

May 2018

Bird News: April

Well, that took a bit of shifting! Winter has finally given up and spring has arrived, late, but most welcome. The early blossom of Blackthorn is out, Primrose and the Daffs of course, Sandwich Terns have arrived along with Swallow and Osprey and breeding is in full swing. Some lovely notable birds carrying food including Kestrel, Osprey and Stonechat amongst many others. A lovely time of year. Here is April's highlights:

Geese: Pink footed late departures, 350 on 25th. LB Brent still in evidence with 8 on 12th.

Estuary Counts: 16th 11 Sandwich Tern out at Edenmouth along with 6 Gannet and onshore a lone Mistle Thrush. Good numbers of Shelduck around and 22 Pintail in Balgove bay.

Wader wise, numbers decreasing generally however as expected decent numbers of Black-tailed Godwit on passage. 153 monthly peak on WeBS count.

St Andrews Bay: 14th 400 Common Scoter and 316 Eider in flotillas out in the bay. 12 razorbill, 5 Slavonian Grebe and a single RT Diver, even a lone Shag. Nice stuff. Now augmented with Gannet and Sandwich Tern.

Outhead: Skylark and Meadow Pipit displaying well and Stonechat and Reed Bunting are doing nicely. A regular feature is a hunting Kestrel, carrying food, so nesting pretty nearby.

Coble Pools: The pools are still looking good and attracting birdlife. A pair of Shoveller there on 1st and a pair of Gadwall on 28th. Again,

Skylark and Grey Partridge breeding on site.

Heron Census: A slow start for our heronry, only 5 estimated pairs in April.

Sea Eagles: It is not great news for our eagles of late. No records this month on site and word that the female has been on the nest site but a no show from the male. So no breeding this year. The first fallow season in many years. The bad news continued with the 'death' of last year's juvenile in Perthshire. Sad.

Eden Centre: Season change is evident at the centre. Little egret on 6th, Slavonian Grebe on 16th. 13 Whooper on 16th too. 2 gadwall on 16th was nice and 2 Scaup on 26th. Osprey numbers have been fantastic, present all month since 6th with 3 on 26th. Good numbers of Black tailed Godwit and Redshank and a lone Common Sandpiper dropped in from 18th. An unconfirmed record of 3 Avocet on 19th and lots of Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler and Blackcap. Nice.

Bird of the Month



Kestrel

A handsome stunning bird of prey with that distinctive hover. This is the site most of us recognise as it latches on to its prey, usually a vole or mouse. One of those birds I root for whenever I see it, and very much an indicator of good habitat. Breeding locally, regularly noted carrying food on West Sands. Check out St Andrews Links Website.

Eden Centre

- **Open 9am-5pm**
- **Heating:** Please ensure heaters are off when leaving the centre

Reserve News

- **Visitor Handbook:** £1.
- **BioRolls:** No not biscuits, along the shores of the reserve you will spot coconut fibre rolls placed to protect the new planted saltmarsh. Clare Maynard's team will be planting out new saltmarsh as part of the 'Green Shores' project this month. These are experimental biodegradable barriers to wave action.
- **Butterfly?:** It's not all about birds, so if you note any butterfly or interesting flora or fauna on your travels around the reserve, please pop it in the log book.
- **Breeding Birds:** the reserve plays host to many ground nesting birds. Please consider these vulnerable species when heading out across dunes, grasslands and heaths. Thanks.
- **Otters:** Still getting decent Otter sightings along the River, keep watching folks.
- **Volunteer!** We have a range of interesting activities going on and always looking for help. Come along and make a change. It really can make a difference. If you fancy being part of the solution, give us a call on 01592 656080 ask for Meg, she's very helpful!
- **FCCT Facebook:** This is a great way to keep up with information.