

March 2019

Bird News: February

Over the last week Spring has suddenly and rather worryingly appeared. An early kick off to spring will trigger earlier breeding for birds and many species of wildlife. Not a disaster as long as food resources are available and there isn't a sudden return to Winter. The other notable climate related issue is the lack of rainfall and the countryside is far drier than usual. Birdlife is still high on the reserve, here are February's highlights;

Geese: The Pinkfoot numbers have remained low in comparison to previous years with around 1000 birds roosting nightly, 2500 on 17th. LB Brent Geese numbers are lower too with only around 10 noted in February.

Estuary Wide: The Estuary count on 18th held at a very high tide which always affects numbers.

Wildfowl were low with 229 Shelduck, 38 Wigeon, 8 LB Brent and only 5 Pintail. 3 Goldeneye and 3 Slavonian Grebe picked up alongside.

Wader wise on 18th, Oystercatcher only 229, 114 Black-tailed Godwit, 227 Curlew and 13 Ringed Plover. Good numbers of Dunlin and Knot have been in using the estuary all month.

Goosepools: Out by the reed beds on 24th were 4 Crossbill and 3 Snipe.

Outhead: Offshore are still reasonable flotillas of Common Scoter early month however it seems to be thinning. Most notable here is the Skylark activity which has exploded overhead in the recent fine weather, 6 singing on 22nd.

Eden Centre: 2 Little Grebe on 2nd with up to 5 present all month. GC Grebe on 20th and a notable record of Red Necked Grebe on 20th also 3 Slavonian Grebe on 19th. Little Egret have been noted since 2 dropped in on 12th. On the move were 50 Whooper Swan on 23rd.

A lone Shoveller was spotted on 20th. 3 Tufted Duck, quite a scarce sight on the Eden these days and 25 Scaup on 5th and 270 Knot on 27th. Good numbers of Lapwing, redshank and Dunlin in inner estuary.

Up by the Centre birds have been preparing the nest boxes and the feeders were holding Long-tailed Tit and Tree Sparrow. Here's to another season's approach.

Bird of the Month



Red Necked Grebe

The Eden is a fine place to pick up Grebes, this month Slavonian, Little, Great Crested and this species the Red-necked Grebe. Expert divers and swimmers they often can be picked up by their frequent dive patterns. RN Grebes do resemble other Grebes in many ways however they have a much thicker neck and a stout looking bill with yellow base. No red neck in winter I'm afraid.

A red list bird for conservation status, they are not a common visitor to the Eden with last record being in April 2013. A nice spot.

Eden Centre

- **Open: 9am-4pm**
(5pm as of April 1st)

Reserve News

- **Bird Records:** Please note in the log book anything you spot out on the reserve. Thanks.
- **SOC App:** The reserve should feature in a new mobile app for birdwatching from Scottish Ornithological Club. One to watch for.
- **Beached Bird Survey:** The annual survey took place on 24th. Pleased to note no oiled birds were found.
- **Coastal Volunteer Group:** Want to make a difference? Check out our Facebook page for details on this new coastal group. Monthly Saturday morning action to improve our coast. Based on West Sands, changing North Fife.
- **West Sands Beach Cleans:** Regular monthly clean ups now happening. Just turn up and pick! Check out our media.
- **Fife Bird Club:** Interested in days out with fellow birders? Info on the club and application details available in the centre.
- **Donations:** Always welcome and always used on the reserve. Thanks!