



Milford Conservation Volunteers



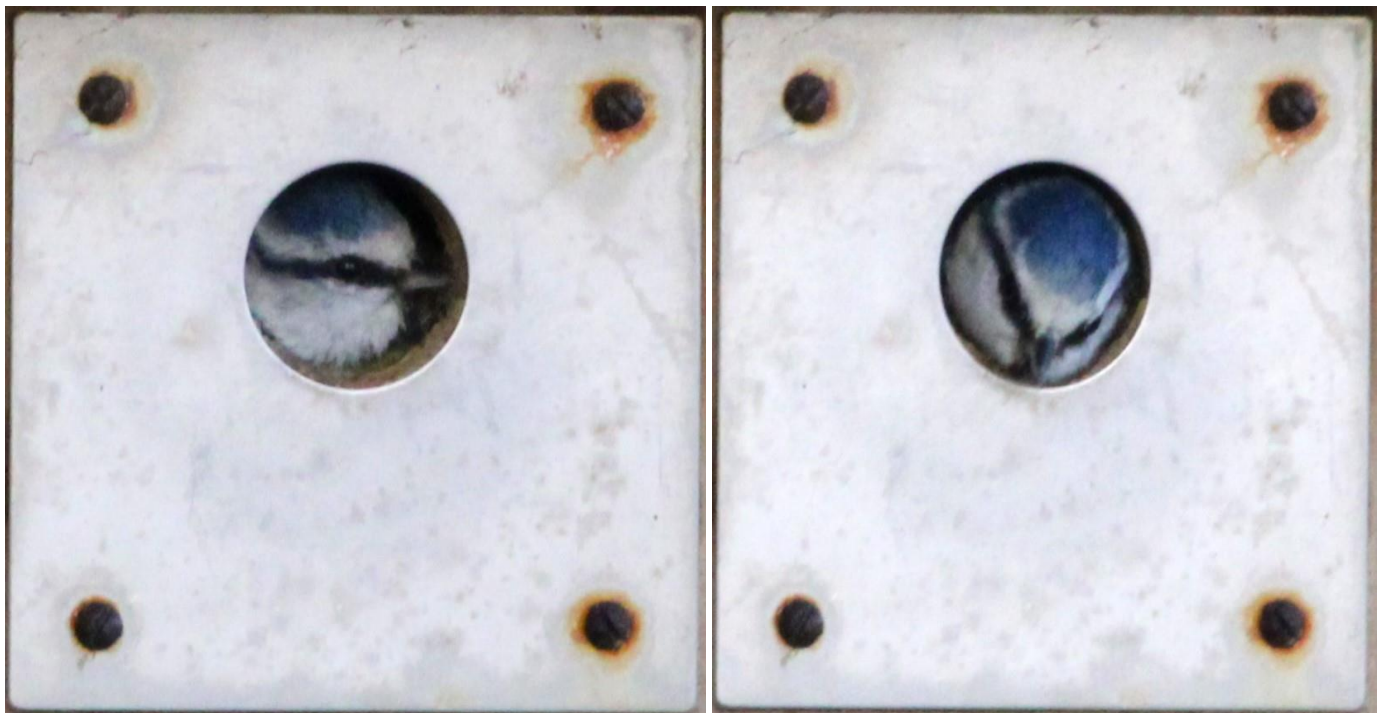
www.milfordconservation.org

April 2023 Observatory Report.

Blackbird: One female has been building a nest in the hedge opposite the Observatory door, but it now seems that she has now changed her mind and has been building a new nest in the fir tree on the left-hand side of the Kingfisher Pool.

Black Tailed Godwit: The water levels have just been low enough for these to return to the Pans in good numbers with 194 birds being the highest number recorded this month on 8th.

Blue Tit: Present every day, one bird has been showing some interest in one of the nest boxes since the 21st April.



A Blue Tit trying out one of the nest boxes.

Buzzard: One or two birds are often seen flying over the site. They seem to prefer perching in the Pine trees by the farm buildings.

Common Tern: First recorded on the 16th April when a single bird was seen, since then 2 or 3 birds have been seen daily resting at the far end of the Pans.



Common Tern flying over on the 24th April.

Coot: Present every day this month. The numbers have decreased from the 25 birds that were present at the beginning of the month to 4 or 5 birds that are being seen by the end of the month.



Coot in the fir tree near the Kingfisher Pool.

Cormorant: Recorded most days. 8 were seen flying over on the 4th April.



Cormorant flying over the Observatory.

Gadwall: Recorded most days with 18 being the highest number on the 2nd April.

Greenfinch: Present on 20 days during the month.



Greenfinch.

House Sparrow: Present every day.

Jay: Up to 4 birds are seen flying over the Pans and Avon water most days.

Kingfisher: Have only been seen twice during the month and they were flying over the Pans.

Little Egret: Recorded nearly every day during the month, with 12 being the highest number seen on the 5th and 6th April.



One of the Little Egrets was seen catching a small crab.

Mediterranean Gull: Have been seen and heard most days during the month. Over 100 birds were estimated to have flown over on some days.



Mediterranean Gull flying over the Pans.

Mute Swan: A pair are nesting in the reeds on Avon Water just to the right-hand side of the river before it turns left. There is a second pair of Mute Swans on the Pans. They are usually seen at the far end. At the moment the pair are usually seen swimming around the Pans so are not thought to be nesting. Up to 7 Mute Swans have been seen flying over the site on several occasions.

Pheasant: Present nearly every day, they are usually seen at the far end of the site near the farm buildings.

Pied Flycatcher: **A new species for the site.** This was present on the 10th April and was very mobile around the Kingfisher Pool, but it didn't stay long.



Because of the brown wing feathers the bird was aged at 1 year old. (Thanks to Graham Giddens for ageing the bird).

Redshank: Recorded most days with 7 being the highest number seen.



Redshank by the Kingfisher Pool on the 3rd April.

Robin: Present on 11 days during April. 2 birds have been seen, one is ringed and the other bird seen isn't.

Sand Martin: First recorded on the 28th April, over 98 were present.



Sand Martins over the Pans (spot the Swallow).

Shoveler: A female was present on the 6th April then a single male was recorded on 8 occasions between the 6th and the 22nd April.

Spoonbill: One adult male was present on the 4th April until the 8th.



Adult Spoonbill.

Starling: Recorded most days in small numbers. 50 has been the highest number seen at the Pans on 1st April.

Stock Dove: Regularly seen but usually only in 2s and 3s.

Swallow: The first sighting was on the 2nd April. 18 were seen flying over on the 16th.



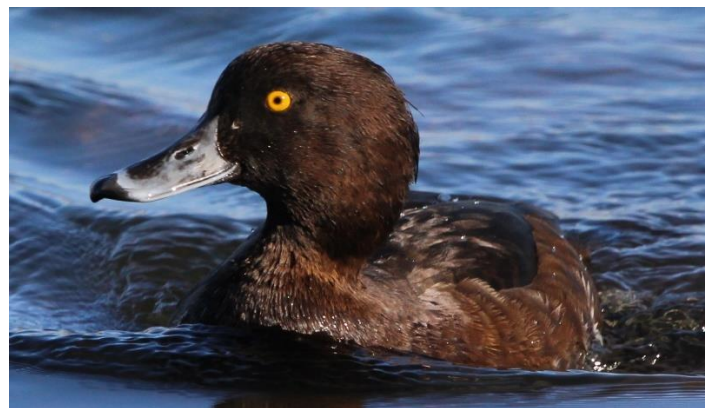
A Swallow flying over the Pans on 2nd April.

Teal: These have been recorded on 19 occasions during April. 16 were present on the 17th April.

Tufted Duck: Recorded most days, sometimes on Avon Water and sometimes on the Pans, luckily they were close to the Observatory. 16 were seen on the 22nd April.



Male.



Female.

Willow Warbler: One bird was present on the 17th April.



A Willow Warbler on the central hedge.

Birds Recorded but not mentioned in this report.

Avocet (heard only), Black Headed gull, Brent Goose, Canada Goose, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal tit, Collared Dove, Common Sandpiper, Curlew, Egyptian Goose, Great Black Backed Gull, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Greenshank, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, Herring Gull, Jackdaw, Lapwing, Lesser Black Backed Gull, Little Grebe, Long Tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Marsh Harrier, Moorhen, Pied Wagtail, Raven, Reed Bunting, Reed Warbler, Rook, Sparrowhawk,

Thanks to: David Horne, Keith Metcalf and Mike Collison for their additions to the bird records.

Birding for Beginners.

This took place on Saturday April the 1st and was run by Chris Barrass and David Horne unfortunately, due to the heavy rain, there were no visitors to the Observatory. A pair of Brent Geese were seen flying over the Pans which turned out to be the last record of them at the Pans. Other birds recorded were Black Tailed Godwit, Coot, Mediterranean Gull and a Great Spotted Woodpecker.

Trail Cameras.

Birds Recorded: Blackbird, Carrion Crow, Coot, Grey Heron, House Sparrow, Little Egret, Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Pheasant, Redshank, Tufted Duck and Woodpigeon.



Moorhen



Mallard, Redshank and Coot.



A Grey Heron night fishing in the Kingfisher Pool.

Animals Recorded: Badger, Brown Rat, Fox and Otter. Also, one of the trail cameras which is set for videos shows a Brown rat dragging a live Shore Crab past the Kingfisher Pool and under the Fir tree. This is something I haven't seen a rat do before.



A Badger was photographed on the 3rd, 6th, 7th, 9th and the 27th April.

A Fox was photographed on 14 different nights and sometimes during the day.



Fox by the Kingfisher Pool.

Otter were photographed on 5 different occasions, on two of those two Otters were present.



Otter by the Kingfisher Pool on the 16th April.

On the 22nd of April when I got to the Observatory there was a dead Cetti's Warbler on the decking by the Observatory door. The bird had been ringed, so I took some photos and sent them to Graham Giddens. It was not a bird that he had ringed, so he was going to contact the person who had ringed it. We are just waiting for those details.

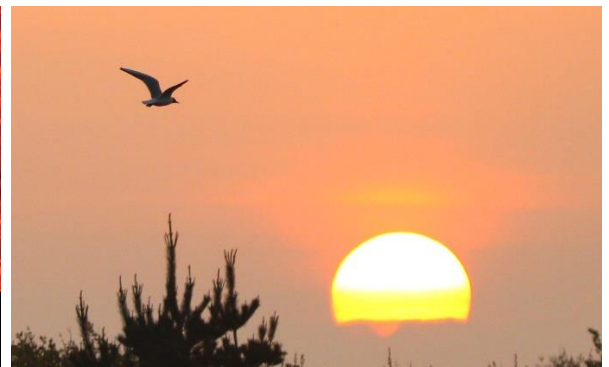


The Cetti's Warbler and a photo of part of its ring.

To finish on a happier note here are some photos taken from the decking of the Observatory of two sunrises in April.



Sunrise on the 6th April.



Sunrise on the 30th April.

Chris Barrass. 31/4/2023