



Milford Conservation Volunteers



www.milfordconservation.org

December 2022 Observatory Report.

Blackbird: Present most days.

Black Headed Gull: Recorded most days with large numbers present on several occasions during the month.

Black Tailed Godwit: Recorded most days. Over 150 birds present on the 9th December.

Blue Tit: Present every day.

Brent Goose: Recorded every day. Over 570 present on the 9th December.



A large flock of Brent Geese flying off having been 'put up' by a Marsh Harrier.

Canada Goose: Seen flying over most days until the 20th December when 32 were present. Since then, 145 has been the highest number recorded.

Carrion Crow: Recorded most days.

Coot: Present every day. 92 Coot were recorded on the 27thDecember. This is probably the highest number recorded since the Observatory opened in November 2017.



Part of a large flock of Coot.

Cormorant: Frequently seen. 9 were recorded on the 18thDecember.

Curlew: Heard or seen most days. 9 flying over on the 7thDecember.

Gadwall: Recorded every day. 162 were seen on the 21stDecember.



Gadwall flying in.

Grey Heron: A single bird Present on 17 days during December.



A juvenile Grey Heron.

House Sparrow: Recorded every day. Over 35 seen on the 6th December.

Jay: Usually one or two birds are seen flying over the Pans most days. 4 were seen on the 24th.

Kingfisher: Seen most days. 3 seen on December 3rd.

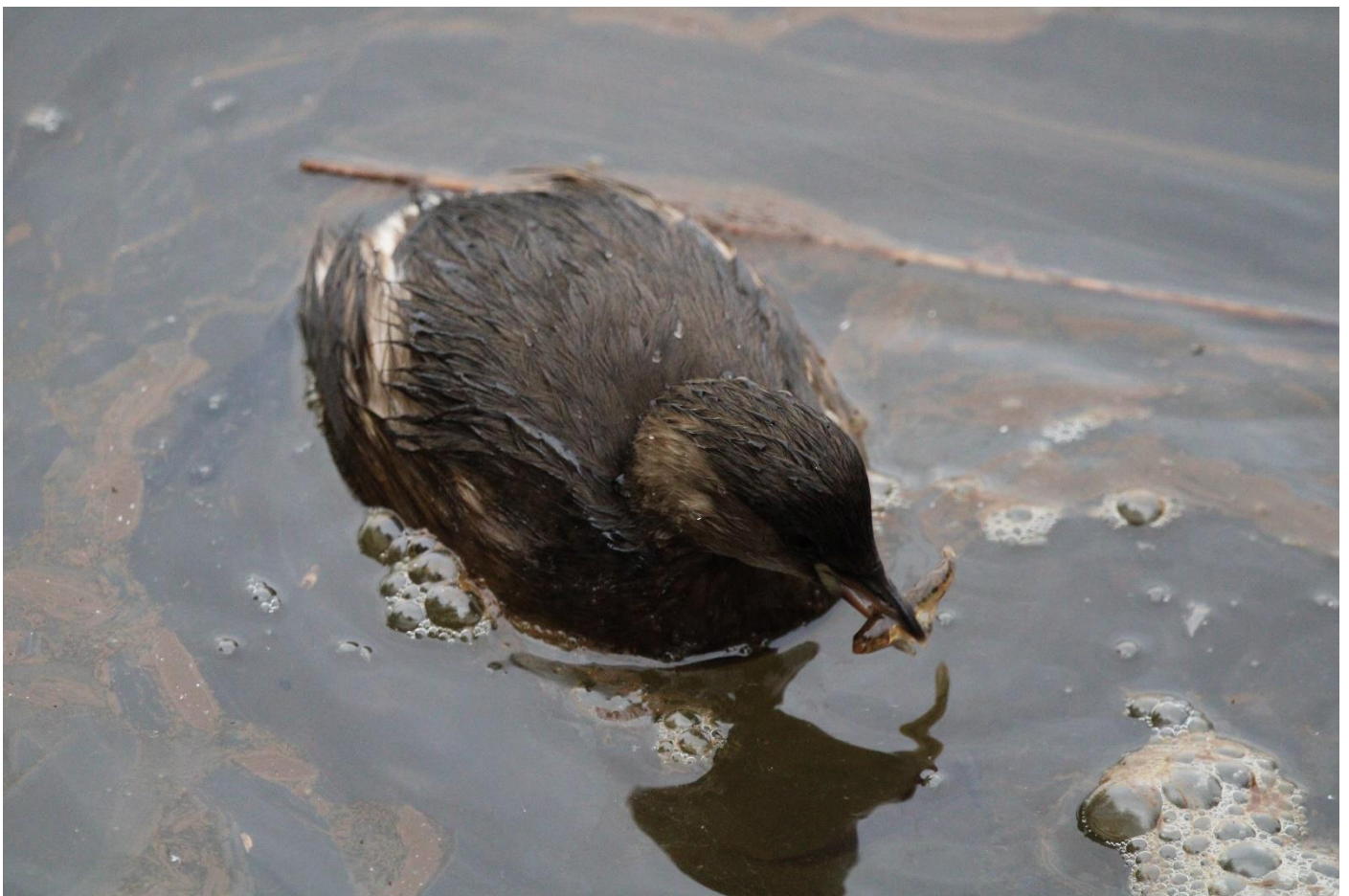


An adult female and an adult male Kingfisher.

Lesser Black Backed Gull: A single bird is recorded most days when it can be seen catching Shore Crabs. When the water levels were lower it would take the crab onto solid ground where it would eat the crab. Now, with the high water levels it eats the crab where it has been caught.

Little Egret: Present in low numbers each day. The highest number recorded was 5 on the 3rd December.

Little Grebe: Recorded every day, with 30 being the largest number recorded.



Little Grebe with breakfast.

Mallard: Present every day. Over 210 recorded on the 16th December.

Marsh Harrier: Seen nearly every day during December. 4 seen on the 4th, 12th and 17th December.

Moorhen: Recorded most days with 4 seen on the 18th December.

Mute Swan: Two birds have been recorded every day during December. A third bird was seen only once when it flew over Avon Water.



A Mute Swan doing some stretching exercises.

Pintail: Present nearly every day. 56 were recorded on the 22nd December.

Redshank: Recorded 17 times during December. Since the 16th December they have only been recorded Flying over The Pans.

Robin: Recorded on most days.

Shoveler: Recorded on 20 occasions during December. 8 have been seen on 3 occasions. With the high water levels they do seem to favour the southern end of the Pans allowing good sightings from the Observatory.



Male Shoveler.



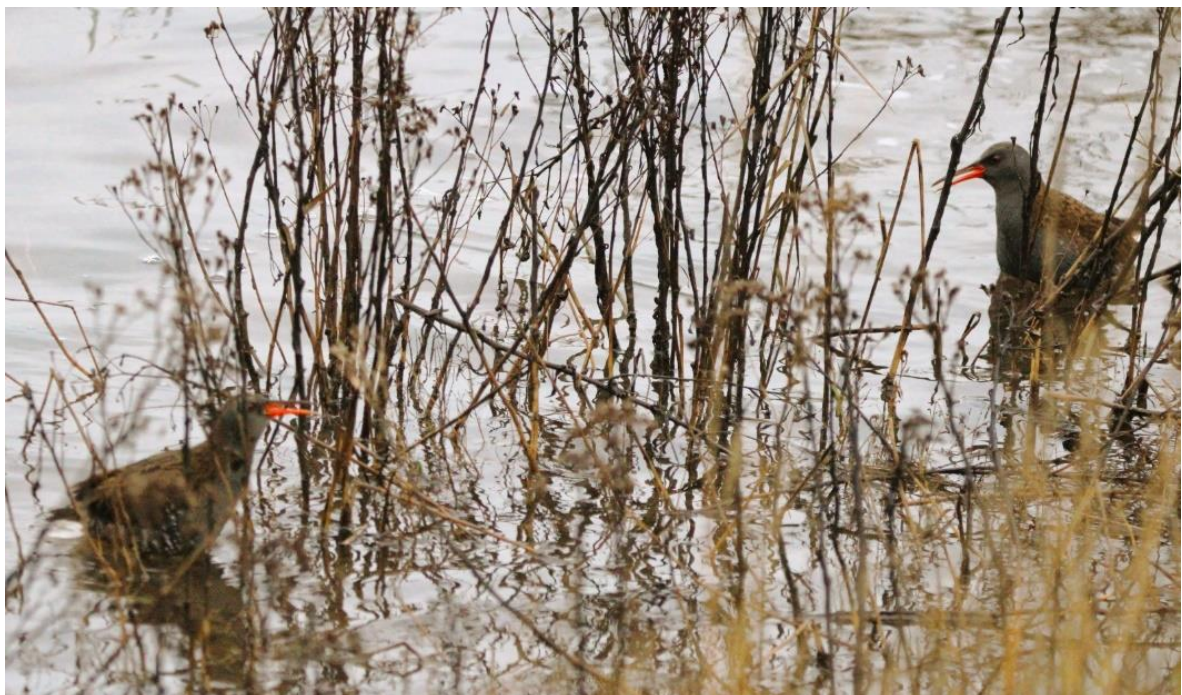
Female Shoveler.

Snipe: Have only been seen on 12 occasions up until the 16th of December, since then there have been no more sightings.



Snipe near the Kingfisher Pool.

Water Rail: 3 were seen on the 1st. They are rather intolerant of each other, so I was very lucky to photograph two together. Recorded on 23 occasions during December.



Two Water Rail near the Observatory.

Birds Recorded but not mentioned in this report.

Barnacle Goose, Buzzard, Cetti's, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Dunlin, Egyptian Goose, Great Black Backed Gull, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Greenshank, Green Woodpecker, Goldfinch, Goldcrest, Jackdaw, Kestrel, Lapwing, Long Tailed Tit, Magpie, Peregrine, Pheasant, Pied wagtail, Raven, Red Kite, Rook, Shelduck, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Teal, Tufted Duck, Turnstone, Wigeon, Wigeon/Pintail Hybrid and Wren.

Thanks to: Peter Barnes, David Horne, Keith Betton and Keith Metcalf for their additions to the bird records.

Birding For Beginners.

This took place on Saturday 3rd December and was run by David Horne, Keith Metcalf and Chris Barrass. We had two groups of new HOS members visit the Observatory on their way around the sea wall. Some of the birds seen were Brent Goose, Canada Goose, Gadwall, Pintail and one Shoveler. 3 Kingfishers, 2 Marsh Harriers and 51 Coot. **Keith Betton spotted a single Swallow flying over the Pans, a very late leaver on its way South.**

Trail Cameras.

Birds recorded: Blackbird, Buzzard or Marsh Harrier, unable to positively identify the bird photographed, Coot, Grey Heron, Kingfisher, Little Egret, Little Grebe, Lesser Black Backed Gull, Magpie. Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Pheasant, Shoveler, Snipe, Tufted Duck, Water Rail and Woodpigeon.



Little Egret taking off.



Coot in the Kingfisher Pool.

Animals Recorded. Brown Rat and Fox.



A Fox was recorded 8 times and a Brown Rat recorded 14 times during the month.

And finally. A photo of the afternoon sun on the flooded Pans



All the Best for 2023

Chris Barrass

31st December 2022.