



Milford Conservation Volunteers.

www.milfordconservation.org



February 2024 Observatory Report.

Blackbird: Recorded every day.

Black Tailed Godwit: Present from the 3rd to the 6th February (while the water levels were almost normal). Once the water levels rose the birds weren't seen again during the month.

Blue Tit: Recorded every day. One has been seen checking out one of the nest boxes. Photo below.



A Blue Tit checking out one of the nest boxes.

Brent Goose: Have only been seen flying over the site on six occasions this month. They will soon be heading off to the Arctic islands and coasts.

Carrion Crow: Recorded on nearly every day of the month. 18 has been the highest number recorded which was on the 10thFebruary.

Cetti's Warbler: Recorded on 13 days during the month.



Cetti's Warbler on the left-hand hedge on the 6thFebruary.

Coot: Recorded every day of the month. 92 recorded on the 1st and 2ndFebruary.

Curlew: Recorded most days. 10 present on the 3rd and 4th.



A juvenile Curlew flying over the Pans (they have a shorter bill than an adult).

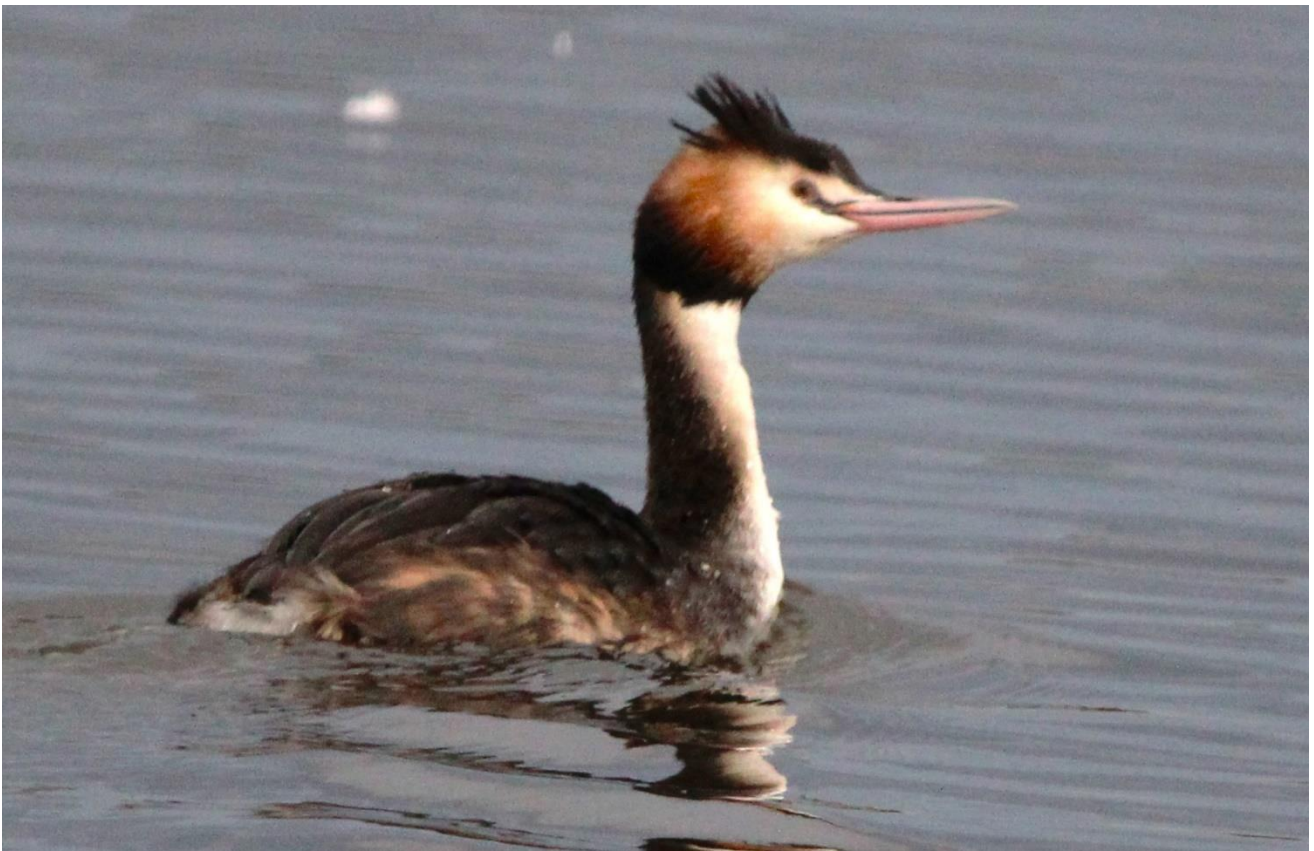
Egyptian Goose: 2 birds were seen on the Pans on the 5th. One was seen flying over on the 10th and 2 flying over on the 11th.



The two Egyptian Geese on the 5th February.

Gadwall: Recorded nearly every day, 70 was the highest number recorded on the 1st February.

Great Crested Grebe: 1 bird was present on the 14th February. photo below.



Great Tit: One or two seen every day.



A Great Tit checking out the Bat Box, (probably looking for insects).

Greenshank: 2 birds were present on the 3 occasions, the 2nd, 4th, and 5th. A single bird was recorded on the 3rd, 6th and the 20th.



Two Greenshank near the Observatory on the 2nd February.

Greylag Goose: Two birds were seen flying over on the 11th and 21st and 1 bird present on the 25th February.



Greylag goose flying over the Pans.

Herring Gull: Recorded most days. As the water level is so high, the gulls have to take the crabs onto one of the house roofs in Harewood Green so that they can break open the crab shell.



A Herring Gull carrying off a shore Crab.

House Sparrow: Present every day.

Jay: Seen flying over the Pans on Several occasions.

Kingfisher: One or two birds recorded most days.



The photo above shows a male Kingfisher with a small gap between the upper and lower bill. This bird was only seen on one occasion during the month. A single female was also seen during February.

Lapwing: While the water levels were low over 329 Lapwing were recorded on the Pans on the 6thFebruary. Once the water level rose the birds were only seen flying over the site.

Little Egret: Present every day. 18 was the highest number recorded on the 6thFebruary.

Little Grebe: Recorded every day. 32 were recorded on the 11thFebruary.

Magpie: Recorded nearly every day flying over the site. The highest number seen was 5 on the 1stof the month.

Mallard: Present every day of the month, either on the Pans or Avon Water. 38 was the highest number recorded during the month (on the 4th).



Female and Male Mallard on the branch over the kingfisher Pool.

Marsh Harrier: Recorded most days, with three being the highest. number recorded on the 12th February.

Mediterranean Gull: A single bird was seen and heard flying over the site on the 19th February and one bird was seen amongst a flock of Black Headed Gulls on the 21st.



A Mediterranean Gull flying over the Pans.

Mistle Thrush: Two Mistle Thrushes were seen flying over the site on two occasions during the month.

Moorhen: Resident for the site. Usually, 2 birds are seen but on the 5th February four birds were recorded.



The photo above shows the difference in size between a Moorhen (on the left) and a Coot. The Coot is over twice the size of a Moorhen.

Mute Swan: A pair are resident for the site and they can be seen either on the Pans or on Avon Water. On the odd occasion another Mute Swan lands on the site only to be chased off by the resident male Mute Swan.



A bit of a tussle between the resident pair and an ‘intruder ‘.

Redshank: Recorded 21 times during the month, either on or flying over the Pans. 6 were recorded on the 5th and 6th of the month.

Robin: Recorded nearly every day. Two birds have been seen on 4 occasions during the month.

Shelduck: Recorded on 9 days during the month with 4 birds being present on February 20th and 27th.

Teal: Present on 24 days during the month. The highest number recorded was 61 on the 2nd February.



Male Teal.

Tufted Duck: Present nearly every day of the month. 6 were present on the 24th February.



Female.



Male.

Water rail: Heard or seen on 16 days during the month.

Wigeon: Present on 8 days during the month, the highest number recorded was 19 on the 9th.

Wren: Seen on 5 days during the month.



Wren on the left-hand hedge.

Birds Recorded but not mentioned in this report.

Black Headed Gull, Buzzard, Canada Goose, Chiff Chaff, Collared dove, Cormorant, Dunnock, Dunlin, Goldfinch, Golden Plover, Great Black Backed Gull, Greenfinch, Grey Heron, Jackdaw, Kestrel, Lesser Black Backed Gull, Long Tailed Tit, Pheasant, Pintail, Raven, Rook, Shoveler, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove and Woodpigeon.

Thanks to: David Horne, Keith Metcalf, Dudley Powell and Adrian Simmons for their additions to the bird sightings.

Open Morning.

This was on Saturday, 3rd February and was run by David Horne and Chris Barrass. Birds recorded included Black Tailed Godwit, Greenshank, Lapwing, Pintail, Redshank, Curlew, 5 Snipe, 2 Kingfishers, a Sparrowhawk, 2 Marsh Harriers and 2 Mistle Thrush plus over 250 Golden Plover flying over the site.

Trail Cameras.

Birds recorded: Blackbird, Coot, Little Egret, Little Grebe, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Pheasant, Redshank, Water Rail and Woodpigeon.



A Moorhen on the Pans on the 1stFebruary.

As a stark comparison the photo below was taken on the 26thFebruary during a stormy night.



As you can see the waves are quite high.

Animals Recorded: Fox, Otter and Rat.

2 Otters were recorded on February 3rd.

A Fox was recorded on 7 different occasions during the month.

The Rats were frequently photographed day or night during the month.



A fox photographed on 6thFebruary.

A Message from Graham Giddens.

Graham Giddens a BTO Licensed bird ringer who has done many bird ringing sessions at the Pans contacted me on the 25thFebruary to let me know that a ringed male Reed Bunting was seen at Afton on the southwest side of the Isle of Wight. They were able to read the number on the ring which showed that it was a bird that Graham had ringed at the Pans in July 2022. Due to the high-water levels at the Pans no bird ringing has been possible since then.

Tidal Flap information.

The Environment Agency contractors attempted to fit a new tidal flap on February 16th, unfortunately they couldn't get it to fit. Adjustments have been made and 14thMarch is the date earmarked for the new tidal flap to be fitted.

Chris Barrass. 29thFebruary 2024.