



## Welcome to the LBC eNewsletter - January 2021

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# Happy New Year

## Joint LBC/BTO Conference Saturday 30th January 15.00 - 17.00

In order to provide a modicum of mid-winter cheer we have organised a first for you. A joint LBC/BTO conference via Zoom which will be chaired by Dawn Balmer of the BTO who will operate the technology. Registration details which will be handled by the BTO at

<https://www.bto.org/community/events/202101-bto-lincolnshire-bird-club-conference-2021> .

There will be a registration fee of £5.

## Lincs Big Bird Day - 1st January 2021

The Lincolnshire Big Bird Day will be held on **1st January 2021**. The aim of the Big Bird Day is to collectively record as many species as possible in Lincolnshire during a single day. Please submit all your records via BTO Birdtrack or eBird by the 4th January 2021. Even though much of our historic county will be in Tier 4 on the day, birding remains a healthy outdoor activity and there is no prohibition on it. Please have regard to your local circumstances and sensitivities and keep local and stay safe.



1st January 2021

Depending on the success of the day we could run similar events in spring and autumn as suggested above.

Details and the results will appear at

<https://www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/sightings/lincs-big-bird-day-1st-january-2021>

## Time for Reintroductions in Lincolnshire?

*LBC Chair Phil Espin shares his dream...*

In 2020 I read Rebirding by Benedict MacDonald, spent a great deal of lock down walking in the Wolds around Louth enjoying Corn Bunting and Quail, was amazed by the news of Cranes breeding at Willow Tree Fen, twitched Vigo, the Bearded Vulture in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire and spent three months writing species accounts for a new Birds of Lincolnshire. This has all gelled together to give me a sense of the birds we've lost and those we may be able to get back.

Red Kites, White-tailed Eagles, Cranes, Corncrakes, the reintroductions in our neighbouring counties have become legion and successful. But what about us and what about the big one? By us I mean Lincolnshire and by the big one I mean Great Bustard. This colossus roamed the Lincolnshire Wolds in droves just over 200 years ago. It became scarcer as the open sheep walks were brought under cultivation and enclosed. It was then shot out and extirpated here and all over England from the late 18th to early-19<sup>th</sup> century as shooting technology improved and bagging trophies became the fashion.

My interest in Great Bustard was piqued as a schoolboy by these fine specimens in Louth Museum, expertly snapped by John Clarkson, with thanks to the museum for granting access to take the picture on a day they were closed.



Later, as a student, I dipped on one in Kent in 1978. There has only been one other UK twitchable occurrence since, in Norfolk/Suffolk in 1987 and I heard about it too late. The sparse account in Steve Lorand and Keith Atkin's 1989 *The Birds of Lincolnshire and South Humberside* had me fantasising about them on my daily drive to work through their former breeding grounds on the Lincolnshire Wolds from Louth to Caistor throughout the 1990s. When I finally experienced the thrill of my first Great Bustards on the steppes of Extremadura north of Torreogaz, Spain in April 1998 I was struck by the similarity of the rolling plains of Spain to our own Wolds.

The Willow Tree Fen Cranes and the occurrence of Vigo made me think more deeply about reintroducing birds. Twenty years ago as a twitcher I would have taken a blinkered purist view of the provenance of these birds. But let's face it birds are birds and any bird living wild deserves a chance. Give the bird the benefit of the doubt is a phrase that's comes to mind, drilled into me by my seabirds surveying trainer, former BBRC committee member Richard Schofield. The view I've come round to is that where man has wrecked things then it's up to man to put things right. It is most unlikely that nature will exterminate introduced rodents on seabird islands to allow petrels and shearwaters to thrive and nature is unlikely to bring back Great Bustards to Lincolnshire. If it is going to happen, people will have to make it happen, so I decided to look into it further.

I had a sense of déjà vu when visiting the Great Bustard Group (GBG) reintroduction project on Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire on the day before the November lockdown began. Yes, with droves of Great Bustards feeding in oil seed rape crops in the chalky hills, Salisbury Plain looks remarkably like the Lincolnshire Wolds and the rolling hills of Extremadura. The GBG driven by the perseverance of its founder David Waters has built an increasingly self-sustaining population of around 100 Great Bustards living free in England. Wild bred birds from released parents have already raised wild young. He has done this by building links with Russian and Spanish governments bodies, local conservation and academics institutions and farmers in those countries and in Wiltshire. Doomed wild laid eggs have been rescued, brought to England to be hatched in incubators and then raised and released at the GBG study site on Salisbury Plain. Of course, the co-operation of local farmers who share David Waters' interest and a team of volunteers at GBG who have raised funds for the project and given their time to it have been crucial. The EU has donated finance to GBG and RSPB has supported it too, but DEFRA and Natural England have done very little to help because these Bustards are not recognised as British birds until they have been admitted to category C3 of the British List, which covers naturalized re-established species, with populations successfully re-established by man in areas of former occurrence.

The British Ornithologists Union Records Committee (BOURC) need to be persuaded on the basis of published evidence that the Great Bustard population of Salisbury Plain is self-sustaining before admitting it to Category C3 of the British List. White-tailed Eagles in Scotland and Red Kites in Scotland and England have passed that hurdle. Sadly the most recent evidence published for Great Bustard is six years out of date so BOURC has not yet had the persuasive evidence it needs. No doubt it is keeping the situation under review. What does successful actually mean for this purpose? How long must a population be self sustaining before admission to Category C3? White-tailed Eagle was admitted in 2004, six years after the last releases of Norwegian sourced birds. The last Great Bustard releases took place in 2019 so it could be 2024 at the earliest before David Waters and GBG receive the ultimate accolade for their world first achievement.

Just as important the Great Bustard is classed by Bird Life International as one of the most Vulnerable species in Europe and the recently published European Breeding Bird Atlas 2 (2020) shows that as well as a declining population it has one of the smallest and shrinking ranges of any European land bird. So having eliminated it from England don't we have a moral obligation to put right the wrongs of our ancestors?

So, what about Lincolnshire as a place for reintroducing Great Bustards? We have the history, the landscape, the space and the relatively low population and traffic density of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The ecosystem that provides habitat for Corn Bunting and Quail can support Great Bustard too as it has been shown that Great Bustard can thrive in a largely arable landscape. We need a group of enlightened farmers who can manage their crops and grassland in a suitable fashion, perhaps with financial support from DEFRA. We are talking tweaks not major changes. The birds would need legal protection from nest disturbance and shooting. They would get that on admission to Category C. The same landscape management could bring back Stone-curlew and Whinchat and help protect and boost existing farmland birds of conservation concern like Grey Partridge, Skylark, Yellowhammer, Tree Sparrow and Linnet. Of course, it would benefit insects and plants too. Judging by the Salisbury Plain project, success for the Great Bustard in other parts of its former range would require single-minded dedication from a small team. We need vision to provide the hope that the Wolds landscape can return to its former glory.

So, who is going to pick up the torch to return the Lincolnshire Wolds to a state that will sustain Great Bustards and lead in their re-establishment? Hopefully LBC members could provide volunteers and support. LWT have some existing land holdings in the Wolds like Red Hill, they have done a great job already in the Fens, what about the Wolds? Let us not forget the Wolds are an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, could the AONB authority have a role? The RSPB maybe? A feasibility study would be worthwhile and it seems logical that a complete landscape approach would have the best chance of success.

There are several major hurdles that could delay a Lincolnshire project for a number of years. Given Brexit, will Spanish authorities continue to allow doomed Great Bustard eggs to be moved to England? The only other source is English bred birds. GBG already rescue eggs from doomed Salisbury Plain nests and hatch and rear the young before releasing them. They have said the population will have to rise to several hundred birds before they will consider supporting a project in another part of England. It is likely with changes to the Agricultural Support system coming in soon that enterprising groups of farmers in other former Bustard haunts like Yorkshire, Norfolk and Suffolk may strike first and corner the next phase of the reintroduction.

I would recommend anyone who is interested, to book a half day out on Salisbury Plain with GBG and see for yourself exactly what can be achieved. Further details on their website at [www.greatbustard.org](http://www.greatbustard.org). The birds are there all year round. The day before visiting the project we went to Stonehenge and unexpectedly lucked in on five fine adult males feeding in a rape field north of the Stonehenge visitor centre about 10km south of the main release site. Sadly, they were flushed by a helicopter before I could digiscope them. We also saw a drove of 27 distantly around the release site. These birds were very wary. There are 70 more scattered across the plain in small droves. After being persuaded by the whole experience I paid an annual membership fee and bought the T-shirt!

If we have the vision, in 10 years time Great Bustards could be back in Lincs but only if we get them on the radar for lots of different bodies and people and start planning now. If anyone has any thoughts on this idea I'd be interested in hearing them.

Please email me on [chairman@lincsbirdclub.co.uk](mailto:chairman@lincsbirdclub.co.uk) or send me a tweet on @philespin.

## American Bittern in Lincolnshire?

On the afternoon of Nov 29th a lucky birder had an American Bittern briefly on the LWT reserve at Fiskerton Fen. It was seen well at least 3 times by the finder and two others on the next two days up to Dec 1st. Sadly despite dawn-dusk vigils over the following 5 days it was not seen again. Two Eurasian Bitterns were present (later there have been three seen at this site) and these may have played a part in its departure. News was not released given the current lockdown restrictions and in view of the small size of the only hide (3-4 people max.) and car park. No photographs were obtained but a full description has been submitted to BBRC. This record, if accepted, will be the first county record.



One of three 'european' bitterns at Fiskerton Fen on 22nd Dec 2020 © Russ Hayes

## Records for 2020

Sorting records for the 2020 bird report is well underway but we are still missing details of some of the rare and scarce birds which have been reported on social media and by the rare bird news services.

These are among those of which we have no details to date:

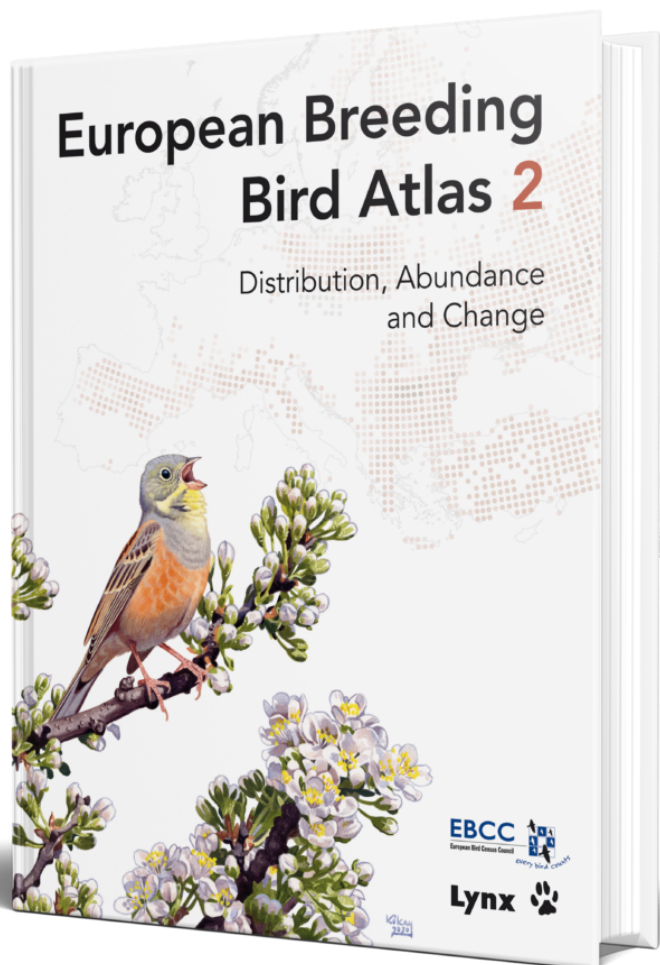
**Red-footed Falcon**, Horseshoe Point, May-25-2020

**Purple Heron**, Horseshoe Point, May-25-2020

**Purple Heron**, Stamford area, Jul-6-2020

**Bee-eater**, Glentham nr Grantham, 14-Aug-2020

## The European Bird Census Council (EBCC) publishes the second European Breeding Bird Atlas EBBA2, a milestone for biodiversity knowledge in Europe



A tremendous collaborative effort by the EBCC and its partner organisations made it possible to collect bird data from across 11 million km<sup>2</sup> in a systematic and standardised manner. With around 120,000 volunteer fieldworkers from all countries in Europe, EBBA2 is one of the biggest citizen science projects on biodiversity ever.

### Selected results

- Almost 600 bird species currently breed in Europe; 539 are native species and 57 non-native (introduced from elsewhere in the world). Most of these species are not widespread but restricted to small areas of Europe.
- 35% of all native species have increased the area where they breed over the last 30 years, 25% have contracted their breeding range and the rest did not show a change or the trend is unknown.
- ‘Winners’, with increased ranges, include many species of forests and those protected by international legislation. ‘Losers’, with decreased ranges, include many species of farmland.
- Land use change and climate change appear to be the main causes of changes in distribution.

During the fieldwork period 2013–2017 EBBA2 recorded 539 native bird species breeding in Europe, 59 of which are mainly concentrated in Europe (near-endemics) and 40 are species that can be found only in Europe (endemic). There are few species as widespread as White Wagtail or Common Cuckoo, which were recorded in over 85% of all 50-km squares surveyed in EBBA2. More than 50% of the species occurred in less than 10% of all surveyed squares, so that all countries and regions have their own specific responsibility towards this common wealth.

EBBA2 data show that 57 non-native species breed in Europe, i.e. one in ten of European breeding bird species has been introduced from elsewhere; 39 of these species were documented for the first time in the last three decades. Marked changes were observed in the European avifauna in the last 30 years. According to EBBA2 analyses, 35% of all native species increased the area where they breed, among them Cattle Egret, Citrine Wagtail or Mediterranean Gull. On the other hand, 25% of species have shown a decrease in area, e.g. Ruff, Great Bustard, European Roller or Ortolan Bunting, the species shown on the book cover. Furthermore, the breeding ranges of European birds have shifted northwards by an average of

28 km (ca 1 km per year). As many species shift their ranges northwards, species richness of forest birds is increasing, probably also as a result of land abandonment resulting in forest regrowth. Many other aspects are treated in the book. For instance, specialists of montane grasslands and tundra, mires and moorland are losing ground in substantial parts of their ranges.

EBBA2 presents a new baseline on the European avifauna, with an unprecedented geographical coverage from the Azores to the Ural Mountains. EBBA2 is also one of the biggest-ever citizen science projects focusing on mapping biodiversity. In total, around 120,000 fieldworkers contributed data to the atlas, the great majority of them on a voluntary basis. Verena Keller from the Swiss Ornithological Institute, EBCC board member, EBBA2 project manager and the lead author of the book comments: "EBBA2 was only possible thanks to the EBCC network of organisations and individuals from all corners in Europe, all dedicated to a common goal, cooperating across all borders and barriers." Mark Eaton, EBCC chair, looks into the future: "This incredible new book, and the database that underpins it, will serve to enable further research and support conservation of birds and other biodiversity across Europe for decades to come."

David Noble, previously EBBA2 Steering Committee and Principal Ecologist - Monitoring at British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), said, "Information from the UK during the period 2013 to 2017 came from a wide range of sources including BirdTrack and other international online recording schemes, the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), the Waterways Breeding Bird Survey, the RSPB reserve network, and a volunteer gap-filling exercise in 2017. Because good evidence of breeding is so crucial to defining species breeding distributions, some of the most important data sets include the BTO's Ringing Scheme, even more obviously the Nest Records Scheme and for rarer species the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. Overall, almost a million records collated between 2013 and 2017 fed into this, making great use of data collected by volunteers for other purposes."

Dawn Balmer, National Coordinator for the UK, BTO says "Having just completed our own amazing Bird Atlas 2007-11 project, we were challenged to start data collection again for this hugely important European Atlas. We were fortunate to be able to use data from our annual monitoring schemes and our wonderful volunteers across the UK rose to the challenge to undertake fieldwork in places where there were gaps in information. It was important the UK delivered the most up-to-date information we could, and we would like to thank all the volunteers that contributed records"

The project would not have been possible without dedicated fieldworkers, national coordinators, experts contributing to analyses and presentation of the data, donors and other supporters.

### **EBBA2 in a nutshell**

596 breeding bird species	10 years of work	120,000 fieldworkers	48 national partners
5 years of fieldwork	5,110 50-km squares with information on breeding birds	11,075,000 km <sup>2</sup> covered	

## Rick and Brazilian wife Elis shine spotlight on the wonderful world of waders



Thanks largely to two major estuaries, Lincolnshire accommodates plenty of shorebird species, but they should definitely never be taken for granted.

That is the message of the charity, Wader Quest, which campaigns vigorously to highlight the threats posed by most, if not all, of these endearing species from habitat loss, climate change, predation and much else. At the organisation's helm is Rick Simpson whose varied working life has included spells as a firefighter, a gardener, a security guard, an estate agent, an articulated lorry driver and as a birding tours guide in Brazil.

Now based near Milton Keynes in the UK with his Brazilian wife, Elis, also a keen birder, his love of waders was initially sparked by his childhood encounter with a picture of a Lapwing that so fascinated him that he decided it was a bird he had to see.

Much later, the focus of his fascination fell on what is perhaps an even more iconic species - the Spoon-billed Sandpiper - of which the global population may now be fewer than 100 pairs.

Back in 2012, this was the top target species when Rick and Elis decided to sell up and travel the world, seeking both to see as many shorebirds species as possible and to fund-raise for conservation of this varied and delightful family of birds. That experience-packed trip is now the subject of an absorbing book, *A Quest for Waders*, which recounts the highs and lows of their travels.

Briskly written and bursting with amusing anecdotes and fascinating wader information - plus scores of superb illustrations - it makes for a compelling read. Indeed, it is as much a page-turner as any detective thriller.

Rick's passion for his mission radiates from every page, no more so than when he and Elis share their thrilling first encounter with spoonies in Thailand.

But evidently the couple were almost equally thrilled with their first meetings with many more species including, in California, a motionless Mountain Plover which Rick (who has a suspicious mind) at first thought was a scam - a stuffed rarity nailed to the ground. Taking up the story, he writes: "Fortunately for us, the bird both breathed and moved - indeed, it turned out there were several of them scattered liberally around the area.

"Hardly able to believe our luck, we watched gleefully as these busy birds tripped back and forth across the ground in short bursts." *A Quest for Waders* is now on sale, price £15 plus p&p, via the Wader Quest website, [www.waderquest.net](http://www.waderquest.net), with every penny of proceeds going to support wader conservation initiatives all over the world.

**Jim Wright**



## **Exclusive discount offer for Lincolnshire Bird Club members on Fred. Olsen Cruise Line holidays**

*Jim Wright our Hon Sec has spoken to Fred Olsen and secured a potentially useful discount for LBC members*

ONE of the best places to watch birds - especially unfamiliar marine species - is on board a cruise ship. Scan diligently from the deck or cabin, and anything can catch the eye - skuas, shearwaters, seaducks, divers, auks, petrels, plus a range of gulls and terns seldom seen in British waters.

But it is not just these ocean-wanderers that come into focus. From time to time, so, too, do raptors such as eagles, ospreys and even harriers or owls. Especially during the peak of spring or autumn migration, passerines are often to be seen, flying purposefully just above the ocean wave or overhead, sometimes detectable by their flight-notes which seem to travel more clearly in the sea air.

It is not infrequent for these long-distance travellers to land aboard a cruise ship. It may just be for an hour or less while they rest their wings in readiness for the last lap of their journey. In some cases, they tarry longer, perhaps until the ship reaches port.

Warblers, thrushes, chats, larks - they are all hitch-hiking regulars. It is as if the cruise ships almost become floating observatories!

One of the world's foremost holiday companies is Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines whose range of destinations includes such mouth-watering birding locations as Iceland, the Scottish Lochs and Isles, Andalusia, Greenland, The Canaries and beyond - even to the rest of the world. On land, Olsen's shore excursions often travel through bird-rich habitats where you might see anything from a bee-eater to a ptarmigan, from a red-backed shrike to a roller. And even when berthed, there are invariably unusual birds to be seen - phalaropes, Kentish plovers, nesting black redstarts pretty well anything.

Now the Lincolnshire Bird Club is pleased to announce that it has reached a pioneering agreement with this gold-standard cruise company. Across its extensive 2021/22 programme, Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines is offering LBC members a special discount of 5% off all its sailings. The affinity agreement with the Lincolnshire Bird Club is unique - the first county birding organisation chosen to partner with this prestigious company which enjoys one of the best-regarded brands in global leisure. The great thing about cruise ship birding is you can do it at your own pace - and invariably in the greatest of comfort.


What is more, there are plenty of other activities and attractions for partner or family members who (believe it or not!) may not be so captivated as you by the fabulous spectacle of an albatross skimming the ocean wave.

Fred. Olsen are particularly looking forward to welcoming guests, including LBC members, on their two new ships, Bolette and Borealis.

All of the company's fleet, which also includes Balmoral and Braemar, carry fewer than 1,400 guests, meaning whichever ship or cruise you choose you will enjoy the benefits of small ship cruising and the first-class service and attention to detail for which Fred. Olsen is renowned.

Those who have sailed with Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines before will save up to 10% - a 5% ocean loyalty discount plus a further 5% discount through membership of the Lincolnshire Bird Club.



Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

**MEMBERS DISCOUNT UP TO 10% OFF\***

# WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

**BOLETTE      BOREALIS**

We're very excited about all the features you can enjoy on board the newest members of our fleet: More balcony cabins and suites, an all-weather swimming pool with a retractable roof and a wide choice of restaurants, lounges and bars – all designed with original artwork and premium décor. You'll also find a classic two-tiered theatre so everyone will have a great view of the evening shows.

Lincolnshire Bird Club members can benefit from a tempting discount of up to 10% off our new ships. Existing Fred. Olsen customers save up to 10%, with a 5% Lincolnshire Bird Club members discount in addition to their 5% Oceans Loyalty Club discount. Customers that are new to Fred. Olsen can save 5%, and that's on top of any current offers.

**For more information or to book, call 0800 0355 108, quoting 'LBIRD5'**

\*All bookings are subject to Fred. Olsen's (FOCL) standard terms & conditions, available on our website & on request. All prices quoted under the Lincolnshire Bird Club members discount offers are exclusive to qualifying members & their travelling companions only. Readers must quote their discount code at time of booking. Membership discounts cannot be applied retrospectively. Bookings must be made via 0800 0355 108. Proof of Lincolnshire Bird Club membership will be required at the time of booking. Offers cannot be extended to any unrelated third party, are subject to availability and may be withdrawn or amended at any time without prior notice. From time to time FOCL may run special offers which cannot be combined with this discount, including selected group travel deals. Fred. Olsen Oceans members are entitled to a 5% Lincolnshire Bird Club discount. Subject to the same terms & conditions, to be applied after the standard Oceans discount, where applicable. In this instance, Oceans terms & conditions apply. Guests that are new to Fred. Olsen can save 5% through their Lincolnshire Bird Club membership, subject to the same terms & conditions. Flights are excluded from any discounts. Offer ends 31/12/2021. E&OE. 

Those LBC members sailing with Fred. Olsen for the first time will enjoy a saving of 5% on any cruise booked - and that is on top of any current offers.

And keep watching the LBC website and reading The Heron newsletter - other opportunities with Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines could beckon in the future. The website carrying the programme of 2021 cruises is at: (fredolsencruises.com). For more information or to book, call 0800 0355 108, quoting **LBC5**

## THE SWALLOW THAT LOOKED IN FOR BREAKFAST!

Eating your breakfast in a lighthouse, you wouldn't expect a swallow to fly through an open door and perch on your head. This apparently happened once to a keeper at the Bell Rock lighthouse off the East Coast of Scotland.

It is one of many fascinating anecdotes in John A Love's fascinating book, *A Natural History of Lighthouses* (Whittles Publishing). Other unexpected entries to UK lighthouses have included willow warbler, curlew and a jack snipe with a broken leg.

Sad to say, the beams from lighthouse often prove fatally attractive to migrating birds (especially skylarks, redwings and warblers) which regularly crash into the lanterns, usually with fatal consequences.

The author quotes another incident where there were so many avian corpses at the foot of a tower that they had to be removed by wheelbarrow.

On some occasions wild geese have come to grief, providing a meal for the lighthouse keepers.

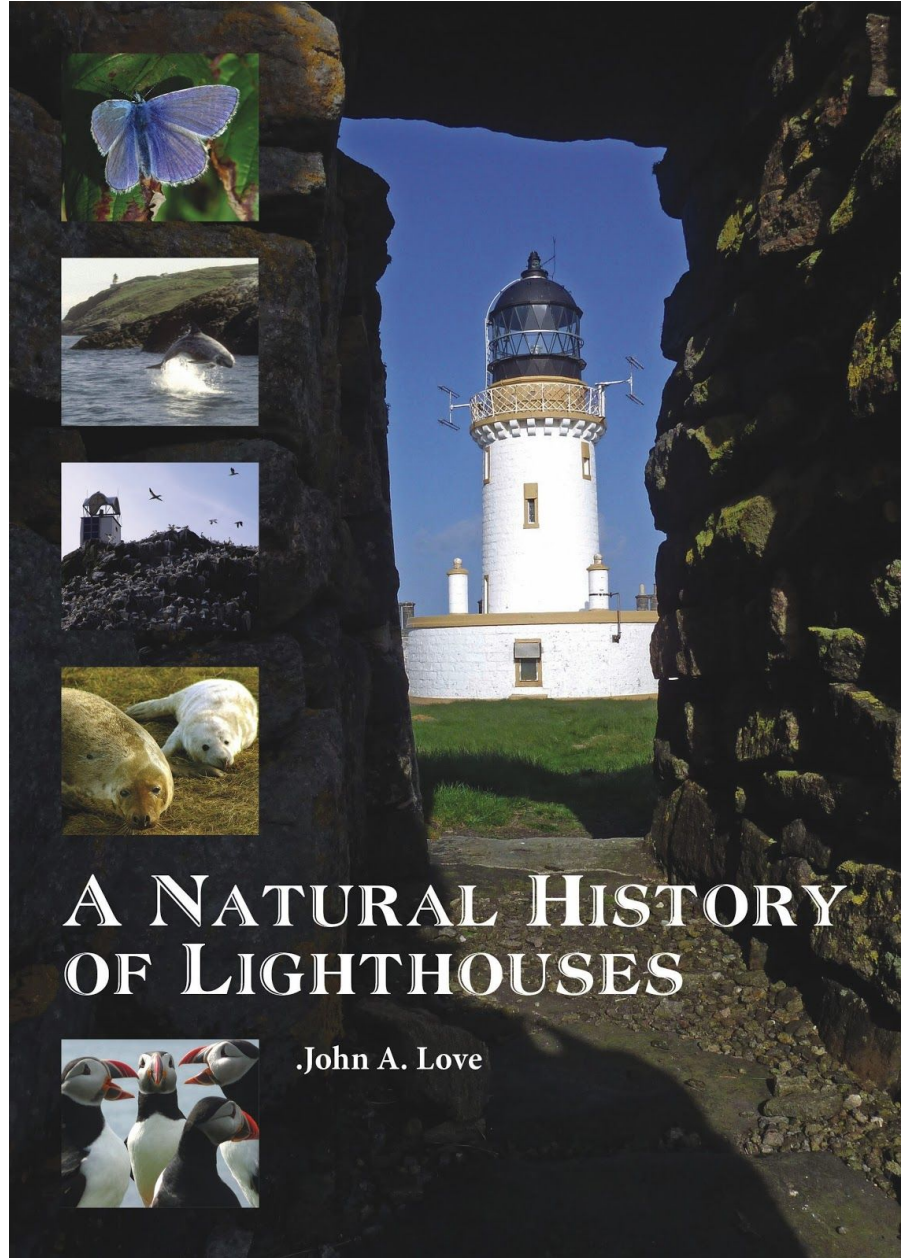
The author also refers to an incident, in 1917, at another Scottish lighthouse, the Little Ross, where William Begg was able to "pick up sufficient dead lapwings to make into stews and pies"

And, in 1881, some workmen working on the Skerries lighthouse off Anglesey made a 'monster pie' from 200 skylarks and other birds.

The cover price of *A Natural History of Lighthouses* is £30, and the book can be ordered from booksellers or online outlets.

However, LBC members who order via the publishers' website - <https://bit.ly/3q5higm> - there is a 20 percent discount by inserting the promotional code WPLINCS20.

This offer will run until until February 12, 2021.



# Lincolnshire Bird News - December 2020

Compiled by Chris Grimshaw

This Lincs Latest Bird News is available on the LBC Website and is updated on a regular basis, to provide a convenient news service to scarce & rare birds found within Lincolnshire. This is a free service and members wishing to get more up to the minute information should check commercial news services. The Sightings page and @Lincsbirding Twitter feed are intended to alert birders to rare (**RED**) and scarcer (**BLUE**) species that they might be interested in seeing within the County.

If your sightings are missing from the list, then please let us know by emailing [recorder\\_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk](mailto:recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk). Records of more common species are still very important and should be submitted to the county Recorder (again, send all records to [recorder\\_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk](mailto:recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk)) or submitted online using the **BTO BirdTrack** or **eBird Apps**. ALL records will then be added to the Lincolnshire Bird Club data-base, to be included in the Annual Reports. **PLEASE NOTE** that none of these reports have been verified or checked by the Lincolnshire Bird Club Records Committee. Please note that the close off date for records for the 2019 Lincs Bird Report is 1st May 2020, after this we cannot guarantee inclusion.

In keeping with the ever-changing government regulations concerning social distancing and unnecessary travel regarding the coronavirus pandemic, we are taking the opportunity to communicate the Lincs Bird Club's position on bird news dissemination. From December 30th Lincolnshire is now in Teir 4. However, we are still permit outdoors for both recreation and exercise. Therefore, birding should be ok as long as no other rules are broken especially regarding social distancing. Please have regard to your local circumstances and sensitivities and keep local and stay safe.

We will continue to maintain our Latest Bird News page (updated each evening) and the Lincs Rare Birds WhatsApp Group - members sharing bird news. The bird club committee believe this helps reduce social isolation by allowing members to keep in touch with the outside world and hopefully it will help some get through what will be a very frustrating time. However, we will continue to closely monitor the situation, and we may change our policy if events suggest that is required. There is of course no compulsion on members to share bird news should they consider local circumstances are such that they prefer not to.=

**31/12/2020**

## **Gibraltar Point**

2 Hen Harrier (male & female), 2 **Bewick's Swan**

## **Lincoln**

80/90 Goldfinch, 10 Redwing, 4 Siskin

## **Saltfleetby/Theddlethorpe**

Long-tailed Duck

## **Scunthorpe (private garden)**

Goldcrest, Sparrowhawk

## **Swanholme Lakes**

Grey Heron, Kingfisher

**30/12/2020**

## **Deeping High Bank**

2 Kestrel, Barn Owl, 3 Short-eared Owl, Sparrowhawk, Stonechat (female)

## **Fiskerton Fen - 99% frozen**

5 Tufted Duck (river), Goosander (2 male, 2 female), Great White Egret (flew across the river), Little Egret, 34 Fieldfare, 30 Mallard (over), 7 Mute Swan

## **Freiston Shore**

**Grey Phalarope**

## **Marston**

Pink-footed Goose, Water Rail, **Bearded Tit**, **Woodcock**



Bearded Tit at Marston STW 30th December 2020 © Steve Nesbitt



Grey Phalarope at RSPB Frieston Shore 30/12/2020 © Andrew Dove



Grey Phalarope at RSPB Frieston Shore 30/12/2020 © Andrew Dove

**29/12/2020**

**Baston & Langtoft Pits**

2 Smew (on private lake - please view from the road)

**Cleethorpes**

16 Snow Bunting

**Deeping High Bank**

Short-eared Owl

**Deeping Lakes**

4 Long-eared Owl

**Frieston Shore**

Grey Phalarope

**Hartsholme Park**

c40 Shoveler

**Heckington**

Hen Harrier

**Swanholme Lakes**

2 Kingfisher

**Tallington Lakes**

Scaup

**28/12/2020**

**Baston & Langtoft Pits**

2 Smew (2 male)

**Deeping High Bank**

Short-eared Owl

**Deeping Lakes**

4 Long-eared Owl

**Fiskerton Fen**

12 Fieldfare, 9 Goosander, Goldeneye

**Swanpool**

Raven



Raven over Swanpool on 28th Dec 2020 © Andy Sims

**Tallington Lakes**

Scaup

**Witham (near Fiskerton)**

Otter

27/12/2020

**Boultham Mere**

Raven (over)

**Deeping High Bank**

2 Barn Owl, Buzzard, 4 Kestrel, 4 Short-eared Owl

**Fiskerton Fen**

Bittern

**Freiston Shore**

Grey Phalarope

**Harlaxton**

Great White Egret (over)

**Heckington**

Hen Harrier

**Langtoft**

Great White Egret

**Trent Port, Marton**

2 Bullfinch, Chiffchaff, Kingfisher, 30 Gadwall, 15 Teal, 2 Treecreeper, 440 Wigeon

**Marston**

22 Fieldfare, 2 Water Rail, 3 Grey Wagtail

**Tallington Lakes**

Scaup

**Branston Island & Washingborough**

Otter

**26/12/2020**

**Alvingham**

Barn Owl

**Boultham Mere**

6 Goosander, Marsh Harrier, 3 Pochard, Water Rail, 16 Shoveler

**Frampton Marsh,**

2 Hen Harrier, Barn Owl

**Lincoln, Doddington Park**

3 Lesser Redpoll (briefly but first of winter)

**Rimac**

Hen Harrier

Saltfleetby

3 Velvet Scoter, 50 Whooper Swan

**25/12/2020**

**Cleethorpes**

12 Snow Bunting

**Grantham**

2 Lesser Redpoll

**Messingham SQ**

42 Gadwall Pochard 6, 100 Lesser Redpoll, 8 Shelduck, Shoveler 12, 4 Siskin, 3 Great Spotted Woodpecker

**River Slea**

Kingfisher

**Swanholme Lakes**

5 Goosander (3m,2f), 2 Great Crested Grebe, Kingfisher 2 Shoveler

**24/21/2020**

**Cleethorpes CP**

Scaup

**Deeping Lakes**

7 Long-eared Owl, Nuthatch

**Winter's Pond**

Scaup, Waxwing (north over)

**23/12/2020**

**Boultham Mere**

7 Whooper Swan

**Covenham Reservoir**

Red-necked Grebe

**Fiskerton Fen**

3 Bittern

**Gibraltar Point**

Hen Harrier

**Kirkby GP's**

2 Bullfinch, Chiffchaff, Little Egret, 3 Goldcrest, Kingfisher, 128 Lapwing, 5 Lesser Redpoll, Redshank, 9 Shoveler, Sparrowhawk, Treecreeper

**Thurlby Fen**



Hen Harrier

**22/12/2020**

**Covenham Reservoir**

Red-necked Grebe, Goosander, 2 Whooper Swan

**Fiskerton Fen**

3 Bittern

**Grantham**

3 Raven

**Temple Wood**

50 Fieldfare, Red Kite, 2 Raven, 150 Redwing, 10 Marsh Tit, 2 Nuthatch

**Thurlby Fen**

Hen Harrier

**21/12/2020**

**Deeping High Bank**

Short-eared Owl

**Frampton Marsh**

Green-winged Teal

**Gibraltar Point**

3 Great Northern Diver

**20/12/2020**

**Bole Ings, Gainsborough**

Short-eared Owl

**Cleethorpes**

35/40 Snow Bunting

**Deeping Lakes**

4 Long-eared Owl

**Fillingham Lake**

Russian White-fronted Goose (Would potential visitors please note that you need a visitors permit to visit the site)

**Fiskerton Fen**

2 Bittern

**Frampton Marsh**

Kingfisher, 10000 Lapwing, 10000 Golden Plover, Water Rail, Scaup, Stonechat. 2000 Eurasian Teal, Green-winged Teal, Bearded Tit, Cetti's Warbler, 10000 Wigeon

**Freiston Shore**

Water Pipit

**Gibraltar Point**

6 Great Northern Diver, Long-tailed Duck, Hen Harrier

**Hartsholme Park**

20 Long-tailed Tit, 12 Siskin

**Legbourne**

Great White Egret

**Lincoln**

Blackcap (male)

**New Holland**

18 Whooper Swan

**East Halton Skitter**

4 Scaup

**Swanholme Lakes**

Kingfisher, 2 Shoveler

**Theddlethorpe**

14 Snow Bunting, 6 White-fronted Goose, Merlin

**Theddlethorpe**

Snow Bunting, 16 Russian White-fronted Goose

**Winter's Pond**

Scaup

**RAF Woodhall**

Great White Egret

19/12?2020

**Boultham Mere**

7 Whooper Swan

**Deeping Lakes**

Long-eared Owl

**Frampton Marsh**

10000 Lapwing, Green Winged Teal

**Freiston Shore**

Pintail

**Gibraltar Point**

Peregrine Falcon, Hen Harrier, 6 Red-breasted Merganser, 1800 Lapwing, Merlin, 2 Stonechat, Green Woodpecker

**Swamholme Lakes**

5 Goosander, Kingfisher



Kingfisher, Pike Drain, Swanholme Lakes - Image © Chris Grimshaw

**Witham End**

Hen Harrier, Short-eared Owl

18/12/2020

**Boultham Mere**

4 Barnacle Geese, Kingfisher

**Deeping Lakes**

Long-eared Owl

**Trent Port, Marton**

250 Fieldfare, 240 Pink-footed Goose

**Rimac**

Iceland Gull, Stonechat

**Tetney Blow Wells**

Chiffchaff, Kingfisher



Long staying Whooper Swans at Boultham Mere on 19th Dec 2020 © Andy Sims

17/12/2020

**Deeping High Bank**

68 Fieldfare, Goosander, 4 Barn Owl, 4 Short-eared Owl, Stonechat (female)

**Deeping Lakes**

4 Goosander, 2 Egyptian Goose, 3 Long-eared Owl, 16 Snipe

**Frampton Marsh**

300 Pink-footed Goose, 4 Hen Harrier, ( 2 male, 2 female), 3 Stonechat, 94 Whooper Swan

**Grimesthorpe**

Red Kite

**Rimac**

Iceland Gull

**Whisby**

3 Bittern



Iceland Gull at Rimac © John Clarkson

16/12/2020

**Boultham Mere**

Green Sandpiper, 7 Whooper Swan (60th day)

**Deeping Lakes**

Bullfinch, Goldcrest, Goosander, 5 Long-eared Owl, Little Owl, Treecreeper

**Frampton Marsh**

Peregrine Falcon, 4 White-fronted Goose, 2 Hen Harrier, 2 Merlin

**Jobs Lane**

1 Pink-footed Goose

**Sandilands**

60 Whooper Swan

**Tunby Woods**

400 Pink-footed Goose (over)

15/12/2020

**Deeping High Bank**

Short-eared Owl

**Deeping Lakes**

6 Long-eared Owl

**Fiskerton Fen**

Bittern, Great White Egret

**Gibraltar Fen**

Glossy Ibis (over)



Bittern at Fiskerton Fen - Image © Andy Sims

**Humberston Fitties**

Short-eared Owl

**Humberston Fitties to Tetney Lock**

159 Curlew, Short-eared Owl

**Meridian car-park**

Bean Goose

**Swanpool**

Little Egret

**Tattershall**

71 Redshank (on the Witham Bank)

**Thurlby Fen**

3 Russian White-fronted Goose

**Tunby Wood**

c400 Pink-footed Goose (over)

**Willow Tree Fen**

Great White Egret

**RAF Woodhall**

Great White Egret, 2 White-fronted Goose

**Walesby**

10 Common Crossbill

14/12/2020

**Anderby Creek**

6 Tundra Bean Goose, 172 Pink-footed Goose

**Boultham Park**

12 Goldcrest, 3 Nuthatch



Nuthatch in Boultham Park - Image © Chris Grimshaw

**Burgh-le-Marsh**

6 Russian White-fronted Goose, 3000 Pink-footed Goose

**Deeping High Bank**

Barn Owl, 3 Short-eared Owl, 84 Whooper Swan

**Deeping Lakes**

2 Long-eared Owl

**Freiston Shore**

Hen Harrier

**Sea View Farm**

3 Russin White-fronted Goose

**RAF Wainfleet**

Hen Harrier

13/12/2020

**Deeping Lakes**

Long-eared Owl

**Gibraltar Point**

Hen Harrier (male)

**Saltfleetby St Peter**

Iceland Gull

12/12/2020

**Branston Fen**

Great White Egret

**Cleethorpes CP**

Scaup

**Covenham Reservoir**

Lapland Bunting, Red-necked Grebe

**Deeping Lakes**

Long-eared Owl

**Deeping High Bank**

Short-eared Owl, Whooper Swan

**Denton Reservoir**

Great White Egret

**Eastoft**

Great White Egret

**Mablethorpe**

Lapland Bunting

11/12/2020

**Baston & Langtoft Pits**

Short-eared Owl

**Deeping Lakes**

Long-eared Owl

**Gibraltar Point**

Hen Harrier

**Grantham**

Redwing (overnight movement)

**Lincoln (Doddington Park garden)**

Blackcap (female)

**Saltfleetby St Peter**

Great White Egret, 6 Russian White-frint Goose, Pink-footed Goose

**Tunman Woods**

10 Common Crossbill



Common Crossbill, Tunman Woods - Image © Grahame Hopwood

10/12/2020

**Gibraltar Point**

Lapland Bunting, Hen Harrier, Black Redstart

**Hibaldstow Bridge**

Great White Egret

**Killingholme Haven**

Water Pipit

**Manby Wetlands**

9 Bewick's Swan (over)

**Messingham SQ**

3 Bullfinch, 4 Crossbill, 32 Gadwall, 2 Jay, Kestrel, 100 Lapwing, 26 Pochard, 2 Lesser Redpoll, 4 Snipe, Song Thrush, 180 Teal, Willow Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker

09/12/2020

**Boultham Mere**

Kingfisher, 3 Grey Partridge, Water Rail, 40 Lesser Redpoll, 3 Siskin, 7 Whooper Swan, Woodcock

**Deeping Lakes**



3 Barn Owl. **Long-eared Owl**

**Deeping High Bank**

Hen Harrier, **7/8 Short-eared Owl**

**Far Ings**

Kingfisher

**Immingham**

**Swallow**

**Tealby area**

2500 Fieldfare, 2 Raven, 600 Redwing, 45 Yellowhammer

**08/12/2020**

**Covenham Reservoir**

**Red-necked Grebe**

**Deeping Lakes**

**Long-eared Owl**

**Denton Reservoir**

Great White Egret

**Gibraltar Point**

Short-eared Owl

**Hanby**

Merlin

**Marston**

20 Water Rail, 6 Grey Wagtail

**Sutton on Sea**

Great White Egret

**07/12/2020**

**Boultham Mere**

Water Rail, 7 Whooper Swan

**Deeping High Bank**

Hen Harrier

**Frampton Marsh**

Hen Harrier, 7 Whooper Swan

**Gibraltar Point**

**Lapland Bunting, 2 Bearded Tit**

**Holbeach St Johns**

**24 Bewick's Swan, 88 Whooper**

**Mablethorpe**

12 Snow Bunting

**Wroot**

Great White Egret

**06/12/2020**

**Baston Fen**

Short-eared Owl

**Baston & Langtoft Pits**

Short-eared Owl

**Black Bank, Messingham**

Peregrine Falcon, 100 Fieldfare, 2 Redshank

**Boultham Mere**

7 Whooper Swan (for 50th day)

**Deeping Lakes**

**Long-eared Owl**

**Frampton Marsh**

Merlin, Scaup

**Gibraltar Point**

Lapland Bunting, Great White Egret, Short-eared Owl

**Immingham**

4 Swallow

**Mablethorpe**

Snow Bunting

**East Halton Skitter**

Scaup

**Cress Marsh, Stallingborough**

Great White Egret, Green Sandpiper

**Westwoodside**

Russian White-fronted Goose

05/12/2020

**Baston Fen**

Short-eared Owl

**Black Bank Messingham**

10 Grey Partridge, 2 Redshank, Stonechat, Great Spotted Woodpecker

**Covenham Reservoir**

Red-necked Grebe, Hen Harrier

**Deeping High Bank**

3 Common Crane (over), Short-eared Owl

**Denton Reservoir**

Great White Egret

**Donna Nook**

Pomarine Skua, Dusky Warbler

**Frampton Marsh**

Scaup, Bearded Tit

**Freiston Shore**

Black-throated Diver, 16 Great Northern Diver, 8 Long-tailed Duck, 8 Slavonian Grebe

**Gibraltar Point**

Lapland Bunting, Great White Egret, Hen Harrier

**Goxhill Haven**

33 Snow Bunting, Great Northern Diver, Caspian Gull, 29 Scaup

**Grimsby**

Waxwing

**Hartsholme Park**

Kingfisher, Treecreeper, Grey Wagtail

**Holbeach St Johns**

12 Bewick's Swan, 153 Whooper Swan

**Marston**

Water Rail



Water Rail at Marston - Image © Steve Nesbit

**Gibraltar Point**

Lapland Bunting, Great White Egret, Hen Harrier

**Rimac**

Great Northern Diver

**Swanholme**

Goldeneye

**Thurlby Fen**

Great White Egret

**Witham Mouth**

3 Great Northern Diver, 19 Red-throated Diver, 2 Barnacle Geese, 1500 Brent Geese, 14 Goldeneye, 14 Slavonian Grebe, 14 Red-breasted Merganser

04/12/2020

**Covenham Reservoir**

Red-necked Grebe

**Immingham**

4 Swallow

03/12/2020

**Covenham Reservoir**

Red-necked Grebe, Goosander, 3 Turnstone

**Fiskerton Fen**

Bittern, 2 Great White Egret, 9 Goosander, Green Sandpiper

**Freiston Shore**

Scaup

**Holbeach St Johns**

8 Bewick's Swan, 191 Whooper Swan

**North Somercotes**

Firecrest (in private garden)

**Tetney Marshes**

3 Twite



Red-necked Grebe at Covenham Res on 3rd Dec 2020 © John Clarkson

02/12/2020

**Covenham Reservoir**

Red-necked Grebe, Hen Harrier, 2 Whooper Swan

**Swanpool**

34 Pink-footed Geese

**Saltfleetby - Theddlethorpe Dunes**

12 Brambling, 18 Snow Bunting (out from Crook Bank), Merlin, Peregrine, 4 Water Rail, 4 Stonechat, Swallow, 2 Tawny Owl

**Wainfleet**

Snow Bunting

**RAF Woodhall**

Great White Egret, Spoonbill

**01/12/2020**

**Baston Fen**

Siberian Chiffchaff, 3 Short-eared Owl

**Baston & Langtoft Pit**

Russian White -fronted Goose

**Brickyard Lane**

2 Barn Swallow, 18 Snow Bunting

**Gibraltar Point**

Hen Harrier

**Heckington**

Red Kite

**Huttoft Car Terrace**

Snow Bunting, Red-throated Diver, Guillemot, Common Scoter, [Velvet Scoter](#), Great Skua

**Messingham SQ**

3 [Crossbill](#), 66 Tufted Duck, 28 Gadwall, 400 Greylag Goose, 5 Pochard, 50 Lesser Redpoll, 5 Shelduck, 30 Siskin, 15 Shoveler, 12 Teal, Treecreeper, Cetti's Warbler, Great Spotted Woodpecker

**Saltfleet Haven**

[Iceland Gull](#)

**Sutton on Sea**

2 Red-throated Diver, 5 Gannet. [22 Common Scoter](#), [3 Pomerine Skua](#)

**Swanholme Lakes**

Chiffchaff, 4 Goldcrest, 3 Goosander (1 male, 2 female), 8 Siskin, Treecreeper, Grey Wagtail

**North Thoresby**

Great White Egret

**Toft Newton Reservoir**

[Bean Goose](#)

## Contact Information & Useful Lincs Websites

### Lincs Bird Club Website

Website: <http://www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk>

Twitter [@Lincsbirding](#)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/LincolnshireBirdInformation/>

LBC County Bird Recorder

Phil Hyde [recorder\\_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk](mailto:recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk)

BTO - <https://www.bto.org>

RSPB - <https://www.rspb.org.uk/>

Birdguides - <https://www.birdguides.com/>

Rarebird Alert - <https://www.rarebirdalert.co.uk/>

### Recording

BTO Birdtrack - <https://app.bto.org/birdtrack/login/login.jsp>

eBird - <https://ebird.org/home>

iRecord - <https://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/>

Nature Lister - <http://www.naturelister.co.uk>

Wildlife Recorder - <https://www.wildlife.co.uk>

### Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union Website

<http://lnu.org/>

LNU e-mail: [info@lnu.org](mailto:info@lnu.org)

### Love Lincs Plants

<https://www.lincstrust.org.uk/what-we-do/love-lincs-plants>

Love Lincs Plants Twitter feed [@LoveLincsPlants](#)

### Sir Joseph Banks Society

<http://www.joseph-banks.org.uk>

[enquiries@joseph-banks.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@joseph-banks.org.uk)

### Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

<http://www.lincstrust.org.uk/>

### Lincolnshire Bat Group website

<http://www.lincsbatgroup.co.uk/>

### Butterfly Conservation Lincolnshire Branch

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/300/lincolnshire-branch.html>

### FIGHTING WILDLIFE CRIME

Rural Crime Officer

Pc 160 Nick Willey

Force Wildlife, Rural Crime Officer

Force Dog Training Establishment

Lincolnshire Showground.

Grange-De-Lings.

Lincoln

[nicholas.willey@lincs.pnn.police.uk](mailto:nicholas.willey@lincs.pnn.police.uk)

OFFICE: 01522-731897

MOBILE :07768-501895

PAGER : 07654-330877

Rural Crime News -

<https://www.lincs.police.uk/news-campaigns/news/2019/rural-crime-news/>

### STAYING SAFE

EasyTide

<http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk/EasyTide/EasyTide/index.aspx>

Met Office Severe Weather E-mail Service

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/guide-to-emails>

Environment Agency Flood Information/Floodline

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/default.aspx>

Lyme Disease

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>

### SPECIES IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDING

#### Botany

Botanical Group in South Lincs

Contact: Sarah Lambert - [sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com](mailto:sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com)

Also see: <http://bsbi.org/south-lincolnshire-v-c-53>

LNU Sawflies, Bees, Wasps and Ants Recorder

Dr. David Sheppard - [d.a.sheppard@btinternet.com](mailto:d.a.sheppard@btinternet.com)

#### Lincolnshire Mammals

Chris Manning, [Chris.LincsDeer@gmail.com](mailto:Chris.LincsDeer@gmail.com)

#### Mammal Atlas

You can download and print off a hard copy or view it online.

<http://www.glnp.org.uk/our-publications/biodiversity/projects-and-reports.php>

#### Lincs Amphibian and Reptile Group

The Lincolnshire ARG (Amphibian & Reptile Group)

Ashley Butterfield - [learningoutdoors@btinternet.com](mailto:learningoutdoors@btinternet.com)

#### Local Bat Helpline

Grounded bats, bat problems, advice and information.

Contact Annette and Colin Faulkner on

01775 766286 or e-mail: [annettefaulkner@btinternet.com](mailto:annettefaulkner@btinternet.com)

Confidential Bat Records

You may send confidential bat records direct to Annette

Faulkner on: [annettefaulkner@btinternet.com](mailto:annettefaulkner@btinternet.com)

### USEFUL WILDLIFE CONTACTS

#### Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership

<http://www.glnp.org.uk/>

Contact: [charlie.barnes@glnp.org.uk](mailto:charlie.barnes@glnp.org.uk)

or for more general [queries:info@glnp.org.uk](mailto:queries:info@glnp.org.uk)

#### Natural England

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

#### Lincolnshire Environmental Awards

[www.lincsenvironmentalawards.org.uk](http://www.lincsenvironmentalawards.org.uk)

#### Life on the Verge and Wildflower Meadow Network Project

<http://www.lifeontheverge.org.uk/>



Lincolnshire Bird Club  
Follow us on twitter @lincsbirdclub  
<http://www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk>

The Lincolnshire Bird Club, supporting the recording & conservation of wildlife in Lincolnshire

