



Milford Conservation Volunteers



www.milfordconservation.org

April 2022 Observatory Report.

From Friday 1st April to Saturday 30th April

Avocet: 2 present most days. On the 16th April 6 Avocets were present which was the highest number recorded during April.

Blackbird: Present most days, 5 being the highest number on 27th.

Black Headed Gull: Present every day, the highest number recorded was on the 6th April when there were over 130.

Black Tailed Godwit: Present in high numbers every day. There was over 225 on the 3rd April.



Black Tailed Godwit (Left hand side) and an Avocet.

Blue Tit: Present nearly every day of the month. One has been seen taking food into one of the nest boxes



and taking food out again.

As can be seen, this Blue Tit has been ringed, with the ring on its right leg.

Cetti's: Heard every day but has only been seen once during the month, on the 13th April.

Coot: Has been seen every day. The highest number recorded was 7 on the 7th April.

Common Tern: Present on six occasions. Two on the 22nd April.

Cuckoo: First heard on Tuesday 19th April and has only been heard on four other occasions since then.

Dunnock: Common for the site, four recorded on the 3rd April.

Gadwall: Two or three are seen most days, usually on Avon Water.

Grey Heron: Has been recorded most days since 9th April.

House Sparrow: Has been seen or heard most days.



House Sparrow.

Kingfisher: Has only been seen twice this month, the 14th and 30th April.

Lapwing: One or two have been seen, on or flying over the Pans on 12 occasions.

Mallard: Have been seen every day. A female was seen with three ducklings on the 14th April. On April 22nd another female Mallard was seen on the Kingfisher Pool with 11 ducklings.



Female Mallard sheltering 11 ducklings.



The 11 ducklings.

Marsh Harrier: One is seen flying around most days.

Moorhen: Present nearly every day. 5 seen on two occasions.

Mute Swan: Present every day. A pair are nesting in the reedbeds of Avon Water. The nest can be seen from the Observatory decking.



Mute Swan on the nest.

Oystercatcher: Present on 12 occasions, 7 on the 30th April.

Pheasant: Heard every day but not seen this month.

Pintail: A single bird has been seen until 9th April, none since then.

Redshank: Recorded every day. 20 present on the 1st April.

Sand Martin: Three recorded flying over on the 30th April.

Sandwich Tern: Have been seen on three occasions.

Scaup: A single male was first spotted by Simon Boswell on Sunday 3rd April. The Scaup is a new species for the site. It was recorded every day between the 7th April until the 18th. Unfortunately it has been at the far end of the Pans near the Tern raft, usually amongst a group of Tufted Duck.

Shelduck: Present every day. Six on the 5thApril. The highest number recorded this month.

Shoveler: On 7thApril 19 were present, this has been the highest number recorded during the month. Present on 22days.

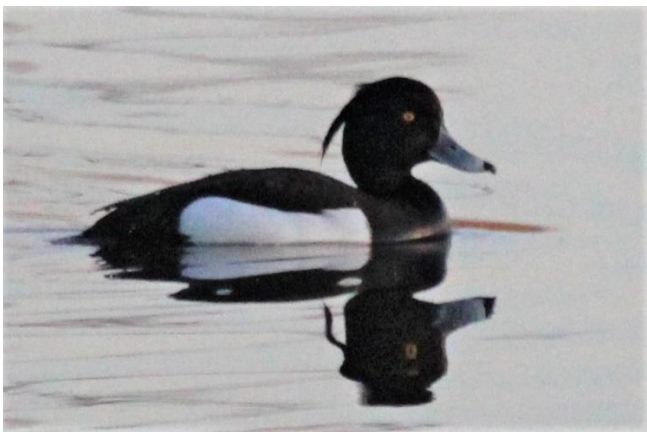
Snipe: Only seen on four occasions. 6 present on the 1stApril.

Sparrowhawk: Has been recorded on 13 occasions, usually flying over the Pans.

Swallow: Douglas Marcuse spotted the first Swallow over the Pans on the 5thApril. They have only been seen on 5 occasions since then.

Teal: Present every day, 30 recorded on 7thApril.

Tufted Duck: Present every day. Seventeen were present on the 23rd April.



Tufted Duck



Scaup

Birds recorded but not mentioned in this report.

Buzzard, Canada Goose, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiff Chaff, Collared Dove, Cormorant, Curlew, Goldfinch, Great Black Backed Gull, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Greenshank, Herring Gull, Kestrel, Little Egret, Little Grebe, Long Tailed Tit, Magpie, Mediterranean Gull, Pied Wagtail, Ringed Plover, Robin, Song Thrush, Starling, Stock Dove, Water Rail, Willow warbler Woodpigeon and Wren.

Thanks to: Peter Barnes, Simon Boswell and Douglas Marcuse for their contribution to the bird records.

While at the Observatory on Thursday 28th April I was very surprised to see a Mink in and around the Kingfisher pool, luckily, I managed to take



Mink leaving the Kingfisher Pool.

some photos. Mink can devastate populations of water birds such as Moorhens and ducks so let's hope it isn't around for long. The land holders have been informed.

Trail cams.

Birds recorded: Blackbird, Carrion Crow, Little Egret, Mallard, Moorhen, Pheasant, Song Thrush and Woodpigeon.

Animals recorded: Badger. 18 occasions.

Brown Rat. 3 occasions.

Fox. 20 occasions.

Roe Deer. 1 occasion.

Three photos from the Trail Cams.



Badger (24th April).



Fox (28th April).



Roebuck (23rd April).

Below is a pregnant female Roe deer photographed at the Pans on 15th April.



The Roe deer rut (breeding season) is mid-July to mid-August. The gestation period is 9 months. 4 months of no embryonic growth, followed by 5 months of foetal growth. Up to 3 kids but usually 1 or 2 are born during May to June. So we may see some Roe deer kids around the Pans.

And now for something completely different.



The above photos were taken at the Observatory on 14th April, I thought it was a moth but not sure which moth. I sent the photos to Mary Macmillan one of MCVs Moth experts and she identified it as a ***Brimstone Moth***. It is at the stage of pumping fluid into its wings.



Fully grown Brimstone Moth.

Chris Barrass 30/4/2022