

## **KENT WILDLIFE TRUST**

### **RUXLEY GRAVEL PITS NATURE RESERVE**

#### **ANNUAL BIRD REPORT for 2015**

##### **SUMMARY**

This year again saw unseasonal weather throughout the year. Although mild it was wet. Autumn was mild and dry before a series of storms late on in the year. According to the met office although rainfall was higher than average we also had more sunny days and average temperatures over the year were higher than average.

I would like to thank all who contributed sightings so this report could be compiled. This year the Dartford ringing group had six ringing sessions and I will indicate the birds ringed against their entry in the report.

Common Buzzard has been seen on several dates and other species seen include Yellow legged Gull, Egyptian Goose, Siberian Chiffchaff, Peregrine Falcon, Redstart, and Pheasant.

##### **SYSTEMATIC LIST**

###### **LITTLE GREBE**

Present January to April and September to December with counts of 9 on 9 January 8 on 11 February and 9 October and 10 on 24 November.

###### **GREAT CRESTED GREBE**

Present throughout the year with a count of 8 birds on 27 March. Two pairs produced 4 young only 1 survived.

###### **CORMORANT**

Present in small numbers most months with a count of 10 on 15 January and 8 on 20 November.

###### **LITTLE EGRET**

Seen in ones and twos January to March then again June to December with a count of 3 on 8 November.

###### **GREY HERON**

Seen every month with a count of 5 on 4 February, 9 October and 12 December.

###### **MUTE SWAN**

4 birds seen throughout the year. 4 signets were seen but only 2 survived.

###### **CANADA GOOSE**

Seen throughout the year. A count of 27 on 18 March and 30 on 10 July. 10 goslings were seen but only 1 or 2 survived.

###### **GREYLAG GOOSE**

Seen in small numbers February to June a pair with 6 goslings seen on 10 May survival rate unknown.

**EGYPTIAN GOOSE**

1 on 12 March.

**WIGEON**

1 on 19 November.

**GADWALL**

Seen throughout the year with counts of 10 in January and of between 20 and 33 from September to December. No evidence of breeding.

**TEAL**

1 bird seen during January and February and 4 on 4 and 6 March.

**MALLARD**

Present throughout the year. A count of up to 18 birds most months. 13 ducklings were seen on 5 May survival rate not known.

**SHOVELER**

Seen January to April in small numbers then September to December with 10 birds seen on several days in November.

**POCHARD**

Seen January, February, November and December with a count of 10 on 9 January and on 24 November.

**TUFTED DUCK**

Seen throughout the year with a count of 148 on 9 January and 154 on 17 December. Most other months between 20 and 80 birds. 5 ducklings were seen but outcome unknown.

**COMMON BUZZARD**

Seen over the reserve from March to October with a count of 6 on 21 May.

**SPARROWHAWK**

Single bird seen every month with two seen on 27 March, 26 September and 14 October.

**KESTREL**

Single bird seen every month with two seen on 14 October.

**HOBBY**

One seen on 5 May.

**PEREGRINE FALCON**

One seen on 22 April.

**PHEASANT**

One seen on several dates between 27 March and 5 June.

### **WATER RAIL**

Seen and heard on the reserve from January to April and September to December with a count of 5 on 12 March and 20 November.

### **MOORHEN**

Seen every month with a count of 33 on 9 October. Several pairs had a breeding attempt and 4 young were seen between 22 May and 16 July.

### **COOT**

Seen in large numbers on the reserve. Counts of 243 on 20 November (highest) and 31 on 22 May lowest. There were over 20 nests on the reserve and 26 young were counted on 29 July. However most of the young do not seem to survive.

### **COMMON SANDPIPER**

One seen on 24 and 30 April.

### **BLACK HEADED GULL**

Seen every month with a count of 322 on 11 November.

### **COMMON GULL**

Seen every month with a count of 16 on 21 January.

### **LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL**

Singles most months with 3 on 6 February and 29 July.

### **HERRING GULL**

Seen in small numbers every month. A count of 15 on 5 May.

### **GREATER BLACK BACKED GULL**

One seen on 26 February.

### **YELLOW LEGGED GULL**

2 seen on 12 and 18 March.

### **FERAL PIGEON**

Seen on the reserve every month a count of 43 on 2 October.

### **WOOD PIGEON**

Seen on the reserve every month. 41 on 23 December. 1 ringed on 23 August (a young bird)

### **STOCK DOVE**

2 seen in May and June with 4 on 23 July and 5 on 29 July and 17 December.

### **COLLARED DOVE**

Seen 1 or 2 at a time most months with 3 on 9 March and 17 June.

### **RING NECKED PARAKEET**

Present throughout the year with a count of 11 on 9 January.

### **CUCKOO**

1 heard on 10 May.

### **SWIFT**

Seen from 5 May to 29 July with a count of 21 on 5 May.

### **KINGFISHER**

Seen every month with sightings of 3 birds on 3, 21 and 26 July. 3 birds were ringed, 2 on 14 June an adult male and a young bird; another young bird was ringed on 5 July which suggests that a pair bred on or near the reserve.

### **GREEN WOODPECKER**

Present on the reserve all year with account of 4 on 26 February.

### **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER**

1 or 2 birds seen every month

### **SAND MARTIN**

3 seen on 22 April, 1 on 5 May and 5 on 29 July.

### **SWALLOW**

Seen on the reserve from 16 April to 26 September, with a count of 20 on 5 May.

### **HOUSE MARTIN**

20 birds seen on the reserve from 16 April to 5 May then 16 on 10 June 4 on 29 July and 10 on 3 September.

### **GREY WAGTAIL**

One or two seen most months with 3 birds seen on 27 March and 25 June.

### **PIED WAGTAIL**

1 seen on 15 January, 26 September and 11 November.

### **WREN**

In good numbers on the reserve. 15 counted on 21 May and 10 June. 21 Birds were ringed 9 of them young birds.

### **DUNNOCK**

Seen every month with a count of 12 on 30 April. 8 birds were ringed 3 of them young birds.

### **ROBIN**

Seen in good numbers every month. A count of 15 on 2 October. 16 birds were ringed 8 being young birds.

### **REDSTART**

1 seen on 3 September.

### **BLACKBIRD**

Present all year with several breeding pairs. A count of 12 on 25 June. 13 birds were ringed.

### **FIELDFARE**

1 seen on 3 February and 17 on 2 December.

### **SONG THRUSH**

Seen throughout the year with a count of 5 on 10 June. 2 ringed both young birds.

### **MISTLE THRUSH**

Seen throughout the year 3 on 25 March and 3 on 10 June.

### **REDWING**

One seen on 11 February, 4 on 26 February and 1 on 26 November.

### **SEDGE WARBLER**

1 ringed on 5 July.

### **REED WARBLER**

Present on the reserve from 30 April to 26 September. A count of 10 singing males during May. 34 birds were ringed and 1 bird was retrapped with a ring fitted by the Rye Meads ringing group. 15 were young birds.

### **CETTIS WARBLER**

1 bird on 14 October and 20 and 24 November.

### **WHITETHROAT**

Present on the reserve from 30 April to 3 July. A count of 6 on 7 May. 4 birds were ringed 3 being young birds.

### **GARDEN WARBLER**

Present on the reserve from 7 May to 29 July. A count of 5 on 10 June. 2 were ringed both adults on 10 May.

### **BLACKCAP**

1 seen on 18 March then up to 14 seen or heard from 16 April to 27 September. 21 birds were ringed 14 were young birds.

### **CHIFFCHAFF**

Seen on the reserve every month. Counts of 9 on 18 March, 8 on 10 July and 28 on 27 September. 30 birds were ringed 20 were young birds.

### **SIBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF**

1 seen on the reserve on 18 March.

### **WILLOW WARBLER**

1 young bird ringed on 23 August.

### **GOLDCREST**

On the reserve all year. A count of 7 on 9 March and 3 on several days in November. 8 were ringed 7 were young birds.

### **LONG TAILED TIT**

Seen on the reserve every month. Counts of 9 on 4 February, 7 on 27 March, 14 On 27 May and 20 on 11 November. 20 birds were ringed.

### **BLUE TIT**

On the reserve all year. Counts of 7 on 9 January, 8 on 17 February, 9 on 17 May and 5 on 26 November. 37 were ringed of which 26 were young birds.

### **GREAT TIT**

On the reserve every month. Counts of 11 on 27 January, 10 on 8 April, 7 on 21 May and 6 on several dates in October and November. 14 were ringed of which 7 were young birds.

### **JAY**

Seen in every month 1 or 2 birds. 3 on 9 March, 4 on 10 June, 5 on 25 June and 5 also on 2 days in November. 1 bird ringed a female on 4 June.

### **MAGPIE**

On the reserve every month with counts of 14 on 27 January 22 on 4 February, 10 on 9 October and 7 on 17 December.

### **JACKDAW**

Seen every month with a count of 24 on 26 September.

### **CARRION CROW**

Seen every month with counts of 11 on 26 February, 9 on 17 June and 11 on 17 December.

### **STARLING**

Seen every month with counts of 20 on 12 March, 7 on 16 July and 8 on 26 November.

### **HOUSE SPARROW**

1 seen on 30 April.

### **CHAFFINCH**

Seen every month with a count of 5 on 11 February and 8 on 11 November.

### **GREENFINCH**

1 or 2 birds seen every month. 3 on 6 March.

### **GOLDFINCH**

Seen every month with a count of 16 on 9 January, 45 on 13 February and 22 on 11 November.

### **REDPOLL**

1 bird seen on 26 January and 10 July.

### **BULLFINCH**

On the reserve all year with counts of 4 on 15 January, 5 on 13 February, 6 on 27 March and 2 in November.

I end this report with the sad news of the death of Frank Clayton. For many years, along with Richard Herbert, Frank supplied the majority of sightings enabling this report to be compiled. He will be missed.

Derek McWalter.