

MILFORD CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS



E-NEWSLETTER

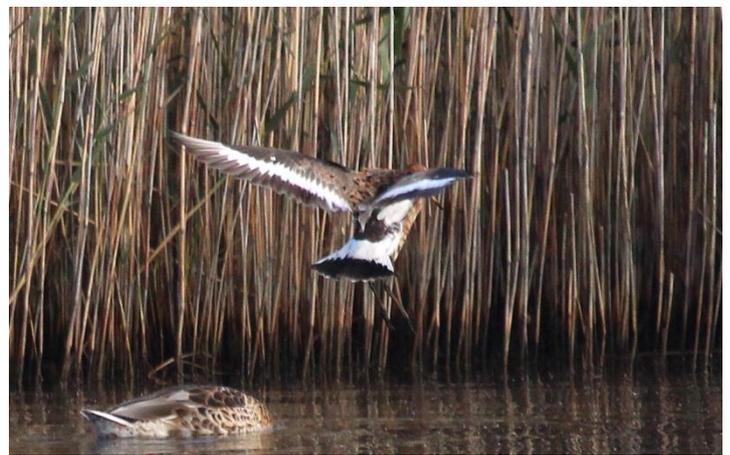
OBSERVATORY UPDATE 25th June - 25th July 2020 - (30 days).

Avocet. Only two sightings, 4 birds on the 26th June then one on 30th June

Bearded Tit. 3 recorded on 25th June, 5 on the 7th then 4 on 12th, 18th and 21st July.



Two juvenile male Bearded Tits



Black Tailed Godwit

Black Tailed Godwit. Present on 26 days. The highest number being 56 on 15th July

Canada Goose. On the Pans from 13 July. Highest number being 69 on 24th July

Common Tern. Recorded on 18 out of the 30 days. Max number being 2.

Cormorant. Present on 23 days, max number 4 on 12th July.

Coot. Recorded most days, 6 present 5th July.

Dunlin. 23 on the 21st July then 12 on 22nd.



Dunlin 'Flying in' to The Pans Wetlands on the 21st

Greenshank. Only present from the 10th July. Highest number, 4 on 24th July.

Green Woodpecker. Heard most days but only seen on two occasions. 3 seen on 6th and one seen on 7th July.

Grey Heron. Present 17 days out of the 30, highest number being 5 on the 18th July.

Kingfisher. Present most days. There are 3 Kingfishers using the pool, all juveniles. Two juvenile males, (one ringed) and a juvenile female.



Two of the three Kingfishers using the Pool

Lapwing. Seen most days, 55 birds recorded on 22nd July.

Little Egret. Another bird present most days. 7 being the highest number on 28th June

Little grebe. Also present most days. 18 being the highest number on July 21st.

Moorhen. Recorded most days.

Mute Swan. Initially one pair with 2 cygnets, but since 27th June the adults were left with only one cygnet. It would appear the swans are able to cross the central bank between the Pans and Avon water.

Oystercatcher. Often seen and heard until the 12th July, then only seen once more on 19th July.

Raven. Recorded on seven occasions, (flying only). Two seen on 26th June.

Redshank. A common bird for the Pans and Avon water. Seen most days.

Reed Warbler. Present 50% of the time. 3 being the highest number on 27th June.

Robin. One Juvenile Robin regularly seen.

Shelduck. Common until 11th July, then only seen once since then.

Stock dove. Up to 6 birds seen on a regular basis.

Swallow. Regularly seen over the Pans.

Swift. Seen on seven occasions.

Water Rail. Often seen after 14th July.



Water Rail swimming across the Kingfisher Pool

Wren. Bred close to the Observatory.

Yellow Legged Gull x Lesser Black Backed Gull. (Photos below). Hybrid species confirmed by Graham Giddens / Mark Moody. Seen on the Avon water side on the 26th June and has been around the harbour ever since.



BIRDS OF PREY

Buzzard. Seen most days.

Hobby. Seen on July 20th. After the Swallows.

Honey buzzard. Seen over the Pans on 16th July. A first for the site. (Reported by the Scott family).

Marsh Harrier. Regularly seen until 11th July.



A Juvenile Marsh Harrier on the field opposite the Observatory – being mobbed by Lapwing

Peregrine. Regularly seen hunting over the Pans after the 7th July. Two Peregrines seen on two occasions.

Sparrowhawk. Often seen flying East with prey or hunting around the Pans.



This Sparrowhawk decided to rest on the telephone wire

On the 7th July, Graham Giddens carried out a ringing session at the Pans Wetlands

BIRDS RINGED BY GRAHAM & DAISY SCOTT

Reed Warbler: 4 juvenile, 6 adults also one adult already ringed.

Dunnock : 1

Bearded Tit: 2 Juvenile males, one Adult male and one Adult female.

Sedge Warbler: 1 Juvenile.

Great Tit: 1 Juvenile.

Cetti 's: 1 Juvenile male.

Kingfisher: 1 Juvenile male.

While carrying out the ringing session Graham also recorded hearing a **Teal** and seeing a **Little Ringed Plover**.

SALINITY REPORT

While spending so much time at the Observatory it has become obvious that things have changed with regard to the Kingfisher Pool.

On 3rd June 9 shore crabs were visible around the Kingfisher pool and clumps of seaweed were starting to appear in the Kingfisher pool.



Crab in the Kingfisher Pool



One of the clumps of seaweed in the KP

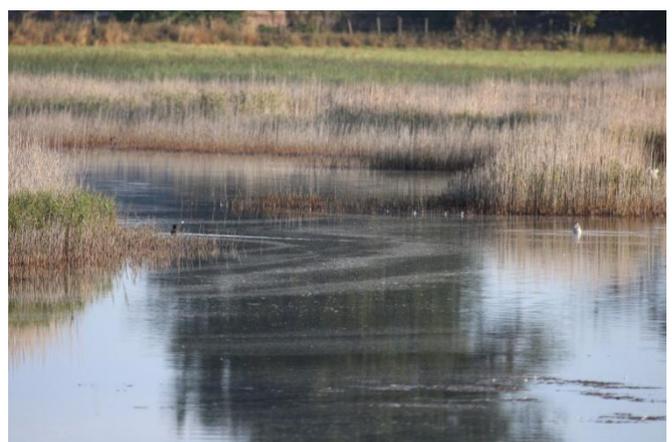
I decided to investigate what was happening so I asked Keith if it would be ok if I checked the salinity of the Kingfisher pool. I was given the OK so I purchased a High Precision Portable Refractometer with automatic temperature compensation from 10°C - 30°C. Accuracy +/- 1% (1ppt)

% Salinity Values (parts per thousand)

Date	Kingfisher Pool	Stream	Seawater *	Harbour	Avon Water
26/6/2020	34			30	
1/7/2020	34	24			
6/7/2020	34	25			
10/7/2020	34	25	34		
11/7/2020				32	5
14/7/2020	34		34		2

* The seawater sample was taken from the sea near the Milford-on-Sea Bowling Club on Hurst Road.

From the results it can be seen that the Kingfisher Pool is seawater and from the state of the reeds on the Pans side it may have been seawater for quite a while.



Scum and an oily layer in the Kingfisher pool which has spread over the Pans

The next question is how is the sea getting into the Kingfisher Pool, well that proved very easy to answer. There is a water gate in the wall below where the cars are parked opposite the entrance gate to the Observatory.

This water gate is there to let the water out of the pans Wetlands and Kingfisher Pool area but now it is actually letting seawater from harbour into the Kingfisher Pool. The gate appears not to be closing properly when sea levels rise at high tide.



The harbour water gate not fully closing



Oily film on the surface of the harbour water.

This oily film is passing through the gate and into the Kingfisher pool. The second photo is taken from above the gate. The seaweed that can be seen in the bottom right hand corner is the seaweed on the lower bar in the first photo.

Keith Metcalf was informed and he contacted David Horne. Keith Metcalf and David Horne met up at the Observatory to discuss the problem. David will contact the Environment

Agency and ask them to clear the water gate of seaweed and whatever else is stopping the gate from closing properly.

TRAIL CAMERA REPORT (camera set on 24hrs).

These continue to give good results, Badger, Fox, Roe deer, Rats and mice are all regularly photographed along with some of the usual birds recorded on the Pans, mainly Woodpigeon and Mallard. I have included one of the better photographs of a Badger taken so far.



Badger just in front of the Observatory

Report by Chris Barrass
28.7.2020