



Welcome to eNews 07

In the first eNewsletter of 2019 I'd like to wish all members a happy and bird filled New Year. 2019 is an important milestone in the club's development as it will be our 40th anniversary year since LBC was founded back in 1979. To celebrate this achievement we're kicking off the year with a bang in January. First of all we have our joint meeting with the Lincolnshire Naturalists Union at Whisby this Saturday 5th at 2pm. We're honoured that Professor Ian Newton will be talking to us about Bird Migration a subject on which he is a world authority and his New Naturalists book of that name is the leading work.

Later in the month at Whisby on Saturday 26th Jan we have a joint one day conference with BTO with a great lineup of interesting speakers. Full details of the event can be found and tickets booked through BTO links below.

Our speaker at the AGM on Tuesday March 26th will be local Lincs birder Alex Lees, who is now a respected academic ecologist. He will be talking about Rewilding and has some interesting ideas to share about opportunities in Lincs. We are changing the venue this year to The Golf Hotel, Woodhall Spa and I look forward to seeing you all there.

Phil Espin

Chair LBC, follow me on twitter @philespin

Joint BTO and Lincolnshire Bird Club Conference 2019

26 January 2019, 9.30am to 4pm

Whisby Education Centre, Whisby Nature Park, Lincoln, LN6 9BW

Come and join us for a day of fascinating talks at your local [BTO Regional Conference](#). The conference will celebrate 40 years of Lincolnshire Bird Club with a focus on Water and Farmland Birds. Everyone is welcome!

The programme includes talks from local speakers and staff from the BTO. Places cost £15 and include coffee, tea and buffet lunch. (Please note there is a £1 car parking fee). The full programme and location details are available [here](#).

You can book your conference place now, either [online](#), by post with a [booking form](#) or by phoning the Supporter Team on 01842 750050.

Colour-ringed birds in Lincolnshire in 2018

By Nigel Lound and Phil Hyde

Introduction

As birders we all obviously enjoying just watching birds but there are spin-offs within birding circles that add another dimension to our pastime. These include Bird ringing, visual migration watching ('viz miggig'), sound recording and sea watching among others. My spin-off within birding is Colour Ring (CR) reading. Some years ago I came across a 1CY Great Black-backed Gull at Middlemarsh Farm and noticed it was sporting a black ring with a code on. Eventually I managed to read the code (and bought a zoom lens shortly after!) as J237W. What did it mean? Some online research later revealed it had been ringed as a pullus in Denmark less than 5 months before my sighting. Fantastic. Instant history on line. I now know that J237W was 127 days old and had flown 816 km across the North Sea and was now loafing on Middlemarsh Farm. Yet another example of the "Wow Factor" as a result of watching birds. I was hooked and with a particular interest in watching gulls many more CRs were obtained.

The majority of my sightings have been of gulls (table below) but I have also received life histories of other species. To date they are 4 Avocet, 4 Caspian Gull, 32 Sandwich Tern, 19 Little Egret, 3 Brent Geese, 1 Bar-tailed Godwit, 11 Black-tailed Godwit, 2 Ringed Plover, 1 Grey Heron, 5 Spoonbill, 2 Twite, 1 Little Tern, 22 Sanderling, 3 Knot, 1 Curlew, 1 Dunlin, 2 White-fronted Geese, 2 Pink-footed Geese, 1 Dunlin and 1 Shoveler. My observations have been carried out on the Lincolnshire coast between GPBO Bird Observatory (GPBO) and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR on the coast, and inland at Kirkby on Bain GP and landfill site, and Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness.

One of the great things about CR reading is that anyone can contribute to schemes purely by recording details and submitting them to relevant scheme. Most details can be found at www.cr-birding.org that provides details of schemes and coordinators. The majority of CR coordinators appreciates receiving recovery details and is very good with prompt replies. Some are not so good and one or two are rather poor to say the least.



Definitely a “record shot, but this Pink-footed Goose at Freiston Shore on May 8th 2018 with this grey collar/ black letters VLS had been ringed as an adult on 19/07/17 at Haugakvísl, Eyvindarstaðaheioi, Iceland. Although approachable and able to fly it appeared injured in some way hence its presence in May (Photo © Phil Hyde)



Two Icelandic-ringed birds were identified in this wintering flock of 38 Whooper Swans at Kirton Marsh in January 2014, both of which had been colour-ringed in Iceland in August 2013 (Photo © Phil Hyde).

Some interesting sightings of colour-ringed birds

All well and good you may say, but what does CR reading tell us? The following are a few of the more interesting results.

Great Black Gull J237W was last recorded on Feb 1st 2015 on the beach at GPBO. The majority of CR Great Black-backed Gulls seen in Lincolnshire have been ringed in either Denmark or Norway.

Adult Mediterranean Gull Red PLY5 was first seen at GPBO on 27th Jul 2012 having been ringed as an adult in Poland on 7th May 2011. It has been recorded every year since at GPBO and on 6th July 2018 was recorded feeding 3 young at Titchwell RSPB reserve, Norfolk.

Adult Black-headed Gull White SEC was ringed as a 3CY+ in Skegness on 16th January 1987. It was then recorded annually in Denmark up until May 21st 2012. It was then recorded regularly at Middlemarsh Farm from Dec 12th 2012 until Dec 24th 2013 making it over 28 years old.

Adult Black-headed Gull Red HFOR was seen at GPBO on Jul 24th 2014. It was ringed earlier the same year at a landfill site in Hungary. It was the first ever CR Black-headed Gull to be recorded in the UK and prompted an email from BTO. It was last seen at Middlemarsh Farm on 30th October 2018.

More Black-headed Gulls: Too many sightings to summarise separately, but here's a flavour of other CR Black-headed Gulls seen in the area: birds ringed in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Germany regularly winter in coastal car parks in Lincolnshire. **White VE57** (Denmark) has spent seven winters in and around Sea View car park in Mablethorpe; and these three all favour the Festival Car Park in Skegness - **White VEC** (Sweden), has spent five winters there, **Green JHA2** (Norway), has spent two winters there and **Black X49C** (Germany) has also spent two winters there.



Adult Black-headed Gull Green JHA2, Skegness, 22nd November 2018

(Photo © Nigel Lound)

Sandwich Tern Red UJL ringed on Coquet Island on Aug 3rd 2013 – occasionally I receive more than just the summary details of where and when the bird was ringed. Here’s a reply I received from the ringer about this bird:

“Dear Nige,

Excellent- very many thanks indeed for this sighting! You have seen our first colour-ringed Sandwich Tern from Coquet Island! This was ringed on Coquet Island, Northumberland (just off the port of Amble) on 3rd Aug 2013. This is interesting: the colony was a late-established one this year, and we have colour-ringed 52 chicks from this colony (in three groups). We have also ringed 104 chicks on a colony on Inner Farne (30 km further north), in an earlier-breeding colony (c. 3 weeks earlier) and 11 of the Inner Farne birds have been reported, all from further north (mostly Moray/Ythan area). So it is interesting that the first sighting of a Coquet chick is south, not north. This could relate to seasonal timing (just speculation though), as we know from other recoveries that Coquet birds also travel north after breeding in other years”

Sandwich Terns ringed on the Ythan. Two birds ringed there in August 2010 elicited this excited response from the ringers:

“Wow, 1370 Sandwich Terns sound good (in the GPBO roost), just a few here now. Both EJJ and EJK were ringed the same night as you re-sighted them, but in 2010! Not sure what the odds of that are! Both ringed on the Ythan Estuary, Scotland on 280810”

Adult Mediterranean Gull White 3K56 was seen at GPBO on Mar 24th 2014. This bird was 17 years old and there was a history of 105 sightings relating to it. This was the first sighting away from France or Belgium.

Adult Herring Gull Green YBPJ was first seen at Middlemarsh Farm on Sep 23rd 2014 having been ringed in Forteiland, Netherlands on June 2nd 2014. It has returned to Middlemarsh Farm again in 2018.

Adult female Shoveler with orange colour ring FH51201 seen at Middlemarsh Farm on Apr 25th 2017 prompted the following response:

“This is one from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR to the south east of York. It was ringed as a duckling on 16/7/2012 at Bank Island, Wheldrake, one of a brood of seven, hope that’s of interest. This is the first UK sighting of birds marked in this way – most of our ducklings appear to head south rapidly post-fledging

and get shot in France (although a couple have made it over to Russia before being shot). Thanks for the record. Brilliant – thank you. It was a bit of a long shot using colour-rings of ducks like this but as we know so little about British bred ducklings (such as Shoveler) it was worth the effort to get something other than a recovery from shooting (which probably reflects where shooting occurs as much than where the birds are using) – so a really valuable sighting. Good to know she is still going strong”

Adult Great Black-backed Gull Yellow 3X2B was seen on Nov 9th and 23rd 2018 at Kirkby on Bain Landfill site. It was ringed near Retford, Nottinghamshire on Dec 27th 2012 so had not been seen or reported in over 6.5 years.



1CY Great-black backed Gull JK265 in Skegness, 22nd November 2018

(Photo © Nigel Lound)

Adult Herring Gull Orange VV9T was seen at Kirkby on Bain Landfill site on Feb 4th 2018 having been ringed at Pitsea Landfill site on Nov 19th 2011. This was the first sighting since it was ringed over 7 years ago.

The majority of Herring Gulls recorded in Lincs are ringed at York. I was interested to know where the majority of birds ringed had been resighted and received the following reply.

“Sightings have tended to be to the east of England with a large number from Scarborough. Over 50 have been seen in The Netherlands, Belgium and France. Relatively few have been seen on the West Coast”.



Mediterranean Gull Red PPJ5 at Middlemarsh Farm, 28th March 2018

(Photo © Nigel Lound)

These CR recoveries show that some Herring Gulls remain faithful to a certain area but that dispersing birds tend to head off between north-east and south of where they were ringed. Sixteen of the CR Herring Gulls recorded in 2018 have been recorded at Gibraltar Point, Skegness sea front or Middlemarsh Farm as well as at

Kirkby on Bain. These birds roost around The Wash and think nothing of flying 35 km or more to feed at a landfill site showing how important these are for gulls.

I hope this article has shown how worthwhile CR reading can be as well as being a welcome diversion from “just birding” ! It also shows the amount of data just one birder can contribute to further our understanding of bird migration in the county.

BTO English Winter Bird Survey (EWBS)

Well done to everyone who has signed up for this survey, just to remind you that:

- It will involve monthly counts of birds and Brown Hare (plus other mammals seen),
- From December 2018 to March 2019,
- A minimum of two visits (ideally January and February).
- The survey method will involve following the summer transects routes,
- Conducted at any time of day, excluding the hour immediately after sunrise and that immediately before sunset.

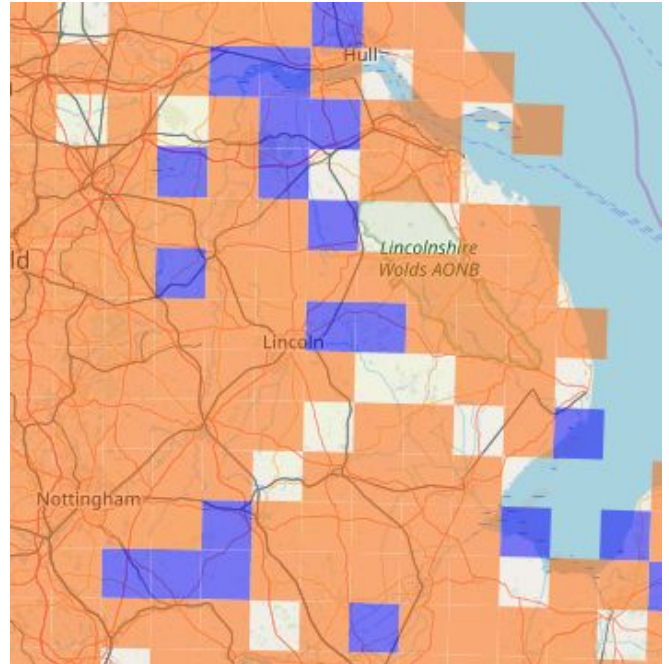
The **ORANGE** squares show areas in LINCOLNSHIRE with currently available squares.

See online resources at

<https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/english-winter-bird-survey/ewbs-survey-resources>

And, sign up at <https://app.bto.org/bbs/public/request-square.jsp?s=WINBS>

Or, contact your BTO rep at;



Lincolnshire (East)	Philip Espin	01507 605 448	pmjespin@gmail.com
Lincolnshire (North)	Chris Gunn	01777 818742	donandchris@hotmail.co.uk
Lincolnshire (South)	Hugh Dorrington	01778 440716	hdorrington@btconnect.com
Lincolnshire (West)	Mike Daly	01522 820105	Mike.btorrwl@gmail.com

BTO Tawny Owl Calling Survey

- 20th Sept to 31st March
- Listen once a week for 20 minutes (between sunset and midnight) for at least 6 weeks
- Just as important to record if you do not hear an owl
- **The only bird survey that can be done from bed!**

There's still loads of time to take part in this far less formal [Tawny Owl Calling Survey](https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/project-owl/tawny-owl-calling-survey) so if you're not already signed up please do! See <https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/project-owl/tawny-owl-calling-survey> for details...

Wading birds are benefiting from conservation action but we need more of it

Breeding waders, such as Curlew, Lapwing and Oystercatcher, deliver some of the most iconic sights and sounds of the British countryside, but are in long-term decline. A newly published study provides hope by showing that many of the conservation interventions widely adopted for these species do indeed work.



Our iconic grassland-breeding waders face a set of common threats throughout much of Europe. The loss or deterioration of breeding habitat through changing agricultural practices, together with increasing predation pressure, are driving population declines, reducing the number of chicks produced to below the threshold needed to maintain stable populations. Despite being subject to decades of conservation effort, many of these species are still declining, suggesting that our efforts have been in vain. If the declines are to be halted and, ultimately, reversed then we need to identify and test the effectiveness of those conservation and policy initiatives designed to help these species.

However, a just-published review of the effectiveness of these conservation actions, led by Dr Samantha Franks of the BTO in collaboration with the Dutch organisation Sovon, reveals that many of the policy and conservation management actions already in place in many European countries, and across the UK, are broadly effective, though to varying degrees. Some of the most effective actions are targeted site protection measures and higher-tier agri-environment schemes. Higher-tier schemes which combine a suite of targeted conservation actions aimed specifically at benefiting waders are particularly effective at improving wader numbers over time and increasing wader productivity.

Underpinning these policies are specific types of management that were also reviewed, with good evidence that altering mowing levels, reducing agrochemical use, raising water levels and protecting eggs and chicks from predation, usually tend to work, by increasing wader productivity. However, despite this positive news, wader populations are still declining. This suggests that even though conservation actions often have a positive outcome, this may not be occurring frequently enough, or at a large enough scale, to compensate for declines occurring outside managed areas; furthermore, the magnitude of positive effects of these actions may be too small. In other words, we know what action is needed – we just need more of it.

Dr Samantha Franks commented ‘Policy tools such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Agri-environment Schemes (AESs) are clearly achieving positive effects, which is a key message at a time of uncertainty for national and European institutions and agricultural policy reform.’

‘Restoration of healthy wader populations in the wider countryside will depend on the implementation of effective measures at a much greater scale and with greater coordination, thereby increasing the amount of land managed favourably for these and other grassland species. The opportunities to achieve this will, to a large degree, depend on the level of support and funding made available by European governments, perhaps delivered within the UK through policies that seek to use public money to provide public goods, such as a healthy environment rich in breeding waders. This in turn, will depend upon how much our society is prepared to protect and restore farmland biodiversity.’

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