh Feb 25th-26th (S. Gantlett) and Mar 25th-28th; what was thought to be the same bird was at Freiston Shore on Mar 21st. Another drake was at Alkborough Flats on Mar 3rd (ND) the best site in the county for this species, and there was an autumn bird, perhaps the same, at South Ferriby on Oct 21st (ND). A fairly typical showing. There have been around 48 records between 1984-2019, although numbers are approximate as some will be returning birds and some movement between sites. All have been drakes with no conclusive records of females. There have been 18 records at Alkborough Flats 2006-2019 in every year apart from 2013, with two there in 2008.



Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis* Alkborough Flats Mar 3rd 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*
 first winter drake Sep 2019 (above)
 and same bird Nov 30th 2019 (left)
 © GRAHAM CATLEY

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Scarce winter visitor and very scarce breeding species. Increasing numbers of feral birds present in the county, especially in the southwest. Webs threshold for international importance: 500. RBBP

The highest count for the year was 42 at Baston on Dec 29th. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 196 observer sightings during the year from 13 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Baston	11	34	31	11	26	35	1	29	7	-	-	42
Langtoft	-	-	4	1	6	10	5	5	-	-	-	15
Messingham	-	2	4	4	6	4	3	-	1	-	4	-
Winterton	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	-	-	-	6	-
Lincoln	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
Deeping St James	2	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	-
Barton Pits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1



The table shows the top eight sites holding maximum accumulated counts of at least three birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. None of the other five sites at which this species occurred held more than two birds at any time and none in the breeding season. The highest total monthly count across all sites in Lincs was 59 in Dec, way down from the peak of 242 in Oct 2018. Confirmed breeding reports were received from two sites: at Baston broods of two, three and five ducklings were seen on Jun 9th and at Langtoft a brood of four was noted on Jul 3rd. A probable breeding pair was reported at Frampton Marsh and there were two at Messingham. In all seven pairs compared to eight in 2018.

Pochard *Aythya ferina* ■

Fairly common but declining winter visitor, and a scarce breeding species found mainly in gravel and clay pits. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 2,000; for national importance: 230. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 304 at Winterton on Mar 1st. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 925 observer sightings recorded coming from 41 sites, up from 32 in 2018. The table below shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 100 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The only other counts of more than 15 birds were 17 at Cleethorpes on Feb 12th and 17 at Denton on Dec 15th. The county total across all sites was 721 in Feb compared to 395 in Feb 2018 suggesting there were more wintering birds this year. Reports of breeding pairs crashed to only eight, down from 20 in 2018 and 27 in 2017. There were only three reports of confirmed breeding: two broods of two and four ducklings at Barton Pits on May 20th and a brood of four at Boatmere Scrape, Gedney Drove End on Jun 19th. Elsewhere there were four probable pairs at Frampton Marsh and one at Kirkby on Bain. Summering birds were reported from Baston Fen, Boultham Mere, Messingham and RAF Woodhall but as usual failure to report the sex of birds seen in May-Jun bedevils arriving at an accurate breeding assessment.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Winterton	180	292	304	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	160
Frampton Marsh	40	75	30	12	12	20	20	12	3	8	22	20
Messingham	21	62	51	21	10	14	11	8	21	34	38	-
Deeping St James	2	9	2	4	-	-	63	132	39	1	-	1
Bardney	47	52	60	3	-	-	22	37	8	-	-	-
Baston	6	25	36	6	2	3	-	17	77	-	-	49
Barton Pits	39	40	57	15	6	5	25	-	4	1	5	6
North Hykeham	31	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	41	28
Kirkby on Bain	15	20	12	11	5	16	1	-	9	1	15	29
Whisby NP	28	26	3	2	-	-	-	1	6	36	8	7

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

Very scarce visitor. N. America. First county record was in June 1979 with at least 36 more since although wandering individuals make accurate record assessment difficult. **LBRC**

A 1CY male at Baston GP was the only record on Dec 27th (JJ).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* ■

Fairly common breeding species on gravel pits and similar water bodies, and fairly common or common winter visitor. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 8,900; for national importance: 1300

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Whisby NP	188	197	124	51	25	12	75	164	264	172	162	103
Covenham Reservoir	161	162	118	128	54	33	41	28	161	185	200	185



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Hykeham	100	341	20	30	8	3	6	56	38	103	131	123
Kirkby on Bain	100	80	100	45	30	24	7	35	225	45	83	150
Frampton Marsh	172	55	78	40	66	34	42	22	20	35	52	57
Barton Pits	250	280	21	41	1	1	6	5	23	90	25	24
Deeping St James	45	115	132	82	8	18	25	116	86	30	10	70
Messingham	67	41	50	77	72	37	42	46	48	97	89	40
Gibraltar Point	32	24	45	26	48	61	40	30	23	212	90	49
Baston	12	75	133	145	25	30		45	9			159

The table shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 600 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Other high counts were 140 at Winterton on Jan 31st, 133 at Tallington Dec 31st and 126 at Denton Dec 6th. The highest total monthly count across all sites was 2,243 in Feb. The species was found in 11% of BBS squares (2018 12%) with an average of 9.4 birds per occupied square (2018 4.4).

Scaup *Aythya marila* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor to estuaries and coast; numbers have declined. Rare in summer; bred in 1944. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 3,100; for national importance: 39.

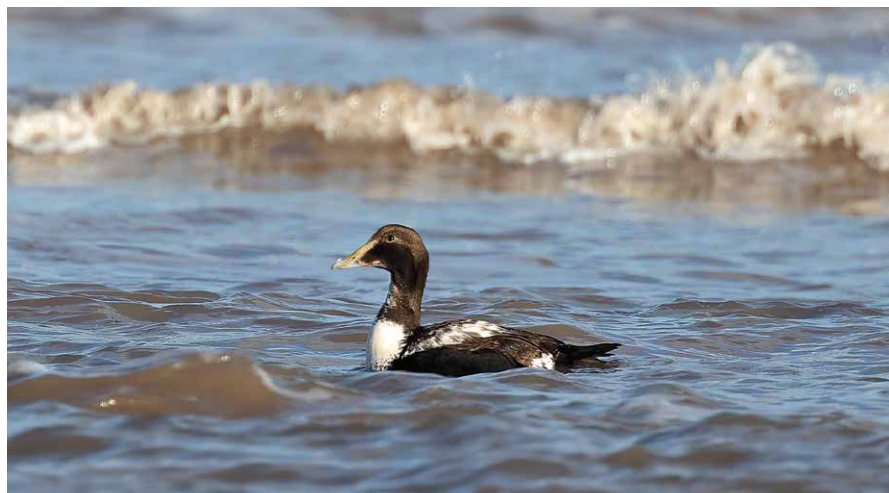
Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barton Pits	1	5	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	16	3
Butterwick	2	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	2	2	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	3
East Halton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-
Horseshoe Point	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-

The highest count for the year was 23 at Butterwick on Mar 23rd. Recorded in 11 months of the year there were 114 observer sightings from 18 sites. Once again, a fairly thin year for this species with a one-day sighting of 23 on The Wash at Butterwick, possibly a migrant flock pausing before continuing north. No other coastal sites recorded more than seven. Barton Pits had a variable number present from Jan 1st-Apr 30th with a peak of six on Mar 1st, three males and three females and two or three birds were again present Oct-Dec. Five inland sites recorded single birds some of which wintered, and two were at Covenham Reservoir briefly Nov 24th-26th.

Eider *Somateria mollissima* ■

Present offshore throughout the year: fairly common on passage and in winter, scarce in summer. Mainly found in The Wash and rare inland. Under recorded because most of the population stays well offshore; however, numbers have recently declined. Nominate *mollissima* Red List. Threshold for international importance: 9,800; for national importance: 770.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 358 observer sightings from 19 coastal sites, with just over half of the counts from the Wash. This was a better year than 2018 with 18 counts of 100 or over coming from five areas, the highest by far being 2,110 at Wrangle on Jan 26th. Gibraltar Point had 585 on Feb 20th and 863 the following day. Wainfleet had 737 on Feb 23rd. The largest total recorded outside The Wash was 90 at Chapel Observatory on Nov 15th. The table below shows those sites which recorded 100 or more in any month. The high counts of the first quarter were not repeated in the last one with a maximum of 115 off Gibraltar Point in Dec. It is apparent from counts made from offshore boat surveys that counts from land may significantly underestimate the totals when birds are at sea and out of sight of land.



Eider *Somateria mollissima* Rimac, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wrangle	2110	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
Gibraltar Point	126	863	370	33	9	6	4	5	9	46	84	115
Wainfleet	230	737	19	8	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Friskney	44	342	-	7	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Leverton	165	-	42	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare inland and in summer. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 4,000; for national importance: 34.

There were 60 records over the year from 10 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
11.7	8.3	5	0	1.7	0	0	0	1.7	25	25	21.7

The peak counts for the year were both at Gibraltar Point: 14 on Jan 1st and 11 on Jan 3rd, continuing the pattern at the close of 2018 of birds concentrated off the Point. Numbers there subsequently declined to single figures, but nine birds were recorded at Mablethorpe on the 10th and on the 16th. The final record of the first quarter was of six at Gibraltar Point on Mar 26th. Apart from two recorded at Anderby on May 3rd, there were no further records until two at Huttoft on Sep 8th. Although there were far more records (43) in the final quarter of the year, none were in double figures and birds were much more widespread. The peak counts for the autumn were of six at Tetney on Oct 26th and five at Gibraltar Point on Oct 31st; otherwise, all other records were of three birds or fewer.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* ■

Fairly common offshore passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce in summer but autumn movements begin in Jun-Jul. Very scarce inland. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 7,500; for national importance: 1,300.



Recorded in all months of the year from 25 sites, with most (>75%) of the 480 observer sightings in Jul-Dec. All sites with a single count exceeding 500 birds are tabulated below. Gibraltar Point had the peak count for the early part of the year with 788 birds on Feb 23rd. There were few records, all in low numbers from Apr-Jun but they began to build in July, with the highest count for the year an impressive 1,800 at Tetney on 29th. High counts in Oct included 863 at Gibraltar Point and 843 at Chapel St Leonards both on 29th and a flock of 749 birds flying north at Gibraltar Point which may have included some of the original 863. There were 720 birds at the Witham Mouth on Nov 5th and 700 at Freiston Shore on Dec 13th. Inland, Covenham Reservoir had a single bird from Mar 21st-Apr 3rd, one on Aug 2nd-3rd and one Nov 2nd-15th; there were three at Boultham Mere on Oct 15th and one at Toft next Newton on Dec 7th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	180	788	124	5	85	72	126	440	227	863	468	138
Tetney	120	-	-	-	10	26	1800	260	160	130	200	400
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	1	-	-	-	219	176	82	843	101	-
Freiston Shore	6	-	-	-	-	-	80	-	1	70	390	700
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	720	117
Sutton on Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	520	-

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer and inland. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 16,000; for national importance: 130.

The highest count for the year was six at Butterwick on Jan 26th. Recorded in five months of the year there were 74 observer sightings recorded from 15 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5.4	0	0	13.5	0	0	0	0	0	32.4	35.1	13.5

The species was very scarce in the first quarter with six in The Wash at Butterwick on Jan 26th and singles inland at Baston GP Jan 2nd-5th and another at Boultham Mere Apr 16th-23rd. In the autumn the first was at Donna Nook Oct 19th, up to four at Gibraltar Point on Oct 21st and one to three there on several dates to Nov 15th with a single remaining until Dec 9th. Offshore other singles were seen down the coast and in The Wash and three were off Freiston Shore Oct 30th with another on Nov 15th. One at Frampton Marsh between Oct 31st-Nov 9th was the first reserve record. Elsewhere there was a maximum of four birds off Huttoft Car Terrace Dec 9th. Inland one arrived at Apex Pit, North Hykeham on Nov 24th remaining in the area into 2020. By Dec 18th it was noted that it had advanced its moult and could be aged as a 1CY male, the only one in the county after mid-Dec.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* ■

Fairly common but somewhat localised winter visitor, rare in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 11,400; for national importance: 190.

There were 920 records in 11 months of the year from 41 sites. The five highest counts of the year, with three exceeding the threshold for national importance, were all on the Humber in the Goxhill area. This was the only site with counts of 100 or more: there were 135 between Goxhill and New Holland on Jan 22nd, 113 Nov 17th and 198 Nov 19th. Dec 19th saw the year's highest count of 259 at Goxhill Haven with 226 still there Dec 27th. Covenham Reservoir was the next most important wintering area followed by Barton Pits. North Hykeham and Freiston Shore also had some decent counts in the first quarter, although The Wash in general holds far fewer birds than the Humber. In May, no birds were recorded after the 14th when three juveniles and an injured adult were observed at Barton Pits with odd singletons at five sites Jun-Sep. Oct then saw small influxes of birds across the county with counts peaking in Nov-Dec. The table below shows sites listed where there were at least 20 birds in one month or more.



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Goxhill	135	83	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	198	259
Covenham Reservoir	92	83	62	30	1	-	-	-	1	6	47	74
Barton Pits	23	78	74	15	6	-	-	-	-	15	5	7
North Hykeham	65	41	21	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	5
Freiston Shore	49	35	12	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	8
Deeping St James	28	35	12	3	-	-	-	-	-	5	10	12
Whisby NP	13	16	12	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	16	23
Frampton Marsh	8	20	10	10	-	-	1	-	-	21	4	8
Toft next Newton	11	14	6	3	-	-	-	-	1	1	17	27
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	16	22	1

Smew *Mergellus albellus* ■

Very scarce winter visitor, with occasional larger influxes in severe weather. Amber List.

Threshold for international importance: 300; for national importance: 1.

Smew remains a very scarce winter visitor with six records involving seven birds at either end of the year. In Jan-Feb, there were two redheads at Deeping Lakes NR Jan 4th, another redhead at Thornton Abbey Lake Feb 19th and a third at Toft Newton Reservoir Feb 23rd. No more were reported until Dec when a redhead was found at Kirkby on Bain Dec 7th which remained into 2020. A male was at Huttoft Pit Dec 18th and another male was at Baston GP Dec 27th.

Goosander *Mergus merganser* ■

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly inland. Rare in summer. Green List.

Threshold for international importance: 2,100; for national importance: 150.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Willow Tree Fen	34	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	12	35
Gibraltar Point	8	1	12	3	1	-	-	-	-	36	6	7
Cowbit	27	29	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Deeping St James	18	26	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4
Covenham Reservoir	3	26	16	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	5
Kirkstead Bridge (Witham)	17	19	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Lincoln*	15	11	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	13	15
Crowland	3	19	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Woodhall Spa	17	11	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4

* Includes Boultham Park and Mere, Hartsholme Park, North Hykeham Pits and Whisby NP

Recorded in 11 months of the year, there were 446 records from 58 sites. There were 44 double-figure counts, the highest being 51 at Willow Tree Fen on Feb 25th. Birds began departing during Mar and by Apr most had gone. Two to three birds were seen here and there with most records coming from Gibraltar Point; the last of the spring there was on May 5th and Covenham Reservoir saw a straggler on Jun 2nd.

An early autumn record was of three flying north-west along the Humber at East Halton Skitter on Jul 30th and a single redhead was at Alkborough Flats on Sep 6th, but most arrived during Oct with a peak of 36 south at Gibraltar Point on 17th and another 10 on 20th. Seven were at Barton Pits and five at Terrington Oct 19th. One to two birds were seen at 13 other sites. Just nine double-figure counts were made during the last two months of the year. The majority of high counts were made during Dec with 35 at Willow Tree Fen on 23rd (counts there usually of birds coming into roost) and 24 at Brigg on 2nd.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal and especially in The Wash. Very scarce inland and in summer. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 860; for national importance: 100.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore	98	40	16	-	-	-	-	1	1	5	1	1
Gibraltar Point	26	34	15	14	7	1	2	-	2	13	23	22
Witham Mouth	30	2	25	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	6	7
Friskney	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wrangle	11	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Butterwick	6	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1
Wainfleet	7	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Benington	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

The majority of wintering birds are found in The Wash with the three highest counts at Freiston Shore - 98 were present on Jan 25th, 42 on Jan 27th and 40 on Feb 12th. Most birds departed during Mar-Apr but with 14 still offshore from Gibraltar Point Apr 22nd, seven there May 3rd and four on May 26th, the last of the spring. In the summer a non-breeding bird was at Gibraltar Point Jun 27th and two were seen at Anderby Creek and Gibraltar Point Jul 8th, 11th and 15th, presumably the same birds. One or two were reported in Sep but the main arrival was seen during Oct-Nov, although counts were much lower than in the first quarter and mainly in The Wash. Very few were seen further north with three Huttoft Oct 20th-21st, three Donna Nook Oct 30th, singles on the Humber in the Barton area on Oct 27th and 29th and five off Huttoft Nov 8th. Numbers built up in The Wash during Dec with a peak of 22 at Gibraltar Point Dec 27th and one to four reported to Dec 31st.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Former scarce feral breeder and winter visitor, now rare. **RBBP**

After the single record of an adult male seen on several dates in 2018 at a site in the south of the county, there were no records in 2019.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* ■

Scarce summer visitor and very scarce passage migrant. **Amber List**.

The first record of the year was of one on May 3rd disturbed from the ringing hollow at Gibraltar Point. The next records were all in Laughton Forest: a female was seen on Jun 5th and a calling male on Jun 28th and Jul 15th, followed by reports of three on Jul 23rd. There was no full survey there this year and no confirmation of breeding. Other potential breeders were reported from Epworth Turbary, where at least two males were holding territory, and from Willingham Woods on Jul 3rd and Middle Rasen Jul 14th. In the autumn there were two unusual records of roosting birds photographed in observer's back gardens, the first on Sep 9th in Hundleby and the second on Sep 10th in Owmbly-by-Spittal.



Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* Hundleby Sep 9th 2019
© CHRISTINE PARKER



Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

Rare. S. Europe. Recorded from Mar-Aug with a single record from Oct. **LBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Common Swift *Apus apus* ■

Very common but declining summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was 31,350 at Gibraltar Point on Jul 31st. Recorded in seven months of the year, there were 1,264 observer sightings from 130 sites.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	-	1481	10094	31350	1014	43	1
Anderby	-	1	30	3765	1208	2	-
Frampton Marsh	1	500	2000	2000	15	20	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	7	1	3765	20	-	-
Huttoft	-	2	150	2853	3	2	-
Marston	-	1000	40	-	2	1	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	1000	-	1	-
Covenham Reservoir	1	500	300	4	9	15	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	200	120	400	20	2	-
Barton upon Humber	-	60	200	70	2	-	-

The first bird was at Barton Pits, the earliest ever at this site on Apr 18th. Another early one was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 20th. Barton Pits, Whisby NP and Covenham Reservoir all had singles on Apr 30th. The largest spring count was 1,481 at Gibraltar Point on May 30th and Marston STW had 1,000 on May 9th. Swift was reported in 35% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 36%) with an average of five birds per occupied square (2018, 6). It was the 36th most widespread species recorded in the Lincolnshire BBS. Mid-summer movements are usual for Swift and Gibraltar Point had 10,094 on Jun 30th, the largest one-day count since 11,000 there on Jul 7th 2008.

Frampton Marsh had 2,000 on Jun 30th-Jul 1st. At the end

of the month on Jul 31st Gibraltar Point recorded

31,350 south, the largest estimated one-

day movement since the all-time

county record there of 35,000

on Jul 16th 2005. Anderby

also saw some of the same

action on Jul 31st with 3,765

south. After that numbers

waned quickly with Anderby

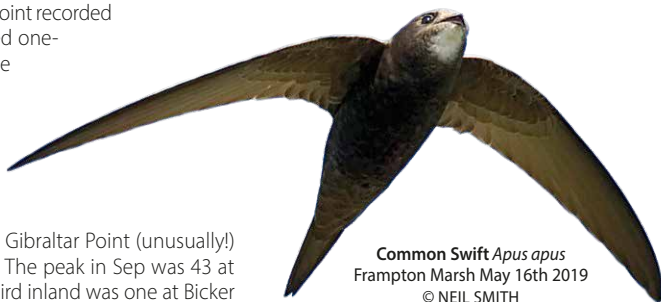
recording 1,208 on Aug 11th and Gibraltar Point (unusually!)

trailing with 1,014 that same day. The peak in Sep was 43 at

Gibraltar Point on 5th. The latest bird inland was one at Bicker

on Sep 20th and the very last on the coast were three at Crook

Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 17th.



Common Swift *Apus apus*
Frampton Marsh May 16th 2019
© NEIL SMITH

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus*

Vagrant. S. Europe. Two previous records. **BBRC**

There were no records of this vagrant in 2019 but there was an additional record for 2018: One at Gibraltar Point Nov 8th (KMW, BW, OB, JS), accepted by BBRC (*British Birds* 113, p585-655) which now becomes the second county record. The third county record, previously accepted by BBRC, was at Goxhill on Nov 11th, 2018. See page 210.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* ■

Fairly common but declining summer visitor. Red List.

Recorded in six months of the year with 534 observer sightings from 76 sites. 2019 seems to have been a good year for the cuckoo, as it was observed from 25% more sites than in 2018. The first bird of the year was noted at Trent Port, Marton on the typical date of Apr 17th, three days later than the first bird of last year. Two days after the first sighting, single birds were recorded at Anderby Marsh, Gibraltar Point and Whisby NP. The highest count for the year was of nine at Gibraltar Point on May 16th and the dozen counts of six or more all came from the Skegness reserve. Of the 80 records of three birds or more all but seven were either coastal or came from the Humber bank areas. About 85% of all records were of a single or a pair of the species. Although there is some difficulty in clarifying how many individual birds there were, juveniles were recorded about 23 times, on 18 occasions at Gibraltar Point and away from the coast on six occasions at Deeping St Nicholas, East Halton, Barton Pits, Scunthorpe and RAF Woodhall. Host birds seen feeding juveniles included Dunnock and Reed Warbler. The final bird of the year was a juvenile bird flying across a field at Scunthorpe on Sep 26th.



Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* Donna Nook May 11th 2019 © MARK JOHNSON

Rock Dove (feral) *Columba livia* ‘feral’ ■

Common and widespread resident. Green List.

Often overlooked or perhaps even ignored there were still 1,175 observer sightings recorded during the year from 106 sites. Ten sites had counts of 50 or more, which was slightly up on last year, and are shown in the table below. Just 10 counts of a 100 or over were received, six of those coming from Lincoln, the highest 403 on Oct 5th, 228 on Oct 2nd, 225 on Oct 8th, 125 on Oct 27th and 105 on Jan 23rd. One hundred were reported from Grimsby on Jan 3rd, a birding trip into The Wash on Sep 23rd recorded 150, Marston STW had 108 on Oct 15th, and at Withern there were 160 on Dec 11th.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Lincoln	105	53	25	70	65	35	6	-	2	403	76	14
Toft next Newton	45	69	20	25	22	30	30	12	46	95	85	10
Marston	28	11	72	-	80	40	30	-	71	108	-	6
Grimsby	100	60	70	25	15	18	20	20	10	20	20	15
Louth	50	50	20	40	40	-	40	-	1	60	40	50
Withern	35	-	40	-	50	-	-	-	3	4	70	160
Cleethorpes	40	50	30	30	15	10	25	40	30	50	10	30
Freiston Shore	65	1	60	1	20	1	15	23	80	1	1	1
Bourne	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	60	-
Long Benington	30	2	3	-	3	9	1	13	15	15	-	-



Stock Dove *Columba oenas* Grantham Apr 6th 2019 © STEVE NESBITT

Stock Dove *Columba oenas* ■

Common and increasing resident and winter visitor. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
East Halton	-	85	-	218	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	-
Gibraltar Point	20	12	19	12	7	24	14	9	26	42	26	33
Doddington Pk, Lincoln	-	3	11	16	12	9	8	7	6	7	7	88
Boultham Mere	10	4	5	13	42	4	3	6	6	17	23	10
Tathwell	126	1	-	8	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Baston	13	9	8	22	6	2	2	6	6	6	2	42
Terrington	-	-	-	-	110	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	33	23	16	13	5	-	-	-	1	-	4	9
Marton	6	2	2	12	4	2	2	2	8	17	36	4
Branston Booths	3	40	4	8	-	6	-	-	3	14	16	-

The highest count for the year was 218 at East Halton on Apr 24th. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 2,149 observer sightings reported from 154 sites. The table shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 94 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. There were three counts over 100 this year compared to two in 2018. The spring flock of 218 at East Halton was the largest count of the year and compared to a peak count of 378 at Gibraltar Point in Nov 2018. Interestingly there was no significant autumn movement reported at the latter site this year. The only other counts of over 30 birds not reflected in the table were both in Jan with 60 at Baumber and 40 at Frampton Marsh. The species was found in 47% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 39%) suggesting the fall from 50% in 2017 was a temporary blip. There was an average of 3.3 birds per occupied square counted (2018, 4.1) and the species was 29th most widespread on Lincolnshire BBS squares, up from 33rd in 2018.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List.

Recorded on all days of the year there were 5,294 observer sightings of this abundant species from 286 sites. The total of these counts was well over 200,000 with 36% of all counts being estimates. The highest count for the year was 4,693 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 17th. The reserve had another count in Oct of 4,000 and just over half of all counts were 1,000 or over. The table below shows all areas where the highest total each month amounted to at least 1,000 for the year

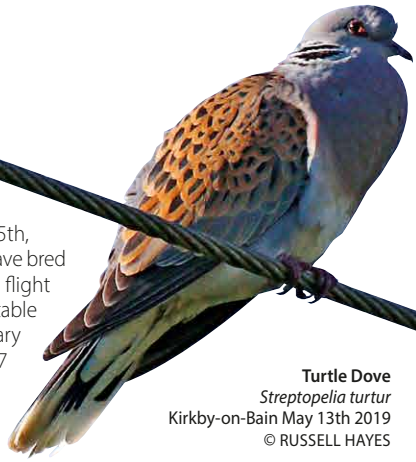
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Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Common in the early 90s now scarce and declining summer visitor and passage migrant. Red List. **RBBP**

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The highest count for the year was four at Frampton Marsh on May 11th. Recorded in seven months of the year there were 256 observer sightings coming from 19 sites, all of which are tabulated. The first bird of the year was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 25th, but most arrived in the first two weeks of May. A pair may have bred at Firsby in 2019, where a pair summered and was seen in flight with a third individual of no confirmed age. The data in the table has been produced in the same way as in 2018. In summary there were 20 probable pairs from 14 sites compared to 27 from 17 sites in 2018. There were also five possible breeding reports compared to 12 in 2018. The decline continues. The recent publication of the *LBC Atlas* puts the position into focus. In the late 1980s the Lincolnshire Turtle Dove breeding population was estimated at 7,300 pairs scaling from data in the contemporary second BTO Breeding Atlas. Using the 1989 Common Bird Census, breeding territories density gave an estimate of 3,200 pairs. It was thought the actual population was towards the lower end of that range. If a not unreasonable estimate of 4,000 pairs is used, Turtle Dove has suffered a crash of 99.5% in 30 years from 1989-2019. A full national survey is planned in 2021, please take part if you can. The last bird of the year was a single seen with two Collared Doves at Gibraltar Point on Oct 17th.



Turtle Dove
Streptopelia turtur
Kirkby-on-Bain May 13th 2019
© RUSSELL HAYES

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* ■

Very common resident. Green List.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 2,575 observer sightings from 165 sites. Counts of 20 birds or more were received from 11 sites with the two highest being 50 at Cleethorpes on Nov 24th and 44 at Tetney Marsh on Dec 16th; exceptionally, the latter site held 20 or more birds in eight months of the year. The species was found in 52% (32) of the 61 BBS squares surveyed with 4.7 birds per occupied square (5.6 in 2018 and 5.8 in 2017); whilst it remains widespread, the decrease in abundance from recent years matches the downward trend in the BBS index for the East Midlands.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* ■

Scarce resident, fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Much under-recorded. Ceased to be an RBBP species from 2018 onwards. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 6,400; for national importance: no data.

Recorded in all months of the year there were 766 observer sightings coming from 36 sites. To reiterate last year's message, reports for this species are heavily dependent on specific site surveys. A reminder too that Water Rail was removed from the Rare Birds Breeding Panel list of species requiring notification from 2018 onwards.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	1	2	55	1	2	-	3	-	-	1	2
Gibraltar Point	2	1	4	1	2	-	1	1	4	5	7	4
Frampton Marsh	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	5	2	2	4	3
Marston	6	8	2	2	-	1	-	1	2	2	3	2
Barton Pits	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	8	1	5	8
Whisby NP	4	4	1	1	2	1	1	5	-	2	2	2
Boultham Mere	2	2	2	1	1	2	5	1	2	2	2	1
Anderby	2	1	2	2	-	-	1	1	1	1	2	-
Kirkby on Bain	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	2
Baston	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	1	1	1	2



Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* Grainthorpe Mar 18th 2019 © MARK JOHNSON

Birds were present at Whisby NP from Jan onwards and monitoring with trail cameras eventually confirmed the first breeding record there, with an adult and a chick caught on camera on Aug 1st and an adult with four chicks there on Aug 3rd, presumed the same family. Elsewhere, at Alkborough after mapping 55 territories, one pair was seen with three very small young on Aug 4th. An adult with two juveniles were seen at Baston Fen on Aug 3rd, a lone juvenile was seen at Boultham Mere on Aug 30th and an adult and a juvenile were seen at Gibraltar Point on Sep 1st. Calling/territorial birds were noted at several other sites during May-Jul but with no concrete evidence of breeding. As ever proof is difficult to obtain and the true numbers of breeding pairs is undoubtedly underestimated except where there has been targeted survey work.

Corn Crane *Crex crex* ■

Very scarce passage migrant. Red List. LBRC RBBP

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana*

Rare migrant, though historically a breeding species up to the latter half of the 19th Century.

Calling male recorded once in last 29 years to 2018. LBRC

No records were received in 2019. With 21 records 1995-2019 at just under one record per year it remains a rare migrant in the modern era. Calling males held territory at Baston Fen in 2006 and again in April-May 2012, only the second and third probable breeding records in the last 30 years.



Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* ■

Very common resident and partial migrant. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 3,000.

The highest count for the year was 100 at Deeping St James on Jan 9th and at Frampton Marsh on Mar 20th. Recorded in all months there were 3,767 observer sightings generally evenly spread through the year from 159 sites. The species is not accurately recorded with 21% of all records without a count or with just an estimate. Evidence of breeding was reported at only four sites. The table shows the top 10 sites that had at least 20 birds in any month. Not included in the table but which also reached the criteria in fewer months are Tetney, Cleethorpes, Holywell, Willow Tree Fen, Cowbit and Sleaford.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	22	28	100	30	10	25	12	50	34	20	38	16
Middlemarsh Farm	27	29	20	20	12	12	12	16	12	8	23	26
Whisby NP	23	14	22	14	11	14	17	24	17	22	9	22
Kirkstead Bridge	33	28	25	14	7	8	4	12	19	11	12	25
Lincoln*	30	29	11	8	7	7	14	12	15	20	14	19
Stamford	28	34	34	-	-	-	-	3	36	21	10	20
Kirkby on Bain	20	21	14	8	12	6	5	12	20	17	25	12
Bardney	33	28	25	14	7	8	4	12	2	1	12	25
Deeping St James	100	8	3	6	3	2	2	5	5	4	3	2
Gibraltar Point	11	10	9	8	30	12	18	6	10	6	12	6

(*Lincoln includes Boultham Mere, Boultham Park, Burton Pits, Hartsholme Park, North Hykeham and Swanholme Lakes)

Coot *Fulica atra* ■

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 15,000; for national importance: 2,000.

Recorded broadly evenly across all months of the year, there were 3,284 observer sightings from 95 sites. The table shows the 11 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 600 birds ranked from highest to lowest. Peak counts were broadly similar to previous years with some variation in the ranking of main sites. Notably, a peak count of 500 birds on Jan 24th elevated Gibraltar Point up the table. Coots were recorded in 16% of BBS squares (12% in 2018; 17% in 2017) with an average of three birds per occupied square (2.7 in 2018).

Site name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	112	114	61	40	17	38	85	152	281	353	282	283
Kirkby on Bain	270	250	100	48	30	63	130	120	150	178	220	200
Deeping St James	30	40	22	12	13	43	140	126	150	420	157	124
Toft next Newton	184	174	23	16	4	1	17	103	156	180	175	150
Whisby NP	365	226	109	58	51	57	54	56	41	48	64	42
Messingham	57	49	42	64	49	120	180	75	83	112	113	1
Gibraltar Point	500	18	13	13	25	120	14	17	21	45	18	7
Tattershall Thorpe	97	100	92	56	20	29	53	78	53	32	47	100
Lincoln	200	112	45	14	15	8	14	12	42	62	72	67
Boultham Mere	54	55	20	34	38	65	70	90	70	92	37	15
Frampton Marsh	150	80	100	30	35	72	42	66	50	10	1	1

Crane *Grus grus* ■

Scarce but increasing migrant, recorded most months. Former breeding species and a common migrant to 16th/17th centuries. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 3,500; for national importance: 2. **RB BP LB RC**

There were 18 observer sightings recorded during the year from seven sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	5.6	50	16.7	5.6	0	0	5.6	5.6	0	11.1

The first record for the year was of two birds landing briefly at Pinchbeck Sluice in early Mar but most of the year's records were in the following two months. In Apr a single bird was at Frampton Marsh on 11th-12th, three birds at Boston also on 12th, two at Alkborough on 14th and two went south over Gibraltar Point towards Norfolk on 19th. In May five birds were at Baston Fen on 11th and a single on 30th, and two were south over Gibraltar Point on May 13th and Jun 14th which concluded sightings for the first half of the year. In the autumn there were two birds at Alkborough Flats on Sep 18th and three on Dec 7th, two at Gibraltar Point on Oct 9th and the peak count for the year was of six at Wroot on Dec 5th.



Crane *Grus grus* Alkborough Flats Dec 7th 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY

Additional Record for 2017: Three at Willow Tree Fen on Apr 30th circled over the reserve before heading off north-east. (JJordan)

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* ■

Fairly common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor, the latter especially noticeable in coastal regions. Green List. Threshold for national importance: 4,700; for national importance: 150.

The highest count for the year was 41 at Cowbit on Jan 20th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 2,497 observer sightings from 95 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kirkby on Bain	30	23	20	13	9	16	1	7	36	3	16	15
Frampton Marsh	8	5	8	6	6	34	14	25	18	20	8	6
Gibraltar Point	12	8	8	8	9	8	14	17	20	12	12	10
Holywell	12	8	6	-	-	-	-	-	14	16	35	18
Toft next Newton	13	14	3	1	-	1	1	2	11	14	21	15
Alkborough Flats	1	10	20	28*	-	-	-	-	14	14	8	1
Deeping St James	19	29	2	5	1	3	3	4	10	8	3	1
Tattershall Thorpe	9	7	9	10	4	-	2	9	6	5	14	4
Cowbit	41	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	6	5
Covenham Reservoir	4	2	2	-	-	1	-	1	5	6	35	6
Tetney	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	19	5	9	11	11

(*14 pairs estimated at Alkborough during the breeding season)



Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Far Ings Nov 21st 2019 © PAUL COOMBES

High autumn and winter counts were received from the usual water bodies, most are likely to be local breeders including 1CY birds and there may also be some winter immigration from the near continent. BTO WeBS Online data shows the five-year mean population up to the winter of 2018/19 is around 300 birds, split broadly 50/50 between the estuary fringes and inland. The maximum monthly peak counts from the 2019 data are in broad agreement with this estimate with total winter numbers of at least 273 birds. The only probable and confirmed breeding records came from Alkborough Flats, Anderby Creek, Boatmere (Gedney Drove End), several sites in and around Gibraltar Point, and Wolla Bank Pits. Around 20-25 pairs were reported, most seen with chicks but breeding activity is clearly under-reported given the number of suitable sites across the county. Breeding success at Alkborough Flats was reported as being poor with several pairs departing before the end of Jun after complete failure of breeding attempts thought to be due to Mink and/or Otters. Five young fledged by mid-Aug when other new broods were still hatching.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* ■

Scarce, and more recently very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, Sep-Apr, rare in summer. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 500; for national importance: 1. The highest count for the year was two at Gibraltar Point on Feb 21st. Recorded in six months of the year there were 55 observer sightings from five sites, four of them inland freshwater bodies. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3.6	45.5	9.1	36.4	0	0	0	0	0	1.8	0	3.6



Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* Barton Pits Feb 2019 (right) and the same bird Apr 2019 (above) © GRAHAM CATLEY



Most were seen in the first quarter of the year with a series of records at Gibraltar Point on Jan 9th (1) Feb 10th (1) and 21st (2), and Mar 11th-12th (1). A popular long-staying bird was at Barton Pits Jan 31st-Apr 18th which assumed breeding plumage in the latter half of its stay. Another was at Apex Pit, North Hykeham Feb 5th-24th, later in the spring one was at Covenham Reservoir Apr 5th-10th and another was at Deeping Lakes NR Apr 22nd. A poor showing in the last quarter saw one at Gibraltar Point on Oct 29th and Dec 26th-27th the only records.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* ■

Fairly common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor. Suggestion of a recent decline from submitted records. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 6,300; for national importance: 170.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 1,763 observer sightings coming from 71 sites. The top 10 sites are tabulated below:

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	44	32	28	30	29	36	48	53	35	31	22	11
Toft next Newton	19	22	20	21	13	5	7	12	20	28	44	50
North Hykeham	50	31	19	9	7	7	4	7	20	15	10	14
Gibraltar Point	16	11	10	2	3	3	3	2	4	15	9	31
Whisby NP	12	6	9	8	9	13	8	7	9	6	11	5
Cowbit	-	5	24	24	16	-	-	-	15	12	1	1
Swanholme Lakes, Lincoln	25	7	5	5	1	8	7	11	2	6	3	3
Norton Disney	6	5	-	19	14	8	-	7	2	2	5	1
Freiston Shore	20	3	12	-	-	-	-	1	12	4	2	10
Frampton Marsh	-	4	4	8	9	10	8	5	2	5	1	-



Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* Frampton Marsh Apr 26th 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON

The highest count for the year was 53 at Covenham Reservoir on Aug 3rd. The top three sites were all freshwater bodies but with significant numbers also wintering on The Wash including Benington (37, Jan), Friskney (35, Feb) and Fosdyke (26, Apr) in addition to those tabulated above. Movement of birds north and south at Gibraltar Point was noted during Jan-Mar, highest counts being eight south on Feb 8th and nine south Mar 7th. Autumn movements were seen Oct-Dec, with the highest counts being 18 south Dec 7th and 21 south Dec 9th. Confirmed breeding records came from Apex Pit (North Hykeham), Boultham Mere, Cleethorpes CP, Deeping Lakes NR, Frampton Marsh, Gibraltar Point, Messingham SQ and Willow Lake (Whisby NP).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* ■

Very scarce/ scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Aug-May. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 50; for national importance: 9.

Recorded in four months of the year, there were 12 observer sightings from six sites, a particularly lean year. There were three in the first quarter all in Jan: Tetney 1st, Gibraltar Point 7th and Freiston Shore 25th. A lone spring bird was at Covenham Reservoir Apr 14th. In Nov-Dec singles were off Gibraltar Point Nov 4th and Dec 19th, Witham Mouth-Freiston Shore Nov 14th-16th and again Nov 18th, and Crook Bank Nov 30th. In 2014-2018 the average was about 20 per year with a range of eight (2017) to 29 (2016). In the good years more are seen along the coast, where around 84% of birds were seen during that time.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* ■

Rare breeder, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. Threshold for national importance: 1,800; for national importance: 1. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was four at Frampton Marsh on Jul 7th. They were recorded in eight months of the year, there were 178 observer sightings from nine sites, of which 155 were from Frampton Marsh. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	1.1	0.6	0.6	22.5	46.1	19.7	7.9	0	0	1.7

A generally poor year for Black-necked Grebe with one saving grace. There were no records in Jan-Feb and the first birds of the year were a pair in partial breeding plumage at Apex Pit North Hykeham on Mar 23rd



Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* Frampton Marsh Jul 15th 2019 © NEIL SMITH

for one day, thought to be migrants. Former breeding sites A and C had no records at all this year. Site B had a pair on Mar 24th and a single on Apr 21st but no other evidence of breeding. There were no further spring records until a pair were reported at Frampton Marsh on May 31st. After a brief disappearance what was probably the same pair were reported continuously from Jun 5th-Aug 4th. From general reports it would appear eggs were being incubated from Jun 10th and two chicks were reported with their parents from Jul 7th. The family were seen together until Aug 4th and the parents seem to have departed around that time. A single juv was present until Aug 19th with a report of two on Aug 20th. There were no reports thereafter. This was the first confirmed breeding at this superbly managed RSPB reserve. Elsewhere an adult was reported from the Blue Lagoon Scunthorpe on Jul 29th. Covenham Reservoir had singles on Sep 1st and 8th (a juv), Boultham Mere had one from Sep 15th-25th and Langtoft GP, had one on Sep 16th. Following no reports in Oct-Nov there were two in Dec with singles each at Covenham Reservoir on Dec 2nd and Thurlby Pit, Bassingham on Dec 26th.

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* ■

Rare summer visitor. Former breeder. No confirmed breeding since 1904.

The single record of the year was of a bird in the Leadenhall Farm estate (Moulton Marsh area) found on May 16th during survey work (ABe). Its status remains 'rare summer visitor' with five records in the 1990s, but then three birds in 2000 and singles in 10 of the years afterwards up to 2019. The most recent record before this year was in 2014.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* ■

Very common coastal passage migrant/winter visitor and fairly common resident. Less common inland but now breeds in increasing numbers. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 8,200; for national importance: 2,900.

The highest count for the year was 27,800 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 4th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 3,589 observer sightings from 92 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1300	2952	1839	690	2500	620	1300	27800	11000	5150	2440	4000
Freiston Shore	350	600	900	900	600	700	1700	3600	3000	5000	900	4
Horseshoe Point	3600	2650	-	-	326	-	1600	50	2400	3600	-	750
Tetney Marsh	1400	60	-	150	300	200	200	1600	2000	1500	500	450
Terrington	-	-	500	4	-	76	300	550	1500	1340	3290	-
Grainthorpe	68	31	960	920	473	565	690	538	1130	1380	686	-
Friskney	1735	1466	426	418	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cleethorpes	158	210	120	82	100	20	130	400	450	2000	198	135
Witham Mouth	1100	-	250	-	350	40	250	200	350	120	350	900
Wrangle	1900	-	820	300	-	-	-	50	2	-	-	600



Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* Freiston Shore Aug 3rd 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON

Gibraltar Point counts exceeded the threshold for international importance on seven dates in Aug-Sep and The Wash remains one of the top five internationally important estuaries for this species in Britain. Further north, Horseshoe Point-Tetney Haven had one count above the nationally important threshold (Jan 1st) and nearby stretches of coastline at Tetney Marshes, Cleethorpes, and Donna Nook also recorded high numbers. Breeding reports were received from both coastal and inland locations. Seven pairs nested at Tetney Marshes, nesting pairs were noted at several locations at Gibraltar Point including four in the shorebird sanctuary, 18 pairs were recorded at Frampton Marsh and another eight at Freiston Shore. Inland two pairs nested at Deeping Lakes NR, another pair were on a nest at Whisby NP and a pair with a large chick was noted at Willow Tree Fen in late Jul. Two colour-ringed birds of Norwegian origin were seen in the roost at Gibraltar Point on Sep 2nd. A bird ringed in its 1CY on The Wash in 1998 was found dead in Norway in Jun 2019, aged 20yrs and another 1CY ringed on The Wash in Aug 2000 was seen alive in The Netherlands in Aug 2019, aged 18yrs.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Rare but increasing summer visitor. **RBBP LBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* ■

Fairly common coastal breeder, has colonised inland localities in the past few years. Fairly common passage migrant, scarce in winter. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 940; for national importance: 87. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 3,030 at Reads Island on Aug 2nd. Recorded in all months of the year there were 1363 observer sightings from 34 sites. The summary table below shows the top 10 sites with reports in five or more months of the year. Reads Island, though it no longer supports a breeding population, continues to be the only internationally important site for Avocet in Lincolnshire.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Reads Island	42	640	500	113	29	140	2400	3030	677	1600	10	10
Alkborough	-	59	220	214	32	356	580	31	60	4	-	-
Frampton Marsh	2	35	300	168	189	120	300	200	71	20	4	3
Killingholme	-	5	102	33	40	-	12	136	205	268	501	15
Gibraltar Point	-	11	100	56	100	86	68	149	120	41	3	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	4	1	12	32	46	41	10	5	15	3	-
East Halton	-	2	7	6	14	-	4	6	12	5	5	101
Freiston Shore	-	-	28	33	14	8	19	20	1	-	2	-
Goxhill	-	-	-	2	8	17	3	11	12	-	5	60
Donna Nook	-	-	3	29	20	32	32	-	-	-	-	-



Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* Gibraltar Point Mar 8th 2019 © PAUL NEALE

The breeding fortunes of Avocet were mixed this year. The total pairs reported of 198 was up from 2018 (181) but fledging success was mixed. On the Humber, Alkborough Flats and Barton Pits had no breeding birds but the new RSPB lagoons at Whitton Sands held 30 pairs that fledged 30 young. Killingholme Pits had up to eight pairs which raised four young and there was a first breeding report from East Halton where three pairs raised two young. At the mouth of the Humber, there were 16 pairs at Donna Nook, but no evidence of young raised. Further south three probable pairs were reported from Saltfleet. Most breeding pairs are concentrated around The Wash with 100 at Frampton Marsh and 11 at Freiston Shore. It is to be hoped that the installation of a predator-proof fence will have a big impact on the breeding success of all birds on the Frampton site and perhaps the recording of fledging success. At Gibraltar Point 20 pairs raised three young. Nearby at Middlemarsh Farm seven pairs raised two young. Inland there were no reports of any breeding and Kirkby on Bain, which has had successful breeding over the last five years, had no attempts this year, though up to 10 birds were present in May.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* ■

Common but declining breeding species, becoming scarce, and very common passage migrant and winter visitor. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 6,200.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Read's Island	10000	6000	3	3	4	20	500	210	16	122	1700	7500
Frampton Marsh	4172	3000	300	150	100	120	105	3000	270	1500	2500	4000
Alkborough	2500	1834	10	11	16	124	190	520	42	1	2220	2000
Goxhill	3000	1500	18	23	10	14	49	40	2	10	740	3000
Freiston Shore	1750	2000	20	10	5	-	101	25	1	1	1900	900
Branston Booths	120	350	-	8	-	1	-	-	25	800	2000	1500
Witham Mouth	1000	-	12	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	1500	2000
Tetney	1500	180	-	2	-	-	5	4	5	500	1100	1000
Killingholme	1930	4	15	4	-	-	10	40	42	246	250	363
Gibraltar Point	470	600	56	16	9	30	78	150	130	315	430	601

Over 2,500 individual records for lapwing were submitted from 124 sites; the 10 most significant are tabulated above. Only Read's Island exceeded the threshold for national importance with a peak count for the year of 1,000 birds on Jan 22nd. However, both the Humber (20,247) and the Wash (9,402) each attained collective peak counts for winter 2018-19 of national, and for the Humber international, significance. Counts exceeded 1,000 birds at two other sites, namely Welland Marsh (1,400 in Dec) and Short Ferry (1,000 in Nov), and achieved 500 or more at a further 10. Peak counts were achieved largely over autumn and winter, from Aug to Feb, before birds dispersed to breeding grounds. Evidence of breeding was provided from only eight sites. The BBS trend for lapwing for the East Midlands seems to have stabilised at a low level following previous declines. Lapwing occurred in 14 (23%) of the 61 squares surveyed, slightly lower than recent years (28% in 2017; 26% in 2018), with a mean of 2.7 individuals per occupied square.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* Frampton Marsh
Sep 9th 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON





Golden Plover

Pluvialis apricaria ■

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, occasional in summer. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 9,300; for national importance: 4,000.

Recorded in all months of the year.

There were 968 observer sightings from 78 sites. Read's Island with a count of 17,000 on Jan 19th and 15,000 on Jan 1st was the only location that exceeded the threshold figure for international importance. The number of counts (in parentheses) exceeding the national threshold were seen at Read's Island (7), Frampton Marsh (20), Freiston Shore (1) and Pyewipe (3). Overall, there were 119 counts of 1,000 or over coming from 16 sites, all coastal except for the 1,000 at Broughton Carrs on Dec 7th. Tabulated below are the monthly maxima at sites which recorded 1,000 or more birds in several months. The number of times a site recorded more than 1,000 is in brackets after its name. Sites not tabulated and which exceeded the national threshold on just one occasion were Goxhill (1,600, Sep), Welland Marsh (1,170, Jan), Saltfleetby St Clement (1,100, Dec), Kirton Marsh (1,000, Sep) and Broughton (1,000, Dec).



Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* Frampton Marsh Feb 17th 2019
© NEIL SMITH

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Reads Island (10)	17000	8000	250	-	-	-	-	3	-	2050	6000	9000
Frampton Marsh (68)	9000	8000	3000	30	15	1	30	400	100	3240	6000	6273
Pyewipe (7)	5000	3800	2220	12	1	-	-	25	50	500	9000	100
Gibraltar Point (4)	521	2500	500	80	-	9	69	411	800	2300	400	3482
Freiston Shore (6)	1000	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	3800	5000
Tetney (11)	400	-	-	120	17	-	300	750	1200	2500	2000	140
Marshchapel (2)	3500	-	-	-	13	-	-	1	120	40	-	1700
Wainfleet (1)	3000	78	800	-	-	-	-	770	-	-	680	-
Huttoft (1)	250	-	-	-	-	-	38	1	2570	500	60	70
Donna Nook (2)	29	-	-	1	-	1	210	100	1500	800	630	100
Humberston (2)	100	33	34	-	-	-	-	1	400	2500	-	-

Numbers dwindled in Apr and by May there were 17 on 6th at Tetney and 10 still lingering at Frampton Marsh on 25th. The few summering birds were soon joined by returning birds in mid-Jul with 210 back at Donna Nook on Jul 17th and large increases through Aug-Sep saw five sites exceeding the national threshold in Sep. Most were seen as expected in Oct-Dec with those sites on the Humber and The Wash recording the highest counts.

American Golden Plover

Pluvialis dominica

Rare. N. America. **LBRC**

A moulting adult was at Frampton Marsh on Sep 22nd (J Grant et al) and again on 25th (MPn). This follows the single record at East Butterwick in 2018 and constitutes the 23rd for the county; of the now 20 individuals that were aged, only four have been juveniles.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Common passage migrant and common winter visitor. Very scarce inland. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 2,000; for national importance: 330.

Recorded in all months of the year with

658 observer sightings coming from 35 sites. The table below shows all eight sites which had at least one monthly count of 500 and which thus exceed the nationally important threshold of 330. Other sites surpassing this threshold were Terrington (438 Sep), Pyewipe, Grimsby (422 Apr) and Wrangle (400 Mar). Gibraltar Point, whose count of 5,100 was the highest total of the year, also had another 37 counts that exceeded 1,000 and the threshold for international importance (2,000) was breached on another 20 dates. Another six counts in excess of 1,000 came from other coastal sites. Inland, singles were recorded at Covenham Reservoir in Feb, May, Sep and Oct; in May singles were also at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness and on three dates at Baston GP.



American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica* Frampton Marsh
Sep 25th 2019 © GARY FENWICK

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2300	4190	5100	2277	600	50	53	1030	4230	3500	1900	255
Cleethorpes	-	200	2	52	-	2	-	55	1050	1800	300	600
Wainfleet	662	756	795	658	782	-	-	-	-	-	70	-
Friskney	804	427	491	1217	614	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Leverton	750	-	74	1470	785	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Welland Marsh	7	-	-	580	400	-	150	420	900	250	-	320
Marshchapel	1300	400	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	420	-	-
Tetney	2	-	-	-	3	-	-	80	1200	300	-	20

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* (nominate) (tundra)

Nominate British and southern Scandinavian form fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal. Breeding has spread to inland sites in last 40 years. Northern Scandinavian and Russian form *tundrae* ('Tundra Ringed Plover') fairly common passage migrants. Red List (nominate) and Green List (*tundrae*). WeBS threshold for international importance: 540. WeBS threshold for national importance: 420.

The highest count for the year was 650 at Gibraltar Point on May 24th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 938 observer sightings from 47 sites. The main sites in terms of individual and summed monthly peaks are tabulated.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	19	75	72	203	650	70	66	253	273	70	4	-
Frampton Marsh	103	120	50	30	300	60	21	500	100	31	16	54



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore	79	-	-	1	12	-	4	35	350	300	-	-
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	28	27	10	42	82	2	4	280	86	51	28	32
Killingholme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	576	22	-	-	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	52	48	-	104	150	10	38	100
Cleethorpes	58	21	32	-	34	-	3	19	110	60	70	54
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	60	-	1	-	200	-	-	30
Grimsby	18	12	-	-	1	-	-	100	75	10	45	5
Saltfleet	28	11	-	2	23	-	-	5	11	11	40	58
Horseshoe Point	47	-	-	-	97	-	-	30	2	-	-	-
Leverton	-	-	-	-	131	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Friskney	-	-	8	19	62	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	-	-	12	-	71	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The WeBS monthly peak count for The Wash, 2018/19, was 1,400 birds in Aug, once again exceeding the threshold for international importance; the five-year moving average there is 1,291. For the Humber the peak was 606 (exactly the same as 2017/18) which exceeds the threshold for national importance. Frampton Marsh comfortably topped the winter counts along with other sites on The Wash, while Cleethorpes and Horseshoe Point were important sites further north.

Spring passage was impressive although slightly down on 2018 with a peak of 650 on May 24th and 10 other counts of 120-380 during the month at Gibraltar Point. Most had departed the county by the end of the month although some lingered at Frampton Marsh, Gibraltar Point and Tetney into Jun when the smaller, darker race *C. h. tundrae* passes through in significant numbers. Eleven inland sites recorded passage birds Apr-Jun, the highest being 11 at Covenham Reservoir Apr 22nd and 15 at Marston STW on May 5th. Autumn passage built through Jul with a peak of 66 at Gibraltar Point on Jul 25th and peaked during Aug-Sep with impressive numbers counted on The Wash and the Humber; 500 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 22nd and 576 at Killingholme on Aug 28th were the highest of the month. In Oct there were still 300 at Freiston Shore on 1st and 100 on 3rd but numbers tailed off during the month with 70 still at Gibraltar Point on Oct 15th and 60 at Cleethorpes on Oct 16th the best. There were smaller numbers wintering but 70 at Cleethorpes on Nov 24th and 100 at Tetney Marsh on Dec 6th were notable.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* ■

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant since 1950. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 3,100; for national importance: no data. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 21 at Frampton Marsh on Jul 4th. Recorded in eight months of the year there were 784 observer sightings from 34 sites. The top 10 sites in terms of summed monthly counts across the year are tabulated below:

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Frampton Marsh	6	20	12	7	21	9	12	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	3	3	4	14	5	3	-
Gibraltar Point	1	5	4	4	5	3	4	1
Cress Marsh, Stallingborough	-	2	2	4	2	6	-	-
East Halton	-	2	2	-	7	3	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	1	7	1	-	1	1	2	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	1	1	3	2	4	-
Baston	1	3	4	3	-	-	-	-
Tetney	1	4	1	-	1	2	-	-
Whisby NP	-	3	3	2	1	-	-	-



A much better spring for this species with peak site counts of 76 across the county in May compared to 35 in 2018. Autumn peak count in Jul was also up to 73 from 67 in 2018. The first reports both came from Frampton Marsh with singles on Mar 19th and 21st, the same first date as 2018. Breeding reports came from 13 sites this year up from eight in 2018 and the number of pairs increased to 37 from 28. Confirmed breeding reports came from East Halton Skitter (one pair raised two chicks), Cress Marsh, Stallingborough (one pair raised four chicks), Gibraltar Point (two pairs raised four chicks and two pairs failed) and Middlemarsh Farm (four pairs raised six chicks). Elsewhere pairs reported without breeding success were at Frampton Marsh (19), Gibraltar Point (3), Alkborough Flats (2) and singles at Baston, Deeping Lakes, Freiston Shore, Kirkby on Bain, RAF Woodhall and Whisby NP. The latest birds were singles at Anderby and Frampton Marsh on Sep 28th and Gibraltar Point on Oct 15th.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Rare. Western Europe. Has bred once, in 1979. LBRC RBBP

With only two records since 2000 this remains a rare wader in the county so the two seen at Gibraltar Point in 2019 represent something of a turn-up. The first, probably a female, was seen distantly looking south from Millennium Ridge on May 14th (KMW, BWd, OB). A second was seen Aug 5th, with Dunlin, *C. alpina*, and Ringed Plovers, *Charadrius hiaticula* (KMW) at the high tide roost but soon disappeared south into The Wash.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* ■

Rare/scarse passage migrant, mainly spring. Red List. LBRC

Another poor year with birds at only two locations. Two at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on May 14th (CMo) provided the only record for the spring, while a juvenile at Killingholme from Aug 22-28th (RHa et al.) was the only record during return passage. These numbers are now a far cry from the c30 per year recorded from the 1990s.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Killingholme Haven Aug 27th 2019

© GRAHAM CATLEY





Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* ■

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal. Rare in winter. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 6700; for national importance: 1.

The highest count for the year was 133 at Gibraltar Point on July 26th. Recorded in 10 months of the year. There were 603 observer sightings recorded from 52 sites; monthly maxima from the main sites are tabulated.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	26	33	2	133	22	17	-	-	-
Anderby-Huttoft coast	-	-	-	24	91	-	106	6	33	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	21	11	2	25	30	50	1	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	46	5	-	4	18	2	-	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	3	-	5	5	60	-	-	-
East Halton	-	-	-	22	18	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
Sandilands	-	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grimsby	-	-	-	1	2	6	21	1	-	-	-	-
Benington	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	26	-	-	-	-

A single bird only was recorded in Jan at Holbeach on the 24th and none until a single bird was recorded at Frampton Marsh on four dates in Mar. Spring passage picked up during Apr-May with notable counts of 91 along Anderby-Huttoft coast (May 3rd) and 46 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe (Apr 30th). Return passage peaked as expected during Jul-Sep with the maximum count for the year on Jul 26th with 133 birds at Gibraltar Point and 106 along Anderby-Huttoft coast. There were only five records in October and one single at Cleethorpes the final record of the year on Dec 2nd. Whilst the majority of the 603 sightings this year were coastal (from 40 sites), there were also 28 inland records from 12 sites, most of which were of five or fewer birds.

Curlew *Numenius arquata* ■

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce and local breeder. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 7,600; for national importance: 1,200.

The highest count for the year was 871 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 4th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 2,494 observer sightings recorded during the year from 80 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	320	400	260	196	107	212	738	871	334	150	191	210
Grimsby	357	278	398	305	10	5	332	150	130	283	262	40
Terrington	-	-	307	145	-	44	430	649	610	63	270	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	368	352	72	18	4	6	212	112	203	209	374	496
Goxhill	220	300	167	22	3	15	112	294	110	4	294	514
Reads Island	251	89	69	41	59	86	460	270	7	145	-	209
Alkborough Flats	208	247	131	155	1	7	116	2	1	1	411	328
Freiston Shore	51	103	106	300	1	2	180	150	200	1	110	30
Wainfleet	161	203	613	145	61	-	-	-	-	-	30	-
Witham Mouth	45	20	50	-	-	50	120	180	310	20	50	100
Frampton Marsh	95	74	50	20	10	16	50	15	400	50	76	45
Wrangle	140	-	90	150	-	-	-	400	47	-	-	60
Grainthorpe	46	62	102	103	42	19	39	186	107	75	18	42
Tetney	61	32	3	54	5	20	88	44	140	45	70	115
Saltfleet	50	71	38	4	4	-	45	40	87	32	206	61



The top 15 sites are tabulated. No single site reached the threshold for national importance for the species, but when grouped together sites on The Wash managed it in Mar-Apr and Jul-Sep and those on the Humber in Jan. No evidence was submitted of breeding activity. At inland sites the highest counts were in the Hagnaby Fen/Lock area, 147 on Mar 24th, and at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, with 110 on both Feb 4th and 22nd.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* ■

Very common coastal passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce inland. Amber List (nominate). Threshold for international importance: 1500; for national importance: 500.

Bar-tailed Godwits were recorded in all months of the year and there were 709 observer sightings from 38 sites. The highest count for the year was one of 7,000 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 13th. All sites having at least 200 birds present on one occasion are tabulated; all of these exceed the threshold for national importance, seven also exceeding the threshold for international importance.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	40	3150	600	500	420	55	79	4500	7000	5000	1400	32
Wrangle	6010	-	5000	400	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	450
Grimsby	1660	2120	480	630	15	80	1	250	200	1150	1800	200
Leverton	2630	1275	1794	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cleethorpes	105	650	1	-	-	-	5	800	550	2500	400	200
Friskney	-	2341	2125	86	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	865	1931	528	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	180	-
Tetney	21	-	-	21	-	-	3	6	1000	18	9	14
Frampton Marsh	2	1	1	20	200	400	250	125	6	3	1	10

Birds wintering in Britain depart in Feb-Mar with a second smaller passage of birds which have wintered in West Africa and are heading for Siberia. A small population of non-breeding, mainly 2CY birds remain to summer before the large post-breeding immigration begins in late summer. In recent years approximately 8,000 birds have moulted on the Wash; 2CY birds start in early Jun and adults late Jul-early Aug. Primary moult is completed in 100-120 days. Research has shown that most of those birds moulting on the Wash come from breeding populations in northern Europe and Scandinavia. Small numbers of non-moulting birds, breeding further east, pass through in late Aug-early-Sep. The Wash remains the most important British estuary for Bar-tailed Godwits on passage, wintering and during the early autumn moult.

Black-tailed Godwit (European) *L. l. limosa* ■

Rare migrant and has bred, last in 1974. Red List. RBBP, LBRC

Separating nominate European race of Black-tailed Godwit *L. l. limosa* from the Icelandic race *L. l. islandica* is quite difficult on field characters alone and submissions certainly need to be accompanied by very good photographs. The identification of the two sub-species is discussed at https://norfolkbirds.weebly.com/uploads/1/3/0/2/13028371/limosa_id_mag.pdf and is well worth a read.

Individuals of this race have been regularly colour-ringed in East Anglia by the Project Godwit team for some years and one of these birds was seen at Frampton Marsh on Apr 24th (TC). The colour ring combination was lime green with black E, right leg, and white flag with black 27, left leg. Further investigation revealed it was ringed as a female chick by Project Godwit on May 25th 2018 (BTO ring EY79922) at the Nene Washes, Cambridgeshire. It was last seen there on Jul 24th 2018 and wintered in the Coto Donana, Spain, where it was seen Feb 5th. After leaving Frampton Marsh it was seen at Breydon Water, Norfolk on May 9th.

Black-tailed Godwit (Icelandic) *L. l. islandica* ■

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 1100; for national importance: 390.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore	950	804	1500	1	40	-	250	200	20	1500	10505	7000
Killingholme	19	95	578	420	95	-	1200	5000	7500	4600	300	2400
Pyewipe	2360	2400	1210	1160	-	-	100	35	50	4530	3800	1000
Frampton Marsh	50	15	500	300	220	200	2023	3300	4000	5000	300	600
Witham Mouth	2000	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	2300	6000	50
East Halton	-	1	-	9	-	-	1280	650	1104	50	2	-
Goxhill	25	20	-	-	-	2	373	166	1505	42	-	-
Terrington	-	-	447	-	-	-	-	540	626	100	-	-
-Gibraltar Point	3	15	9	26	34	210	320	333	184	295	22	16
Reads Island	6	237	15	176	60	-	42	105	88	114	70	300
Alkborough	40	75	380	220	15	62	157	31	25	21	-	-
Welland Marsh	520	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	110
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	13	129	420	-	-
Wrangle	-	-	-	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Over the last century, Icelandic Black-tailed Godwits have increased tenfold and their breeding range has expanded throughout lowland Iceland. In addition, the creation of the RSPB reserves at Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore has increased their visibility and made them more observable for birdwatchers. Iceland now holds 15-18% of the total European population of both races.

There were 1,442 observer records during the year coming from 47 sites, 14 of these being non-coastal. Peak monthly counts at the main sites are shown in the table above. The highest count of the year was 10,505 at Freiston Shore on Nov 16th, a British record. There were also 7,500 at Killingholme on Sep 27th, 6,000 Witham Mouth Nov 14th, 5,000 Frampton Marsh Oct 1st and 4,530 Pyewipe Oct 10th. The highest combined site counts were on The Wash and the Humber as usual, both internationally important sites for the species.

Notable counts from non-coastal locations included a good autumn passage at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness with a peak of 53 on Aug 28th. There were 38 at Covenham Reservoir on Oct 14th, and at Manby Wetlands numbers built up throughout Jul peaking at 30 on Jul 30th; most had left by mid-Aug. Elsewhere 20 were at Barton Pits Jan 8th and Sep 16th, 12 were at Baston GP Jul 1st and 14 were at Teal Lake, Whisby NP Jul 2nd.

Colour-ringed Black-tailed Godwits, virtually all of the Icelandic race *L.l. islandica*, are a regular sight in the county. Two examples (among many) were as follows. Firstly, one seen at East Halton Skitter on Jul





30th had been ringed as an adult at Welwick in East Yorkshire and had earlier been seen at Castle Espie Wetlands in Northern Ireland on Apr 29th 2019. Another was at Frampton Marsh on Oct 18th, originally ringed as an adult male in Iceland on Jun 17th 2017.

The complete catalogue of colour-ring sightings and recoveries can be found on the BTO website at <https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2019/recGBLI2019.htm>

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* ■

Fairly common/common passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce inland. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 1,400; for national importance: 400.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore	25	20	6	4	6	30	6	150	300	600	8	1
Goxhill	150	212	98	-	3	-	3	14	45	102	100	226
Gibraltar Point	22	25	23	26	38	13	49	92	34	53	23	23
Cleethorpes	38	34	30	7	6	-	11	19	32	2	3	26
Witham Mouth	10	-	-	-	-	20	2	15	40	56	50	50
Grainthorpe	-	-	-	14	37	36	14	41	17	19	-	-
Anderby	1	-	-	-	-	-	54	43	4	-	-	-
Tetney	21	-	-	-	3	-	1	22	7	4	2	20

The highest count for the year was 600 at Freiston Shore on Oct 1st. Recorded in all months of the year there were 718 observer sightings from 41 sites. The 2018/19 peak count for sites on The Wash as a whole was 682 in Sep, while Freiston Shore was the only site to exceed the threshold for national importance with its count of 600 on Oct 1st. The Wash is the second most important site in Britain for the species after Morecambe Bay. The activities of the Wash Wader Ringing Group have yielded recoveries in a wide variety of countries from Canada (7) and Greenland (1) in the Arctic to passage and wintering birds in Morocco, Senegal, Guinea Bissau and Ghana.

Seven inland sites recorded Turnstones with five at Covenham Reservoir on May 9th, three at Baston GP May 11th and singles at Whisby NP May 8th-9th. There was autumn passage at the same sites Jul-Oct, the first being at Covenham Reservoir on Jul 27th and regular presence there through the autumn peaking at 12 on Sep 9th and the last bird there a single on Oct 2nd. Singles were at Baston GP on Jul 28th, Whisby NP Aug 12th and 16th, and Middlemarsh Farm Aug 27th. Toft Newton Reservoir had four on Aug 25th and two Sep 5th.

Knot *Calidris canutus* ■

Greenland and Canadian form *islandica* abundant passage migrant and very common winter visitor. Very scarce inland. Amber List (*islandica*). Threshold for international importance: 5,300; for national importance: 2,600.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	6000	11400	32800	10635	5000	600	13318	70000	84000	80000	24300	501
Cleethorpes	5000	1000	20	-	-	-	100	1000	13000	6000	2000	5000
Wainfleet	864	2687	18000	385	-	-	-	-	-	-	5000	-
Tetney	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	250	1100	10000	2000	2000
Freiston Shore	-	120	200	-	1	-	500	1305	250	1200	5000	6000
Grainthorpe	360	-	4450	630	-	-	-	-	300	2200	6000	500
Friskney	3562	5530	2600	2200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Welland Marsh	-	-	-	360	2000	-	120	600	1500	3000	-	6000
Horseshoe Point	5500	1600	-	-	19	-	-	-	200	3000	-	1000
Wrangle	300	-	600	500	-	-	-	5000	12	-	-	3000



Knot *Calidris canutus* North Killingholme Pits Oct 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY

The highest count for the year was 84,000 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 30th. Recorded in every month there were 799 observer sightings from 39 sites, five of them inland. Gibraltar Point once again hosted the largest flocks with 31 counts of more than 30,000 birds Aug 1st-Oct 31st, 10 of which were 60,000 and above. The Oct peak count from WeBS data for The Wash in 2018/19 was 197,291 in Oct 2018, which confirms The Wash as Britain's most important site for this species. Small numbers of Knot turn up every year at inland sites, mainly in the spring, and on May 7th-8th there were singles at Baston GP, Toft Newton Reservoir and Whisby NP, and 15 at Middlemarsh Farm. An autumn bird was at Manby Wetlands Aug 9th. Ringing data from Knot are now extensive, in 2019 two birds ringed on The Wash were recovered abroad: one was shot in France on Nov 30th when just over five years, the other fared better and was retrapped in Norway in May having been ringed as a 1CY in Sep 2016. Finally, a 1CY bird ringed in Poland in Aug 2018 was seen at Frampton Marsh in May 2019.



Ruff *Calidris pugnax* ■

Fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Bred to 19th century. Red List.
Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 9. RBBP

The highest count for the year was 200 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 8th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 684 observer sightings from 32 sites. Sites having at least one double figure count in any month are tabulated.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	40	20	60	50	35	30	45	50	150	52	134	105
Alkborough Flats	7	7	23	20	11	7	30	16	30	7	44	3
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	20	20	-	25	-
Manby Wetlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	19	13	-	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	1	-	11	-	-	5	-	-	-	-

Frampton Marsh and Alkborough Flats continue to be the most important sites for Ruff in Lincolnshire and the counts are comparable to those of 2018. Birds were present throughout the year at both sites. One male was observed lekking on Apr 29th and two more on May 22nd at Frampton Marsh but there was no confirmed evidence of breeding. At Alkborough Flats in early May there were four males present, and eight females mid-month offered hope of a breeding attempt, but the last three birds were seen on May 23rd and there was no other evidence of breeding activity. The management of these two wetlands with the species present throughout the year offers some optimism for the future.

Manby Wetlands saw reasonable autumn passage as an inland site, with numbers building from late Jul and peaking at 19 birds on Aug 31st. Other inland sites at Baston GP, Covenham Reservoir, Deeping Lakes NR, Kirkby on Bain, Marston STW, Messingham SQ, Middlemarsh Farm, and RAF Woodhall all recorded one to six birds from late winter and into spring passage Mar-May and again in autumn Jul-Sep.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus*

Rare. Scandinavia. BBRC

A 2CY+ bird was at Frampton Marsh May 19th-20th, the 16th record in Lincolnshire and the first since two in 2016 (Accepted by BBRC, *British Birds* 113, p 585-665). Two other records from earlier years are under consideration by BBRC.



Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus* Frampton Marsh May 19th 2019 © STEVE KEIGHTLEY



Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* ■

Passage migrant, scarce in spring and scarce/fairly common in autumn. Rare in winter. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 4,000; for national importance: no data.

The highest count for the year was 30 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 31st. Recorded in seven months of the year there were 347 observer sightings from 13 sites with all but one being on the coast or the Humber. This was just over double the sites that hosted the species last year. The following table shows quite clearly the peak autumn passage in Jul-Sep. An early spring bird was at Frampton Marsh Apr 23rd-26th, one or two were present at Frampton Marsh throughout May-Jun, Gibraltar Point saw its first on May 9th and Freiston Shore on May 20th, a poor spring passage. Nine double-figure counts in the autumn all came from Frampton Marsh, peaking at 30 on Aug 31st. Manby Wetlands had two to three between Aug 30th-Sep 11th, the only inland records. In a generally poor year, the final bird was at North Killingholme Haven on Oct 21st.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Frampton Marsh	1	3	2	7	30	20	1
Freiston Shore	-	1	-	5	8	7	-
Killingholme	-	-	-	-	7	6	2
Gibraltar Point	-	1	1	1	2	2	-
Manby Wetlands	-	-	-	-	2	3	-
East Halton	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Goxhill	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Alkborough	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Cleethorpes	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Very scarce/scarce passage migrant. **LBRC**

The species was recorded in six months of the year, Apr-Sep, with 58 observer sightings from seven sites; monthly maxima are tabulated below.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Frampton Marsh	1	2	1	1	1	-
Gibraltar Point	-	1	1	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	1	1	-
Marshchapel	-	1	-	-	-	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	1	-	-
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	1	-	-
Alkborough	-	-	-	-	-	1

The first record of the year was Apr 23rd at Frampton Marsh; there were early records from five other English counties that week. More followed almost a month later with two at Frampton Marsh May 17th-20th, one 21st-22nd, two on 23rd, one on 24th and again 26th-27th; all assumed to refer to the same individuals. Singles were at Gibraltar Point on Jun 3rd and Frampton Marsh Jun 18th-19th and on Jul 6th. One was on the coast at Paradise Pool, Saltfleet on Jul 21st and an adult was at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness Jul 29th-Aug 1st. Another bird was at Frampton Marsh Aug 26th-29th and the final bird of the autumn was at Alkborough Flats on Sep 15th.



Sanderling *Calidris alba* ■

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce inland. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 1,200; for national importance: 160.

The highest count for the year was 6,290 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 3rd. Recorded in all months of the year there were 559 observer sightings from 33 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	200	389	550	812	2100	945	1614	6290	3362	1625	540	120
Cleethorpes	31	46	13	31	41	-	-	7	20	250	330	60
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	65	108	26	48	42	2	70	118	18	37	60	53
Wainfleet	173	131	239	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anderby	20	20	24	-	1	-	64	54	30	30	72	8
Chapel St Leonards	30	25	2	-	-	-	41	54	-	28	72	2
Saltfleet	12	12	16	-	185	-	-	11	-	-	5	12
Huttoft	17	2	-	-	6	-	66	4	1	96	20	2
Donna Nook	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	60
Mablethorpe	1	-	22	-	-	-	-	-	21	70	8	-

The counts at Gibraltar Point reaffirmed its position as a site of international importance for this species. There were 27 counts exceeding the threshold of 1,200 during the year: three in May, three in Jul, nine in Aug, nine in Sep and three in Oct. Away from The Wash, three counts at Cleethorpes (Oct-Nov) exceeded the threshold for national importance.

In May-Jun and Jul-Sep. a small number of birds, one to four, were seen inland at Baston GP, Covenham Reservoir, Marton, Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, Toft Newton Reservoir and Whisby NP.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* Covenham Reservoir May 18th 2019 © MARK JOHNSON





Dunlin *Calidris alpina* Toft Newton Reservoir Oct 2019 © SIMON SPAVIN

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* ■ (*arctica*) ■ (*schinzii* and *alpina*).

Southern form '*schinzii*' a common passage migrant; north-east Greenland form '*arctica*' a passage migrant in unknown numbers; Scandinavian/Russian form '*alpina*' a very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal. Bred to early 20th century and in 1958. Green List (*arctica*). Amber List (*schinzii* and *alpina*).

Dunlin arriving back in the UK in July are mainly of the race *schinzii*. The races *alpina* (far north of Scandinavia and across to Siberia) and *arctica* (northern Greenland) arrive later. Threshold for international importance: 13,300; for national importance: 3,400.

There were almost 1,500 records from 52 sites of this common wader with the majority of these and the greatest numbers coming from estuarine sites bordering The Wash and the Humber. The table shows all sites with at least one monthly count exceeding 2,000 birds. Gibraltar Point continues to be the foremost site for the species in the county with maximum counts exceeding 5,000 birds in five months of the year. In the first part of the year, the site held 6,110 birds on Feb 24th; other notable counts for that period came mostly from the Humber with 7,500 at Read's Island on Jan 22nd, 5,500 at Grimsby on Jan 19th and 5,000 at Cleethorpes on Feb 23rd. Numbers at coastal sites trailed off from May into Jun as birds departed for northern breeding grounds. Returning birds built up in number from Jul onwards when Gibraltar Point held 8,400 birds on Aug 3rd and the peak count for the year for the county as a whole of 8,470 on Sep 1st. Inland, counts peaked during spring passage when double figures were recorded on 8th May at Baston (22), Toft next Newton (17), Marton (14) and Marston (13). There were also 14 at Deeping St James the following day. Later in the year Manby Wetlands held 11 birds on Aug 30th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1400	6110	5850	1936	3000	160	1059	8400	8470	6000	4340	250
Reads Island	7500	5000	3	85	2	-	5	12	8	2100	2700	3200
Grimsby	5500	3200	2500	2700	60	-	30	10	150	1680	3060	1000
Cleethorpes	300	5000	19	134	7	-	25	29	150	2000	4000	2000
Freiston Shore	850	54	400		26	-	400	1500	600	2000	2000	500
Friskney	2470	1413	2375	983	409	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Killingholme	202	13	1	-	-	-	-	500	900	2950	250	1000
Frampton Marsh	420	250	100	60	400	51	1500	2000	500	300	103	89
Witham Mouth	1200	-	-	-	55	200	6		450	2500	300	1000



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* Anderby Creek Oct 5th 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* ■

Very scarce/scarse passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal. Amber List.

Recorded in seven months of the year with 35 records from nine sites. A single bird was present at Cleethorpes on eight dates from Jan 3rd-Feb 15th; the only other sightings from the first part of the year were single birds at Gibraltar Point on Mar 9th and 25th.

The first bird of autumn was a single at the Welland Mouth on Aug 23rd but no more were seen until another single at Anderby Creek on Oct 5th. Gibraltar Point recorded further singles on eight occasions from Oct 15th-Nov 30th; interspersed between these dates, singles were at Trusthorpe (Oct 29th), Huttoft (Nov 1st and 10th) and Mablethorpe (Nov 1st), all of which could potentially relate to the same bird. Elsewhere a single bird was at Frampton Marsh on six dates from Oct 13th-27th and the only inland bird was at Covenham Reservoir on Nov 8th. The year ended as it began with a single bird at Cleethorpes on Dec 20th and 29th.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* ■

Passage migrant, very scarce in spring and scarce/fairly common in autumn with rare/very scarce winter records. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 3,000; for national importance: 1.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	1	1	-	-	3	2	3	5	14	3	1	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	2	1	1	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	2	-	-	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	-



White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* Frampton Marsh Jul 20th 2019 © STEVE KEIGHTLEY

Recorded in nine months of the year, there were sightings from 13 sites. Only the four sites tabulated above recorded birds in more than one month of the year and only Frampton Marsh recorded birds in double figures (14 on Sep 17th). This site held single birds on two dates early in the year (Jan 26th and Feb 28th). Little Stints have wintered in the county in five years out of the last six. Spring passage was limited with a maximum of three birds at Frampton Marsh in May and only singles recorded at Gibraltar Point and Freiston Shore. Return passage began from early Jul with records of mainly single birds from seven coastal sites, in addition to the four in the table. There were few records inland with a single bird at Hagnaby on Sep 6th and at Covenham Reservoir on five dates from Sept 6th-17th. Frampton Marsh accounted for >70% of records for the year and had a series of autumn records from Jul 2nd until the final record of the year on Nov 5th.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

Very scarce migrant. North America. LBRC

Two were at Frampton Marsh Jul 20th-27th (A. Banwell) and later relocated to Freiston Shore Jul 28th where they were seen on and off until Aug 9th. It was the first time two have turned up together and it seems probable they were the same ones seen a few days earlier at Loch of Strathbeg RSPB, Aberdeenshire Jul 17th-18th. With 33 county records up to 2019 this is the joint second commonest North American shorebird recorded in Lincolnshire along with Buff-breasted Sandpiper *C. subruficollis*.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Calidris subruficollis*

Very scarce migrant with 32 county records involving 35 birds. LBRC

An adult was at Frampton Marsh Aug 15th-28th, the first record since 2015 (JB) and becomes the 33rd county record. All have been singles except for the 'invasion' year of 2011 when two were seen together on Aug 14th (adults), Sep 19th and Oct 2nd (juveniles on each date).



Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Very scarce autumn passage migrant and rare in spring. North America, Siberia. **LBRC**

One confirmed record for 2019 at Frampton Marsh, Sep 17th-30th (N. Oram). In the decade 2009-18 the most records in one year was 12 in 2011, probably the best ever year in Lincolnshire; the poorest was 2018 when there were just three. Of the 74 records in that period, only five were in spring and the remaining 69 were all in the autumn.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Rare. North America. **BBRC**

The long-staying 2CY+ bird at Frampton Marsh present from Aug 24th 2018 stayed until May 1st 2019 (CRC, SK *et al*). Presumably the same bird was seen later in the summer from Jul 19th-Sep 5th (D. Lyness). This was the 17th record for the county although with movement between sites perhaps only 12 birds were involved (Accepted BBRC; *British Birds* 113: 585-655).



Long-billed Dowitcher
Limnodromus scolopaceus
Frampton Marsh
Apr 19th 2019
© NEIL SMITH

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* ■

Fairly common resident in woodland, passage migrant and common winter visitor. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 14,000.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	4	11	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	11	14	7
Willingham Woods	-	-	-	-	-	6	3	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-
South Willingham	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Linwood	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Laughton Forest	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Barton upon Humber	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Swinn Wood	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-
Boultham Mere	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

The top 10 sites are tabulated. There were 219 observer sightings of this secretive species recorded during the year from 46 sites, a marked improvement on 2018. During the first quarter, all 46 countywide locations held the species, but during the autumn and early winter birds were only noted in 29 sites with a 50/50 split between the coast and inland. The five highest totals of the year were all at Gibraltar Point: in the first quarter 11 were counted on Feb 12th and eight on Mar 15th, in Oct 11 were present on 28th



and eight the following day; 14 on Nov 8th proved to be the highest total of the year. Gibraltar Point also had another dozen counts of between five and seven throughout the year and in total had just over half of all sightings with 114 bird days. Difficult to see and to survey in its preferred habitat it is perhaps not surprising that many observations were of birds on passage which tended not to linger. Nearly 75% of all records were from coastal sites, even though it was recorded at 26 locations inland. At South Willingham seven were counted on Jan 23rd at a pheasant shoot and six at Willingham Woods on Jun 3rd. Linwood Warren had four on Dec 14th. Several sites recorded three birds: Swinn Wood in Dec, Bourne in Nov and Willingham Woods in Jul.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Probably much under-recorded. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 1,000.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	4
Gibraltar Point	1	-	2	1	-	1	1	1
Frampton Marsh	1	-	-	2	-	1	2	-
Marston	1	-	-	-	1	-	4	-
Freiston Shore	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
Manby Wetlands	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Saltfleet	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-

There were 91 observer sightings recorded during the eight months of the year that birds were present. Records came from 24 sites, 11 inland and 13 on the coast. Those sites recording at least two birds in any month are tabulated. The highest count for the year was four at Marston on Nov 10th and at Rimac on Dec 14th. The last bird of the spring was seen on Apr 22nd at Gibraltar Point and the first date of the autumn was a bird in-off the sea at Crook Bank on Sep 7th. Most records were received in Jan when the species was seen at 15 sites with birders perhaps keen to add it to their year lists. Thereafter it was recorded at three to six sites, Feb-Apr and two to eight sites Sep-Dec. There were 67 records received involving around 83 birds, but the species is undoubtedly grossly under-recorded.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* ■

Scarce breeder, fairly common/common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List (nominate). Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 10,000.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	100	195	97	46	2	-	7	-	1	62	41	-
Marston	3	56	21	25	-	-	-	-	9	60	50	20
Frampton Marsh	10	24	4	5	3	4	12	50	36	35	16	7
Gibraltar Point	22	30	13	10	3	1	21	12	28	37	17	8
Tattershall Thorpe	19	38	39	57	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Manby Wetlands	58	-	-	14	-	-	3	13	9	11	-	40
Immingham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	115	-
Killingholme	4	9	25	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	35
Whisby NP	35	39	7	1	1	-	-	2	6	9	1	2
Donna Nook	21	4	3	11	-	-	-	2	3	7	6	29
Laughton Forest	68	-	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Great Sturton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	20	6	3	-	-	-	-	1	2	5	8	9
Freiston Shore	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	1	40	1
Benniworth	43	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



In the 2018 report we noted that the BTO *Bird Atlas 2007-2011* reported a decline in Snipe which may have been reflected in our records for 2018 coming from only 38 locations. This may have been an aberration as in 2019 records came from 76 sites. Birds were recorded in all months of the year with 1,519 observer sightings. Most were seen at Alkborough Flats which recorded the year's highest counts of 195 on Feb 28th. There were still 97 present on Mar 9th and 46 on Apr 15th. A single bird drummed and displayed occasionally from May 2nd-Jun 1st but there was no proof of breeding. Birds were also heard drumming at Frampton Marsh in Jul but similarly there was no other evidence of breeding. These were the only two county sites reporting possible breeding activity.

Good numbers were recorded at both ends of the year at the dozen or more sites tabulated above. Clearly some of these were only counted occasionally but significant numbers were present when visited. Incoming birds at Gibraltar Point were noted from Jul onwards with 11 'in-off' on Jul 20th and continued evidence of visible migration from then into Oct-Nov. Similarly, at other sites numbers built up from Jul-Aug and 40-50 were at Frampton Marsh during the second half of Aug. Marston STW saw highest numbers a little later with an influx from late Oct with 60 on 30th and 30-50 present during most of Nov. In its only count of the year, 115 were counted at Immingham on Nov 23rd, only the second site to record more than 100 in the whole year.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* ■

Very scarce passage migrant, with generally more in autumn than in spring. Red List. LBRC

A fairly average year for this species with five records. Three were in May: the first at Gibraltar Point on 3rd, then one at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness 4th-7th and one at Frampton Marsh 14th-20th. In the summer a presumed post-breeding bird was at Freiston Shore Jul 24th and the final bird was another at Frampton Marsh Aug 23rd.



Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* Middlemarsh Farm Sep 2nd 2019 © OWEN BEAUMONT



Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* Toft Newton Sep 21st 2019 © GARY FENWICK

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly autumn, rare in winter. **LBRC**

There were three records in 2019, two of them on inland water bodies. The first of these was an adult in summer plumage found on a small private reservoir near Langworth on Jul 17th; there are only two previous records of birds showing at least some summer plumage: Aug 12th-13th 1985 and Alkborough Flats Aug 9th, 2015. The other two were on more familiar dates: one on Sep 21st at Toft Newton Reservoir, and the third flew north past Gibraltar Point on Nov 18th, a particularly good seawatching day.

Over the 10 years to 2018 there has been a slight increase in records, with between one to six per year, but the trend has been extremely variable with the exceptional movement in 2014 when around 39 were recorded in total; the previous best had been 12 in 2007.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* ■

Fairly common autumn passage migrant, scarce in spring and also a regular but very scarce winter visitor. Bred in 1979. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 12,000; for national importance: 1.

There were 887 observer sightings recorded from 56 sites distributed through the year; the percentage records for each month were as follows.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0.1	0	6.9	15.7	1	28	34.3	11	2.8	0.1	0.1

A single bird at Frampton Marsh on Feb 14th was the only winter record from the start of the year. The first migrants of the spring were recorded on Apr 17th; thereafter, birds were recorded from 30 sites over Apr-May with a peak of 14 at Covenham Reservoir on May 17th. The last spring bird was recorded on Jun 1st with return migrants appearing a few weeks later from the 21st. Recorded from 47 sites over Jul-Aug, the highest counts for the year were of 27 from Covenham Reservoir on Jul 26th, 30 from Frampton Marsh on Jul 28th and 30 at Tetney a day later. Ten sites recorded one to three birds until late Oct with the final birds of the year being singles at Alkborough Flats on Oct 23rd and at Frampton Marsh on Nov 9th and Dec 1st.



Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* ■

Fairly common autumn passage migrant, scarce in spring and also as a regular winter visitor. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 20000; for national importance: 3.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Manby Wetlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	24	3	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	-	-	1	1	4	20	8	5	1	1	-
Marston	2	1	3	1	-	2	4	4	6	4	1	5
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	1	-	-	25	6	1	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	1	2	9	12	5	2	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	1	1	-	1	2	8	5	1	-	1	-
West Ashby	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10	3	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain	-	1	1	1	-	-	10	-	1	1	-	1

Recorded in all months of the year there were 674 observer sightings recorded from 60 sites. Most wintering birds were reported from Marston STW (5), where the species was recorded in every month of the year, and spring passage was light with one to three birds at more than 20 sites, the majority inland. Many more were seen in the autumn and the highest count for the year was 25 at Freiston Shore on Jul 28th, coinciding with the record influx of Wood Sandpiper, *T. glareola*. The top three sites in the table all had several double-figure counts between late Jul and early Aug. Numbers fell away during Sep-Oct leaving a small number of over-wintering birds from Nov onwards.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

Rare. North America.

After blank years in 2017 and 2018 there was just one record in 2019, at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness on Jun 28th (NAL). This was the 19th record for the county, 11 of them since 2000. They appear to favour sites offering large pools and wetland areas. The later period after 2000 coincided with the creation of more wetland sites in the county on the Humber, The Wash and elsewhere inland, all very welcome developments.

Redshank *Tringa totanus* ■

Nominate British and continental form a common passage migrant and winter visitor, and fairly common breeding species of coastal marshes. Scarce / very scarce inland. Icelandic form (*robusta*) a common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List (both forms). Threshold for international importance: 2,400; for national importance: 940.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore Shore	150	36	50	100	13	10	1200	2500	2000	3000	200	26
Pyewipe	580	420	960	340	-	-	70	300	200	880	490	100
Gibraltar Point	250	280	255	186	80	49	1435	516	322	150	125	135
Welland Marsh	13	-	-	80	16	-	600	550	850	1400	-	55
Grainthorpe	52	38	128	226	136	97	127	164	164	193	59	-
Frampton Marsh	120	26	150	38	40	50	200	50	500	100	40	57
Reads Island	66	20	40	7	1	3	150	308	198	225	155	100
Donna Nook	200	200	112	39	5	1	5	57	127	120	182	137
Tetney	170	40	-	50	20	8	100	200	100	60	60	300
Killingholme	49	93	251	41	-	-	30	100	220	155	50	64

Over 2,700 sightings were recorded during the year from 75 sites; the table shows all sites whose accumulated monthly maxima exceeded 1000 birds. Collectively, sites on The Wash and the Humber are of international significance. Some sites exceeded the relevant thresholds individually, with the highest count for the year, of 3,000 birds on Oct 2nd at Freiston Shore, being of international significance and



1,400 birds at Welland Marsh on Oct 17th being of national significance.

Inland counts were generally low, but six sites held over 10 birds outside the summer period. There were 141 pairs at Frampton Marsh, 95 of them on the saltmarsh and another 18 pairs at Freiston Shore. At Baston Fen, agitated adult birds were noted on Jun 9th and thought to have chicks nearby and adults with three chicks were noted at Gibraltar Point on Jul 2nd and 6th. Three pairs displayed at Alkborough Flats and were thought to have made nesting attempts but there was no proof of any successful outcomes. There were no other reports of confirmed breeding.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatalis*

Vagrant. Eastern Europe. **BBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019 but note a date correction for 2017: The bird at Freiston Shore on Jul 25th, 2017, previously accepted by BBRC, was also present on Jul 28th (ABe, RDn, DRob). (BBRC, *British Birds* 113: 585-655)

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* ■

Scarce passage migrant, in spring and autumn. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 18,000; for national importance: no data.

The highest count for the year was 41 at Freiston Shore on Aug 1st. Recorded in seven months of the year, Apr-Oct, there were 396 observer sightings from 26 sites. The top 10 sites are tabulated showing monthly maxima (note table is truncated).

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	40	41	-	-
Gibraltar Point	1	1	1	35	5	1	-
Frampton Marsh	2	6	1	13	16	5	-
Manby Wetlands	1	2	-	16	18	1	-
Huttoft Pit	-	-	-	34	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	2	2	-	19	8	1	1
Alkborough	-	7	-	1	2	2	1
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	7	-	-
East Halton	1	-	-	2	3	-	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	2	2	1	-

The first bird of the spring was at Manby Wetlands on Apr 21st with a small spring passage in May peaking with six at Frampton Marsh on 3rd and seven at Alkborough Flats on 10th. Singles lingered into Jun at Frampton Marsh and Gibraltar Point. A trickle of returning autumn birds appeared from mid-Jul presaging what was an unprecedented number of autumn records. Late Jul was dominated by blue skies and oppressive heat followed by a rapid breakdown in weather producing thunderstorms and plenty of heavy rain across the centre of Britain. This deluge, combined with strong easterly winds out of Scandinavia, delivered one of the biggest influxes of Wood Sandpipers on record across Britain with many 100s recorded. Double-figure counts were recorded at the main Lincolnshire sites in the table above, concentrated into the period Jul 28th-Aug 12th. Thereafter, birds moved quickly on with just single-figure counts going into Sep, with five at Frampton Marsh on 1st the highest count and just one or two birds lingering at several sites. The final birds of the autumn were singles at Alkborough Flats and Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness on Oct 1st.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* ■

Passage migrant, scarce in spring but fairly common in autumn. Very scarce but regular in winter. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 1,000; for national importance: 1.

The highest count for the year was 27 at Alkborough Flats on Sep 1st. Recorded in all months of the year there were 836 observer sightings from 18 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:



Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* Frampton Marsh Sep 20th 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4.4	5.6	6.1	8.7	7.2	3.1	16.3	21.2	14.5	9.2	2.5	1.2

Only three sites (tabulated) recorded double-figure counts, the other 15 recorded one to three birds in various months with three at Freiston Shore in Jul-Sep and singles at five inland sites in Apr (2) and Aug-Oct (3).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	5	7	11	17	4	8	25	25	27	16	-	6
Frampton Marsh	4	5	6	4	5	4	14	21	15	15	2	4
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	1	4	1	4	12	11	9	1	-

At Alkborough Flats birds began to return north from late Apr with 11 still present on 24th falling to four by May 5th and the last bird of the spring was seen on 13th. Spring passage at Frampton Marsh was less marked. Returning birds were back at Alkborough Flats by mid-Jun when eight birds were present and then further influxes into Jul saw 14 on 1st increasing to 25, including one juvenile on 29th. The Alkborough Flats autumn peak of 27 was recorded on Sep 1st with 20 on 15th and still up to 16 in Oct. A similar pattern was seen at Frampton Marsh and Gibraltar Point. Thereafter a few birds remained into Nov-Dec and the last birds of the year were at Read’s Island on Dec 22nd and Frampton Marsh on Dec 31st.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* ■

Passage migrant, scarce in spring, fairly common in autumn. Very scarce in winter. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 3,300; for national importance: 8.

The top 10 sites over the year are tabulated and overall it seemed to be a much better year. During the first quarter birds were scarce. In the winter singles were seen at Frampton Marsh on Jan 18th and at Wainfleet on Feb 15th. Early spring birds in March were singles at Frampton Marsh on 11th and 24th, three over Boultham Mere on 20th and singles at Gibraltar Point on 21st and Grainthorpe Marsh on 29th.



Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
Frampton Marsh Sep 14th 2019
© NEIL SMITH



During Apr, 80 sites had birds but the only areas having more than two were Welland Marsh and Manby Wetlands which each had three, Donna Nook, Gibraltar Point and Freiston Shore with five and Frampton Marsh with eight. In May the largest counts were adjacent to the Humber at Alkborough Flats and at East Halton with six and 10 respectively. In Jun the highest total was only three, but things picked up in Jul as autumn got underway. Gibraltar Point had 17 and Frampton Marsh 15 but Freiston Shore had six totals in excess of 15 including 50 on Jul 30th. Nearly 30 sites saw the species visit in Aug with the two largest counts coming from Freiston Shore with 62 on the 2nd and 78 on the 4th, the year's highest total. The three highest counts of Sep were all on The Wash with the largest of 50 at Holbeach Marsh on the 23rd. Numbers dropped away in Oct with the largest total of 29 at Gedney Drove End on the 3rd. In the last two months of the year the only birds seen were at Frampton Marsh, maximum of four Nov 4th with just one after mid-month remaining until Dec 31st. The highest inland count was six at Manby Wetlands on Aug 31st.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	4	1	-	50	78	13	6	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	-	1	8	5	3	15	20	10	9	4	1
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	9	34	29	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	1	4	4	3	17	18	11	4	-	-
Holbeach Marsh	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	4	3	-	3	6	4	15	-	-
Welland Marsh	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	2	25	-	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	1	6	1	4	7	4	1	-	-
Tetney	-	-	-	1	2	-	2	8	9	1	-	-
East Halton	-	-	-	2	10	-	1	2	-	-	-	-

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*

Vagrant. South-east Europe through Ukraine to SW Russia and N Kazakhstan. First record July 2014. **BBRC**



Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni* Frampton Marsh Jun 18th 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni* Frampton Marsh Jun 18th 2019 © STEVE KEIGHTLEY

One was present at Frampton Marsh on 18th-21st June (T Barnatt et al). This was the second record for the county and the only British record in 2019. Including this one, there have now been 38 in Britain since 1950 where it remains a truly rare bird averaging around six records per decade (Accepted BBRC; *British Birds* 113: 585-655).

(See Finder's Report p 208).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* ■

Fairly common but declining passage migrant and winter visitor with small numbers in summer. Scarce inland. Red List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: no data.

The highest count for the year was 949 at Huttoft on Nov 5th. Kittiwakes were recorded in all months of the year with 67 observer sightings coming from 12 coastal sites. All sites recording 20 or more during the year are tabulated. No inland records were received.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Huttoft	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	3	15	949	-
Sutton on Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	925	-
Gibraltar Point	5	1	7	-	2	3	-	1	14	92	554	132
Anderby/Wolla Bank	56	-	18	-	-	-	2	-	2	15	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	22	-	-	208	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	130	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Pyewipe	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-

Kittiwakes are the most oceanic gull and are great wanderers. They are generally scarcer in winter, but some remain in the North Sea. Few were recorded in the first quarter of the year with 56 past Wolla Bank, Anderby on Jan 1st the most notable record. Only eight records were received during the period Apr-Jun with 20 north past Freiston Shore on Apr 12th and another 20 at Pyewipe on Jun 12th the best. Six records were received in Aug, the highest count being 22 past Chapel Point on Aug 10th and 14 north at Gibraltar Point on Sep 17th the best of that month. Counts of 49 on Oct 20th and 92 on 21st at Gibraltar Point were the highest in Oct but some big movements occurred on Nov 5th as follows: 925 past Sutton on Sea, 949 past Huttoft and 554 past Gibraltar Point; later some were in The Wash with 130 seen off the Witham Mouth. Another large movement occurred on Nov 15th with 208 past Chapel Point and 44 past Gibraltar Point, which also recorded the last significant movement of the year with 132 on Dec 9th.



Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Very scarce coastal migrant in autumn, mainly Aug-Oct. Exceptional inland. **LBRC**

There were four records this year, three of which were offshore at Gibraltar Point: the first was a 1CY bird on Sep 17th (KMW, BWd) followed by another 1CY offshore, which landed on the sea, on Sep 26th (KMW) and the third and last of the year, was a 1CY bird on Oct 6th (NAL, BWd). There was just one other record elsewhere of an adult at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 1st (CMo).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* ■

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: 22,000.

The table shows all sites recording 2,000 birds or more. Inland sites dominated with the Whisby NP/ North Hykeham lake complex having the most significant roost with a peak of 11,880 at Apex Pit on Jan 30th (the peak count for the year) and later in the year 10,000 roosted at nearby Teal Lake, Whisby NP on Nov 24th. Covenham Reservoir had 3,000 on Jan 6th but all of the other counts of 2,000 and above were on the coast with Gibraltar Point having 10 counts of 5,000 or more with most, 9,500, on Aug 20th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3000	2500	4685	900	376	900	3630	9500	9000	9000	5000	4125
North Hykeham	11880	4715	-	-	1	-	12	-	-	-	-	4600
Saltfleetby- Theddlethorpe	110	106	61	4	4	6	140	5000	6000	1150	1180	720
Whisby NP	11	432	760	100	1100	300	-	-	-	1	10000	80
Terrington	-	-	120	280	7	5	100	1220	8900	300	2	-
Tetney	1200	50	1	12	12	57	500	2000	2000	2000	1500	400
Covenham Reservoir	3000	100	700	1200	80	90	350	700	1000	500	350	300
Donna Nook	35	41	12	2	1	-	50	285	2000	400	3000	431
Freiston Shore	450	2000	130	85	52	350	250	1015	550	1	250	10
Welland Marsh	15	-	-	75	60		60	2600	800	300	-	22
Anderby	50	300	50	12	13	1	400	10	2500	18	300	14

Breeding was confirmed or reported at Deeping Lakes, Frampton Marsh, Freiston Shore, Gibraltar Point, Kirkby on Bain, Middlemarsh Farm and Whisby NP. The latter site held a total of 766 nests (comprising 530 on Thorpe Lake; seven on Coot Lake, 219 on Grebe Lake, and 10 on Teal Lake), very similar to the 2018 count. Gibraltar Point held a maximum of 183 nests (162 on Tennyson Sands, five on Jackson's Marsh, three on the Fenland Lagoon, nine on the Freshwater mere and four on the Old Saltmarsh). Frampton Marsh held 367 and Freiston Shore 108 active nests; Deeping Lakes had a maximum of 39 nests on May 18th with 37 young on Jun 14th; at Kirkby on Bain 105 fledged chicks were seen on Jun 26th. No data on breeding were provided from other sites.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus* ■

Fairly common passage migrant in spring and autumn, scarce/very scarce in summer and winter. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 1,000; for national importance: no data. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 47 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 10th. Recorded in 11 months of the year, there were 191 observer sightings from 18 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1.6	0	3.7	28.3	18.3	11	17.3	4.2	1.6	6.8	6.3	1.0

The significant sites are tabulated, evidence of a fairly poor year for the species. An adult offshore at Gibraltar Point on Jan 3rd was the first of the year followed by eight south on Jan 20th at Anderby Creek.

There were none in Feb, but a trickle of records Mar to early Apr was followed by flocks of 21 at Baston GP and a spring peak of 39 at Covenham Reservoir on Apr 22nd. Few occurred thereafter through May-Jun and autumn passage was poor with a maximum of 12 on the Huttoft-Anderby coast on Jul 18th. Oct-Nov was the peak period with Gibraltar Point seeing a total of 59 Oct 20th-28th and an autumn peak of 47 on Nov 10th. There were just two records in Dec with four at Gibraltar Point on 9th and the last of the year a single at Goxhill on 27th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	-	6	2	1	2	6	1	2	24	47	4
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	1	39	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	9	2	4	5	-	1	-	-	-
Baston	-	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft-Anderby coast	8	-	2	-	-	-	12	2	-	2	3	-
Tetney	-	-	-	4	-	-	6	3	-	-	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-
Barton Pits	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus* ■

Scarce, but increasing visitor throughout the year, most frequent in late summer/early autumn.

Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 2,400; for national importance: 40. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 17 at Gibraltar Point on Jul 26th, a reserve record. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 333 observer sightings from 26 sites. The top 10 sites in terms of the summed monthly maximum counts are tabulated. The species remains very scarce in winter and with little presence in the spring except for adult birds in Black-headed Gull colonies in Apr-Jun at Frampton Marsh, Middlemarsh Farm and Whisby NP. Display was noted but there was no definite proof of breeding. Frustratingly, two adults and a juvenile were at Whisby NP on Jul 5th, but these had not bred there. Surprisingly, there were no records from Kirkby on Bain this year. As has been seen in recent years a modest build-up of numbers occurred from mid-Jul onwards with an impressive count at Gibraltar Point of 17 birds on Jul 26th (four adults, one 3CY, three 2CY and nine juveniles). Elsewhere in Jul up to six were seen along the coast between Chapel St Leonard's-Huttoft (two adults, four immatures) and five at Barton upon Humber/ Read's Island (three adults, one 3CY, 1 2CY). The origin of these birds has been overwhelmingly continental so far, with 13 different Polish-ringed birds seen in 2015 and in 2014 birds from Hungary (1), Poland (2) and The Netherlands (1). Given their presence at apparently suitable breeding sites with already established Black-headed Gull colonies how long will it be before they become established (although we have been asking this question for several years)?

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	1	2	2	3	4	17	5	5	2	1	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	1	-	2	2	3	3	1	1	-	1	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	-	-	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	2	1	-	-
Whisby NP	1	-	1	2	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft-Anderby coast	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	1	1	1	-	-
Chapel St Leonard's	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1	-	-	1	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
Cleethorpes	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	-
Barton upon Humber	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Reads Island	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-



Common Gull *Larus canus* ■

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 16400; for national importance: 7,000.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	10000	5000	150	10	9	1	100	10	40	60	170	750
Toft next Newton	25	20	350	1	3	-	2	1000	50	3	80	7000
Gibraltar Point	1000	340	698	155	40	34	252	450	60	450	850	875
Donna Nook	64	4	10	2	-	-	50	1	19	1	4000	91
North Hykeham	2970	785	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	400
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	120	900	71	5		13	26	1000	875	57	55	650
Tetney	25		1	4		1	34	600	100	150	250	20
Anderby	100	200	300	5	97		53	13	30	7	200	1
Huttoft	300	46	20	40	3	1	53	5	10	100	200	80
Louth	250	250	20	4			2	20	1	100	30	10

Peak monthly counts from sites recording 1,000 or more in any month are summarised in the table. Covenham Reservoir had the highest count in the first half of the year with 10,000 on Jan 6th and North Hykeham had 2,970 on Jan 30th. Numbers were typically low during the second quarter with small numbers of immatures staying to summer coastally. The first signs that autumn passage was underway came when 252 roosted at Gibraltar Point on Jul 20th building to 450 by Aug 30th. Inland 1,000 were counted at Toft Newton on Aug 13th and another 1,000 were on the coast at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Aug 21st. The next significant counts were not until well into the last quarter when wintering totals at Donna Nook and Toft Newton were the most significant.

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*

Very rare vagrant. LBRC

One record of a 2CY bird at Trent Port Wetlands, Marton Feb 5th (DN). The first record was also a 2CY bird, in Jul-Aug 1988, and this year's is just the fifth county record. Although 'ex-BBRC 1988' it remains a tricky species to identify for some and it may be overlooked if occurring with large congregations of gulls on the coast or in the Wolds.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* ■

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor with some immatures remaining in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 3,600; for national importance: 760.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	200	55	800	800	140	160	159	170	150	220	260	180
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	79	23	43	19	5	12	2	86	107	110	60	100
Kirkby on Bain	250	80	30	50	2	-	-	-	150	1	56	24
Middlemarsh Farm	30	30	9	11	25	20	5	130	160	70	16	50
Tetney	36	1	-	16	6	5	9	10	29	128	220	35
Donna Nook	69	12	39	8	3	-	17	27	15	10	29	50
Humberston	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	10	220	4	-
Saltfleet	33	23	28	1	10	-	28	-	22	25	20	15
Cleethorpes	27	15	17	5	16	2	3	10	15	12	12	20
Huttoft	20	7	1	2	-	-	30	3	4	50	25	2

The top 10 sites in the county are listed in the table. On the coast, the top site for this large gull is Gibraltar Point. During the six years to 2019, LBR data shows that the largest peak site counts were here in five out of six years; the counts of 800 on Mar 13th and Apr 4th were far and away the highest in the county

in 2019. Kirkby on Bain still has a working landfill site and it recorded the next highest counts of 250 on Jan 18th and 30th. Middlemarsh Farm was the only other inland site to record more than 100, with nine counts of 100-160, Aug 19th-Sep 21st. Frampton Marsh, not tabulated, had a count of 100 on Oct 14th but otherwise all monthly peak counts were 10 or less. Lincolnshire is one of the most important wintering sites for Great Black-backed Gull in Britain with ringing data showing that birds from Scotland, Norway and Denmark winter in the county and in 2019 a bird ringed as a nestling in Norway in 2016 was recovered freshly dead in Grimsby in Sep 2019.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 3,100; for national importance: 2. **LBRC**

Around 13 individuals were seen in the county in 2019. A 3CY was at Gibraltar Point on Jan 4th (OBt *et al*) followed by a 1CY on Jan 17th which was joined by another 1CY on Feb 2nd (GPBO). One or both of these two were seen on and off until Mar 3rd at least. A 3CY was at Festival Pools, Skegness Mar 11th-12th (NAL) and presumed the same bird at Gibraltar Point Mar 13th, 17th-18th and 20th (GPBO). Finally it or another 3CY was present on Apr 16th and 19th, the last of the spring. Elsewhere, a 2CY bird was at Donna Nook on Jan 11th-12th (CA) with a 3CY there on Jan 20th-30th (GPC). Another (unaged) bird was at Covenham Reservoir Jan 30th (RHay), a 2CY flew over Saltfleetby St. Peter on Feb 17th (BMC) and a 3CY came in off



Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*
Gibraltar Point Feb 12th 2019 © PAUL NEALE



Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* Donna Nook Feb 2nd 2019 © MARK JOHNSON

the sea at Chapel St. Leonards on Mar 16th (RDn). There may be a certain amount of replication with the Chapel Point-Gibraltar Point records. In contrast to the Jan-Apr records, there was just a single bird in the second half of the year when a 1CY went west over Saltfleetby St. Peter (BMC).

There was also an additional record for 2018 when an immature went north at Witham Mouth Feb 4th (JB); this was seen at Gibraltar Point later on the same date (already documented).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor Aug-May. Kumlien's Gull *L. g. kumlieni* is a vagrant. Amber List (nominate). Threshold for international importance: 3,100; for national importance: 3. LBRC

A good year involving around 15 birds, although this may be an over-estimate given their mobility. The first of these was a 2CY at Middlemarsh Farm which had first been seen Dec 27th 2018 and lingered until Feb 9th 2019 (NAL). Elsewhere in the first half of the year, an elusive adult was at Kirkby on Bain on Jan 4th, 12th and again Feb 22nd (NAL, PAH, ADv et al); there was also a 3CY bird there Jan 4th-5th (NAL, DN). Also in Jan an adult was on the beach at Chapel St. Leonard's Jan 5th (RDn) and another immature was at Brickyard Lane, Theddlethorpe on Jan 11th (DCo). A 3CY bird flew over Saltfleetby St Peter on Apr 3rd and 6th (BMC) and an adult was at Manby Wetlands Apr 25th (GW). The last bird of the first half of the year was an immature which flew over Gibraltar Point on May 11th and 12th, assumed to be the same bird (GPC, KMW).

The first returning bird of the autumn was an adult seen flying over Saltfleetby St Peter on Sep 7th (BMC); this is presumed to be the same bird seen in the area and at Manby Wetlands on several dates in Nov-Dec, lastly at Manby Wetlands on Dec 31st. The only other autumn record was of a 1CY bird at Gibraltar Point on Nov 7th which flew in from inland (KMW).

There was an additional record for 2018: A 3CY bird flew over Saltfleetby St Peter on Dec 21st (BMC).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* ■ (*argenteus*) ■ (*argentatus*)

British form '*argenteus*' a common passage migrant and winter visitor; fairly common and increasing breeding species. Nominate northern European form '*argentatus*' a fairly common winter visitor. Red List (*argenteus*) and Green List (*argentatus*). Threshold for international importance: 10,200; for national importance: 7,300.

It is worth mentioning the majority of birds recorded in the county are of the subspecies *argenteus* but on passage and during the winter months good numbers of the more easterly and northerly nominate *L. a. argentatus* are present; typically these are larger and darker birds, adults being safely identifiable, as primary pattern differs to that of the British breeding subspecies *argenteus*.



Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* Trent Port Mar-Apr 2019 © DEAN NICOLSON

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* ■

Very scarce all-year visitor, first county record in 1995. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 3,200; for national importance: 1. **LBRC**

Caspian Gulls were recorded in four months of the year with eight observer sightings from three sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	12.5	12.5	0	0	0	37.5	37.5	0	0	0	0

2CY birds were seen at Middlemarsh Farm Feb 3rd (NAL) and at Trent Port Wetlands Mar 31st-Apr 10th (DN, BHe); the latter carried a yellow colour ring X34E and was also present there on Aug 4th and 12th, and again on Oct 24th. As usual several more arrived in Jul-Aug with a 3CY bird at Gibraltar Point on Jul 6th (BWd), a 1CY at Middlemarsh Farm on Jul 14th-Aug 7th (NAL), an adult at Trent Port Wetlands Jul 17th-18th and an adult at Norton Disney Pits Jul 31st (DN,BWd). A 1CY bird was at Gibraltar Point on Aug 2nd (KMW) and Sep 26th (GPBO), and there was another 1CY at Middlemarsh Farm intermittently Aug 22nd-Sep 8th (NAL). Since the first county record in Dec 2001, they have been recorded in every month of the year with non-breeding birds arriving from Jul onwards. Jul-Aug are the only months when fresh plumaged juveniles may be seen, peaking mid-Sep with significant numbers remaining into Nov. Most have left by Dec but return migration begins Feb-Mar.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* ■

Scarce visitor, mainly in late summer/autumn. **RBBP** Azorean Yellow-legged Gull *L. m. atlantis* is a vagrant, **BBRC**. Amber List (nominate). Threshold for international importance: 13,900; for national importance: 8. **LBRC**

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 143 observer sightings from 17 sites. The table shows all sites recording at least two birds in any month. Still a scarce visitor, few birds over-wintered, mostly singles, apart from three at Covenham Reservoir on Jan 15th and at least two different adults at Kirkby on Bain. Some lingered into Apr and a pair were seen on Jackson's Marsh, Gibraltar Point on May 4th where one or two immature birds were present Jun-Jul. The expected appearance of 1CY/juvenile birds started to appear in Jul-Aug with the first at Gibraltar Point on Jul 13th and what was the only record of the year for Alkborough Flats on Jul 30th. Most individuals were present during Aug with 1CY birds reported from eight sites, two of them inland at Bassingham and Marston STW, with at least 20 birds involved, perhaps more given movement along the coast. Few stayed after the end of Sep with singles at East Halton Oct 5th, Gibraltar Point on Nov 6th, 29th and Dec 29th and a long-staying adult bird at Covenham Reservoir until Dec 31st and into 2020.



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	1	2	1	2	3	2	-	1	-
Covenham Reservoir	3	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	1	3	3	1	1	1	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Marston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Bassingham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* ■ (*graellsii*) ■ (*intermedius*).

Present all year: western European form '*graellsii*' common on spring and autumn passage, scarce but increasing in winter and as breeding species. Danish and southern Scandinavian form '*intermedius*' is a fairly common passage migrant. Birds showing characters of the northern Scandinavian form '*fuscus*' (Baltic Gull) have been noted, one accepted record in 2016. Amber List (*graellsii*) and Green List (*intermedius*). Threshold for international importance: 5,500; for national importance: 1,200.

The BTO Bird Atlas 2007-11 reported a remarkable change in the status of this species with increases in both the winter and breeding season. The species was recorded in all months of the year with 2,406 records coming from 119 sites. The highest count for the year was 1,350 at Marston on Aug 11th. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3.2	4.8	7.8	13.3	13.1	10.4	11.7	12.6	11.8	7.7	2.7	0.8

Relatively small numbers were reported during Jan-early Mar followed by signs of returning spring migrants from the second half of Mar into May. The consistently high number at Deeping Lakes NR was due to the number of breeding birds there with a maximum of 49 nests in May and 44 on Jun 14th plus at least 50 chicks of varying sizes. The only other breeding records were from Boston town centre, and Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness where up to three pairs per site were reported, and Gibraltar Point where there were two pairs. Numbers built up during Aug with easily the highest total being of 1350 inland at Marston STW on Aug 11th. At Deeping Lakes NR, the count of 164 on Aug 4th comprised 86 adults and 78 juveniles, most of which had fledged. Reasonable numbers remained during Sep-Oct but thereafter there were few in the county Nov-Dec with 56 at Kirkby on Bain on Dec 9th and 20 at Tetney Marshes on Dec 6th the highest counts. A 2CY bird colour-ringed in York in 2017 was present at Gibraltar Point in Jan and three dead birds were recovered on The Wash having been ringed in Gloucestershire (1) and at Terrington Marsh (2); the Gloucestershire bird was 29yrs.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
Morrisons Car Park, Scunthorpe Jun 2019
© SIMON SPAVIN





Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marston	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1350	120	-	-	-
Deeping St James	2	8	98	67	114	82	118	164	23	1	-	-
Gibraltar Point	1	3	59	36	35	29	56	73	14	16	2	1
Kirkby on Bain	20	30	60	100	12	3	-	-	10	-	1	56
Boultham Mere	1	4	6	17	58	16	25	72	20	24	5	1
Lincoln	-	34	39	40	47	1	-	25	23	30	3	-
Cleethorpes	-	2	5	6	4	4	6	200	2	-	-	-
Toft next Newton	-	1	6	4	2	-	10	38	40	100	3	4
Marton	2	1	1	10	5	4	50	45	15	22	4	-
Baston	1	4	18	21	25	22	30	15	12	-	-	1

'Baltic Gull' *L.f. fuscus*

Vagrant. Scandinavia. **BBRC**

The first county record was of an adult bird (7CY) seen at Norton Disney Quarry on Jul 22nd 2016 (DN, BWd which had had been colour-ringed in a Norwegian colony). This comes after a long review of this subspecies by BBRC (*British Birds* 113: 585-665).

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Vagrant. Western Europe. About 17 records involving about 13 mobile birds. **BBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019 but note the revised dates for this 2016 record: Two 3CY+ birds at Gibraltar Point, Jun 14th-18th, one to Jun 19th (BBa, JPS et al). BBRC (*British Birds* 113: 585-665).

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* ■

Passage migrant, scarce in spring but common in autumn. Rare inland. Occasional pairs in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 1,700; for national importance: 1.

The highest count for the year was 4,980 at Gibraltar Point on Jul 27th. Recorded in nine months of the year there were 355 observer sightings from 27 sites; those sites recording 300 or more in at least one month are tabulated.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Gibraltar Point	-	31	206	458	4980	3872	438	23	1
Anderby-Huttoft coast	-	-	-	-	400	1400	150	30	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	9	546	400	1	-	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	-	3	720	2	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	3	70	550	60	6	-
Donna Nook	-	1	2	-	350	44	-	-	-

A 1CY bird was present at Witham Mouth on Dec 28th 2018 and this may well have been the individual, now 2CY, recorded by one of the Frampton Marsh WeBS counters on Jan 28th 2019. After that the first spring bird was seen on Apr 10th at Gibraltar Point. A trickle of records followed with 31 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 27th followed by 104 on May 4th and 206 May 9th. Remarkably few were seen elsewhere on the coast and there were none reported inland. In the summer, 458 off Gibraltar Point on Jun 30th presumably related largely to feeding birds from breeding colonies at Blakeney Point and Scolt Head, Norfolk; these birds may travel up to 50km from their breeding sites when foraging.

In the autumn two were at Baston GP Jun 30th-Jul 1st and three at Toft Newton Reservoir also Jul 1st, the only records from inland sites. Numbers began to increase from Jul post-breeding and the well-known roost at Gibraltar Point built up Jul 10th-12th from 156 to 982 and then Jul 22nd-27th from 2,232 to 4,980. This was sustained into Aug with 3,872 on 28th. Twelve counts of more than 200 were made there in Sep with 438 on 8th and large numbers indeed were still passing through the coastal sites. By Oct most had



gone with a few double-figure counts, the last of these being 23 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 20th with the final bird of the year there on Nov 10th.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* ■

Scarce summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Occasional inland. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 190; for national importance: no data. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 293 at Gibraltar Point on May 4th. Recorded in seven months of the year there were 160 observer sightings recorded from 16 sites. The vast majority of sightings were between Apr 18th and Sep 9th. The sites reporting most birds are tabulated (note truncated table).

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	9	293	49	10	16	-	1
Witham Mouth	-	3	-	-	8	8	-
Anderby	-	-	-	13	3	3	-
Welland Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	16	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	13	-	-	-
Terrington	-	-	-	-	-	12	-
Grainthorpe	-	8	-	-	-	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	4	3	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	1	6	-
Saltfleet	4	2	-	-	-	-	-

The first returning bird was seen on Apr 18th at Gibraltar Point with display noted on May 1st. There were few reports from elsewhere along the coast until late May. There was an unprecedented spring passage north past Gibraltar Point concentrated between May 4th-10th peaking at 281 north on May 4th and another 191 north on 9th. A roost of 120 was noted on the high tide on May 24th and the first nests (5) there were seen on May 26th. Much smaller numbers were seen in the autumn with 16 at Gibraltar Point Aug 5th and a combined total of 28 in The Wash on Sep 1st at Terrington and Welland Marsh. The last of the year was a straggler at Gibraltar Point on Oct 20th.

The only site in the county to have any breeding pairs was Gibraltar Point. Despite huge efforts there, the 10 pairs of Little Terns fledged just a single chick. Five nests were found on May 26th but terrible weather conditions in mid-Jun saw all but one fail. The surviving fledgling first flew Aug 8th.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* ■

Very scarce passage migrant, May-Oct. Red List. **LBRC RBBP**

A particularly poor showing this year, even given its national rarity. There were no spring records, and just four in the autumn. The first of the four was a bird past Chapel Point on Jul 27th (GWr, RDn) followed by an adult out of the tern roost and then north past Gibraltar Point on Jul 30th (BWd). The pattern was repeated in Aug with one past Chapel Point on Aug 4th (RDn) and another adult went south past Gibraltar Point on Aug 10th (KMW).

From 2001-19 Roseate Terns were recorded in every year except for 2002, 2005 and 2013, mostly single birds except for 2008 (4), 2009 (5) and 2009 (8). Roseate Terns have been recorded in every month Apr-Oct, peaking in mid-Aug to mid-Sep.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* ■

Fairly common summer visitor and common passage migrant. Most breeding colonies are now inland. Amber List (nominate). Threshold for international importance: 1,800; for national importance: no data.

Recorded in seven months of the year. There were 1,032 observer sightings recorded during the year with those coming from 66 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:



Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	8.4	26.5	21	19.1	17.2	7.1	0.7	0	0

The first bird of the year was a single at Frampton Marsh on Apr 5th. Two days later another single was observed at Messingham SQ. Just nine counts exceeded 100, six of which came from Gibraltar Point, including the year's second highest total of 226 towards the end of Aug. The other four were from the Chapel Point Observatory area, Freiston Shore, Tetney and the year's largest count of 5,500, as with last year, at North Cotes on Aug 18th. Inland, the year's highest count was 45 on May 18th during the WeBS count at East Pits, Deeping St. James; the final inland record came from Willow Tree Fen where there were five on Aug 4th.

Breeding activity was noted at several sites though outcomes were mostly unknown. Fifteen occupied nests were counted at East Pits, Deeping St James on May 18th, increasing to 17 on Jun 17th. The colony at Kirkby on Bain had a small number of nests but vegetation precluded accurate counting and few juveniles were seen during the summer. There were 21 apparently occupied nests at Frampton Marsh and 40 at Freiston Shore. At this last site, 34 chicks fledged from the 17 nests located inside the protective fence, but none fledged from the remaining 23 nests outside it. On the Humber bank a few pairs bred and fledged chicks at Barton Pits on the rafts on Hotel and Ness Pits. Several pairs were seen at Gibraltar Point with up to four nests in Jun. Most birds departed the county during Sep with a few lingering into Oct and the final birds of the year were all at coastal sites with two at Huttoft Oct 21st and the last two of the year flew south on Oct 27th at Gibraltar Point.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* ■

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal but there is a regular inland passage in spring. Has bred. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 20,000; for national importance: no data.

The highest count for the year was 93 at Gibraltar Point on Jul 31st. Recorded in seven months of the year, there were 136 observer sightings from 23 sites and the top 10 are tabulated.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	1	44	1	93	26	6	2
Goxhill	63	-	-	-	-	-	-
Barton Pits	1	61	-	-	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	11	34	-	-	-	-	-
Anderby-Huttoft coast	-	1	-	11	13	4	1
Baston	-	20	-	2	-	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	21	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	12	1	-	-	1	2	-
North Hykeham	-	15	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	9	4

The first of the year was one at Covenham Reservoir on Apr 5th, with 11 on Apr 12th and 34 May 3rd; the last of the spring passage there were four on May 10th. Small numbers as usual passed through other inland sites with most at Baston GP on May 3rd (10) and May 5th (20) with 15 at Apex Pit, North Hykeham May 9th. On the coast numbers were higher (see table) and most spring passage was concentrated into the period Apr 14th-May 10th. Gibraltar Point had nearly all of the double-figure counts in Jul with a peak of 93 south on Jul 30th. Further passage in Aug was patchy with 13 past Chapel Point on Aug 2nd, 26 Gibraltar Point Aug 10th and 13 Aug 30th the only double-figure counts. Numbers dwindled during Sep with 10 at Freiston Shore 10th and nine at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sep 4th the two highest. A few Arctic Terns usually linger into Oct and nine were at East Halton Oct 6th, and the last two singles were at Gibraltar Point on Oct 29th and Freiston Shore Oct 30th.



White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Rare/very scarce migrant. S. Europe. **LBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019 but note a corrected date range for this 2014 record: The 1CY+ bird at Covenham Reservoir, Oct 1st-8th, 2014 (Corrected in BBRC record, *British Birds* 113: 585-655).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* ■

Scarce/fairly common passage migrant in spring and autumn. **RBBP** American Black Tern *C. n. surinamensis* is a vagrant (**BBRC**). Green List. Threshold for international importance: 7,500; for national importance: no data.

The highest count for the year was 27 at Baston on Apr 25th. Recorded in five months of the year, there were 83 observer sightings from 18 sites. Birds were divided equally between coastal and inland sites as can be seen from the table below.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Baston		27	3					
Covenham Reservoir			16				1	
Whisby NP			14					
North Hykeham			14					
Frampton Marsh			5		1	2	1	
Deeping St James		6	2					
Gibraltar Point			1		2	3	1	
Toft next Newton			5				1	

The first bird of the year was a single at Barton Pits on Apr 19th-20th, followed by up to seven at Baston on Apr 22nd. Three days later on 25th the highest count of the year of 27 was also recorded there. Two other double-figure totals were recorded on May 8th: 16 at Covenham Reservoir and 14 at Whisby NP and the adjacent North Hykeham Pits. Two going east in Lincoln city centre along the River Witham towards Washingborough on May 13th was unusual. The last birds of the spring were on May 18th at Covenham and Toft Reservoirs.

Autumn passage was marked by birds at Gibraltar Point on Jul 26th and Frampton Marsh on Jul 28th but was generally very light with the highest counts being of just three birds at Chapel Point Observatory on Aug 2nd and Gibraltar Point on Aug 24th. The final bird of the year was one at Covenham Reservoir on Sep 29th.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua* ■

Fairly common autumn passage migrant, mainly August to November and rare in winter and spring. Rare inland. Amber List.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	30	11	8	1
Anderby-Huttoft coast	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	11	16	20	1
Sutton on Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	11	-

There were 74 observer sightings recorded during the from 13 sites; the table above shows all sites with a double-figure count in at least one month. There were only three records in the first half of the year, singles at Anderby Creek on Jan 9th, at Gibraltar Point on Jan 10th and at Grainthorpe on Apr 19th. Return passage began on 30th Jul with single birds at Anderby-Huttoft, Chapel St Leonards and Gibraltar Point. Records increased slightly during August with from one to two birds at Gibraltar Point on five dates, two at Anderby-Huttoft and singles at Chapel St Leonards and Trusthorpe. The greatest proportion of the year's records occurred in Sep when the highest single counts of the year were also recorded: of 30 birds

at Gibraltar Point on the 5th and 16th and with notable counts there also of 17 on the 17th and 11 on the 7th. Anderby Creek also recorded 11 birds on Sep 28th, with six at the Witham mouth on 16th and four at Frampton Marsh on the 7th. On Oct 1st, 11 birds were at Gibraltar Point and 16 birds were at Huttoft with 12 at the latter site on the 20th. Otherwise, most records in Oct were of five birds or fewer. Early Nov saw 20 birds at Huttoft, 14 at Sutton on Sea, eight at Gibraltar Point and four at the Witham Mouth, all on the 5th. Later in the month, 11 birds were observed at Anderby-Huttoft and (presumably the same birds) at Chapel St Leonards on the 15th. A single bird at Gibraltar Point on Dec 24th was the only record for the month and the final bird of the year.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus* ■

Generally scarce autumn passage migrant, although occasional larger movements, mainly September to November. Rare in winter and spring and exceptional inland. Green List.

Site Name	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sutton on Sea	-	-	42	-
Gibraltar Point	3	5	27	2
Huttoft	3	1	22	-
Anderby	-	1	7	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	7	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	7	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	4	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	1	-
Donna Nook	-	-	1	1
Freiston Shore	1	-	-	-
Barton upon Humber	-	-	1	-





All records this year were from Sep-Dec and the table shows the peak monthly counts at all sites. The first of the autumn was seen at Huttoft on Sep 7th with a trickle of birds from then until the end of Oct, maximum of seven at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 20th. The highest counts of the year were all on Nov 5th with 42 south at Sutton on Sea, all appearing to be juveniles, and 27 south at Gibraltar Point (presumably some of the same birds) which included five adults. Following seven at Gibraltar Point on Nov 15th a long-staying adult (probably a male) in the Donna Nook seal colony afforded very close views for many, last seen Dec 5th. Two at Gibraltar Point on Dec 9th were followed by singles, the last of the year there on Dec 19th and 23rd.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* ■

Fairly common, but decreasing, late summer and autumn passage migrant, mainly July to October. Very scarce in spring and winter and exceptional inland. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 57 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 1st. Recorded in seven months of the year, there were 119 observer sightings during the year from 16 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0.8	1.7	0	11.8	28.6	31.9	22.7	2.5	0

As usual, the great majority of birds were seen at Gibraltar Point. There were three singles in the early part of the year: at Huttoft Apr 6th and Gibraltar Point May 4th and 6th. Return passage began with one at Gibraltar Point on Jul 12th, with one to five noted there and at a few other coastal sites from Huttoft south, on nine days during the rest of the month. Records were more widespread in Aug, although very few from the northern half of the county with just one at Tetney on the 10th, two at Cleethorpes 14th and one at Saltfleet on the 15th; the remaining 104 records were noted from Trusthorpe south, with a peak at Gibraltar Point of 19 on the 30th. Very nearly half of the year's records (282) occurred in Sep with the same sort of distribution as for Aug. All double-figure counts, apart from 12 at Witham Mouth on the 7th, came from Gibraltar Point with peaks of 50 there on the 5th, 34 on the 7th, 21 on the 8th and later in the month 16 on the 17th and 17 on the 29th. The closest to an inland record was of two birds at East Halton on Sep 21st. There was a flurry of records on Oct 1st with 20 at Huttoft and 57 at Gibraltar Point after which numbers declined rapidly with one to six until the 20th and singles thereafter until the end of the month. A few birds were noted in Nov with five at Huttoft on the 5th, seven at Gibraltar Point on the same day and, finally, one there on the 15th. Sea watchers generally feel that numbers are declining, and the sum of day counts for the year, including duplicates of birds being recorded at different sites was 570; this compares with 697 in 2009.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus* ■

Very scarce/scarse autumn passage migrant, mainly Aug-Oct and exceptional inland. Green List. LBRC

A poor year for this species with just four records involving five birds. The first two concerned singles past Gibraltar Point on Sep 17th (KMW, BWD) and 29th (NAL, BWD) followed by two past Huttoft Car Terrace Oct 1st (PAH, GMO et al) and lastly another past Gibraltar Point Oct 6th (NAL, BWD). All were juveniles. Numbers very hugely from year to year and over the 10 years to 2019 ranged from a low of five this year to 47 in 2013, with an average of about 16 birds per annum.

Little Auk *Alle alle* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, with occasional larger influxes. Green List (nominate)

There were 34 observer sightings during the year coming from 10 coastal sites. A single seen from Gibraltar Point on Feb 8th was the sole record in the first quarter of the year. As in previous years modest numbers were seen in the autumn, all in Oct and Nov. The first birds were noted on sea watches on Oct 21st with three at Mablethorpe and Anderby Creek, four at Huttoft and eight north at Gibraltar Point. Then in the last five days of Oct a steady trickle of birds was noted with two at the Humber Bridge Viewing Area on 27th, one off Gibraltar Point 28th, and most then on 29th: 11 Huttoft and Mablethorpe, 10 Gibraltar Point,



and two Barton on Humber. A single was at Freiston Shore on Oct 30th and another four at Huttoft on 31st completed the month's tally. Smaller counts were recorded in Nov at the same coastal sites with five at Huttoft on 5th and at Gibraltar Point on 15th. The last bird of the year was a single on Nov 22nd seen going south at Chapel Point. There were no inland records.

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* ■

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor but can occur in any month. Rare inland.
Amber List.

There were 135 observer sightings recorded during 11 months of the year and from 18 sites. The annual pattern was as expected with a small wintering population, largely in The Wash, very few at all between Apr-Aug and the highest counts in the autumn. Most were counted during Oct with a monthly maximum of 154 north at Huttoft on Oct 21st and another 133 there on Oct 20th; the county total of Guillemots and Razorbills for 20th-21st was 989. Monthly maxima by site are tabulated below with all sites recording more than 10 on at least one occasion shown:

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Huttoft	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	546	95	-
Gibraltar Point	9	8	2	1	-	2	-	-	7	47	6	3
Saltfleetby	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	46	-	-
Theddlethorpe												
Freiston Shore	30	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-
Witham Mouth	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11
Mablethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-
Anderby	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	5	-
Sutton on Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-

Razorbill *Alca torda* ■

Western European form (*islandica*) scarce passage migrant and winter visitor but can occur in any month. Exceptional inland. Amber List (*islandica*).

Razorbills were recorded in seven months of the year with 23 observer sightings coming from four coastal sites. The table below gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
21.7	13	0	0	8.7	13	0	0	13	21.7	8.7	0

Razorbills remain a scarce species in the county with no double-figure counts in 2019, although they are likely to be more common than reported as many pass by too far out to be safely differentiated from Guillemots. The tiny wintering population had gone by Feb 9th and in spring Gibraltar Point reported one to four birds in May and Jun. The first record of the autumn was slightly later than usual with a single off Anderby Creek on Sep 25th, four at Gibraltar Point on Oct 29th and only six further reports with the last on Nov 8th.

Unidentified Auk (Guillemot or Razorbill) *Uria aalge* or *Alca torda*

Large auks can be impossible to identify at distance, but observers are encouraged to report all movements of unidentified auks. These records are only occasionally published if there has been heavy passage. The highest count for the year was 720 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 20th. Recorded in 11 months of the year there were 117 observer sightings recorded during the year with those coming from five sites.

Small movements of Auk sp. took place occasionally during the winter months, but as expected the largest numbers were seen in Oct past Gibraltar Point and Huttoft (see Guillemot and Razorbill, above). Most of the 720 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 20th went south but on other Oct dates significant numbers also went north.



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	44	22	4	-	4	8	6	1	57	720	39	53
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	417	1	-
Chapel St Leonards	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	30	-	2
Anderby	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	10	-	-	-

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle* ■

A rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. **LBRC** *C.g. mandtii* vagrant, one record in 2017, **BBRC**.

Just a single record was reported in 2019, a bird in transitional plumage seen close in from Chapel Point on Oct 30th (RDn).

Additional record for 2017: The BOURC accepted the 2CY+ bird of the high arctic race *C.g. mandtii* seen on Dec 7th-11th at the Witham Mouth as the first example of this distinctive taxon to be recorded in Britain (<https://www.bou.org.uk/changes-6-mar-2020/>).

See Finder's Report p 206. (BBRC, *British Birds* 113: 585-665)

Puffin *Fratercula arctica* ■

Scarce passage migrant but can occur in any month. Exceptional inland. Red List. **LBRC**

Puffins remain a county rarity and in 2019 they were recorded in five months of the year with 11 records from four coastal sites. The only record of the first quarter was a single off Gibraltar Point on Jan 8th (NAL). There was one off Gibraltar Point Jun 29th (LA) and no more until the autumn when one was at Gibraltar Point Sep 9th (Sai) followed by one at Anderby Creek on Sep 28th (RDn). Gibraltar Point recorded birds in Oct on 21st (NAL), 28th (KMW, BWD) and two on 29th (GPBO), and in Nov on 12th (KMW) and 18th (BWD), the last of the year. Also in Nov singles were seen at Huttoft on 5th (RL) and at Chapel Point on 15th (RDn). Additional record for 2017: Two summer plumage adults seen from a boat in The Wash May 18th (AJB et al).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* ■

Fairly common offshore passage migrant and winter visitor Aug-May with peaks in mid-winter. Rare inland and in summer. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 3,000; for national importance: 210.



Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* Target Pit, Far Ings Nov 29th 2019 © PAUL COOMBES



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	103	283	39	1	1	-	-	1	28	56	101	194
Anderby-Huttoft coast	60	-	11	-	-	-	1	-	13	325	29	2
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	30	19	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	9	29	57
Mablethorpe	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	11	13	-
Saltfleet	1	-	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5

There were 301 sightings recorded during the year coming from 18 sites; the table shows the main coastal counts although clearly there may be some duplication. Records in the first quarter of the year came predominantly from Gibraltar Point with peaks of 103 birds on Jan 1st and 283 on Feb 13th. Smaller numbers were recorded from 10 other sites in Jan-Feb. Numbers declined in Mar, but double figures were recorded from Gibraltar Point (39 on Mar 1st), Saltfleet (24 on Mar 9th) and Anderby-Huttoft coast (11 on Mar 18th). In Apr and May, single birds only were recorded on five dates, all from Gibraltar Point. With no records in June, the first returning birds of the autumn were in Jul with a single at Cleethorpes on Jul 7th and singles at Anderby-Huttoft coast later in the month (28th and 31st). Single birds were at Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Aug 31st before records picked up from Sep. In the final quarter, the peak count for the year came from Anderby-Huttoft coast with 325 birds on Oct 29th. Subsequently, the only counts in three figures were both from Gibraltar Point: 101 birds on Nov 30th and 194 on Dec 27th. Ten other coastal sites recorded one to four birds during the year, mainly Sep-Dec and a lone bird was at Far Ings NR Nov 29th-Dec 2nd.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* ■

Scarce winter visitor to coastal and inland waters. Mainly Sep-Apr, rare in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 3,500; for national importance: 6.

Recorded in seven months of the year. There were 35 observer sightings recorded during the year with those coming from eight sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
14.3	8.6	5.7	0	0	0	0	0	11.4	34.3	17.1	8.6

In the first quarter of the year, single birds were recorded at Mablethorpe and Huttoft on Jan 2nd, Freiston Shore on Jan 9th and Gibraltar Point on six dates from Jan 26th-Mar 11th. Only a single inland bird was recorded for the year, at Apex Pit, North Hykeham from Jan 4th-31st, being only the second record there (the first in Nov 1985). The first bird of the autumn was a single in summer plumage at Gibraltar Point on Sep 10th; birds were recorded there on 13 other dates through the final quarter until Dec 21st, with a peak count there for the year of five on Oct 29th. Elsewhere, Huttoft had a single bird on Sep 22nd, a peak of four on Oct 20th and three on Nov 5th. Single birds were also at Mablethorpe on two dates in Oct, at Anderby and Chapel St Leonards on Oct 30th and at Sutton on Sea on Nov 5th.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer* ■

Rare/scarce winter visitor Aug-May. Mainly coastal and exceptional in summer. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 50; for national importance: 43.

The table gives the percentage of observer records for each month. There were 25 records for the year from eight sites but with only three records in the first half of the year – a single bird at Gibraltar Point on Jan 3rd and 9th and one at Tetney on Jan 19th. A single, exceptional, summer record came from Anderby on Jul 7th and a bird north in early Sept (3rd) at Gibraltar Point preceded a brief period in late Oct which had over half (14) the year's sightings and that began with single birds at Gibraltar Point, Huttoft and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the 20th. Single birds were then seen subsequently in October at Anderby (29th), Chapel St Leonards (29th), Donna Nook (30th), Freiston Shore (29th), Gibraltar Point (27th), Huttoft (21st and 28th) and Tetney (29th); the maximum counts for the year, of two birds at each site, came from Gibraltar Point (29th) and Freiston Shore (30th). There were only six records from November, all of single birds from Donna Nook (16th), Freiston Shore (6th), Huttoft (5th) and Gibraltar Point on the 15th, 18th and the final record of the year, on the 21st.



Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
12	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	56	24	0

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* ■

Very scarce offshore migrant Jul-Nov averaging more than one per year but variable between years; exceptional inland and in other months. Amber List. **LBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019. Since 2000, there has been around 26 records but with nine of those were in 2013. There were none in 2000, 2002-3, 2005, 2007-10, 2012 or 2017. A hard species to see in the county.

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* ■

Scarce offshore migrant generally Sep-Nov, but also May and Dec-Jan. Exceptional inland. Amber List. **LBRC**

There were five records in 2019 with the first past Gibraltar Point on Sep 16th and another in The Wash at Freiston Shore on Sep 18th. One on Oct 29th past Gibraltar Point was the sole record in that month and the final two were both on Nov 15th, one at Chapel Point and the other at Freiston Shore which is a surprisingly good place to see them. In the 10 years 2011-2019 there has been an average of three records/four birds per year but with huge variation and five blank years. The average is greatly skewed by the 16 records of 27 birds in 2013.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* ■

Offshore visitor, declined from fairly common to scarce, mainly Mar-Nov. Rare in winter and very infrequent inland. Red List.

Fulmars were recorded in 11 months of the year. There were 51 observer sightings during the year with those coming from 10 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5.9	0	3.9	9.8	2	13.7	7.8	21.6	17.6	2	11.8	3.9

The first bird of the year was noted from Wolla Bank on Jan 1st and two singles were seen from Anderby Creek and Tetney Marsh on Jan 9th. The next record was two months later on Mar 9th at Chapel Observatory. Gibraltar Point had its first of the year on Mar 21st. In Apr Anderby Creek had a single on the 21st, Gibraltar Point had singles on the 21st and 27th, and Donna Nook had two on the 23rd. Three birds flew south at Gibraltar Point on May 4th, there were two more on Jun 2nd and singles on 22nd, 27th and 30th. Also in Jun, there were singles at Tetney Marsh on 12th and Cleethorpes on 19th. Later in the summer/early autumn, single birds were at Anderby Creek and Chapel Observatory on 27th and 30th.

Eleven records were received during Aug amounting to 18 birds with six past Saltfleet Haven on Aug 31st. In Sep 10 were seen from Gibraltar Point on 5th, five on 7th, two on 8th and 12 on 17th, the highest count of the year. Singles were also seen from Huttoft, Anderby Creek and Freiston Shore during the month. The only inland sighting of the year occurred four miles from the sea at Saltfleetby St Peter with a bird flying in a westerly direction on Sep 7th. Nine records occurred between Oct 1st-Dec 9th of one to three birds. Three went south at Anderby Creek on Nov 15th and three at Chapel St Leonards on the same day, presumably the same birds. Gibraltar Point had the final bird of the year on Dec 9th.

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea* ■

Scarce offshore passage migrant Jul-Nov, mostly Sep. A few winter records; Dec-Jan. Green List.

A very poor year for this species with all records except one coming from Gibraltar Point as follows: in Sep three north on 5th, singles north on 7th 13th, two on 16th (one north, one south), four north on 17th. In Oct singles went north there on 2nd and 20th. The only other record received was of two north at Chapel Point on Nov 15th, the last of the year.



Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* ■

Scarce/fairly common offshore visitor/passage migrant, Apr-Nov with most Sep. Occasional inland records after south-westerly gales. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was 12 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 17th. Recorded in six months of the year, there were 31 sightings coming from five coastal sites Jul-Dec. The following table gives the maximum counts for the months in which they were recorded.

Site Name	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	6	-	12	2	-	1
Huttoft-Anderby coast	1	3	2	4	2	-
Mablethorpe	-	-	2	1	-	-
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	-	-	2	-	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	2	-

An extremely poor year for this species with only two double-figure counts in the whole year, both at Gibraltar Point. There were 10 past there on Sep 7th and another 12 on Sep 17th. There were no records Jan-Jun and all occurred between Jul 26th-Dec 15th.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus* ■

Rare migrant. S. Europe. This is a BoCC Red listed species. **LBRC**

Increasing northerly winds on Sep 17th saw two Balearic Shearwaters (KMW, BWd, NAL), among other seabirds, fly past Gibraltar Point. This date is within the peak time for the species, the second and third weeks of Sep. There are three previous later records in Oct-Dec. This is only the 24th record in all.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Rare vagrant. Status complicated by the existence of reintroduction schemes on the near continent. **LBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Gannet *Morus bassanus* ■

Regular offshore visitor/passage migrant most of the year. Fairly common/common Jul-Nov, but scarce at other times and rare inland. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was 2,377 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 20th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 321 observer sightings from 26 sites. The table below contains all sites with a single count exceeding 50 birds. There were few records in the first half of the year with these coming from just nine coastal sites and with most counts of fewer than 10 birds, but Gibraltar Point had 71 birds on May 4th and 35 on Jun 26th. As always, records picked up from Jul-Nov peaking in Oct with 2,377 birds at Gibraltar Point and 1,025 at Huttoft both on Oct 20th. There were no inland records, but one bird was seen to fly inland with five Whooper Swans from Donna Nook on Oct 22nd. Records tailed off from mid-Nov and there were only four records in Dec, the final records for the year being 56 at Gibraltar Point and six at Huttoft both on Dec 9th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	5	1	2	2	71	35	128	69	352	2377	341	56
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	83	12	23	1025	361	6
Anderby	6	-	1	-	-	-	150	60	21	185	46	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	200	200	45	-
Sutton on Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	-	225	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	1	-	6	-	58	55	45	9	46	-
Mablethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	5	155	-	-
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	7	70	25	4	-



Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* ■

Fairly common winter visitor, mainly coastal but increasing numbers inland and in summer. Inland breeding colony established 1992. Subspecies *carbo* and *sinensis* Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 1,200; for national importance: 620.

There were 3,332 observer sightings from 130 sites recorded during the year. The table below shows all sites with an accumulated total of maximum counts for the year exceeding 200 birds. Gibraltar Point held the two highest counts with 504 on Jan 23rd and 500 on Nov 18th with inland counts peaking at 232 birds at Covenham Reservoir in Nov (1st and 15th). Numbers dipped at most sites in the late spring/early summer apart from at the county's only breeding colony at Deeping St James which peaked over the summer. A maximum of 33 nests were recorded on the island at Deeping Lakes NR with birds sitting on nests from mid-Feb, some still sitting into Aug, and juveniles in the nests until early Sep. In addition to the tabulated sites, other notable counts included 106 at North Hykeham (Jan 20th), 102 at Frampton Marsh (Sep 7th), 78 at Wainfleet (Apr 21st) and 70 at Humberston (Sep 23rd).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coastal												
Gibraltar Point	504	460	450	30	12	16	36	59	181	368	500	420
Tetney	61	-	2	4	16	61	108	189	68	80	55	42
Terrington	-	-	63	-	-	4	-	90	51	152	5	-
Saltfleet	28	51	12	7	1		2	2	5	4	10	163
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	34	84	6	1	-	5	1	26	26	36	15	20
Witham Mouth	15	6	12	-	-	2	15	10	19	6	68	65
Inland												
Covenham Reservoir	5	4	4	40	54	66	119	124	37	162	232	10
Deeping St James	70	56	57	55	90	82	75	59	33	30	22	53
Tattershall Thorpe	80	39	52	24	30	7	12	60	44	39	22	15
Whisby NP	22	30	14	17	13	9	16	40	44	31	24	21

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* ■

Usually rare/scarse winter visitor Aug-May to the coast and inland, with occasional larger influxes. Exceptional in summer. Threshold for national importance: 2,000; for national importance: 1,110. Red List.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*
Covenham Reservoir (ringed as a chick
on Fidra in the Firth of Forth in 2018)
Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY





Recorded in 10 months of the year. There were 116 observer sightings recorded during the year from 10 sites. Three-quarters of all sightings were from Covenham Reservoir which had two to three birds present there Jan 1st-Mar 22nd. Elsewhere one to three birds were seen on the coast, mainly in The Wash, with two lingering birds on May 7th and 13th in the Witham Mouth area. There were very few birds reported in the early autumn with the first two seen at Gibraltar Point on Sep 14th and singles on several dates thereafter between Oct 1st-Nov 30th. The highest count of the year came from Covenham Reservoir with 12 on Nov 8th. A single remained there until Nov 21st; this bird had been colour-ringed in the Firth of Forth. The only other record of more than two birds during this period was of five at Witham Mouth on Nov 16th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-
Witham Mouth	1	3	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-
Mablethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
The Wash	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boston	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Rare but increasing passage migrant; breeding attempt in 2014. Threshold for international importance: 800; for national importance: 1. **LBRC RBBP**

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* ■

Scarce visitor, mainly coastal in Apr-Sep, and exceptional in winter. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 160; for national importance: 1. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 28 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 7th. Recorded in nine months of the year, there were 636 observer sightings from 19 sites. Of these sightings, 84% were from just two sites: 341 from Frampton Marsh and 192 from Gibraltar Point. The main sites are tabulated.

Site name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	-	-	2	1	1	6	6	21	28	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	3	5	3	9	17	17	5	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	1	2	5	16	11	15	6	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	-	1	1	5	6	8	-	-	-
Manby Wetlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	-	-	-	-
Other sites	1	-	-	3	2	3	-	8	4	1	-	-
Other sites total birds	2	-	-	3	2	4	0	16	6	1	-	-

The year started with an unusual winter report of two at Freiston Shore on Jan 25th. Frampton Marsh had two on Mar 6th and Alkborough Flats had their first on Mar 31st. With breeding birds in West Yorkshire and Norfolk and the volume of birds now in the county in spring, a first breeding record in one of our heronries may be in prospect soon but there was no evidence for it this year. Away from the sites in the table there were four birds at Tetney Marsh on Aug 9th and four at Cress Marsh, Stallingborough on Aug 21st. Aug was the peak month with up to 80 birds, but numbers quickly fell away and there were six in Oct, with the last, a single at Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th.



Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* Far Ings Nov 20th 2019 © PAUL COOMBES

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* ■

Rare breeder, rare winter visitor. Bred to early 19th century, from 1940s-1979 and in recent years. Amber List. Threshold for international importance: 80; for national importance: 80. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was three at Barton Pits on Dec 1st. Recorded in all months of the year there were 119 observer sightings from 15 sites. Of these 48 were from Barton Pits and 47 from Whisby NP. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9.2	11.8	11.8	8.4	10.1	1.7	4.2	0.8	4.2	8.4	16.8	12.6

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	3	4	9	4	5	1	2	1	2	3	2	2
Minimum Lincs total	5	5	13	4	6	1	2	1	3	3	3	4

In the Humber Bank clay pits area, there were up to three males booming at Far Ings Feb-May. Regular feeding flights were noted throughout June. One nest fledged two young in early Jul and a second nest fledged one young (minimum) two weeks later. A male boomed regularly from Barrow Haven and adjacent pits throughout spring / summer and feeding flights were seen, suggesting successful breeding. At Dawson City booming was also heard frequently, feeding flights observed, and in mid-Jul a female with two fledged young was photographed. Occasional booming was reported from Hoe Hill / Pasture Wharf. At Alkborough Flats, two males were heard booming from Apr 25th through May, but there was no other evidence of breeding and there were no records at all after Jun. There were no reports of “boomers” from elsewhere in the county. In summary with four confirmed pairs raising a minimum of five young at three sites and three other boomers from two more sites, this was the most successful year for Bitterns in Lincolnshire for many years. Away from the north, Messingham SQ had single birds in Feb, May, Sep and Oct and Whisby NP Pits, one to two were seen from Jan 1st-11th with a single returned from Oct 22nd to the end of the year.

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

Rare. Western Europe. **BBRC**

A 2CY+ male was present in a reedy dyke at North Thoresby on Jun 4th (J. Shone et al). This was the 13th county record (Accepted BBRC; *British Birds* 113: 585-665).

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

Vagrant. Western Europe. **BBRC**

A 2CY+ bird was found at Frampton Marsh on Jul 5th (CAd, T Carter) and at Freiston Shore, Jul 6th (Accepted BBRC; *British Birds* 113: 585-665); also seen in Norfolk Jun 29th-Jul 2nd.



Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* Freiston Shore Jul 6th 2019 © STEVE KEIGHTLEY



Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Rare vagrant. Threshold for international importance: 2,300; for national importance: 1. **LBRC**

There were six records in 2019, the first on Feb 26th and the last on Nov 13th. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	12.5	0	12.5	12.5	0	12.5	0	37.5	0	12.5	0

The first of the year was at Gibraltar Point on Feb 26th (KMW). An adult then turned up at Deeping Lakes NR on Apr 19th (WB *et al*) and remained until May 19th. A third bird was at Donna Nook on May 15th-19th (GWr *et al*).

In the summer/autumn one was at Croft Marsh, Gibraltar Point Jul 28th (GPBO) and another was at Frampton Marsh from Sep 7th-23rd (RSPB), also visiting Freiston Shore on Sep 11th (PS) during that period. The Croft Marsh and Frampton/Freiston birds are regarded as separate individuals. The last of the year was one at Millennium Green, N Hykeham on Nov 13th (GHo).

The first county record was in 1986 at North Hykeham followed by two in 1992 (one of four individuals together) but then no more until two in 2008. Since then there has been a dramatic increase with records in 2010, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018. The numbers in 2017 are hard to assess given the species mobility but a conservative estimate is of 10 birds with up to three together.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* ■

Fairly common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor. WeBS threshold for national importance: 450 Green List.

The highest count for the year was 29 at Kirkby on Bain on May 13th. This species was recorded in all months of the year and there were 2,351 observer sightings from 148 sites. Most peak counts were associated with organised colony counts but other notable counts in the first winter period included seven at Kirkstead

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Far Ings Nov 29th 2019 © PAUL COOMBES



Bridge Jan 16th, seven on the River Welland at Cowbit on Feb 17th and seven at Dunston on Mar 2nd. During the spring there were 10 at Short Ferry Apr 6th and up to nine birds at Tetney throughout Apr. In Jul there were counts of 10 birds at Manby Wetlands and 12 at Gibraltar Point. Passage birds there included 13 on Sep 1st and seven on Oct 6th. During the second winter period there were nine at Middlemarsh Farm Oct 6th, 20 in the Brigg area on Dec 2nd and 10 at the Withern Washland on Dec 11th. The results of the annual BTO heronries census coordinated by Barrie Wilkinson are tabulated below.

Abbey Wood	19	Hospital Cottage Spinney	14	Patterson's Pit	10
Appletree Ness	10	Kingerby Wood	nil	The Deepes	6
Baston GP	8	Kirkby GP (west)	20	The Mere, Deeping St James	6
Belton Park	3	Lea Marsh	nil	Troy Wood	2
Bishopsbridge	5	Long Wood	10	Warren Plantation	5
Fitties Nature Reserve	3	Nocton Wood	7	Welland Farm	6
Hartsholme Country Park	14	North Cotes Spinney	7	Willoughby Wood	13

The total number of occupied nests in 2019 was 168, this compares with 192 in 2018 and represents a 12.5% decline across the county. Long standing sites at Dowsby Fen and Howsham Barf Wood have been removed from the annual list as there has been no recorded breeding for consecutive years. The loss of 10 nesting pairs from Lea Marsh due to disturbance is a major loss and a significant factor in this year's drop in nests. The 2019 national census recorded 783 heronries in the UK and the data collected suggest a 4% decline in the UK since 2017. If you come across a heronry in Lincolnshire and are not sure whether it is included in the Heronries Census, please count the number of apparently occupied nests and report it to the county bird recorder.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Rare. Western Europe. LBRC

A 2CY+ individual flew NW over Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe early morning on Jun 21st and appeared to land between Saltfleetby St. Clement and Saltfleet Haven but could not be relocated (BMC, MJT). At Gibraltar Point an adult flew in off the sea late evening of Jul 24th, disappearing away to the NW. At the end of the month a juvenile was discovered at Manby Wetlands on Jul 30th (GW) and astonishingly it was joined by a second juvenile later that day (PAH, MDw); one was still present on Jul 31st. This is the first occasion in the county that two have been seen together but there was no evidence of any adults there



Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* Manby Wetlands Jul 30th 2019
© JOHN CLARKSON

earlier in the year or of a local breeding attempt. A recent news item in 2020 from The Netherlands stated that 1,100 nests had been counted there pre-2019, perhaps indicating the origin of these two juveniles.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Scarce but increasing visitor recorded in all months, scarcer Jul-Aug. Threshold for international importance: 780; for national importance: 1.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 313 observer sightings from 47 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5.4	4.2	3.8	12.1	8	2.6	1.9	14.4	16.6	16.6	8.9	5.4



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* ■

Formerly a rare/scarse visitor in all months, a few wintering since 1993/94. Now a scarce breeding bird and increasingly common resident. Green List. Threshold for international importance: 1,110; for national importance: 110. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 120 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 4th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 3,033 observer sightings from 124 sites.

District minimum totals	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
The Humber	47	23	51	75	77	84	167	215	164	183	59	63
East Coast	9	9	9	15	11	9	20	3	10	20	28	28
The Wash	95	38	70	69	41	65	230	327	374	170	199	111
Inland	96	89	112	107	45	56	69	81	56	60	97	54
Minimum Lincs Total	247	159	242	266	174	214	486	626	604	433	383	256

The summary table above shows the monthly minimum peak counts of all birds recorded in each of four districts comprising the whole county; the East Coast includes Saltfleetby to Skegness, the others are self-explanatory. The county peak total in Aug of 626 is similar but slightly down compared to the Aug 2018 peak of 665. The Jan figure is slightly up from 224 in 2018 to 247 this year.

The table below summarises the number of occupied nests reported from the known egrettries in the county (sites anonymised). It shows that the number of breeding pairs is slightly up to 118 from 106 in 2018. A new colony at site K close to The Wash was found and was thought to have been present for at least two years. Another new colony was discovered inland after the breeding season and it does not appear in the table as no birds were present. It was counted for the first time in 2020. It remains likely that there are more egrettries waiting to be discovered.

Site	Number of nests	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
A	Wash	6	8	6	7	6	25	5	150	60	65
B	Humber	27	17	12	-	8	14	13	22	6	13
C	Inland	5	7	6	8	10	12	6	4	2	4
D	Humber	2	3	3	4	20	15	22	18	13	14
E	Humber	-	8	32	20	32	21	11	-	-	-
F	Inland	-	1	4	5	8	8	10	14	11	4
G	Wash	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
H	Inland	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	5	6	7
I	Humber	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	5	5	5
J	Inland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
K	Wash	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
	Total	40	45	63	44	84	101	74	218	106	118

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* ■

Scarce passage migrant, rare in summer. Amber List. **RBBP**

Recorded in six months of the year, there were 25 observer sightings from 14 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	8	8	12	0	4	52	16	0	0	0

All records were of single birds and spring passage was light this year with only seven birds recorded compared to 17 in 2018, and these well spread out. The first of the year was at Freiston Shore on Mar 5th



and the second was at Thorpe Fen on Mar 15th, followed by singles at Gibraltar Point Apr 9th, Frampton Marsh Apr 24th, Messingham May 3rd, Marshchapel May 8th and one seen from a cruise in The Wash on May 13th. There were no reports of summering birds and only a single in Jul at Gibraltar Point on July 6th. Aug provided the main autumn passage from the 4th onwards and unusually there was no suggestion that any of the 13 birds reported lingered for more than a few hours, certainly not for days, which has been the pattern in previous years. This continued into Sep with just four more one-day records culminating with the last at Frampton Marsh on Sep 28th. The autumn total of 17 was up on the 12 birds recorded in the same period in 2018.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* ■

Very scarce passage migrant, with occasional larger autumn influxes. Europe. Amber List.

LBRC RBBP

There were three records in 2019. The first was an adult male seen well soaring low over Chambers Farm Wood on Aug 19th (SMcE, AMcE). The second was a juvenile bird seen on Aug 29th in a garden at Raithby cum Maltby (SFo) and the third another juvenile seen flying over Far Ings NR on Oct 19th (KeRo). The latter individual looked distinctly unusual as it had lost most of its tail. There was no indication of any breeding attempts in the county.

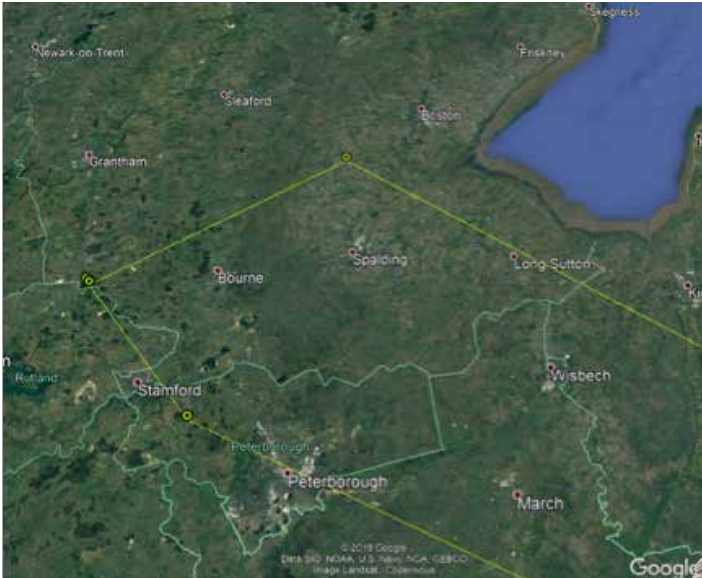
Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* ■

Common resident and passage migrant. After extinction as a breeder in 1950s, due to pesticides and persecution, recolonised rapidly from the early 1980s. Green List.

The highest count for the year was nine at Gibraltar Point on Mar 21st. Recorded in all months of the year there were 1,348 observer sightings from 130 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2	2	9	8	3	2	1	3	9	6	5	2
Boultham Mere	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
Frampton Marsh	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	2
Lincoln (West Common)	1	4	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	4	1	-
Tetney	1	-	-	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	1	2
Marton	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	-	2	3	1	1
Middlemarsh Farm	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3
Louth	1	1	2	1	1	-	1	-	-	2	3	1
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	2	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	2	2	1
Alkborough	2	5	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

The table above contrasts the regular pattern of occurrence at five well-watched inland sites with the pattern of migration observed at five coastal sites. Some movement was seen at Gibraltar Point in Mar with five of the nine recorded on 21st moving south and another four went south on 24th; there were also one or two local pairs displaying over different parts of the reserve. Display was also noted at East Halton and Alkborough Flats, where there were two pairs, one of which fledged young in Aug. A pair was seen near a nest site in Bourne Woods, May 11th, and a male was seen carrying food to a presumed nest on Jul 7th at Anderby Creek. Juvenile birds were noted on several dates in Aug at Gibraltar Point and a juvenile was killed by collision with a car in Sep. Twenty birds (nine juveniles, 11 adults) were ringed in the county this year and a male ringed as a 1CY bird in 2010 was retrapped for the sixth time at Kirmond le Mire aged 8yrs 5 mths. Over the years there have been recoveries of ringed birds from Scandinavia and The Netherlands, and birds ringed in-county have been found in similar areas. There is insufficient county BBS data to inform of any population trend, but nationally the Sparrowhawk BBS index is around 40% lower than its level in 1994.



Left: Satellite-tracked female **Goshawk**, Mar 31st-Apr1st
© BRITISH TRUST FOR ORNITHOLOGY

Right: **Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis* Female 2CY undisclosed location, Lincolnshire Jun 2019 (PHOTOGRAPHERS NAME WITHHELD)



Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* ■

Rare visitor/passage migrant, mainly autumn to spring.
Green List. **LBRC, RBBP**

A record on Apr 1st 2018 concerned an immature female which was satellite-tagged as a nestling in the Brecks which made brief forays into the county. On Mar 31st 2019, another satellite-tagged bird crossed into the county from Norfolk. It ventured into the south of the county, roosted overnight and returned whence it came the next day (map above). The BTO has noticed a pattern in these unattached females to explore towards the end of March/early April. A second was found and photographed in the west dunes at Gibraltar Point on Aug 12th, a one-day bird. Breeding was reported from two areas of the county. In one area a nest was present and recently fledged young were seen but no adults were seen by known observers; the adults may have been of captive origin. Elsewhere a pair of Goshawks fledged two young; this pair were both 2CY birds, an unusual occurrence in this species.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* ■

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

The highest count for the year was 15 at Frampton Marsh on Jun 21st. Recorded in all months of the year there were 1,343 observer sightings from 100 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
7.4	6.7	7.9	8.6	9.8	6	10.3	10.6	12.8	7.1	6.6	6.3



The long-running study on the south bank of the Humber, carried out annually since 1992, revealed 14 males and 15 females which fledged 26 young (GPC). This was the lowest count of females since 2005. Elsewhere in the county the coast reported one confirmed pair fledging two young and three probable pairs, The Wash had two confirmed pairs with four fledged young and inland there were five confirmed pairs fledging one young and five probable pairs. A total for the year of 33 pairs included 23 confirmed and ten probable pairs fledging a total of 33 young, which was down from a total of 37 pairs fledging 46 young in 2018. The downward trajectory continues, and a full survey of this species now looks long overdue. In the early winter period in Jan around 51 birds were reported, up from 41-43 in 2018. These were split between the Humber (15), coast (4), inland (13) and The Wash (19) with a max of eight at Dawsmere in Jan. The peak count across the county was in Sep when the combined peak total came to 86. These were split between the Humber (24), coast (17), inland (24) and The Wash (21). Apart from 15 at Frampton Marsh in Jun, other large counts included 10 at Holbeach St Matthew in Nov and at Winteringham in Jul, nine at Witham Mouth in Jun and eight at Frampton Marsh in Aug and Alkborough Flats in Sep.

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**

The highest counts for the year were five at both Frampton Marsh (Mar 8th) and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe (Jan 25th). Recorded in 11 months of the year there were 431 observer sightings from 39 sites. Those sites recording at least two in any month are tabulated.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	3	4	5	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	2
Gibraltar Point	2	2	3	2	1	2	-	-	-	2	2	3
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	5	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Donna Nook	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
Tetney	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Wainfleet	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Dawsmere	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Holbeach St Matthew	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Baston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* and Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Mid-Lincolnshire Dec 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



Wintering birds from 2018 remained in the county at up to 15 sites in Jan-Mar and one or two were still at coastal sites into Apr-May; the last birds were singles at Gibraltar Point May 1st-13th with two there Jun 2nd. An early autumn bird returned to Frampton Marsh Aug 4th-10th and another was at Moulton Marsh Aug 29th, possibly the same bird. More single birds were seen in Sep with records from four coastal sites, with more arriving in Oct, mainly singles, apart from two at Anderby Creek Oct 7th and at Gibraltar Point Oct 30th. Inland birds were also at Branston Booths, Marston, Nocton and Scunthorpe area. Nine sites hosted Hen Harriers in Nov, mainly on The Wash with two inland at Baston GP Nov 16th-17th, up to two at Frampton Marsh and Gibraltar Point. The picture remained the same into Dec with 14 sites recording them and a maximum of three at Gibraltar Point Dec 15th. Adult/sub-adult males were recorded during the year at about eight sites, most regularly on The Wash and one was inland at Marston STW Dec 13th. A few clues as to the origin of wintering birds have been gleaned in the past from a few ringing recoveries of birds ringed in Scotland (Sep 1973), Netherlands (Dec 1972) and Sweden (1985). Colour-ringed birds seen alive include a Scottish female (Dec 2005) and a Scottish male (Dec 2002 and again Jan 2005).

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* ■

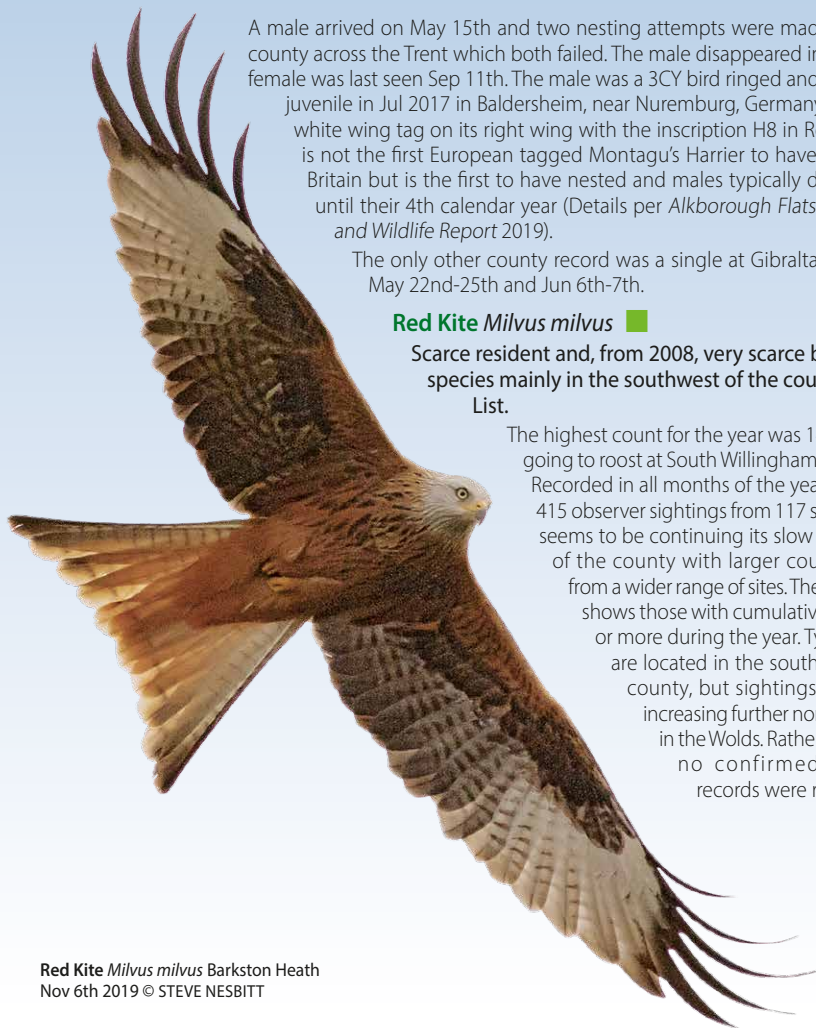
Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor, though breeding irregularly. Amber List. RBBP

To repeat the depressing narrative of the 2018 report, the dire state of this species in Lincolnshire continues to suggest that a year with no records is not far away. The last successful nest was in 2012 and the last nesting attempt in 2014. It is worth remembering that as recently as 2001 four pairs fledged five young in The Wash.

The first bird of the year was identified as the female that bred successfully on the upper Humber in 2014 and 2015 and was first seen at Alkborough Flats on May 1st.

Montagu's Harrier
Circus pygargus male
and female Alkborough
Flats May and Jun 2019
© GRAHAM CATLEY





A male arrived on May 15th and two nesting attempts were made out of the county across the Trent which both failed. The male disappeared in Jul and the female was last seen Sep 11th. The male was a 3CY bird ringed and tagged as a juvenile in Jul 2017 in Baldersheim, near Nuremburg, Germany. It carried a white wing tag on its right wing with the inscription H8 in Red/Pink. This is not the first European tagged Montagu's Harrier to have occurred in Britain but is the first to have nested and males typically do not breed until their 4th calendar year (Details per *Alkborough Flats Annual Bird and Wildlife Report 2019*).

The only other county record was a single at Gibraltar Point seen May 22nd-25th and Jun 6th-7th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* ■

Scarce resident and, from 2008, very scarce breeding species mainly in the southwest of the county. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 14 apparently going to roost at South Willingham on Jan 25th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 415 observer sightings from 117 sites. Red Kite seems to be continuing its slow colonisation of the county with larger counts coming from a wider range of sites. The table below shows those with cumulative totals of 10 or more during the year. Typically, they are located in the south-west of the county, but sightings are steadily increasing further north especially in the Wolds. Rather surprisingly, no confirmed breeding records were received.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* Barkston Heath
Nov 6th 2019 © STEVE NESBITT

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marston	1	2	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	13
South Willingham	14	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	1	4	1	4	2	1	1	-	1	-	-
Temple Wood	1	5	3	2	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	2	1	-	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	-
Baston	1	2	1	3	2	-	-	-	-	1	2	-
Morton (Bourne)	1	1	2	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	2
Hawthorpe	1	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1
Deeping St James	2	1	2	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	1
Grantham	-	2	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Rare vagrant first recorded in 1979, around 11 records in all to 2019. **LBRC**

One was well seen and photographed at Alkborough Flats on May 3rd (ND). There have been around 10 previous records including the unresolved record of a possible Black-eared Kite, *M.m. lineatus* in 2006-07.

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* ■

Rare vagrant. The first to be recorded in Lincolnshire was shot at Nocton in 1732; there have been more than 20 further records. **Red List**.

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Rare/scarse coastal passage migrant and winter visitor, chiefly Oct-Nov and occasionally Dec-May. **LBRC**

An exceptionally poor year for this species with just a single record at Gibraltar Point on Nov 7th, 8th and 13th (GPBO, Sai et al). The species is well known for showing periodic influxes into the county and in some years larger numbers than usual have been seen: 1994, 1998, 2011, 2014 and 2015. By contrast, in some years since the new millennium the species has been scarce with only one or two birds recorded.: 2000-2003, 2006, 2008, 2013 and 2017.



Black Kite *Milvus migrans* Alkborough May 3rd
2019 © NEIL DRINKALL

Buzzard *Buteo buteo* ■

Bred to 19th century before local extinction. Now common breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor. **Green List**.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 2,947 observer sightings coming from 245 sites across the county. The highest counts of the year were both at Gibraltar Point where 46 were recorded on Mar 23rd and 39 on Aug 28th; close behind was a count of 37 on Jan 25th along the Bluestone Heath road, Oxcombe. Visual migration recording at West Common, Lincoln produced 23 on Feb 21st and 18 on Feb 25th. All sites having at least one double-figure count are tabulated. Displaying pairs were noted at several sites and confirmation of successful breeding was received from Twyford, Bourne and Temple Woods.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	2	46	13	10	5	1	39	16	4	3	3
Lincoln	1	23	7	2	3	1	1	1	13	8	4	1
Covenham Reservoir	4	5	7	6	5	7	3	4	13	3	3	3
Marton	1	2	4	4	5	5	2	2	5	13	8	2
Louth	3	3	2	15	1	-	2	-	5	7	-	2
Oxcombe	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alkborough	6	2	10	3	2	1	4	2	1	2	1	2
Belton (Grantham)	1	3	13	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1
Linwood	-	-	6	2	1	1	-	-	-	14	-	-
Anderby	2	3	11	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-
Kirkby Moor	-	-	12	8	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Dunston	1	1	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1
South Willingham	10	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	-



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* ■

Common and widespread resident with good breeding years coinciding with peaks in the vole population. Dark-breasted Barn Owl *T. a. guttata* is a vagrant. Green List. **BBRC**

Barn Owls were recorded in all months of the year with 395 observer sightings from 111 sites. The highest count for the year was six at Deeping St Nicholas on Jun 14th.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Number of nests**	298	330*	155	394	77	272	280	185	296
Failures	40	131	18	38	20	41	62	31	29
Broods ringed	243	185	126	333	44	198	191	131	240
Chicks ringed	627	427	378	1214	104	522	455	313	722
Average number of chicks/brood ringed	2.6	2.3	3.0	3.6	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.4	3.0

** Total nests = "missed" and "outcome unknown" as well as ringed + failures
* High number of Barn Owl nests in 2012 was due to early failures and subsequent relays

Bob Sheppard and Alan Ball as usual kindly supplied a summary of their nestbox data for 2011-2019, summarised in the table above. Numbers of nests reported was the highest since 2014. Some wet weather in Jun curtailed first broods but most which failed went on to rear a second brood. The most frequent brood size of those chicks ringed was three but there were 79 broods of four or more including single broods of seven and eight.

Brood sizes (ringed)	No	Total
1	36	36
2	51	102
3	74	222
4	49	196
5	17	85
6	11	66
7	1	7
8	1	8
Total	240	722

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* ■

Common resident, widespread but predominantly in wooded areas. Amber List.

Tawny Owls were recorded in all months of the year and there were 436 observer sightings year from 78 sites. The highest count for the year was of five at Willingham Woods on May 30th.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Number of nests**	34	18	13	60	6	23	42	8	36
Failures	3	1	3	4	0	2	1	2	4
Broods ringed	31	17	8	53	3	20	32	3	22
Chicks ringed	70	30	12	112	5	40	68	5	39
Average number of chicks/brood ringed	2.3	1.8	1.5	2.1	1.7	2.0	2.1	1.7	1.8

** Total nests = "missed" and "outcome unknown" as well as ringed + failures

At least two pairs were at Gibraltar Point, one of which was recorded with two juveniles from mid-May onwards. At least two pairs also bred in Willingham Woods, one of which produced two young, and three



Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* Gibraltar Point May 9th 2019 © OWEN BEAUMONT

calling males were recorded in Twyford Wood on May 17th. Territorial calling was commonly recorded at many sites and given their sedentary nature; any calling pairs are likely to be on nesting territories.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Common resident, very sedentary.

Little Owls were recorded in all months of the year and in all there were 132 observer sightings from 35 sites. The highest count for the year was of four at Stickney on Jul 18th.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Number of nests**	68	59	70	80	70	78	90	91	66
Failures	18	18	20	16	17	23	26	27	16
Broods ringed	44	37	45	57	44	51	50	55	39
Chicks ringed	133	105	103	188	108	138	141	152	112
Average number of chicks/brood ringed	3.0	2.8	2.3	3.3	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.9

** Total nests = "missed" and "outcome unknown" as well as ringed + failures

Bob Sheppard and Alan Ball kindly provided a summary of their nest box data from 2011-2019 as usual in the table above. The number of nests visited was down but average number of chicks ringed per brood was similar to that of most previous years. AGB commented that 2019 was a poor Little Owl year in which some of the regular pairs were absent. The majority of nest failures seem to be down to infertile eggs or



Little Owl *Athene noctua* Brandon Apr 2nd 2019 © STEVE NESBITT

eggs that do not develop. One or two nests a year fail due to bees taking over the nestbox and the odd one is predated. In wet years, the adults often switch to feeding their young on earthworms which can lead to liquid excreta and the young getting wet and succumbing.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Scarce and declining breeding bird in county and scarce winter visitor. Green List. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was seven at Deeping St James on Feb 2nd. Recorded in eight months of the year. There were 50 observer sightings from four sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
40	26	2	2	4	0	0	0	2	8	16	0

Of 50 records received, 40 were from Deeping St James, seven from Gibraltar Point, two from Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and one from Baston Fen. The winter roost at Deeping Lakes is now the only regular spot where it is relatively easy to see this species in the county, a massive change over the last 30 years. The recently published LBC Atlas reports that in the 1980s there were 50-100 breeding pairs and around 100 birds in winter roosts each year. There were no breeding reports at all this year and the Deeping roost held a maximum of seven birds. The roost there built up from one to two birds on Jan 1st, rising to four on Jan 17th, five on Jan 23rd and seven on Feb 2nd, quickly falling to three from Feb 3rd, and one from Feb 15th-Mar 22nd. Two reappeared from Sep 30th, building to five on Nov 12th. Two birds seen on Nov 19th were the last reported of the year. Elsewhere there was a single reported at Baston Fen on Jan 25th and a single at Gibraltar Point on Jan 14th. The only spring passage reported was of single birds at Gibraltar Point on May 11th and 19th and there were single autumn passage birds here on Oct 21st and Nov 6th and 9th. Single passage birds were also reported at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 17th and 23rd.



Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* Gibraltar Point
May 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Scarce winter visitor and occasional breeder. Amber List. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was seven at Frampton Marsh on Sep 30th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 550 observer sightings from 51 sites.

[illegible]



Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* Bonby Carrs Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY

The table shows the top 10 sites holding accumulated peak counts of more than five birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The year started well with a total of 35 birds at 17 sites across the county in Jan, including six at Bonby Carrs on Jan 14th and 24th, making it the best month of the year. Second best was Apr with 30 birds at 18 sites. Despite two birds summering at both Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh and a single bird at Tetney Marsh there was no other evidence of breeding reported. No substantial visible migration was reported this year and the best counts were seven at Frampton Marsh on Sep 30th with six the following day.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Very scarce migrant, mainly Apr-Oct, rarely to Dec. LBRC

There were two records in 2019, the first at Laceby on Apr 26th (per MFr) and the second at Swineshead on Sep 4th (K. and J. Doig); both were photographed in private gardens. There were no other records from the usual coastal migration sites. One or two Hoopoes per year has been the average number in the last 20 years. They are more common in spring than in autumn, with most spring records falling between Apr 21st-May10th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* ■

Fairly common resident and partial migrant. Subspecies *ispida* Red List.

Recorded in all months of the year. There were 613 observer sightings from 76 sites which was slightly up on last year's 72 and only about 80% of the 2017 total.

The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8.3	5.5	4.7	5.7	3.6	1.6	4.1	9.3	18.1	21.4	10.6	7



Kingfisher
Alcedo atthis
Far Ings Nov
21st 2019 ©
PAUL COOMBS



The largest total recorded was seven at Toft Newton on Jun 30th which included six chicks in a man-made nest. This was the only instance of proof of breeding reported in the county during the year and undoubtedly a gross misrepresentation of the real picture. Six birds were recorded at Barton on Mar 26th and four were at Whisby NP on Oct 15th with five there Oct 23rd. Estimating the county population is impossible without a full survey but tabulated is the total count each month from 77 sites.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
28	18	27	15	12	17	14	24	42	42	26	21

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Very scarce migrant. Forty-five county records involving about 86 birds up to and including 2019, all but two of these have occurred since 1957. **LBRC**

The sole record of the year came from Gibraltar Point where two flew south over the west dunes in the early morning of Jun 7th (NAL), a fairly typical and short occurrence. The last really good year was 2015 when one to two birds were seen at six locations in May-Jun, with six at Chambers Farm Wood on Jun 6th and a flock of 10 at Tetney Marsh on Jun 16th. How many birds were involved is debatable given their highly nomadic tendency with flocks splitting up and re-joining. Still a hard county bird to get, for most!

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Very scarce/scarce declining passage migrant Apr-May and Aug-Oct, mainly coastal. Bred to early 20th century.

Just one record in 2019, rather late in the year on Oct 29th at Gibraltar Point, seen briefly feeding near Sykes's Farm. There were no records in 2018 and only one in 2017 continuing the species' decline in the county. Of note, three other Wrynecks were seen in Britain in the week Oct 23rd-29th all on the south coast. Bird Guides *Review of the Week*, Aug 28th-Sep 3rd reported a minimum of 45 birds during that week, mostly in the south and south-west of Britain.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor* ■

Very scarce and declining resident. Red List. **RBBP**

Another disappointing year for this very scarce and sharply declining species. There were just three confirmed records with only the male bird of the former long-standing pair at Swanpool/Boultham Mere seen on and off between Jan 2nd-Mar 5th. Elsewhere in the county there was a calling male on May 3rd in Ripplingale and another bird (unsexed) in Walesby on May 15th. They are fairly invisible for most of the year and only in Feb-Mar do they call and drum with any regularity. Once they have settled on a nest site, usually by mid-Apr, they are very inconspicuous and secretive until they are feeding young in late May. Most pairs in Britain reported by the Woodpecker Network (www.woodpecker-network.org.uk) are to be found in the New Forest, Hants.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* ■

Common resident and partial migrant. Subspecies *anglicus* Amber List.

The highest count for the year was nine at Nocton on May 22nd and Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 1,417 observer sightings from 129 sites which was up from last year's 1,200 from 110 sites. The BBS results for 2019 reflected this increase: birds were recorded in 28.4% of 74 squares (1.6 birds per occupied square) compared to 19.5% of 77 squares (1.6 birds) in 2018, suggesting this was a good year for Great Spotted Woodpecker. Gibraltar Point records birds in all months of the year ranging from two to six in Nov-Sep but the nine there on Oct 12th was the only indication of any movement this year. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
10.9	9.1	9.4	9	8.4	7.3	6	6.4	8	9.4	8.3	7.7



Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis* ■

Fairly common resident and partial migrant. Green List.

The highest count for the year was five at Bourne on Mar 30th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 897 observer sightings from 108 sites, compared to just over 900 observations from 90 sites in 2018. Birds were recorded in 24.3% of 74 BBS squares at a rate of 1.4 birds per occupied square compared to 13% of 77 squares occupied and 1.9 birds per square in 2018. By adding the peak monthly counts at each site to give an annual total it is possible to compare presence. The best counted site in Lincolnshire is Gibraltar Point our only bird observatory. It scored 25 on this measure and Belton Park near Grantham, which lies in the centre of the species' historic range in the county, came second scoring 23. By contrast the best site in the north-west was Alkborough Flats coming in at 27th scoring six and in the north-east Louth at 43rd with only three. So, although there were signs of a spread from the records received and from BBS data, there was little evidence of it in the north of the county. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6.2	7.9	12.3	15.7	9.1	3.6	8.1	9.1	8.6	8.1	5.6	5.6

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis* Bourne Nov 16th 2020 © MARK JOHNSON





Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* Wyberton Dec 8th 2019 © NEIL SMITH

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* ■

Common resident and passage migrant. Amber List.

Recorded in all months of the year there were 2,710 observer sightings from 202 sites. The tabulated data is from the regular nest box monitoring scheme provided by Alan Ball. The highest nest total and chicks ringed since the 'bumper' year of 2014 spelled a successful breeding season, in turn suggesting a good vole population; in Britain and Europe these make up around 90% of the species' diet.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total number of nests*	85	117	82	150	43	98	110	98	131
Failures	7	27	10	16	5	4	4	15	11
Broods ringed	55	66	54	111	17	58	61	56	81
Chicks ringed	236	186	171	449	46	203	195	154	294
Average number of chicks/ brood ringed	4.2	2.8	3.2	4.0	2.7	3.5	3.2	2.8	3.6

* Total number of nests = "missed" and "outcome unknown" as well as ringed + failures.

Numbers across the county varied seasonally as usual with most in Jul-Aug, post-breeding. Three sites all recorded the peak count of the year of 16 birds, first at Tetney Marshes in Jul, then Gibraltar Point in Aug and Nocton in Oct. Some coastal movement was evident with small numbers going south and occasional birds seen coming in off the sea. One bird ringed as a nestling in 2018 was found freshly dead in Kent in May 2019, and another nestling ringed in Jun 2013 was also found dead in N Yorks. in Sep 2019. BTO ringing data shows that most foreign-ringed birds recovered in Britain and Lincolnshire are from Scandinavia and The Netherlands.

Red-footed Falcon

Rare, 39 county records, most of these since 1963. LBRC

A juvenile bird flew in from the NE during a visible migration watch on Mill Hill in the east dunes at Gibraltar Point on Sep 30th (M.L. Edgeller, KMW, BWd). There have been 39 records in all, involving 37 birds averaging about six per decade 1960-2019, and of those which were sexed, 16 were males and 10 were females.



Merlin *Falco columbarius* ■ (aeson) ■ (subaeson)

British form 'aeson' is a scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, very scarce in summer. Bred sporadically in the 19th century. Icelandic form 'subaeson' may also occur. Red List (*aeson*) and Amber List (*subaeson*).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2	2	8	2	1	-	1	1	2	4	5	2
Frampton Marsh	2	2	3	2	-	-	-	1	1	3	4	4
Donna Nook	2	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	2
Tetney	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1

The table shows all the sites with records in more than six months. There were 570 observer sightings during the year from 48 sites but 71% (405) of records came from just two sites – Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh; most other sites were also coastal with fewer than half inland. The peak count for the year, of eight birds, came from Gibraltar Point on Mar 17th, with seven there also on Mar 9th, when six were seen going south over the sea on both dates. The latest bird of the spring was also at Gibraltar Point, on May 14th, as was the first returning bird of late summer on Jul 26th. Notable counts in the latter part of the year include five at Gibraltar Point on Nov 18th and four at Frampton Marsh on Nov 27th and Dec 7th. Away from tabulated sites, all records were of one, or occasionally two, birds and many on only single dates, especially inland.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo* ■

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Bred to early 1900s and sporadically in the 1970s, regularly from the mid-1980s. Green List. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was six at Baston Fen on May 11th. Recorded in seven months of the year. There were 377 observer sightings recorded during the year from 72 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	3.2	20.9	13	19.6	19.3	20.9	3.2	0	0

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Gibraltar Point	-	1	3	5	2	3	2	-	-
Laughton Forest	-	1	2	2	2	4	-	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	2	1	-	4	3	-	-
Boultham Mere	-	-	1	1	1	3	2	2	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	1	1	2	3	1	-	-
Messingham	-	1	2	1	2	-	2	-	-
Baston Fen	-	1	6	-	1	-	-	-	-
RAF Woodhall	-	5	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
Whisby NP	-	1	3	-	1	-	2	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	-

The table shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated peak counts of more than six birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. As is generally the case all records occurred between Apr-Oct. The first arrivals were surprisingly late this year, on Apr 23rd at Laughton Forest and Apr 24th at Gibraltar Point and Messingham SQ. This compares to a more typical date of around Apr 15th. There were four reports of confirmed breeding, at Alkborough Flats where an adult was seen with three juveniles on Sep 1st; East Halton where a party of three juveniles was seen on Sep 21st; Laughton Forest where

a well-watched pair were seen carrying food into a nest site on Jul 10th and Louth where an adult was with a juvenile on Sep 12th.

From the data received using consistent criteria applied in previous years it was judged there were a further 32 probable breeding pairs and a further 20 possibles, a total of 56 pairs compared to 50 on the same basis in 2018. The best day counts were six hawking insects over Baston Fen on May 11th, five over RAF Woodhall on Apr 30th and five at Gibraltar Point on Jun 30th. This last group included three south, one trapped and ringed and one carrying a white darvic ring with black letters or numbers. Unfortunately, these could not be read, as the bird was chased off by a Magpie, but the ring type indicated that the bird was ringed in The Netherlands. The last records of the year were singles at Boultham Mere, Lincoln and Gibraltar Point on Oct 9th.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* ■

Scarce but widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor; has bred since 1963. Green List (nominate). **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was a family of five at Tetney on Jul 17th. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 879 observer sightings recorded during the year from 81 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
11.7	11.6	9.6	4.3	4.7	3.9	6.8	9.4	10.5	8.4	9.4	9.7

The Lincolnshire Peregrine population is still slowly increasing. Reports were received of 21 confirmed pairs in 2019 compared to 17 last year. Of these 21, 13 pairs successfully raised 28 young. The rate of 2.15 chicks per nest was virtually the same as 2.1 in 2018. Sadly, the remaining eight pairs were all unsuccessful:





five nest failures were due to heavy spring rain showers causing nestling mortality. At Louth Church the pair had a record five chicks which were thriving on May 23rd but by Jun 12th they had all succumbed to the atrocious weather. The nest tray there has subsequently been redesigned with a simple roof. For two nests the results were not reported and for another on the Humber Bridge the removal of the nest tray resulted in failure for the site faithful pair there.

One of the successful nests was at a new site and there were two probable breeding pairs prospecting new nest locations. The total number of known/probable nesting locations is now 39. The 21 confirmed and two probable pairs this year were spread across the county as follows: NW 7, NE 2, W 3, E 4, SW 6, SE 1. Of the remaining 16 sites, five were definitely not used, four because adjacent neighbouring locations were used and one was a quarry location, where dumping caused disturbance. No reports at all were received from 11 sites and for seven of these no reports have been received for three years.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Very scarce. Occasional visits from feral populations and local escapes.

Two birds of unknown origin were seen at Fulney (Spalding) on Oct 6th, the only record received in 2019. A small feral population has begun breeding just outside the county in the Longthorpe area of Peterborough, so watch this space.



Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* ■

Very scarce passage migrant. Former rare breeder last confirmed in 1978. Red List. LBRC RBBP

The history of Red-backed Shrikes in the county is one of decline. Between 1979-1995 there was an average of seven to eight per year, falling to three to four between 1996-2018. This trend continued in 2019 with just two records. A splendid adult male present in a North Somercotes garden on May 19th (per MJn) was the only spring record and a 1CY bird was at Seaview Farm, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe, Oct 29th-31st (ACS, PEs *et al*).

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* 1CY Seaview Farm, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe 30th Oct 2019
© JOHN CLARKSON

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

Very scarce/ scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor Oct-Apr. Exceptional in summer. LBRC

Another thin year for this species with just two records. The first was at Brickyard Lane, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 5th (CMo) and the second along the Haven Bank walk towards Witham Mouth Oct 28th (JWh). There have been considerable fluctuations in annual numbers with 27 in 2013 and 19 in 2014 with around 11 per year over the past decade. One this year and in 2018 is clearly bringing the average down.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* ■

Very scarce migrant, mainly spring/early summer, but recorded Apr-Aug. Red List. LBRC RBBP

The first of the year was possibly an immature male or a female seen on May 18th at Wyberton Roads flying along the dense Hawthorn hedgerow north of the Frampton Marsh exit (PAH). Next was a female at Gibraltar Point on May 23rd which flew in from the north, alighted briefly at Mill Hill before heading off high south (NAL). The third record was a male at Freiston Shore on May 25th (PS) which, like the bird of 18th, flew along the Hawthorn hedgerow there before disappearing into it without being seen again.



Jay *Garrulus glandarius* Bourne Nov 16th 2019 © MARK JOHNSON

Jay *Garrulus glandarius* ■

British form 'rufitergum' is a common resident, irregular migrant and winter visitor. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Boultham Mere	9	11	8	4	2	2	4	9	9	6	7	3
Whisby NP	4	6	4	2	-	2	-	4	3	10	5	2
Lincoln	1	1	1	2	1	-	8	3	9	6	2	1
Frampton Marsh	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	6	6	-
Hartsholme	1	1	2	6	-	1	2	1	2	2	3	1
Kirkby on Bain	1	1		3	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2
Alkborough Flats	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	12	-	-
Keelby	3	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	8	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	12	-	-



The table includes all sites with accumulated monthly maximum counts above 15 birds; over the year there were 791 records of Jays from 109 sites. The species was recorded in eight (13.1%) of the 61 BBS squares surveyed with 1.4 birds per occupied square. Most records were of one to five birds with a westerly bias from more wooded areas. There were indications of movement in Sep and Oct with birds recorded going south (predominantly) at Gibraltar Point on 13 dates those months and one in off the sea on Oct 1st. The only counts in double figures were of 11 at Boultham Mere on Feb 20th and in the autumn on Oct 12th there was an influx of 10 birds at Whisby NP, 12 going west at Alkborough and another 12 south at Gibraltar Point, the latter being the maximum counts for the year.

Magpie *Pica pica* ■

Common resident. BBS data indicates that the population has increased by 65% in the period 1994-2018. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 150 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 28th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 4,010 observer sightings recorded from 200 sites. Three coastal sites had counts of 35 or more seven times. The largest count inland was 30 at RAF Woodhall in mid-Jan. Sites recording at least 20 in any one month are tabulated. BTO ringing data show that Magpies are a long-lived species which does not move very far. The high count at Gibraltar Point on Oct 28th was probably a one-off involving some local or coastal movement.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	21	29	80	25	21	45	14	14	20	150	30	25
Cleethorpes	15	10	60	7	10	10	10	5	45	17	36	13
Tetney	16	1	1	20	20	20	20	25	16	24	16	18
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	35	12	7	12	8	8	-	4	20	22	20	20
Anderby	30	10	17	14	8	1	20	3	4	20	8	8

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula* ■

Western European form '*spermologus*' very common resident, also passage migrant and winter visitor. Nordic Jackdaw, *C.m. monedula*, rare or overlooked winter visitor. Green List (both forms).

Recorded in all months of the year there were 3,466 observer sightings during the year from 230 sites. Counts of 200 or over were recorded 32 times from 11 sites, with the largest counts being 500 at Donna Nook on Jul 28th, 400 going into roost at Hartsholme Park Mar 11th and 350 at Kirkby on Bain on Feb 21st. Some evidence of passage movement was seen at Gibraltar Point during Mar-Apr with visible migration counts in Mar noting almost 900 south or south-west with 176 south on March 15th. The table below shows areas that recorded birds in at least 10 months of the year and with at least 100 birds in two of those months; monthly maxima are shown. BTO ringing data showed there were four recoveries of Jackdaws ringed in the county, the most notable being a bird ringed as a nestling at Gibraltar Point in 2003 which was hit by a car in Dec 2019 aged 16.5yrs.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	200	200	326	160	71	70	105	200	199	179	162	140
Lincoln*	40	39	400	110	35	5	6	130	171	341	326	116
Kirkby on Bain	100	350	300	30	35	150	1	-	50	1	20	40
Donna Nook	18	40	100	10	5	-	500	20	5	240	10	50
Marton	300	20	150	8	5	15	40	100	80	50	200	10
Tetney	280	50	4	10	9	54	3	50	10	5	5	300
Middlemarsh Farm	30	50	30	50	50	50	50	100	100	100	50	30

*Lincoln includes Burton Pike Drain, Doddington Park, Boultham Mere, Fosdyke, Hartsholme Park, Minster Yard, Stainton Lane, Valentine Road and West Common

Rook *Corvus frugilegus* ■

Very common resident also passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows that the population has increased by 15% during the period 1994-2018. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 350 at Kirkby on Bain on Jun 5th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 1,871 observer sightings coming from 179 sites. There were 29 sites which recorded counts of 100 or more in at least one month. A few sites reported numbers of nests including 83 in the Hagnaby Lock/Fen rookery by mid-Apr, 61 at Donington on Bain, 21 at Biscathorpe House, 19 in Tattershall village, 12 in Bilsby and nine in High Toynton. These are just representative examples, and no formal survey of rookeries was undertaken.

There were some records from Gibraltar Point of small numbers coming in off the sea and coastal movements in Mar and Sep though these mainly involved 10-50 birds. In the past birds ringed in The Netherlands, Denmark and Russia have been recovered in the county in autumn and winter but none in the last 20-30 years.

Carrión Crow *Corvus corone* ■

Very common resident also passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows that the population has increased by 177% during the period 1994-2018. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 1,200 at Boultham Mere on Jan 1st. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 4,810 observer sightings from 257 sites. The top 10 sites with regard to cumulative presence throughout the year are tabulated.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Boultham Mere	1200	54	70	40	2	150	10	150	4	10	50	20
Marston	420	220	85	36	100	70	43	150	46	50	32	37
Saltfleetby- Theddlethorpe	330	45	16	29	8	19	4	20	30	72	45	92
Sturton by Stow	85	60	90	70	38	50	30	36	40	90	50	30

Carrión Crow *Corvus corone* Bardney May 21st 2019 © RUSSELL HAYES





Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	80	36	34	42	22	13	9	20	27	170	54	54
Tetney	40	7	3	20	20	30	45	50	50	45	30	150
Long Bennington	23	70	53	20	28	26	11	43	41	34	23	41
Lincoln	150	32	43	27	24	7	7	7	8	16	60	18
Donna Nook	33	10	5	20	5	80	3	30	7	26	40	70
Branstons Booths	8	20	50	100		20			40	10	50	8

Carrión Crow was found in 97% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 95%) with an average of eight birds per occupied square (2018 nine). It fell from 3rd most widespread species in 2018 to 4th in 2019. There were some large winter numbers recorded in Jan-Feb including some sizeable congregations at some coastal sites. Carrión Crows do not move very far from natal areas so a recovery of an adult ringed in Bedfordshire at Bolnhurst in 2016 and found shot near Spalding on Apr 22nd when aged 2.5yrs was noteworthy.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix* ■

Very scarce migrant and winter visitor formerly much more common in winter. Green List. **LBRC**

The highest count for the year was five at Donna Nook on Fe 15th. Recorded in six months of the year, there were 127 observer sightings from eight sites (four coastal, four inland). The following table gives the numbers recorded during the year at all eight sites:

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	4	4	4	1	1						1	
Donna Nook	1	5		1								
Marston	3	1	1									
Kirkby on Bain	1	1										
Tetney	1											
Frampton Marsh		1										
Messingham		1										
Middlemarsh Farm					1							

Carrión Crow *Corvus corone* and one of two hybrid **Hooded Crow**
Corvus cornix Mablethorpe Jan 2nd 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



A thorough analysis of Hooded Crow status was published in last year's report by Henderson (*Lincolnshire Bird Report 2018, 189-195*) which showed that an almost exponential decline has occurred since 1949-50 and with most years since the late 1970s having single-figure counts.

There were more on the coast at Gibraltar Point and Donna Nook in the 2018-19 winter than in any winter since 1993-94. The species remains a very scarce migrant and winter visitor.

Note: Two hybrid Carrion Crow x Hooded Crows were at Mablethorpe North End on Jan 2nd

Raven
Corvus corax
Laughton Forest
Jan 2019
© GRAHAM
CATLEY

Raven *Corvus corax* ■**

Resident to 18th century but was extirpated, and now a very scarce but increasing resident. **Green List.**

Recorded in all months of the year there were 142 observer sightings from 56 sites, which was an increase on the previous year's total of 48. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
15.5	13.4	9.9	11.3	6.3	2.8	4.9	4.2	5.6	2.8	7	16.2

Perhaps a non-birdwatcher would think of the Raven as a bird of the uplands but, according to BTO reports, it is a species of mixed farmland and lowland forestry after it's spread eastward in the last 40 or so years. Records were spread from the Humber south along the Lincoln edge along a broad path from Messingham in the north and down to the woodlands in the southern extremities of the county. Most sightings occurred between Jan-Apr when vocal birds in pairs are most visible.

Breeding pairs are known to be under-reported and the only confirmed breeding came from Temple Wood where young were in the nest at the end of Apr. Several other sites reported some displaying and vocal pairs and records of two birds were reported just over 50 times. There were also four records of three birds. Alkborough Flats reported the highest count of the year on Nov 6th when seven flew over heading south-east.

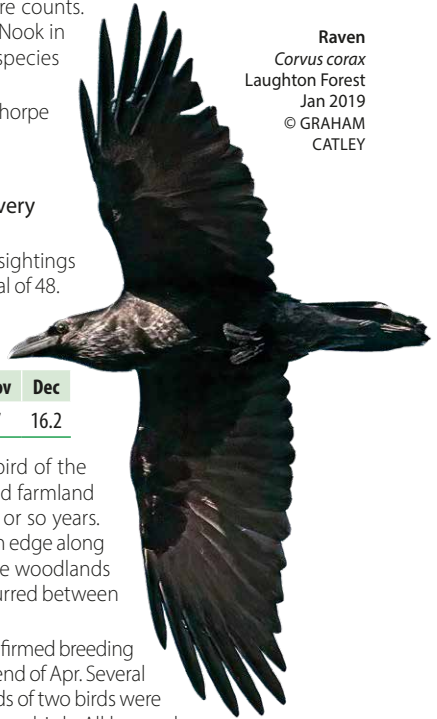
Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus* ■

Passage migrant and winter visitor, most in Oct-Apr. Scarce most winters but fairly common in irruption years. **Green List.**

Waxwings were recorded in five months of the year with 22 sightings coming from just six sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hemingby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Gibraltar Point	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	-
Lincoln	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Frampton Marsh	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middle Rasen	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Barton Pits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

The table above tells its own story of a lean 'non-invasion' year with the majority of records being of single birds. Two were at Frampton Marsh Jan 1st with one still there Jan 6th. Another two birds were seen at a Waitrose carpark in Lincoln Jan 12th and two were in Middle Rasen Feb 2nd, the last record of the first quarter. In the autumn the first record was a single over West Common, Lincoln, Oct 23rd with singles at Gibraltar Point Oct 29th and maxima of three on Nov 16th and five on Nov 29th. One was at Barton Pits Nov 18th and a flock of 12 at Hemingby on Dec 13th was the highest count of the year.





Coal Tit *Periparus ater* ■ (britannicus) ■ (nominate).

British form 'britannicus' is a common resident and passage migrant. Nominate continental form a very scarce irruptive visitor in autumn but no accepted records yet. Amber List (*britannicus*) and Green List (nominate).

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 843 observer sightings from 104 sites. The highest counts for the year were 13 at each of Willingham Woods (Apr 13th) and Linwood Warren (Jul 14th); only four other sites also recorded double figures, namely 12 at Broughton (Nov), 11 at Laughton Forest (May) and 10 at each of Bourne (Nov) and Twyford (Apr) Woods. Elsewhere a further eight sites had counts exceeding five or more birds, but the majority of records (95%) were of fewer than five birds and most (72%) were of single birds, reflecting the general low density of the species away from woodlands with conifers. Migrants were seen at Freiston Shore on Sep 18th (1) and Nov 23rd (2) probably of the nominate form but a photograph of one of these proved inconclusive.

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris* ■

Fairly common but local resident, mainly in the southwest. Red List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Callan's Lane Wood	-	5	3	6	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-
Haverholme	2	2	1	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	1
Temple Wood	4	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Twyford Wood	2	1	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Potterhanworth	3	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anwick	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Nocton	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Castle Bytham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4

Sixty-one records were received from 15 sites all within the established range of the species in the south-west of the county and the south-west side of the Witham valley. Counts from major sites are tabulated above. The highest count for the year was seven from Callan's Lane Wood on Sep 3rd and six there on Apr 5th, five at Anwick on Mar 9th, and five at Twyford Wood on Apr 22nd. The species is clearly under-recorded and more recording effort for this red-listed species is desirable.



Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris* Nocton Nov 29th 2019 © STEVE NESBITT

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus* ■

Once common and widespread, now seriously declining and scarce. Red List. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was four at Haverholme on Jan 14th. Recorded in nine months of the year. There were 34 observer sightings recorded with those coming from 10 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
14.7	20.6	11.8	17.6	2.9	11.8	0	0	11.8	0	5.9	2.9

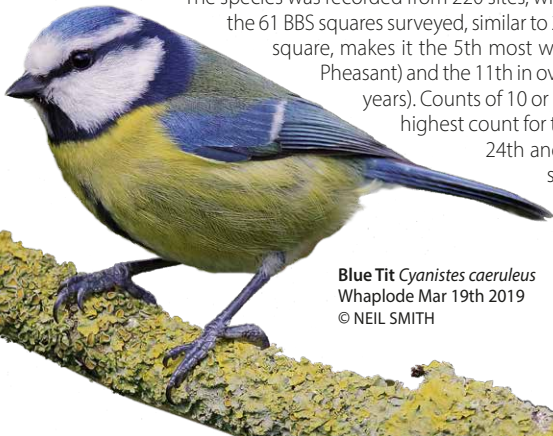
Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Messingham	-	1	2	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	3	2
Snipe Dales	3	3	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Haverholme	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Barton Pits	-	2	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anwick	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Goxhill	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
Laughton Forest	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Willingham Woods	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulby	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Crowle	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The table shows all sites reporting birds by maximum accumulated peak counts across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The decline in site numbers has continued from 21 sites in 2017 to 15 in 2018 and now 10 in 2019. Only one site reported confirmed breeding this year, at Messingham SQ, where an adult with two juveniles was noted on Jun 21st. Elsewhere there was also probable breeding at Barton Pits and Snipe Dales with two pairs each and Anwick Fen, Haverholme and Laughton Forest with one each. There were a further two possible at Callan Lane Woods and Crowle Waste, a total of eight pairs and two singing males. This is surprisingly good news in that this is the first year in many years that the population has remained stable, eight pairs also being the number reported in 2018. Willow Tit is the subject of an RSPB survey in 2020 and 2021. Random squares have been selected, most of which will not contain Willow Tits but formerly did. Please take part if you can. The publication of the *LBC Atlas* (2020) provides a timely reminder that only 30 years ago there were an estimated 400 pairs of this species in Lincolnshire spread across 433 1km squares, a fall of 97.5% over that period.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* ■

British form '*obscurus*' a very common resident. BBS data shows that the population has increased by 85% during the period 1994-2018. Amber List (*obscurus*).

The species was recorded from 220 sites, with 3,938 sightings. Observed in 93% (57) of the 61 BBS squares surveyed, similar to 2018, with a mean of 6.4 birds per occupied square, makes it the 5th most widespread bird in the county (jointly with Pheasant) and the 11th in overall abundance (an increase from previous years). Counts of 10 or more birds were received from 59 sites; the highest count for the year was of 61 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 24th and 40 or more birds were recorded there in seven months of the year. Signs of movement at Gibraltar Point included 16 south on seven dates in late Feb-early Mar and 67 south on 13 dates in Sep and Oct. Elsewhere, the highest count was of 50 at Bourne Woods on Nov 2nd.



Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*
Whaplode Mar 19th 2019
© NEIL SMITH

The table shows the top eight sites holding maximum accumulated peak counts of six birds or more per year ranked from highest to lowest. A full survey was carried out at Alkborough Flats. This revealed 35 breeding pairs which were estimated to have had three broods each so there were over 150 birds present by Sep-Oct. Far Ings reported 21 pairs and elsewhere along the Humber Bank two pairs were reported from both Pasture Wharf and Barrow Haven and single pairs from Fairfield Pit and Dawson City. The total of 62 pairs was similar to the 65 reported in 2018. No breeding was reported from elsewhere although birds were present at other suitable reedbed sites in the spring. Inland single birds were at Boultham Mere on Aug 2nd and Nov 20th and Deeping St James on Apr 22nd.



Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* Alkborough Oct 3rd 2019
© PAUL COOMBES

Woodlark *Lullula arborea* ■

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant, rare in winter. Bred to 1959 and again from 1984 with numbers peaking around the year 2000, although now steadily declining. Green List. RBBP

The highest count for the year was four at Greetwell (Scunthorpe) on Feb 22nd. Recorded in seven months of the year there were 37 observer sightings from nine sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month and emphasises the species absence from our records as much as their presence:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	18.9	37.8	29.7	5.4	2.7	0	0	0	2.7	0	2.7

The next table shows all sites for which records were received ranked from highest to lowest in terms of annual accumulated monthly peak counts.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	2	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Manton	-	4	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kirkby Moor	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greetwell (Scunthorpe)	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Keb Wood	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Laughton Forest	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Messingham	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Gibraltar Point had a good late winter/spring with migrants on Feb 20th, 21st (2) and 27th. In Mar singles were recorded 5th-7th, 15th (3), 16th-18th, 21st, in Apr 17th-20th and May 11th, most of which were birds flying over. In autumn Gibraltar Point had one on Oct 27th and in winter there was one at Wainfleet on Dec 5th. There were no thorough surveys at breeding sites this year, but records with breeding evidence came from six sites where it has been known to occur in the past. Although there was no evidence of confirmed breeding, in total there were eight probable pairs and three possible. The probable pairs break down as follows: Greetwell (2), Keb Wood (1), Kirkby Moor (2), Laughton Forest (1), Manton Warren (2). There were single possibles at Keb Wood, Laughton Forest and Messingham SQ.



Skylark *Alauda arvensis* ■

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows that the breeding population has fallen by 43% during the period 1994-2018. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 772 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 17th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 2,692 observer sightings reported from 167 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
5.5	9.4	9.5	14.6	13.3	8.8	7.2	4.7	5.2	9.6	6.4	5.8

Large wintering flocks were reported from the coast where there were 632 at Wainfleet on Feb 2nd and Marshchapel and Donna Nook both had 200 on Jan 26th and Jan 29th respectively. Inland the largest winter flock reported was 120 at Boultham Mere on Jan 14th. The largest inland spring count was 100 at Benniworth on Apr 17th. Skylark was found in 88% of BBS squares (2018, 90%) with an average of 11.4 birds per occupied square (2018, 9.6). It was the 9th most widespread bird species in the county from Lincs BBS coverage down from 7th in 2018. It had a particularly good year with breeding bird numbers up 21% over 2018 as reflected by the Lincs BBS index. This puts it at around 16% below its 1994 position when BBS commenced. Autumn passage was most pronounced at Gibraltar Point with monthly peaks of 296 Sep 30th, 772 Oct 17th and 229 Nov 6th. This year 38 counts over 100 were reported compared to 40 in 2018, with 25 coming from Gibraltar Point.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris* ■

Scarce, formerly fairly common winter visitor. Currently low numbers compared to the 1960s and 1970s. Exceptional inland. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	16	17	15	9	-	-	-
Donna Nook	11	9	-	-	-	1	-
Cleethorpes	1	6	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Theddlethorpe St Helen	-	-	-	-	-	-	1



Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris* Huttoft Car Terrace Nov 8th 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON

Recorded in seven months of the year there were just 35 observer sightings from seven sites of this increasingly scarce winter visitor; note the truncated table. In the first four months of the year birds were present at just four coastal sites, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (Crook Bank/Brickyard Lane area), Cleethorpes, Tetney, Donna Nook. At Cleethorpes there were eight records of a single bird between Jan 4th and Feb 23rd and one of a flock of six on Feb 12th. At Tetney Marsh just a single bird was noted on Jan 21st. Seven records came from Donna Nook with between one and 11 birds in the four weeks from Jan 20th-Feb 24th. After a single bird on Jan 15th, the flock frequenting the coast between Brickyard Lane and Churchill built up to 10-17 birds on various dates during Jan-Mar, with 15 still present on Mar 17th and nine on Apr 1st the last birds of the spring.

The first of the autumn period was a single bird at Gibraltar Point on Oct 8th and possibly the same bird on Oct 25th. Elsewhere a single was at Huttoft Nov 11th, another was at Donna Nook Nov 11th and the last of the year was at Theddlethorpe St Helens Dec 1st. These were the only birds reported Oct-Dec, a truly miserable picture.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* ■

Common but declining summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 3,827 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 27th. Recorded in nine months of the year there were 794 observer sightings from 69 sites. Those sites recording 250 or more in any month are tabulated.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Gibraltar Point	1	25	10	308	996	3827	92	2	24
Frampton Marsh	1	15	30	15	500	3000	500	40	-
Freiston Shore	1	-	-	100	90	3000	200	-	-
Barton Pits	-	500	400	-	1	-	30	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	60	700	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	70	150	4	20	15	500	-	-
Winteringham Haven	-	-	-	-	500	-	-	-	-
Tattershall Thorpe	2	300	100	-	-	16	-	75	-
Bagmoor	-	450	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deeping St James	1	250	25	-	25	30	13	-	-

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* Frampton Marsh Sep 20th 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON





The first of the year was a lone bird at Freiston Shore on Mar 5th with a trickle arriving thereafter and a high of 20 at Kirkby on Bain on Mar 31st. In Apr seven sites recorded more than 100 birds, highest counts were at Barton Pits (500, Apr 19th) and Bagmoor (450, Apr 3rd). The main arrivals seem to have ceased by mid- May and counts were much lower in Jun with the exception of one or two high counts on the coast including 308 south at Gibraltar Point on Jun 30th. Breeding colonies were reported from the South Holland Main Drain near Sutton Bridge (120 nests), Kirkby on Bain (65 nests), Baston GP (c.50 nests), Hagworthingham (5+ nests), and there were colonies reported at both Asterby and Deeping Lakes NR, but no nest counts reported there. These very probably under-represent the picture across the county.

Large post-breeding flocks were noted during Jul with notable southward movements on the coast at Gibraltar Point towards the end of the month: 525 south on 19th, and 876 south on 22nd. Aug saw the largest congregations with 3,000 at Frampton Marsh on 1st and the same number at Freiston Shore on 2nd. High numbers south at Gibraltar Point at the end of Aug were 1,689 on 26th and 3,827 on 27th. There were also counts of 1,000 birds at Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore Aug 15th, 26th and 28th and flocks of 165-500 Sep 1st-7th. Inland, there were 500 at Covenham Reservoir on Sep 6th. These were the last large flocks of the autumn. Numbers dried up rapidly thereafter but feeding flocks hung on into Oct with 75 at RAF Woodhall on Oct 12th, and the last of the year were five at Frampton Marsh on Oct 14th.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica* ■

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant. Exceptional in winter but recorded in most months. BBS data shows that the breeding population has not changed during the period 1994-2018. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 1,701 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 12th. Recorded in 10 months of the year there were 2,482 observer sightings reported from 208 sites. The top 10 sites based on the sum of monthly peak counts are tabulated.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Gibraltar Point Aug 5th 2019 © PAUL COOMBES





Site Name	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Gibraltar Point	-	1	38	358	93	897	1647	1701	157	11
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	150	800	17	31	85	1500	6	1
Anderby	-	-	8	50	1	1200	30	40	5	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	200	600	-	1	-
Tetney	-	-	11	50	16	180	240	250	11	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	1	1	2	50	200	500	1	-
Frampton Marsh	-	2	40	150	50	30	150	250	23	22
Marston	-	1	3	40	18	14	350	100	11	-
Toft next Newton	-	2	60	400	2	6	25	25	1	-
Stickney	-	-	5	15	-	50	250	150	-	-

The first birds of the year were two at Alkborough Flats on Feb 24th, well ahead of the crowd. The next arrived at Toft Newton Reservoir on Mar 22nd followed by another single at Frampton Marsh on Mar 26th and two there on 27th. Thereafter the rush built up to a high of 150 at Covenham Reservoir on Apr 25th and a spring county peak of 800 there on May 9th. The only other site reporting significant numbers in May was Toft Newton Reservoir which had 400 on May 3rd. Breeding Swallows were found in 77% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 87%) with an average of five birds per occupied square the same as 2018. It was the 16th most widespread species recorded in the Lincolnshire BBS. As the breeding season drew to a close, the largest Jul movement was 1,200 at Anderby on Jul 26th. At Gibraltar Point there were 1,647 moving south on Aug 8th and 1,701 on Sep 12th. As usual migration numbers tailed off through the autumn and the last flock reported was 11 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 3rd and the final birds of the year were two at Frampton Marsh on Nov 10th.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum* ■

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was 1,513 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 12th. Recorded in eight months of the year there were 1,355 observer sightings recorded from 143 sites. The table shows the top 10 sites holding more than 230 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest:

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	-	22	288	110	97	522	1513	121
Covenham Reservoir	-	40	400	30	10	20	250	15
North Hykeham	-	10	700	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby NP	-	100	200	4	25	15	26	10
Cleethorpes	-	5	10	25	10	250	31	-
Anwick	-	-	11	4	11	108	143	5
Baston	-	-	75	-	200	-	6	-
Boultham Mere	-	4	120	45	10	60	25	-
Lincoln	-	2	55	6	10	20	129	17
Frampton Marsh	-	10	50	50	25	70	22	5

The earliest birds were three at Toft Newton Reservoir (not tabulated) on Mar 23rd. The next records were from five sites on Apr 2nd after which date birds became widespread. The species was found in 39% of BBS squares (2018, 38%) with an average of 6.8 birds per occupied square (2018, 5.2). It was the 35th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire (2018, 36th) and the 16th most numerous (2018, 21st) suggesting that 2019 was a better year for returning House Martins than 2018. The last report of the year was a single at Gibraltar Point on Oct 28th.



Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Rare migrant, almost annual since 2003. **LBRC**

A fortuitous record was received from a visitor to the county who had gone to Barton Pits to look for Bittern, *Botaurus stellaris*, but instead found and photographed a Red-rumped Swallow (G. Gann) on Apr 17th. Three more one-day records followed in May, all at Gibraltar Point. The first was over Tennyson's Sands for five to 10 minutes on May 24th before drifting away south (KMW, BWd). A second also flew south with Barn Swallows, *H. rustica*, over the Tern Hut on May 27th (RDn) and is considered to be a second bird. A third flew south offshore on May 29th (RDn).



Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*
Barton Pits Apr 17th 2019 © G. GANN

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* ■

Scarce and increasing breeding resident and passage migrant/winter visitor; first proven breeding in 2008. Green List. **RBBP**

The highest count for the year was 34 at Barton Pits on Apr 1st. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 802 observer sightings reported from 38 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6.1	7	9.5	14.8	15	8.5	7%	2.2	6.4	12.3	7.5	3.7

The rapid expansion of Cetti's Warbler graphically depicted in LBR 2018 continues apace. Using the same basis of determining winter and breeding territories as in previous years, analysing the reports submitted there were 62 winter territories and 125 breeding territories in 2019 compared to 94 and 98 respectively in 2018. The fall in winter territories might be explained by less attention given to the species in winter

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* Alkborough Flats Sep 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



but the breeding territories are up by 27% on 2018. There was only one instance of confirmed breeding reported, at East Halton where a brood of three was observed on Jul 8th. The number of territories reported from sites on the Humber Bank was as follows: Alkborough Flats (19), Winteringham (6), South Ferriby (2), Barton Pits to Barrow Haven (34), Goxhill (1), East Halton (1), Town Holt, Grimsby (13), Tetney (4), North Thoresby (4); a total of 84. Elsewhere down the west side of the county Messingham SQ (6), Whisby NP (1), Washingborough (1), Kirkby on Bain area (4). In the south-west: Marston STW (4) Thurlby (4), Baston Fen (3), Deeping Pits (1), Wilsford (1). In the south-east Frampton Marsh (6), Pinchbeck (1) and along the coast: Grazing Marshes Country Park (8), Gibraltar Point (1). It is quite likely some sites have not been reported and the real position is an even higher breeding population.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* ■

British form '*rosaceus*' a common resident and partial migrant. Nominate Scandinavian form ('Northern Long-tailed Tit') vagrant. Amber List (*rosaceus*).

The highest count for the year was 56 at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 2,050 observer sightings from 159 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
11.2	9.4	9	9.9	10	4.3	4.5	6	8.5	11	8	8.1

The species was found in 28% of Lincs BBS squares (2018, 31%) with an average of 2.5 birds per occupied square (2018, 2.2). It was the 42nd most widespread breeding species in the county (2018, 39th) and 51st most numerous (2018, 57th). Post breeding counts of more than 20 birds came from only six sites this year, down from 15 in 2018 and suggestive of a poorer breeding performance in terms of chick production than 2018. The peak count of 56 came from Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 12th, an improvement on the 2018 peak of 50 at Boultham Mere. The latter site had the second highest count in 2019 with 52 birds on Sep 6th, two more than in 2018.



Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* Whaplode Mar 7th 2019 © NEIL SMITH





Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* ■

Very scarce and declining passage migrant. Formerly bred up until 1951. Red List. **LBRC**

A poor year for this species with one or two birds at Gibraltar Point, May 10th-12th the only spring records. There were just two more in the late summer/autumn, the first at Gibraltar Point Jul 28th and the other at Tetney Aug 29th. The species has gradually grown scarcer over the last four decades with an occasional good year. Between 1979-1995 there were 10-11 birds per annum, but later between 1996-2019 only four to five. BTO BirdTrends data shows that there has been a rapid, significant decline in Britain since 1994 with eventual shift to the red list in 2009; this decline is mirrored across northern and western Europe.

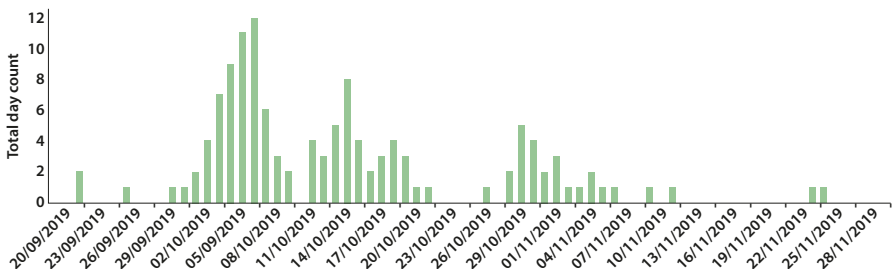
Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Scarce but increasing passage migrant Sep-Nov, rare inland.

All birds were recorded during Sep-Nov with 83 observer sightings coming from 15 sites. All of these are tabulated regardless of numbers and, as usual, the counts shown are the maximum at that site in each month. Extreme dates were Sep 22nd (Gibraltar Point, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe) to Nov 25th (Donna Nook). The highest count on any single day was five at Gibraltar Point on Oct 15th.

Site Name	Sep	Oct	Nov
Gibraltar Point	1	5	2
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe heddlethorpe	1	4	1
Anderby	-	2	1
Tetney	-	2	1
Huttoft	-	2	-
Donna Nook	-	1	1
Chapel St Leonards	-	2	-
Humberston	-	1	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	1	-
Saltfleet	-	1	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	-
Cleethorpes	-	1	-
Freiston Shore	-	1	-
Marshchapel	-	1	-
Saltfleetby St Peter	-	1	-

Yellow-browed Warbler: total bird day counts, Sep–Nov 2019



The chart shows the total bird count per day for all sites, Sep-Nov. This is a crude indicator of presence given that it is impossible from day to day to know how many individuals were present, especially at the main coastal sites where birds may move through quickly. On this basis the key dates for arrivals were Oct 6th-7th, Oct 15th and Oct 30th-31st. The bird(s) at Donna Nook on Nov 24th-25th were clear outliers.



Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* Gibraltar Point Oct 30th 2019 © JAMES SIDDLE

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

Very scarce but increasing passage migrant Sep-Nov, rare inland. Siberia. **LBRC**

After blank years in 2017 and 2018, there were seven records in 2019, five at Gibraltar Point and two at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe; all were seen during Oct-Nov. The first of the autumn was at Gibraltar Point on Oct 15th, moving quickly through with Goldcrests, *Regulus regulus* (KMW). Others there followed on Oct 30th-Nov 1st (KMW), Nov 7th (BWd), Nov 9th (JS), and Nov 24th (DH et al). These were all thought to be different birds. The other two records at Crook Bank were found on Oct 31st (CMo) and Nov 12th (CMo). The extreme dates for this species in autumn are Oct 7th (2016) and this year's late bird on Nov 24th. There has been a single record of a spring bird: a male found singing at Freiston Shore May 7th, 2007.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

Rare. Siberia. **LBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

Rare. Siberia. **LBRC**

Remarkably there were two records from the same part of the coast in 2019. The first was found in a roadside hedgerow at Huttoft Bank Jan 1st where it remained until Feb 3rd attracting a considerable crowd of admirers during its stay (RDn). The second turned up in the nearby locality of Anderby Creek on Nov 16th (RDn, JS); by contrast this was a one-day only bird. These were the 12th and 13th records for Lincolnshire.



Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* Wolla Bank Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* ■

Nominate form a very common summer visitor and passage migrant. Northern form *acredula* scarce passage migrant to the UK. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 309 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 20th. Recorded in seven months of the year there were 728 observer sightings from 99 sites; the top 10 in terms of summed monthly peaks are tabulated below.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	10	34	4	12	309	32	1
Twyford Wood	28	35	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby NP	26	20	3	-	2	-	-
Barton Pits	3	1	1	2	30	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	6	7	2		15	6	1
Laughton Forest	20	15	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney Marshes	2	2	1	1	16	2	1
Crowle Moors	18	2	1	-	-	-	-
Linwood Warren	-	6	2	-	-	12	-
Swanholme Lakes, Lincoln	16	-	1	-	1	-	-

The first bird of the year was on Apr 1st at Anderby Creek; this compares with Mar 29th in 2018 (Whisby NP) and Mar 26th in 2017 (Ruskington). More arrived at many sites across the county during Apr and peak numbers were reached at most sites during May. Three birds of the form *Pt. acredula*, the northern and eastern European race, were reported from Gibraltar Point, one of which was trapped. Autumn passage began in Aug with some large counts at Gibraltar Point including 224 on 8th (58 trapped), 154 on 13th, 147 on 19th, 309 on 20th (55 trapped), 165 on 21st (35 trapped) and 108 on 23rd. These were by far the highest total in the county with 30 at Barton Pits on 24th the next highest. Birds rapidly exited the county during Sep with much lower totals recorded and 13 at Gibraltar Point on 20th was the last double-figure count of the year. A few lingered into Oct with singles on seven dates, two on 9th at Winterton Carrs, and the last birds of the year at Tetney Marsh on 17th and at Gibraltar Point on 25th.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* ■

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Rare/scarc in winter. Green List.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 2,210 observer sightings coming from 179 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1.1	1.5	11.4	22.2	17.5	9.3	6.7	6.9	11.1	8.4	2.2	1.8

Site name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2	3	21	24	17	18	18	18	53	95	11	4
Barton Pits	-	1	31	28	1	1	1		20	6	-	-
Whisby NP	1	1	11	22	19	6	-	1	4	3	1	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	1	8	4	2	1	17	20	12	3	-
Marton	-	-	2	3	3	4	3	6	23	7	-	1
Nocton	-	-	-	30	17	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Snipe Dales	-	2	6	25	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Willingham Woods	-	-	-	23	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
Laughton Forest	-	-	-	4	20	-	-	1	-	-	-	-



Siberian Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis* Alkborough Flats Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY

Wintering birds were recorded from 24 sites in Jan and Feb – most were of single birds but three were recorded at both Manby Wetlands (Jan 18th) and Gibraltar Point (Feb 15th). Two birds were seen at North Hykeham in Jan and there were also two at Alkborough Flats, Marston and Snipe Dales in Feb. A singing bird was heard at Whisby NP on Feb 19th and probable migrants began to appear in the first week of Mar. The table above shows all sites holding a monthly peak of 20 birds or more. The highest spring counts were of 31 birds at Barton Pits on Mar 26th and 30 at Nocton on Apr 12th but the highest count for the year came from Gibraltar Point with 95 on Oct 12th. Records in Dec, indicating genuinely wintering birds rather than late migrants, came from 10 sites, again all of single birds apart from at Gibraltar Point, with a peak of four on 10th and two at Frampton on 23rd.

Siberian Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis*

Very scarce migrant and winter visitor. LBRC

Recorded in three months of the year (Jan, Oct, Nov), there were five records from four sites. The first of the year was at Alkborough Flats on Jan 4th (ND) followed by one on Jan 5th at Apex Pit, North Hykeham (DMJ). Later in the year one was at Gibraltar Point Oct 22nd-25th (NAL) and possibly the same bird was in the Plantation there Nov 1st-8th (NAL). The final bird of the year was one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Nov 9th (GPC). Overall a fairly typical showing.

Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus*

Vagrant. South-western Europe. BBRC

A 2CY+ male was in song at Gibraltar Point on May 7th-10th (KMW et al), the first county record. Accepted by BBRC (*British Birds* 113 (11) p585-665). See Finder's Report, p 214.



Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus*
Gibraltar Point May 7th 2019 © BEN WARD



Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*

Rare, 10 previous county records. The first was shot at North Cotes in 1932; the remainder have all occurred since 1976. Scandinavia, North-eastern Europe. **LBRC**

One was trapped at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe on Oct 5th (BRG), the 11th county record. This species was devolved by the BBRC to county rarities committees for assessment from Jan 1st, 2019.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* ■

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 66 at Anderby on May 3rd. Recorded in seven months of the year there were 847 observer sightings from 74 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
0.1	16.9	34.1	19.5	16.2	11.2	2.0

The first of the year were two at Frampton Marsh on Mar 27th, five days earlier than in 2018. There were double-figure counts by Apr at five sites, with 20 at Barton Pits on 21st and 28 at Gibraltar Point on 28th the highest. Numbers increased through May with peaks of 42 at Gibraltar Point May 3rd and of 66 singing males in the Lincolnshire Coastal Park at Anderby Creek May 13th, when there were also 30 at Frampton Marsh. Despite a plethora of records mainly relating to singing males in May-Jul there were no records at all of confirmed breeding. Post-breeding numbers built up through Jul-Aug with fairly modest totals at coastal sites, 46 at Gibraltar Point Jul 7th being the highest and 20-30 reported at several other sites. The last double-figure count was of 16 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 23rd after which numbers dwindled as birds moved rapidly south. In Sep the highest count was of five at Frampton Marsh on 7th with most gone by mid-month. The exception was a lingering bird at Alkborough Flats on Sep 29th, which was the second latest record ever for that site.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* ■

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Frampton Marsh	8	20	30	20	20	5	-
Alkborough	1	50	4	20	-	1	-
Midville, Stickney	-	25	-	30	15	2	-
Gibraltar Point	1	9	10	17	20	2	1
Willow Tree Fen	1	14	12	20	12	-	-
Tetney	4	16	16	12	7	1	-
Barton Pits	30	1	1	2	-	-	1
Kirkby on Bain	1	17	10	1	-	1	-
Anderby	2	7	-	10	5	2	-
Huttoft	-	10	5	8	3	-	-
Haverholme	-	15	-	4	1	-	-

The highest count for the year was 50 at Alkborough Flats on May 6th, although the new reedbed there was later mapped and 73 territories were found to be occupied (54 in 2017, 57 in 2016). Recorded in nine months of the year there were 1,104 observer sightings from 74 sites. The first Reed Warbler arrived on Apr 14th at Frampton Marsh, almost two weeks later than in 2018, and many more had arrived by the end of the month with 30 at Barton Pits on Apr 21st. Many more arrived in May when most of the main sites tabulated recorded their peak counts. The records show the species has a wide distribution to every corner of the county in suitable reedbed habitats, including many *Phragmites*-lined drains and ditches in the Fens, especially the Hobhole drain at Midville, Stickney. The species was found in 18% of BBS squares



(2018 17%) with an average of 2.1 birds per occupied square (2018 2.5). It was the 56th most widespread and 58th most numerous species in the 2019 Lincolnshire BBS.

Autumn counts were relatively modest with peaks of 20 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 3rd and Gibraltar Point on Aug 8th; numbers fell rapidly during Sep with only one to two birds being reported at a few coastal sites. Three were at Alkborough Flats on Oct 3rd, two at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Oct 9th, with a late bird there Oct 19th. The last bird of the year was at Barton Pits Oct 25th.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* ■

Very scarce migrant and potential breeder first recorded in Lincolnshire in 1961. Red List. **RBBP LBRC**

Two records in 2019, the first on Jun 20th-21st at Frampton Marsh (GPC et al), an elusive and infrequently singing male in thick scrub along a reedy ditch. Another was trapped at Gibraltar Point on Jun 28th (GGr). Singing males held territories in spring in 2012 and 2019 but there was no evidence of a pair or nest building in 2019.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

Very scarce passage and declining coastal passage migrant mainly Aug-Oct, exceptional inland. **LBRC RBBP**

A very elusive male was singing at Swanpool, Lincoln on Jun 11th (ACS). The bird was never seen but was well sound recorded and widely circulated and unanimously accepted as this species. In total there have been around 120 records up to 1990. However, since then the species' fortunes have declined and the average this century is just one to four per year.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia* ■

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Decline in late 20th century. Red List.

Recorded Apr-Sep, there were 198 observer sightings from 25 sites. The table shows all sites where they were present for at least two months and the maximum number recorded in each month. Most totals refer to singing males but not in every case.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Gibraltar Point Jun 28th 2019

© OWEN BEAUMONT





Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Gibraltar Point	5	4	4	3	2	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	2	2	3	1	2	-
Anderby	5	1	-	1	1	-
Tetney	3	1	2	1	1	-
Alkborough Flats	4	1	1	-	1	-
Marston	2	3	1	-	1	-
Grimsby	3	1	-	-	-	-
Barton upon Humber	2	1	1	-	-	-
Anwick	-	2	-	1	-	-
North Cotes	1	-	1	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	1	-	-	-	-
Willow Tree Fen	-	-	-	1	1	-

The first bird of the year was at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Apr 13th, two days earlier than in 2018 but eight days later than in 2017. Sightings from 16 locations were recorded by the end of Apr including the highest total of five at Gibraltar Point on Apr 20th, Anderby Creek Apr 21st and Cleethorpes Apr 30th. Four singing males were recorded at Gibraltar Point up to Jun 24th and at Alkborough Flats on Apr 20th. Three birds were counted on 20 occasions including the highest inland total at Marston SW on May 3rd. The final bird of the year was trapped and ringed in the east dunes, at Gibraltar Point on Sep 1st.

Although presence was mainly detected by singing males, a male at Barton was seen in wing-waving display Apr 21st, and another was seen displaying at Tetney Marsh Jun 1st. There were just three records of confirmed breeding: at Gibraltar Point an adult was seen carrying food May 24th, at Barton adults were seen feeding young on Jun 22nd, and a freshly fledged juvenile was trapped at Gibraltar Point on Jul 2nd.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* ■

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant. Scarce winter visitor Dec-Mar. BBS data shows that the population has increased by 164% during the period 1994-2018. Green List.

The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0.3	0.4	3	25.5	25	13.9	10.7	7.9	6.9	4	1.4	1.1

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 1,685 observer records during the year from 154 sites. The highest counts were of 42 at Whisby NP on May 12th and at Gibraltar Point on Aug 23rd. Sites recording 20 or more are recorded in the table below.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1		8	36	34	22	15	42	27	19	12	7
Whisby NP			2	36	42	6		1	2	1		
Saltfleetby- Theddlethorpe	3			8	8	2		15	20	20		1
Messingham				6	3	1	1	6	20			
Twyford Wood				16	20							
Barton Pits			4	28	1	1				1		
Laughton Forest					25							

Over-wintering birds were recorded in Cleethorpes on Jan 1st and Feb 9th, and at Barton on Humber Jan 3rd. One was at Gibraltar Point on Jan 10th and three further up the coast at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the 20th. A bird was on a fat-ball feeder in Pinchbeck on Jan 30th and probably stayed in the area during Feb as one was also recorded on Feb 19th-20th and 22nd-23rd. Two were recorded in Monks Wood, Dunholme on Feb 24th. Spring passage began in earnest during April as usual.



Autumn passage started in Aug with eight counts in excess of 20 (all at Gibraltar Point). In Sep all counts over 20 came from coastal locations except for 20 at Messingham on Sep 10th. Most records in Oct also came from coastal sites or along the Humber with the exception of two at Deeping St James and single birds at Marston and Whisby NP. Twelve birds were counted at Gibraltar Point on Nov 19th. There were 18 counts in Dec, a pair on four occasions in a garden in Langworth with singles at Healing, North Thoresby and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe. Gibraltar Point had up to seven on Dec 2nd and also had the last bird of the year on Dec 31st.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* ■

Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List.

The species occurred in only two (3.3%) of the 61 BBS squares surveyed. The first bird of the year was recorded at Messingham on Apr 7th followed by one at Cleethorpes on 14th. Birds became more widespread from Apr 20th and were recorded from 15 sites by the month end. Records peaked during May with almost 50% of the 208 sightings coming from 32 of the 44 sites recorded over the year. The peak count was of 19 birds at Whisby NP on May 12th, with other notable counts in May of nine at Laughton Forest (18th), eight at Temple Wood (27th) and Twyford Wood (5th), and six at Bourne Wood (11th) and Kirkby on Bain (13th). Records tailed off gradually thereafter with records from only six sites in Aug and eight in Sep and with a shift to more coastal sites, up to four at Gibraltar Point (Aug 27th) and three at Tetney (Aug 24th). The final birds of the year were both at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 9th and 15th.

Barred Warbler *Curruca nisoria*

Very scarce/scarse coastal passage migrant mainly Aug-Oct, exceptionally to Dec. LBRC

There were four autumn records, three of which were in Oct. The first was on Oct 3rd at Tetney (DEv) and then a further two mid-month with one on Oct 15th at Donna Nook (CA, GPC, ND) and another on 16th at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe (BRG). The fourth bird was found nearly three weeks later on Nov 4th in the Plantation at Gibraltar Point (NAL).

Lesser Whitethroat *Curruca curruca* ■

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green list (nominate form)

Recorded in seven months of the year, there were 527 observer sightings during the year from 70 sites; the top 10 sites are tabulated below. Note the truncated table.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	10	12	12	10	30	21	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	7	4	1	-	5	6	1
Donna Nook	6	1	-	-	14	-	1
East Halton	2	2	-	2	9	1	-
Anderby	-	2	-	5	2	4	1
Long Bennington	5	5	3	-	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	3	2	1	-	-	6	-
Boultham Mere	3	2	1	2	2	2	-
Tetney	1	2	1	-	4	1	1
Frampton Marsh	2	3	1	1	2	1	-

Birds were present from Apr-Oct and in the spring the first birds were at Barton Pits and Gibraltar Point on the 14th. By the end of the month, 32 sites played host to the species with 10 on three occasions at Gibraltar Point. In May there were 12 on 7th and 10 on 10th at Gibraltar Point with five ringed in the east dunes on each day. An adult feeding two young at Gibraltar Point on Jun 12th was the only confirmed evidence of breeding received. Post-breeding, numbers increased greatly with a high of 30 birds at Gibraltar Point Aug 20th; Donna Nook had 14 on Aug 25th, the only other site to report more than 10. There were still good numbers present in Sep, but in Oct numbers declined considerably with only single birds recorded and the final bird of the year at Tetney Marsh on Oct 29th.



Siberian Lesser Whitethroat *Curruca curruca blythi* Donna Nook Oct 15th 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY

Siberian Lesser Whitethroat *Curruca curruca blythi*

Vagrant. Asia. **LBRC**

One record of this distinctive Asian race of Lesser Whitethroat Oct 15th-18th at Donna Nook (LHa, RHa, CA, GPC, ND). The first definitive mention of this race was in LBR 1981 when around five individuals were seen Oct 18th-Nov 14th that year, with good descriptive evidence. Two more were found in 1987, one trapped at Gibraltar Point on Sep 27th and another seen at Donna Nook, Oct 4th. From published records in the LBR and the LBC database they average less than one per year, but the suspicion remains that they are under-recorded.



Eastern Subalpine Warbler
Curruca cantillans albibristata
 May 3rd 2019
 © OWEN BEAUMONT

Eastern Subalpine Warbler *Curruca cantillans*

Vagrant. SE Europe.

A 2CY male *C.c. albibristata*, was at Gibraltar Point Apr 29th-30th, trapped Apr 29th, still present briefly Apr 30th north of Mill Hill (Accepted BBRC; *British Birds* 113: 585-665). Given the new taxonomy relating to the 'Subalpine warbler' group, all previous Lincolnshire records are to be re-submitted as requested by BBRC. Given this proviso, there has been at least one previous record of this 'new' species (Humberstone, May 12th, 1981).

Whitethroat *Curruca communis* ■

Nominate form a very common summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS data shows that the breeding population has significantly increased by 81% during the period 1994-2018. Green List (nominate form).

Numbers of Common Whitethroat are still gradually improving after the disastrous winter of 1968-69 when severe drought hit its wintering areas south of the Sahara and decimated the species. There were 1,256 observer sightings recorded Apr-Sep from 153 sites. The first returning bird of the spring was observed at Millennium Green, North Hykeham on Apr 10th. By the end of that month another 58 sites had recorded the species. Of the 158 counts from Gibraltar Point, 58 were higher than 43, with 13 being higher than 100. The monthly maxima are shown in the table below. The highest count of the year was of 187 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 28th. No other site came close to these counts in any of the months. Note there were no records Jan-Mar or Oct-Dec.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Gibraltar Point	90	125	180	132	187	23
Tetney	16	22	22	20	8	5
Anderby	6	33	-	30	8	10
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	12	32	8	3	20	7
Donna Nook	41	1	12	-	16	-
Long Bennington	16	24	16	9	-	-
Boultham Mere	8	15	10	10	3	2
Marton	6	8	8	6	12	6
Marston	3	12	13	10	-	4
Dunholme	11	12	13	2	-	-

The highest count away from Gibraltar Point was at Donna Nook with 41 recorded on Apr 26th. Only six other sites had totals of between 10-40. The only evidence of breeding apart from singing males was a report of a family group at Gibraltar Point on Jun 16th and two juvenile birds at East Halton Marshes on Aug 17th. The final bird of the year was on Sep 29th at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla* ■

Scarce and increasing passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Green List. RBBP

There were 39 sightings during 2019 at Gibraltar Point possibly involving 57 different birds. The first of the year was an over-wintering bird on Jan 1st. The next were in Mar with one on the 8th and another trapped and ringed on the 26th and retrapped three days later. Two were recorded on the 28th and four scattered around the reserve on the 31st. Eleven sightings were made during Apr with three on the 4th and two on the 21st and 24th. In May four were seen on 10th (three singing males) and two singing males were present in Aylmer Avenue on 14th and 23rd. There were no more records until Oct, with single birds on 10 dates and two on Oct 23rd. In Nov singles were recorded on four dates with two on Nov 7th, 9th and 24th. Elsewhere in the county, there was a spring bird at Frampton Marsh on May 19th. One was also seen there in the autumn on Oct 23rd just a day after one had been seen on the coast at Anderby Creek. Another was at nearby Huttoft Bank Pit on Oct 31st and there was one at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Nov 3rd. The last of the year was recorded a few miles inland at North Thoresby on Dec 16th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* ■

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 215 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 1,023 records from 115 sites; the top five are tabulated below.



Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* Gibraltar Point Nov 3rd 2019 © PAUL NEALE



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	5	4	12	11	1	1	-	6	72	215	166	12
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1	1	15	1	2	-	-	6	20	100	17	2
Anderby	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	4	100	4	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	2	50	1	-
Anwick	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-1	6	28	-	-

Numbers were low in the first half of the year with the only double-figure counts coming from Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and Gibraltar Point in late Mar. Modest autumn passage began in Sep picking up at the end of the month with 72 at Gibraltar Point on 29th and increasing into Oct as expected. Gibraltar Point recorded counts of 100 or more on 11 dates between Oct 7th-24th with 100 at Anderby Creek on Oct 7th and at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 15th. Pulses of migrants continued to be recorded at Gibraltar Point with 166 on Nov 3rd (including 26 trapped), 72 on 4th, 86 on 7th and 59 on 10th the four highest day counts. Numbers everywhere tailed off towards the end of the month with only three counts in double figures. Evidence of onward movement to the south came from birds ringed in the county and retrapped later in Oct-Dec in Devon, Kent, Suffolk and Gt. London. A bird ringed as a 1CY female on Oct 8th, 2018 in France was caught in Ruskington on Sep 15th, 2019.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* ■

Abundant resident and partial migrant. BBS data shows that the population has increased by 39% during the period 1994-2018. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 73 at Gibraltar Point on Jun 12th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 3,643 observer sightings reported from 225 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8.1	7.2	8.6	13	12.6	8.2	7.4	7	6.7	7.8	7	6.6

This species was found in 87% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 94%) with an average of 6.4 birds per occupied square (2018, 6.0). Although it fell from 6th most widespread bird in the survey in 2018 to 10th in 2019, it had a better year with regard to the index for the county which was up by 8% compared to 2018. This was after a 38% decrease in 2018 (compared to 2017) following the "Beast from the East". Not a complete rebound but heading back up. As usual only Gibraltar Point reported counts of more than 40 with 73 on Jun 12th.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* ■

Fairly common and increasing woodland resident. Green List.

The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
13.3	11.5	9.3	10.6	6.4	3.7	4.4	7	9.7	8.4	7.6	8.1

There were 724 records in total received from 65 sites, but the species was recorded from only one BBS square (1.7%) of the 61 surveyed, a reduction from recent years (3.9% in 2018; 3.5% in 2017). Eight was the highest count for the year from Callan's Lane Wood, Bulby on Sep 3rd. Other notable counts include five at Belton on Jun 5th and five at Linwood on Apr 6th. Counts of four or more birds came from nine sites in all, but most records were of one to three birds; breeding was only confirmed at Roughton. Away from the usual woodland haunts, a single bird was at Gibraltar Point on Jul 1st suggesting some movement / dispersal.



Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* ■

British form *britannica* a common resident and partial migrant. Nominate Scandinavian and eastern European form, vagrant. Green List (nominate).

Recorded in all months of the year there were 470 observer sightings from 67 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
13.6	9.1	6.8	9.6	6.6	3.2	4	7.2	10.9	10	9.4	9.6

Records were mainly of one to two birds, but also three birds on eight dates, four on five dates and six in Mar at Rigsby and six in Apr at Linwood Warren. As in previous years there were hardly any reports of any breeding activity. Three singing males were heard in Callan's Lane Wood on Apr 1st, one or two at Whisby NP in Apr and one at South Ormsby Mar 24th, and display was noted at Haverholme. More direct evidence of breeding was the 20 juveniles out of a total of 38 birds ringed in the county. There were no claims of the nominate form *familiaris*, a BBRC-reportable subspecies.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

Rare. Eastern Europe. LBRC

No records of this species were received in 2019.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* ■

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. BS data shows that the breeding population has significantly fallen by 79% during the period 1994-2018. Red List.

The highest count for the year was an estimate of 200,000 at Messingham on Nov 19th. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 4,052 observer sightings reported from 216 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Messingham	-	1	-	-	3	-	1	2	1	1	200000	-
Gibraltar Point	350	469	2960	32	45	1590	6000	30	206	25040	24514	206
Whisby NP	2000	-	1000	1	1	-	-	-	20	200	13500	20000
Barton upon Humber	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	25000	10000
Chapel St Leonards	100	1	-	7	1	8	-	-	1	90	22000	70
Anderby	408	100	400	80	66	2	40	33	300	1000	18000	4
Branston Booths	-	200	4	22	-	6	-	-	150	8000	4000	400
Kirkby on Bain	300	150	30	1	-	1	-	-	20	-	3000	9000
Frampton Marsh	2000	223	180	100	70	1000	1000	1500	3000	400	3000	27
Boultham Mere	4000	20	120	40	45	200	30	40	40	250	140	6000

The table shows the top 10 sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 10,000 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The species was found in 64% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 57%) with an average of 18 birds per occupied square counted (2018, 21) and the 23rd most widespread species in Lincolnshire BBS squares. Starling is a red data breeding species in UK and the Lincolnshire population is 55% below the index level in 1994, 5% of that fall came from 2018 to 2019. There is fortunately no such pressure on the wintering population although the *European Breeding Bird Atlas 2* (2020) reports a 64% decline of the population in western Europe since 1980, the population in central and eastern Europe has increased. The record numbers in Nov 2019 are obviously coming from somewhere! The estimate of 200,000 at the Black Bank roost at Messingham on Nov 19th is the joint highest count ever claimed in the county, equalling a count at Alkborough Flats five years previously on Nov 16th 2014. It must have been an awe-inspiring sight. The second highest count at Gibraltar Point on Oct 28th included 7,040 moving south and up to 23,000 in the Mere roost from then to Nov 8th. Whisby NP also held a significant roost of up to 20,000 birds in Nov-Dec.



Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* ■

Scarce passage migrant Mar-May and Sep-Nov; rare in winter. Red List.

The highest count for the year was an amazing 54 birds at Gibraltar Point on Oct 13th. Recorded in six months of the year there were 99 observer sightings recorded from 20 sites, seven of them inland. Those recording at least two in any month are tabulated.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	4	2	-	-	-	-	54	1	-
Donna Nook	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Tetney	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1
Huttoft Pit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Tealby	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The spread of records emphasises their presence in the county as passage migrants with no records at all between Jun-Sep. First arrivals in the spring were on Mar 25th at Frampton Marsh and Mar 31st at Gibraltar Point. A trickle of migrants passed through 15 sites during Apr with one to four birds recorded and the last of the coastal migrants were seen between May 10th-19th at Gibraltar Point and Tetney Marsh. Inland sites lucky enough to see them were Covenham Reservoir, East Keal, Kirkby Moor, RAF Woodhall, Trent Port (Marton), Tealby (2) and Witham on the Hill.

The first autumn bird was seen at Tetney Marsh on Oct 3rd and up to five were recorded in the first fortnight of Oct followed by a deluge of birds at Gibraltar Point with 54 on Oct 13th, 48 on 15th and 28 on 18th. Maxima elsewhere were four at Huttoft Pit and just one to two at six other sites, all coastal except for one at Marton on 7th. All but two birds had departed by the end of Oct leaving a single at Gibraltar Point on Nov 3rd and another at Seaview Farm, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe found on Dec 3rd which was seen on several dates to Dec 29th.

Blackbird *Turdus merula* ■

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows no significant change in the breeding population of this species from 1994-2018. Green List.

Recorded in all months of the year with 4,723 observer records coming from 252 sites. Many records didn't have a meaningful count and were recorded as simply being present. There were five counts of 60 at Barton Pits (Jan 7th), two of 60 at Tetney (Oct 15th and Dec 12th), one at Deeping Lakes NR (Jan 9th) and one at Woodhall Spa (Jan 4th). All other counts of more than 60, of which there were 39, came from Gibraltar Point, all in the last three months of the year. Birds continually arrived from the east with the highest count of the year being 545 on Nov 8th. This was during a big influx between Nov 6th-24th with other day counts between 156-360. Away from the coast, there were significant counts at Woodhall Spa with 48 May 3rd, 44 Mar 29th, 42 Jan 13th, and 41 on Jun 6th; 45 were at Trent Port, Marton on Nov 17th and 42 were at Stenigot on May 29th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* ■

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr; rare in summer. Red List.

RBBP

Recorded in nine months of the year, there were 1,086 sightings from 143 sites with 100 or more recorded 102 times, which was slightly down on last year. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
20.9	16.9	8.8	9.9	0.6	0	0	0	0.1	8.5	15.8	18.5

The highest totals in the first quarter of the year were 500 Baston Fen on Feb 6th, 400 Willow Tree Fen on Feb 15th, 350 Anwick on Feb 24th and 300 adjacent to the River Witham at Bardney Pits on Jan 1st. In



Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* Old Brumby Street, Scunthorpe Jan 31st 2019 © SIMON SPAVIN

the second quarter of the year there were 16 counts of over 50 with nine of more than 100. The highest total was a flock of 500 at Callan's Lane Wood on Apr 5th. The final bird of the first half of the year was a single at Branston on May 10th.

The first birds of autumn were two at Gib Point on Sep 15th, the only Sep record. Small numbers were recorded throughout the rest of Oct until a large arrival from Oct 20th when 330 were at Trent Port Marton. There were 206 over University of Lincoln on Oct 21st and 193 at Gibraltar Point the same day, the highest count for that site in 2019. Those sites recording 200 or more are tabulated. Note there were no records Jun-Aug.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Broughton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2000
Marton	55	20	100	20	-	-	330	550	250
Nocton	100	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	780
Frampton Marsh	185	12	-	1	-	-	3	200	500
Baston	30	500	75	5	1	-	4	60	80
Alkborough	-	160	52	200	-	-	-	-	330
Wellingore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	700
Toft next Newton	150	125	200	26	-	-	-	80	60
Dunsby	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	500	30



Redwing *Turdus iliacus* Old Brumby Street, Scunthorpe Jan 31st 2019 © SIMON SPAVIN

Redwing *Turdus iliacus* ■ (nominate) ■ (coburni)

Nominate Scandinavian and Russian form a very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr, rare in summer. Icelandic form *coburni* rare but probably under-recorded. Red List (nominate) and Green List (*coburni*). **RBBP**

Recorded in 11 months of the year there were 995 observer sightings coming from 117 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Anderby-Huttoft coast	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	7000	-	17
Gibraltar Point	19	58	143	74	2	1	-	1	7	4258	580	148
Donna Nook	1	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	3000	2	-
Lincoln	10	211	123	-	-	-	-	-	-	999	108	21
Barton Pits	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	31	180	450
Tetney	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	340	3	80
Marton	6	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	180	35
Broughton	200	-	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	25	50	17	5	-	-	-	-	-	120	60	35
Sturton by Stow	31	105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	40	95

The spread of counts tends to emphasise the huge numbers of winter migrants appearing on the coast in Oct and dispersing inland. Early Oct saw 127 arrivals at Gibraltar Point on 3rd followed by 755 flying over Lincoln on 5th, another 457 at Gibraltar Point on 6th and 1,500 at Anderby Creek on 7th. Numbers continued to increase until a huge arrival on Oct 15th on the coast between Gibraltar Point and Donna Nook, the highest of the month (see table). Another large movement occurred on Oct 20th with 999 over Lincoln and 363 at Gibraltar Point followed by 684 there on Oct 21st. Small pulses of arrivals occurred into Nov with 540 on Nov 7th and 580 on Nov 8th, again at Gibraltar Point, and more were seen arriving inland. Widespread flocks were recorded across the county in Dec with a peak of 450 at Barton Pits on Dec 8th and several other flocks of more than 100 at several sites but with double-figure counts the norm in the second half of the month.



Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* ■ (clarkei) ■ (nominate)

British form *clarkei* a very common resident. Nominate continental form a common passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows that the breeding population has declined by 14% during the period 1994-2018. Red List (*clarkei*) and Green List (*philomelos*)

The highest count for the year was 515 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 15th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 2,072 observer sightings reported from 160 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
7.2	11.6	9.	14.6	15.1	9.1	7.6	3.7	4.3	8.3	4.2	4.6

Song Thrush was found in 60% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 62%) with an average of 2.2 birds per occupied square unchanged since 2018. It was the 25th most widespread BBS species down from 23rd in 2018 but the Lincolnshire BBS index reflected no change over 2018. In the autumn the first influx occurred on Oct 6th with 237 at Gibraltar Point, and inland the two largest inland were on the same date, with 40 at Boultham Mere, Lincoln and 14 at Marton. The most widespread coastal movement came on Oct 15th at Gibraltar Point (515), Crook Bank to Churchill Rd, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe (150), Donna Nook (80) Huttoft (60), Anderby (60) and Tetney (40). The combined total in excess of 900 was probably the biggest movement recorded since Oct 5th 2010.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* ■

Common resident and partial migrant. Red List.

There were 1,040 observer sightings recorded during the year from 138 sites but only 28 of these had maximum counts of five or more birds. The highest count for the year was 17 at Sutton Bridge on Jun 29th and there were only seven other counts in double figures, all from Aug to Oct: 14 at Little Carlton (Aug 7th), 10 at Baumber (Aug 11th), 10 at Gibraltar Point (Aug 13th), 12 at Fulbeck (Sep 10th), 11 at Normanby (Sep 15th), 14 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe (Oct 12th) and 10 at Tetney (Oct 15th). The species was recorded in 15 (24%) of the 61 BBS squares surveyed, compared to presence in 35% of squares in 2018 and 28% in 2017. This pattern matches the BBS index for the East Midlands which shows a general decline since 2008 only interrupted by two outlying peak years in 2016 and 2017.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* ■

Fairly common but much decreased and now very local summer visitor and passage migrant. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 13 at Hill Holt Wood on Jun 19th. Recorded in six months of the year there were 145 observer sightings from 47 sites all during May-Oct. The top 10 sites are tabulated showing monthly peak counts.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	-	6	3	1	5	3	1
Linwood	-	2	1	3	3	4	-
Hill Holt Wood	-	-	13	-	-	-	-
Woodhall Spa	-	-	-	7	-	-	-
Laughton Forest	-	-	-	2	2	3	-
Boultham Mere	-	-	-	1	5	1	-
Whisby NP	-	-	-	-	4	3	-
Belton (Grantham)	-	-	-	1	4	1	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	-	1	2	1	-
Normanby	-	-	-	5	-	-	-



Spotted Flycatcher *Muscipapa striata* Alkborough Flats Aug 30th 2019 © SIMON SPAVIN

The first bird of the year arrived on May 7th at Gibraltar Point, two days later than in 2018. More arrived during the month although records were received from only 10 sites, four coastal and six inland. These were mostly just one to two birds with highs of six at Gibraltar Point on May 22nd and five on 24th. Four pairs bred at Hill Holt Wood, where two of these were observed with a total of nine young on Jun 19th. Elsewhere breeding activity was reported as follows: a pair at the nest in the Plantation, Gibraltar Point, Jun 9th-16th; a pair at Woodhall Spa with five young, Jul 2nd; a pair at the nest in Laughton Forest, Jul 9th; and another pair feeding young at Linwood warren Jul 26th.

Autumn passage during Aug-Sep saw records from 34 sites on a broad front across the county with maxima being of four to five birds at several of these. A few lingered to the end of the month with a single at Belton on Sep 25th and singles at Gibraltar Point Sep 28th-Oct 1st being the last of the year as in 2018.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula* ■

British form *melophilus* a very common resident. Nominate continental form a common passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows that the breeding population has increased by 136% during the period 1994-2018. Green List (both forms).

The highest count for the year was 410 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 15th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 3,969 observer sightings from 220 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9.6	8.8	9.1	11.6	10.5	5.9	4.9	7.1	8.2	9	7.5	7.8

Robin was found in 92% of BBS squares (2018, 90%) with an average of 3.4 birds per occupied square (2018, 4.2). It was the 7th most widespread bird species in the county from Lincs BBS coverage up from 8th in 2018. Although it continues to do well as a breeding bird numbers fell some 16% over 2018 as reflected by the Lincs BBS index. In the early part of the year high counts inland included 45 at Haverholme on Feb 16th, 30 at Swanholme, Lincoln on Mar 9th and 33 at Cranwell on Apr 5th. Peak autumn migration was on Oct 15th when Gibraltar Point had 410, including many grounded on the beach and on the same day there were 200 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe. Gibraltar Point also had a Nov peak of 154 on Nov 24th.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

Nominate Scandinavian form (Red-spotted Bluethroat) rare migrant. Central and southern European form *cyanecula* (White-spotted Bluethroat) vagrant. **LBRC RBBP**

The only record of the year was a juvenile female trapped at Gibraltar Point on Oct 22nd.

Bluethroats are rare and irregular passage migrants averaging barely one record per year since the late 1990s. Most turn up on the coast, but there have been two exceptional inland records. First recorded in 1892 with seven records up to 1924. Since 1950 there have been nearly 100 records, with the red-spotted form predominating in spring.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* ■

Very scarce and declining local summer visitor and very scarce passage migrant. Red List.

This species maintains its toehold in the county. A singing male was found on the coast at Seacroft Lagoon, Skegness from Apr 12th-15th. Two more singing males were found inland, one at Twyford Wood on May 5th and 17th, and the second at Ropsley on May 24th. There were no signs that any of these were anything more than transients.

Detailed survey work at Whisby NP showed that three birds, a pair and a lone male, were present between Apr-Jun. The first singing male turned up on Apr 21st and was seen with a second bird, presumed to be a female, from Apr 29th at the west end of Oakwood. The female was observed nest-building. This pair were seen on and off until Jun 12th, but no evidence of confirmed breeding was recorded. The second singing male turned up on May 4th and held another territory at the east end of Oakwood until Jun 14th. There was no evidence that this bird was paired up.



Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* Whisby NP May 2019 © CHRIS GRIMSHAW



Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Rare. LBRC

No records of this species were received in 2019 for the third consecutive year.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Very scarce coastal passage migrant mainly Aug-Oct. LBRC

Just a single record in 2019 at Anderby Creek on Oct 30th, a bird trapped and ringed (JDa). The annual average for this species, 2010-2019, is between two and three birds, but totals vary considerably from year to year. Blank years still occur, the most recent was in 2017, but there were eight individuals in both 2013 and 2014.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* ■

Scarce passage migrant, mainly coastal; very scarce in spring and scarce in autumn. Red List.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	2	8	-	3	36	7	1
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	8	1	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Marton	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Tattershall Thorpe	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Hobhole	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Boultham Mere	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Marston	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

There were 51 observer sightings recorded during the year from 12 sites, five of those inland; monthly maxima from all sites are tabulated (note truncated table). Spring records were scarce as usual with the only records coming from Gibraltar Point with two birds present on Apr 22nd, eight on May 10th and six the following day, with singles on four more dates until May 21st. The first birds of return passage were also at Gibraltar Point with two on Jul 28th, increasing to 13 on Aug 24th, 17 on the 25th, 30 on 29th and an exceptional 36 on the 30th, the maximum count for the year. Other counts in Aug included eight at Donna Nook on the 27th, two at both Tetney and Saltfleet on the 26th, and singles at Marton, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and Tattershall-Thorpe. Up to seven birds were at Gibraltar Point in Sep with singles at a further seven sites. Passage concluded with single birds at Gibraltar Point and Tetney on Oct 5th and the final bird of the year at Marston on the 15th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* ■

European form ('Western Black Redstart') *gibraltariensis* a scarce passage migrant, rare and irregular breeder, last in 2012, and very scarce winter visitor. One record of one of the Central Asian forms *P.o. phoenicuroides/rufiventris/xerophilus*. Red List. RBBC

Black Redstarts were recorded in 10 months of the year. There were 42 observer sightings during the year coming from seven sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
14.3	0	11.9	19	4.8	9.5	0	4.8	2.4	14.3	4.8	14.3

A presumed over-wintering bird was at Gibraltar Point from Jan 3rd-11th but the first spring migrants were three on Mar 20th at Donna Nook, followed by singles at Gedney Drove End Mar 26th, Gibraltar Point 27th-28th and Humberston 28th. Further spring passage was meagre with just single birds being



reported along the coast in Apr at Tetney, Gibraltar Point, and Gedney Drove End; there was a single record inland in a private garden at Deeping St. James on Apr 11th. Just two May records on 20th and 21st at Gibraltar Point and Gedney Drove End respectively completed a dismal spring for the species. A female or immature male was seen at Gibraltar Point on Jun 12th and 20th and a male frequented the Visitor Centre on 28th-30th. There was no evidence of breeding here or anywhere else in the county.

Autumn birds were thin on the ground with the first on Aug 21st at Gibraltar Point and again on 28th. A single record there on Sep 20th was the only record for that month. Singles continued to be recorded in Oct with two on 15th and an adult male from 21st-22nd. A single at Tetney Marsh on Oct 25th was the only record away from Gibraltar Point. Further singles were at Gibraltar Point on Nov 8th and 10th, and another on Dec 2nd. A late bird was at Seacroft Marsh SSSI Dec 20th-26th.

Black Redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

Gibraltar Point Oct 21st 2019

(above) and Jun 30th 2019

(right) © PAUL NEALE





Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Gibraltar Point Apr 14th 2019 © RUSSELL HAYES

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* ■

Very scarce summer visitor and scarce passage migrant in spring, fairly common in autumn. Last confirmed breeding 2013. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was five at Gibraltar Point on May 10th. Recorded in six months of the year there were 66 observer sightings from 15 sites all of which are tabulated (note truncated table).

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	2	5	-	-	4	3	2
Tetney	2	-	-	-	1	-	-
Boultham Mere	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
Barton upon Humber	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Humberston	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Cotes	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marston	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Deeping St James	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Barton Pits	-	-	-	-	-	-	1



The first bird of the spring was a single at Gibraltar Point on Apr 13th with two there on 20th-21st. Two birds were also at Tetney on Apr 20th and single birds were at three other coastal sites in Apr with one inland record from Marston on 26th-27th. The only records in May were from Gibraltar Point with the maximum count for the year of five on 10th-11th and two on the 12th; a late bird was also present on Jun 29th. Still at Gibraltar Point, the first bird of the autumn was on Aug 19th, followed by four on 26th. Elsewhere in Aug, single birds were at four other coastal sites, plus two inland at Boultham Mere (21st-23rd) and one at Deeping St James (31st). Up to three birds were at Gibraltar Point during Sep with two at Anderby and singles at three other sites. Numbers tailed off in Oct with only single birds reported from four sites apart from two birds at Gibraltar Point on Oct 3rd, with the last bird of the year also there on the 22nd.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* ■

Scarce/fairly common passage migrant. Formerly a common breeder, last bred in the 1980s. Red List.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	-	1	3	-	-	21	12	1
Huttoft	-	2	-	-	-	2	7	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	-	-	4	3	2
Donna Nook	-	-	1	-	-	8	-	1
Tetney	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	1
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	-	-	3	7	-
East Halton	-	-	-	-	-	8	1	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	-
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-

Around 50,000 pairs of Whinchat breed in the British Isles but there has been a steady decline in numbers and a geographical contraction to the west and north over a sustained period. The reason for this is not completely clear, but it is likely to be a combination of increasing agricultural intensification in Britain and issues in the humid tropics of sub-Saharan Africa where the species winters (migrants there have shown greater decreases than those wintering in other regions). This species and four other upland species breeding in Britain were added to the Red List in BoCC4.

There were 169 observer sightings recorded during the year with those coming from 31 sites. Two birds at Huttoft Pit and a single at Thurlby Fen on Apr 20th heralded the start of a very light spring passage. One on Apr 21st at Gibraltar Point and another at Barton Pits Apr 24th were the only other birds of April. In May there were seven records of single birds and one of three at Gibraltar Point on the 8th; the last two birds were recorded on May 19th at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point.

Autumn migration started in early August and sightings totalled 156 from 29 different sites. A dozen records of 10 or more birds all came from Gibraltar Point between Aug 19th-Sep 13th. The highest count was of 24 on Aug 24th. The highest inland counts were just a few miles from the coast at Middlemarsh Farm in Sep with seven on the 1st, six on the 4th and four on the 12th. In Oct records of one to two birds came from seven sites with the final birds of the year being two at Stickney on Oct 28th.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola* ■

Scarce/fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr. Very scarce and sporadic breeder. Bred in seven out of the last 21 years to 2019, last in 2016. Green List.

The highest count for the year was 23 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th. Recorded in 11 months of the year there were 515 observer sightings coming from 54 sites.



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3	4	2	1	1	-	-	2	19	23	9	10
Alkborough	4	5	1	2	1	7	-	5	4	14	-	14
East Halton	2	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	6	3	4
Saltfleetby	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	6	5	2
Theddlethorpe												
Goxhill	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	4	5	3
Anderby	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	5	1
Donna Nook	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	5	2	-
Willow Tree Fen	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	5	2
Barton Pits	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-

Sites having five or more birds in one month at least are tabulated. Wintering birds departed during Mar-Apr with two records in May at Gibraltar Point, the only site where there was significant autumn passage during Sep-Oct. Breeding occurred at Alkborough Flats in a well-documented series of events which began on Mar 25th when a singing male was discovered. This bird appeared again on Apr 3rd, and on the 6th was with a female, continuing to sing and display to his mate. The pair was observed regularly, but later on in May there seemed to be no sign of nesting, while strangely what appeared to be a second female was seen in an area only 400m away. On May 12th the first female was seen feeding young in a nest hidden in vegetation near the ground. Unfortunately this nest seemed to be predated a few days later. However, on June 5th the second female reappeared with four small chicks that had just fledged.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* ■

Fairly common passage migrant and former local breeder until the end of the 19th century but no recent certainty, although pairs are regular in late spring. 'Greenland Wheatear' *leucorhoa* is a scarce migrant in spring/autumn. Green List (both forms).

The highest count for the year was 25 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 26th. Recorded in eight months of the year there were 380 observer sightings from 49 sites. The top 10 sites according to summed monthly maxima are tabulated (Note the truncated table).

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	5	25	13	1	1	9	13	2
Tetney	-	5	10	-	-	3	8	2
Donna Nook	2	12	2	-	-	1	2	-
Frampton Marsh	2	4	1	1	1	3	3	1
Middlemarsh Farm	-	5	2	-	1	2	3	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	1	-	-	6	4	-
Cleethorpes	5	-	2	-	-	-	1	1
Saltfleet	-	4	-	-	-	-	5	-
Covenham Reservoir	1	2	1	-	-	2	2	-
Anderby	1	2	2	-	-	-	2	-



Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola* (juvenile)
Alkborough Flats Jun 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
Gibraltar Point May 14th 2019
© PAUL NEALE



One of the most eagerly awaited spring migrants, the first of the year appeared at Covenham Reservoir and Huttoft Marsh on Mar 19th; by the end of the month another eight sites had logged the species with five at both Gibraltar Point (21st) and Cleethorpes (22nd) the highest counts. Inward migration continued during Apr with highs of 12 at Donna Nook (Apr 20th), 25 at Gibraltar Point (Apr 26th), and continued through May with highs of 13 at Gibraltar Point (May 11th) and 10 at Tetney (May 13th). One male bird of the Greenland race *leucorhoa* was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 21st.

Only singles were seen at a few coastal sites in Jun-Jul but one of these was a juvenile at Gibraltar Point on Jul 12th, perhaps the first sign of autumn. Passage during Aug-Sep was relatively light with maxima as per the table; the count of 13 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 13th was the only double-figure count of the autumn and birds quickly moved on with three at Winterton on Oct 9th the highest count of the month and a single at Frampton Marsh on Oct 20th the last of the year.

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*

Vagrant. Central Asia. BBRC

The first county record was a 1CY+ bird at Gibraltar Point Sep 22nd-23rd, one of eight in Britain in 2019 (Accepted BBRC; *British Birds* 113: 585-665). See Finder's Report, p 212.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* ■

Abundant resident and partial migrant. BBS data shows that the breeding population has fallen by 15% during the period 1994-2018, in contrast to the greater than 50% decline in much of the UK. Red List.



Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*
Gibraltar Point Sep 22nd 2019
© BEN WARD



House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Grantham Feb 2nd 2019 © STEVE NESBITT



The highest count for the year was 160 at Sturton by Stow on Feb 1st. Recorded in all months of the year there were 3,125 observer sightings reported from 191 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9.4	8.1	8.9	10.8	12.3	8	9.5	8.1	7.6	6.3	4.9	6

House Sparrow was found in 68% of BBS squares (2018, 62%) with an average of 25 birds per occupied square (2018, 22). It was the 22nd most widespread bird in Lincolnshire (2018, 24th) and 2nd most numerous (2018, 3rd). The Lincolnshire BBS trend showed a 9% increase in the breeding population in 2019 over 2018, an encouraging sign suggesting a good breeding season in 2018 and/or good over winter survival. A bird ringed as a 1CY female at Willingham by Stow in Sep 2012 was retrapped there in Mar 2019, making it 6.5 yrs. old, one of the oldest British-ringed House Sparrows reported in 2019 although the British record is nearly twice that age at just over 12 yrs.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* ■

Common resident though localised resident and partial migrant. Population prone to fluctuations over last 30 years. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 126 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 9th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 770 observer sightings reported from 83 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	5	22	126	27	-
Tetney	15	-	-	10	15	15	35	35	20	6	11	16
Boultham Mere	30	20	20	5	5	8	6	15	7	7	13	12
Freiston Shore	14	-	12	1	2	-	20	10	30	20	1	1
Sturton by Stow	-	-	2	2	1	-	-	8	60	4	3	20
Scamblesby	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scampton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	9	1	2	1	2	3	5	6	10	5	8	3
Toft next Newton	-	4	8	4	4	2	-	10	4	6	5	2
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	2	2	4	-	2	10	29	-	-

The table records all sites with summed monthly peaks for the year totalling more than 49 birds. The only additional site to report 30 birds was Hospital Rd, Spalding on Jul 1st. The largest winter flock of 80 at Scamblesby was in a maize Pheasant cover. Tree Sparrow was found in 22% of Lincolnshire BBS squares (2018, 25%) with an average of 5.3 birds per occupied square (2018, 4.4). It was the 50th most widespread species in the Lincolnshire survey. Numbers of this species seem to fluctuate considerably over the years, but it does not occur in enough BBS squares in the county for BTO to compute a Lincolnshire specific index for it. The highest count of the year of 126 at Gibraltar Point involved a southward movement on Oct 9th, with a further 115 on Oct 12th.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis* ■ (*occidentalis*) ■ (nominate)

British form *occidentalis* a very common resident and partial migrant. Nominate continental form a scarce passage migrant, mostly in autumn. Amber List (*occidentalis*) and Green List (nominate).

The highest count for the year was 121 at Gibraltar Point on March 5th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 3,172 observer sightings coming from 194 sites. After a decline in the species from the mid-70's to the 80's the Dunnock has made a small partial recovery, but the BTO reports a decline in 2019 in the abundance of ground feeding birds relative to a five-year average. The species is mainly sedentary and is recorded in most of the country south of a line from the Humber to the Wirral, but less frequently in northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The highest count for the year was 121 at Gibraltar



Dunnock *Prunella modularis* Louth Jun 1st 2019 © JOHN CLARKSON

Point on Mar 5th which virtually doubled the best of last year. This was the only site to record 50 birds or over on nine occasions during the year. Inland, the highest count was 25 at both Marston and Woodhall Spa within five days in late February. Tabulated are the sites whose monthly high counts amounted to over 50 birds a year. Numbers are significantly boosted by migrants from the The Netherlands during the autumn period.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	12	28	121	52	32	63	47	62	70	60	58	41
Tetney	6	2		8	10	18	18	12	10	10	10	10
Woodhall Spa	10	25	17	9	13	6	2		5			4
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	2	6	1	10	7	4		11	10	21	10	5
Dunholme	2	11	8	14	7	11	4	6	1	8	4	
Marston	3	25	12	2	4	9	4		3	2	1	6
Sturton by Stow	3	5	9	6	3	4	7	7	1	7	8	4
Louth	5	5	3	12	11		3		1	10	4	5
Lincoln		1	6	8	7	6	9	6	6	5	3	2
Long Bennington	3	10	7	4	6	4	7	2	4	5	3	2
Anwick	2	2	9	5	2	2	3	8	18		2	2
Boultham Mere	5	5	5	6	2	5	1	4	4	6	3	4
Donna Nook	1	3	10	6	1	8		10	2	6	1	2



Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima* ■

Summer visitor and passage migrant. British form '*flavissima*' common. Lincolnshire holds around 20% of the world population, perhaps our most important bird of conservation concern. Several other races are scarce/rare. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 200 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 1st. Recorded in eight months of the year there were 1,171 observer sightings Apr-Nov reported from 104 sites.

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Frampton Marsh	15	7	5	12	50	200	-	-
Marston	11	3	2	3	150	100	-	-
Toft next Newton	65	80	5	12	30	15	6	-
Covenham Reservoir	16	33	2	2	37	60	-	-
Tetney	3	6	4	64	56	12	-	-
Gibraltar Point	12	8	4	11	54	43	1	1
Freiston Shore	-	2	-	3	70	50	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	8	12	1	6	19	25	1	-
Alkborough	2	-	-	-	38	15	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-

The table includes all sites where the summed monthly peaks generated an annual total of 50 or more. Covenham Reservoir had the first bird in on Apr 3-5th and three were at Frampton Marsh on Apr 5th. There was a single "Channel race" (Yellow x Blue-headed hybrid) bird at Covenham Reservoir on Apr 22nd (CA). The spring migration peaks came at Toft Newton Reservoir with 65 on Apr 29th and 80 on May 1st. Yellow Wagtails were reported in 42% of BBS squares (2018, 26%) with an average of 3.5 birds per occupied square (2018, 3.2). It was the 32nd most widespread bird in the county (2018, 45th). Overall a good year for Yellow Wagtail with the short-term Lincolnshire BBS index up a significant 134% from 2018. Sadly not enough squares were counted with Yellow Wagtails in earlier years to produce an index going back more than five years but encouragingly its breeding status appears to have been stable overall since 2014, with annual fluctuations. The autumn migration peaked at the end of Aug/beginning of Sept with 150 birds at Marston STW on Aug 29th-30th and the peak count of the year of 200 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 1st. The latest birds were singles on the coast at Huttoft and Middlemarsh Farm on Oct 27th. A very late bird at Gibraltar Point was found mid-afternoon on Nov 17th after a rainstorm. It was heard to make a buzzy call twice but not seen well and not relocated and was thought by the observer to be possibly an Eastern race bird. This is especially interesting given the context of accepted Eastern Wagtails in Norfolk and Suffolk in the same period, but a county first will need a full description and likely a DNA sample too!

Blue-headed Wagtail *M.f. flava* ■

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly spring. Has bred sporadically. Amber List. **LBRC RBBP**

The first of the year was an adult female at Toft Newton Reservoir Apr 28th (GJF) with another adult female hot on its heels at Gibraltar Point on May 1st (GPBO). A third adult female of the spring was at Middlemarsh Farm on May 22nd (NAL).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* ■

Scarce passage migrant (mainly coastal) and winter visitor (mostly inland). Scarce and fairly local breeder increased in recent years. Red List.

Recorded in all months of the year there were 434 observer sightings from 71 sites, which was 20 more sites than in 2018 and close to the 73 sites in 2017. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6.2	8.5	7.1	5.3	5.5	2.1	4.6	3.7	11.5	22.1	11.8	11.5



Around one fifth of the year's sightings were in Oct, clear signs of autumn passage, and on the coast 10 went south at Gibraltar Point on Sep 30th and 24 went south on Oct 9th, the highest count of the year. Ten other counts there were of between six and nine flying south on 10 dates in Sep-Oct. There was little evidence of passage from elsewhere. Presence at riverine sites during Apr-Jun at sites where they have previously bred or could potentially breed, especially in the Wolds, hints at under-recording of breeding pairs. In fact, breeding evidence was recorded just twice: at Hagworthingham an adult female was observed feeding a fledgling and on Jul 27th four adults and six juveniles were observed at Marston STW, presumed to have been local breeders.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli* ■

Common resident and passage migrant. BBS data shows a 14% decline in the breeding population during the period 1994-2018. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was 200 at Marston on Feb 2nd. Recorded in all months of the year there were 1,864 observer sightings from 128 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marston	170	200	3	1	-	5	-	1	-	-	1	-
Toft next Newton	16	7	35	50	15	16	40	40	90	30	10	25
Covenham Reservoir	6	12	6	20	5	10	15	40	80	12	10	5
Tetney	12	1	1	8	5	6	8	21	36	8	6	44
Gibraltar Point	1	3	5	3	4	9	7	11	20	12	6	6
Frampton Marsh	1	1	5	12	1	3	10	14	25	3	1	1
Bransby	-	-	-	-	3	6	14	32	-	-	7	-
Kirkby on Bain	15	5	20	1	-	-	-	-	-	15	3	1
Middlemarsh Farm	2	1	6	6	5	6	11	6	4	-	2	10
Alkborough	-	1	1	1	1	1	50	-	1	1	-	-

The table includes all sites where the summed monthly peaks generated an annual total of 50 or more. It is worth noting that there were a further 1,113 records from 94 sites of Pied Wagtails not assigned to race. These records are not reported in detail. It would be helpful if observers could be specific about the race of their records when making submissions. There were no reports from winter roost sites this year. Pied Wagtails were reported in 45% of BBS squares (2018, 44%) with an average of 1.9 birds per occupied square (2018, 1.3). It was the 31st most widespread bird in the county (2018, 31st) and the 63rd most numerous (2018, 83rd). It would appear to have been a good year for Pied Wagtail with the long-term Lincolnshire BBS index from 1994 showing the species only 4% down over the 25-year period, compared to 15% down in 2018.

White Wagtail *M.a. alba* ■

Nominate continental form scarce passage migrant Mar-Jun. Amber List. **RBBP**

Spring passage began early this year at Gibraltar Point with the first on Mar 7th and a peak of three on Mar 14th. The highest count for the year was 14 at Covenham Reservoir on Apr 17th and Frampton Marsh had five birds on Apr 12th. Elsewhere there were two at Anderby on Mar 30th and two at RAF Woodhall on Apr 2nd. In all 73 spring records were received from 13 sites and eight sites had single birds. The last of the spring was a single at Gibraltar Point on May 19th. A further 15 records were received from three sites for Jul-Nov, but these are not reported owing to uncertainty of identification.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly Sep-Nov, rarely Dec-Jan and Apr-May. **LBRC**

There were six county records involving seven birds all at Alkborough Flats and Gibraltar Point. The first was a 2CY bird on the Trent embankment at Alkborough Flats Feb 6th-Apr 24th (GPC). This bird underwent its post-juvenile moult and a pre-breeding moult during its stay of 78 days, the second longest for the county. The first was an over-wintering bird at Howden's Pullover which stayed 92 days, Jan-Apr 2008 and

departed on Apr 10th that year. This was the only spring record, the next being two at Gibraltar Point Oct 2nd with one still there Oct 3rd (KMW et al). Three further birds were found there, all deemed separate individuals, on Oct 7th (KMW), 9th (NAL) and 10th (GPBO). The last of the year spent a week at Alkborough Flats from Oct 20th-28th, a remarkable second record for an inland site (GPC,ND et al).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* ■

Common/very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List

The highest count for the year was 6,685 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 27th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 2,257 observer sightings from 128 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	14	16	74	136	48	62	42	98	6685	963	234	16
Anderby	1	10	10	1	-	-	-	-	942	225	100	-
West Common, Lincoln	-	6	120	35	-	-	-	-	539	84	7	-
Donna Nook	80	30	28	10	12	14	12	44	23	100	20	30
Toft next Newton	7	15	25	22	6	3	5	-	75	80	30	60
Covenham Reservoir	40	59	22	10	1	-	1	-	75	30	40	45
Tetney	25	1	3	20	20	20	40	40	50	40	20	26
Frampton Marsh	14	16	10	10	12	4	15	40	36	30	12	4
Marston	80	60	12	1	-	-	-	-	8	5	20	3
Freiston Shore	20	16	10	10	3	3	15	25	30	1	15	6

Many counts of 20 or more birds were reported Jan-Feb at 12 sites with smaller numbers at many others. Regular visible migration watching inland in Lincoln produced a Mar peak of 120, 119 of which were headed south-west. Coastal movements were of the same order at Gibraltar Point albeit peaking a month later. As

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* Cadney Reservoir Apr 10th 2019 © RUSSELL HAYES





far as breeding records go, Frampton Marsh reported 84 pairs and Freiston Shore 26 pairs. Singing males were reported at various sites but there was no other evidence of breeding. In the autumn Sep saw the bulk of migration with a peak of 6,685 on Sep 27th at Gibraltar Point, 6,385 of which went south. Overall 22,324 were logged moving during the whole of Sep. Inland 539 were logged moving north-east over Lincoln on Sep 29th. Smaller daily counts were seen at Gibraltar Point in Oct, and the monthly total was 4,519. Movement subsided through Nov and relatively few birds remained to winter.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* ■

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Breeds locally, mainly in the western half of the county. Red List.

Recorded in the six months of the year Apr-Sep there were 70 observer sightings from 13 sites and the monthly maxima from all 13 is tabulated (note truncated table).

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Laughton Forest	14	17	-	4	-	-
Gibraltar Point	2	5	1	-	10	3
Marton	-	-	-	-	3	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	2	-	-	-	-	-
Manton	-	-	2	-	-	-
Lincoln	1	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby NP	1	-	-	-	-	-
Kirkby Moor	-	1	-	-	-	-
Willingham Woods	-	-	1	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	-	-	1	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	1	-
Barton Pits	-	-	-	-	-	1
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	1

The records in the table illustrate how scarce this bird has become with few away from the main breeding area and Gibraltar Point. The first bird of the year was on Apr 7th, seen during a visible migration watch over West Common, Lincoln. A few more followed back at Laughton Forest with three on Apr 11th, 11 there on 19th and 17 by May 2nd. Gibraltar Point recorded birds on 16 days in May with five on 1st and three on 19th being the most; one was trapped and ringed on 21st. A single at Kirkby Moor on May 1st was the only site away from Laughton to record them in May.

Three sites recorded possible breeders in Jun-Jul although there were no breeding surveys done this year. By Aug light return passage was noted on the coast with one to three birds at Gibraltar Point, Frampton Marsh and Marton 7th-19th and with maxima at Gibraltar Point of six on 20th and 10 on 21st, one of which was trapped and ringed. Up to three birds were seen at Gibraltar Point during Sep with singles at Anderby Creek and Far Ings NR and the last of the year at Gibraltar Point on Sep 30th, some two weeks earlier than in 2018.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

Vagrant. Siberia. LBRC

One flew south from the Plantation at Gibraltar Point on Nov 8th, the only county record this year (KMW, BWd, NAL, SAI). This was the 15th county record, the first being as recently as Oct 1980.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor Oct-Apr. Mainly coastal, possibly increasing but can be elusive, making counting difficult. Amber List. LBRC

The highest count for the year was 15 at Baston on Feb 4th. Recorded in seven months of the year there were 249 observer sightings coming from 13 sites. Monthly peaks for all sites are tabulated below.



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Baston	13	15	-	-	3	-	2
Gibraltar Point	7	3	5	3	8	2	3
Alkborough	4	1	1	-	-	5	12
East Halton	5	7	-	-	2	1	4
Goxhill	5	3	-	-	-	4	3
Anderby	1	2	2	-	2	1	-
Frampton Marsh	1	1	-	1	1	1	1
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	1	-	1	1	1
Huttoft	-	-	1	1	2	-	-
Tetney	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Chapel St Leonards	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

Birds were present from Jan 1st-Apr 21st in the first quarter with maxima of seven at Gibraltar Point on Jan 14th and East Halton Skitter on Feb 2nd. Elsewhere Goxhill saw five Jan 6th-20th with one to three at several other sites, mainly coastal. The flock at Baston Fen arguably stole the show with a minimum 10-15 birds present Jan-Feb, the last record there being two on Feb 17th. In the autumn the first bird was noted at Gibraltar Point on Oct 5th, peaking at eight on Oct 23rd. Five were at Alkborough Flats on Nov 3rd, eight on Dec 1st and a peak of 12 on Dec 31st. There were one to four at the remaining sites in the table, and numbers at Baston did not match those of Feb with just one record received from there of two birds on Dec 29th.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus* ■ (*littoralis*) ■ (nominate)

Scandinavian Rock form *littoralis* a fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor Sep-Apr; scarce inland. Nominate British and Irish form essentially resident so probably a very scarce winter visitor. Green List (*littoralis*) and Amber List (nominate).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point*	32	35	14	4	-	-	-	-	48	607	142	31
Donna Nook	15	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	40	47	25
Saltfleet	18	22	16	1	-	-	-	-	1	28	12	28
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	63	2	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	2	3	5
Grainthorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	-
Freiston Shore	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-
Wainfleet	-	11	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Seacroft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	4
Horseshoe Point	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Anderby	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	14	-	-

*Note the Gibraltar Point peak counts are the sum of birds south plus others on site.

Early and late in the year, most Rock Pipits are found along the shore and in saltmarsh between Gibraltar Point and Tetney/Grainthorpe but there is also a pronounced visible passage at Gibraltar Point in autumn. Counts in the first quarter were modest with 63 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe being the most reported. The bulk of the wintering birds departed during Mar with a few birds lingering Apr-May, and a very late bird on Jun 16th at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe.

British and Irish Rock Pipits are essentially resident and with none breeding between the south Yorkshire coast and the Thames the autumn and winter arrivals are largely of the Scandinavian race *A. p. littoralis*. Birds are absent Jun-Aug in most years (excepting the late Jun bird in 2019) and the first few in the autumn



arrive in Sep. Gibraltar Point hosted the first bird on Sep 8th but the real arrival occurred on Sep 30th and onwards into Oct. Visual migration counts at Gibraltar Point recorded 2,559 south during the month with a peak of 604 south (out of a total of 607) on Oct 12th and eight other day counts of 104-362 between Oct 8th-23rd. Interestingly very few were reported on The Wash in Oct.

Southwards passage continued through November with 140 south over Gibraltar Point on 3rd and 47 at Donna Nook on 16th. Twenty-four at Freiston Shore on Nov 19th was the highest on The Wash that month. There were fewer in December with widespread counts along the coast to the end of the year.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* ■ (gengleri) ■ (nominate)

British form *gengleri* an abundant resident. Nominate continental form a passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows that the breeding population increased by 80% during the period 1994-2018. Amber List (*gengleri*) and Green List (nominate).

The species remains widespread and relatively abundant with 3,786 observer sightings from 234 sites of which 15 had a peak count of 50 birds or more and three had counts exceeding 100. In the first winter period, Jan-Mar, counts of over 50 birds were recorded at Sausthorpe (90, Jan 3rd), Elsham (90, Mar 13th), Chapel St Leonards (80, Mar 22nd), Scamblesby (70, Jan 8th) and Leadenhall Farm Estate (62, Jan 2nd). Passage was evident at Gibraltar Point with 183 south in Feb, 6,775 south in Mar including a notable peak of 4,572 south (and 40 west) on Mar 15th, before trailing off to 56 south in Apr.

Autumn passage at Gibraltar Point began with 232 south in September, 4089 in October and 1073 in November. Peak counts of birds heading south included 781 on Oct 12th, 680 on the 17th and 530 on Nov 3rd with a further 11 days with counts of >100 birds south. Away from Gibraltar Point, notable counts exceeding 50 birds from October-December included 140 at Marton (Oct 31st), 105 at Anderby (Oct 25th), 70 at Kirkby on Bain (Dec 3rd) and 60 at East Halton ((Oct 27th).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* Whaplode Mar 19th 2019 © NEIL SMITH





Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* with **Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis* Grantham Nov 7th 2019 © STEVE NESBITT

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* ■

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Exceptional in summer. Numbers fluctuate considerably between winters. Green List. **RBBP**

Bramblings were recorded in 9 months of the year with 277 observer sightings from 44 sites distributed across the year as follows (as percentage of records):

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
10.5	7.9	16.6	17.7	1.8	0	0	0	1.1	26.7	13	4.7

In the first half of the year only seven records were received of 10 or more birds, all coming from six sites (from a total of 150 records from 29 sites); records elsewhere were all in single figures. A count of 100 at Scamblesby on Jan 7th-8th was the peak both for the period and for the year. Other notable counts included 80 at Sausthorpe on Jan 3rd, 60 at Ruckland on Jan 11th and 30 at each of Snipe Dales (Feb 28th), Broughton (Mar 3rd) and West Common, Lincoln (Apr 7th). Low numbers (<5) were present consistently in a Scunthorpe garden from Jan 9th-Apr 19th, a span of records exceeded only by Gibraltar Point where the last bird of the winter was recorded on May 12th (first record there on Jan 3rd).

The first bird of the autumn was recorded at Gibraltar Point on Sep 27th. In this second part of the year, 24 records (out of 127 in total from 22 sites) were received of ten or more birds from just four sites, all in Oct and early Nov, with peak counts of 55 at Broughton (Nov 4th), 50 at Gibraltar Point (Oct 20th), 36 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe (Oct 15th) and 20 at Donna Nook (Oct 15th). At Gibraltar Point, 228 birds were recorded south in Oct with 99 in Nov.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* ■

Rare local resident and rare passage migrant. Occasionally irruptive, large and exceptional influx in autumn 2017 with around 100 birds staying into 2018. Last confirmed breeding 1999. Red List. **RBBP**

After the extraordinary events of 2017/18 it was back to normal in 2019, almost. The first record of the year was of one coming in off the sea at Chapel Six Marshes on Jul 17th, not exactly the date or circumstances normally expected of the sprinkling of migrants seen each year on the coast.

Following this mid-summer record, the first of the autumn was a flock of five at Northcotes Point on Sep



Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Gibraltar Point Nov 18th 2019 © PAUL NEALE

14th which landed in a single Hawthorn before flying away inland. The following month there were two on 7th at Brickyard Lane, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and one at Gibraltar Point on 15th, two south there on 23rd and another two in the west dunes on 27th.

In Nov, one was at Normanby Hall CP on 1st, another at Seaview Farm, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on 13th and one at Gibraltar Point 15th-18th, which was apparently taken by a Sparrowhawk. Another was in and around The Plantation at Gibraltar Point 21st-23rd, the last record of the year.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* ■

British form *pileata* a fairly common resident, but largely absent from the fens. Nominate Scandinavian form ('Northern Bullfinch') a very rare irruptive visitor in autumn and winter (see below). Amber List (*pileata*).

The highest count for the year was 19 at Snipe Dales on Feb 28th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 894 observer sightings coming from 111 sites. The table lists the top 10 sites in terms of cumulative records over the year.

Breeding was confirmed at Boultham Mere, Castle Bytham and Whisby NP but is easily overlooked.



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Whisby NP	12	2	4	4	2	6	3	5	-	2	6	12
Marton	5	6	6	3	4	2	2	2	6	5	6	7
Saltfleetby- Theddlethorpe	8	4	3	2	2	6	-	2	6	6	5	4
Boultham Mere	11	6	2	3	-	3	-	5	1	5	4	6
Tetney	5	-	-	2	4	8	5	3	6	2	4	4
Snipe Dales	7	19	1	10	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	2	2	1	1	-	2	-	10	12	4
Willingham Woods	16	3	-	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	9
Kirkby on Bain	6	6	4	3	2	2	-	-	2	-	2	4
Sturton by Stow	5	8	-	5	-	-	1	3	2	-	5	2

Bullfinch (Northern) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Very rare sub-species occasionally irrupts in autumn and winter.

A female of unknown age was seen by the Trent at Marton on Nov 15th feeding on Mugwort seeds in the loose company of a flock of Goldfinches (DN). Its arrival coincided with a large influx of Fieldfares. There are few confirmed sightings of this sub-species which is still considered by the LBRC. Up to five were present at Killingholme and Barrow Haven in October 1978. Since then, there have been confirmed records in 1990 (1), 1994 (9), 2003 (4), 2010 (2) and 2016 (1).

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare. North-eastern Europe. **LBRC RBBP**

A male was heard singing close to Mill Hill, Gibraltar Point on Aug 2nd (KMW) and a juvenile was present there on Sep 20th consorting with a Linnet flock (BWd). Another juvenile was seen and photographed at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Aug 26th (NCC) an image of this bird appeared in error in the 2018 report. The first record for the county was an immature male or female at Donna Nook in May 1979. Since then, there have been a further 60 records including the ones in 2019.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris* ■ (*harrisoni*) ■ (nominate)

British form *harrisoni* a common but declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Nominate continental form a winter visitor in unknown numbers. BBS data shows that the breeding population has declined by 75% during the period 1994-2018. Red List (*harrisoni*) and Green List (nominate).

The highest count for the year was 438 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th. Recorded in all months of the year, there were 2,174 observer sightings coming from 142 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	17	8	112	5	5	3	17	11	32	438	82	49
Frampton Marsh	6	9	5	3	2	2	3	4	1	75	200	1
Whisby NP	80	15	6	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	70	46
Tetney	9	-	-	8	8	10	15	45	12	15	8	6
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	14	8	6	2	3	6	-	1	4	75	10	-
Dunston	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	100	1	1
Belton (Grantham)	1	1	4	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	90
Anwick	6	2	4	4	5	2	5	9	13	18	4	6
Marton	2	-	1	2	1	2	3	7	28	16	2	6
Goxhill	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	67

The woes of our breeding Greenfinch population described in the 2018 report continue. The species was found in 34% of BBS squares (2018 48%) with an average of 2.9 birds per occupied square (2018 2.7). It fell to our 36th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire (2018 30th) but remained our 46th commonest.



Twite *Linaria flavirostris* ■

Fairly common, declining to scarce coastal winter visitor in recent years and passage migrant, mainly Sep-Apr. Rare inland. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 127 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Jan 1st. Recorded in eight months of the year there were 98 observer sightings coming from 16 sites. Monthly maxima from all of these sites are tabulated below. Note the species was absent from the county May-Aug.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donna Nook	70	100	-	25	-	-	90	88
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	127	30	4	-	-	65	55	-
Gedney Drove End	80	-	16	-	-	-	-	-
Butterwick	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
Leverton	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Horseshoe Point	30	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	-	20	-	-	-	6	3
Cleethorpes	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	22
Saltfleet	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	1
North Somercotes	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	2	1	3	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Holbeach Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-

As a species which winters in the county almost exclusively on coastal saltmarshes, the numbers seen in the first quarter were broadly similar to those of the previous two years with most on the north-east coast and on The Wash. Numbers dwindled during Mar and only Donna Nook recorded any in Apr with 18 there on 17th, the last of the spring. They return fairly late in the autumn compared with some other finches and two at Gibraltar Point on Sep 27th were the first and only birds of that month. Gibraltar Point and only two other sites saw them in Oct with 65 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on 23rd and 29th, and just two at Holbeach Marsh, the only Wash record for that month. More arrived during Nov with 90 at Donna Nook by 16th but still very few on The Wash with only three sites recording them – Gibraltar Point, Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore – and a maximum of only six at Frampton Marsh on Nov 11th. The picture remained much the same through Dec with the Donna Nook flock still in residence until 29th at least and 18 at Tetney Marsh the same day.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina* ■ (nominate)

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS data shows that the breeding population has increased by 65% during the period 1994-2018. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 2,260 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 27th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 2,271 observer sightings from 168 sites. The table shows the top sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 400 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	89	80	76	175	139	104	66	189	2260	1620	108	57
Middlemarsh Farm	70	100	76	50	16	6	20	382	300	100	80	75
Tetney	65	-	2	30	70	15	65	130	280	100	30	110
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	100	50	13	30	20	8	12	100	200	150	40	35
Andarby	4	10	2	21	40	1	30	30	568	1	10	-



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donna Nook	45	150	180	22	2	20	8	40	22	40	75	80
Cleethorpes	9	35	26	4	4	12	6	19	100	140	100	60
Frampton Marsh	50	30	25	10	20	14	30	100	30	40	12	100
Goxhill	1	-	30	1	1	1	10	65	1	1	-	300
Boultham Mere	90	60	30	75	8	20	10	14	12	30	40	16

During Jan-Mar winter flocks of over 100 were reported from eight sites (2018, 13). The largest were 200 at Welbourn Jan 26th and 180 at Marshchapel on Jan 18th. Spring migration at Gibraltar Point was lighter than last year with a peak of 115 south on Apr 26th. The species was found in 78% of Lincs BBS squares (2018, 79%) with an average of 6.0 birds per occupied square (2018, 7.9). It was the 15th most widespread breeding species in the county (2018, 16th) and 21st most numerous (2018, 12th). Linnets have enjoyed some good breeding years of late as outlined in LBR 2018 but the Lincs index fell back 16% in 2019 over 2018. Autumn migration at Gibraltar Point with birds all moving south peaked at 2,190 on Sep 27th with 1,488 on Oct 9th and 1530 on Oct 12th. In Dec the largest flocks were 300 at Goxhill from Dec 15th-27th and 250 at Frithville on Dec 11th.

Redpoll reminder

Some observers continue to confuse Lesser and Common Redpolls. This may be a problem as much with terminology as with identification. All Redpolls can be variable and confident identification in the field can be difficult. For this reason, observers are reminded that **all** field records of Common (formerly **Mealy**) **Redpolls** in Lincolnshire should be supplemented by supporting details such as a written description, ringing report and/or photographic evidence. Only the following records below met these criteria and were deemed acceptable.

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea* ■

Nominate Scandinavian and Russian form scarce or very scarce, occasionally fairly common, irruptive winter visitor. Greenland form *rostrata* a very rare vagrant. Amber List (nominate). **LBRC**

A very scarce winter visitor in 2019 with most of the action coming from a private garden in Lincoln where the first was noted with a large flock of Lesser Redpolls, *A. cabaret*, on Mar 15th and with one or two there on and off until Apr 10th (CG). Elsewhere in the first quarter one was at Gibraltar Point on Mar 27th (KMW) and two were at Kirkby Moor on Apr 7th, again with a large flock of Lesser Redpolls (MHa). Fewer still turned up in the autumn with three at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 21st and one on Oct 25th (BRG). The only other record was a single at Gibraltar Point on Oct 27th (KMW).

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret* ■

Fairly common but declining passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce breeder. Red List.

The highest count for the year was 80 at Boultham Mere on Feb 5th. Recorded in 10 months of the year, there were 172 records from 34 sites. Numbers of this species vary hugely from year to year with breeding confirmation an extremely rare event. The sites with 20 or more birds in at least one month are tabulated below. Note the discontinuity in the table Jun-Sep. There were no records Jun-Jul and just one bird on Aug 29th at Tetney Marsh and two there Sep 10th.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
Laughton Forest	56	50	-	80	-	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	6	80	8	-	-	-	-	-
Lincoln	-	2	47	33	-	1	2	-
Whisby NP	70	4	2	-	-	1	-	-
Linwood	60	-	2	2	-	-	-	-
Messingham	50	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
Broughton	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
Nocton	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woodhall Spa	42	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Greetwell	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bourne	36	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-
Washingborough	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	1	-	1	-	1	15	2	1
Kirkby Moor	-	-	-	55	-	-	-	-

A decent presence in the county was reported in Nov-Dec 2018 and more arrived in the first quarter of 2019 with some sizeable flocks at various sites across the county. Most departed during Apr with the last big flocks in Loughton Forest being 40 on Apr 11th, 80 on 13th and 30 on 19th. The last bird of the spring was a singleton at Gibraltar Point on May 31st.

Small numbers arrived during Oct with nine records of flocks numbering 10-30 birds only and the species all but disappeared during Nov-Dec with a maximum of just four birds on Dec 1st at Marston STW. Visible migration on the coast was exceptionally poor. The number of birds ringed in 2019 (143) was the lowest since 2014 (114), mirroring the poor year for this species.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* ■

Scarce/fairly common irruptive passage migrant and visitor, mainly Jun-Apr, occasionally all year. Proved to breed on a few occasions, last between 2008-2011. Green List.



Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* Loughton Forest Jan 2019 © GRAHAM CATLEY



The highest count for the year was 20 at Laughton Forest on Jan 6th. Recorded in 11 months of the year. There were 40 observer sightings recorded from eight sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Laughton Forest	20	-	3	16	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	12	10	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	-
Snipe Dales	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Linwood	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alkborough	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Whisby NP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

Another poor year in the county with almost no evidence of migration; the distribution of all records is shown in the table above. Red Crossbill is dependent on Norway Spruce *Picea abies* over much of Europe and large, irruptive movements tend to occur when the spruce crop is poor over a wide area (Newton 2006*). It may be the case that in 2019 there was a good crop and, hence, little movement. Evidence of breeding came from Laughton Forest where two newly fledged juveniles were seen in late Apr at the same site they last bred at in 2012.

*Newton, I. (2006). Movement patterns of Common Crossbills *Loxia curvirostra* in Europe. *Ibis* (2006), 148, 782–788.

Two-barred Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*

Rare. Scandinavia. **BBRC**

No records of this species were received in 2019 but note corrected dates for this bird in 2014: 2CY+ male present at Forest Pines golf Course, Broughton, Feb 9th-Mar 21st at least (*British Birds* 113: 585-655).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* ■

British form *britannica* a common resident and passage migrant. Nominate continental form may also occur. BBS data shows that the breeding population has increased by 196% during the period 1994-2018. Amber List (*britannica*).

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 4,184 sightings during the year from 228 sites. The top 10 sites with regard to cumulative counts over the year are tabulated.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	58	80	576	86	51	59	190	206	494	4005	654	68
Frampton Marsh	33	36	20	40	22	20	21	500	100	80	50	20
Tetney	80	6	7	25	45	60	80	80	60	220	120	120
Lincoln	51	60	44	30	16	16	23	44	63	103	50	50
Middlemarsh Farm	40	30	8	28	12	12	50	100	100	40	15	14
Boultham Mere	60	60	40	10	10	15	30	26	30	70	60	22
Donna Nook	40	25	1	2	2	-	-	60	30	200	35	20
Witham Mouth	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	400	-	-
Anwick	12	13	11	10	9	11	7	186	119	-	12	9
Anderby	30	30	10	10	12	1	10	40	40	134	8	2

A dozen counts of 500 or over occurred at two sites with eleven at Gibraltar Point and the other at Frampton Marsh. All occurred in the last quarter of the year apart from one of 576 at Gibraltar Point Mar 5th and another at Frampton Aug 17th. Numerous small flocks totalling around 230 were observed at Gibraltar Point travelling south between Feb and the end of Apr. Much more significant was the visible migration observed there from Aug onwards with nearly 20,000 birds on passage and six flocks of more than 1,000 logged. The two largest counts of 3,465 and 4,005 on Oct 12th and 9th respectively had well





over 96% heading south. Most counts over 100 were from the coast or the Humber but not exclusively: one observer had a flock of up to 186 frequenting the garden in Anwick throughout Aug and still counted 119 towards the end of Sep. Another observer had Goldfinch present every day of the year in a garden adjacent to Swanholme Lakes in Lincoln.

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

Very scarce migrant, mainly Apr-Jun and Oct-Nov. LBRC

An exceptional year for this species at Gibraltar Point with six records, the only site to record any at all. A male flew low south Mar 29th (BWd) with another male was in sub-song a month later, Apr 29th, flying off to the east (KMW). Another, thought to be a female, was feeding with Linnets on May 17th at the south end of the reserve, flying off to the south on to The Wash (BWd). Continuing this exceptional run, a very vocal male dropped in at Shoveler's Pool mid-day on May 21st (KMW, BWd) and probably the same bird was seen again on May 25th (LAN). The fifth of the year, another female, was found in the east dunes on Jun 18th (KMW, BWd), and to complete the year an immature or female was found in the east dunes on Jul 19th (KMW).

Siskin *Spinus spinus* ■

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce in summer but may breed in some years.

Green List.

The highest count for the year was 585 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 3rd. Recorded in all months of the year there were 436 observer sightings coming from 58 sites. The following table gives totals for all sites recording at least 50 birds in one month of the year or more:

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	11	63	67	15	2	2	2	1	7	205	585	35
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	5	1
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	250	-	-
Cleethorpes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	180	20	-
Anderby	-	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	69	-
Messingham	30	20	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	32	1
North Hykeham	60	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	30
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-
Boultham	70	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The monthly maximum counts tell the story of this species presence in the county over the year with a large autumn passage, much smaller winter numbers and virtually no presence during May-Aug.

Lingering flocks in the first quarter were present Jan-Mar at more than 40 sites, maxima as per the table, with in addition the regular presence of up to 20 birds in at least one suburban garden in Lincoln. There were other significant flocks inland though few of more than 30; 35 were in Willingham Woods Jan 3rd, 60 North Hykeham Jan 26th, and 70 Boultham Mere Jan 21st. Numbers petered out in Apr as birds moved out to breeding areas with the last bird seen on Apr 27th apart from one or two apparently summering birds at Gibraltar Point.

Small numbers appeared at three sites in Sep with eight at Covenham Reservoir on 11th and seven at Gibraltar Point on 19th. The real onslaught didn't begin as usual until Oct. At Gibraltar Point more than 1,300 were logged moving south peaking at 205 south on Oct 25th and more than 100 south on four other dates. The highest total for the month though was at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe, where (contrastingly) 500 went north on Oct 13th. Three other sites recorded 100 or more between Oct 13th-19th. Passage continued into Nov, most moving south at Gibraltar Point where nearly 1,500 were logged during the month with a peak of 585 on Nov 3rd, 432 of which went south. This movement dried to a trickle by the last week and during Dec there were only eight double-figure counts of 11-35, mainly on the coast.



Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus* ■

Nominate continental form a scarce local passage migrant and winter visitor Sep-Apr. Rare inland. The Greenland and Canadian form *subcalcaratus* may also occur. Amber List (both forms).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	9	5
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	1
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Tetney	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Humberston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	-
Saltfleet	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Marshchapel	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-

Twelve predominantly coastal sites recorded 80 sightings of birds during the year, with some overlap possible; the table above shows all sites with records in more than one month. In the first quarter of the year, single birds only were recorded at five sites: at Gibraltar Point between Jan 10th-13th; at Saltfleet and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe between Jan 14th-Feb 2nd; and at Tetney and Marshchapel between Jan 21st-Feb 20th.

The first birds of the autumn were a single at Marshchapel and three at Gibraltar Point, both on Sep 17th. Thereafter, birds at Gibraltar Point were recorded on 37 dates until Dec 28th peaking at nine birds on Nov 3rd. Other sites with multiple counts were Donna Nook with one to three birds from Oct 12th-Dec 16th, Humberston with four on Sep 23rd, and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe with four on Nov 3rd. In addition to the tabulated sites there were single birds at Scunthorpe on Nov 8th, at Frampton Marsh on Oct 31st, Middlemarsh Farm on Sep 19th, and Chapel St Leonards on Nov 22nd. The final birds of the year were singles at Gibraltar and Tetney on Dec 28th.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* ■

Icelandic form *insulae* a regular winter visitor and passage migrant on coast, mainly Sep-Apr, exceptional in summer. Scarce but fairly regular inland. Nominate Scandinavian form a scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber List (both forms).

The highest count for the year was 37 at Donna Nook on Nov 24th. Recorded in six months of the year there were 89 observer sightings from around 12 sites, all of which are tabulated (note truncated table).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	3	37	37
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	7	30	-
Cleethorpes	6	15	-	-	-	2	7
Gibraltar Point-Seacroft Marsh SSSI	1	5	-	1	1	13	28
Anderby-Huttoft coast	-	-	-	-	1	3	-
Stallingborough	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Mablethorpe	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Winterton	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Frampton Marsh	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Tetney	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

A very scarce species in the first quarter with the six at Cleethorpes seen in Dec 2018 remaining into Jan and presumably the same flock swelling to 15 on Feb 1st in the Buck Beck area, the largest count received



in Jan-Feb. Gibraltar Point recorded a few late Feb with five on 21st and then four on 23rd the last of the winter. There were no records in Mar. Singles were seen at Gibraltar Point on Sep 17th-18th before more arrived in Oct with one to three at seven sites and one count of seven at Gibraltar Point on Oct 29th. As in previous years, Nov saw the highest counts, though nothing like the numbers recorded in 2018 (100 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe). Most birds were at Donna Nook, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and Gibraltar Point, but Covenham Reservoir also recorded a single on Nov 6th and 26th and there were one to three mobile birds along the Anderby-Huttoft coast Nov 1st-18th.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* ■

Fairly common but somewhat localised and declining resident. Red List.

Recorded in all months of the year, there were 309 records from 49 sites but 64% (199) of these records came from just two sites, Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh, and 29 sites had birds recorded in only a single month. The table below shows all sites with a single count of 10 birds or more. The highest single count for the year was 97 at Moulton on Jan 24th. The roost at Gibraltar Point peaked at 82 birds on Jan 4th, numbers declined thereafter with the last count in double figures of 14 on Apr 18th. Frampton Marsh held significant numbers in the early part of the year with a peak of 80 on Jan 17th whilst Terrington had a notable flock of birds in May, peaking at 55 on the 25th. Singing birds were noted from at least 10 sites and were probably at many more. This is a species whose continued decline and red list status would justify greater observer effort to record singing birds. The most notable counts from the autumn were of 40 at Appleby on Dec 11th, 25 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 19th and 12 at Donna Nook on Dec 23rd.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	82	72	47	25	4	-	1	1	1	-	25	7
Frampton Marsh	80	30	30	3	4	2	3	2	-	1	-	-
Moulton	97	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terrington	-	-	-	-	55	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appleby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
Stenigot	-	-	-	5	-	20	12	-	-	-	-	-
Donna Nook	5	1	-	4	4	5	-	2	-	-	2	12
Baston	20	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dunsby	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Crowland	-	-	6	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* ■

Very common resident. BBS data shows that the breeding population has declined by 10% during the period 1994-2018.Red List.

The highest count for the year was 170 at Scamblesby on Jan 8th. Recorded in all months of the year there were 1,648 observer sightings from 174 sites. The following table gives the percentage of observer records for each month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6.8	7.8	9.8	13.2	13.9	9.9	10.7	5.8	3.9	8.6	5	4.7

The highest count for the year was 170 at Scamblesby on Jan 8th in a maize crop, perhaps part of an agri-environment scheme. To emphasise the importance of such cover for wintering passerines the same plot held Brambling (100), Tree Sparrow (80), Chaffinch (70), Linnet (35), Goldfinch (30) and Greenfinch (20). In the absence of extensive winter stubble such crops provide a valuable lifeline for species whose declines are often associated with poor winter survival owing to food shortage. This conclusion was reached by the BTO wintering birds survey that took place in winter 2018/19. Elsewhere there were 105 at Marton on Feb 3rd, 100 on saltmarsh at Cleethorpes Jan 10th, 70 at Welbourn on Jan 18th, 60 at Manby Wetlands on Jan 18th and 60 at Stickford on Feb 24th. The largest flock in Mar was 70 at Elsham on 11th.



In terms of breeding in 2019, 77% of BBS squares in Lincolnshire recorded Yellowhammers (2018, 87%) with an average of 5.4 birds per occupied square (2018, 5.1). It fell to 16th most widespread species from 12th the previous year. Nevertheless the Lincolnshire BBS index showed the species held its own this year with a marginal 1% increase and it remains 15% down on its index level from 1994. The only count over 50 in the second half of the year was 100 at Welbourn on Dec 24th.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

Vagrant. Continental Europe.

2019 saw the first record for 27 years of this bird at Town's Holt, Grimsby on Aug 29th (SMcE). The previous record was of one at Donna Nook on Sep 19th, 1992! This was the 33rd county record, the first being one at North Coates on 3rd May 1883, with the remainder all coming since 1963. Donna Nook has accounted for 19 of the records and the concentration along the coastal strip between Tetney and Theddlethorpe is marked. Strangely, Gibraltar Point has had just one record (Aug 1973), while in contrast four birds have been seen inland at Covenham Reservoir.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

Rare. Scandinavia. LBRC

Two records this year, with the first found at Gibraltar Point on Oct 4th in scrub and tall grass along the path to Shoveler's Pool (KMW). Another was at Middlemarsh Farm on Dec 7th feeding in a reedy ditch and Hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna*, scrub (NAL). The first record was on Oct 5th 1951 at Saltfleet and these two bring the county total to 20 records.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* ■

Very common resident and passage migrant. BBS data shows that the breeding population has increased by 357% during the period 1994-2018. Amber List.

The highest count for the year was 1,689 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th. Recorded in all months of the year. There were 2,916 observer sightings from 137 sites.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	37	39	38	22	20	23	13	13	175	1689	120	31
Frampton Marsh	12	25	10	8	10	12	12	15	25	25	3	50
Willow Tree Fen	6	4	9	12	12	20	30	30	25	18	20	-
Anderby	4	4	5	11	9	5	9	1	102	28	8	-
Alkborough	-	1	1	1	25	4	25	-	3	1	18	100
Middlemarsh Farm	14	20	20	22	12	11	3	4	9	20	16	21
Donna Nook	8	12	22	12	11	12	12	15	5	30	18	5
Cleethorpes	50	35	4	4	4	6	4	-	8	5	6	15
Goxhill	11	10	16	23	1	20	20	5	12	3	11	6
Sturton by Stow	-	3	7	5	11	25	15	22	33	-	2	8

The table includes the top 10 sites with cumulative monthly peaks totalling more than 130 birds ranked from highest to lowest. Winter flocks were unremarkable with the largest of 50 reported from Cleethorpes on Jan 24th. Sadly, no reports were received from Fockerby this year, which has held the largest winter flocks in the previous two years: 220 in 2018 and 250 in 2017. The species was found in 63% of BBS squares (2018, 64%) with an average of 4.2 birds per occupied square (2018, 2.3). It was the 24th most widespread and 35th most numerous species in the 2019 Lincolnshire BBS. Autumn passage started in late Sep with 102 south at Anderby Creek on 28th. Almost all of the action was at Gibraltar Point as usual: 175 on Sep 27th, 992 on Oct 9th, 1,681 on Oct 12th and 538 on Oct 17th. Most birds were heading south. In late winter there were flocks of 100 at Alkborough Flats on Dec 1st and 50 at Frampton Marsh on Dec 2nd.



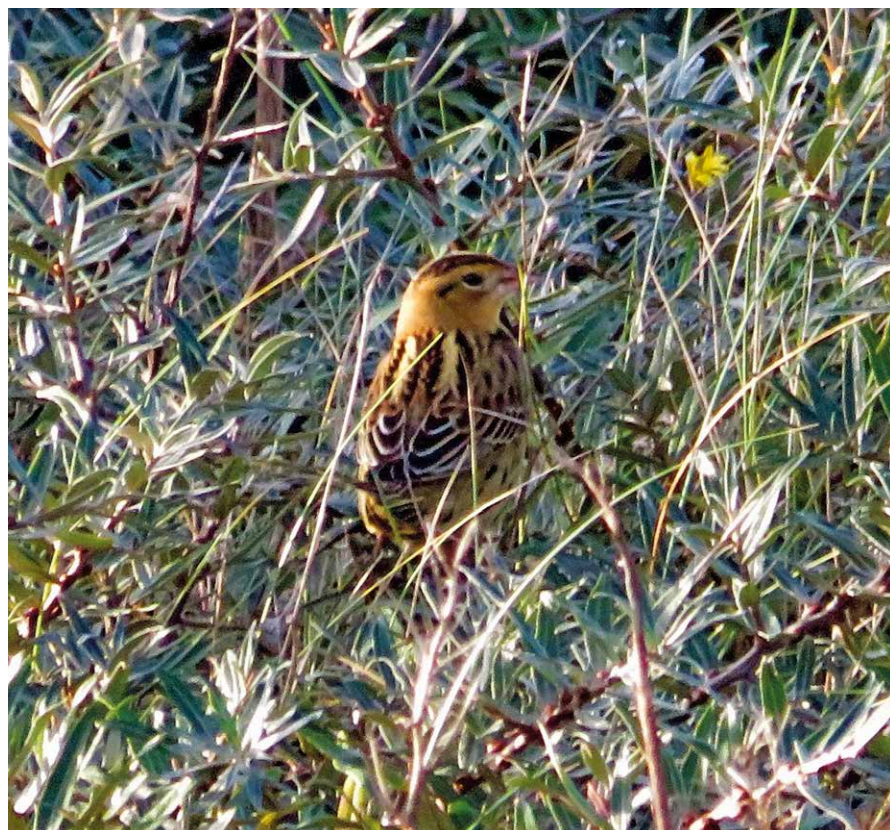


Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*

Vagrant. North America. BBRC

A juvenile Bobolink was found at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on Oct 18th, the first record for Lincolnshire (TH et al). It was seen later by a good number of county birders but was absent the next day. Accepted by BBRC, *British Birds* 113, 585-665p). First recorded in Britain in 1962 (Isles of Scilly) there has been a total of 33 since then, including this individual. This was only the second to reach the east coast after one at Easington, Yorkshire, in Oct 2001. It is a much sought-after species and this is the first in Britain since one on Shetland in 2012. See Finder's Report, p 216.

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Oct 18th 2019 (right) © NEIL DRINKALL (below) © TOM HIBBERT





Appendix 1: Records of birds of suspect origin in 2019, including escapes and those released from captivity, and hybrids.

This list includes those species that may not have self-sustaining wild populations and any individuals from species that are on the British list that are known, or are strongly believed, to have been of captive origin. We are aware that the species on this list and other escapes are under-recorded.

The LBC asks that all records of 'category E' species recorded in Lincolnshire be submitted.

The RBBP report occasionally on non-native species breeding in the UK. The last report was for 2009-11 published in *British Birds* in 2014 (Holling, M and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. Non-native breeding birds in the UK, 2009-11. *British Birds* 107 (3): 1220141). A summary paper on naturalised geese in Europe was published in 2010 (Kampe-Persson, K. Naturalised Geese in Europe. *Ornis Svecica* 20: 155-173).

Nene *Branta sandvicensis*

Endemic to the Hawaiian archipelago, derived from captive stock, not known to breed in the wild in Europe.

Two at RAF Woodhall on Aug 31st.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Scarce. Birds are recorded in most years. Most, if not all, are assumed to come from feral stock in the Netherlands. Kept in collections and has bred.

A single was at Holywell Jan 19th, Oct 10th and Oct 20th, and again Nov 16th. Branston hosted four on Jan 20th and Feb 3rd, with a single there on several dates between Feb 17th-Jul 7th. Two were at West Lodge, Gainsborough Sep 7th and one was at Alkborough Flats Oct 20th. This species remains widely distributed across many English counties, with breeding confirmed in 19 between 2009-11.

South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana*

Occasional breeder from captive stock. A sedentary African species with occasional intra-African drought-related movements.

A female was at Frampton Marsh from Jan 1st-Feb 11th, and presumably the same bird was at Freiston Shore on Jan 27th. This seems likely to be the same individual reported at Frampton Marsh in December 2018. Bred in the UK in 1997 and 1998 in Surrey and a pair also bred in Breconshire in 2009 (although one of the adult pair may have been a hybrid South African x Australian Shelduck).

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Occurs widely across England and breeding is reported in most years although the only regular site remains the River Ouse at Ely, Cambs. Native to S America.

One was at Frampton Marsh on Sep 14th.

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

Occasionally breeds in the UK from captive stock. Native of North America and Cuba.

A pair were seen on Belton Park golf course, Grantham on Apr 7th. Three pairs bred in the UK in 2011: one pair in each of Berkshire, Cambridgeshire and Nottinghamshire.

Yellow-billed Pintail *Anas georgica*

South America and the Falkland Islands derived from captive stock.

One was at Marston STW Sep 11th-12th (DRo).

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola*

Wild birds do occur and there is a single accepted county record in April 2012 but still widely kept in captivity. Native to North America.



An adult female was at Baston GP on Mar 30th, but photographs showed it was carrying a ring on it's right leg indicative of captive origin. It is believed to have travelled widely in the Midlands.

Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

Escape from captivity, local breeder sustained by winter feeding.

There was one at Nocton on Feb 20th, 13 there on Apr 12th, and four on May 22nd. Singles were at Healing on Mar 1st and 22nd, Apr 26th and Aug 3rd-4th. A single was at Metherringham on Jun 3rd and in the autumn three were at Fleet Hargate on Oct 4th and a single on Oct 5th. The species is more widespread than these records suggest and is widely ignored by birdwatchers.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Occasional breeder in the UK from captive stock. Native to SW USA, central and south America.

One in Louth on Jan 15th was the only record.

Red-headed Lovebird *Agapomis pullarius*

Escape from captivity, native to west Africa.

One was seen at Healing on Jul 25th.

Hybrid birds

Hooded x Carrion Crow

Two were seen and photographed at Mablethorpe North End on Jan 2nd.

Tufted Duck x Pochard

A female was at Millennium Green Pit, North Hykeham on Feb 3rd and 12th; it had previously been seen on Dec 16th 2018. Another was at RAF Woodhall on Nov 26th.

Canada Goose x Greylag Goose

Two were at Millennium Green Pit, North Hykeham on Aug 4th, and one still there on Dec 15th. Another was at Holywell Lake on Nov 16th.

Hawaiian Goose x Swan or Chinese Goose

This odd-looking and probably indeterminate hybrid goose was at Kirkby on Bain on Jun 15th. It was also reported in Jun 2016 and 2018.

Appendix 2: Records found not proven

Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*

Covenham Reservoir, Mar 27th.

Ashy-headed wagtail *Motacilla flava cinereocapilla*

Frampton Marsh, Apr 17th 2015.

Coues's Arctic Redpoll *Acanthis hornemanni exilipes*

Lincoln, Mar 15th-Apr 10th.

Ringling Report 2019

The bird ringing activity in the county in 2019 is summarised in the table below. The data for Lincolnshire are from the BTO website (<https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2019/ringGBLI2019.htm>).

Ringling recovery information is placed within the systematic list in order to provide all significant information about each species in one place. By doing so, we hope that non-ringers will derive knowledge and understanding of the value of ringing, while ringers will see how their efforts fit into the wider sphere of bird studies. As ever, we welcome analyses of Lincolnshire ringing data for inclusion in future reports as featured articles.

Species		Nestling	Juvenile	Adult	Unaged	County total	British total	Retraps	Recoveries
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	0	46	50	0	96	2141	244	430
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	0	1	15	0	16	931	0	1
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	0	9	11	0	20	665	1	0
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	3	0	0	0	3	103	0	0
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	2	0	0	0	2	171	0	0
Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	0	1	2	0	3	107	2	0
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	0	0	2	0	2	187	0	0
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	0	15	46	0	61	1445	8	11
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	1	0	0	0	1	1907	0	0
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	0	0	9	0	9	97	0	0
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	0	1	0	0	1	789	0	0
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	0	1	0	0	1	117	0	0
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	0	1	4	0	5	624	1	3
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	0	5	35	0	40	423	7	0
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	0	7	3	0	10	308	0	0
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	0	52	8	0	60	507	0	5
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	0	1	0	0	1	12	0	0
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	0	60	8	0	68	4515	2	0
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	0	8	1	0	9	1903	0	0
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	0	1	0	0	1	499	0	0
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	0	2	1	0	3	185	0	0
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	0	41	64	1	106	1655	3	0
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	0	1	3	0	4	3553	0	7
Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	26	0	19	0	45	1214	1	0
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	1	6	24	1	32	1420	2	1
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	0	2	7	2	11	475	0	0
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	0	2	1	0	3	83	0	0
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	1001	6	140	0	1147	10896	117	80
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	93	0	14	0	107	1483	24	1
Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	126	0	17	0	143	416	43	3
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	3	0	1	0	4	100	0	0
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	0	0	72	0	72	869	9	0



Species		Nestling	Juvenile	Adult	Unaged	County total	British total	Retraps	Recoveries
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	0	4	0	0	4	612	0	0
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	0	29	17	1	47	2063	26	2
Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	0	1	0	0	1	220	1	0
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	324	1	9	0	334	2814	3	10
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	0	0	1	0	1	91	0	0
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	5	0	0	0	5	440	0	2
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	0	3	3	0	6	559	1	0
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	0	9	1	0	10	516	0	0
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	160	4	5	0	169	2863	2	3
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	0	0	3	0	3	487	0	1
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	0	0	1	0	1	148	0	0
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	7	0	0	0	7	326	0	0
Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>	0	127	46	5	178	12753	56	1
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	0	6	2	0	8	1331	3	0
Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>	0	4	0	0	4	377	6	0
Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	899	1719	804	3	3425	150284	788	13
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	340	832	598	6	1776	73829	635	6
Bearded Tit	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	0	0	1	0	1	630	0	0
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	168	4	59	0	231	9635	25	1
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	10	64	169	0	243	23265	6	0
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	0	49	353	0	402	2588	17	0
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	0	4	3	7	14	1761	2	0
Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	8	79	117	416	620	21052	246	8
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	0	383	120	1	504	25411	14	1
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	5	335	175	73	588	43687	39	3
Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	0	0	1	0	1	320	0	0
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	0	0	0	9	9	220	0	0
Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	0
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	2	80	70	0	152	19077	74	5
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	59	82	53	1	195	23381	8	5
Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>	0	0	1	0	1	10	0	0
Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	1	5	7	0	13	1760	2	0
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	4	506	178	56	744	74811	85	1
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	0	16	9	0	25	4177	3	0
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	0	74	41	0	115	2682	34	0
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	9	374	139	0	522	15617	286	1
Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	0	0	1	0	1	13	0	0
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	0	6	3	1	10	1015	2	0
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	0	974	85	61	1120	24015	129	5
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	9	387	137	9	542	16688	228	1



Species		Nestling	Juvenile	Adult	Unaged	County total	British total	Retraps	Recoveries
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	0	2	4	7	13	3166	3	0
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	0	20	10	8	38	2324	18	0
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	0	300	145	19	464	20846	130	54
Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	0	0	3	0	3	314	0	0
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	23	431	505	11	970	24076	180	22
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	0	3	55	0	58	1411	0	0
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	0	228	123	20	371	20435	2	0
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	0	126	55	7	188	6502	20	1
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	0	1	1	0	2	224	0	0
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	14	3	4	0	21	1043	0	0
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	3	528	231	61	823	27538	273	2
Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>	0	1	0	0	1	13	0	0
Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	0	5	1	0	6	15703	0	0
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>	0	1	0	0	1	12	0	0
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	0	6	6	0	12	1720	3	0
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	0	4	0	0	4	664	0	0
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	0	0	2	0	2	1413	0	0
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	0	0	2	0	2	978	0	0
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	1	236	195	146	578	16480	34	1
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	397	93	261	170	921	15490	24	1
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	3	497	260	16	776	20361	347	8
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	0	66	24	2	92	810	0	0
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	0	0	1	0	1	1199	0	0
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	8	3	14	0	25	1964	0	0
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	0	64	9	0	73	17302	2	0
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	0	2	1	0	3	1334	0	0
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	2	274	679	11	966	26041	94	4
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	0	9	39	0	48	4469	2	1
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	0	60	65	0	125	6614	24	1
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	2	370	310	16	698	19091	24	9
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	2	179	408	1	590	9738	39	1
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	0	14	126	3	143	13286	14	4
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	0	844	1242	37	2123	50299	230	18
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	0	3	232	0	235	28012	4	5
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	0	0	1	0	1	114	0	0
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	0	26	339	0	365	6448	18	1
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	4	315	737	21	1077	15625	69	3
Grand Total		3725	11145	9859	1209	25938	1047521	4739	756

Selected recoveries and related news in 2019

Some of the interesting recoveries in 2019 are included in the main body of the report because they represent particularly long-lived birds, birds which have moved a long distance within Britain and Ireland, birds which have gone to, or come from countries with few such recoveries, or because few birds of this species have been recovered. The sightings or recoveries mentioned below were made on dates in 2019; for those birds ringed in earlier years these are specified after the day and month. Wildfowl recoveries may involve birds that have been shot or which have been colour-ringed enabling the code to be read in the field. A **Canada Goose** ringed at Ancaster Sandpit in Jun 2014 was found shot at Wyberton Marsh on Sep 6th and a juvenile **Greylag Goose** ringed at Derwent Ings was shot on the Humber on Nov 6th. Several **Mute Swans** ringed at Brayford Pool in 2008-09 were seen alive in the area, all aged 10-11 years and another ringed as a 1CY bird in Berkshire was seen in Lincoln now aged eight years on Aug 30th. **Little Egrets** continue to be identified by their colour rings, and a nestling ringed in the county was present in Northumberland for its fifth year.

A **Sparrowhawk** ringed as a 1CY male in Nov 2010 was retrapped on Apr 24th at Kirmond-Le-Mire for the sixth time and is now almost 8.5yr old. **Marsh Harriers** carrying wing tags are seen regularly in the county mostly having been tagged in Norfolk and several ringed as nestlings are now up to five years old and are actual or potential breeding birds in the county. A Dutch colour-ringed **Hobby** was seen at Gibraltar Point on Jun 30th (see account in Systematic List).

A remarkable find was GK53376, an adult male **Coot** ringed at Deeping St James in 1977 known only by the recovered ring found on Jan 9th; this was 41 years after the date of ringing but as the date of the Coot's demise is of course unknown, this cannot be taken as an accurate indicator of age. There were many notable recoveries, controls and colour ring observations among the waders migrating through and wintering in the county. Three **Oystercatchers** ringed on The Wash were recovered or seen in Norway (2) and The Netherlands (1):

FA55861	Adult	15-08-1995	Wrangle Tofts, Lincolnshire.
	Freshly dead (hit by car)	28-07-2019	Brensholmen, Tromsø, Norway (2,057km NNE; aged 23y 11m 13d)
FA97536	1CY	11-09-1998	Butterwick, Lincolnshire.
	Caught by ringer	28-10-2018	Snettisham, Norfolk)
	Freshly dead (injury)	29-06-2019	Søre Bjørnsund, Fræna, Norway (1,171km NNE, aged 20y 9m 18d)
FP08328	1CY	01-08-2000	Friskney, Lincolnshire.
	Alive (ring read in field)	08-04-2019	Den Helder, Noord-Holland, The Netherlands (305km E, aged 18y 8m 7d)

Avocet colour rings caught the eye with four British-ringed birds ringed as nestlings providing extensive information. One ringed as a nestling on Teesside on Jun 3rd was at Frampton Marsh on Aug 21st and another from Teesside ringed on Jul 2nd was seen at Gibraltar Point on Sep 8th and then on the Humber on Dec 27th. Two others from Teesside ringed in 2012 have both been seen six to seven times at Gibraltar Point. From late Oct, Avocets move to their wintering sites and those wintering on British estuaries are thought to be British breeders, although some have been found to move as far south as Morocco. A **Lapwing** ringed in Belgium in 2016 was found long dead near Lincoln on Aug 26th and a colour-ringed Norwegian **Ringed Plover** was seen alive at Frampton Marsh on Aug 19th. FP32856, a **Curlew** ringed as an adult at Holbeach St Matthew on Aug 23rd 2005 was seen alive for an amazing eighth time at exactly the same location of Torvela, Finland on



Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* (juveniles) in artificial nest, South Lincolnshire Jun 2019 © ALAN BALL

A brood of six kingfishers ringed on Jun 30th 2019 in an artificial nest site in southwest Lincolnshire. The photographs were taken under Schedule 1 licence during ringing activity. In 2020 the nest site successfully supported two broods of five and then seven juveniles!



Jul 21st. Continuing the Scandinavian theme with **Bar-tailed Godwits** one ringed as a 1CY bird in Norway, on Sep 7th 2002, was caught on The Wash on Sep 2nd, now aged nearly 17yr. Two other Norwegian-ringed 1CY birds were seen at Frampton Marsh on Jun 20th aged nine months and a second was retrapped on The Wash on Sep 2nd, aged almost 17yr. The catalogue of colour-ringed **Black-tailed Godwits** is now enormous but an adult ringed in Kent in Sep 2017, then seen in Iceland in Apr 2018, was at Frampton Marsh on Aug 4th and another which was ringed in Iceland in Jun 2017 was found dead at Frampton Marsh on Oct 18th. A **Knot** ringed on The Wash in Aug 2014 was shot in France at Mont-St-Michel on Nov 30th another was retrapped in Norway on May 21st. Another bird emphasising the importance of colour-ringing was an adult at Frampton Marsh originally ringed as a 1CY bird in Sep 2014 in Norway. A **Redshank** ringed on The Wash on Sep 30th 2007 was retrapped at almost the same site on Aug 1st now aged nearly 12yr and a 1CY colour-ringed **Spotted Redshank** ringed in Norway was seen at Frampton Marsh on Aug 20th and again Sep 22nd. Colour-ringed **Black-headed Gulls** feature regularly with ER86483 ringed as an adult seen in Poland on May 10th and SVS6421618, another adult ringed in Sweden seen for the third year in Skegness



on Nov 29th, now at least 12.5yr old. EZ58047 ringed as an adult in Essex in 2016 was seen for the fourth year in a row at Huttoft Car Terrace on Mar 9th and finally two birds seen in Cleethorpes: the first was ringed as a chick in Russia in Jun 2017 and seen three times on Jan 30th, Jul 14th and Sep 23rd; the second was ringed as a 1CY bird in Switzerland in Nov 2016 and seen on Jan 18th. HW93611, the colour-ringed **Great Black-backed Gull** that has visited Denmark in the past was seen again at Kirkby on Bain landfill site on Jan 30th, its third visit to the county, and a Norwegian-ringed nestling from 2016 was found dead in Grimsby on Sep 26th. Several Scottish-ringed **Herring Gulls** were noted in Jan (3) and Jul (1) as well as a Suffolk-ringed nestling from 2012 now more than seven years old when seen at Kirkby on Bain GP. An adult **Sandwich Tern** colour-ringed in Norfolk in May 2018 which was seen wintering in The Gambia in Sep 2018 was seen for the second time at Seacroft on Aug 31st.

Barn Owls are quite long-lived if they can avoid being killed on our roads and two nestlings ringed in 2007 were retrapped now aged 12yr 3mth. and 11yr 11mth. Four female **Little Owls** caught on the nest have provided a long history of retrap data, the oldest of these now 8yr 1mth. A 1CY male and a 1CY female **Great Spotted Woodpecker** first caught at Gibraltar Point in 2011 and 2012 respectively have each been retrapped several times now aged 7yr 8mth, and 6yr 9mth respectively. A **Kestrel** ringed as a nestling in Skegness was found freshly dead in Kent on May 1st, probably killed by a mammal and another ringed as a nestling in 2013 was found drowned in North Yorks. on Sep 17th. A colour-ringed **Peregrine** ringed as a nestling in May 2016 was seen alive in Essex on Aug 24th. A **Blue Tit** ringed as a 1CY bird in Jul 2011 at Gibraltar Point was retrapped there for the eighth time on Dec 18th now aged 8yr 4mth, a remarkable feat of longevity for a small passerine.

Among the other passerines, a **Willow Warbler** ringed as a 1CY bird on Aug 8th at Gibraltar Point was retrapped in Pas-de-Calais, France on Aug 13th having travelled some 270km south-southeast. Two 1CY **Sedge Warblers** were retrapped abroad: one was ringed on Jul 25th at Gibraltar Point and caught in Seine-Maritime, France on Aug 21st (402 km south) and the second was ringed on Aug 28th 2018 at Marston STW and caught in Setúbal, Portugal on Aug 24th 2019. A 1CY female **Blackcap** ringed on Sep 22nd at Gibraltar Point was retrapped in Viborg, Denmark on Oct 4th, a movement of 691km north-east. Several 1CY **Goldcrests** ringed on the coast were retrapped further south in Britain and a 1CY female ringed in Pas-de-Calais, France in Oct 2018 was caught in Ruskington on Sep 15th. A 1CY male **Blackbird** ringed in Oct 2012 at Gibraltar Point was retrapped in Nordjyllands, Denmark on Mar 19th, then aged 6yr 4mth. And an adult **Song Thrush** ringed on Oct 27th 2018 at Gibraltar Point came to an unfortunate but not unfamiliar end when it was shot in Guarda, Portugal on Feb 7th. A 1CY female Brambling ringed on Oct 16th 2018 near Bourne was retrapped in Hedmark, Norway on May 5th and there was more **Lesser Redpoll** data showing their Scottish origins and also two birds returning from southern English counties retrapped in Feb-Mar presumably returning northwards to their breeding grounds via Lincolnshire. A similar picture was seen with **Siskins** originating in or returning to Scotland and with one remarkable retrap, AJB3117, an adult female ringed on St Agnes, Isles of Scilly on Oct 27th 2017 and then retrapped in Willingham Forest on Mar 18th. Another 1CY female ringed on Mar 30th 2018 in nearby Market Rasen was retrapped in Opland, Norway on Jun 26th. To complete what has been a very Norwegian-orientated summary, a 1CY male Reed Bunting ringed on Sep 9th 2018 in Nord-Trøndelag, Norway was retrapped at Quadring Eaudike on Mar 28th.

Lincolnshire Rare Breeding Birds Panel Report Summary 2019

Phil Espin Chair LBC

Each year I prepare LBC's annual report to RBBP during Oct/Nov of the following year to meet the RBBP target submission date of Nov 30th. The report is prepared from the LBC database and direct contacts with a host of people who can provide the detailed information required for the report. The full UK report is published in *British Birds*. The 2018 report will be in the Dec 2020 issue. I usually do this as part of writing the species account for the bird report. The 2019 submission has been done just before the deadline and for your information a summary of the report is below.

Species	Sites	Confirmed pairs	Probable pairs	Possible	Total Pairs	Fledged young	Best evidence
Garganey	4	4	4		8	13	Fledged young
Shoveler	13	3	43		46	17	Fledged young
Wigeon	0						
Pintail	1		1		1		Pair
Pochard	4	3	5		8	10	
Red-crested Pochard	4	3	3		6	12	Fledged young
Quail	10		13	3	16		Territories
Black-necked Grebe	2	1	1		2	2	Fledged young
Bittern	5	4	4		8	7	Fledged young
Little Egret	9	118			118		Fledged young
Goshawk	1	2			2	4	Fledged young
Marsh Harrier	30	23	8		34		Fledged young
Montagu's Harrier	1		1		1		Pair
Avocet	9						Fledged young
Little Ringed Plover	12						Fledged young
Ruff	1						Display: 2 leks, 12 males
Mediterranean Gull	3		3		3		Mating
Little Tern	1	10			10	1	Fledged young
Turtle Dove	19		20	5	25		Pair
Long-eared Owl	0						
Short-eared Owl	3		3		3		Pair
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	3			3	0		Territory
Hobby		4	32	20		7	Fledged young
Peregrine	23	21	2		23	28	Fledged young
Willow Tit	8	1	7	2	8	2	Fledged young
Bearded Tit	6	62			62		Fledged young
Woodlark	6		8	3	11		Pair
Firecrest	1			1			Territory



In order to improve the efficiency of making the report the process is about to change. If you have heard from me in the last couple of months about 2019, you'll be hearing from me in January 2021 to collect information for 2020. So please study the summary above and be prepared if you have relevant information about any of the above species at any Lincs site. If you don't hear from me in January, please submit your data to LBC through your usual channel. If you have any questions about anything in this report, please contact me on chairman@lincsbirdclub.co.uk.

follow me on twitter @philespin

Water Pipit influx at Baston Fen NR

John Redshaw

January 2019 has seen an unprecedented number of Water Pipits at Baston Fen NR in south Lincolnshire. The previous status of this species in the county, according to *BoLaSH* (1989), was as a “passage migrant and winter visitor. Wintering birds have been more present in the last ten years (1979–89) with up to three at Saltfleetby during 1980 to 1985. A few birds have been recorded inland”. Certainly, at Baston Fen, single birds were recorded in Dec in the years 1996, 1998, 2001 and 2010, with further singles in Feb 2005 and Mar 2013. Two, possibly three birds were seen at Baston on 29th and 30th Dec 29th–30th 2018, breaking the reserve’s previous records. A disappointing visit on 31st produced only Meadow Pipits. However, on Jan 18th up to seven were reported increasing to 12, possibly 14, on 20th an unprecedented number. From 21st–26th numbers reported fluctuated between three and nine as the birds became more flighty.

Shallow patches of floodwater on the low wash in late Dec may have provided margins that attracted the first birds. Subsequently controlled flooding of the washes started in early Jan, and the shallow margins were pushed further west as the floodwaters rose. The pipits were then to be found around the margins at the western end of the middle (second) and eastern end of the high (third) wash. Frost and bright sunlight on Jan 19th–20th meant that the birds became more obvious due to very good lighting, and this is when the highest numbers were seen. It has been reported that the birds have occasionally been seen flying over to the adjacent Stewardship Wetlands, and this probably accounts for some of the low or negative sightings from the reserve.

Elsewhere in the county six were recorded at ponds at East Halton Skitter on Jan 13th, when there was one at Gibraltar Point, and up to two at Frampton Marsh between 21st and 26th.

These often shy and elusive individuals have rarely been more viewable or as numerous than at Baston Fen this winter, don’t miss out!

I am grateful to several birders who made their records available either to me or to Birdguides.

Reference

Lorand & Atkin *Birds of Lincolnshire and South Humberside* 1989 (*BoLaSH*)



'Mandt's' Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle mandtii* in Lincolnshire: new to Britain

Dave Roberts

On Friday Dec 7th 2017, I travelled over to the Cut End section of The Wash, southeast of Boston, for one of my regular seawatching sessions there. There was a strong south-westerly wind blowing – not the most favourable direction, but there are usually one or two interesting birds taking shelter in the calm waters of the mouth of the Rivers Witham and Welland in such conditions.

In the event, I enjoyed a decent morning's birding, with four Long-tailed Duck south, a Slavonian Grebe, a Great Northern Diver, Shag, Hen Harrier and Merlin. It wasn't until lunchtime that I decided to open the south-facing window of the hide, as the rain and hail had been lashing it for most of the morning. I scanned the rocks for waders, then the Welland (at least the bits of it that I could see). It was then that I noticed a strikingly white bird, very distant and close to the riverbank. It was immediately obvious to me that I had a Black Guillemot in my sights, even though it was for only a couple of seconds. In that same moment I was struck with just how white it looked. My previous experience of the species had mostly been of summer-plumaged birds along the coasts of western Scotland and Northern Ireland. I had seen a winter-plumaged individual a few years earlier in Norfolk, but my bird looked very different indeed from that one.

The bird disappeared, out of my view, and I was initially worried that I might not see it again. I did, however, still very distantly and only for a few seconds each time, before it dived or went out of view again. I had to get a photo! Well, I did, but they came out only as white 'blobs'. More brief views were had over the next hour or two, including in-flight views. I put news out and local birder Paul



Sullivan made it down to the hide to see the bird that same day.

This Black Guillemot initially proved very popular with Lincolnshire birders since many people needed it for their county list alone, including me: the previous one in the county was some 11 years earlier. A few birders managed to get much better photographs over the weekend, and as a result of its very pale appearance there was some suggestion on social media (by Graham Catley at least) that this bird could possibly be of the high-Arctic subspecies *C. g. mandtii*. The online discussions and the possibility that it was the first British record of *mandtii*



Left, above and below: **Mandt's Black Guillemot**, *Cepphus grylle mandtii* Witham Mouth Dec 9th 2017 © STEVE GANTLET. (These images first appeared in the Lincolnshire Annual Report 2017)

attracted attention from beyond the boundaries of Lincolnshire, and on the Sunday morning it was seen and photographed by Norfolk-based Steve Gantlett; his photographs, and subsequent submission of the record to BBRC, were instrumental in its eventual acceptance as the first British record of 'Mandt's Black Guillemot'.

Additional note: Mandt's Black Guillemot breeds from north-east Canada to Svalbard to northern Siberia and northern Alaska. Candidate Mandt's Black Guillemot have been observed in Iceland, the Faroe Islands and The Netherlands, too. IOC currently recognises five subspecies. The form breeding in the British Isles *arcticus*, is largely sedentary, and also breeds in north-east USA, south-east Canada, Greenland, Scandinavia and the White Sea. The nominate form *grylle* is confined to the Baltic, while the Faroe Islands and Iceland have their own subspecies *faroeensis* and *islandicae*.

In non-breeding plumage *mandtii* is generally very much paler than *arcticus*, in having a largely white head, lacking both a dark loreal spot and dark ear-coverts, and having an all-white rump, scapulars and wing coverts. The Cut End bird showed all of these features.





Black-winged Pratincole, Frampton Marsh, June 18th 2019

Terry Barnatt

We pulled into the Frampton visitor centre car park, as I recall surprisingly empty, just before 9am and parked against the fence, facing the field; my mate Roger Favell was driver of the day. I live near Bourne and Roger at Market Deeping.

As soon as I emerged from the car, even before 'gearing up', no binoculars or anything, I spotted this fast moving very agile swift-shaped Hobby-sized bird dashing around in front of us.

Its needle-shaped tail, white rump, white underparts, brownish upper parts, and dark underwing were immediately evident along with, of course, the little throat 'bib'. It struck me as a classic 'text book' bird example of a pratincole sp. although I had never seen one before. "There's a pratincole", I called to Roger – he was only just climbing out of the driver's seat, rather bemused at my exclamation. We both watched it, now with binoculars, as it banked and swerved around the car park and off further along the reserve road.

Although I have been birdwatching for many, many years any rarity I have seen has almost always been already spotted and identified by others and I naturally assumed that this was the case on this occasion. Although not a twitcher by nature I am always pleased to get a new tick and a pratincole of any persuasion would be gratefully received. I did not have my telescope with me that day so having donned binoculars and cameras we both set off down the road in the direction of the speeding bird. I spotted Frampton Warden, Toby Collett, scanning the wet fields of the reserve with his telescope. "Watching the pratincole?" I said on the assumption that he had already seen it. He hadn't. I think Roger then picked it up again flying across the cattle field before it again was lost from sight. Of course, at this point the actual species had not been defined.

Within minutes other RSPB staff were in attendance, telescopes and smart phones to hand - soon to be joined, out of the ether, by other birders. It was then spotted again, by the gathering throng, at rest near a piece of water a couple of hundred yards away. Even through the telescopes it was difficult to see clearly. It eventually took to the air enough for finer inspection to be made and after some conjecture it was agreed that it was in fact a Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*, differing from the less rare Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* by having darker upper wings, with no pale trailing edge and the more noticeable dark underwing.

I didn't manage to get a decent photo myself but several photographers did get some good shots over the next few hours as it hawked over the wet fields and even flew close to observers on the road and the car park. This all helped to confirm the identity of the species.

Being an oldie, my own reference system still consists of 'hard copy' bird guides – I still have a 1960s edition of the Peterson, Mountford, & Hollom Field Guide – my 1950s one fell apart.

On this visit to Frampton, among the now expected variety of waders and waterfowl we also saw the breeding Black-necked Grebes.

Frampton just used to be a Lincs Trust saltmarsh reserve, beyond the seawall. For someone who has known it all that time I have been amazed to have seen species unimaginable in those early days - Great White Egret, Spotted Crane, Long-billed Dowitcher, Spoonbill *et al.* Regulars will notice that I have missed quite a few as well, including previous *pratincole* spp. - but not this time!



Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni* Frampton Marsh Jun 19th © SIMON SPAVIN



Pallid Swift Gibraltar Point NNR, November 7th 2018

Kev Wilson

At around 12:15, Ben Ward and I had just finished collating a tranche of bird data and were taking a break. From my desk, I picked up my binoculars to take a scan over Jackson's Marsh from the window. Immediately a swift flew into my field of view and came head on as if it was going to come in through the window. I alerted Ben urgently as well as Jim Shaw, who had just walked into the office and both were able to see it as it veered upwards to fly over the building. At point blank range, I had a brilliant view of it, head on and was struck by the extent of pale around the face and the forehead; the large pale throat patch extending seemingly onto the upper breast. Dark patches around the eyes were striking in this context. I exclaimed it must be a Pallid Swift!

Jim was quick to open the upper door giving access to the first-floor veranda, although the presumption was that the bird would have just carried on south over the Plantation and out of view. Remarkably though, it had turned back and gave a superb fly-past in very good light at eye level and less than 50m range. As the three of us stood there watching, it performed three circuits just north of us over the Jackson's Marsh main scrape and hide. I called out features as I was watching it; I recall saying – it just looks so brown and later commenting on how contrasting it was with areas of pale almost sandy brown and darker brown patches. The large pale throat/forehead combination was always obvious and accentuated dark patches around the eyes. Most incredible though was that we were all able to easily see the continuous pale crescents across the underparts.

After the initial close views for around a minute, the bird moved away and ranged widely over Croftmarsh, spending some time hawking around a cattle corral about 500m away for a further five minutes before it then drifted slowly south/south-west.

Description

Upperparts

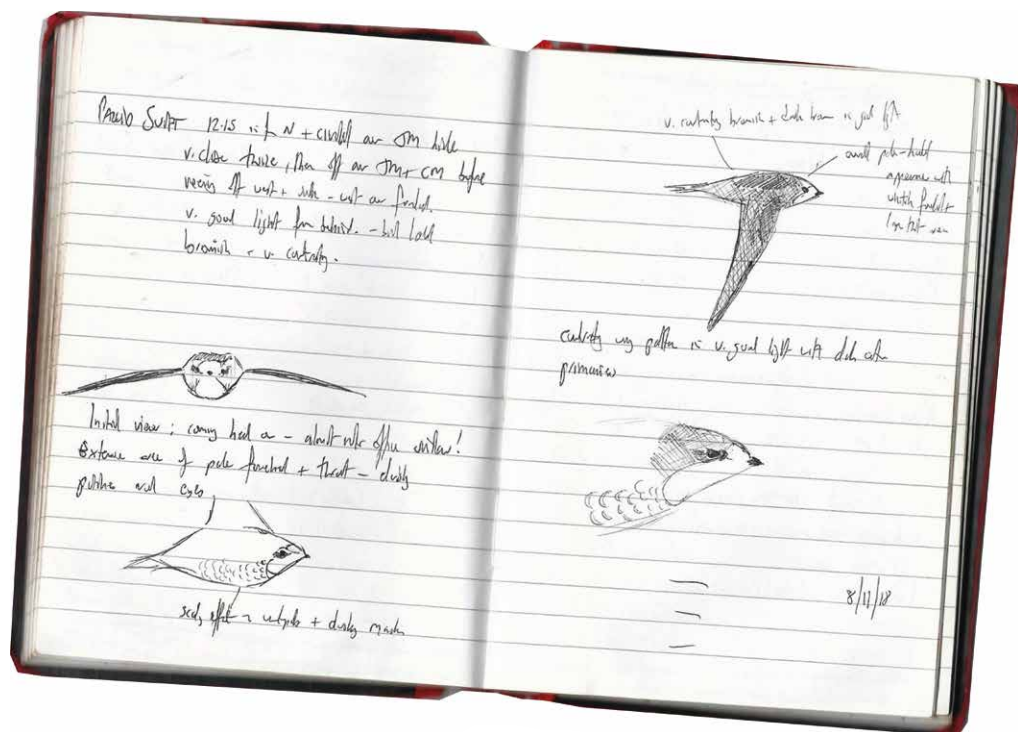
The bird was more contrasting than Common Swift which can look uniformly dark. This bird showed a combination of darker and paler areas. The light conditions could not have been better from our vantage point with the bird seen extremely well and close at low level. Much of the body and wing area was a pale brown, almost sandy brown or milky coffee with strong contrast with dark brown outer primaries and coverts. The back was perhaps a shade darker than the rump and crown - giving more contrast.

Underparts

Below the extensive pale throat, the pale brown underpart feathers were fringed pale, so it appeared that the bird had continuous rows of crescents all the way down to the lower belly. This scaling effect was easy to see in the light conditions at close range. The underwing showed dark brown lesser coverts merging with dark brown primaries, giving a continuously darker leading edge to the wing, collectively contrasting with the rest of the paler brown underwing and mirroring the upperwing pattern.

Face and Head Pattern

The head could appear slightly paler than the mantle – perhaps almost light greyish brown but this could have been influenced by the large whitish forehead blaze and the very broad whitish throat patch that extended onto the upper breast. The eye and associated small dark mask area really stood out against the pale brown background plumage of the face.



Kev Wilson's notebook details of the **Pallid Swift**,
Gibraltar Point Nov 7th 2018

Structure

It was not really possible to pinpoint any features exactly without Common Swift for comparison – it had been a good few weeks since the last Common Swift – however, this did look quite a sturdy and compact bird in terms of body, wings and tail – perhaps less rakish than Common Swift. The wings/flight feathers all looked in very good fresh condition, with no apparent moult, so maybe a juvenile bird?

Flight action

The flight was fairly slow and deliberate for a swift with a series of unhurried shallow flaps and glides as it circled, before moving off with more rapid actions. The three of us were left in a state of shock. Having struggled often to identify Pallid Swifts on various European trips in strong light and almost dreading picking up a late swift in the UK, expecting it to be a brief experience in poor light as a single observer, we had just been treated to exceptional views at eye level of a Pallid Swift in perfect light. We quickly retreated back to the office to write up some notes and sketches while all was fresh in our minds.

Note

This submission just missed the BBRC deadline for 2018 records but was duly assessed by BBRC in their 2019 batch and unanimously accepted. It just pre-dates the other accepted 2018 record from Steve Routledge by 4 days and so constitutes the second county record, Steve's now being the third. Very astute observations in both cases.



Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina* Gibraltar Point, September 22nd 2019

John Clarkson

Adrian Royle asked me if I'd like to join him in the Beach car park at Gib Pt on Sunday morning at 7am when a group of 11 birders led by Ben Ward assembled to amass a big day list for the reserve at peak migration time. It soon became evident from Mill Hill and then on the beach that visible migration was almost non-existent with 3 Jays south and a handful of wagtails, and apart from a few Gannets and 4 Red-throated Divers, the sea was fairly empty. Careful examination of the bushes *en route* to the visitors' centre increased our total of resident birds. By now a breakaway group of three had gone their separate way. We spent an hour looking from the observation platform before walking around Jackson's Farm plantation where Treecreeper was the highlight. It was now lunchtime and we agreed to re-convene in Harvey's hide at 13:00.

Despite the encouraging forecast of steady SE winds and thundery rain-showers the weather was by now Mediterranean; hot, 25degC, and calm with mainly clear blue skies. After some time in the hides checking out the regular birds on Tennyson's Marsh, we proceeded to Shoveler's Pool where there had been earlier sightings of a Pied Flycatcher and a brief Yellow-browed Warbler. The Pied showed well and we headed from there towards the shore and began walking south. It was here, whilst scanning the beach that I spotted a Wheatear some 70m north feeding along the dune edge.



Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina* Sep 23rd 2019 © JAMES SIDDLE



Some of the group had seen a rather elusive Northern Wheatear from the Visitor Centre and this bird, being in the open and coming closer, gave the others a chance to catch up. It came to within 30m and gave good views.

Even though it made for a very small image in less than ideal conditions, there was something about this bird that made me reach for my camera and begin snapping. It wasn't just the unusual dark feathering on the right side of its neck. It seemed large, perhaps as a result of its striking upright stance and, maybe, rather pale. We discussed it and couldn't rule out one of the massive variations of Northern Wheatear that are available in the autumn. The word 'Isabelline' did occur in our conversation but, under a glaring sun, there seemed to be more contrast in the wings than we'd like and there was no obvious black alula. It flew once briefly giving no view of the tail and the second time it flew it headed strongly north and out of sight. We moved on deciding that it was almost certainly a probable Northern Wheatear.

That evening when I had a chance to examine my photos I began to have second thoughts and I posted one picture on a local bird info group site. Immediately there was a split in opinion: This could be an Isabelline? There is no obvious black alula. Look at the stance. Too much contrast etc. My photos confirmed the upright stance, they showed that the wing coverts and upperparts were very similar tones, the supercilium was white in front of the eye and one photo seemed to show a broad black terminal band in the tail. I've seen Isabelline in the UK, Israel and various African countries but can't claim to be familiar with the species and didn't have the confidence to declare that this was an Isabelline.

Fortunately, my photo was interesting enough to encourage a second look the following day. Ben Ward relocated the bird in the same area and in the company of Owen Beaumont, James Siddle and Kevin Wilson, grilled it for three hours before coming away confident that it was an Isabelline Wheatear. I posted my pics on the Facebook page Rare Birds In Britain and Ireland and, again, there was a division of opinion but most coming down in favour of Isabelline. The clinching comment, for me, came from Killian Mullaney:

This is an Isabelline Wheatear. The head markings, wing markings, overall colour and especially the shortness of the primary projection establish the identification beyond doubt, in my opinion.

With only 33 records to 2015 this is, indeed, a rare species in the UK and it is the first for Lincolnshire (subject to ratification by BBRC). The process of identifying this bird has been interesting and instructive. As *Collins Bird Guide* says: "Like autumn-plumaged Wheatear, and the two at times very tricky to separate". That's why confirmation took so long; it needed study and discussion over some time to arrive at a conclusion.

Incidentally, the combined day list from all contributors was 105 at close of play. I'm happy to have been part of increasing that total to 106.



Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus* Gibraltar Point May 7th 2019 © OWEN BEAUMONT

Iberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus ibericus*, Gibraltar Point, May 7th 2019

K M Wilson

Tuesday May 7th was a day off and my first chance to get out to the East Dunes to check for migrants for a while. After a couple of hours there did not seem to be much change in the species numbers or composition since my previous visit there and I'd found myself spending considerable time looking at the emerging flora on the dune ridges and in the dune slack.

Whilst heading back towards Mill Hill at approximately 09:30, I heard a brief burst of an odd chiffchaff type song coming from an area of thick scrub. After a short while it very briefly sang again. Even though it was quite subdued, almost sub-song, it was odd enough for me to consider the possibility of Iberian Chiffchaff, although it was difficult to pick out at the initial distance and with a noisy Song Thrush, Sedge Warbler, Linnets and Common Whitethroats obscuring it to some extent.

Over the course of the next 55 minutes or so, I waited in the area, keeping my distance and listening out for the very occasional bursts of song. I was very aware of the variability of Common Chiffchaff song and several previous rejected claims of Iberian Chiffchaff based on song. The bird had moved a short way north into some dense cherry plums and it was here that it became more vocal – singing



more loudly and prolonged and consistent with what I could recall from Iberian Chiffchaff song that I had heard previously. Three to four “chiff-chaffs” would be given before the song tailed off in a fairly quick scratchy trill. The song was quite erratic, and I noted that the start of the delivery was almost like the start of a Tree Pipit song with a Reed Bunting quality at the end. I put a message out to local birders, and I approached closer to attempt to get some sound recordings.

I got my first views of the bird at this point – it had stopped singing but was feeding very actively in the thick cover. I was able to get some good views. Initially it showed fairly smart olive upperparts and apparently pale legs – which made me wonder whether I had latched onto a willow warbler as one had been in song 100m further south earlier. The bird did show a fairly long primary projection beyond the tertials, the bill appeared fairly long and thin and showed quite extensive pale pinkish coloration and the supercilium was long and prominent and with a slight yellowish wash. The eye was deep set in the face and did not appear framed by split eye rings as Common Chiffchaff might look – rather there was a less distinct lower pale eye ring. Again, many of these features were almost reminiscent of Willow Warbler. The bird did show a prominent yellow surround to the alula however as seen in Common Chiffchaff. The underparts showed some yellowish wash around the throat and breast sides, but it was quite white otherwise. At this stage I was reminded of the call of Iberian Chiffchaff when I heard it make a soft siskin like call twice.

At around 11:00 the first birders arrived on the scene – I had lost track of the Iberian Chiffchaff at that time and it had gone silent. However, by about 11:30 it had been re-located further to the south where Ben Ward, Owen Beaumont and James Siddle were able to obtain photographs and sound recordings.

N.B. at no time was the bird heard to sing continuously like a Common Chiffchaff – there were two of this species on territory not far away for comparison. The length of the bird's full song was always short and truncated by a scratchy trill, sometimes just limited to the initial ‘chiff-chaff’ component of the song and not giving the end trill. It transpired that Nigel Lound and Phil Hyde had heard the bird at around 08:10 from Mill Hill, whilst it had been giving occasional bursts of song.

The bird remained in the same area of dune over the next two days and mostly sang while fairly well concealed. The weather was generally damp with cold northerly winds, but it did sing fairly regularly during the early morning periods, even when it was raining. Later, on the early morning of May 10th it delivered full song repeatedly, having moved over to a more open Sallow, and became bolder, moving almost out of cover, nearing the tops of the foliage. Shortly after this the bird disappeared.

Editor's note: This is the first county record of this species and one long awaited. The BOURC accepted the split of Chiffchaff into four species in their 25th Report (Oct 1998): Common *Phylloscopus collybita*; Canary Islands *P. canariensis*; Iberian *P. brehmii*; Mountain *P. sindianus*. In 2002, the Taxonomic Sub-committee of the BOURC recommended that the correct scientific name of Iberian Chiffchaff should be *P. ibericus* (*Ibis* 144:518-525). Following the split and a review of historic records, the first British record was a bird seen and sound recorded at Brent Reservoir, Greater London on Jun 3rd 1972 (*British Birds* 93:329-332, 2000).



Bobolink at Crook Bank – a first for Lincolnshire

Tom Hibbert (Birklands Ringing Group, Notts.)

There was nothing special about Friday the Oct 18th. It was my last full day of a week on the Lincolnshire coast, where I'd been staying with my partner, Lauren. The morning was surprisingly sunny, with strong southerly winds, and we'd seen very few birds on a wander through the dunes. A trickle of thrushes and finches moved south, but it felt quiet. My gut was telling me there was nothing around. Fortunately my instincts have never been more wrong!

We decided to head along Theddlethorpe beach in the hope of some early Snow Buntings. A few Skylarks fed on the beach, along with a large flock of Linnets, but nothing more exciting. We'd walked a few hundred metres when a call drew our attention to a bright male Yellowhammer, passing low overhead like a second sun. It dropped into the grass briefly, before taking to the air again. As the Yellowhammer took flight, two Reed Buntings popped up in a patch of sea buckthorn. I'd just raised my binoculars to take a closer look when another yellow bird exploded from the long grass.

I saw just enough to get a quick impression: a little larger than the two Reed Buntings, with a yellowish wash to the face and breast. I immediately knew this was something special - this was a bird I'd never seen before. But the view wasn't enough to clinch an ID. For about twenty minutes it played hide and seek with us, skulking in the buckthorn and giving tantalising flashes of a plain face, boldly patterned head and heavy bill. I had a growing suspicion that I knew what it was, but I was sure I must be mistaken.

And then it finally hopped out into the open. It felt like a biblical moment, as if a ray of sunlight descended from the heavens to illuminate a bird I'd never dreamed of seeing in Britain, let alone finding on the east coast. Two bright golden streaks ran down the mantle, bringing to mind an Aquatic Warbler. Dark lateral crown stripes, with a bright golden-brown median crown stripe added to this impression, but this was no warbler. The heavy pink bill, pale eye ring and thin dark line extending behind the eye all confirmed my suspicions. I'd just found a Bobolink!

My first thought was an incoherent babble. My second was that no one would believe this! I quickly grabbed my phone and tried to snap a few record shots through my binoculars, but before I'd managed more than a couple my battery died. I borrowed Lauren's phone to put the news out, hoping other birders would be able to quickly get down and see it, then tried to keep an eye on it until more people arrived.

This proved to be a challenge! The bird was a magician, creeping through the grass between clumps of buckthorn and popping up twenty feet from where we last saw it. Andy Lowe and Andy Ashley were in the nearby dunes, so were quickly on the scene, just in time for the bird to fly right over Andy L's head, giving a weak "wink" call. It dropped into the biggest patch of sea buckthorn and disappeared. By the time a small group had gathered, the Bobolink hadn't shown itself for around half an hour and I was getting worried. At this point I didn't know if I'd succeeded in capturing it on camera, and a growing crowd of birders had only my word to go on. Then finally it reappeared, giving brief flight views before disappearing into another dense cluster of buckthorn.

Sadly I couldn't stay to enjoy the bird. At that moment we got a phone call about a family emergency and had to head home immediately, but I'm glad many birders were able to connect with this surprising visitor. I was just as delighted that my frantic attempts at a record shot had paid off!



Tom Hibbert's phone-scoped shot of the **Bobolink** at Crook Bank © TOM HIBBERT



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AV	Andrew Vaughan
BG	Barrie Galpin
BHe	Brian Hedley
BLa	Brian Lawrence
BRG	Birklands Ringing Group
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BWd	Benjamin Ward
CA	Chris Atkin
Cas	Casual Record
CG	Chris Grimshaw
CJ	Chris Jarvis
CMo	Cliff Morrison
CPa	Christopher Park
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JWh	J Wheldon
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RJH	Ray Hume
RKW	Rob K Watson
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SF	Stewart Foster
SGC	Steve Cross
SHd	Steve Hood
SJg	S Jagger
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SMcE	S J McElwee
SPd	Stuart Pedley
SPr	Sally Prescott
SRO	Stephen Routledge
SWi	Steve Willey
TCa	Toby Carter
TGr	Tom Green
TH	Tom Hibbert
TML	Trevor Lee
TwI	Twitter
TWo	Tomas Wood
VF	Vin Fleming
WB	William Bowell
WBR	Whisby Bird Records
WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
WG	Wayne Gillatt
WPB	William Brooking
WS	Will Scott



Index

A

Avocet **60**

B

Bee-eater **125**

Bittern **108**

Little **109**

Blackbird **160**

Black Brant **24**

Blackcap **153**

Black-winged Pratincole **86**

Black-winged Stilt **60**

Bluethroat **165**

Bobolink **194, 216**

Brambling **181**

Bufflehead **195**

Bullfinch **182**
(Northern) **183**

Bunting

Corn **191**

Lapland **190**

Little **192**

Ortolan **192**

Reed **192**

Snow **190**

Buzzard **119**

Honey **114**

Rough-legged **119**

C

Chaffinch **180**

Chiffchaff **149**

Iberian **150, 214**

Siberian **150**

Common Guillemot **101**

Common Rosefinch **183**

Coot **54**

Cormorant **106**

Crake

Corn **53**

Spotted **53**

Crane **54**

Crossbill

Red **186**

Two-barred **187**

Crow

Carrion **133**

Hooded **134**

Cuckoo **49**

Curlew **67**

Stone **59**

D

Dotterel **66**

Dove

Collared **52**

Rock **49**

Stock **50**

Turtle **51**

Duck

Falcated **37**

Long-tailed **45**

Mandarin **34**

Muscovy **195**

Ring-necked **42**

Ruddy **47**

Tufted **42**

Wood **195**

Dunlin **75**

Dunnock **173**

E

Egret

Cattle **110**

Great White **111**

Little **113**

Eider **43**

European Serin **189**

F

Falcon

Red-footed **127**

Fieldfare **160**

Firecrest **157**

Flycatcher

Red-breasted **166**

Spotted **163**

G

Gadwall **37**

Gannet **105**

Garganey **34**

Glossy Ibis **107**

Goldcrest **157**

Goldeneye **45**

Golden Oriole **130**

Goldfinch **187**

Goosander **46**

Goose

Bar-headed **27**

Brent **23**

Canada **26**

Dark-bellied Brent **24**

Egyptian **32**

Eurasian White-fronted
29

Greenland White-front-
ed **30**

Greylag **27**

Pale-bellied Brent **25**

Taiga Bean **28**

Tundra Bean **28**

Goshawk **115**

Grebe

Black-necked **58**

Great Crested **57**

Little **55**

Red-necked **56**

Slavonian **58**

Greenfinch **183**

Greenshank **84**

Guillemot

Black **102**

'Mandt's' Black **206**

**Gull**

- 'Baltic' **95**
- Common **90**
- Glaucous **91**
- Great Black-backed **90**
- Herring **92**
- Iceland **92**
- Lesser Black-backed **94**
- Little **88**
- Mediterranean **89**
- Ring-billed **90**
- Sabine's **88**
- Yellow-legged **93**

H**Harrier**

- Hen **116**
- Marsh **115**
- Montagu's **117**

Harris's Hawk 196**Hawfinch 181****Heron**

- Grey **110**
- Purple **111**
- Squacco **109**

Hobby 128**Hoopoe 124****I****Indian Peafowl 196****J****Jackdaw 132****Jay 131****K****Kestrel 127****Kite**

- Black **119**
- Red **118**

Kittiwake 87**Knot 70****L****Lapwing 62****Lesser Yellowlegs 82****Linnet 184****Little Auk 100****Long-billed Dowitcher 78****M****Magpie 132****Mallard 39****Martin**

- House **143**
- Sand **141**

Merlin 128**Moorhen 54****N****Nene 195****Nightingale 165****Nightjar 47****Nuthatch 158****O****Osprey 113****Owl**

- Barn **120**
- Little **121**
- Long-eared **123**
- Short-eared **123**
- Tawny **120**

Oystercatcher 59**P****Partridge**

- Grey Partridge **22**
- Red-legged Partridge **22**

Peregrine 129**Petrel**

- Leach's **104**
- Storm **104**

Phalarope

- Grey **81**
- Red-necked **80**

Pheasant 23**Pintail 39**

- Yellow-billed **195**

Pipit

- Meadow **177**
- Olive-backed **178**
- Richard's **176**

Rock 179**Tree 178****Water 178, 205****Plover**

- American Golden **64**
- Grey **64**
- Kentish **66**
- Little Ringed **65**
- Ringed **64**

Pochard 42

- Red-crested **41**

Puffin 102**Q****Quail 23****R****Raven 135****Razorbill 101****Red-breasted Merganser 47****Red-flanked Bluetail 166****Red-headed Lovebird 196****Redpoll**

- Common **185**
- Lesser **185**

Redshank 82

- Spotted **83**

Redstart 168

- Black **166**

Redwing 162**Ring-necked Parakeet 130****Ring Ouzel 160****Robin 164****Rock Dove 49****Rook 133****Ruff 72****S****Sanderling 74****Sandpiper**

- Broad-billed **72**
- Buff-breasted **77**
- Common **81**
- Curlew **73**
- Green **82**
- Marsh **83**



- Pectoral **78**
 Purple **76**
 White-rumped **77**
 Wood **83**
 Scaup **43**
 Scoter
 Common **44**
 Velvet **44**
 Shag **106**
 Shearwater
 Balearic **105**
 Manx **105**
 Sooty **104**
 Shelduck
 Common **33**
 Ruddy **34**
 South African **195**
 Shore Lark **140**
 Shoveler **36**
 Shrike
 Great Grey **130**
 Red-backed **130**
 Siskin **189**
 Skua
 Arctic **100**
 Great **98**
 Long-tailed **100**
 Pomarine **99**
 Skylark **140**
 Smew **46**
 Snipe
 Common **79**
 Jack **79**
 Sparrow
 House **172**
 Tree **173**
 Sparrowhawk **114**
 Spoonbill **107**
 Starling **159**
 Rose-coloured **159**
 Stint
 Little **76**
 Temminck's **73**
 Stonechat **169**
 Swallow **142**
 Red-rumped **144**
 Swan
 Bewick's **30**
 Black **195**
 Whooper **31**
 Swift
 Alpine **48**
 Common **48**
 Pallid **210**
- T**
- Teal **40**
 Green-winged **40**
 Tern
 Arctic **97**
 Black **98**
 Caspian **95**
 Common **96**
 Little **96**
 Roseate **96**
 Sandwich **95**
 White-winged Black **98**
 Thrush
 Mistle **163**
 Song **163**
 Tit
 Bearded **138**
 Blue **137**
 Coal **136**
 Great **138**
 Long-tailed **145**
 Marsh **136**
 Willow **137**
 Treecreeper **159**
 Turnstone **70**
 Twite **184**
- W**
- Wagtail
 Blue-headed **175**
 Grey **175**
 Pied **176**
 White **176**
 Yellow **175**
 Warbler
 Arctic **151**
 Barred **154**
 Cetti's **144**
 Dusky **148**
 Eastern Subalpine **156**
 Garden **154**
 Grasshopper **152**
 Icterine **152**
 Marsh **152**
 Pallas's **148**
 Radde's **148**
 Reed **151**
 Sedge **151**
 Willow **149**
 Wood **147**
 Yellow-browed **147**
 Water Rail **52**
 Waxwing **135**
 Wheatear **170**
 Isabelline **172, 212**
 Whimbrel **67**
 Whinchat **169**
 White Stork **105**
 White-tailed Eagle **119**
 Whitethroat **156**
 Lesser **154**
 Siberian Lesser **155**
 Wigeon **37**
 American **38**
 Woodcock **78**
 Woodlark **139**
 Woodpecker
 Great Spotted **125**
 Green **126**
 Lesser Spotted **125**
 Wood Pigeon **51**
 Wren **158**
 Wryneck **125**
- Y**
- Yellowhammer **191**

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Front cover: **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni*
 Frampton Marsh Jun 18th 2019 © STEVE KEIGHTLEY