

THE Lincolnshire BIRD REPORT 2016



**The
Lincolnshire
Bird Club**

www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk

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FRONT COVER: Common Swift *Apus apus*

Frampton Marsh Jul 2nd 2016 © Neil Smith

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Welcome to the 2016 Bird Report



Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* Donna Nook Oct 15th 2016 © Graham Catley



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THE LINCOLNSHIRE BIRD CLUB 2016 REPORT

Welcome to the 2016 Lincolnshire Bird Report

On behalf of the Lincolnshire Bird Club (LBC) we are pleased to present our annual report on the birds of Lincolnshire. The publication of the Bird Report involves a huge amount of work, with many individuals involved in its publication. Thanks are due to the observers who submit records to LBC, the two bird recorders, John Clarkson and Phil Hyde, the Lincolnshire Bird Records Committee (LBRC), Roy Harvey and to Colin and Sheila Jennings for all the work undertaken in converting the raw data into the building blocks of the report. We would like to thank Valerie Daniels for proof-reading the report.

Contributing Authors

The LBC would like to thank all of the authors who volunteered their time to complete species write-ups or articles for the 2016 report:

Graham Catley
Andrew Chick
John Clarkson
Richard Doan
Phil Espin
Vin Fleming
Chris Grimshaw

Andrew Henderson
Grahame Hopwood
Phil Hyde
Richard Jackson
Steve Lorand
Ian Macalpine-Leny
James Siddle

Garry Steele
Bill Sterling
Ben Ward
Nicholas Watts
Kevin Wilson

Photographers

LBC is very grateful to the following photographers for supplying images for the 2016 report. All images included in the report have been obtained in Lincolnshire during 2016 and many are referred to in the text. All images are labelled with the photographer's name; their contact details are listed below.

Chaz Adland
Sean Brown
Graham Catley
Andrew Chick
John Clarkson
Jack Dawson
Peter Dewar
George Gregory

Chris Grimshaw
Roy Harvey
Russell Hayes
Richard Jackson
Mark Johnson
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Steve Nikols
Dave Roberts
James Siddle
Neil Smith
Graham Taylor
Ben Ward

Our thanks go also to **Stéph Thorpe** for her sketches of the Western Swamphen.

Records and contributions

The Lincolnshire Bird Report is an annual publication of records, articles and photographs relating to all aspects of Lincolnshire ornithology. We are very keen to hear from anyone who is interested in volunteering to help produce future bird reports, please contact chairman@lincsbirdclub.co.uk.

Submissions of Records

All observers are encouraged to submit records on a regular, at least monthly, basis as this helps considerably with managing the workload and speeding up production of the annual report. If it isn't possible to submit records until the end of the year, the deadline is **by the end of February of the following year**. Late records cause serious problems in drafting the systematic list and may be omitted. The names of all contributors will be published, unless individuals ask us to omit their names.

There are several ways of submitting records to LBC, and below we list some of the best. Please remember that, as a small, volunteer-run organisation, we are unable to monitor and extract records from the many personal blogs and similar online sources that now exist. Your records are valuable, so please make sure that they are sent somewhere secure and accessible.

Twitter: For short messages, to get the news out to others, you can tweet @lincsbirding.

LBC Forum: For LBC members, you can post sightings of what you have seen, where and when you saw them, on our forum (with an image if you have one). Go to the LBC website www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk, log in and follow the links to the forum.

LBC Template: Twitter and Forum records have to be transferred to the LBC database, which takes a lot of time. Submitting records using the LBC Excel spreadsheet template saves a lot of that work. You can either fill records into the spreadsheet yourself or export data into the spreadsheet from your recording software package, and email it to info@lincsbirdclub.co.uk. Download the template from www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/media/LBC_Template_import.zip.

BirdTrack: Many birders are now using BirdTrack (www.bto.org/birdtrack) to maintain their personal records online. All such records (barring confidential ones) for Lincolnshire are passed to us by BTO and are published in this report, subject to our usual checking procedures. LBC supports BirdTrack and a single submission to BirdTrack will suffice; there is no need for you to send duplicate records direct to LBC.

National Rarities

Nationally rare birds are indicated as such by the identifier **BBRC** (British Birds Rarities Committee) after the species name in the systematic list in this report. Consideration of records of these is by the BBRC and submission of details should be made direct to BBRC at www.bbrc.org.uk. Records of all such rarities will only be published in our report once assessed and accepted by BBRC. The submission of descriptions of national rarities is important. Bird news providers do not assess records passed to them and without full submission to BBRC such records cannot be published and will be lost.

County Rarities

Species or races considered rare at county level are dealt with by the Lincolnshire Bird Record Committee and are indicated as such by the identifier **LBRC** after the species name in the systematic list in this report. The committee currently comprises: John Clarkson, Steve Keightley, Nigel Lound, James Siddle, Andy Sims and Phil Hyde. The chairman of the 2016-17 LBRC is John Clarkson and Roy Harvey is secretary (roy.harvey100@btinternet.com).

Details and descriptions of LBRC species can be submitted by emailing them to the LBRC secretary or using the online form (visit www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/sightings and click on the green 'Submit a record' button).

All records of LBRC species should be submitted as soon as possible after the sighting and not left until the end of each year. County rarities accepted by the LBRC will be published in the report, together with the initials of the finder/identifier. The submission of description of county rarities is important. The verification of the data that appears in the annual report is essential to the production of an accurate and meaningful report. A systematic approach to the verification of ALL rare bird records, no matter who has reported them, prior to the production of the annual report is required before they are published.

From time to time the LBRC will reserve the right to seek additional details of other records deemed exceptional by virtue of, for example, date, location, or number. For further information on the treatment of county rarities, please contact one of the county recorders.

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LBC Data

LBC has a data sharing agreement with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership based at LWT headquarters, Banovallum House, Horncastle. All our bird data from the late 1990s onwards can be accessed by requesting a search from the Information Officer. Searches are free for members of LBC and students undertaking scientific research. Commercial organisations and others may need to pay a fee. There are restrictions on access to confidential data for rare breeding birds. Further details can be obtained from Charlie Barnes, Information Officer, GLNP on 01507 528381 and charlie.barnes@glnp.org.uk.



GLNP
GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE
NATURE PARTNERSHIP

Data Sources used in the 2016 Bird Report

LBC offers their thanks to the following individuals and organizations for supplying and letting us use their data in the 2016 bird report. Apologies to anyone we have missed off the list.

Alkborough Flats Partnership. The Alkborough Flats Partnership for supplying data from Alkborough Flats.

BirdGuides Data. Data supplied by BirdGuides Ltd has been used in the production of the 2016 bird report. Further details can be found at www.birdguides.com/.

BTO BBS Data. Scott Mayson, the National Organiser of the Breeding Birds Survey, for providing Lincolnshire specific BBS data. The BBS is run by the British Trust for Ornithology and is jointly funded by the BTO, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs – Northern Ireland, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

BTO BirdTrack Data. Data supplied by BirdTrack has been used in the production of the 2016 bird report. BirdTrack provides free online bird recording software for Britain and Ireland and is being developed in a partnership between the BTO, RSPB and Birdwatch Ireland. All Lincolnshire records are available for download by the LBC. Further details can be found at www.birdtrack.net.

BTO Heronry Data. LBC is grateful to Barrie Wilkinson, our county organiser, for supplying data on breeding Grey Heron and Little Egret in Lincolnshire. This long running dataset is extremely important for the monitoring of herons in Lincolnshire, and we would encourage all LBC members to submit data to this survey.

BTO WeBS Data. Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) data are used; kindly made available by the WeBS partnership, a joint scheme of the British Trust for Ornithology, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (the last on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland) in association with The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust. Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated. Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org).

BTO Woodcock Survey. Greg Conway, at BTO, for the 2016 results of the BTO/Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust Woodcock monitoring survey.

eBird. Data supplied by eBird has been used in the in the publication of the 2016 bird report. Further details can be found at www.ebird.org/

Forest Enterprise. For permission to use data collected on the heathland recreation project in Laughton Forest by Graham Catley, on behalf of Forest Enterprise.

Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust. For supplying Partridge count data for Lincolnshire.

Gibraltar Point Dataset. Kev Wilson and Richard Doan for supplying data from Gibraltar Point NNR and Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory, and for answering queries about records.

Grimsby Areas Members Group. Bill Sterling for submitting data from the Grimsby Areas Members Group.

Kestrel, Barn Owl and Little Owl Data. Alan Ball and Bob Sheppard for supplying data from their extensive ringing project in Lincolnshire.

LBC Database Team. All records that are submitted on the LBC Forum and via the online records system are collated by Colin and Sheila Jennings. The amount of work that Colin and Sheila do in gathering these records is outstanding, and forms the bedrock for this report. At the end of each month they produce a spreadsheet that contains all of the bird records for that month. We are grateful to Chris Grimshaw and Carl Annall for helping Colin and Sheila with data input. Colin Casey has been assisting the Jennings's by making improvements to the operation of the LBC records' database.

LBC website: A major revision of the LBC website (www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk) has been made during 2017, with work on it continuing. This has only been possible through a huge input of time and effort by Colin Casey, to whom we are extremely grateful. The website contains a section

summarising the status of all bird species recorded in Lincolnshire (the Lincs List); this section is being co-ordinated by Phil Hyde.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, including Dave Bromwich, Grahame Hopwood and Barrie Wilkinson.

Middleton Ecological Consultants. Thanks to Peter Middleton for a copy of the survey report of Nightjars on Crowle Moors.

North Lincolnshire Marsh Harrier Monitoring. Graham Catley for access to his marsh harrier monitoring data. For more details contact Graham Catley at graham.catley@btopenworld.com or via his website at <http://pewit.blogspot.com/>

Ringling Data. The Online BTO Ringing Report, the Boston Ringing Association, the Mid-Lincs Ringing Group, Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory, Wash Wader Group and the Birkland Ringing Group for submitting their annual ringing reports.

RSPB. For supplying data from their reserves at Frampton Marsh, Freiston Shore, Read's Island and Tetney Marsh. We are especially grateful to Anthony Bentley and Toby Collett for resolving queries concerning the Wash reserves.

Whisby Nature Park Dataset. Grahame Hopwood for supplying data from Whisby Nature Park.

Wildlife Recorder. Thanks to Jack Levene who is very generous with his time and patience while sorting out LBC database issues.

Andrew Chick and Phil Espin, February 2018

Review of the Year 2016

James Siddle

January

The highest count of **Black-tailed Godwit** in the first half of the year was 3000 at Freiston on New Year's Day. Two **Black Brant** were noted in the north of the county between Tetney and Donna Nook during the month from the 1st and another was noted at various sites in The Wash from the 23rd when c8000 **Brent Geese** were noted at Witham Mouth. Higher numbers of **Eurasian Wigeon** than the previous winter were noted in the Frampton, Witham and Freiston area with a peak of 11377.

There was an unusual passage of **Little Gulls** early in the month starting with 11 off Donna Nook on the 2nd and peaking at 31 off Gibraltar Point on the 4th. Offshore at Gibraltar Point on the 4th were a **Slavonian Grebe** and the first **Pomarine Skua** of the year. A **Rough-legged Buzzard** was at Tetney on the 5th. A **Waxwing** at Deeping High Bank on the 6th was the first of a very light scattering of winter records this year. A **Great Northern Diver** headed S off Gibraltar Point on the 10th and what was presumably this bird was again offshore, with a **Black-throated Diver**, on the 12th when a **Raven** was also noted on the reserve.

On the 14th, nine **Little Auks** were noted at Witham Mouth. There were three records of **Smew** during the month starting with a redhead at Freiston Shore on the 16th. A **Grey Phalarope** was a good find at Tetney Marsh on the 17th. The only **Shore Lark** in the first half of the year was at Cleethorpes from the 19th. A **Glossy Ibis** was seen just north of Boston on the 28th.

February

The first of around 16 **Caspian Gulls** during the year was noted at Norton Disney Pits on the 2nd. An adult **Black Brant** was on Croft Marsh and Gibraltar Point on the 4th along with 1619 **Brent Geese** and an excellent 23 **Water Pipits**. Good numbers of **Red-throated Divers** were offshore from the first half of the month onwards including counts of 134 off Huttoft and then 388 off Crook Bank. The highest numbers of **Fulmar** during the year were also noted in February with a high of 63 S off Gibraltar Point on the 8th.

A **Richard's Pipit** was at Goxhill Marsh on the 26th and remained into March. The first **Garganey** were two at Willow Tree Fen from the 27th.

March

Barnacle Geese numbers on the Humber peaked at 2180 on the 1st. A **Red Kite** that flew south at Gibraltar Point on the 2nd was the first of several sightings on the reserve during the month. The evening wader roost was quite spectacular at Gibraltar Point during the month, with up to 7500 **Bar-tailed Godwit**, 4150 **Dunlin**, 1000 **Sanderling**, 3110 **Grey Plover**, 7760 **Knot** and 5000 **Oystercatcher**. A **Richard's Pipit** was noted at Appleby Carrs on the 6th. On the 13th an astonishing c500 **Whooper Swans** flew north over Willow Tree Fen.

The first coastal migrant **Firecrest** of the year was discovered near Mill Hill at Gibraltar Point on the 18th and a **Woodlark** flew S there next day. On the 24th a total of 28 **Woodcock** was noted at Gibraltar Point. The first **Barn Swallow** of the year, at Nettleton on the 25th, was a week later than the recent average and the first **Sand Martins** on the 26th were two weeks later than the average for the previous eight years. On the 29th two **Common Cranes** flew S over Gibraltar Point and four **Firecrests** were on the reserve.

April

Early **Tree Pipits** flew south over Gibraltar Point and at Cleethorpes on the 2nd. **Hawfinch**, **Woodlark** and **Red Kite** were all at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd – the first of those being the only spring record in the county. There were now five **Firecrests** at Gibraltar Point on the 5th when a **Great Grey Shrike** was near Crowland. A **Yellow Wagtail** flew S at Gibraltar Point on the 7th and a **Hooded Crow** was noted there next day. Also on the 7th a **Green-winged Teal** was at Alkborough Flats. Raptor passage on the 13th at Gibraltar Point included both **Osprey** (the first of the year) and **Red Kite** and a fine first-summer male **Pied Flycatcher** - the first of three spring **Pied Flycatchers** in the county this year - was noted following an absence in spring in 2015 for this species. The first returning **Cuckoo** was at Alkborough Flats on the 13th and the first **Turtle Dove** (apart from an odd record at Goxhill on Mar 17th) was at Frampton from the 16th.

The earliest ever **Red-rumped Swallow** for the county flew south over Freiston Shore on the 15th. A **Cattle Egret** was in the Saltfleetby area on the 17th. Two **Common Redpolls** flew S at Gibraltar Point on the 18th. **Dotterel** were scarce this year and the first were three females at Theddlethorpe on the 23rd. A **Hoopoe** was in a garden at Burgh-le-Marsh on the 26th. The first records of **Spotted Flycatcher** for the year all came from Frampton with the earliest on the 29th.



Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Frampton Marsh May 3rd 2016 © Roy Harvey

May

Two **Spoonbills** were noted at Gibraltar Point on the 1st along with an **Osprey**. A **Black-winged Stilt** was at Frampton Marsh on the 2nd and remained until it visited Anderby on the 5th before returning to Frampton next day (acceptance by BBRC awaited). On the 3rd a **Rough-legged Buzzard** passed through Donna Nook. The first of only five **Montagu's Harriers** during the year was first seen at Alkborough Flats on the 4th. On the 5th a second calendar **Pallid Harrier** was at Conisholme – the third county record. Also on the 5th there were two **European Serins** at Frampton Marsh. The first of five spring **Temminck's Stints** was noted at Baston-Langtoft Pits on the 6th and there was a good scattering of **Wood Sandpipers** around the county in the first half of the month. There was also a moderate passage of Black Terns during the first ten days of the month with a peak of 15 past Chowder Ness on the 9th.

A magical weekend at Gibraltar Point began with the second county record of **Alpine Accentor** found at the feeding station next to Syke's Farm on the 7th. Much to disappointment of those assembled, the accentor wasn't present next day but a superb singing **Western Bonelli's Warbler**, a county first, was found at the north end of the West Dunes, and an **Osprey** and five **Spoonbills** flew over. Also on the 8th the only **Honey Buzzard** of the spring was noted at Donna Nook and the only **Wood Warbler** of the year was at Sea View Farm. Two **Wrynecks** were noted on the 9th; a singing bird at Gibraltar Point and another at Frampton Marsh. A **Hooded Crow** began an extended stay at Gibraltar Point from the 11th and a **Montagu's Harrier** was noted there on the 13th.

The first **Quail** was noted at Risby Warren on the 12th when the second **Glossy Ibis** of the year was at Manby Wetland. Highlight of the 12th though was a **Broad-billed Sandpiper** at Frampton Marsh. The county's seventh and earliest **Whiskered Tern** was at North Hykeham Pits on the 13th. On the 16th a calling **Corn Crane** was noted at Long Sutton. The only **Dotterel** of the month were two at Horseshoe Point on the 18th-19th. The **Golden Oriole** at Frampton Marsh on the 20th was a first for the reserve. A **Wryneck** was inland at Swinstead on the 29th.

June

On the 1st the only record of **Red-necked Phalarope** for the year, a male, was noted on the shore off Crook Bank and a female **Red-backed Shrike** was also at this site. At Alkborough Flats, the 308 **Reed Warbler** territories represented an increase of over a third on 2015. Light and variable easterly winds were a feature of the next few days and a few notable migrants appeared, starting with a singing **Great Reed Warbler** at Waters' Edge from the 5th for two days. Next day a **Marsh Warbler** was singing and occasionally showing well at Huttoft Pit. A male **Golden Oriole** was at Gibraltar Point on the 7th.

On the 13th a ringed **Caspian Tern** was at Middlemarsh Farm. This bird was joined by a second bird on Tennyson's Sands at Gibraltar Point where they entertained a steady stream of admirers for several days. An unseasonal adult **Redwing** was trapped at Gibraltar Point on the 21st (being seen there earlier and later in the season) and an **Osprey** flew over the same site on the 22nd. Numbers of breeding **Little Terns** at Gibraltar Point were down to 23 pairs from 32 in 2015. A **Hoopoe** at Trusthorpe on the 25th was an atypically dated record. It was a good breeding season for **Bearded Tit** at Alkborough with 33 pairs noted.

July

Five **Spoonbills** appeared at Gibraltar Point on the 2nd and numbers built on slowly during the month with a peak of nine, while at Alkborough Flats they reached 15. A Portuguese-ringed **Blackcap** was controlled at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd. The usual summer **Common Swift** movement peaked at 2872 past Gibraltar Point on the 11th. On the 16th the first of at least six autumn **Pectoral Sandpipers** was noted at West Ashby Pits from the 16th. On the 22nd a colour-ringed adult **Baltic Gull** was noted at Norton Disney Pits was a fantastic record (though acceptance of this by BBRC may not take place for a while).

Another **Caspian Tern** record came from Alkborough Flats on the 24th. On the same day, the only **Roseate Tern** of the year was at Gibraltar Point, and an adult **Broad-billed Sandpiper** was Frampton Marsh's second of the year – this bird showing very well until the 28th and on the latter date an adult **White-rumped Sandpiper** was found at the same site with a **Pectoral Sandpiper** also present during this period – a rather notable hat-trick!



Broad billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus* Frampton Marsh Jul 25th 2016 © Steve Keightley

August

The county's fifth **Squacco Heron** began an often elusive six day stay at Barton Pits from the 4th. Also at Barton Pits were an impressive 7000 **Sand Martin** coming into roost on the 10th. Numbers of terns and waders built up steadily during the month; 1630 **Common Terns** were Donna Nook on the 24th and there were 2000 **Sandwich Terns** at Gibraltar Point on the 9th increasing to 3000 by the 14th. A **Honey Buzzard** was photographed over Chambers Farm Wood on the 15th was the first of five during the autumn. There was a light easterly wind on the 16th and this duly produced a fine **Greenish Warbler** trapped in the East Dunes at Gibraltar Point. A **Corn Crake** was flushed from a path at Gibraltar Point on the 19th and there were now 18 **Spoonbills** there. A **Wryneck** appeared at Gibraltar Point on the 21st, originally on the main road, the bird relocated to the hedge and pathways near the Croft Marsh hides. A **Purple Sandpiper** was there the same day.

A male **Red-backed Shrike** was at Frampton Marsh on the 22nd. Passage of **Willow Warblers** at Gibraltar Point picked up from the 20th and there was a superb concentration of migrants there in light east-south east winds on the 23rd: ten **Pied Flycatchers** (increasing to 14 next day), 13 **Spotted Flycatchers**, 4 **Garden Warblers**, 250 **Willow Warblers**, 33 **Blackcaps**, 135 **Whitethroats**, 65 **Lesser Whitethroats**, 20 **Whinchats**, 20 **Wheatears**, 16 **Redstarts**, 80 **Yellow Wagtails** and 16 **Tree Pipits**. Many birds could be seen moving southward in waves through the East and West Dunes. During this period there was a substantial movement of **Curlew Sandpipers** through the county peaking at a very impressive 258 at Frampton Marsh on the 22nd. Also a Frampton Marsh, **Little Stints** peaked at 40 on the 28th. On the 23rd the first **Temminck's Stint** of the autumn was noted at Whisby on the 23rd. The second **Wryneck** of the autumn was also the second of the year at Frampton Marsh on the 28th.

The rarest bird of the year – a Britain's first **Western Swamphen** – began its extended stay at Alkborough Flats from the 30th having previously been seen at Minsmere in Suffolk. An **Osprey** flew over Gibraltar Point on the 31st.

September

A **Wryneck** was at Gibraltar Point on the 1st and 55,000 **Knot** came in to roost on the high tide there next day when a juvenile **Long-tailed Skua**, the first of a dozen seen during the year, was noted. Numbers of **Bar-tailed Godwit** peaked at 8000 at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd. An **Icterine Warbler** in sallows near North building at Gibraltar Point on the 5th was a rare Lincolnshire bird for recent times. On the 7th a **Long-billed Dowitcher** was noted flying south past Gibraltar Point. This bird was eventually relocated at Frampton Marsh on Oct 1st, adding to the latter site's fine autumn for shorebirds. On the same date, Sep 7th, four **Temminck's Stints** were noted at Frampton with another nearby at Freiston. In an increasing south-westerly wind on the 9th both **Long-tailed** and **Pomarine Skuas** were noted off Gibraltar Point. Visible migration at Gibraltar Point on the 11th included 4800 **Meadow Pipits**. **Spoonbill** numbers peaked at 22 at Alkborough Flats on the 14th.

The wind veered to the north on the 14th/15th and the first two **Yellow-browed Warblers** of the autumn appeared at Gibraltar Point with another at Chapel Pit - the forerunners of a record autumn influx. There were also six **Pied Flycatchers** at Gibraltar Point – the highest tally noted in September. A **Honey Buzzard** flew south over the East Dunes at Gibraltar Point mid-morning on the 16th.

The northerlies stiffened on the 17th, with bouts of heavy rain and poor visibility along the coast. Correspondingly 62 **Sooty Shearwaters** were noted off Gibraltar Point along with a **Pomarine Skua** and 16 **Manx Shearwaters**. On the same date there were also 46 **Sooties** and 22 **Manx** off Huttoft along with a juvenile **Sabine's Gull**. The next day was quite contrasting being sunny and warm with variable winds which eventually swung firmly to the east. A **Yellow-browed Warbler**, **Lapland Bunting** and offshore a **Sabine's Gull**, were noted at Gibraltar Point. The first **Leach's Petrel** since 2013 was off Crook Bank on the 18th, and a **Honey Buzzard** was there on the same day. From this point there were good numbers of **Yellow-browed Warblers** all along the coast.

The first of only four autumn **Grey Phalaropes** was off Gibraltar Point on the 25th. A **Richard's Pipit** flew S at Gibraltar Point on the 26th – the first of eight autumn records. Visible migration at Gibraltar Point on the 29th included 7000 **Barn Swallows** heading S along with 3500 **House Martins** and next day 439 **Reed Buntings**, 966 **Linnets** and 608 **Goldfinches** passed south.

October

The **Long-billed Dowitcher** – the tenth county record – at Frampton from the 1st remained until the 8th November. There was a major arrival of **Yellow-browed Warblers** on the 2nd with 24 at Gibraltar Point being more than double the previous reserve record set in 2015. Next day there were seven at Donna Nook and ten elsewhere in the county. Also on the 2nd three **Long-tailed Skuas** and 36 **Sooty Shearwaters** flew N off Gibraltar Point and a **Leach's Petrel** was off Huttoft with another off Killingholme on the 5th. Also on the 2nd there were 50 **Sooties** noted off Huttoft with c20 **Trusthorpe** and 37 off Mablethorpe and a **Puffin** was off Gibraltar Point. There was also a considerable movement of **Gannets** on the 2nd with highs of 1500 off Gibraltar Point and 1000 off Huttoft.

From this point onwards easterlies dominated the month and with it came a superb procession of rare and scarce migrants from the east – a phenomenon reflected along the whole east coast of Britain.

A **Little Bunting** was at Donna Nook on the 4th – the start of a superb run of scarce and rare migrants at this locality during the month. The year's only **Red-breasted Flycatchers** were at Donna Nook on the 5th and 6th. From the west a **Lesser Yellowlegs** was found at Butterwick Hale on the 6th when a **Siberian Stonechat**, probably of the form *stejnegeri*, was found towards the southern end of the reserve at Donna Nook. On the 7th there was an arrival of three **Pallas's Warblers** at Donna Nook – the first of nine individuals in this area during the month; also at Donna Nook a **Rosy Starling** arrived in the Stonebridge area. A **Pallas's Warbler** was also at Skegness on the 8th where the year's only **Bluethroat** (and the first in the county for three years) was noted; in addition eight **Yellow-browed Warblers** were at Cleethorpes and counts of common incoming arriving migrants included 500 **Goldcrests** in the dunes at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and 320 **Robins** at Gibraltar Point. There was a peak of 24 **Ring Ouzels** at Gibraltar Point on the 8th and a **Great Grey Shrike** was there on the 9th; one of five birds during the autumn. On the 10th the county's ninth **Red-flanked Bluetail** was found near Stonebridge at Donna Nook.

Two **Shore Larks** at Donna Nook from the 11th were the forerunners of some good counts by recent standards including a peak count of 28 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the 24th. The second **Red-flanked Bluetail** of the month was a very showy bird in the West Dunes at Gibraltar Point for several days from the 12th (acceptance by BBRC awaited). From the 14th small parties of **Tundra Bean Geese** were noted with four at Donna Nook being the first. These complemented an arrival of **White-fronted Geese** during the month with peak counts of 70 at Crook Bank on the 14th and 63 at Donna Nook the same day. Also on the 14th the second **Siberian Stonechat** of the autumn was noted at Donna Nook, this bird appearing to be the more expected *maurus*.

The 15th was a superb day at both Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point. In the morning at Gibraltar Point, a **Pallas's Warbler** was discovered in the East Dunes and in the afternoon a **Dusky Warbler** was trapped and ringed (having previously been heard calling on the 12th-13th) and over 480 birds were ringed during the day including 68 **Brambling** and 143 **Goldcrests** and also 1180 **Redwing** arrived with counts in the hundreds scattered all along the coast that day. At Donna Nook two **Radde's Warblers** were trapped and ringed in the south of the reserve – one in the morning and the second in the afternoon. A **Richard's Pipit** was at Gibraltar Point on the 16th. Also on the 16th the first **Waxwing** of the autumn was noted at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and there were records at nine other sites during the month with a peak of four at Gibraltar Point on the 26th.

On the 18th both a **Radde's Warbler** and the **Dusky Warbler** were noted at Gibraltar Point. A **Spotted Crane** was photographed near Sutton Bridge on the 19th. On the 22nd a somewhat elusive **Red-flanked Bluetail**, the third of the month and eleventh county record, was found in the pine wood at Chapel Six Marshes. A **Glossy Ibis** began an extended stay at Frampton Marsh from the 24th when an adult male **Northern Bullfinch** was trapped and ringed at Donna Nook, with a second bird there on the 29th. On the 25th a **Pallas's Warbler** was discovered along the roadside near the entrance to the reserve at Gibraltar Point and a **Richard's Pipit** was seen in the Outer Dunes. One of the highlights of the autumn was an **Eastern Black Redstart** at Donna Nook from the 26th – the first county record of one of these races. On the 29th a **Rough-legged Buzzard** was at Donna Nook and 128 **Whooper Swans** flew S over Gibraltar Point. It had certainly been a month to remember!



Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* Gibraltar Point Oct 15th 2016 © James Siddle

November

The month started with a **Waxwing**, three **Tundra Bean Geese** and a **Pomarine Skua** off Gibraltar Point on the 1st when 21 **Pomarines** and a **Leach's Petrel** were noted off Huttoft – with another of this species at the same site on the 24th. Also noted on the 1st were eight **Greater Scaup** off Huttoft, and there were 17 off Sutton on Sea on the 5th. There was a scattering of **Little Auk** records along the coast from the 2nd in light south-westerlies. On the 3rd a **Black Brant** was at Cleethorpes. On the 4th a **Cattle Egret** was at Stallingborough with a bird at Covenham on the 8th and then two were seen together near Skidbrooke and remained well into December.

By the 5th the wind had veered to a strong north-westerly and nine **Pomarine Skuas** passed Gibraltar Point. The wind persisted to the 7th, when two **Storm Petrels**, a **Long-tailed Duck** and a **Great Northern Diver** were off Gibraltar Point, while **Little Auk** sightings included ten at Huttoft. In addition, a **Puffin** was noted off Huttoft on the 7th. Also at Gibraltar Point on the 7th, a drake **Green-winged Teal** was noted on Tennyson's Sands – this bird also being seen at Middlemarsh Farm later in the month.

On the 8th a peak count of 100 **Bearded Tits** was made at Alkborough Flats and the third **Northern Bullfinch** of the autumn was at Gibraltar Point. On the same date a **Pallid Harrier**, which had crossed the Humber from the Welwick/Spurn area, began its stay in the Tetney to Donna Nook area. There were several double figure counts of **Waxwing** during the month with a peak of 24 at Burgh-le-Marsh on the 12th. In a poor year for the species, the first **Iceland Gull** of 2016 was noted off Crook Bank on the 13th and probably the same bird was seen sporadically at Manby from the 15th. On the 14th a good count of 2000 **Common Scoter** was off Theddlethorpe when a **Rough-legged Buzzard** was noted at Donna Nook and another was noted at Holland Fen on the 20th.

A **Great White Egret** flew S at Gibraltar Point on the 19th where a **Waxwing** and eight **Bewick's Swans** were also noted. On the 23rd a **Yellow-browed Warbler**, the last of the autumn, was noted briefly in the Plantation at Gibraltar Point. The only **Hooded Crow** of the second half of the year flew north at Skidbrooke on the 25th.

December

There were 2000 **Fieldfare** at Frampton on the 6th and 1500 **Redwing** at Barton Pits on the 9th. Several **Bewick's Swans** appeared early in the month and then peaked at seven near Wroot on the 17th. A wintering **Whimbrel** was noted at Holbeach Marsh on the 14th.

A small arrival of geese was noted mid-month including 33 **White-fronted** and 13 **Barnacles** at Gibraltar Point on the 17th. An **Iceland Gull** was at Cleethorpes from the 19th when a **Great Grey Shrike** was at Claxby, near Alford. There were two records of **Smew** during the month – at Kirkby and Barton Pits. The year ended with ten **Waxwings** at Burton upon Stather and 15 in Grimsby.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 2016

Collated and edited by: Andrew Henderson and Andrew Chick

Contributing Authors: Graham Catley, Andrew Chick, John Clarkson, Richard Doan, Phil Espin, Vin Fleming, Chris Grimshaw, Andrew Henderson, Grahame Hopwood, Phil Hyde, Richard Jackson, Steve Lorand, Ian Macalpine-Leny, Bill Sterling, Ben Ward.

The Systematic List contains summaries of the status and occurrence of all species recorded in Lincolnshire in 2016. It is based on the many thousands of records submitted to and collated by Lincolnshire Bird Club (LBC). Clearly, not every record can be mentioned but they all help to inform the writers of the species accounts. All records are retained on the LBC database. Note that the order and names of species differ a little from the last few years. We have attempted to maintain list stability against the background of rapidly changing taxonomy but, with the adoption by the British Ornithologists' Union in January 2018 of the International Ornithological Congress world bird list (version 7.3), we have altered to this sequence with this report. We are using mainly the IOC recommended English names or alternatives suggested by the BOU, with our own variants in a very few instances. An index of English names is provided towards the rear of the report.

Key to acronyms:

LBRC - Rare or scarce in Lincolnshire. Description and/or photograph required for consideration by the Lincolnshire Bird Club Records Committee.

BBRC - National rarity: Description and/or photograph required for submission to British Birds Rareties Committee. Records in this category are not published in the annual report or input to the database if they have not been accepted by BBRC.

BBBP - Nationally scarce breeding species monitored by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. Any breeding season sighting in suitable habitat should be reported to the Rare Breeding Bird Panel representative as soon as possible.

BOCC4 - Birds of Conservation Concern 4: Eaton, M.A., Aebischer, N.J., Brown, A.F., Hearn, R.D., Lock, L., Musgrove, A.J., Noble, D.G., Stroud, D.A. and Gregory, R.D. (2015) Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the population status of birds in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man. *British Birds* 108: 708-746. Available online at britishbirds.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/BoCC4.pdf

BB	British Birds	NNR	National Nature Reserve
BBRC	British Birds Rareties Committee	NR	Nature Reserve
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey	RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology	SQ	Sand Quarry
CP	Country Park	STW	Sewage Treatment Works
GC	Golf Course	WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
GP	Gravel Pit(s)	WWT	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee		

Tables:

Tables are provided to convey information in a minimum of space. The sites included vary between species, and are selected to include areas holding significant numbers (sometimes defined in the text), usually with counts in several or many months. The figures shown are the highest counts for each month.

WeBS data

For waterfowl (wildfowl, waders and other waterbirds), tables use data from the LBC database plus that from Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory and RSPB Reserves, to whom we are grateful for sharing this information. In addition, Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) data are used, kindly made available by the WeBS partnership, a joint scheme of the British Trust for Ornithology, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (the last on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland) in association with The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust. Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated.

Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org). Where a site's counts comprise solely WeBS data, the site name is marked by an asterisk. The tables for some species also give the sums of Lincolnshire WeBS sector totals for the Humber (which extends to Mablethorpe) and The Wash. WeBS counts extend systematic coverage away from more intensively watched areas but are, in most cases, made on a single date near the middle of the month, and thus may miss higher counts made on other dates. Note that there may occasionally be overlap between sites in the table; we try to avoid it but occasionally it is preferable to not presenting important data. An example of this concerns the Witham Mouth WeBS sector, which includes part of Freiston Shore RSPB reserve and is used by birds from both Freiston and Frampton reserves.

BBS data

The Breeding Bird Survey data are kindly supplied by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). The Breeding Bird Survey is run by the BTO and is jointly funded by the BTO, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs - Northern Ireland, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage), and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Each year, we choose a few species to illustrate population trends in Lincolnshire with comparable data for the East Midlands region (which includes most of Lincolnshire) and for England as a whole. In most cases, we use the smoothed indices for East Midlands and England, so as to draw attention to long-term trends rather than to year-on-year changes. Because the Lincolnshire data are unsmoothed, and because of the relatively small sample size (about 80 out of over 3500 UK squares are in the county), the lines showing Lincolnshire trends tend to be more variable. Lincolnshire indices are available for only a limited number of species, for which adequate county data are available, and we show a changing selection of these each year. We also show a few charts illustrating changes in numbers counted on BBS squares for other, less common, species. It should be stressed that these are less reliable as guides to population trends than the indices calculated by the BTO, but they may provide an indication of how species are faring. They show the percentage of BBS squares in which that species occurred each year, and the average number of individuals of a species counted per square (including all those covered, not just those occupied by the species), against the background of the smoothed BBS index for England. Additional BBS coverage is desirable and anyone wishing to help with this valuable and straightforward survey should contact their local BTO representative (see inside front cover) or visit the BTO website.

Ring recovery data

A selection of the more interesting recoveries or sightings of ringed birds affecting Lincolnshire are included with the species entries. These should be fairly self-explanatory, with the ring numbers in the left hand columns, then details of the individual and the recovery method, then the dates, and in the right hand column the locations of ringing and recovery/sighting. Where no county (or overseas country) is specified, the location is in Lincolnshire. In many cases, additional comment is included in the text.

Rare and scarce species

Many reports of rare and scarce species are submitted each year without documentation, in some cases even without a named observer. This poses difficulties, because we cannot be certain that mistakes have not been made, something that is important for understanding of species' status now and, even more so, in the future when patterns of occurrence are reviewed and analysed. However, because of the numbers of records now coming without supporting details, we continue to take a pragmatic approach for this report. Records have been included in the systematic list if the LBRC was confident that a mistake was unlikely, taking into account the experience of observers, the circumstances of the sighting and any verbal information received, and how the record fits into the known pattern of occurrence of the species. Information is actively sought by LBRC when possible. This approach will be kept under active review for future reports. If a significant record is missing from the report and documentation is available, please let the editorial team know. Records, including those from national information services, which have no named observer, may often be excluded. Please note that this can apply to reports of commoner species that are out of season or in atypical locations, as well as to LBRC species.

Website

The recently revised Lincolnshire Bird Club website includes a section describing the status of species in the county. Brief summaries are available to all but more detailed information can be seen by LBC members. Population trends and seasonal patterns of occurrence are described, with detailed listing of the records of the rarest species. This can be found at:

www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/information/the-lincs-list

Information on how to submit records to LBC are provided at:

www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/sightings

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Winter visitor. Three distinct races occur.



Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* Frampton Marsh Dec 11th 2016 © Neil Smith

Black Brant *B.b. nigricans*: Former vagrant, first seen in 1982 with just three records to 1991. Now very scarce but annual in small numbers, with Dark-bellied flocks. **LBRC**

A minimum of four individuals was seen in the first quarter, and one at the end of the year. One was on Tetney Marsh on Jan 1st (CA, AJH *et al.*) and 5th (CDA), and presumably the same bird at Donna Nook on Jan 17th and 19th (SL *et al.*), at Tetney Marsh on Feb 10th (CA, DKW) and at North Coates Marsh on Feb 27th and on Mar 8th, when a second bird was also present (CA, APC). An adult was at Gibraltar Point on Feb 4th-5th (KMW *et al.*). In The Wash, one was at Witham Mouth on Jan 23rd (DRob) and presumably the same bird was seen again at Frampton Marsh on Feb 23rd and Mar 12th (TC), which was the last of spring. In autumn, one was at Cleethorpes on Nov 3rd (DJB).

In addition, birds considered to be hybrids between Black Brant and other races of Brent Goose were at Frampton Marsh on Feb 23rd and May 14th-15th (JB, SK *et al.*), and at Gibraltar Point on Feb 26th and Mar 3rd, and on Dec 22nd (GPBO). The last was thought to be Pale-bellied x Black Brant hybrid. There was also one at Tetney Marsh on Nov 19th.

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B. b. bernicla*: very common coastal winter visitor Sep-May, mainly to The Wash and outer Humber. Scarce but regular in summer, especially on The Wash. Occasional inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	2490	1976	623	507	415	2	1	-	68	1788	2599	2494
Tetney-Somercotes	2500	1600	1070	507	415	2	2	1	88	2000	1834	1717
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	589	598	183	-	-	-	-	-	12	361	713	777
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	12721	10973	8438	6586	4465	20	15	2	-	2359	4579	8952
Gibraltar Point	800	1651	1500	200	101	55	5	-	55	400	750	1115
Wainfleet	570	762	1450	3	37	-	-	-	-	-	300	542
Friskney*	1170	860	226	85	-	-	-	-	-	363	638	1149
Wrangle	3200	2100	-	35	104	-	-	-	-	360	-	2850
Leverton*	744	689	622	559	118	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Butterwick*	888	674	558	251	133	7	-	-	-	155	460	522
Freiston Shore	2500	4000	2500	1000	1101	3	13	16	25	1012	137	620
Witham*	1200	700	250	1225	1200	-	-	-	-	-	250	2400
Frampton Marsh	2000	2500	4000	2000	1500	10	5	140	210	3000	4000	2500
Welland*	381	1040	1300	1551	526	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dawsmere*	-	-	250	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terrington*	1500	1760	2100	690	710	-	-	-	-	130	745	-

The table includes most counts of 500 or more, but there were also c8000 at Witham Mouth on Jan 23rd and 1800 on Kirtan Marsh on Dec 27th. These counts no doubt involve birds already represented in the table; there is much overlap between the areas shown. The Humber counts were well down on those of 2015, while in The Wash they were less different, with some sectors up and others down. As usual, high numbers persisted in The Wash well into May, with 1500 still at Tabbs Head on the 16th, but mostly small totals after that apart from some passage flocks. The latter included 95 N at Gibraltar Point on May 26th, 48 there on the 27th and 55 N on Jun 2nd. Otherwise there were just single figure counts during June-July until 13 appeared at Freiston Shore on Jul 23rd. Away from the favoured localities, there was one at Covenham Res on Jan 19th, singles at Barton Pits on Feb 21st, Mar 21st and May 12th (a sickly bird), two at Alkborough Flats on Jan 1st, with one there on May 4th, and six at North Killingholme Haven on Oct 5th.



Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B. b. bernicla* Frampton Marsh Mar 25th 2016 © Neil Smith

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *B.b. hrota*: scarce coastal winter visitor, in variable numbers.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Humberston-Grainthorpe	2	3	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Gibraltar Point	2	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	1
Freiston Shore	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	5	1	1	2	1	1	-	1	-	1

In addition to those in the table, singles were reported from Holbeach Marsh in January and Grimsby in February. This was another year with unexceptional numbers. The highest count was five at Frampton Marsh on Jan 2nd. A bird thought to be a hybrid between Pale and Dark-bellied Brent Geese was at Gibraltar Point on May 3rd, apparently paired with a Dark-bellied bird.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Common resident, introduced from North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The taxonomic status of Canada geese has recently changed with Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* and Cackling Goose *B. hutchinsii* now being recognised as two distinct species. Only Canada Goose occurs as a feral resident in Britain.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	156	34	28	2	10	-	5	20	100	202	206	132
Read's Island/South Ferriby	17	237	87	2	33	1	126	68	150	-	-	80
Barton-Barrow Pits	25	38	10	31	15	36	16	49	70	40	70	15
Donna Nook	1	-	-	2	7	-	-	-	116	267	-	-
Covenham Res	18	8	9	5	2	114	14	19	105	21	19	-
Manby Wetland	200	1	9	4	3	3	7	12	3	17	100	120
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	140	36	18	17	11	9	-	142	242	400	268	96
Gibraltar Point	89	93	48	30	31	58	56	49	445	76	100	100
Freiston Shore	660	100	11	20	6	1	10	-	-	39	185	21
Frampton Marsh	100	50	20	30	50	23	76	350	37	91	500	103
Riseholme Lake	105	28	215	11	-	-	195	-	43	268	64	-
Whisby NR	43	10	43	7	5	39	8	108	84	8	30	18
Norton/Thurlby area	15	18	8	8	6	-	23	36	95	100	45	4
Bardney	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	100	133	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	6	7	18	10	25	12	14	20	6	-	-	1
Culverthorpe Lake	-	4	4	4	-	7	-	50	100	100	100	30
Grimsthorpe Lake	450	75	41	-	-	-	-	-	325	-	220	9
Holywell Lake	34	2	29	-	-	-	-	-	26	65	-	36

The table includes the majority of sites holding 75 or more birds. The highest site counts were 660 at Freiston Shore on Jan 16th, 450 at Grimsthorpe Lake on Jan 17th, 445 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 4th, c400 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe on Oct 1st, and c500 at Frampton Marsh on Nov 13th.



Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* Grainthorpe Apr 17th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Fairly common feral resident on the Humber; in most years scarce/very scarce elsewhere. Wild birds are occasional winter visitors to the coast.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough/Whitton Sand	1330	2020	2180	1400	500	73	174	10	650	1	1600	-
Cleethorpes-Tetney	80	1	-	-	5	6	92	-	90	-	50	1
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	8	11	13
Freiston Shore	30	3	3	1	30	1	-	-	-	1	-	2
Frampton Marsh	6	2	2	3	4	6	-	1	-	2	1	10

Numbers at the top of the Humber reached over 2000 this year at the end of February and in early March, peaking at 2180 on Mar 1st. More or less the whole population was on Alkborough Flats then (although as mentioned previously, they spend much of the time, and most nest, on the Yorkshire side of Whitton Sand) and this explains the lower numbers at other times of year. Numbers using the Cleethorpes-Tetney area were little different from in 2015, but the appearance of occasional flocks elsewhere in the county perhaps hints at further expansion. In addition to those in the table, there were 16 at Trent Port (Marton) on Nov 25th and 16 also at nearby Torksey on Dec 4th. A few birds were noted well inland, including those up the Trent, and singles at Woodhall Spa Airfield on Jan 8th, Kirkby on Bain GP on Jun 9th, Whisby NR on Dec 11th and Norton Disney Pits on Dec 27th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Formerly a common resident in the Fens, up to about 1800. Feral population established in the 1950s with rapid expansion and now common. Wild birds may occur (scarce) Sep-Apr, but difficult to detect.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	211	371	193	40	300	293	520	230	500	404	860	18
Messingham SQ	350	30	20	60	40	14	5	270	15	112	350	150
Read's Island	82	8	70	5	50	1	105	318	145	76	-	2
Bagnoor Floods	230	-	8	1	36	100	-	4	80	1	-	-
Barton Pits	140	98	4	16	45	190	140	30	410	50	230	3
Covenham Res	200	22	23	10	3	10	-	60	398	55	134	160
Manby Wetland	310	1	-	3	3	-	-	119	-	-	100	350
Gibraltar Point	27	21	10	30	26	15	3	5	212	127	9	5
Freiston Shore	100	6	24	20	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
Frampton Marsh	150	50	18	20	40	2	30	95	45	35	6	25
Hagnaby Lock Fen	79	108	13	20	14	8	112	67	309	-	6	2
Whisby-N Hykeham	98	104	96	66	84	171	100	36	15	102	120	224
Norton/Thurlby area	150	10	8	5	4	10	10	212	20	150	100	150
Fiskerton-Nocton	850	98	26	40	13	4	36	400	554	451	653	124
Woodhall Spa Airfield	500	-	37	24	-	290	-	-	390	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	150	200	110	46	60	260	66	150	740	700	-	180
Culverthorpe Lakes	200	150	40	40	-	17	11	-	116	106	200	200
Deeping Lakes	140	7	27	31	50	224	32	96	171	17	300	205
Baston-Langtoft	-	50	35	10	-	12	110	-	400	45	550	1
Grimsthorpe Lake	215	140	99	-	79	-	-	-	65	-	380	201
Marston STW	82	40	100	10	-	-	-	85	34	400	39	203

The table includes all regularly counted sites holding significant numbers and all those holding 250 or more, except for 250 at Benniworth in January, 350 at Biscathorpe in September and many hundreds at Nebraska Farm, Kirton in Lindsey, in October. While numbers generally appear high, the average and maximum counts at most of the tabulated sites were lower than in 2015. This was especially noticeable on the Humber, where the peak at Alkborough Flats of 860 on Nov 23rd was over 400 lower than the peak of 1280 in 2015. There were exceptions, and the counts of 850 at Bardney pits on Jan 17th and c740 at Kirkby on Bain GP on Sep 2nd were noteworthy. Breeding was widely reported but with few significant counts. Five broods totalling 25 young were at Whisby NR on Apr 29th. Only three broods were seen at Alkborough Flats in what appeared to be a second poor breeding season in a row.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Common winter visitor Sep-Apr, mainly to the Humber and Wash, but many coastal and inland movements. A few injured/escaped birds occasional in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber & coast</i>												
Wroot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1000	1000	243
Whitton Sand	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	6700	-
Alkborough Flats	3000	145	35	1	1	-	-	-	12	305	205	1500
Read's Island area	3000	1100	-	19	-	-	-	-	1700	5200	8720	1770
Barton Pits	2000	298	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Goxhill-East Halton	786	700	15	-	-	-	-	-	70	-	1638	4500
Cleethorpes-Tetney	40	155	-	-	2	-	-	-	103	200	260	415
Donna Nook	-	-	220	220	-	-	-	-	39	772	147	210
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	1209	950	4	-	-	-	-	-	195	800	200	290
<i>The Wash</i>												
Gibraltar Point	890	843	16	15	5	2	-	-	353	1950	2818	1500
Frampton Marsh	600	500	5	2	2	-	-	-	-	1200	1000	1800

The table includes the majority of locations at which counts of 500 or more were made regularly. There were similar counts more widely within the feeding range of the Humber flock and, elsewhere, mainly as single counts of passage birds. Early in the year, the highest count was 5700 at Wingland Marsh on Jan 6th, the peak of short-term presence in the area. The highest counts close to the Humber were 3000 feeding on sugar beet tops at Bonby Top and 3000 at Alkborough Flats on Jan 22nd. Numbers diminished through February-March, though there were 1100 at Read's Island on Feb 29th, and the only three figure counts in April were 220 at Donna Nook on the 9th and 153 over East Keal on the 10th. Frequent records of up to four came through May-August, mainly from Gibraltar Point and The Wash and most involving injured birds. The first autumn arrival was c60 at Hibaldstow on Sep 15th, with more following widely on subsequent days. There were 1700 at Read's Island by the 20th. Movement overland and along the coast was observed widely, mainly towards the south-east and contrasting with the north-west passage seen in spring. Around 6800 moved over Gibraltar Point in directions between south and east between mid September and the end of November, though these counts are complicated by the presence of flocks using the local area, which peaked at 2000 on Nov 1st-5th and 20th-23rd. At Frampton Marsh, the highest count was 1800 on Dec 22nd. The peak count on the Humber was 15420 on Nov 4th, with 6700 on Whitton Sand and 8720 on Read's Island. These birds spread out to feeding areas, some in Yorkshire, including up to 1000 near Wroot and 4500 on Goxhill Marsh. The Humber count was down on that of 2015 (a record 18430), a trend similar to the 10% decline of the whole of the Iceland/Greenland Pink-footed Goose population. Several colour-marked Pink-feet were seen around the Humber; these sightings help to elucidate the movements around Britain in winter, between key areas such as north-east and south-west Scotland, Lancashire, the Humber and Norfolk. Additional detail is now being provided by satellite tag information (see <http://telemetry.wikispaces.com/pinkfeet2> for the movements of birds using the Humber in 2016/17).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris*

Scarce winter visitor, mainly coastal, in variable numbers. **LBRC**

Tundra Bean Goose and Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* are now treated as separate species. We hope that observers seeing Bean Geese will make every effort to determine which species they belong to. However, in most instances we are likely to assume that those not specifically identified are Tundra Bean Geese.

There were no acceptable records in the first half of the year. In the period of persistent easterly winds in the autumn, a number of parties were seen; all those seen well (marked by † below) were Tundra Bean Geese. The first group was four† at Donna Nook on Oct 14th, and in that area there were also two† on the 15th, six on the 18th and two on the 26th (CA, GPC, SL). Other sightings at Cleethorpes, Tetney and Rimac at this time were not supported by any documentation but may have referred to the same birds. One was seen at Covenham Res on Oct 17th (GPL). At Chapel Six Marshes, there were two† on Oct 21st (DRob) and eight† on Oct 22nd (ACL). At Gibraltar Point, a long series of records (KMW, BHe, RDn *et al.*) involved two on Oct 15th and 18th, one† on the 21st, two† on the 24th-25th, one† on the 26th, five† N on the 27th, three† NW on Nov 1st, two† on the 2nd, three† on Nov 20th and 23rd, and one† on the 25th. Many of these were birds seen with Pink-feet. Four were on Tetney Marsh on Nov 17th (RL). Up the Humber, there had been one† on Bonby Carrs on Oct 28th (GPC, ND). In December, one† was at Cove Farm Quarry

(Westwoodside) on the 3rd (CRo), and later another influx began. Five† were at Goxhill Marsh on Dec 19th (GPC) and then seven† there on the 22nd-24th (GPC) with five† on the 26th (SRo) and one† on the 29th (SRo). One† was at Winteringham on Dec 23rd (ND) with eight† there on the 27th (ND, WG). Far to the south, two† were at Frampton Marsh on Dec 25th with nine† at Moulton Seas End on the 27th (WB).

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Scarce winter visitor Sep-Apr; occasionally fairly common. Two distinct races occur.

Greenland White-fronted Goose *A.a. flavirostris*: very scarce. **LBRC**

Two (adult and first winter) were at Theddlethorpe St Helen on Jan 1st-3rd (JRW, RLb) with the immature bird remaining at Theddlethorpe and Saltfleetby until Jan 21st (JRW *et al.*).

European White-fronted Goose *A.a. albifrons*: scarce but regular; occasional larger influxes.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	9	-	-	18	-	32
Winteringham	3	-	-	-	-	20
Barton Pits	-	-	-	-	2	43
Goxhill-East Halton	11	-	-	-	-	30
Tetney Marsh	-	4	-	32	-	6
Donna Nook	-	-	-	63	-	7
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	5	4	-	70	-	-
Anderby-Chapel Six Marshes	5	5	6	21	-	19
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	-	-	45
Gibraltar Point	3	3	-	25	-	33
Friskney*	-	-	-	-	-	33
Freiston Shore	32	4	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	30	-	-	-	6	2

As can be seen from the table (not usually justified for this species), there were relatively high numbers at widespread coastal and estuarine locations at both ends of the year. The table includes most sites with counts of 20 or more. In the first quarter, there were scattered individuals or groups in single figures, plus larger number in two areas. A flock of 30 arrived at Frampton Marsh on Jan 8th with 21 there on the 9th and then up to 32 at Freiston Shore during Jan 13th-24th. At Goxhill, there were 11 with Pink-feet (as were many of the flocks this year) on Jan 11th. Up to four remained at Freiston Shore into February, and other small groups included three at Gibraltar Point and five at Huttoft Bank Pit and nearby for much of February. Inland records in the first quarter were singles at Covenham Res on Jan 10th and Woodhall Spa on Feb 20th. There were regular reports of five at Huttoft Bank Pit to Mar 8th, plus one later report of six there on Mar 20th.

In autumn, there was a significant arrival in the easterly airflow of early October, beginning with 14 at Anderby Marsh on the 7th and 17 at Donna Nook on the 8th. A few days later, there were 14 at Alkborough Flats, 63 at Donna Nook and (perhaps the same) 70 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe on the 14th. Those were the highest totals of the year, but over the next ten days, there were up to 42 at Donna Nook, 21 at Chapel Six Marshes and 25 at Gibraltar Point as well as briefer presence of flocks elsewhere. There were then fewer until mid December, when a new arrival began, with 33 arriving from the east at Gibraltar Point on Dec 17th. On the 18th, there were 33 in the Friskney WeBS sector and (presumably different) 19 at Gibraltar Point, while in the north, ten were feeding at Barton upon Humber while 33 flew W, with flocks totalling 32 at Alkborough Flats. Flocks remained to the year-end, including up to 30 at Goxhill on the 19th-24th, up to 45 at Middlemarsh Farm on the 21st-29th and 20 at Winteringham on the 31st. Inland records in the last quarter were two at Banthorpe GP on Oct 13th, two W at Covenham Res on Oct 17th, two at Baston-Langtoft GP on at least Nov 2nd and Dec 23rd, and 23 over Sloothby on Dec 26th. One of the flock at Middlemarsh Farm in late December had a neck collar; it was a female hatched in 2015, presumably in Russia, which wintered in The Netherlands in 2015/16 but came over to England in 2016/17.

NLA	First-year female	27-01-2015	Maren-Kessel, Lage Velden, Vorstweg; 51°47'N 5°25'E (Noord-Brabant) The Netherlands
7176011		06-03-2015	Woudbloem: 53°12'N 6°44'E (Groeningen) The Netherlands 183km NNE 0y 1m 7d
		12-10-2015	Tonnekreek-de wachter: 51°41'N 4°28'E (Noord-Brabant) The Netherlands 66km WSW 0y 8m 15d

05-11-2015 Hoeven-brede balrouw: 51°35N 4°34'E (Noord-Brabant) **The Netherlands** 62Km WSW 0y 9m 9d
 04-12-2015 Standaardbuiten-eerste kruisweg: 51°37N 4°31'E (Noord-Brabant) **The Netherlands** 65km WSW 0y 10m 7d
 08-01-2016 Hoeven-palingstraat: 51°36N 4°36'E (Noord-Brabant) **The Netherlands** 59km WSW 0y 11m 11d
 28-11-2016 Hoeven-papeweg: 51°36N 4°35'E (Noord-Brabant) **The Netherlands** 61km WSW 1y 10m 1d
 22-12-2016 Middlemarsh Farm, near Skegness: 53°08N 0°17'E 379km WNW 1y 10m 25d



European White-fronted Goose *A. a. albifrons* Barton Pits Dec 18th 2016 © Graham Catley

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Humber WeBS totals	54	66	11	65	98	33	77	169	72	12	29	25
Wash WeBS totals	19	26	35	35	69	83	32	22	26	11	11	28
South Ferriby	-	2	-	2	43	-	31	62	37	2	-	-
Barton Pits	16	24	14	9	12	16	42	31	23	16	16	22
Barrow-Goxhill	12	16	4	20	5	8	23	11	3	1	11	3
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	49	70	54	60	61	20	11	14	24	12	4	13
Wroot	42	1	-	47	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Brayford Pool, Lincoln	7	15	13	11	4	-	12	-	-	12	5	-
Whisby NR	48	27	24	17	18	22	25	32	51	48	62	66
Thurlby/Norton GP	4	6	4	3	4	3	78	102	75	105	146	73
Branston Fen	113	69	28	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	-
Five Mile Ho-Bardney*	45	41	33	81	160	42	-	-	76	-	-	61
Bardney-Nocton area	121	75	10	21	29	23	11	8	50	39	25	48
Kirkstead-Chapel Hill*	20	2	-	-	5	-	4	10	15	25	38	42
Spalding-Crowland area	207	187	89	88	110	105	24	15	109	117	137	107
Willow Tree Fen	6	4	14	17	8	2	1	6	3	21	3	50
Deeping area pits	29	22	20	25	32	56	102	123	78	23	15	42

In addition to the Lincolnshire Humber and Wash WeBS count totals, the table shows the peak monthly counts for most sites with counts of over 50 birds. There were also 62 at Baston Fen in Apr. There is no doubt overlap between counts occurs in some areas, including the Branston-Bardney area. The data for Brayford Pool have been retained, though numbers reported there this year were low. The largest concentrations as usual were along the R Welland, including 182 between Spalding and Borough Fen on Jan 17th and 181 there on Feb 21st. Also noteworthy were 160 along the R Witham between Bardney Bridge and Five Mile House on May 9th, and 146 on

Norton Disney Pits on Nov 13th. Reports of breeding included seven pairs that hatched young at Barton Pits, and five pairs at Kirkby on Bain GP, though few of the four broods survived long, plus scattered single pairs elsewhere. The ringing recovery below is strikingly similar to one published last year; both involved birds ringed at Berwick-upon-Tweed in 1996, found near Spalding and Boston a year apart. Berwick is a traditional moult location but most of the swans using it come from much closer than Lincolnshire; relatively few Mute Swans travel more than 100km.

Z87568	Second-year Female	05-08-1996	Berwick-upon-Tweed: 55°45'N 2°0'W (Northumberland)
	Alive (ring read in field)	11-12-2007	Shorts Corner, Boston: 53°2'N 0°2'W 328km SSE 11y 4m 6d
	Alive (ring read in field)	05-03-2016	Harvestman Farm, Shorts Corner, Boston: 53°2'N 0°2'W 328km SSE 19y 7m 0d

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

C.c. bewickii: Scarce passage migrant/winter visitor, mainly Oct-Mar and exceptional in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wroot	8	9	-	-	-	7
Horseshoe Point	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby	5	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	2	-	-	-	-	1
Branston-Nocton Fens	6	6	7	-	-	2
Pinchbeck-Spalding	-	-	-	-	-	4
Willow Tree Fen	-	-	-	-	-	4

Two wintering groups were present early in the year. The five that arrived at Wroot in December 2016 increased to eight on Jan 16th, with nine on Feb 7th, but none reported thereafter. At Branston-Nocton Fens, where birds had been present since November, 1-4 were reported in early January increasing to six by Jan 25th and with a final count of seven on Mar 3rd, which were the last anywhere in spring. Elsewhere there were two at Saltfleetby on Jan 8th and (perhaps the same birds) two S at Gibraltar Point on Jan 9th, with further records at Saltfleetby of three on Jan 12th and five on Jan 15th. The first report in autumn involved one at Witham Mouth on Oct 20th with two at Frampton Marsh on the 31st. Eight flew past the visitor centre at Gibraltar Point on Nov 19th. Wintering birds appeared in early December. There were four in the Willow Tree Fen-Pinchbeck area on Dec 2nd and 14th, with 1-2 there later in the month. In the north-west, three were at Cove Farm Quarry on Dec 3rd and seven between there and Wroot on the 17th-18th. At Bardney, there were two on Dec 18th.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Fairly common passage migrant/winter visitor, mainly Oct-Apr and exceptional in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wroot	90	26	14	1	-	-	-	-	-	20	18	130
Alkborough Flats	12	17	123	11	-	-	-	-	-	52	10	-
Donna Nook	3	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	68	26
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	57	52	62	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	79	9
Sandilands-Mogg's Eye	54	56	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	12
Gibraltar Point	10	7	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	128	53	23
Frampton Marsh	40	66	120	7	-	2	-	-	-	45	36	40
Whisby NR	-	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	6	3
Branston-Nocton Fens	27	30	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	68	117

The table includes the majority of counts of 40 or more, but there was a scattering of records of 40-60 at other sites. In addition, there was a count of about 500 flying N over Willow Tree Fen on Mar 13th. This is believed to be a record count for Lincolnshire by a considerable margin. Wintering numbers at the start of the year, especially at Wroot, were a little lower than for the past two winters but there was a high count of 130 at Wroot on Dec 17th. Spring passage was most evident during Mar 10th-31st, with high counts including 40 at Donna Nook on Mar 10th, 120 at Frampton Marsh on the 12th, 123 at Alkborough Flats on the 11th, the 500 over Willow Tree Fen, 50 at Sutton St James and 40 over Whisby NR on the 13th, 51 at Toft Newton Res on the 26th and 49 at Thurlby Fen on the 31st. Counts tailed off quickly in April but included 11 at North Rauceby on the 11th and the last migrant at Alkborough Flats on Apr 16th. A few stayed into the summer, including two at Frampton Marsh on Apr 19th and Jun 8th, one at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 24th and Jul 17th, and two at Bassingham on Sep 13th. Autumn passage began with nine at Gibraltar Point and four at Frampton Marsh on Oct 1st, with 32 at the former site

on the 2nd. Numbers increased from the 19th, when there were 45 at Witham Mouth, with 52 S at Alkborough Flats and 45 at Woodhall Spa on the 20th. On Oct 29th, there were 128 S at Gibraltar Point, 57 at Gedney Drove End, 43 at Donna Nook and 50 at Garthorpe. The highest passage counts later on were 79 at Theddlethorpe on Nov 18th, 68 at Skidbrooke on the 19th and 68 at Bardney on the 27th. Towards the end of the year there was a count of 52 at Deeping High Bank on Dec 23rd.



Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* Saltfleetby Nov 19th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Rare/scarse feral visitor. Some local releases also involved and breeds occasionally.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	1	-	5	2	8	8	-	-	-
Messingham area	1	-	2	2	5	-	-	3	-	-	2	2
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	-	1	-	-	-	6	12	-	7	7	-	1
Boultham-Whisby	2	2	4	3	2	3	1	-	2	7	4	7
Norton Disney-Thurlby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-
Fiskerton Fen-Bardney	-	-	-	3	2	2	2	4	-	10	-	-
Kirkstead-Chapel Hill	-	6	5	9	2	-	-	11	2	14	2	2
Woodhall Spa & Airfield	4	-	13	8	-	6	6	-	27	-	-	14
Kirkby on Bain GP	6	4	9	7	14	12	15	17	12	11	8	2
Tattershall-Dogdyke	2	-	2	8	9	-	-	8	9	9	2	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	5	-	2	-	-
Freiston-Frampton	-	-	-	-	7	6	6	5	7	7	-	2
Deeping Lakes	-	4	-	3	2	2	-	1	6	7	5	4

As mentioned last year, there must be overlap between the tabulated counts, perhaps most of all in the Woodhall-Kirkby-Tattershall area. At the inland sites, there does not appear to have been any great increase on 2015, but the appearance of more on the coast in the Saltfleetby area, Gibraltar Point, and at Freiston Shore and Frampton Marsh is noteworthy. The highest counts were 27 at Woodhall Spa Airfield on Sep 15th and 26 there on Sep 28th. Breeding was confirmed only from sites along the R Witham from Fiskerton Fen (one brood) to Tattershall (one brood), and nearby at Kirkby on Bain GP (three broods) and Woodhall Spa Airfield (two broods).

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Very common resident/partial migrant; mainly Humber/north-east coast and Wash but breeds regularly inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	1298	1459	1158	830	880	335	2083	3174	1932	3177	2098	2636
Alkborough Flats	98	378	188	91	143	112	94	112	56	210	231	48
Read's Island	177	465	363	13	156	1460	1590	1700	670	1140	400	403
Pyewipe-Grimsby	468	150	190	328	61	58	329	1830	360	1193	614	1270
Humberston-Grainthorpe	144	386	485	277	394	37	102	72	490	470	394	630
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	534	183	90	75	92	79	64	41	304	145	303	220
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	359	197	44	24	31	45	26	8	76	227	300	190
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	728	908	653	631	380	143	80	127	60	283	823	1159
Gibraltar Point	90	68	86	70	50	97	70	34	125	115	72	177
Wainfleet-Butterwick*	276	299	134	138	98	12	-	-	51	217	191	200
Freiston Shore	60	160	200	56	30	3	1	3	3	5	1	111
Witham*	50	70	-	5	18	-	-	-	-	-	231	500
Frampton Marsh	50	108	97	106	105	77	73	85	35	50	121	106
Kirton*	-	120	61	19	23	4	-	-	-	-	39	71
Welland*	159	30	72	38	23	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Terrington*	69	272	140	70	26	-	5	31	2	16	238	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Messingham SQ	19	21	12	12	10	8	2	4	-	2	7	8
Toft Newton Res	4	2	8	17	16	5	-	-	-	-	1	1
Covenham Res	5	8	18	21	20	15	-	2	1	2	1	1
Manby Wetland	-	6	3	16	8	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
Bardney-Nocton	9	6	4	4	6	10	31	19	45	12	12	9
Kirkby on Bain GP	10	5	13	12	13	10	-	2	-	-	1	-



Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* Grainthorpe Apr 24th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Numbers on the Humber again were at high levels, and while the Read's Island peak of 1700 on Aug 26th was down on last year's outstanding 2600, there was a noteworthy count of 1830 at Pyewipe on Aug 16th. Counts in The Wash, however, were somewhat lower than in 2015, due partly to WeBS coverage being incomplete, but with totals even in the better recorded areas including Gibraltar Point and the RSPB reserves all being slightly down. The inland areas shown in the table also had lower numbers. Breeding estimates on the RSPB Wash reserves were two pairs at Freiston Shore and 34 pairs at Frampton Marsh. Elsewhere a few broods were reported at estuarine sites including Alkborough Flats (four broods), Tetney Marsh (one), Donna Nook (one) and Gibraltar Point (at least four), though these in many cases understate the numbers attempting to breed. Inland breeding was confirmed at Butterwick Hale (one brood), North Kelsey (one), the Whisby area (three), Fiskerton Fen (one), Kirkby on Bain GP (six pairs), West Ashby Pits (one brood), and Spalding (one). Breeding was confirmed also at Read's Island, Nebraska Farm (Kirton in Lindsey), Toft Newton Res and Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness). Productivity appears to be low but it is difficult to assess nesting numbers of this species accurately.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Very scarce. Birds are recorded in most years, mostly in late summer/early autumn. Most if not all are assumed to come from feral stock. **RBBP**

Reports came only from the Humber. Two were on Read's Island on Jun 24th. Two were on Whitton Sand, opposite Alkborough Flats, from Aug 21st, increasing to four during Aug 31st-Sep 11th. One was seen at Far Ings NNR on Sep 12th.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Rare/scarce feral resident/visitor and local escapee.

Reports were more widespread this year than previously, but all counts were in single figures. The highest totals were as usual at Grimsthorpe Lake, with seven there in January, five in March and six in December. At Belton Park, up to four were seen in April, including a leucistic bird, perhaps that seen in Grantham in 2015. Elsewhere in the south-west, a female was at Marston STW on Sep 13th-15th. There was a scattering of records close to the Witham fens, including one at Fiskerton Fen and Stainfield Fen on three dates in May, singles at Kirkby Moor NR on Sep 24th and at Kirkby on Bain GP on Nov 2nd, and a male at Norton Disney Pits on Nov 18th. Finally, single birds at North Somercotes Warren in January and February, presumably derived from the wildfowl collection there.



Garganey *Spatula querquedula* Waters' Edge, Barton May 4th 2016 © Graham Catley

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Scarce passage migrant, rare summer visitor, breeding occasionally. Exceptional in winter. **RBBP**

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Number of sites	1	3	10	12	7	5	8	3	2
Minimum Lincs total	2	3	19	20	15	6	10	3	2

Garganey were reported from 19 sites this year, down from 27 in 2015. The first arrivals were a month earlier than 2015 with two at Willow Tree Fen NR on Feb 27th, one of which (a drake) remained to Mar 13th. These were followed by one at Barton Pits on Mar 14th and one at Alkborough Flats on Mar 22nd-27th. There was no confirmed breeding this year and the May peak at 20 was well down from 29 in 2015. During April-June, short-staying pairs were reported from Alkborough Flats, Barton Pits, Grainthorpe Marsh, Covenham Res, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR, Gibraltar Point and Willow Tree Fen NR. Longer-staying pairs (regarded as probably breeding) were reported from Frampton Marsh (two pairs), Kirkby on Bain GP (two pairs) where there were counts of five birds on Jun 9th-11th (but involving four males and two females), and Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness (one pair). Single juveniles were reported at Barton Pits on Aug 5th, Manby Wetland during Aug 15th-22nd, and East Halton Pits on Aug 27th. The last bird was with an eclipse male. The latest birds this year were one at Friskney on Oct 8th and one at Alkborough Flats on Oct 23rd.



Shoveler *Spatula clypeata* Grainthorpe Apr 10th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, and scarce breeding species. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Alkborough Flats	97	84	74	60	5	1	25	133	174	52	68	30
Read's Island/South Ferriby	7	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	7	15	11	8
Barton Pits	37	5	15	22	-	-	5	-	24	71	41	30
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	59	52	35	20	3	2	3	-	2	4	17	50
<i>The Wash</i>												
Gibraltar Point	103	64	44	22	5	7	7	30	46	77	55	46
Middlemarsh Farm	7	8	12	13	8	5	3	12	17	22	10	11
Freiston Shore	12	42	100	50	6	3	-	1	3	2	4	60
Frampton Marsh	71	70	76	38	42	12	36	15	38	50	38	68

Inland

Messingham SQ	6	10	27	12	3	2	-	14	-	3	8	55
Covenham Res	11	7	11	8	2	3	-	5	21	9	8	6
Manby Wetland	12	15	32	24	8	7	12	7	20	4	11	15
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	18	12	3	6	2	5	5	22	80	68	43	22
Whisby NR	16	32	8	4	3	3	1	5	21	97	31	25
Blackmoor Bridge-Norton	8	6	12	6	-	-	-	-	-	4	14	2
Fiskerton Fen	-	6	-	16	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bardney Pits	135	76	81	32	3	5	7	100	150	154	195	61
Nocton-Metheringham	80	16	-	2	-	1	-	-	14	7	11	11
Kirkby on Bain Pits	25	20	17	10	4	5	2	23	35	43	42	26
Deeping Lakes	1	1	5	-	7	1	1	26	89	10	1	11
Willow Tree Fen	48	36	56	20	6	-	-	-	-	2	15	34

The table includes most counts of ten or more, but there were occasional counts elsewhere of 10-18 plus 55 at Howden's Pullover on Feb 19th, 44 at Rosper Road Pools on Mar 2nd and 56 at Dunston on Oct 9th. Peak counts at key sites during the year were 103 at Gibraltar Point on Jan 17th, 100 at Freiston Shore on Mar 17th, 174 at Alkborough Flats on Sep 11th and 195 at Bardney Pits on Nov 13th. Only small offshore movements were reported, the largest being 35 S at Gibraltar Point on Sep 6th and 20 in off the sea there on Nov 29th. No confirmed breeding was reported this year and probable breeding pairs were reported as follows: Frampton Marsh (25), Willow Tree Fen NR (five), Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness (four), Boultham Mere (two), Kirkby on Bain GP (two), Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes (two), Alkborough Flats (one), Baston Fen (one) and Manby Wetland (one). A total of 43 pairs was recorded for the county, up from 33 in 2015.



Gadwall *Mareca strepera* Grainthorpe Apr 10th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Scarce breeding species and fairly common winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	26	56	75	55	88	146	36	35	10	20	12	8
Barton Pits	101	48	38	2	6	35	3	54	21	30	56	107
Gibraltar Point	56	62	58	24	10	17	19	36	77	22	29	70
Frampton Marsh	90	150	70	42	42	20	12	30	25	20	28	60
Messingham SQ	30	2	8	12	16	7	11	2	14	30	150	142
Burton GP	50	21	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	84	27	76	59	11	71	20	170	234	92	96	96
Swanholme/Hartsholme	65	100	6	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	25	134

Whisby NR	211	180	14	5	16	50	91	80	76	130	201	202
Thurlby/Norton pits	6	12	20	8	4	-	-	56	5	-	190	44
Nocton-Metheringham	16	-	25	21	17	14	-	8	10	11	51	70
Kirkby on Bain pits	120	51	120	104	46	110	4	50	95	103	109	130
Woodhall Spa Airfield	130	-	60	27	-	30	-	-	35	-	-	-
Deeping Lakes	62	126	28	7	2	2	9	61	77	16	30	79

The table includes all sites holding 50 or more. The threshold for inclusion was previously 25 and the change has been made because of the continuing increase. The highest counts were predominantly in the Lincoln area, the highest of all being 234 at Boultham Mere on Sep 9th. Other sites holding 25-49 were Bardney Pits, Chapel Pit, Covenham Res, Holywell Lake, Huttoft Bank Pit, Louth, Marston STW, Middlemarsh Farm, Stenigot-Biscathorpe, Tetney Marshes, Thorpe Tilney Dales, Toft Newton Res, and the R Witham at Woodhall Spa. Breeding was widely reported in the usual areas, including 32 pairs at Frampton Marsh, four pairs at Kirkby on Bain GP, at least three pairs at each of Alkborough Flats, Barton Pits and Trent Port (Marton), and ones and twos elsewhere.

Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Common or very common winter visitor and passage migrant, especially to The Wash and the Humber. Scarce in summer, and occasionally suspected of breeding. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	668	713	185	40	-	-	-	6	1626	1385	1070	876
Alkborough Flats	360	608	1000	96	2	-	1	13	500	440	3560	940
South Ferriby/Read's I	227	132	39	-	-	-	-	-	690	1228	103	95
Barton Pits	56	53	10	5	-	2	-	-	23	192	53	65
Tetney-Somercotes	210	119	300	10	1	-	-	6	512	500	450	343
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	400	350	280	1	1	-	-	-	369	59	285	250
<i>Coast</i>												
Huttoft-Anderby	140	112	-	-	-	-	-	-	495	100	200	35
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	12169	5631	5245	291	51	2	6	6	122	3518	3889	6473
Gibraltar Point	568	282	199	5	2	2	2	19	676	600	350	213
Middlemarsh Farm	600	600	500	70	1	1	-	22	300	800	1000	1200
Butterwick*	360	285	114	128	41	-	-	-	8	77	1037	462
Freiston Shore	7800	2800	2600	100	1	1	-	6	500	2120	1187	6000
Witham*	800	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	600	850
Frampton Marsh	6000	5000	2500	105	14	-	4	30	600	4000	6000	6290
<i>Inland</i>												
Bagmoor Floods	174	129	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trent Port (Marton)	290	270	195	35	-	-	-	-	-	12	200	200
Covenham Res	212	187	118	50	1	-	3	1	30	111	238	429
Manby Wetland	300	180	200	30	1	1	1	3	50	18	210	230
Withern Washlands	3	-	85	-	-	-	-	-	2	37	54	-
Lincoln	200	116	94	1	-	-	2	2	16	56	265	260
Whisby NR	100	2	28	2	-	-	11	8	242	345	451	303
Blackmoor Br-Norton	200	250	200	2	-	-	-	2	167	500	866	800
Fiskerton-Bardney	100	200	20	4	-	-	-	4	50	12	4	2
Kirkby on Bain pits	78	45	45	2	-	3	-	2	25	145	187	150
Woodhall Spa Airfield	250	-	375	4	-	-	-	-	280	-	-	-
Kirkstead-Chapel Hill	31	112	50	4	-	-	-	-	3	2	12	45
Willow Tree Fen	500	580	620	33	-	-	-	-	-	60	560	650
Deeping Lakes	48	66	66	2	-	1	1	1	7	55	52	120

The table shows maxima for most sites/areas holding 500 or more on The Wash, 200 on the Humber and coast, and 100 inland. The combined peak WeBS count for the Frampton, Witham and Freiston sectors of 11377 in January was up from 8624 in January 2015. Away from the south-west corner of The Wash, there were high counts of 1120 at Alkborough Flats on Nov 8th, with 3560 on Island Sand in the Trent off Alkborough Flats on Nov 23rd, 1200 at Middlemarsh Farm during Dec 7th-29th and 1000 at South Ferriby on Oct 18th. Counts were generally low throughout the summer with none exceeding 100 between Apr 10th and Sep 4th. There were June records of summering pairs at Frampton Marsh (five), Gibraltar Point (one) and Kirkby on Bain

GP (one). A pair had been seen mating at Gibraltar Point on May 12th but, otherwise, there was no evidence of display, mating or confirmed breeding. Autumn passage off Gibraltar Point was less pronounced than in some previous years, with a peak of 454 S on Sep 22nd. Elsewhere there were 212 moving on the sea at Mablethorpe on Sep 16th and 495 mostly N from Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 17th.



Wigeon hybrid Covenham Res Nov 3rd 2016 © John Clarkson

[American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

Vagrant. **LBRC**

Following last year’s record of an American Wigeon at Saltfleetby paired with a female Eurasian Wigeon or hybrid, a hybrid drake wigeon was present at Covenham Res this year during Oct 18th–Nov 16th. Its parentage was unknown but may have included Chiloe Wigeon. It is included here because some observers believed it to be an American Wigeon.]

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	904	670	190	195	191	158	319	645	329	180	450	549
Alkborough Flats	337	346	121	30	105	80	140	120	195	160	80	142
Winteringham-Read’s I.	103	42	34	7	17	-	6	37	46	44	112	162
Barton Pits	83	77	82	50	78	6	40	91	39	94	72	80
Barrow-New Holland	64	112	-	35	34	-	60	50	14	-	68	-
Goxhill-East Halton	105	206	72	42	22	26	24	44	151	1	85	24
Cleethorpes-Tetney	80	46	15	15	16	1	88	-	-	120	160	120
Donna Nook	204	56	54	30	25	54	40	150	220	120	57	113
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	56	70	70	22	21	33	33	23	50	400	20	16
Huttoft-Anderby	55	55	11	12	10	40	183	324	200	69	30	27
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	699	352	316	213	185	163	181	252	511	435	427	481
Middlemarsh Farm	70	100	70	59	52	36	86	100	150	50	100	70
Gibraltar Point	222	178	101	29	43	134	114	130	296	150	177	249
Wrangle	120	22	32	10	9	28	68	150	6	8	-	40
Frampton Marsh	261	140	110	18	100	75	135	250	117	153	300	100

Inland

Covenham Res	264	209	45	97	85	217	88	144	183	206	207	294
Manby Wetland	300	128	78	26	58	66	104	155	74	25	100	186
Fiskerton-Bardney	256	260	94	48	76	95	101	250	50	21	73	190
Nocton-Metheringham	100	20	23	22	31	17	44	53	50	42	38	16
Kirkstead-Chapel Hill	138	49	66	23	43	7	83	138	184	168	118	123
Kirkby on Bain GP	42	30	20	30	23	80	112	100	73	118	103	86
Hagnaby Lock Fen	33	75	30	10	12	39	61	120	55	40	24	25
Spalding area*	280	143	185	74	50	61	117	242	170	21	221	147
Deeping Lakes	159	12	10	11	7	58	155	56	58	13	17	32

The table includes most areas holding 150 or more. Numbers generally appeared to be down on those of 2015. Breeding was widely noted but with few systematic reports. Estimates included 78 pairs at Frampton Marsh, 19 pairs at Freiston Shore and at least 15 pairs at Alkborough Flats. Eight broods were seen at Baston Fen on Jun 10th. There was some unusual movement at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, for a few days in October, involving flocks moving S in the early morning, peaking at c350 on the 9th and c400 on the 11th; these were presumably feeding movements. The ringing recovery below concerns a local resident that survived more than ten years (the Mallard longevity record is 20 years) before being shot.

GC00582	Adult Male	01-11-2006	Borough Fen Decoy, Peterborough: 52°38'N 0°14'W (Peterborough)
	Caught by ringer	23-11-2006	Borough Fen Decoy, Peterborough: 52°38'N 0°14'W (Peterborough) 0km 0y 0m 22d
	Caught by ringer	24-05-2011	Borough Fen Decoy, Peterborough: 52°38'N 0°14'W (Peterborough) 0km 4y 6m 23d
	Caught by ringer	09-06-2015	Borough Fen Decoy, Peterborough: 52°38'N 0°14'W (Peterborough) 0km 8y 7m 8d
	Freshly dead (shot)	07-12-2016	Crowland: 52°40'N 0°9'W 5km 10y 1m 6d

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce in summer. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Alkborough Flats	2	12	9	2	-	-	1	1	47	20	3	2
Barton Pits/Humber	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	20	2	-
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	4	6	-	-	1	-	-	-	9	10	-	-
<i>Coast</i>												
Huttoft Car Terrace	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	2	1	-
<i>The Wash</i>												
Gibraltar Point	3	4	7	1	-	-	1	1	29	19	17	8
Freiston Shore	80	160	16	14	-	-	-	3	3	74	1	147
Frampton Marsh	200	42	12	4	-	-	3	4	54	78	25	17
Gedney	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	58	-	-	-
Terrington*	31	110	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	-

Inland

Covenham Res	2	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	7	3	1	2
Boultham Mere-Swanpool	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	2	1

The table includes coastal and estuarine locations attracting ten or more, plus the inland sites with greatest frequency of occurrence. There were also 14 at Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness) in September. After a fall in 2014 and a rise in 2015, numbers in January 2016 were again high at Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore. Together with the concentration in the Gedney and Terrington WeBS sectors, these four Wash areas accounted for 95% of the Lincolnshire wintering population. The highest count away from this area was 47 at Alkborough Flats on Sep 28th. There was a dearth of records in May-Jun: apart from one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on May 4th-6th, there were no reports between Apr 17th and Jul 23rd, and no evidence of breeding. Autumn offshore movement at Gibraltar Point was poor compared to previous years with peaks of 21 S on Sep 6th and 24 S on Sep 22nd. There were 30 S off Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 17th.

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Common migrant and winter visitor. Scarce in summer, with localised breeding.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	967	519	339	100	2	51	6	543	2655	1623	2418	1229
Alkborough Flats	1270	835	506	254	37	103	90	700	1200	3000	3480	1112
Read's Island-Winteringham	130	180	129	-	-	-	-	1200	1495	1137	426	364
Barton Pits	144	20	1	3	1	1	74	156	3	30	123	31
Humberston-Grainthorpe	60	5	15	11	2	-	-	1	215	24	50	32
Grainthorpe-Donna Nook	465	199	130	34	3	4	9	120	419	600	560	430
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	300	150	100	42	10	14	-	39	425	89	313	120
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	2412	845	852	251	52	25	109	191	154	995	2670	2021
Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness)	150	100	100	18	2	3	11	130	150	150	200	300
Gibraltar Point	940	373	146	29	8	29	119	166	607	1000	1144	447
Butterwick*	498	97	110	45	47	5	-	-	21	20	94	66
Freiston Shore	500	60	30	164	2	-	2	1	180	15	32	-
Witham*	20	6	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	400	300
Frampton Marsh	2000	1500	655	44	5	54	18	300	350	1000	1624	2100
<i>Inland</i>												
Manby Wetland-Withern	500	169	198	68	10	5	9	53	335	151	437	556
Boultham Mere-Swanpool	54	14	10	6	-	-	5	11	20	128	86	86
Whisby NR	90	48	10	4	-	5	4	30	133	98	241	191
Fiskerton-Bardney	18	15	22	6	3	-	4	200	150	71	87	31
Kirkby on Bain GP	60	18	10	5	5	4	5	140	300	492	279	170
Willow Tree Fen	150	75	40	43	-	1	12	50	30	80	200	80



Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca* Grainthorpe Apr 10th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Most areas supporting 200 or more are included in the table. There were also 574 off Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 17th with 100 there on the 18th, 220 at Shep Whites on Sep 19th, 500 at Bonby Carrs on Oct 28th, and 400 at North Killingholme Haven on Nov 4th. Overall totals were well down on 2015 throughout the Humber but slightly higher in The Wash and inland. The peak at Alkborough Flats of 3480 on Nov 16th was almost 1000 below the 2015 peak of 4460. Birds lingered into the summer at several locations but no confirmation of breeding was reported. Surveys at Frampton Marsh suggested 19 pairs present (compared to 28 in 2015 and nine in 2014)

but these are based on standardised methods that do not allow for non-breeding birds and it is not certain that any actually nest there. Southward movement was apparent at Gibraltar Point from mid July to the end of November, but most pronounced in September. A total of 1623 was counted flying S that month, including peaks of 486 on the 6th, 227 on the 16th and 265 on the 22nd. The only ringing recovery this year is shown below. Over one third of foreign exchanges of ringed Teal involve Scandinavia or Finland, so this one fits the pattern.

SVS	First-year Female	19-08-2009	Sundshalet, Stocke: 63°43'N 20°16'E (Västerbotten) Sweden
7190275	Freshly dead (shot)	08-10-2016	Gedney Drove End: 52°50'N 0°9'E 1,680km SW 7y 1m 19d

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

Very scarce visitor. **LBRC**

A drake was at Alkborough Flats during Apr 7th-17th (ND *et al.*). It was assumed to have been the same as that in 2014 and 2015. Another drake was at Gibraltar Point on Nov 7th-8th (JPS, NAL) and, presumably the same, at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on Nov 12th, 14th and 24th (NAL *et al.*). Two in the year is fairly typical of the last twenty years – though how many individuals have been involved is unknown.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; very scarce in summer but has bred. Most or all birds are from feral stock. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Swanholme/Hartsholme	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
North Hykeham Pits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	-	-
Whisby NR	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	3
Deeping Lakes & Pits	4	-	-	6	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	1
Baston-Langtoft Pits	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	11	-	93	95	-

The population in Britain originated from releases or escapes from waterfowl collections, according to the BTO Bird Atlas 2007-11. In Lincolnshire, sightings are gradually increasing with around 64 records noted from 15 countywide areas. Birds were recorded throughout the year. Presumably it was the long staying pair that was recorded in every month at Swanholme Lakes, and judging from photos on social media the pair were not averse to visiting other water bodies in the Lincoln area. Less than three miles away at Whisby NR, counts of three were recorded in both January and December and ten in November. The best count of the year was an impressive 95 at Baston-Langtoft Pits on Nov 2nd. This exceeded the previous best count of 67 in the same location in October 2011. There was only a handful of reports from this area and we would welcome more counts.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Scarce breeder and a common winter visitor. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Alkborough Flats	1	6	29	10	9	-	1	4	-	-	-	2
Barton Pits	72	109	19	44	7	18	115	14	13	6	21	40
Barrow-New Holland	-	21	-	15	6	-	4	-	1	2	5	-
<i>The Wash</i>												
Gibraltar Point	13	13	9	4	1	1	-	-	1	2	5	4
Frampton Marsh	57	72	19	9	17	18	12	4	2	1	37	10
<i>Inland</i>												
Bagmoor Floods	12	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	130	-	-
Messingham SQ	65	85	64	28	17	7	-	1	4	20	31	20
Toft Newton Res	100	103	5	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	4	58
Boultham Mere	18	16	4	-	5	6	8	4	5	3	2	6
North Hykeham Pits	16	6	1	-	-	-	-	1	13	7	12	9
Whisby NR	15	28	46	2	1	2	2	3	5	15	70	42
Norton Disney/Thurlby Pits	6	94	100	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	18	40
Bardney Pits	-	43	58	30	12	29	28	21	-	12	7	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	36	40	22	10	6	5	7	6	4	7	6	16
Deeping Lakes & Pits	2	16	2	-	-	-	67	67	18	1	1	5

The table includes all sites holding 25 or more birds. The WeBS 2015/16 survey report showed that wintering Pochard numbers in the UK are down 67% since 1990 and 42% down since 2005. Thus it comes as no surprise that at our premier area for this species, from Barton Pits to New Holland, numbers are at their lowest since the 1970s. The average winter peak during 1988/89-1995/96 was 1100 birds and peaked at 2600 in 1996/97, but during 2008/09-2015/16 it was 221. The peak of 109 in 2015/16 was the lowest since 105 in 1979/80. Decrease was evident even between 2015 and 2016: the total wintering at the sites listed in the table using the Feb figures was down from 730 in 2015 to 654 in 2016. It was also a poorer breeding year than last at Barton/Barrow Pits, with only two confirmed broods of two and four and a further ten probable breeders. At Alkborough Flats, there was one brood of two from two females. Probable breeding also occurred at five other sites (number of females in brackets): Frampton Marsh (13), Bardney Pits (one) Boultham Mere (one), Kirkby on Bain GP (one) and Whisby NR (one). The female below, marked with a nasal saddle (blue 1K), is assumed to have been breeding at Barton Pits and wintering in western France.

FRP	Female	25-11-2015	Saint-Philbert-de-Grand-Lieu: 47°5'N 1°40'W (Loire Atlantique) France
DB118780	Alive (colour mark seen)	21-01-2016	Waters' Edge, Barton upon Humber: 53°41'N 0°26'W 760km NNE 0y 1m 26d
	- ditto -	05-05-2016	Waters' Edge, Barton upon Humber; also seen Jul 2016 & Sep-Oct 2016
	- ditto -	16-03-2017	Waters' Edge, Barton upon Humber: 53°41'N 0°26'W 760km SE 1y 3m 21d

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Fairly common resident and common winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Barton Pits-New Holland	228	149	105	101	31	1	171	180	36	63	47	41
<i>The Wash</i>												
Gibraltar Point	29	36	43	33	32	27	30	40	38	26	26	25
Freiston Shore	40	70	66	50	20	2	1	1	-	1	1	-
Frampton Marsh	70	15	30	50	50	36	114	50	31	30	10	35
<i>Inland</i>												
Messingham SQ	62	20	87	20	21	32	13	31	37	67	100	1
Cadney Res	-	-	4	4	4	-	270	380	-	20	11	2
Covenham Res	138	82	107	128	74	78	102	68	172	219	229	203
Toft Newton Res	100	104	60	20	10	1	12	34	79	128	25	106
Swanholme Lakes	65	125	73	42	6	9	-	12	6	7	60	150
North Hykeham Pits	86	36	32	26	5	-	13	62	275	272	64	170
Whisby NR	100	138	127	40	17	13	198	160	84	120	221	212
Norton Disney/Thurlby Pits	80	112	150	80	79	14	21	85	29	40	75	54
Bardney Pit	-	69	132	84	-	55	87	57	34	21	70	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	105	85	100	66	35	23	17	40	32	99	110	180
Spalding area*	219	54	26	40	18	58	5	3	14	10	4	164
Deeping Lakes & Pits	105	265	135	88	43	23	119	143	43	99	110	180
Baston-Langtoft Pits	-	103	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	-

The table includes all sites with counts of 90 or more. Nearly 3000 records were submitted during the year but about 15% of the sightings were recorded with no count, as "birds present". The best count of the year was of 380 at Cadney Reservoir during the WeBS count of Aug 14th. The only other count of over 300 was an estimate of 350 at Covenham Reservoir on Nov 4th, but 275 were counted during the WeBS count at Apex Pit, North Hykeham, on Sep 17th with 272 in the same location on Oct 8th. Other high WeBS counts were 279 at Cadney Res on Jul 24th and in the south of the county 265 were counted at Deeping Lakes on Feb 22nd; the latter was the highest count in the first half of the year. Confirmed breeding was slightly down on 2015, being reported for 16 sites. In addition, evidence suggested probable breeding at a further six sites and possible breeding at a further one. This no doubt understates the species' status in the county. The highest counts of young were as follows (showing number of young or broods/total young): South Ferriby (1/9), Barton Pits (9/22), Pye's Hall (13), Gibraltar Point (1/6), Whisby NR (4/13), Kirkby on Bain GP (4/9), Hagnaby Lock (6), Baston Fen (5).

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare in summer; bred in 1944.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cove Farm Quarry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3
Barton-New Holland	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	19	14
Toft Newton Reservoir	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Covenham Reservoir	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	4
Gibraltar Point	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	1
Frampton Marsh	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	9	2	3
Norton Disney/Thurlby Pits	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1

The table includes all counts of two or more and with records in at least two months. Additional notable counts were offshore movements in early November, involving eight at Huttoft on Nov 1st, 17 (including eight together on the sea) at Sutton on Sea on the 5th, and four at Huttoft on the 7th. Other than the 17 at Sutton on Sea, all other double figure counts were from Tetney Marsh in November or December. There were ten or more at the latter site from Nov 4th to Nov 22nd, peaking at 19 on the 11th, and also 14 on Dec 17th. Probably not unexpectedly, the best location to see the species away from the coast was Covenham Reservoir, where up to four were noted on 53 dates. However, it's worth noting that Whisby NR saw reports on 46 dates, though only of single birds. The sightings there during January-March were of the female first seen in Nov 2015, while at the end of the year there was a first winter bird on Dec 7th-10th. An injured drake remained at Barton Pits from April to the end of the year.

Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor, especially to The Wash, present in all months but fewer in summer. Most of the population stays well offshore. Very rare inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	-	2	11	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	1222	703	233	36	15	-	-	11	5	18	8	196
Gibraltar Point	69	110	10	12	8	4	10	-	2	10	27	10
Wainfleet*	376	-	79	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	80	30	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wrangle*	720	600	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	190
Leverton*	37	67	71	-	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	10	9	-	-	-	6	6	14	25	14	3	4
Witham*	-	1	1	2	-	-	4	-	-	18	-	41

At the start of the year, larger numbers were recorded than since 2013. The highest counts were 720 in the Wrangle sector of The Wash on Jan 16th and 376 in the Wainfleet sector the following day, and there were still 600 at Wrangle on Feb 13th. Summer records were sparse with a maximum count of 14 at Freiston Shore on Aug 8th. Numbers remained low until late November/December, when there were 101 N at Huttoft Car Terrace on Nov 24th and 190 in the Wrangle sector of The Wash on Dec 19th. Humber totals were again relatively low during the year, with most birds seen between Tetney and Saltfleetby, including a peak of 22 in the latter area on Nov 25th. A single immature drake was present by the Humber Bridge at Barton on Nov 8th.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare inland and in summer.

One at Gibraltar Point on Jan 11th was the first record of the year. One-three were recorded from Mablethorpe-Theddlethorpe on eight dates during Jan 15th-Mar 4th. A single bird at Witham Mouth on Mar 23rd was the last of the spring. One at Chapel Point on Jul 9th and a female off Huttoft Car Terrace on the 15th were possibly the same bird. In September, three flew S at Gibraltar Point on the 5th and there were two at Donna Nook on the 18th. Birds were recorded on three dates from both Trusthorpe and Huttoft Car Terrace with peaks of four at Trusthorpe on the 17th and five at Huttoft on the 18th. Records in October were mainly from Tetney Marsh with two birds present on seven dates during the 15th-31st, but there were 1-2 at Mablethorpe-Huttoft on the 2nd-4th and, further south, a female with the Common Scoter flock

at Gibraltar Point on the 9th. Tetney Marsh proved popular until the end of the year, with almost daily sightings throughout November-December, with a peak of 18 on Nov 13th. Birds were also seen off Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes, with 19 birds present on Dec 21st and 30th, the highest count of the year, with up to five off both Huttoft Car Terrace and Gibraltar Point. A single bird was recorded at Covenham Res on Nov 22nd, and two were seen off Tabbs Head on Dec 19th and 28th.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	-	45	1	-	-	-	125	87	681	16	2131	304
Barton upon Humber	-	-	-	-	-	-	398	200	-	1	42	-
Tetney-Somercotes	1	-	-	4	-	-	50	130	116	250	350	260
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	200	180	11	5	7	150	115	65	580	50	2011	424
<i>The coast</i>												
Mablethorpe-Skegness	-	50	-	-	-	-	150	400	342	85	520	13
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	20	-	1	-	-	1	12	-	-	25	82	-
Gibraltar Point	110	80	100	16	90	128	180	250	298	231	339	60

The table includes passage flocks (especially for example at Barton) as well as those present offshore in an area. Wintering flocks were reported from Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby, with peak counts of 110 from Gibraltar Point on Jan 1st and 200 from Theddlethorpe Dunes on Jan 28th. The finding of four birds, three males and a female, at North Hykeham Pits on Jan 5th was a good record. A slight drop-off in numbers was evident at Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe in February, but there were 50 at Sutton on Sea on the 24th. Gibraltar Point provided the peak count in March with 100 on the 6th; other notable records were four at Covenham Res on the 18th, and one at Witham Mouth on the 12th-13th. Only small numbers were recorded in April-May, with the only double figure counts coming from Gibraltar Point on Apr 1st and May 15th. An excellent record of three on a small inland pool came from Old Bolingbroke on Apr 12th. Numbers increased dramatically during June in the usual coastal areas. There were also inland records during June including three at Toft Newton Res on the 14th, two at Covenham Res on the 17th, and two at North Hykeham Pits on the 30th. There was also more substantial inland movement in late July-early August, including 212 W at Alkborough Flats and 398 W at Barton upon Humber on the 21st, 72 W at Barton on the 27th, and 358 W at Alkborough and 299 W at Barton on the 31st, plus one at Covenham Res on the 22nd and two there on the 29th, and then at least 200 W at Barton on Aug 6th. Further inland records later in summer included one at Covenham Res on Aug 26th-28th, one at Toft Newton Res on Aug 27th-28th and six at Swineshead Bridge on Aug 28th, and in autumn singles at Covenham Res on Sep 18th and Oct 4th, and four at North Hykeham Pits on Oct 31st. Coastal areas held three figure flocks throughout July-December, peaking in November when there was an impressive raft of 2000 present off Theddlethorpe on Nov 14th and again next day. Numbers reached 339 off Gibraltar Point on the 7th. Inland, 2-3 were present regularly at Covenham Res during Nov 7th-25th, with one to Dec 2nd, and a single bird was recorded at Thurlby Pit on Nov 28th. On the 27th, there had been 17 on the Humber at Barton.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; rare in summer.

The only records early in the year were singles at Gibraltar Point and Horseshoe Point on Jan 9th and 15th respectively, and an immature female at Gibraltar Point on Apr 1st. The first in autumn was an adult summer drake at Gibraltar Point on Sep 22nd. Singles in October included a drake on the Humber off Barton on the 12th, and singles at Witham Mouth on the 20th, S at Gibraltar Point on 27th and at Tetney Marsh on the 31st. Birds were quite widespread and numerous in November-December. In the area around Tetney Marsh, 1-4 were frequent and six present on Nov 13th. At Donna Nook, there was one on Nov 29th and three on Dec 21st. In the Mablethorpe-Huttoft area, the peak count was 13 at Sutton on Sea on Nov 5th. One was regularly seen on the lake at Queen's Park, Mablethorpe, during Nov 11th-Dec 17th. At Gibraltar Point, there were 1-2 offshore on five dates plus four N on Dec 19th, and at the same site a bird was present on Jackson's Marsh throughout Nov 22nd-Dec 12th, with two there on Dec 5th. In The Wash, there were 17 at Witham Mouth on Nov 7th, with three there on the 8th, and singles at Frampton

Marsh on Nov 6th, Freiston Shore on Nov 18th and Wainfleet Clough on Nov 21st. A wintering bird at Covenham Res was seen frequently during Nov 7th-Dec 30th, joined by a second during Dec 16th-28th. Further inland, there was one on the R Witham at Woodhall Spa on Dec 17th and one at Willow Tree Fen on Dec 18th.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Fairly common winter visitor, rare in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Messingham SQ	12	15	10	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cadney Reservoir	-	7	9	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Barton Pits	52	155	130	16	2	2	2	2	2	-	18	120
Barrow-Goxhill	666	179	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	24
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	31	-
Covenham Res	80	79	75	11	1	-	-	-	-	4	44	68
Toft Newton Res	20	39	21	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	26
Gibraltar Point	7	15	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
Freiston Shore	50	56	32	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	10	54
Frampton Marsh	20	20	9	3	-	1	1	-	-	1	3	5
North Hykeham	14	32	26	23	-	-	-	-	-	4	8	9
Whisby NR	18	18	10	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	14
Norton Disney/Thurlby Pits	18	16	50	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Bardney-Nocton	10	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	12	15	17	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	3
Langtoft West End GP	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deeping Lakes	24	17	6	7	-	-	-	-	-	2	10	19

The table includes all counts of ten or more. The peak count in the Barrow-New Holland-Goxhill area was 666 on Jan 16th, only a little below the record of 691 on Jan 26th 2013. Goldeneye was recorded in every month of the year but, apart from summering birds, the last in spring was one at Covenham Res on May 4th and the first in autumn were two also at Covenham on Oct 10th. In summer, one was at Frampton Marsh during Jun 5th-Jul 2nd, and two remained at Barton Pits from May through to Sep 2nd. The main influx of birds started in October, though only small numbers were observed at eight locations. During November there was some coastal movement noted but numbers were relatively small. The highest counts were 31 at Tetney Marsh on the 3rd and, in The Wash, 20 on the 7th and 15 the following day at Witham Mouth. Covenham Res was as usual the best inland site to see the species with the bird reported on 143 occasions and counts of 50 plus noted 68 times; the highest count was 80 on Jan 1st.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Scarce winter visitor, mostly Dec-Feb.

Although it was another rather poor year for the species there was a slight improvement on the two seen during 2015; a total of five birds was recorded in 2016. The first was a redhead at Freiston Shore on Jan 16th. Boultham Mere also had a redhead for a single day later in the month on the 29th. At Toft Newton Reservoir a redhead was present throughout Jan 19th-Feb 10th. The River Sleas Pit at Kirkby on Bain held a male bird, recorded on five dates during Dec 4th-10th. Barton Pits held the last bird of the year with a redhead on Dec 27th-31st.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly inland. Rare in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Lincoln area</i>												
Fillingham Lake	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	-
Birchwood L, Skellingthorpe	7	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	23	5	6	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	3	4
Boultham Park	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Swanholme/Hartsholme	20	14	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	23
<i>Other areas</i>												
Cadney Reservoir	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	50
Covenham Res	8	9	10	3	1	-	-	-	2	3	4	1

Witham, Lincoln-Kirkstead	26	17	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	18
Witham, Kirkstead-Chapel Hill	3	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
Freiston Shore	5	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spalding-Borough Fen	30	24	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	6
Deeping Lakes	1	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
Willow Tree Fen	16	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30

The table includes all sites attracting five or more and with records in two or more months. A handful of birds lingered into May, with the last one at Cleethorpes on the 29th. The next was a female at Tetney Marsh on Jul 13th and presumably the same bird was seen there intermittently through to Oct 7th. One was at Marston STW on Aug 24th-27th and more widespread occurrence started in September. The highest counts early in the year were from the usual areas, including maxima of 30 on Vernatt's Drain at Spalding on Jan 10th and 26 along the R Witham (Bardney Bridge to Five Mile House) on Jan 18th. Some larger counts were made towards the end of the year including 35 at Fillingham Lake on Nov 12th and 16th, 30 at Willow Tree Fen on Dec 13th and 50 at Cadney Res on Dec 18th.



Goosander *Mergus merganser* Grainthorpe Feb 28th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Scarce coastal passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce inland and in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	41	6	7	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	22	34
Gibraltar Point	26	47	12	4	4	1	1	-	2	2	3	7
Wrangle*	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Freiston Shore	20	9	-	6	8	-	-	-	3	-	20	1
Witham Mouth	13	16	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Frampton Marsh	-	14	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-

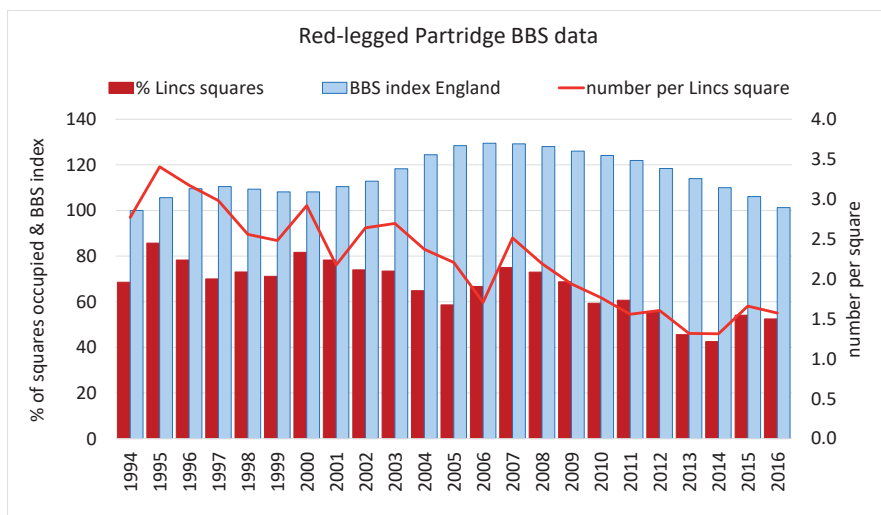
The table includes all sites at which there were ten or more. There were only five records between May 8th and Sep 16th (not all in the table, and including one in August), and none at all between Jun 5th and Jul 24th. The species was recorded predominantly on the coast and The Wash, and a few times on the Humber. The species was reported most frequently at Gibraltar Point, where there were 13 counts exceeding ten, all in January-February. The highest count was 47 including 44 flying S on Feb 9th. The next highest count was 30 in the Wrangle sector of The Wash on Dec

19th. On the Humber, a young bird, probably male, was on the estuary at Barton on Jan 2nd, two were at Alkborough Flats on Apr 25th and one on the Humber at Barton on Nov 3rd. Inland, a long-staying bird was found on West Lake, Whisby NR, on Jan 2nd. An adult male, it showed well until last seen on the final day of Jan. Another, or just possibly the same, adult male was found on the R Witham between Kirkstead Bridge and Thorpe Tilney Dales on Mar 17th-18th. A single bird was present at Covenham Res on Feb 12th and 15th, and two birds were present there on Oct 26th.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Very common feral resident; huge numbers released for shooting annually.

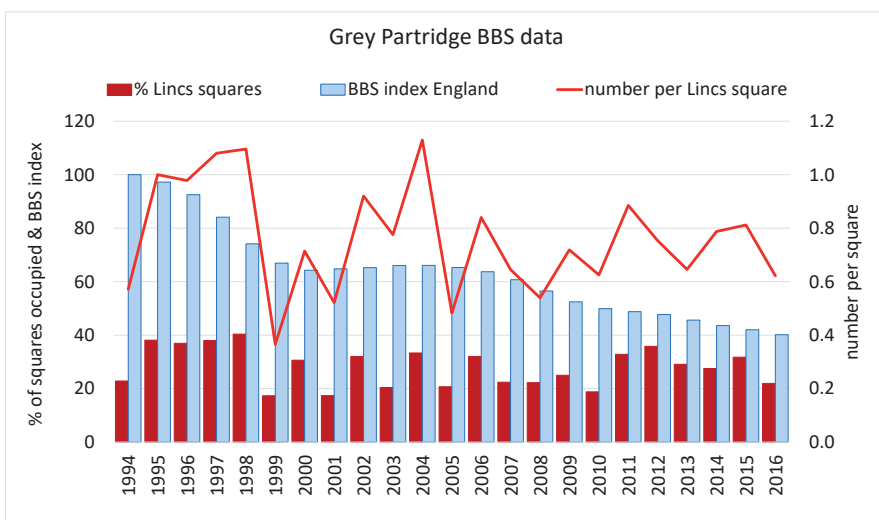
There were 384 records from about 105 sites with a maximum of 350 at a release site at Hougham on Sept 9th. The next highest counts were 40 at Ancaster on the same date, 30 at Trent Port (Marton) on Dec 15th and 25 at Old Bolingbroke on Jan 26th. With many thousands being released on shooting estates every year throughout the county, such records are largely academic. The breeding population in some districts is considered largely stable but the breeding success of released birds is generally considered poor. In the county as a whole, as more widely in England (see chart), the BBS shows a declining population trend. The Lincolnshire data in the chart, while based on a small sample, do however suggest numbers and distribution more than twice that of Grey Partridge.



Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Common resident with recent decline, especially in the southern half of the county.

There were 460 records from about 120 sites and records of confirmed or probable breeding from 13 sites (19 in 2015), although this clearly understates the species' status in the county. Experience in some areas is that numbers are declining but the BBS provides an additional measure of its current trend (see chart below), suggesting that numbers here are holding up better than in England as a whole (though it should be remembered that the Lincolnshire data are not statistically reliable). Small numbers of birds are being released on some shooting estates that, together with specific measures to encourage Grey Partridges, are helping to reduce the decline in Lincolnshire. The largest count reported during the year was 51 at Woodhall Spa on Sept 28th. Other relatively high counts were 27 at Welbourn Heath on Dec 21st and 25 at Normanby-by-Spital on Nov 9th. Other counts of ten or more came from a further 20 locations.



The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust's Partridge Count Scheme returns (38 for Lincolnshire) indicate that the September density of birds on the sampled farms in the county declined from 21.5 per 100 ha in 2015 to 20.0 per 100 ha. Overall, the counts returned were down, with harvest being another wet experience for many, but the young to old ratio looks to have held steady in Lincolnshire, remaining unchanged at 2.5:1.

Year	Counts	Young to Old ratio	Autumn density (birds/100ha)
2014	43	2.7	23.6
2015	44	2.5	21.5
2016	38	2.5	20



Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix* North Kelsey Moor Apr 17th 2016 © Roy Harvey

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce summer visitor Apr-Sep; rare in winter. Probably much under-recorded. **RBBP**

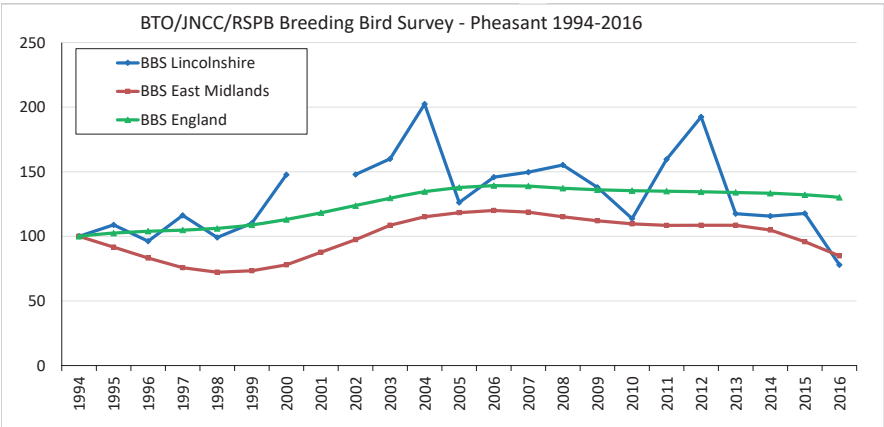
	Average 2011-2015	2016
Number of sites	19.6	5
Number of birds	28.6	7

There were records from only five sites this year, the first being one at Risby Warren on May 12th. The next was one at Welton le Marsh on Jun 3rd. There were two at Scopwick on June 20th, with one there on Jul 4th, and one was at Kirkby Underwood on Jul 10th. Two were between Horseshoe Point and Grainthorpe Haven from Jul 3rd to Jul 12th, which was the last record date. The total of seven singing males represents a significant decrease on 2015, and is well below the recent average (see table).

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Very common feral resident: huge numbers released for shooting annually.

There were more than 2600 records from a wide variety of sites with a maximum of 130 at Marston on Sep 10th. The next highest were 46 at Swinstead on Nov 20th, 41 at Welbourn Heath on Jan 9th, 40 at Kirmond le Mire on Jan 4th and 40 at Eagle Hall Wood on Jul 28th. Again, with many thousands of birds released on shooting estates annually, such records are largely academic. Few breeding records were submitted for such a common resident. The BBS records declining trends in England (statistically significant) and the East Midlands, a pattern that is reflected in data for Lincolnshire alone (see chart). This decline appears to have been underway since around 2005. It does, of course, record the situation for wild-breeding birds and not the much larger numbers released in late summer before the shooting season starts.



Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Fairly common offshore passage migrant and winter visitor Aug-May with peaks in mid-winter. Rare inland and in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tetney-Grainthorpe	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	8
Donna Nook-Saltfleet	5	33	7	-	-	-	-	1	5	3	8	3
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	55	388	87	4	1	1	-	-	16	5	6	31
Mablethorpe-Skegness	64	134	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	20	12	4
Gibraltar Point	92	177	80	16	-	-	-	-	61	42	14	43

In the early part of the year, coastal records were more evenly distributed than last year. In January, peaks were 92 at Gibraltar Point on the 12th, 55 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 28th and 64 at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 30th, with the only other double figure counts coming from the same sites. In February, there were two spells with particularly high counts. During

the 3rd-10th, 134 at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 3rd, 177 S at Gibraltar Point on the 4th, and 112 S at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and 121 S at Gibraltar Point on the 10th. Later, 388 were recorded at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes from Crook Bank on the 23rd, 101 (93 S) at Gibraltar Point on that day and 199 also from Crook Bank on the 26th. Elsewhere there were 22 N at Sutton on Sea on the 24th and 33 at Donna Nook on the 28th. Numbers tailed off significantly through March, but there were 87 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and 80 (77 S) at Gibraltar Point on the 2nd, 82 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 8th and 24 at Gibraltar Point on the 15th. From April to August there was just a handful of records: four at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Apr 7th, 16 at Gibraltar Point on the 17th and one there on the 22nd. There were singles at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on May 23rd and Jun 1st and 3rd, and one at Donna Nook on Aug 18th. Post-breeding movements began in early September with single figure counts at southern coastal sites, and 11 at Gibraltar Point on the 7th was the first double figure record. The highest counts were at Gibraltar Point, with 38 on the 27th and 61 there on the 29th, mostly S on both dates. Counts were generally smaller in October with maxima of 26 at Gibraltar Point on the 1st, and 42 there and 20 at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 2nd. Numbers remained generally low for the rest of the year with monthly peaks of 14 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 3rd, and 31 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Dec 19th and 43 at Gibraltar Point on Dec 21st. There were single birds inland, flying up the R Welland near Crowland on Nov 4th and at Covenham Res on Nov 11th-26th.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Scarce winter visitor to coastal and inland waters. Mainly Sep-Apr, rare in summer.

As usual the great majority of records came from Gibraltar Point, where birds were noted flying S on Jan 3rd, 8th and 12th and one was seen flying N on the 21st. In February, there were single birds S there on the 9th and 10th followed by two at Witham Mouth on 14th and one close inshore at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on the 15th. What was possibly the same bird was at this site on Mar 2nd and singles were at Gibraltar Point on the 15th and 29th. There was an unusual summer record of an adult at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Jun 3rd. Autumn birds were recorded from Sep 6th when one flew S at Gibraltar Point with another on the 8th and 9th. One was at Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 17th and an adult in summer plumage flew S at Gibraltar Point on the 27th. There were just two sightings in October, with one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 16th and one at Tabbs Head, Witham Mouth, on the 25th. In November, one was at Freiston Shore on the 2nd, one at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 7th and one stayed at Covenham Res from the 8th until the 14th; one was at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 24th and another at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 25th. At the end of the year one was at Gibraltar Point on Dec 3rd and one at Witham Mouth on the same date, one was off Anderby Creek on Dec 7th, another at Tetney Marsh on Dec 22nd and the final bird of the year was seen close in at Gibraltar Point on Dec 23rd. The total for the year is 29 birds (13 in the first half, 16 in the second), but some duplication may be involved, for example in January.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Rare/scarce winter visitor Aug-May. Mainly coastal and exceptional in summer.

The first of the year were two birds at Donna Nook on Jan 1st followed by singles at Freiston Shore on Jan 2nd, Tetney Marsh on Jan 4th and what seemed to be the same bird at Gibraltar Point on Jan 10th, 12th and 15th, each time flying S. Other single sightings in January were at Ingoldmells on the 17th, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe on the 18th, Freiston Shore on the 26th and Gibraltar Point on the 26th and 27th (assumed the same). In February, single birds were seen at Gibraltar Point on the 9th, and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe and at Gibraltar Point on the 10th, probably the same bird at Witham Mouth and Freiston Shore on the 13th and what was 'presumed to be the regular bird' at Gibraltar Point on the 13th, 17th, 27th and 28th. Singles were at Donna Nook on Mar 16th, Far Ings on Apr 15th and the final record for the first half of the year was of three birds at Freiston Shore on May 2nd. The first returning birds were flying S at Gibraltar Point on Sep 9th, 22nd and 28th. These were followed in October by singles at Trusthorpe and Huttoft Car Terrace on the 2nd, at Huttoft again on the 3rd and 4th (those all counted as the same), Tetney Marsh on the 10th and Gibraltar Point on the 20th. All November records were from Gibraltar Point, with five on the 4th, two on the 17th, and singles on the 7th, 8th and 27th. One at Gibraltar Point on Dec 3rd was among a fishing raft of Cormorants and one flew S there on the 4th. One was at Donna Nook on the 17th and the last bird was noted on Dec 21st at Gibraltar Point. The total for the year is 35 birds (15 in the first half, 20 in the second), counting duplicates as described but accepting there may be others.

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Rare offshore migrant Jul-Nov averaging more than one per year but variable between years; exceptional inland and in other months. **LBRC**

Two flew N at Gibraltar Point on Nov 7th (NAL, KMW). This is the third year in a row that there has been a single confirmed record, and they have been at the same site each time.

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Very scarce offshore migrant, mostly in Sep-Nov. Very rare at other times or inland. Variable numbers between years. **LBRC**

After two blank years, the first was recorded from Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes, on Sep 18th (NAL) followed by singles in October off Huttoft Car Terrace on the 2nd (EJM), and off North Killingholme Haven, shearing up the Humber, on the 5th (GPC). One was at Huttoft Car Terrace on Nov 1st (CRM, RL) and the fifth and final bird of the year was at the same site on Nov 24th (RL, DRob).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Offshore visitor; declined from fairly common to scarce, mainly Mar-Nov. Rare in winter and very infrequent inland.

Fulmars were recorded on eighty days this year and as usual the majority of records came from Gibraltar Point where it was noted on fifty-eight days. Only thirteen records came from sites north of Huttoft Car Terrace, and it may be the case that this heavy southern bias is due to the proximity of the breeding colony at Hunstanton, Norfolk. The first quarter of the year began quietly with one to three on five dates in January, all at Gibraltar Point. February was much busier with high counts at Gibraltar Point of 63 S on the 8th, 17 on the 9th, 36 on the 10th, 22 N on the 13th and 47 on the 22nd with some birds lingering offshore. Elsewhere there was one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Feb 8th, six at Witham Mouth on the 14th, and singles at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 17th and Donna Nook on the 28th. In March there were two at Gibraltar Point on the 23rd, one there on the 26th, and two at Donna Nook on the 29th. In the next quarter one to five were seen at Gibraltar Point on seventeen dates plus peaks of ten on Apr 25th, six on Apr 26th, six on May 21st, 14 on May 24th and 12 on Jun 1st on which date there were also 26 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes; there were also four at Donna Nook on Jun 27th. Singles were seen on five dates in July plus two at Donna Nook on the 23rd. One to four were recorded on ten days in August including four at Donna Nook on the 21st, plus six at Gibraltar Point on the 29th. It was a very similar picture in September with one to four noted on ten days and a high count of 14 N at Gibraltar Point on the 17th. As with last year the final birds of the year were in October, with one at Witham Mouth on the 5th and one at Gibraltar Point on the 25th.

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*

Scarce offshore passage migrant Jul-Nov, mostly Sep. A few winter records; Dec-Jan.

Unusually, there were no records until Sep 12th when one was at Huttoft Car Terrace followed by singles at Chapel Point on the 14th and at Gibraltar Point on the 16th. On the following day, 46 flew N at Huttoft Car Terrace and 62 N at Gibraltar Point with just two being noted at Mablethorpe. Also in September were two at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 19th and one, unusually flying S, at Gibraltar Point on the 24th. On Oct 2nd, records were widespread, with ten at Donna Nook, 37 at Mablethorpe, c20 at Trusthorpe, 50 at Huttoft Car Terrace and 36 (all but one flying N) at Gibraltar Point; note that there may well be much duplication between those. One flew N at Gibraltar Point on Oct 4th, and there was one at Witham Mouth and two at Donna Nook on the 5th, one at Witham Mouth on Oct 6th, three at Gibraltar Point on Oct 20th and the final birds of the year were two at Sutton on Sea on Nov 5th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Scarce/fairly common offshore visitor/passage migrant, Apr-Nov with most Sep. Occasional inland records after south-west gales.

Birds were recorded on twenty dates, there being a minimum of 72 and an absolute maximum of 94, with most being noted in September. There was an early bird flying N close inshore at Gibraltar Point on Apr 11th followed by two S there on Jul 11th and another N on the 27th and just one record in August at Donna Nook on the 21st. Records in September involved one at Gibraltar Point on the 4th, three N there on the 5th and one at Wolla Bank the same day, four at Gibraltar Point on the 11th, three there on the 12th and a single bird N on the 13th. There were eight at Chapel Point on the 14th, six at Mablethorpe on the 16th, one at Trusthorpe on the 17th, but

further south on the same day there were 22 N at Huttoft Car Terrace and 16 N at Gibraltar Point. One was at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 18th, nine at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 19th and singles at Gibraltar Point S on the 27th and N on the 28th. There was a handful of records in early October starting with one N at Gibraltar Point on the 1st, four N there on the 2nd with four at Huttoft Car Terrace on the same day, two N at Gibraltar Point on the 5th and finally a single bird at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 8th.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Fairly common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor, the latter especially noticeable in coastal regions.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	2	6	10	10	-	6	20	2	15	3	1
Barton Pits	13	6	4	3	4	6	4	4	15	2	4	5
Barrow-New Holland	6	2	-	4	1	-	2	4	8	3	2	-
Tetney Marsh-Horseshoe Pt	9	6	-	2	2	-	-	2	2	14	23	16
Donna Nook	8	10	6	7	2	2	4	4	11	15	6	12
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	10	6	4	3	2	2	1	2	4	2	2	8
Covenham Reservoir	3	3	2	-	-	-	1	1	2	3	5	3
Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness)	-	-	2	2	2	2	2	5	7	2	1	1
Gibraltar Point	18	23	22	23	9	9	22	24	38	35	32	29
Freiston Shore	16	7	12	2	1	-	1	10	10	6	1	18
Frampton Marsh	8	4	3	4	3	1	10	30	11	25	10	5
Welland*	53	20	5	-	-	-	3	1	6	-	-	-
Toft Newton Res	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	6	5
Whisby NR	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	9	10	5	4	2
Norton/Thurlby Pits	8	4	4	8	2	-	-	2	5	4	-	2
Bardney Pits	1	-	-	2	6	1	4	1	-	-	-	1
R Witham												
(Chapel Hill-Kirkstead)	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	12	8
Woodhall Spa Airfield	1	-	13	5	-	2	-	-	15	-	-	-
Kirkby-on-Bain GP	6	9	7	2	1	1	1	20	23	13	6	11
Holywell Lake	14	13	10	-	-	-	-	-	10	12	19	10
Spalding-Borough Fen*	1	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	20	6
Deeping Lakes	1	2	-	1	1	1	1	4	6	22	7	2

The table includes all counts of ten or more, except for 12 in the Benington sector of The Wash in November. There was a similar pattern of occurrence to other recent years, with the highest numbers at most sites during the autumn months, particularly those on the coast. Overall numbers appear fairly stable, though they have increased since the cold winters a few years ago, especially that of 2010/11. There was a notable concentration on the Welland sector of the Wash early in the year, with a peak of 53 on Jan 16th. At Gibraltar Point, where previously annual maxima tended to be in single figures, there have been high numbers in autumn since 2014, and the count of 38 on Sep 28th was the highest yet. There were confirmed/probable breeding pairs at a number of sites: Alkborough Flats (ten territories), Kirkby on Bain GP ("several" broods), Gibraltar Point (at least four pairs), Frampton Marsh (four pairs), Boatmere Scrape (three pairs), Whisby NR (three pairs) East Keal (two pairs), Barton Pits (at least two pairs) and single pairs at several other waters scattered throughout the county, although breeding activity at many smaller sites presumably goes unreported.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Rare/scarse passage migrant and winter visitor, Sep-Apr; rare in summer.

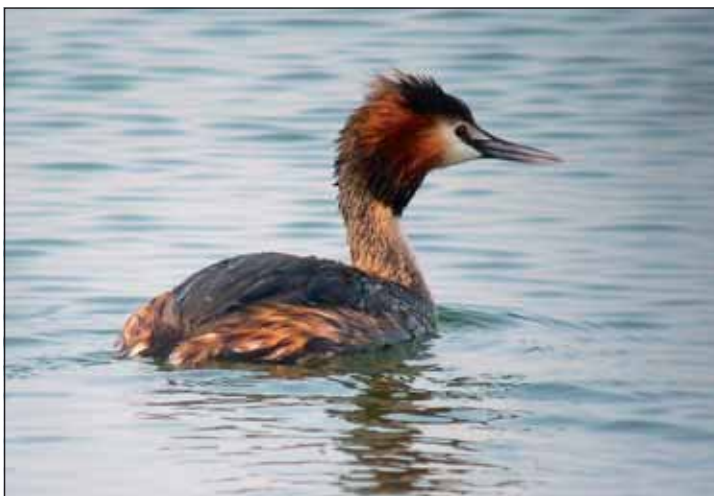
A better showing than in some recent years with a long-staying bird at Cleethorpes CP from Jan 13th-Feb 3rd, alongside two Slavonian Grebes for some of the time. There was also a single bird at Freiston Shore on Jan 5th and again on Jan 28th, with one at Cowbridge on Jan 7th and on the Witham at Anton's Gowt on Jan 31st, assumed to be the same as that at Freiston. There were offshore records at Gibraltar Point on Feb 9th and 19th, assumed to be the same bird, and the last of the spring on Apr 20th at Barton Pits. In the autumn, there were passing coastal records moving S at Huttoft Bank on Oct 4th and two at Tetney on Nov 14th, whilst a single bird at Covenham Res from Oct 8th-16th was joined by two still in summer plumage on the 13th and there were also two present on the 16th. The total for the year, assuming no more than three in total were at Covenham Res in autumn, was ten.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Humber & Wash</i>												
Barton Pits	16	5	16	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	5
Saltfleetby-Mablethorpe	5	46	6	-	1	2	2	1	2	-	1	3
Gibraltar Point	9	16	12	4	3	4	3	3	6	3	4	10
Freiston Shore	13	3	-	2	-	7	3	-	-	4	6	20
Witham*	15	16	2	3	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	6	4	15	6	5	4	1	2	1	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Covenham Reservoir	16	5	7	5	8	9	33	56	69	68	81	97
Toft Newton Reservoir	50	29	17	9	6	1	5	10	9	35	25	26
North Hykeham Pits	13	13	15	6	4	2	11	15	28	22	14	10
Whisby NR	10	8	15	12	16	19	17	9	5	7	4	4
Norton-Thurlby Pits	3	9	18	16	6	12	17	42	49	20	6	8
Kirkby on Bain GP	2	5	9	9	6	6	13	20	4	3	2	1
Spalding-Borough Fen*	6	9	6	21	24	26	24	17	15	6	7	-
Deeping Lakes NR	6	6	8	5	1	5	8	13	9	9	4	3

The table includes sites at which 20 or more were recorded plus a selection of other consistently-recorded places. Covenham Res continued to host the largest autumn congregations in the county, with overall numbers and patterns of occurrence at most sites broadly similar to recent years. This includes some reports of birds moving or congregating at the coast in autumn and winter months, as well as the use of large inland lakes and rivers. The peak movement off Gibraltar Point was 15 S on Feb 10th. As in previous years there were limited reports of breeding, with around 35 pairs recorded as confirmed or probable breeding at 13 sites, spread throughout the county. The highest totals were two pairs at Barton Pits, six at Whisby NR and six at Frampton Marsh.



Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* Toft Newton Mar 11th 2016 © Richard Jackson

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Mar; rare in summer.

There was a good start to the year with up to five long-staying birds in the north of the county, three or more in The Wash, and scattered other records. In The Wash, one at Freiston Shore on Jan 1st was the first of the year and one was there or at Witham Mouth intermittently until Feb 26th, with two on Jan 15th-16th and 30th and three on Feb 14th. One at the Welland Mouth

on Feb 11th is assumed to have been one of the same birds. At Gibraltar Point, there were single birds on the sea on Jan 4th and 5th (assumed to be the same) and Feb 10th. In the far north of the county, there was one on the Humber at Barton on Jan 2nd and two at Bagmoor/Winterton Flood on Jan 24th, which possibly were some of those at other sites a little later. These were one at Toft Newton Res from Jan 25th to Mar 30th, with two there on Jan 29th, a further two at Cleethorpes CP during Jan 28th-Feb 9th, and one there during Feb 16th-21st which is assumed to have been one of the two, and one at Far Ings from Jan 29th until Feb 9th. On the coast, there was one off Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR, on Feb 15th, three off Saltfleet on Feb 19th and probably the same trio at Donna Nook the following day. Unusually there were two records during the summer, both at Freiston Shore, with two birds on May 2nd and one on Jun 4th.

The autumn was quieter. The first was a juvenile on the sea and then moving S at Gibraltar Point on Sep 17th, and the next was one at Covenham Res on Oct 15th-16th, possibly the same as a long-staying bird there during Nov 2nd-26th. Far inland, there was one at Deeping High Bank for five days on Oct 21st-25th. In addition, there was a smattering of coastal records: singles at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Nov 15th and at Tetney on Nov 25th, with three at Witham Mouth on Nov 7th-8th and one, counted as one of the three, there on Nov 19th and Dec 9th. The total numbers of birds recorded this year was about 29, a better than average showing: 17 in the first quarter, three in summer and nine in September-December.



Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* Toft Newton Mar 11th 2016 © Richard Jackson

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Rare breeder, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. **BBBB**

The first bird of the year was at Barton Pits on Jan 16th-17th. Singles were reported at Covenham Res on five dates between Jan 23rd and Apr 3rd and four summer plumage birds were there on Apr 20th-21st. A single was at Thurlby Pits on May 11th and nearby Norton Disney Pits on May 15th. Breeding records at traditional sites were as follows: Site A had one bird from May 16th to Jun

10th. Site B had one pair on Mar 27th. At Site C, ten birds were first noted on Apr 10th and there were at least 11 and perhaps 13 on May 8th and eight on May 14th to Jun 5th. Four pairs were thought to have bred but no evidence of confirmed breeding was reported. The last report at Site C was of one on Sep 17th. Covenham Res had two on Jul 4th-5th, one on Jul 17th, one juvenile on Jul 25th, two on Aug 17th and one from Sep 11th to 23rd. During autumn/winter, other reports were singles at Frampton Marsh during Oct 19th-Nov 11th, Deeping High Bank on Oct 24th-29th and Toft Newton Res from Nov 26th to Dec 31st.



Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* Barton Pits Jan 17th 2016 © Graham Catley

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

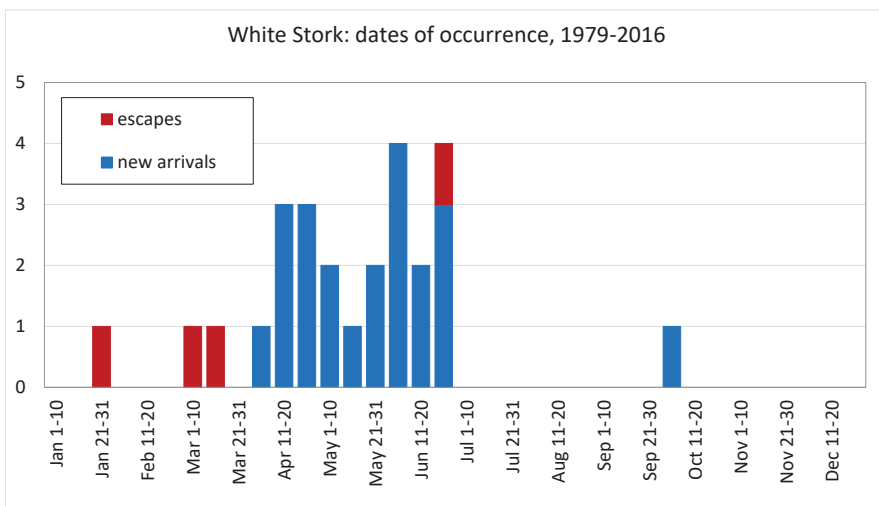
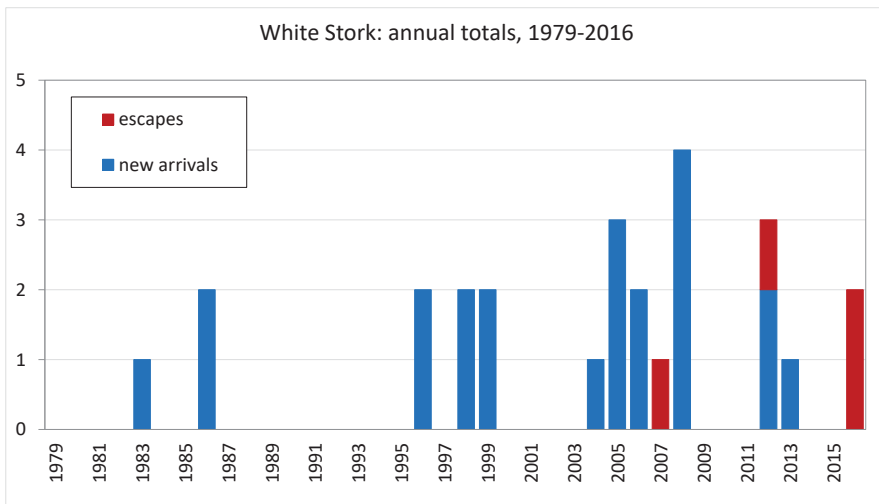
There were no reports in 2016. The non-submitted records outlined in the 2015 report have still not been submitted to BBRC.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

There were two reports but, as so often with White Stork, there is doubt over their provenance. The first was seen three miles north of Bourne on Mar 3rd. It is possible that this was a free-flying individual from Shorelands Wildlife Gardens, near Dickleburgh in Norfolk, where a number of injured Polish storks were taken for long-term care in 2014. One, a green-ringed individual (Z1213), was at Welney, Norfolk, for a few days at the end of February but left towards the north on the 29th, re-appearing near Dereham, Norfolk on Mar 4th. The same bird was in Herefordshire in mid June, but could well have been responsible also for the second Lincolnshire record, one seen flying over the A1 near Colsterworth on Jun 25th. Later in the summer, Z1213 was in Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Herefordshire, where it spent part of the winter, but then it appeared in Aberdeenshire in April 2017 (information from BirdGuides). The two records are not included in the Lincolnshire county statistics.

After the first record in 1832, no more occurred until three arrived together in 1967 and there were three more singles in the 1970s. Occurrence since then is shown in the first chart below; there have been 23 individuals regarded as wild birds during 1979-2016. Four records assumed to involve escaped birds also are shown, treating the two in 2016 as different individuals (though they may have been the same, as described above). The second chart shows that wild birds have been almost entirely restricted to spring. Most records have been of birds seen on single dates or, at most, a handful of days but a very few have stayed longer, including one for 45 days in 1971.



Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Rare vagrant. **LBRC RBBP**

One was seen by Rawson's Bridge over Maud Foster drain, just north of Boston on Jan 28th (SK). Another seen on just one day was at Manby Wetland on May 12th (JRC, MJn). In autumn, one was at Frampton Marsh from Oct 24th to Nov 5th (JHe, RHay *et al.*). These three take the

number of individuals seen in Lincolnshire since the first in 1869 to 23. Seventeen of them have been in the period beginning in 2008.



Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* Manby Wetland May 12th 2016 © John Clarkson

Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Scarce visitor, mainly coasts and estuaries, in Apr-Sep; rare in winter. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	1	1	5	15	18	22	-	-	-
Tetney-Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	2	2	3	3	3	-	-	-
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	6	1	2	5	-	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	-	-	2	8	10	12	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	1	5	5	9	18	15	3	-	-
Frampton Marsh	2	-	-	-	-	4	1	4	4	-	-	-

The table shows the sites with most records; note that there is much duplication between them and especially between Gibraltar Point and Middlemarsh Farm. Records of up to eight at Skegness and five at Seacroft no doubt refer to the same birds. There were also records of 1-2 at several other sites, mostly on the coast or estuaries. The year began with two flying over Frampton village on Jan 23rd and one (perhaps one of the Frampton birds) flew W over Anwick on Jan 24th. In spring there was one at Kirkby on Bain GP on Apr 12th-13th and one at Alkborough Flats on Apr 15th, then more consistent presence from the end of April. The first two figure count came from Alkborough Flats with ten on Jul 8th. Numbers there reached 14 on Jul 28th and 18 on Aug 20th-21st but then fell off a little until a late peak reaching 22 on Sep 14th. At Gibraltar Point, numbers slowly rose to nine in the second half of July, then jumped to 18 on Aug 20th, but subsequently fluctuated around 6-15 through until mid September. At nearby Middlemarsh Farm, the same birds comprised the peaks of ten on Aug 8th and 11-12 on Sep 6th-10th. There were still 14 at Alkborough Flats on Sep 18th but numbers then dropped sharply everywhere. The last was one bird that lingered at Gibraltar Point until Oct 15th. Three example sightings of colour-ringed birds are shown below, as usual showing the origin of many of our summering birds to be the colonies of The Netherlands, and also demonstrating how much they move around.



Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* Grainthorpe Aug 7th 2016 © Mark Johnson



Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* Gibraltar Point Aug 1st 2016 © Paul Neale

NLA 8060220	Nestling Alive (colour rings seen)	04-06-2015 Onderdijk, Vooroever: 52°46'N 5°07'E, Medemblik, The Netherlands 26-07-2015 Jaap Deensgat: 53°21'N 6°14'E, Lauwersmeer, The Netherlands 101km NE 0y 1m 22d - ditto - 26-04-2016 Saint-Just-Luzac, Gab 45°48'N 1°06'W, Charente Maritime, France 927 km SW 0y 10m 22d - ditto - 09-06-2016 Paradise lagoon, Saltfleetby: 53°41'N 0°20'E 336km W 1y 0m 5d - ditto - 12-06-2016 Carlton Marshes, Lowestoft: 52°28'N 1°40'E 257km W 1y 0m 8d - ditto - 01-07-2016 Hollesley Marshes: 52°17'N 1°57'E (Suffolk) 250km W 1y 11m 26d
NLA 8058806	Nestling Alive (colour rings seen)	12-05-2014 Onderdijk, Vooroever: 52°46'N 5°07'E, Medemblik, The Netherlands 08-09-2014 Dungeness: 50°92'N 0°98'E (Kent) 351km W 1y 2m 30d - ditto - 17-09-2014 Old Hall reserve: 51°73'N 0°67'E (Essex) 324km W 0y 3m 8d - ditto - 22-09-2014 Benacre Broad: 52°38'N 1°72'E (Suffolk) 234km W 0y 3m 13d *sighted many times in Suffolk, Oct 2014 to Apr 2015* - ditto - 26-04-2015 Orfordness: 52°07'N 1°47'E (Suffolk) 260km W 1y 10m 17d - ditto - 08-05-2015 Minkewaal: 53°07'N 4°88'E, Texel, The Netherlands 37km NW 1y 10m 30d - ditto - 21-05-2015 Dijkmanshuizen: 53°05'N 4°85'E, Texel, The Netherlands 36km NW 1y 11m 12d - ditto - 26-05-2015 Hollesley Marshes: 52°17'N 1°57'E (Suffolk) 250km W 1y 11m 26d *sighted many times in Suffolk & Norfolk, May 2015 to Mar 2016* - ditto - 15-04-2016 Alkborough: 53°41'N 0°41'W 399km W 2y 10m 6d *sighted in Norfolk & Suffolk, May and Jul 2016*
NLA 8058678	Nestling Alive (colour rings seen)	09-06-2014 Oosterkwelder: 53°29'N 6°14'E, Schiermonnikoog, The Netherlands 19-08-2014 Jaap Deensgat: 53°21'N 6°14'E, Lauwersmeer, The Netherlands 0y 2m 10d - ditto - 02-07-2016 Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 397km W 1y 11m 23d - ditto - 05-07-2016 Blacktoft Sands: 53°41'N 0°42'W (Yorkshire) 460km W 1y 11m 26d - ditto - 06-07-2016 Alkborough: 53°41'N 0°41'W 458km W 1y 11m 27d

Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Rare breeder, rare winter visitor. Bred to early 19th century, from 1940s-1979 and in recent years. **BBBB**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	8	10	4	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	6	4
Minimum Lincs total	9	10	4	2	3	2	1	1	3	3	7	5

A slightly better year for Bittern in the county with reports from 18 sites, up from 14 the previous year, and a cumulative monthly Lincolnshire total for the year of 50, up from 44 the previous year. The Humber Bank pits held birds in only six months with a maximum of two in January and November. Breeding attempts were limited to reports of one booming bird for an eight day period at Baston Fen in May and another at nearby Willow Tree Fen NR on Jun 18th. Another boomer was at Alkborough Flats from Apr 17th to 20th, and two females were seen flying in from Yorkshire on May 21st. Only one boomer was reported from Barton Pits and for only a couple of days. Single wintering birds were reported from Boultham Mere (January and September-November), Cleethorpes CP (January-February), Kirkby on Bain GP (January-March) and Whisby NR (January-March and November-December), with two at Whisby on Dec 28th-30th.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

One was present at Barton Pits on Aug 4th-9th (GPC, MTA *et al.*). Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.570). This bird closely resembled a full adult but the presence of some brownish shafts in the primaries suggested it might only be in its second calendar year.

This was the fifth for Lincolnshire, following the one at Kirkby on Bain GP in June 2015. Although present over six days and not especially sensitive to human disturbance, it proved somewhat elusive as it moved between pits.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Rare vagrant. **LBRC**

One was in the Crook Bank-Churchill Lane area of Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Apr 17th (CRM). Later in the year, there was a series of records which, it is assumed, related to only two individuals. One was at Stallingborough on Nov 4th (JWW), and one in a field close to Covenham



Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* Barton Pits Aug 9th 2016 © Graham Catley



Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* Barton Pits Aug 9th 2016 © Graham Catley

Res on Nov 8th (KRo, GPL). Then two were found together near Skidbrooke on Nov 13th, where they remained until at least Dec 21st (SJM, WM *et al.*).



Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Skidbrooke Nov 19th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Fairly common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor.

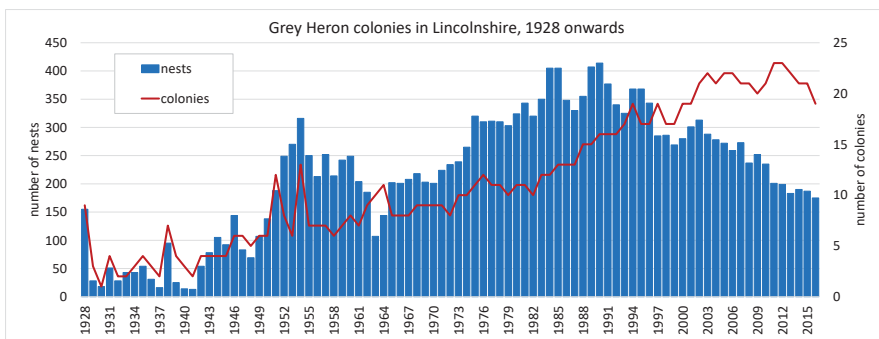
Away from breeding sites this is a regularly encountered bird, with most records involving low numbers, and peak counts were lower than in past years. In the first winter period, peak counts included seven along the R Witham near Bardney on Jan 18th, seven at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jan 30th and 17 there as nesting got under way on Mar 25th, and also ten at Alkborough Flats on Mar 25th. In the second winter period, there were few large counts, with seven in the Wrangle sector of The Wash on Oct 4th, eight along the R Welland upstream of Spalding on Dec 18th, nine along the R Witham near Bardney on Dec 19th, and seven at Anwick STW on Dec 29th. Coastal movements recorded at Gibraltar Point included six in from the south on Mar 19th and, in the autumn, eight in from the east and then S on Sep 7th, and nine, including eight in off the sea, on Sep 17th. There were only three ringing recoveries affecting Lincolnshire this year, with the two shown below involving nestling ringing in spring 2016 in North Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire and both being recovered in Lincolnshire within a three month period.

1508358	Nestling	05-05-2016	Thicket Priory, Thorganby, York: 53°52'N 0°57'W (North Yorkshire)
	Long dead	13-07-2016	North Somercotes: 53°26'N 0°8'E 88km SE 0y 2m 8d
1508297	Nestling	09-04-2016	Besthorpe Gravel Pits, Newark: c. 53°9'N 0°47'W (Nottinghamshire)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	22-07-2016	Whisby NR, Lincoln: 53°10'N 0°38'W 11km E 0y 3m 13d

The total number of occupied nests in Lincolnshire during 2016, counted as part of the BTO Heronries Census, is shown in the table below.

Abbey Wood	27	Lea Marsh	8
Appletree Ness	4	Long Wood	5
Baston Sand & Gravel Pits	5	Nocton Wood	6
Belton Park	3	North Cotes Spinney	10
Dowsby Fen	nil	Patterson's Pit	16
Fitties Nature Reserve	3	The Deepes	5
Hartsholme Country Park	16	The Mere, Deeping St James	10
Hospital Cottage Spinney	6	Troy Wood	8
Howsham Barff Wood	?	Warren Plantation	4
Kingerby Wood	nil	Welland Farm	4
Kirkby Pits (west)	17	Willoughby Wood	18

The total number of occupied nests in 2016 was 175. This compares with 187 in 2015, with the trend still showing a decline in Lincolnshire. Howsham Wood was not checked in 2016, but it is thought to have been deserted. The traditional sites at Bottom Barff, Legbourne and Tuetoes Wood have been removed from the list as they have been checked three or more times and confirmed as deserted.



The BTO heronries census began in 1928 and is the longest running survey of any breeding bird in the world. The data for Lincolnshire are summarised in the chart below, courtesy of Barrie Wilkinson and the BTO. Coverage until after the Second World War was probably far from complete (except perhaps in 1928 itself) but the nest totals during the 1950s were generally in the 200-250 range. There was a dip in the 1960s, most pronounced after the severe winter of 1962/63, but subsequently a sustained rise began. This was probably facilitated in large part by milder winter weather but may also have been helped by lower persecution rates than earlier, improvements in water quality and the banning of persistent organochlorine pesticides. The number of nests just topped 400 in the years running up to 1990. However, a decline then set in which has continued to the present. This pattern has been mirrored in the wider trend, although for the UK as a whole the decline started later, around 2001. The cause of the decline is not known but it has been substantial, with the population now back at the level last recorded after the 1963 winter. Interestingly, the number of colonies continued to rise, at least until 2012, although even that measure may now be falling. The trend towards more and smaller colonies could mean that some new heronries are unrecorded, and efforts to find these are encouraged.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Very scarce visitor. **LBRC**

During the year, there were about 90 reports from c35 sites. All were single birds and they were recorded in all months except July and August. Many of the records will have involved the same birds and it is not possible to say with certainty how many occurred in the county during 2016, but our estimate is seven in the first half and eight in the second half of the year. The on/off presence of this species at Deeping High Bank and nearby sites during 2016 highlights the problem of calculating the actual number of birds involved. The following account includes all records validated by LBRC submissions, with the addition of all birds recorded on more than one date, and those for which images have appeared online (single site records without any form of validation have been omitted). Unfortunately, LBRC submissions for this species have inevitably declined with the increasing level of occurrence and long-staying nature of some of the birds. This species was still considered by BBRC as recently as 2003, but is a candidate for removal from LBRC consideration in the near future; for this reason we have not included observers' initials. However, we still encourage observers to provide at least brief details of sightings, to establish at least that there was no confusion with Little Egret.

The first of the year was the long-stayer in the Bardney-Nocton area, which had been present since mid December 2015, recorded at Nocton Fen on Jan 1st and remaining until at least Jan 16th. Reports from Deeping High Bank and the Crowland-Spalding area on Jan 2nd-3rd, during Apr 2nd-Apr 26th, then on Oct 4th and from Nov 19th until the end of the year could have involved a single individual, though given its absence in summer it is counted as two. The same bird or birds may well have been responsible for records at Tongue End on Jan 4th and Feb 18th, Baston Fen NR on Mar 12-13th, Willow Tree Fen NR on Mar 10th, 16th and 23rd, and on Apr 8th, and

at Deeping St Nicholas on Dec 29th-30th. Apart from those long-staying individuals, the only records in the first quarter involved one at Birchwood, Lincoln, on Mar 10th and, presumably the same, nearby at Whisby NR on Mar 14th, the third reserve record. In spring, there were singles at Ruskington on Apr 30th, photographed at Huttoft Bank Pit on May 1st-2nd, at Toft Newton Res on May 4th, and at Huttoft Bank Pit again on May 9th. An adult in breeding plumage was at Alkborough Flats during May 17th-26th. One at Whisby NR on Jun 9th was then the last until September. One roosted at Alkborough Flats on Sep 12th, and others were seen at the Nene Mouth on Sep 16th and at Gibraltar Point on Sep 17th. One at Barton Pits on Sep 23rd could have been the Alkborough bird. A sequence in the Witham valley downstream of Lincoln probably relates to one bird, seen at Fiskerton Fen during Sep 23rd-30th, Kirkby on Bain GP on Sep 24th and intermittently during Oct 11th-Dec 18th, and at Woodhall Spa on Oct 2nd. Also during autumn were birds at Gibraltar Point on Oct 8th, Boultham Mere on Oct 17th (perhaps the Witham valley bird), Boston town centre on Oct 25th (perhaps the same as Gibraltar Point), Far Ings, Barton, on Nov 15th, Gibraltar Point on Nov 19th and finally Covenham Res on Dec 19th.



Great White Egret *Ardea alba* Kirkby on Bain Dec 11th 2016 © Russell Hayes

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Formerly a rare/scarse visitor in all months, a few wintering since 1993/94. Now a scarce breeding bird and increasingly common resident. **RBPP**

District minimum totals	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
The Humber	55	62	116	85	76	64	139	185	204	100	75	52
East coast	47	52	30	36	20	15	32	36	37	35	46	49
The Wash	97	67	77	86	85	84	450	498	468	145	97	56
Inland	117	91	107	75	57	46	54	68	61	61	109	111
Minimum Lincs total	316	272	330	282	238	209	675	787	770	341	327	268

The summary table above shows the monthly minimum peak counts of birds recorded in each of four districts; the East Coast includes Saltfleetby-Skegness. After a fall back in 2015, numbers rocketed up, but the 787 minimum total in August still falls short of the record 873 in September 2013. Breeding numbers were down mainly because of an 80% drop at site A, possibly caused by competition for nest sites with Cormorants. There is no obvious explanation for the 50% declines at sites C and E. No new colonies were reported this year. It remains likely that there are undiscovered breeding sites.



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Gibraltar Point Aug 7th 2016 © Paul Neale



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Gibraltar Point Jun 15th 2016 © Paul Neale

	Number of nests	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
A	Wash	-	5	7	6	6	8	6	7	6	25	5
B	Humber	1	11	14	11	27	17	12	0	8	14	13
C	Inland	-	-	1	4	5	7	6	8	10	12	6
D	Humber	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	4	20	15	22
E	Humber	-	-	-	-	-	8	32	20	32	21	11
F	Inland	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	5	8	8	10
G	Wash	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	0	0	0
H	Inland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
I	Humber	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
County total		1	16	22	21	40	45	63	44	84	101	74

There were 15 recoveries or sightings of Little Egrets moving 100km or more this year. The longest all involved birds bred in Lincolnshire, rather than elsewhere. The two longest of all are shown below, illustrating the wanderings of young birds, together with a Norfolk bird (just) that seems settled north of The Wash.

GR37103	Nestling	20-05-2015	Site E
	Alive (colour rings seen)	24-09-2015	Kinneil Lagoon, Grangemouth: 56°0'N 3°40'W (Falkirk) 366km NW 0y 4m 4d
	- ditto -	01-03-2016	Vane Farm: 56°10'N 3°22'W (Perth and Kinross) 369km NW 0y 9m 10d
	- ditto -	23-07-2016	Wheldrake Ings: 53°52'N 0°56'W (York) 77km NW 1y 2m 3d
	- ditto -	18-08-2016	Warren Mill: 55°35'N 1°46'W (Northumberland) 263km NNW 1y 2m 29d
	- ditto -	24-08-2016	Kinneil Lagoon, Grangemouth: 56°0'N 3°40'W (Falkirk) 366km NW 1y 3m 4d
R36342	Nestling	10-06-2013	Site E
	Alive (colour rings seen)	15-08-2013	Ironbridge: 52°37'N 2°29'W (Telford and Wrekin) 193km WSW 0y 2m 5d
	- ditto -	31-08-2013	Venus Pool, near Shrewsbury: 52°38'N 2°40'W (Shropshire) 203km WSW 0y 2m 21d
	- ditto -	06-10-2013	Durleigh, Bridgwater: 51°7'N 3°3'W (Somerset) 336km SW 0y 3m 26d
	- ditto -	20-10-2013	Ludford Bridge, Ludlow: 52°21'N 2°43'W (Shropshire) 222km WSW 0y 4m 10d
	- ditto -	01-12-2013	Badshot Lea: 51°13'N 0°45'W (Surrey) 258km SSW 0y 5m 21d
	- ditto -	19-03-2014	Moor Green Lakes Nature Reserve, Finchampstead: 51°20'N 0°50'W (Wokingham) 244km SSW 0y 9m 9d
	- ditto -	30-12-2014	Tice's Meadow, Badshot Lea: 51°13'N 0°45'W (Surrey) 258km SSW 1y 6m 20d
	- ditto -	19-03-2016	Badshot Lea, Aldershot: 51°13'N 0°45'W (Surrey) 258km SSW 2y 9m 9d
	- ditto -	22-03-2016	London Wetland Centre, Barnes: 51°28'N 0°14'W (Greater London) 225km S 2y 9m 12d
GC85732	Nestling	22-05-2010	near The Laurels Farm, Terrington St Clement: 52°46'N 0°18'E (Norfolk)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	03-01-2015	Middlemarsh Farm, Croft, Skegness: 53°8'N 0°17'E 39km N 4y 7m 12d
	- ditto -	05-01-2016	Middlemarsh Farm, Croft, Skegness: 53°8'N 0°17'E 39km N 5y 7m 14d
	- ditto -	03-06-2016	Middlemarsh Farm, Croft, Skegness: 53°8'N 0°17'E 39km N 6y 1m 12d

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Regular offshore visitor/passage migrant most of the year. Fairly common/common Jul-Nov, but scarce at other times and rare inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donna Nook	-	2	1	1	6	1	41	6	8	145	58	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	4	1	-	5	51	-	2	189	18	5	3
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	40	100	1000	145	-
Gibraltar Point	2	1	1	11	5	40	66	54	281	1500	187	3
Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	12	100	300	1	-

The table includes most counts of 100 or more, but there were also 355 in the Terrington sector of The Wash in November. There were few records in the first four months of the year with 1-4 being noted along the coast, but mainly from Gibraltar Point and Wash sites with a high count of 11 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 26th. Low numbers of 1-6 were more widespread in May, and in

June double figure counts were made regularly at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point. There was an inland record of an adult at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jun 18th. In July, birds were recorded on most days with nearly all records coming from the coastal stretch between Huttoft and Witham Mouth and the great majority from Gibraltar Point; at the end of the month there were six at Donna Nook on the 30th and 41 there on the 31st. Records in August showed a similar distribution with double figure counts at Gibraltar Point on twelve days. There was just a handful of single figure records from the northern parts of the coast. This pattern was repeated in September with much higher numbers; Gibraltar Point had double figure counts on twenty-five days, of which nine were over 100, the highest being 281 on the 12th. North of Huttoft there were 48 at Mablethorpe and 24 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 16th, 18 at Trusthorpe on the 17th, 189 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 18th and 54 there on the 24th. There were large movements at the start of October with 300 at Freiston Shore, 355 at Terrington, 1500 at Gibraltar Point, 1000 at Huttoft Car Terrace and 145 at Donna Nook all on the 2nd. There were 107 at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd, 120 at Huttoft Car Terrace and 135 at Gibraltar Point on the 4th, when there were also 33 at Wrangle, and 150 at Witham Mouth and 70 at Gibraltar Point on the 5th. Thereafter, all other double figure counts for the rest of October were at Gibraltar Point, apart from 71 at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 13th whilst single figure counts were widespread but, for the great part, concentrated in the southern coastal areas. The first week of November was fairly busy with 145 at Huttoft Car Terrace, 155 at Gibraltar Point and eight at Donna Nook on the 1st, 130 at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 2nd, 86 at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd, with 85 there on the 5th, when there were also 58 at Donna Nook, 104 at Sutton on Sea and 30 at Huttoft Car Terrace. On Nov 6th there were c100 at Huttoft Car Terrace, 124 at Gibraltar Point and 22 at Donna Nook. On the 7th there were 187 at Gibraltar Point and 52 at Huttoft Car Terrace and during the rest of the month 1-5 were noted on just ten days. In December, there were three at Gibraltar Point on the 4th, one on Christmas Day at Donna Nook and three at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 27th.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Scarce winter visitor Aug-May mainly to the coast, with occasional larger influxes. Rare inland and in summer.

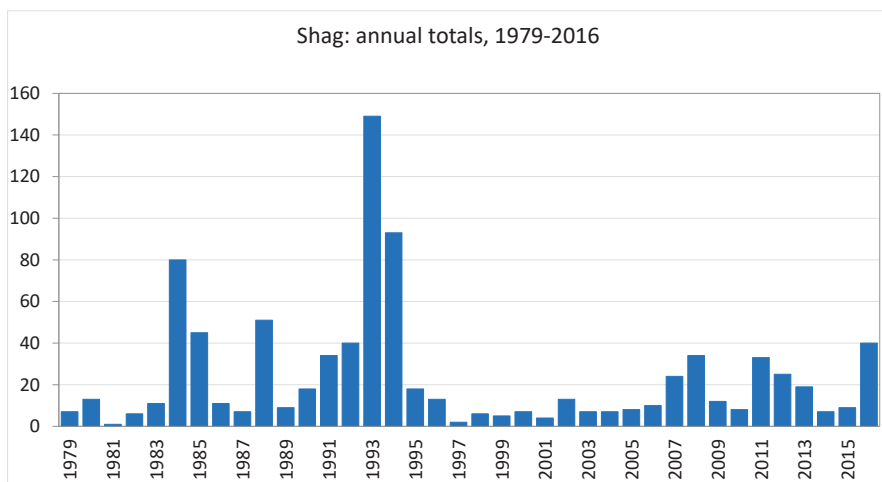


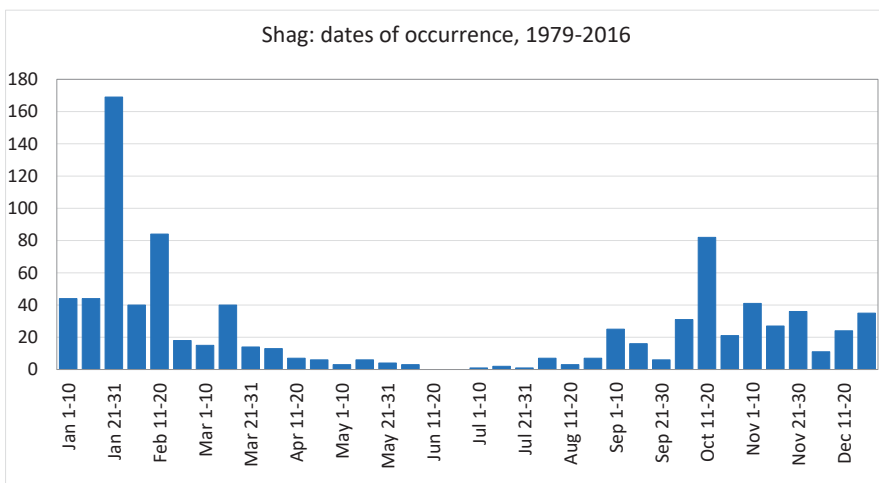
Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* North Hykeham Pits (Apex Pit) Jan 10th 2016 © Ben Ward

On Jan 1st there was a remarkable record of 13 at Donna Nook, with four still there on the 3rd, on which date there was also one at Witham Mouth. One of the two ringing recoveries this year (see below) was also on Jan 1st, of a bird seen 4 km inland at Hannah, near Sandilands. Also in January, there was one at Tetney Marsh on the 4th, with two there on the 9th and one on the 17th (assumed to have involved only two birds overall), and further singles at Witham Mouth on the 9th and 14th (assumed the same), inland at North Hykeham Pits on the 9th-10th, and at Gibraltar Point on the 12th and Anderby Creek on the 16th-17th. The other ringing recovery involved one found dead near Donna Nook on Feb 7th. Three were on the Humber at Alkborough Flats on Feb 13th, one was at Gibraltar Point on Feb 21st and two were at Donna Nook on the 25th. One was found dead at Immingham Docks on Mar 24th and two were at Donna Nook on 29th. The first autumn record was a juvenile noted on the River Welland near Crowland on Sep 13th-17th. Single birds were at Friskney on Oct 6th, Tetney Marsh on Nov 11th and Huttoft Car Terrace on Nov 24th; two were at Witham Mouth on Dec 9th, with one there on the 19th, then a first winter bird moved S at Gibraltar Point on Dec 21st and finally one was at Witham Mouth on Dec 26th and 28th.

1472445	Nestling	18-06-2015	Isle of May: 56°10'N 2°33'W (Fife)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	01-01-2016	Hannah: 53°17'N 0°14'E 370km SSE 0y 6m 14d
1472320	Nestling	10-06-2015	Isle of May: 56°10'N 2°33'W (Fife)
	Freshly dead	07-02-2016	Between Donna Nook and Saltfleet: c. 53°26'N 0°10'E 353km SSE 0y 7m 28d

The total of 40 this year was the highest since 1994 (see first chart). In the 1980s and early 1990s, there were several years with large numbers, notably 80 in 1984 (including 24 at Covenham Reservoir in January and 12 at North Cotes in November), 149 in 1993 (including a record 132 flying S at Mablethorpe during a half day seawatch on 25th January), and 93 in 1994 (including 58 S at Gibraltar Point on 17th February). The average for the twenty years to 2016 has been 14.0 individuals per year but over the whole period since 1979 it was 23.3. The UK breeding population of Shag reached a high level during the late 1980s and early 1990s but then declined quite sharply and it has remained at a relatively low level since then. Thus the frequency of occurrence in Lincolnshire approximately matches the wider pattern. Birds can appear at almost any time of year (second chart) but are most frequent from October to March. During 1979-2016, there were no records between 9th June and 6th July. The majority are seen along the coast or in The Wash. Some penetrate the Humber and a small number are seen well inland, though not every year. Some remain for a few days or even weeks; the bird at Crowland in 2016, roosting on the water tower, was reminiscent of one at Brayford Pool, Lincoln, during 3rd March-17th April 1994, which roosted on the cathedral.





Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Fairly common winter visitor, mainly coastal but increasing numbers inland and in summer. Inland breeding colony established 1992.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Coastal</i>												
Barton upon Humber	55	16	12	3	1	-	2	10	7	40	15	17
Humberston Fitties-Tetney	33	20	24	18	12	-	2	-	25	56	161	26
Donna Nook	51	270	22	23	5	13	38	65	54	10	12	35
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	138	299	65	14	9	30	5	10	33	10	17	53
Gibraltar Point	371	236	180	27	30	11	153	250	243	218	361	386
<i>Inland</i>												
Covenham Res	28	3	1	4	1	1	7	17	129	206	286	308
North Hykeham Pits	86	4	-	1	-	-	1	-	2	2	14	57
Whisby NR	64	22	18	2	9	5	24	45	36	45	69	22
Woodhall Spa Airfield	60	-	32	14	-	3	-	-	65	-	-	-
Deeping Lakes	27	31	33	35	41	41	31	40	16	20	39	26

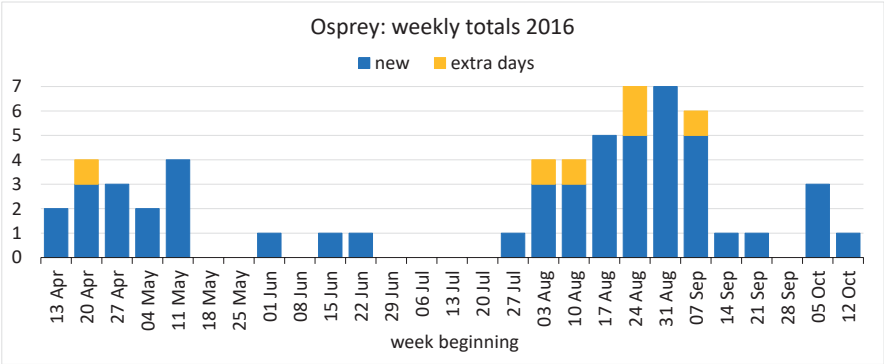
The table above includes all sites which regularly hold significant numbers. The highest counts were mainly at Gibraltar Point or at Covenham Res but there were 270 at Saltfleet on Feb 19th, also 270 at Donna Nook on Feb 20th, and 161 flew over Tetney Lock from their roost on Nov 25th. The peaks at Gibraltar Point were 371 on Jan 23rd and 386 on Dec 4th. At Covenham Res, there were 308 on Dec 1st. Away from tabulated sites, there were 48 at Terrington on Feb 12th and 38 at Witham Mouth on Mar 17th. There were 30 at Frampton Marsh from Jul 28th to Aug 1st, and c100 in The Wash on a Boston Belle cruise on Aug 26th. Later in the year, there were 47 at Terrington on Sep 4th, 36 at Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 19th, 46 at Langtoft End GP on Nov 19th. At Deeping Lakes 30 or more were regularly recorded during the breeding season and 13 occupied nests were counted on Apr 1st. No other evidence of breeding activity was reported. There are no movements between Germany and Lincolnshire in the BTO ringing reports, so the colour ring information below is of interest.

5264463	First-year	01-11-2012	near Lyndon, Oakham, Rutland Water: 52°38'N 0°41'W (Rutland)
	Dead	12-03-2016	River Witham, Tattershall: 53°5'N 0°13'W 61km NNE 3y 4m 11d
DEW	Nestling	15-06-2015	NABU Waterbird Reserve, Wallnau, Germany
290018	Colour rings read	12-11-2015	Covenham Reservoir

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Scarce passage migrant, rare in summer. **RBBP**

There were an estimated 15 individuals in spring, followed by two in mid summer and an autumn with about 35 birds, though it should be stressed that judgements as to which birds are new and which have moved location or stayed on are difficult. The chart shows the number of assumed new arrivals each week, together with additional days spent here by those already present. The first was one that came in off the sea and then moved north at Gibraltar Point on Apr 13th. More followed, including three more at Gibraltar Point on May 1st, 3rd and 8th. Individuals at Tattershall on Apr 20th and Ruskington on Apr 21st are assumed to have been the same. The summer records were singles at Weelsby Woods, Grimsby, on Jun 21st and at Gibraltar Point on Jun 22nd. The first of autumn was at Donna Nook on Aug 2nd and more followed from the 5th. Most were singles but there were two at Horseshoe Point on Aug 31st. One at Trent Port (Marton) was present on at least Aug 8th-10th, but one there on Sep 3rd is considered to have been different. Other birds thought to have stayed a short time were one at Donna Nook on Aug 24th-26th and one at Freiston/Frampton Marsh on Sep 11th-12th. Records were concentrated along the coast and estuaries, with eight in the Frampton/Freiston area, six at Gibraltar Point, eight between Donna Nook and Grimsby, and four at Barton Pits. However, some were seen right across the county, with birds in the west including the two at Marton, one at Ancaster on Jun 4th, and one at Deeping High Bank on Sep 7th. The last of the year were one at Immingham Docks on Oct 9th and one at Frampton Marsh on Oct 15th.



Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Very scarce passage migrant, with occasional larger autumn influxes. **LBRC RBBP**

Six were recorded this year: one in spring and the rest in August-September. The spring bird was an adult female which moved slowly NW at Donna Nook on May 8th (SL). The first of autumn was an adult male photographed over Chambers Farm Wood on Aug 15th (RTa). One flew S at Gibraltar Point on Aug 23rd (PCro). One flew SE at Gibraltar Point on Sep 16th (RDn). One was seen at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Sep 18th (NAL). A dark morph juvenile flew SW at Donna Nook on Sep 30th (SL).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Common resident and passage migrant. After extinction as a breeder in 1950s due to pesticides and persecution, recolonised rapidly from the early 1980s.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tetney Marsh	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	-	1	2	2	2
Donna Nook	1	1	2	3	2	-	-	2	2	2	3	2
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	1	2	1	2	1	1	-	2	2	1	2	1
Gibraltar Point	2	2	2	5	3	2	1	3	3	5	4	1
Frampton Marsh	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	2
Whisby NR	2	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2

As usual, most records were of 1-2 birds. The table includes a selection of consistently recorded sites, showing the larger counts concentrated in spring and autumn. There were two counts of five, both at Gibraltar Point, on Apr 25th and Oct 8th. Counts of four also were restricted to Gibraltar Point: one in April, three in October and one in November. This is a widespread breeding bird but there were only two reports of confirmed breeding, one of them involving a nest with three chicks at Whisby NR. Reported prey included birds seen hunting Swallow, Starling and Blue Tit, birds with a captured Black-headed Gull chick, Fieldfare, Sanderling and (more unusually) Waxwing, this last at Fillingham on Jan 29th. One at Gibraltar Point on Jan 21st was seen attempting to drown a Magpie in a puddle before being disturbed by a passing car.



Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* Covenham Res Aug 23rd 2016 © John Clarkson

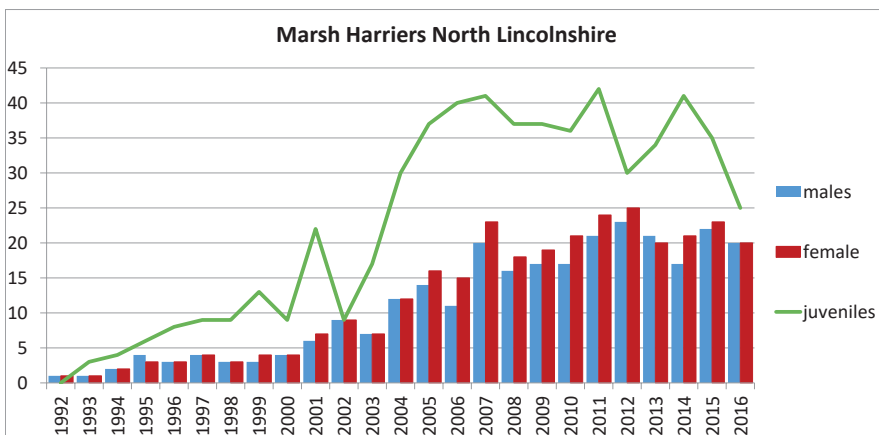
Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Fairly common passage migrant and summer visitor, increasing in winter. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North	31	27	36	49	21	17	24	15	22	26	20	34
Coast	3	8	6	15	25	17	15	15	16	17	5	1
Wash	17	24	17	17	42	51	21	30	20	18	16	8
Inland	13	15	13	22	20	16	20	21	27	13	9	3

The table includes sums from localities within four broad regions, though it is difficult to be sure which reports refer to the same birds within these. Wintering numbers in January-February were higher than in 2015 but November-December figures were down. The largest roost counts were down, with maxima of ten reported at Alkborough Flats on Jan 12th, Oct 30th and Nov 17th. There were also ten reported from Bardney Pits on Sep 28th. In north Lincolnshire, the number of breeding males was 20 (22 in 2015) and also 20 females (23 in 2015) and the total of 25 fledged young was lower than the 35 in 2015; see the chart below for the trend in the north of the county since 1992. Elsewhere, 15 confirmed nests were reported, plus a further 11 probable breeding attempts. These 26 pairs were widely spread with 15 from the inland fens, seven from The Wash and four from the coastal marshes. Overall, breeding numbers at 46 pairs were ten down on the 56 pairs recorded in 2015. It may be that this fall is partly caused by incomplete coverage around The Wash.

GC97695	Nestling Female	27-06-2013	Haddiscoe Island: 52°32'N 1°36'E (Norfolk)
	Alive (wing-tag seen)	25-07-2013	Haddiscoe Marsh, Fritton: 52°32'N 1°36'E (Norfolk) 0km 0y 0m 28d
	- ditto -	22-12-2013	Minsmere Nature Reserve: 52°14'N 1°37'E (Suffolk) 34km S 0y 5m 25d
	- ditto -	25-06-2016	Nocton Fen: 53°9'N 0°23'W 151km WNW 2y 11m 29d



Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-May; rare in summer. Bred to 1872. This species has become less numerous since the 1990s. Former roosting sites on The Wash used to hold double figures throughout the winter periods. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Tetney Marsh-Donna Nook	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	3	3	2
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Gibraltar Point	2	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	2
Freiston Shore	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Frampton Marsh	2	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	1	3	4	2
Welland-Holbeach	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Nene Mouth	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fiskerton-Nocton	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-



Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* and Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* Frampton Marsh Nov 28th 2016
© Steve Keightley

There were no reports between one at Donna Nook and Horseshoe Point on May 19th and one at Frampton Marsh on Sep 22nd. The numbers occurring each month will be, in many cases, higher than the peak counts because of migrants moving through and because not all birds in an area will be seen on a single day. The information provided does not permit a full assessment of numbers. The peak counts continue to be low though, and the only reports of three or more were as follows. There were three at Frampton Marsh on five widely spaced dates during Feb 20th-Apr 15th; these probably all involved one male and two females. There were also three (two males and one female) at Frampton Marsh on Oct 1st and Nov 27th, with four on Nov 25th. Elsewhere, there were three at Donna Nook on Oct 21st and at Tetney Marsh on Nov 25th. Sightings well inland were sparse but included singles at Marston STW and Willow Tree Fen in January, with two at Belton Park on Jan 17th, and singles at Careby Wood on Mar 2nd, Willow Tree Fen on Apr 13th, there again on Oct 9th, Hawthorpe on Nov 15th, and Dunsby Fen on Dec 26th.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

A second calendar year bird was seen at Conisholme on May 5th (ACo). In the autumn, a first calendar year female was seen in the Tetney-Grainthorpe-Donna Nook area on most days during Nov 8th-17th (CA *et al.*); this bird had been present in Yorkshire, in the Welwick Marsh and Spurn area, from Nov 5th and was there again, after its visit to Lincolnshire, into 2017. These two records take the county total to four, with previous individuals in 2012 and 2015. Both accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.572).



Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* Grainthorpe Haven Nov 10th 2016 © Graham Catley

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor, though breeding irregularly. **RBBP**

The fortunes of the Montagu's Harrier in Lincolnshire continued to decline, with a total of only five birds seen throughout the year; the last successful breeding took place in 2012 and the last nesting in 2014. A lone female that summered at RSPB Blacktoft Sands in East Yorkshire again ventured across the Trent to Alkborough Flats on a few dates between May 4th and Jul 4th. A ringtail was at Gibraltar Point on May 13th with one (not sexed or aged) at Gipsy Bridge on Jun 19th, then two birds at Gibraltar Point: a male on Jul 8th and a female in off the sea and then S on Jul 24th. Finally, a second calendar year female was reported at Rippingale on Aug 29th-30th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Scarce resident and, from 2008, very scarce breeding species mainly in the south-west of the county.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Stoke Rochford-Colsterworth	-	1	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Hawthorpe-Bulby-Callan's Lane area	15	16	4	2	2	2	3	-	-	4	5	6
Morton-Bourne	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	2	3
Culverthorpe-Osournby	2	1	5	2	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	1

The table shows all areas that held four or more. Most of the larger counts this year came from the Hawthorpe-Bulby-Callan's Lane area, including the largest of all, of 15 on Jan 2nd and 16 on Feb 20th. No counts of four or more were made away from the south-west apart from six at Frampton Marsh on Jul 24th. Nevertheless, reports came from locations spread across the whole county, though with fewer in September-October than at other times. Only one report of confirmed breeding was received, but that is clearly an under-statement of the species' status. Probable breeding was noted at four other sites.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

Rare vagrant. **LBRC**

2015 correction: The bird that flew north at Donna Nook was seen on Apr 9th (not the 15th as published in error last year).

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. **LBRC**

This year saw a reversion to very scarce status with only five records, after a couple of years with more. The only one early in the year was at Tetney Marsh on Jan 5th (RL) but there was a late migrant at Donna Nook on May 3rd (SL) which arrived over the mudflats and continued to the south-west. Two juveniles were seen at Donna Nook in autumn: one on Oct 29th (GPC, ND, CA *et al.*) and the other on Nov 14th-16th (SL *et al.*). Close to The Wash, one was at Holland Fen on Nov 20th (JWh).



Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus* juvenile Donna Nook Oct 29th 2016 © Graham Catley

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Bred to 19th century before local extinction. Now common breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donna Nook	2	3	4	4	5	4	2	6	13	6	3	2
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	1	3	1	3	4	2	1	3	18	3	1	1
Gibraltar Point	3	4	5	9	6	2	3	5	12	3	1	1
Messingham SQ	4	13	6	15	5	3	2	8	4	5	2	5
Laughton Forest	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	15	-	-	-
Trent Port (Marton)	3	4	18	5	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	3
Covenham Res	4	8	8	4	3	4	4	3	16	6	3	4
Stenigot-Biscathorpe	-	5	10	17	1	3	-	-	3	1	8	2
Whisby NR	3	5	5	10	4	6	3	3	2	2	1	1
Marston STW	2	1	2	11	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	3

The table shows sites with records in four months or more and counts of at least ten. All such counts occurred in February-April or August-September, and those at non-tabulated sites were 12 at Binbrook in February, and 14 at Normanby and 11 at Fillingham in August. The largest counts of all were 18 at Trent Port (Marton) on Mar 20th, 17 at Stenigot-Biscathorpe on Apr 13th, 18 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Sep 18th and 16 at Covenham Res also on Sep 18th. Very few reports mentioned breeding activity. Birds were recorded moving (mostly to the S or SW), on the coast in spring and autumn. The peak in spring was six S at Gibraltar Point on May 22nd, while in autumn there were three S at Gibraltar Point on both Aug 16th and Aug 21st, and at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Oct 8th, plus nine S at Gibraltar Point on Sep 18th.



Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* Nocton Fen Feb 26th 2016 © John Clarkson

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce resident, fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Much under-recorded. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	-	3	44	6	4	2	20	7	5	3	1
Messingham SQ	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Barton Pits	20	12	1	1	-	-	4	2	1	2	1	5
New Holland-Goxhill	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Town's Holt, Grimsby	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1
Cleethorpes CP	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donna Nook	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Gibraltar Point	4	4	4	1	3	-	-	2	3	16	10	6
Frampton Marsh	2	1	-	-	2	1	2	3	2	2	4	1
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	2	2	2	1	1	-	1	4	3	2	3	1
Marston STW	11	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	1	10	6	18

The table above includes most sites with records of three or more, or in eight or more months. There were also three at Butterwick Hale in October and four at Chapel Six Marshes in December. It was another good year for breeding Water Rails with Alkborough Flats reporting 22 territories and confirmed breeding with several broods. Confirmed breeding was also reported from Barton Pits (four broods), Gibraltar Point (one) and Frampton Marsh (one). In all there were nine confirmed breeding reports, 26 probable and four possible from 11 different sites. The total of 39 was up on 36 pairs reported in 2015. Outside of the breeding season, there was an autumn influx, reflected by reports of 56 birds at 20 sites in October, up from 23 birds at 11 sites in September. In December, 66 birds were reported from 20 sites.



Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* Gibraltar Point Oct 30th 2016 © Paul Neale

Corn Crane *Crex crex*

Very scarce passage migrant. **LBRC RBBP**

A calling male was near Long Sutton on May 16th-20th (MJa), and an autumn migrant was flushed at Gibraltar Point on Aug 19th (NAL). There have now been three years in a row with records, and each of them involving one or more calling birds.

Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana*

Rare migrant. **LBRC**

The only record this year involved one seen and photographed at Guy's Head, at the mouth of the R Nene near Sutton Bridge, on Oct 19th (PAI). Over the last ten years, Spotted Cranes have occurred in seven, with an average of 0.9 per year.

Western Swamphen *Porphyrio porphyrio*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

This was probably the highlight of the rare bird year – even if it was generally a long way away. A bird essentially of the western Mediterranean, normally occurring no nearer than southernmost France. A thin scatter of records through France in 2016 was the forerunner of one appearing at Minsmere, Suffolk, on Jul 31st-Aug 5th. It disappeared but, a few weeks later, one was found at Alkborough Flats by Peter Cleford, and later identified as the same as that at Minsmere through plumage characters. It remained at Alkborough Flats, moving between pools depending on the amount of tidal inundation but often vanishing into the reedbeds, from Aug 30th to at least Nov 23rd (PCf, GPC *et al.*). An article about this record can be found on p.236. Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.573).



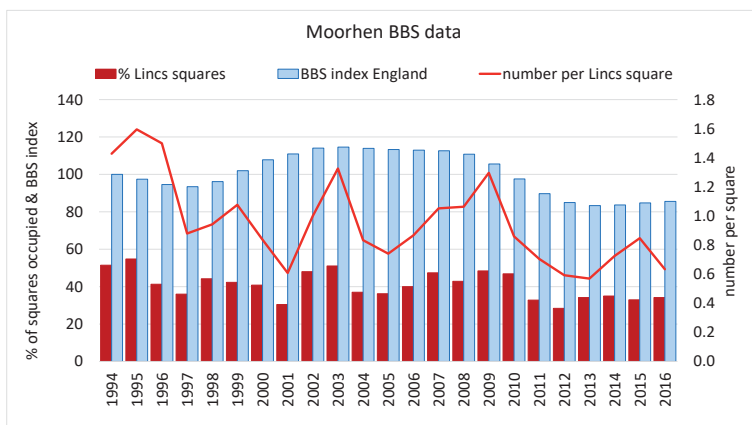
Western Swamphen
Porphyrio porphyrio
Alkborough Flats Sep 1st
2016 © Steph Thorpe

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Very common resident and partial migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Humber & Wash</i>												
Barton Pits	8	14	9	4	8	1	6	9	5	4	3	4
Town's Holt, Grimsby	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	10	8	14	18	21
Tetney Marsh	22	-	11	8	6	-	2	-	-	12	14	38
Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness	54	34	50	22	15	12	12	25	16	9	42	54
Gibraltar Point	36	38	35	24	15	11	20	21	20	14	11	20
Frampton Marsh	16	20	18	24	22	3	15	20	12	19	16	21
<i>Inland</i>												
Boultham Mere	20	25	22	5	4	8	4	12	6	5	8	12
Boultham Park	25	13	26	4	8	5	3	5	6	13	12	25
Whisby NR	22	12	10	7	6	12	12	15	20	19	22	24
Norton Disney-Thurlby	12	16	8	4	-	1	1	-	2	4	6	4
Fiskerton-Bardney	10	16	11	3	4	11	2	1	20	3	1	16
Kirkby-on-Bain Pits	7	16	6	5	3	1	3	20	13	12	18	12
Holywell Lake	17	12	14	-	-	-	-	-	14	13	24	21
Spalding-Borough Fen*	47	39	59	3	17	7	22	19	5	13	12	18
Grimsthorpe Lake	20	15	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
R Welland, Hudd's Mill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	18	23

The table includes all sites with totals of 20 or more. Generally, numbers appear to have been lower than in 2015 at sites as widely separated as Barton Pits, along the Witham valley and Frampton Marsh. It is not known whether this trend is real, or the result of counting effort, but it is worth pointing out that the raw BBS data for Lincolnshire (while not statistically significant) have been showing downward trends in both range and numbers (see chart below). The largest counts came from Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, where there were 54 on both Jan 2nd and Dec 24th, and 50 on Mar 3rd.



Common Coot *Fulica atra*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bagmoor Floods	53	45	36	3	22	7	-	28	38	35	-	-
Messingham SQ	30	1	67	16	27	70	76	42	29	100	41	41
Cadney Res	-	2	-	-	-	-	27	180	-	6	11	1
Barton-New Holland	287	182	31	23	33	1	180	131	78	93	84	129
Covenham Reservoir	132	101	73	40	5	21	87	172	221	251	250	183
Toft Newton Reservoir	214	174	61	29	4	3	1	39	51	81	99	94

Burton GP (Lincoln)	51	35	26	14	12	14	17	17	30	46	37	37
Boultham Mere	19	26	20	21	28	47	95	102	60	21	24	21
Swanholme Lakes	60	35	20	13	9	5	3	4	14	16	64	68
North Hykeham Pits	97	86	47	22	11	4	5	60	57	106	127	143
Whisby NR	349	180	107	73	51	86	105	92	46	36	77	90
Norton/Thurlby pits	60	100	50	20	20	14	25	112	160	-	47	224
Bardney Pits	6	23	28	21	16	33	47	28	34	11	8	6
Woodhall Spa Airfield	1	-	130	42	-	65	-	-	160	-	-	-
Kirkby-on-Bain Pits	200	95	60	36	26	52	76	150	127	117	111	270
Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness)	5	53	43	38	31	39	85	81	32	3	1	3
Gibraltar Point	15	37	23	20	20	16	18	18	9	3	5	1
Frampton Marsh	200	100	15	20	50	44	22	25	15	5	25	2
Spalding-Borough Fen*	24	31	26	12	26	10	8	13	9	10	10	6
Deeping Lakes	27	71	16	12	15	8	75	108	108	83	11	35
Grimsthorpe Lake	32	20	28	-	1	-	-	-	70	55	-	-
Denton Res	102	35	21	8	12	14	10	16	27	45	67	59

The table includes most sites that held at least 50 birds, but there were also 50 at Manby Wetland in January and at Freiston Shore in February. At many sites, numbers were down on those of 2015, continuing a trend from the previous year. Nationally, recent trends in breeding and wintering Coot numbers have indicated declines, so the Lincolnshire results are not surprising. Counts or estimates of breeding populations included 20 pairs at Alkborough Flats, well above the previous maximum (12 pairs) there, and 22 pairs at Frampton Marsh.

Common Crane *Grus grus*

Rare, but increasing migrant, recorded most months. Former breeding species and a common migrant to 16th/17th centuries. **RBBP LBRC**

At North Cotes Point one was seen flying SW on Mar 25th (CA). At Gibraltar Point, two were seen flying over Croft Marsh LNR on Mar 29th (DRob, BWd). One flew over North Hykeham Pits on Apr 13th (MPn). At Frampton Marsh, single birds were seen on Apr 23rd (IE) and Jul 23rd (RSPB). At Saltfleetby St Clement there was one at Elm House Farm on May 16th (RWO, JWo). There was one in fields north of Covenham Reservoir that lingered from May 17th to 20th (GPL, KRo). Another was reported flying W along the Humber near Winteringham on May 29th (BGU). One flew high to the north over Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Oct 1st (BRG). The final record of the year was of six flying S over Knaith in the Trent valley on Nov 2nd (IB).



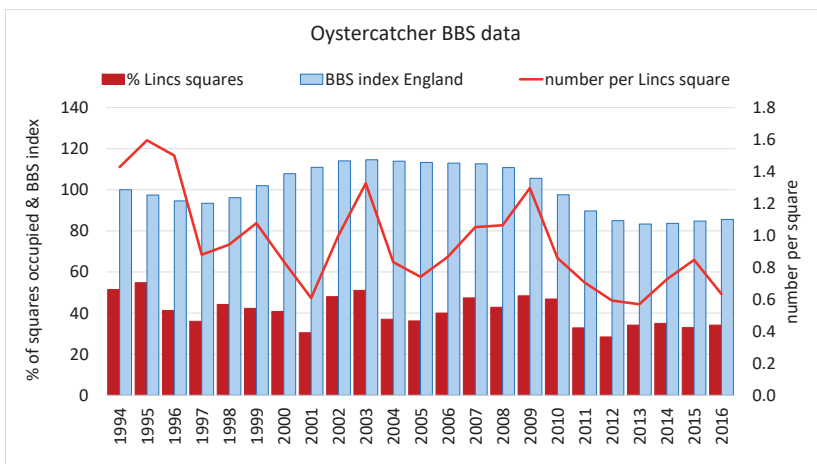
Common Crane *Grus grus* Covenham May 17th 2016 © John Clarkson

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Very common coastal passage migrant/winter visitor and fairly common resident. Less common inland, but now breeds in small numbers.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	2728	2834	1295	1634	1201	410	1150	1715	4904	1635	2496	4993
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	1360	2580	870	1322	1147	229	796	512	1818	1500	2500	3930
Grainthorpe-Donna Nook	1255	201	373	264	8	145	188	421	340	367	8	756
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	113	45	49	46	37	34	147	777	2745	328	138	307
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	2728	2834	1295	1634	1201	410	1150	1715	4904	1635	2496	4993
Gibraltar Point	1500	5000	5000	3826	800	523	2596	5000	6700	9400	3000	3100
Wainfleet	580	4500	1680	623	311	-	1150	2565	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	400	146	110	72	82	16	-	-	881	124	430	140
Wrangle*	7000	1800	-	284	64	-	813	-	103	960	-	850
Leverton*	1729	3170	1370	219	32	-	107	14	-	-	-	-
Butterwick*	550	63	-	16	17	3	-	-	3	18	77	13
Freiston Shore	1500	2150	819	2114	509	630	1100	1800	1850	1800	2000	1100
Witham Mouth	30	250	1000	16	12	-	50	2500	2000	1000	200	125
Frampton Marsh	739	6	190	54	517	104	20	119	24	21	4100	2000
Welland*	135	1380	375	26	26	-	17	6	100	-	-	-
Terrington*	375	352	1	264	183	-	102	255	1770	3000	900	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Covenham Res	-	2	2	2	20	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
Market Rasen	-	2	2	5	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby NR	1	6	6	5	6	6	4	4	-	-	-	-
Woodhall Spa Airfield	-	1	5	4	-	5	5	-	-	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	5	13	6	10	7	2	-	-	-	-	-
West Ashby Pits	-	2	2	-	6	2	9	-	-	-	-	-
Deeping Lakes	-	-	2	5	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-

The table includes all estuarine and coastal areas supporting at least 500 birds, and inland sites attracting at least five. The highest counts were mainly at Gibraltar Point, including the maximum of 9400 on Oct 19th. There was also a count of 7000 in the Wrangle WeBS sector on Jan 16th. There were eight pairs at Frampton Marsh, 11 pairs at Freiston Shore and nine pairs at Tetney Marsh but, elsewhere, reports were of only 1-3 pairs at scattered estuarine and coastal locations. In the 2013 report, we mentioned the slow spread into inland areas for breeding but Lincolnshire BBS data suggest that trend has come to a halt, and the England BBS index also is now falling.



The ringing recoveries listed below include two long-lived birds (at 33 years, these are still short of the BTO longevity record of 40 years), then four long-distance ones within Britain and one to the Faroe Islands (the eighteenth recovery of a Lincolnshire-ringed bird there). We hear of more transfers to/from Norway, though, with 11 such movements this year.

FA07743	First-year	08-09-1983	Wrangle: 53°1'N 0°9'E	67km N 33y 3m 10d
	Dead (leg only)	18-12-2016	Long Bank Marsh, near Kilnsea: 53°37'N 0°6'E (Yorkshire)	
FA07229	Adult	12-08-1983	Friskney New Marsh: c. 53°3'N 0°13'E	5km 33y 0m 9d
	Caught by ringer	21-08-2016	Friskney: 53°1'N 0°11'E	
FH82113	Nestling	14-06-2015	Bosqoy, Dounby: 59°2'N 3°13'W (Orkney)	1y 2m 5d
	Caught by ringer	19-08-2016	Wainfleet Marsh: 53°5'N 0°17'E	
FH52527	Adult	02-08-2015	Friskney: 53°1'N 0°11'E	369km SW 0y 4m 17d
	Alive (ring read in field)	19-12-2015	Dawlish Warren: 50°35'N 3°26'W (Devon)	
	Alive (ring read in field)	24-12-2016	Dawlish Warren: 50°36'N 3°27'W (Devon)	
FH52569	Adult	02-08-2015	Friskney: 53°1'N 0°11'E	369km SW 0y 5m 30d
	Alive (ring read in field)	01-02-2016	Dawlish Warren: 50°35'N 3°26'W (Devon)	
	Alive (ring read in field)	24-12-2016	Dawlish Warren: 50°36'N 3°27'W (Devon)	
FP74783	First-year	08-09-2006	Wainfleet Marsh: 53°4'N 0°17'E	343km WSW 9y 5m 1d
	Freshly dead	09-02-2016	Crofty: 51°37'N 4°8'W (Swansea)	
FH31024	Second-year	16-09-2012	Wainfleet Marsh: 53°4'N 0°17'E	1,090km NNW 3y 8m 4d
	Freshly dead (disease)	20-05-2016	Skala: 62°7'N 6°46'W (Eysturoy) Faroe Islands	

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Increasing, now fairly common coastal breeder, has colonised inland localities in the past few years. Fairly common passage migrant, rare in winter and scarce inland. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Alkborough Flats	5	41	270	160	135	150	800	1100	1020	80	100	1
Read's Island	21	161	733	-	86	220	2053	2409	2000	1270	1150	90
Killingholme	-	-	69	15	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Donna Nook	-	-	28	38	43	41	18	6	2	-	-	-
<i>The Wash</i>												
Middlemarsh Farm	1	-	14	25	44	42	32	16	4	1	-	-
Gibraltar Point	3	2	24	39	30	89	148	417	100	24	17	2
Freiston Shore	-	1	12	15	5	43	40	12	10	-	-	1
Frampton Marsh	2	9	78	108	190	117	150	100	30	10	5	1
<i>Inland</i>												
Messingham SQ	-	-	4	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	-	7	13	12	9	4	-	-	-	-	-

Birds were present at three locations on Jan 1st this year. One with a deformed bill was at Alkborough Flats during Jan 1st-22nd, when four more appeared; one was at Frampton Marsh during Jan 1st-18th with two on the 13th; and two were on Tennyson's Sands. One flew offshore at Gibraltar Point on Jan 1st, with two still there and one at Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness) on Jan 2nd. Twenty-one birds had over-wintered at Read's Island, but there were 102 there on Feb 13th-14th, and 41 at Alkborough Flats on Feb 17th. The first double figure count elsewhere was 20 at Frampton Marsh on Mar 5th. Spring passage peaked with 733 at Read's Island on Mar 14th.

Breeding numbers were slightly down this year with 248 pairs reported from eight sites compared to 266 pairs from 12 sites in 2015. Breeding success was patchy. Read's Island, our most important site in recent years, held 80 pairs which raised no young and as few as 14 pairs actually laid. Predation from the growing Lesser Black-backed Gull colony on the island is thought to be the cause for nesting failure. Elsewhere on the Humber, there were up to 160 birds at Alkborough Flats in May, with lots of display and mating but no serious nesting attempts as conditions were not suitable. Four pairs bred at Barton Pits, raising no young, and no breeding was reported from Killingholme Haven Pits. Further down at the mouth of the estuary at breeding colonies established in 2014, none bred at Horseshoe Point, while 17 pairs at the Donna Nook realignment area raised six young. Around The Wash, 22 pairs raised 16 young at Gibraltar Point, while close by at Middlemarsh Farm 12 pairs fledged 12 young. Fourteen pairs nested at Freiston Shore

raising four young and 94 pairs bred at Frampton Marsh from where no productivity data were submitted. Inland sites had a very poor year with no breeding at Blackmoor Bridge or Manby Wetland, and at Kirkby on Bain GP five pairs raised no young.

Despite the poor breeding season, there were record counts on the Humber during autumn migration with 2741, divided between Read's Island and Alkborough Flats, on Jul 27th. Later high counts were 2400 at Read's Island flats on Aug 24th and there on Oct 18th. At Alkborough Flats there were 1100 on Aug 16th. Two were reported from Tetney Marshes on Dec 17th and one at Freiston Shore on Dec 21st. Read's Island still held 90 on Dec 16th and 36 were there at the turn of the year.



Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta Frampton Marsh Jun 24th 2016 © Neil Smith

Ringling details are shown for three colour-ringed birds, two raised at colonies on Teesside and one at Dunkirk in Cambridgeshire, the last of which was breeding at its natal site in 2015 at least. Other colour-ringed birds sighted in 2016 included one more from Teesside and three more from Cambridgeshire.

EY98306	Nestling	06-07-2016	Long Drag Pools, Seal Sands Road: 54°36'N 1°12'W (Stockton-on-Tees)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	01-11-2016	Frampton Marsh: c. 52°55'N 0°1'E 204km SSE 0y 3m 26d
EY98078	Nestling	16-06-2015	Seal Sands, Teesmouth: c. 54°36'N 1°11'W (Stockton-on-Tees)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	02-09-2015	Gibraltar Point NNR, near Skegness: 53°5'N 0°19'E 198km SSE 0y 2m 17d
	- ditto -	08-05-2016	Salterns, Greatham: 54°36'N 1°13'W (Hartlepool) 3km 0y 10m 22d
	- ditto -	30-10-2016	Tennyson Sands, Gibraltar Point NNR, Skegness: 53°6'N 0°18'E 196km SSE 1y 4m 14d
EL81896	Nestling	21-06-2009	Dunkirk, Little Downham, near Ely: 52°26'N 0°14'E (Cambridgeshire)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	29-08-2010	Parc du Marquenterre, le Crotoy: 50°14'N 1°34'E (Somme) France 264km SSE 1y 2m 8d
	- ditto -	10-09-2010	Banc de Strado: (Brittany) France 1y 2m 20d
	- ditto -	06-10-2010	Réserve Naturelle de Séné, Sene: 47°36'N 1°31'W (Brittany) France 578km SSW 1y 3m 15d
	- ditto -	26-09-2012	Trimley Marshes, near Felixstowe: 51°57'N 1°16'E (Suffolk) 3y 3m 5d
	- ditto -	20-06-2014	Dunkirk, Little Downham, near Ely: 52°26'N 0°14'E (Cambridgeshire) 5y 11m 30d
	- ditto -	23-04-2015	Dunkirk, Little Downham, near Ely: 52°26'N 0°14'E (Cambridgeshire) 5y 10m 2d
	- ditto -	13-03-2016	Dunkirk, Little Downham, near Ely: 52°26'N 0°14'E (Cambridgeshire) 6y 8m 22d
	- ditto -	08-07-2016	Alkborough Flats: c. 53°41'N 0°41'W 7y 0m 17d 147km NNW 7y 0m 17d
	- ditto -		



Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* Frampton Marsh Jan 19th 2016 © Neil Smith

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Declining breeding species, becoming scarce; very common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Alkborough Flats	7200	3860	412	2	6	140	379	380	450	1174	6000	6100
South Ferriby-Read's I.	160	460	2	-	-	1	76	197	550	678	3100	12540
Goxhill-Killingholme	1323	1800	25	13	12	23	21	-	1	20	1100	611
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	2925	30	120	2	-	-	-	-	-	180	1500	1360
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	560	1190	14	-	1	-	50	6	103	220	1200	1700
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	2000	310	45	-	10	9	1	1	-	90	110	1000
<i>The Wash</i>												
Middlemarsh Farm	600	1000	300	120	100	90	150	100	50	300	700	2000
Gibraltar Point	2410	520	155	8	13	60	100	150	1200	350	480	2000
Freiston Shore	800	2000	16	3	9	6	18	10	200	40	487	2000
Frampton Marsh	4000	4000	5000	83	106	71	200	150	195	200	1000	17310
Kirton*	2	2	-	-	9	1	-	6	11	20	290	1540
<i>Inland</i>												
Messingham SQ	1000	220	24	20	15	1	1	1	-	8	-	200
Marton	2100	1800	2	4	1	-	-	26	5	15	600	250
Covenham Reservoir	1800	-	180	4	-	-	-	-	45	-	500	3
Branston Fen	1000	700	40	10	4	-	-	-	-	-	70	-
Bardney-Nocton	1200	1500	5	1	2	-	-	100	180	1200	396	211
Kirkby on Bain GP	800	150	120	20	3	10	270	330	400	55	180	300
Willow Tree Fen	70	720	58	24	8	2	14	4	6	6	500	150

Counts of 1000 or more not included in the table were 3000 at Woodhall Spa Airfield on Jan 23rd and 6000 at Twenty on Nov 15th. There were some high counts at either end of the year. There

were around 7200 at Alkborough Flats in the first half of January, and 5000 were estimated at Frampton Marsh on Mar 6th. Late in the year, there was the Twenty 6000, and peaks of 6100 at Alkborough Flats on Dec 14th, 12300 at Read's Island on Dec 15th and 17310 at Frampton Marsh on Dec 18th. The last was the sum of WeBS counts in several sectors (one sector alone had 7250). At the RSPB's Wash reserves, 51 pairs nested at Frampton Marsh (producing 0.8 fledged young per pair) and four pairs bred at Freiston Shore. Elsewhere, two pairs nested and one other pair displayed at Alkborough Flats, two pairs bred on Read's Island, and about four pairs attempted breeding at Kirkby on Bain GP (two broods of one chick seen). Scattered pairs were reported elsewhere, including four pairs present at Waterwell Lane, Ancaster, in late April. Plenty still attempt to nest in farmland across the county but success rate appears to be very low.

European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, occasional in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	2066	3589	377	410	-	-	401	1004	3030	5959	47135	20796
Alkborough Flats	3000	3000	92	60	1	-	8	33	55	392	3000	340
Read's Island	8000	5000	10000	2	-	-	-	-	8	10000	26000	25000
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	540	730	3000	410	-	-	113	39	1230	4500	16500	4000
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	800	1700	600	45	-	1	600	380	2000	3000	3300	1200
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	1400	160	-	-	-	-	-	8	169	350	1700	190
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	8598	2414	4053	233	24	-	962	37	37	2572	3798	373
Gibraltar Point	2560	300	14	1	1	-	7	353	400	3150	1200	1500
Wainfleet	1500	125	-	233	-	-	845	36	-	-	1000	-
Friskney*	315	60	1300	-	-	-	-	-	-	2796	-	167
Wrangle*	-	318	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2250	-	200
Leverton*	5770	473	105	-	-	-	117	-	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	4500	6000	200	-	-	-	1	4	1	1	350	-
Frampton Marsh	5000	6000	6000	8	3	1	20	70	1000	7000	4000	4000
Welland*	-	32	1500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gedney/Terrington	4000	340	1	-	-	-	-	1	333	300	619	1200
<i>Other</i>												
Huttoft-Anderby	150	300	-	-	-	-	1	-	1200	35	5	626
Anwick-Ruskington Fens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1500	1	200	4500

The table includes the majority of sites attracting 1000 or more; there were also 2000 at Rippingale Fen in November. Numbers were up on 2015's in many areas, though somewhat lower at both Alkborough Flats and Gibraltar Point. Early in the year, there were c10000 at Witham Mouth on Jan 2nd and there was a spring peak of c10000 at Read's Island on Mar 11th-12th. Only small numbers are present in the county in May-June, and this year there were no records between May 28th and Jun 17th. Read's Island saw all the highest counts at the end of the year, reaching 10000 on Oct 30th and peaking at 25000 during Dec 11th-18th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Common passage migrant and common winter visitor. Rare inland.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	417	259	40	445	102	5	27	285	1605	1043	1170	1888
Pyewipe	200	-	-	-	2	-	-	20	-	20	-	-
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	157	191	7	316	82	-	21	48	1564	853	1020	1700
Grainthorpe-Donna Nook	107	70	41	127	70	-	3	131	30	95	80	230
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	131	65	-	2	32	5	3	86	12	71	77	85
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	1139	2116	1602	5647	5404	2	262	109	896	2516	478	4350
Gibraltar Point	680	3200	3330	3200	2040	20	80	2500	3000	3000	3000	2260
Wainfleet*	67	158	411	214	1187	-	-	12	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	528	288	235	631
Wrangle*	700	1500	-	1170	1241	-	110	-	157	775	-	2030

Leverton*	76	175	206	288	616	-	21	37	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	120	1	-	-	1	26	1	1	-	28	18	2
Frampton Marsh	16	114	23	97	49	2	8	70	80	220	11	24
Welland*	206	75	220	550	72	-	85	55	189	-	-	-
Dawsmere*	-	-	300	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gedney	-	-	300	1	-	-	-	-	10	2	-	-
Terrington*	1	16	20	47	112	-	-	-	-	293	231	-

The table includes all sites with counts of 100 or more. WeBS totals and other counts were generally higher than in 2015 on the Humber but lower on The Wash. The two estuaries, and especially The Wash, are of major significance for wintering Grey Plovers. The threshold for international importance is 2500, while that for national importance is 430. As usual, the highest counts tended to be made at Gibraltar Point during spring and autumn passage rather than in mid winter. There were 3200 there on Feb 10th but more consistent high numbers occurred in March-April, including 3330 on Mar 9th and 3200 on Apr 4th. In autumn, the highest counts were 3000 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 3rd, Oct 19th and Nov 17th. The largest totals away from Gibraltar Point were 1450 in the Horseshoe Point-Tetney Haven area on Sep 22nd and 1690 there on Dec 18th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal. Breeding has spread to inland sites in last 40 years.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	25	82	53	70	380	96	25	284	280	177	158	35
Alkborough Flats	-	-	1	9	47	40	2	100	202	-	-	-
Barton Pits	-	-	-	1	14	1	1	50	31	21	4	1
Goxhill-Killingholme	-	4	-	-	-	-	2	50	1	1	21	-
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	26	52	44	64	160	16	1	65	152	69	93	19
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	1	1	3	16	295	6	20	53	50	8	5	11
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	8	25	7	4	217	74	18	155	74	108	40	16
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	53	61	44	268	1325	52	16	82	569	389	177	50
Gibraltar Point	12	55	62	150	454	55	100	218	289	150	8	30
Wainfleet*	-	-	-	-	353	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	-	-	-	-	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wrangle*	-	-	-	-	32	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Leverton*	-	-	-	-	567	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Butterwick*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	71	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	481	266	50	1
Frampton Marsh	74	61	60	217	600	6	40	500	310	8	56	19

The table includes all counts of 50 or more, apart from c50 at Read's Island on Aug 15th. Spring passage in May was again notable for some large totals, often with birds present for very short periods. There were 217 between Saltfleet and Mablethorpe on May 6th, then 376 in the Leverton WeBS sector of The Wash on the 7th and 306 in the Wainfleet sector on the 8th. The two highest counts at Gibraltar Point were 421 on the 15th and 454 on the 17th, and at Frampton Marsh there were c600 on the 22nd and 300 on the 25th. At Donna Nook, the peak was 295 on May 26th. After that, there were no more counts over 70 until late July. Autumn passage as usual was more prolonged and included peaks of 500 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 25th, 481 in the Freiston WeBS sector on Sep 4th and 300 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 6th. Two pairs bred at Frampton Marsh, and breeding was confirmed also at Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes. Three movements from Norway are shown. There are only 11 recorded overseas movements of Ringed Plover, six of which are to or from Norway. We have published details of the third individual before, when it was sighted at Skegness, but include it again as it has since been seen in Brittany. Also shown are the limited details we have of a colour-ringed bird, bred in north Germany and apparently wintering in Lincolnshire.

NOS	First-year	05-09-2013	Makkevika, Giske: 62°30'N 6°1'E (More og Romsdal) Norway
8A56845	Alive (colour rings seen)	10-05-2016	Frampton Marsh: 52°55'N 0°0'E 1,123km SSW 2y 8m 5d
NOS	First-year	23-09-2014	Makkevika, Giske: 62°30'N 6°1'E (More og Romsdal) Norway
8B45348	Alive (colour rings seen)	21-09-2016	Frampton Marsh: 52°55'N 0°0'E 1,123km SSW 1y 11m 29d

NOS	First-year	02-09-2014	Revtangen, Klepp: 58°45'N 5°28'E (Rogaland) Norway
8B46850	Alive (colour rings seen)	28-09-2014	Seacroft, Skegness: 53°6'N 0°19'E 705km SSW 0y 0m 26d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	12-09-2016	St.Guenole (harbour), Penmarch: 47°48'N 4°22'W (Finistere) France 1377km SW 2y 0m 10d
Yellow AJK	Nestling	12-06-2015	Dollart, River Ems estuary, Germany
	Colour rings seen	30-12-2016	Tetney Marshes

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant since 1950. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Alkborough Flats	-	4	4	4	9	5	-	-
Barton Pits	-	1	2	1	-	1	-	-
Donna Nook	3	4	4	2	6	4	1	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	-
Toft Newton Res	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	-
Middlemarsh Farm	1	5	5	4	3	3	2	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	1	2	6	9	3	-
Frampton Marsh	2	4	8	6	12	14	2	2
Whisby Quarry	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby NR	-	1	1	1	5	2	-	-
Woodhall Spa Airfield	-	2	8	4	4	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	4	3	5	3	-	-	-
Deeping Lakes	-	-	2	2	-	2	4	-
Baston-Langtoft Pits/Fen	-	6	2	-	-	-	-	-
Number of sites	5	17	19	14	15	20	8	2
Minimum Lincs total	8	40	49	32	60	49	18	6

The first bird was one at Frampton Marsh on Mar 7th (18 days earlier than 2015) followed by two there on Mar 14th and one on Mar 27th. There were also singles at Donna Nook and Willow Tree Fen NR on Mar 27th. The April arrival of at least 40 birds was down from the 2015 total of 65 birds, with records from 17 sites, down from 22 in 2015. More birds came in May but numbers were still slightly down on 2015. Reported breeding numbers were up with 27 pairs across ten sites, compared to 17 from nine sites in 2015. Confirmed breeding (numbers of pairs in brackets) was reported from: Frampton Marsh (14), Freiston Shore (one), and Kirkby on Bain GP (two), Whisby Pits NR (two) and Woodhall Spa Airfield (two). Probable breeding was reported from Barton Pits (one), Baston Fen (one), Gibraltar Point (one), Donna Nook realignment area (two) and Middlemarsh Farm, near Skegness (two). The peak late summer count was made at Frampton Marsh with 14 on Aug 28th. The county total in Jul of at least 60 birds at 15 sites was similar to 60 birds at 13 sites in 2015. The latest record was of two at Frampton Marsh on Sep 24th. We included details for the ringed bird below in 2014, when it set a new age record of 16 years for the BTO ringing scheme. Well, after almost two more years, it was still alive!

NR61892	Adult Male	27-06-1998	Blankney Sand Quarry: 53°6'N 0°25'W
	Alive (ring read in field)	16-04-2013	Scaling Dam: 54°29'N 0°51'W (Redcar and Cleveland) 157km N 14y 9m 20d
	- ditto -	24-07-2013	Scaling Dam: 54°29'N 0°51'W (Redcar and Cleveland) 157km N 15y 0m 27d
	- ditto -	08-07-2014	Scaling Dam: 54°29'N 0°51'W (Redcar and Cleveland) 157km N 16y 0m 11d
	- ditto -	01-04-2016	Scaling Dam: 54°29'N 0°51'W (Redcar and Cleveland) 157km N 17y 9m 5d
	- ditto -	16-05-2016	Scaling Dam: 54°29'N 0°51'W (Redcar and Cleveland) 157km N 17y 10m 19d

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Rare/scarce passage migrant, mainly spring. **LBRC**

This was one of the off-years for Dotterel, with just two records, totalling five birds. Three females flew north off the Brickyard Lane area of Theddlethorpe Dunes on Apr 23rd (CRM), and two (male and female) were at Horseshoe Point on May 18th-19th (IGS, CA *et al.*). The annual average for the twenty years to 2016 was 25, but this was the fifth of those years with a single figure total.



Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* North Cotes May 19th 2016 © John Clarkson

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal. Rare in winter.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	-	-	-	9	71	2	70	11	3	-	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	19	16	-	1	2	8	-	-	-
Tetney Marsh-Grainthorpe	-	-	-	13	16	-	14	1	3	-	-	-
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	-	-	-	5	8	2	37	93	2	1	-	-
Saltfleetby-Mablethorpe	-	-	-	18	40	2	50	30	3	-	-	-
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	-	-	-	-	93	1	262	243	13	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	14	29	4	37	48	6	-	-	-
Wrangle*	-	-	-	-	19	-	25	-	5	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	1	43	2	70	102	6	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	30	15	1	150	84	1	-	-	-

The first bird of the year was a singleton recorded during the WeBS count at Frampton Marsh on Mar 17th. Passage proper started nearly a month later, generally at the well-watched coastal areas and beginning with two on the realignment area at Donna Nook on Apr 8th. The largest April counts were 30 at Frampton Marsh on both the 24th and 28th, and in May there were 40 in the Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe area on the 6th. Inland records in spring came from Caistor, Trent Port (Marton) and RAF Coningsby in April and at five sites in May. After few records in June, numbers quickly picked up in July as birds passed through to their wintering areas in Africa. Many reports were of birds moving south. Totals peaked in late July and early August, and included 70 at Freiston Shore on Jul 23rd, 150 at Frampton Marsh on the 24th, 102 at Freiston Shore on Aug 5th, 93 at Donna Nook on Aug 7th and 80 at Frampton Marsh also on the 7th. There were no double figure counts after Aug 21st, and very poor numbers in September. The last of autumn was one at Donna Nook on Oct 8th, but a wintering bird was found at Holbeach Marsh on Dec 14th (AHJH).

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce and local breeder.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	1585	1215	637	768	78	73	1804	1184	1266	1011	1021	1155
Alkborough Flats	473	426	358	354	10	58	260	310	260	157	252	128
Read's Island-South Ferriby	77	119	116	6	15	60	575	150	54	33	48	53
Barton Pits	102	27	150	49	3	-	3	12	11	72	1	3
New Holland-East Halton	142	314	80	168	9	5	197	88	140	17	80	161
Pyewipe	64	96	27	1	15	14	250	251	201	251	86	52
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	110	67	59	106	22	8	31	112	189	214	135	122
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	211	188	140	194	19	49	518	221	347	115	130	199
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	712	450	242	84	9	180	303	232	332	380	389	519
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	2756	2497	1435	2664	551	35	3899	1950	3561	2560	1399	1342
Gibraltar Point	260	201	277	75	22	144	200	360	305	293	290	280
Wainfleet*	166	175	236	201	84	-	1580	515	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	475	388	211	365	182	8	-	-	1356	1003	101	489
Wrangle*	480	254	-	307	10	-	264	-	465	740	-	227
Leverton*	67	144	85	394	89	-	463	254	-	-	-	-
Benington*	-	45	66	380	-	-	83	-	19	-	16	-
Freiston Shore	318	1099	371	205	63	75	423	450	99	120	707	92
Frampton Marsh	250	61	108	25	39	14	103	59	78	153	126	55
Welland*	809	29	62	288	15	-	458	212	580	-	-	-
Holbeach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	480	-	-	-	-
Gedney	-	1	30	1	-	-	-	-	130	-	-	-
Terrington*	88	174	48	190	45	-	280	120	780	420	111	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Withern Washland	15	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	5	16
Hagnaby Lock Fen	84	105	74	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marston STW	17	16	33	10	-	-	-	20	-	17	15	17

The table includes all estuarine and coastal areas with counts of 250 or more, and most inland areas with relatively high counts. There were nine WeBS sector counts in excess of 500 birds, as shown in the table: the highest of all was 1580 in the Wainfleet sector on Jul 24th, but 1099 in the Freiston sector on Feb 16th and 1356 in the Friskney sector on Sep 4th also were noteworthy. No confirmed breeding was noted during the year but evidence of possible/probable breeding was reported from the Scopwick Heath-Digby-Metheringham area and various localities around Grantham (including Hawthorpe, South Rauceby and Hougham). While disturbance should be avoided, more information on the breeding status of Curlew at these sites and elsewhere would be valuable. The State of the UK's Birds (2017) highlights the decline in the Curlew population as being of great concern, especially when it is considered that the UK supports around a quarter of the global breeding population but that they have declined here by 65% between 1970 and 2015. The ringing recoveries include the oldest of this year's reports, and five overseas movements indicating the breeding areas of birds present in Lincolnshire in autumn. The last is from colour ring sightings, not yet in the BTO system, with details of the bird's breeding success.

FA97831	Adult	28-09-1999	Holbeach St Matthew: c. 52°52'N 0°5'E
	Caught by ringer	21-10-2016	Gedney Drove End: 52°49'N 0°11'E 8km ESE 17y 0m 23d
SFH CT078056	Nestling	23-06-1991	Nivala: 63°58'N 24°45'E (Oulu) Finland
	Caught by ringer	04-08-2012	Leverton Outgate: 53°0'N 0°8'E 1,868km SW 21y 1m 12d
FP32856	Adult	23-08-2005	Lawyer's Farm, Holbeach St Matthew: 52°52'N 0°6'E
	Caught by ringer	16-05-2011	Torvela, Kajaani: 64°19'N 27°51'E (Oulu) Finland 2,036km NE 5y 8m 23d
	Alive (ring read in field)	20-04-2012	Torvela, Kajaani: 64°19'N 27°51'E (Oulu) Finland 2,036km NE 6y 7m 28d
	- ditto -	23-06-2013	Torvelantie, Kajaani: 64°19'N 27°52'E (Oulu) Finland 2,036km NE 7y 10m 0d
	- ditto -	24-06-2016	Torvelantie, Kajaani: 64°19'N 27°52'E (Oulu) Finland 2,036km NE 10y 10m 1d



Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* Grainthorpe Apr 12th 2016 © Mark Johnson



Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* Grainthorpe Apr 12th 2016 © Mark Johnson

FH31705	Adult	14-08-2014	Wrangle Tofts: 53°1'N 0°10'E
	Long dead	23-04-2016	Kokkola, Keski-Pohjanmaa: 63°45'N 23°10'E (Vaasa) Finland 1,783km NE 1y 8m 9d
FH52040	Adult	14-08-2014	Terrington: 52°47'N 0°14'E
	Dead	15-06-2016	Elbergen, Loningen: 52°45'N 7°43'E (Weser-Ems) Germany 505km E 1y 10m 1d
DEW 4013419	Adult male	06-05-2014	Borm, Schleswig Holstein, Germany . Pair reared one chick
	Colour rings read	10-03-2015-15-04-2015	Borm, Schleswig Holstein, Germany . Pair reared one chick
	Colour rings read	22-03-2016-19-07-2016	Borm, Schleswig Holstein, Germany . Pair reared two chicks
	Colour rings read	28-11-2016	Rimac beach, Saltfleetby. In flock of 128 Curlews

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Very common coastal passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	143	584	1	2	19	-	-	25	180	61	188	116
Cleethorpe-Grainthorpe	55	443	25	5	12	-	31	10	73	50	400	146
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	51	1	5	15	-	-	-	11	14	15	14	10
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	63	132	1	1	9	-	11	2	11	6	89	16
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	9346	5461	6585	1558	1362	92	4689	2747	3297	4315	2596	4496
Gibraltar Point	40	2500	7500	640	425	60	4	2100	8000	4000	2500	800
Wainfleet*	3070	820	2836	996	217	-	2670	1890	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	350	1400	600	-	-	-	-	-	1820	1205	2510	2335
Wrangle*	2560	2600	-	100	100	-	1820	-	626	1000	-	2140
Leverton*	2290	640	3130	162	939	-	198	855	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	4	2	15	-	12	4	2	20	8	20	1	7
Frampton Marsh	216	2	2	2	1	150	150	100	76	8	20	-
Welland*	770	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terrington*	70	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	15	-

The table includes all areas with counts of 200 or more. Counts of 1200 or more, the threshold for international importance, came from the outer sectors of The Wash, from Leverton to Gibraltar Point. The largest, by a considerable margin, were roost counts at Gibraltar Point, of 7500 on Mar 9th and 8000 on Sep 3rd. Numbers on the coast and in the Humber are far lower, although there were 400 or more in the Tetney-Horseshoe Point area in February and November. The only inland record was of three S at Covenham Res on May 10th. The three ringing recoveries include two that survived a long time (the BTO longevity record is almost 34 years), one of them breeding a long way to the east in Russia, and another passing through the Dutch Waddensea in autumn.

DK07212	Adult Female	01-08-1992	Wrangle Tofts: c. 53°1'N 0°9'E
	Caught by ringer	15-08-2014	Wrangle Tofts: 53°1'N 0°10'E 2km 22y 0m 14d
DK32416	Adult	09-09-1994	Wrangle Tofts: c. 53°1'N 0°9'E
	Freshly dead (shot)	14-05-2016	Chapoma: 66°6'N 38°51'E (Murmansk Oblast) Russia 2,590km ENE 21y 8m 5d
DD73375	Adult	02-09-2011	Leverton Outgate: 53°0'N 0°7'E
	Caught by ringer	03-08-2016	Kwelderpad: 53°28'N 6°13'E (Schiermonnikoog) The Netherlands 409km E 4y 11m 1d

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

L.l. islandica: common passage migrant and winter visitor. *L.l. limosa*: rare migrant and has bred, last in 1974. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Alkborough Flats	150	180	177	194	49	47	171	202	217	146	132	73
East Halton-Pyewipe	222	10	34	-	-	-	1250	3800	186	6000	4200	1276
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	200	4	50	1



Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* Frampton Marsh Jul 17th 2016 © Steve Nikols



Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* Frampton Marsh Jul 17th 2016 © Steve Nikols

The Wash

Gibraltar Point	7	3	4	5	18	25	71	203	227	190	98	85
Freiston Shore	3000	1400	1500	3	7	-	1	20	5000	7300	2000	1350
Frampton Marsh	12	34	25	150	30	57	600	1800	4000	50	100	69
Terrington*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	750	-

Inland

Manby Wetland	2	-	-	-	-	1	82	53	7	8	1	-
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The highest count early in the year was 3000 at Freiston Shore on Jan 1st, but there were still up to 1500 there intermittently until Mar 10th. After the mid-summer lull, numbers rose steeply in the second half of July. The peak counts in the two main areas came almost synchronously, with 7300 at Freiston Shore on Oct 2nd and 6000 at Killingholme Haven Pits on Oct 5th. Birds were seen at several inland sites, with Manby Wetland most heavily used by far; double figure counts were usual there throughout Jul 5th-Aug 19th, peaking at 82 on Jul 27th. Also on Jul 27th, there were 24 at Messingham SQ and ten at Whisby NR, and there had been 24 at West Ashby Pits on Jul 5th.

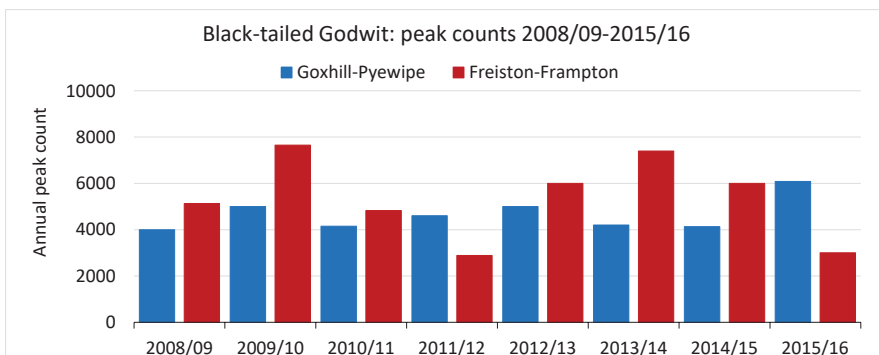
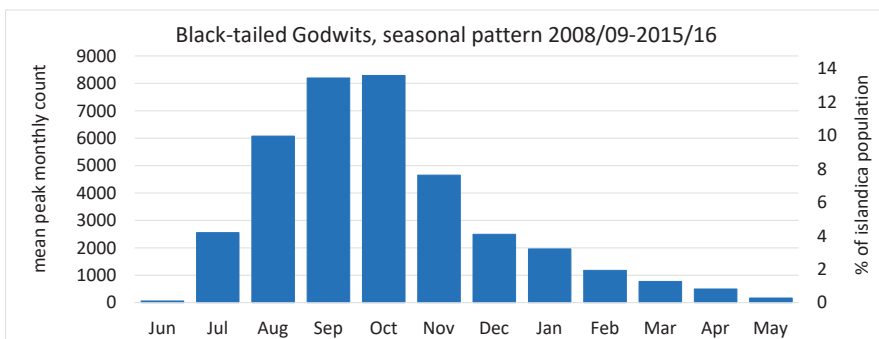
Details of 18 ringed birds are available this year, all but one of them colour-marked. Most have come as reports via LBC members from the ringers. The BTO ringing report has no transfers to or from Iceland this year, yet we know of ten through colour-ring information. The ringing details are too lengthy to repeat but they all fit the general pattern of movements described below. Three are summarised here.

01-08-96	ringed Terrington, Norfolk Sighted at least once every year except 1999 & 2006, many sightings in eastern England 12-02-12 seen in north Wales 29-04-05 & 26-05-11 seen in Iceland
07-08-16	seen at Frampton Marsh; now over 20 years old (BTO longevity record is 23 years)
07-09-98	ringed Holbeach Sighted many times (though not in 2002-2004 or 2006) in north-west England and a few times in eastern England 01-05-01 seen in Iceland
07-08-16	seen at Frampton Marsh; now about 18 years old
10-07-12	ringed Iceland Sighted on Humber in autumn 2014, 2015, 2016 14-04-13 seen near Belfast Sighted in Iceland spring/summer 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016
29-07-16	seen at Killingholme Haven Pits

The charts below illustrate the patterns of occurrence of Black-tailed Godwits in Lincolnshire. The data used are the monthly peaks in two areas: on the Humber between Goxhill and Pyewipe, and on The Wash at Freiston Shore and Frampton Marsh. For each area, the single highest count in each month has been selected; this may understate true totals if (for example) birds were at Frampton Marsh when the highest count was made at Freiston Shore. The counts may well understate peaks in any case, because only a few and sometimes no full counts are made per month and, with turnover of birds, the high point can easily be missed. Also, of course, while these two areas hold the majority of 'our' Black-tailed Godwits, other parts of The Wash and Humber also can hold significant numbers.

The first chart shows the seasonal occurrence, with birds arriving from Iceland from July onwards, peaking in September-October, and then tailing off through the winter to reach the minimum level in June. The use of Lincolnshire sites is highest while the birds are moulting. While many do remain here throughout the winter, a substantial proportion move on to other estuaries further south before returning to Iceland, often via the west coast. The seasonal chart also shows, on the right hand axis, the percentage of the Icelandic godwit population present in Lincolnshire. This emphasises the importance of the Humber and Wash to the species: any site regularly holding at least 1% (610 birds) is regarded as internationally important.

The second chart shows the annual peak for each June-May year in each of the areas. As can be seen, they support similar totals (the mean peak for Goxhill-Pyewipe is 4645 and that for Freiston-Frampton is 5362). There is no clear trend in either area. If anything, Goxhill-Pyewipe shows a slight increase, while Freiston-Frampton may be declining, but there is so much variation between years that these suggested trends are unreliable.



Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Fairly common/common passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	41	47	19	22	38	12	24	34	149	39	129	107
New Holland-East Halton	55	78	2	-	-	-	38	-	106	6	47	31
Pyewipe-Grimsby	-	47	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Cleethorpes-Tetney Marsh	73	35	18	67	8	6	-	45	51	61	71	43
Horseshoe Pt-Grainthorpe	20	5	16	22	36	9	11	22	19	16	38	21
Donna Nook	11	1	1	-	2	-	2	3	2	-	20	76
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	88	129	79	138	328	1	326	505	467	350	225	512
Gibraltar Point	29	24	31	14	12	8	6	25	24	24	38	28
Wrangle*	-	25	-	35	199	-	8	-	5	20	-	20
Freiston Shore	42	10	2	3	70	-	105	300	351	420	75	227
Frampton Marsh	3	30	19	27	43	35	197	11	25	95	25	137
Welland*	25	59	32	60	14	-	6	180	80	-	-	-

The table includes most counts of 50 or more. Wintering numbers were generally lower than normal at all sites in the early part of the year. The most notable counts were 55 at East Halton Skitter-Goxhill Haven on Jan 3rd, 73 at Cleethorpes on the 4th, 59 at Tetney on Jan 24th and 78 at Goxhill Haven on Feb 26th. In both the Humber and The Wash, there were fewer birds during March and April, but birds on passage were more in evidence in May. Peak counts were 70 at Freiston Shore and 199 at Wrangle on May 8th while overland passage was recorded at nine locations. The first inland bird was noted at Whisby NR on May 5th-8th, then 1-3 birds were at six other sites from 10th-14th, six flew E at Barton Pits on the 10th and four were at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 12th. Late spring birds were 35 at Frampton Marsh on Jun 7th and 1-6 birds at

five coastal sites until Jun 22nd. Occasional ones and twos began to reappear in early July followed by moderate increases from the 22nd onwards. Sixty at Freiston Shore on the 23rd increased to 105 by the 24th, when there were also 197 at Frampton. Freiston Shore produced good counts of 300 on both Aug 5th and the 24th, and there were 180 at the Welland on the 7th. Birds were well-distributed, but in lower numbers elsewhere during August, the best being 45 at Cleethorpes on the 17th. Freiston Shore continued to give the highest counts later in the autumn with peaks of 351 on Sep 4th, 420 on Oct 20th and 227 on Dec 17th. The only other peak counts in excess of 50 birds were 80 at the Welland on Sep 4th, 106 at Goxhill-New Holland on Sep 19th, 61 at Tetney Marsh on Oct 28th, 71 at Cleethorpes on Nov 6th, 100 at the Witham Mouth on Dec 17th and 76 at Donna Nook on the 25th. There were a few more inland records than usual during the autumn. Single birds were seen at Toft Newton Res on Jul 24th and at Barton Pits on Jul 27th and 28th, followed by others at Alkborough Flats on Aug 16th-21st, Covenham Res on Aug 21st, Whisby NR on Aug 28th and Toft Newton Res on Aug 29th. Ten flew S at Covenham Res on Sep 4th with later records there of two on the 6th, six on the 14th and two on the 20th. Three birds were also at Middlemarsh Farm, near Skegness, on Sep 6th and three were at Deeping Lakes on the 10th. There were several records in the South Ferriby-Barton area during October-December, including seven at South Ferriby on Oct 18th, ten on the Barrow-Barton foreshore on Oct 30th and five at South Ferriby on Nov 13th.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*

Abundant passage migrant and very common winter visitor. Very scarce inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	6061	5970	7190	3230	1	-	69	247	6327	570	7130	8396
Cleethorpes	40	2	7	-	-	-	100	-	1000	50	12	-
Tetney-Grainthorpe	7000	5620	4180	3230	7	-	-	-	5027	1000	4890	7270
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	1410	600	2700	-	15	-	60	50	2000	180	1416	2700
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	112	312	310	-	2	-	8	199	1200	29	758	370
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	21368	10586	16935	19016	22428	73	21440	23435	63478	56994	9153	19309
Gibraltar Point	100	800	15000	17580	14700	400	3820	55000	80000	70000	13000	5000
Wainfleet*	2640	950	9550	6120	3200	-	3375	23163	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	4600	6000	900	200	165	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wrangle*	2000	1500	-	50	3000	-	3700	-	40	200	-	4925
Leverton*	2700	965	2673	2004	2027	-	13800	154	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	500	3	1	40	-	-	10	1	65	10	1000	6200
Witham Mouth	1	-	500	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1500	450
Frampton Marsh	38	43	12	2	134	350	450	800	1000	3	1	1
Welland*	4000	-	-	3900	-	-	-	85	-	-	-	-
Holbeach	-	-	1200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terrington*	4550	1000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	322	-

The table includes all areas holding 500 or more. The peaks for the Humber and The Wash occurred in autumn as usual. As in 2015, the main Wash roost at Gibraltar Point peaked in September, while that for the Humber at Tetney-Grainthorpe was also in September, rather than October as in 2015, and was barely 50% of that in 2015. Over the year, a comparison of the monthly count totals shows that total numbers on The Wash were about 10% down; on the Humber, the same calculation showed an increase of around 30% in 2016. This is a very approximate comparison, however, as year to year changes are much influenced by precise count timing; it is long-term trends that are more important. Departure in spring is a somewhat attenuated process with some leaving in mid or late March for continental pre-breeding moulting areas, while others fatten and moult into breeding plumage and depart in early May for staging areas in Iceland and Norway. Monthly peak counts reflect this, with those in March being the highest of the spring, those for April and May being about 14% lower, and by June the nadir for the year has been reached with just 100-200 at each of Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh. However, given the short Arctic breeding season, there is evidence of returning birds on The Wash by the end of June. Very few Knot are recorded on inland freshwater water bodies. Two were at Covenham Res on Apr 2nd, with one there on the 3rd, a notable 16 flew E at Barton upon Humber on May 10th, and one was at Woodhall Spa Airfield on May 16th. In the autumn, one was at Covenham Res on Jun 9th, one was at Baston-Langtoft Pits on Aug 19th and nine were at Covenham Res on Sep 20th.

Notable ringing recoveries and controls are tabulated below. Note R49280, SV70859, M15978 and 753558 (some repeated from last year), which were ringed at different locations in different years but remarkably all re-trapped on Aug 14th 2014 on The Wash. These and the two colour-ringed birds illustrate interesting points in the migrations of the birds concerned and underline the importance of international staging posts.

R49280	Adult	14-02-1998	Heysham, near Lancaster: 54°1'N 2°54'W (Lancashire)
	Caught by ringer	14-08-2014	Wrangle Tofts: 53°1'N 0°10'E 233km ESE 16y 6m 0d
SV70859	First-year	28-01-2001	Buckpool, Buckie, Moray: 57°40'N 3°0'W (Moray)
	Caught by ringer	14-08-2014	Wrangle Tofts: 53°1'N 0°10'E 553km SSE 13y 6m 17d
FRP	Adult	23-03-2012	Reserve de Moeze-Oleron: 45°52'N 1°4'W (Charente-Maritime) France
M15978	Caught by ringer	14-08-2014	Wrangle Tofts: 53°1'N 0°10'E 800km N 2y 4m 22d
ISR	Adult	26-05-2007	Hlídsnes, Alftanes: 64°4'N 22°1'W (Kjósars?sla) Iceland
753558	Caught by ringer	14-08-2014	Wrangle Tofts: 53°1'N 0°10'E 1,770km SE 7y 2m 19d
Colour mark	Ringed	26-05-2009	Marnes, Porsanger: 70°24'N 25°32'E Norway
R/YFLAL	Colour marks seen	29-08-2010	Spurn: 53°37'N 0°06'W (East Yorkshire) 2,255km SSW 1y 3m 3d
	Colour marks seen	26-05-2011	Kopasker, Nordur Pingeyjarsýsla: 66°17'N 16°27'W Iceland 1,740km WSW 2y 0m 0d
	Colour marks seen	03-08-2016	Gibraltar Point : 53°6'N 0°18'E 2,300km SSW 7y 2m 8d
Colour mark	Ringed	20-05-2014	Dyrafjordur: 65°52'N 23°29'W Iceland
Y/YFVCL	Colour marks seen	27-05-2015	Dyrafjordur: 65°52'N 23°29'W Iceland 0km SSW 1y 0m 7d
	Colour marks seen	17-05-2016	Dyrafjordur: 65°52'N 23°29'W Iceland 0km SSW 1y 11 27d
	Colour marks seen	02-08-2016	Gibraltar Point : 53°6'N 0°18'E 1,930km SE 2y 2m 13d



Shorebirds including Red Knot *Calidris canutus* at Gibraltar Point Sep 17th 2016 © James Siddle

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Bred to nineteenth century. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	30	1	16	1	4	1	18	67	70	36	32	1
Read's Island	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	12	30	-	-	-
Tetney-Donna Nook	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	5	7	1	-	-
Manby Wetland	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	15	15	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness	1	-	-	4	18	2	-	16	9	1	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	3	6	1	2	24	31	10	3	-

Freiston Shore	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	12	9	-	-	1
Frampton Marsh	100	40	70	100	26	14	25	70	30	23	2	40
Bardney Pits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	16	8	2	-

The two main sites in the county for Ruff are Alkborough Flats and Frampton Marsh. The latter recorded the highest winter count of 100 on Jan 2nd, although for the rest of the month counts varied widely between one and 43. A similar picture was seen at Alkborough Flats with totals varying between six and 30 during January. Very few were recorded elsewhere in the county during January-April. Small peaks of 18 at Middlemarsh Farm and 26 at Frampton Marsh were recorded in May. Lekking was observed at Saltfleetby on May 8th, when five males and two females were present. Lekking was also observed at Frampton Marsh from May 6th onwards into early June, with some courtship behaviour but no further proof of breeding. Autumn numbers began to pick up during July with about 18 at Alkborough Flats from the 13th and a peak of 25 at Frampton Marsh on the 23rd. There were August maxima of 70 at Frampton Marsh on the 16th and 67 at Alkborough Flats on the 28th. There were also 70 at Alkborough Flats on Sep 25th, though doubtless different birds were involved as passage continued. Manby Wetlands did not see a repeat of the influx of 2015, with a modest site maximum of 15 on three dates during Aug 31st-Sep 12th. Numbers declined into November with only Alkborough Flats recording double figures, a count of 32 on Nov 20th. Frampton Marsh was the only site to record significant numbers in December with 20-40 present during Dec 7th-14th.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

An adult was at Frampton Marsh on May 12th-14th (PS et al.) and another adult was present from Jul 24th-28th, presumed to be a different individual (JB, CG et al.). These were the fourteenth and fifteenth for Lincolnshire, from the first in 1959, and arrived on typical dates. Both accepted by BBRC (online notification).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Passage migrant, scarce in spring and scarce/fairly common in autumn. Rare in winter.

Peak monthly counts	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	6	13	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm		1	-	-	15	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	1	-	-	11	42	3	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	3	32	20	4	-
Frampton Marsh	-	3	2	8	258	100	7	30

The first bird of the spring was at Gibraltar Point on May 6th followed by regular sightings of 1-2 birds at Frampton Marsh during May 7th-28th, plus three there on the 13th. One was present at Middlemarsh Farm, near Skegness, on May 15th. The only June records were two at Frampton Marsh on the 7th-8th and one there on the 19th-27th. One was at Grimsby on Jul 4th and 1-4 birds were noted at Frampton Marsh from the 5th onwards, rising to eight by the 27th. There were single birds at Alkborough Flats during the 21st-27th, at Chowder Ness, Barton, on the 24th and at Pyewipe (Grimsby) on the 30th-31st. Juvenile birds began to appear from the 17th onwards and brought the best counts since 1969. Frampton Marsh had small counts until Aug 18th, but 70 arrived on the 19th, increasing to 100 on the 20th, 200 on the 21st and 258 on the 22nd. Numbers dropped to 100 by Aug 28th, with similar counts on Sep 4th-5th and 24th. Reporting rates from other sites were much more modest. Also in The Wash, Freiston Shore had regular counts from Aug 17th with peaks of 32 on Aug 21st and 20 on Sep 3rd, Gibraltar Point had frequent sightings from Aug 9th, in single figures apart from 42 S on Sep 26th, and there were up to 15 at Middlemarsh Farm on Aug 20th-24th. On the north-east coast between Donna Nook and Mablethorpe there were occasional counts of 1-6 and 13 at Donna Nook on Sep 8th. The Humber produced one at Alkborough Flats on Aug 18th-19th, four on the 20th, three on Sep 3rd and one on Sep 22nd, while Barton Pits had seven on Aug 29th, 2-3 during Aug 30th-Sep 3rd, and one on Sep 6th. Inland occurrences were seven at Bardney Pits on Aug 20th, with one there on Sep 5th, three on the 8th and one on the 28th, and one at Covenham Res on Sep 18th. By October only 1-3 birds remained at Frampton Marsh from 1st-23rd, with seven on the 8th. There were also 1-2 at Gibraltar Point until the 2nd and one on the 9th and the 17th, 3-4 at Freiston Shore on the 2nd-3rd, and three at Tabbs Head on the 25th.

OS	First-year	26-08-2016	Fraena: 62°58'N 7°1'E (More og Romsdal) Norway
8N58421	Alive (colour rings seen)	04-09-2016	Frampton Marsh: 52°54'N 0°0'E 1,190km SSW 0y 0m 9d



Ruff *Calidris pugnax* Covenham Res Aug 23rd 2016 © John Clarkson



Ruff *Calidris pugnax* Frampton Marsh Apr 28th 2016 © John Clarkson



Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* Frampton Marsh Aug 28th 2016 © Steve Nikols

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Rare passage migrant. **LBRC**

This was yet another above-average year, although with a total of 12, there were slightly fewer than in 2015. One far inland at Baston-Langtoft Pits on May 6th (WB) was the first and it was followed quite quickly by one at Frampton Marsh on May 9th (ABe). One that is assumed to have been different was at Frampton Marsh on May 13th-14th (DNw, SK *et al.*), and yet another there on May 21st (DNw). Meanwhile, one was seen at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on May 13th and 16th (NAL). In autumn, a juvenile was at Whisby NR on Aug 23rd (GHo, BWd), the third reserve record. A couple of weeks later, a juvenile was found at Freiston Shore on Sep 7th (PS). On the same day, four were at Frampton Marsh (TC, EJM *et al.*) and they are assumed to be different from the Freiston one. Two remained at Frampton Marsh on the 8th and one to the 11th. Another juvenile was at Frampton Marsh on Sep 23rd-25th (ASd *et al.*).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	287	136	170	176	109	212	131	257	219	200	242	691
Cleethorpes-Horseshoe Pt	60	85	25	78	66	-	-	-	100	31	58	57
Grainthorpe-Donna Nook	226	60	139	90	240	19	226	149	131	50	128	350
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	80	124	31	89	140	193	96	110	60	129	100	100
<i>Coast</i>												
Mablethorpe-Skegness	78	8	4	46	16	-	12	3	250	7	30	2
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	371	71	231	467	2465	991	5000	2020	255	505	20	236
Gibraltar Point	500	500	700	1160	4880	975	5000	7520	3770	1200	500	300
Wainfleet*	83	63	216	458	137	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



Sanderling *Calidris alba* Alkborough Flats May 11th 2016 © Graham Catley



Sanderling *Calidris alba* Alkborough Flats May 11th 2016 © Graham Catley

The table includes most areas holding 100 or more. The north-east coast produced first winter period peaks of 60 at Humberston Fitties on Jan 6th, 80 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 8th, 151 at Donna Nook on Jan 16th and 85 at Horseshoe Point-Tetney Haven on Feb 15th. 75 were at Ingoldmells on Jan 25th. The highest numbers, as usual, were at Gibraltar Point, hence up to 500 present in January and February and 700 on Mar 9th, while other Wash counts of significance were 207 at Wrangle on Jan 16th and 216 at Wainfleet on Mar 13th. Spring passage birds showed some increases in April when there were 1160 at Gibraltar Point on the 7th and 458 at Wainfleet on the 10th. Counts were much lower at this time on the north-east coast with peaks of 78 at Theddlethorpe-Mablethorpe North End on the 10th, 78 at Tetney Marsh on the 19th and 90 at Donna Nook on Apr 23rd. Passage was more marked in May with high counts at Gibraltar Point of 4880 on the 6th, 4500 on the 7th, 2320 on the 8th and 1230 on the 25th. Much lower peaks were attained elsewhere and included 137 at Wainfleet on May 8th, 140 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 11th and 240 at Donna Nook on May 12th and 15th. Movement was also apparent in the upper reaches of the Humber when eight birds were seen at Alkborough Flats on May 7th, with five there on the 11th and two on the 13th and 21st, while 12 flew E at Barton Pits on May 9th, followed by nine next day, two on the 11th and one on the 17th. Inland birds were one at Whisby NR on May 8th and three at Covenham Res on May 11th, with two on the 13th. Coastal passage was practically over by Jun 11th and the last high count was of 975 at Gibraltar Point on Jun 5th. Returning birds began to appear from Jul 4th onwards, with 1000 present at Gibraltar Point by Jul 16th. Four figure totals were recorded at Gibraltar Point on 19 dates until Oct 4th with the most being 7520 on Aug 5th and additional notable records of 5000 on Jul 24th and Aug 2nd. The majority of counts away from The Wash usually involved double figures and the most significant sightings were of 226 at Donna Nook on Jul 31st, 110 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Aug 2nd, 250 at Trusthorpe on Sep 20th and 100 at Cleethorpes on Sep 30th. Birds in the upper Humber at this time were confined to records at Alkborough Flats of one on Aug 6th, four on Sep 2nd, with three next day, and one on Oct 10th and 16th. The only inland autumn bird was at Covenham Res on Nov 12th. Wintering birds at Gibraltar Point peaked at 500 on Nov 30th and 300 on Dec 17th, while high counts at other sites in this period were 100 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Nov 18th and Dec 14th, 223 at Donna Nook on Dec 17th, with 350 there on the 26th and 290 at Grimsby on Dec 18th.

There are no ringing details for Sanderling in the BTO's online report for 2016, but we know of sightings of six colour-ringed birds at Gibraltar Point (NAL). We do not have the full details and in any case those would be too lengthy to include in full, but they are summarised here in order of ringing date. These sightings contribute to projects furthering understanding of the migration routes and conservation of the species involved. Individual returns do not have great significance, but fascinating facts can be gleaned. Examples here are the quick movement of the first one from France to Iceland, and the site fidelity to Ghana, Mauritania or Hampshire of different birds. And, of course, while it's easy to become blasé about bird migration, these are amazing movements for birds weighing less than 60g.

Ringed Iceland 03/06/2007	Seen Gibraltar Point 22/07/2016
Seen in Iceland May-June 2010; France May 2011 ten days before Iceland May-Jun 2011, Ghana Oct 2014	
Ringed Mauritania 13/12/2009	Seen Gibraltar Point 02/08/2016 & 03/08/2016
Seen in Mauritania Jan 2012, Jan 2013	
Ringed Mauritania 27/11/2010	Seen Gibraltar Point 04/08/2016
Seen in Mauritania Dec 2010, Nov 2011, Dec 2012, Jan 2013, Netherlands Aug 2013, Jul 2014, Greenland Jun-Jul 2015	
Ringed Ghana 27/08/2011	Seen Gibraltar Point 03/08/2016
Seen in Ghana Sep 2011, Sep 2012, Oct 2012, Jan 2013, Apr 2013, Nov 2013, Jan 2014	
Ringed Hampshire 03/10/2011	Seen Gibraltar Point 04/08/2016
Seen in Hampshire/Sussex Nov 2011, Mar-Apr 2012, Aug-Nov 2012, Jan 2013, Sep-Oct 2013, Jan 2014, Apr 2015, Aug 2015, Oct 2015	
Ringed Hampshire 18/09/2013	Seen Gibraltar Point 03/08/2016
Seen in Hampshire/Sussex Sep-Nov 2013, France Dec 2013.	

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal. Bred to early 20th century and in 1958.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	7010	6786	2569	1750	632	75	1049	4564	3927	5558	10232	8090

Alkborough Flats	1580	760	265	60	69	-	30	150	220	560	350	265
Winteringham-Read's I	930	1000	1500	-	45	-	56	110	113	790	3224	1270
Barton	-	-	-	1	9	-	162	130	-	70	300	740
Goxhill-East Halton Skitter	20	69	137	-	-	-	-	15	13	46	348	420
Pyewipe	1692	2399	158	410	-	-	64	1960	121	1960	2870	1330
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	729	1085	750	672	196	-	107	445	1000	1377	1340	2220
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	1156	976	1900	658	350	13	640	1657	2295	620	1573	1431
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	870	990	101	7	400	49	69	250	630	450	488	750

The Wash

WeBS totals	9010	4736	7681	10044	7808	30	6984	9255	10153	10390	4485	7312
Gibraltar Point	850	3400	4590	3640	5500	25	8000	9200	9980	7000	2000	3000
Wainfleet*	1350	1855	1815	2861	1348	-	974	774	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	1200	300	-	-	78	12	-	-	1298	1096	798	1157
Wrangle*	3200	650	-	1720	3220	-	2000	-	55	1400	-	1626
Leverton*	661	380	440	906	371	-	1240	1005	-	-	-	-
Butterwick*	890	136	98	47	53	-	-	-	-	44	78	210
Freiston Shore	2000	20	150	49	22	20	610	700	630	45	52	1701
Witham*	-	100	-	250	110	-	20	-	-	-	2200	850
Frampton Marsh	500	1226	1850	770	760	50	1500	2800	3000	555	313	823
Welland*	115	-	180	1700	-	-	920	460	24	-	-	-
Dawsmere*	-	-	2300	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terrington*	183	85	460	-	176	-	-	-	15	250	907	-

The table includes most counts of 300 or more, but there were also up to 1200 at Killingholme Haven Pits in November. For the second year in a row, numbers on the Humber were higher, but the picture in The Wash was less clear with some areas up and others down. The highest counts were all from Gibraltar Point, where the spring peak was 5500 on May 7th and there were several counts of 7000 or more between Jul 29th and Oct 2nd, and a maximum of 9980 on Sep 3rd. The highest totals on the Humber were 3200 at Read's Island on Nov 17th and 2870 at Pyewipe on Nov 20th. As can be seen from the table, numbers dip to a low point in June, but that is short-lived. An early juvenile was seen this year at Frampton Marsh on Jun 29th. Some movement was seen at Gibraltar Point, including 64 S on Jan 3rd, but mainly in autumn when the peaks were 100 S on Jul 24th, 64 S on Sep 12th and 68 S on Sep 27th. Numbers seen inland were small but highest in autumn, when the peaks were 22 at Bardney Pits on Sep 17th and 14 at Covenham on Sep 18th.

The ringing details include the two longest distance movements within the British Isles (one from Wales and one from the Isle of Man) and two of the less typical overseas movements. There were also examples this year of birds moving to Lincolnshire from Norway (2), Sweden (1) and Poland (2).

BT75115	First-year	05-08-2016	Rue Point, Point of Ayre: 54°23'N 4°26'W
	Caught by ringer	23-08-2016	Gedney Drove End: 52°49'N 0°11'E 353km ESE 0y 0m 18d
BT71193	First-year	23-01-2016	Llanfairfechan: 53°14'N 4°0'W (Conwy)
	Caught by ringer	21-10-2016	Gedney Drove End: 52°49'N 0°11'E 285km E 0y 8m 28d
BT52075	First-year	26-09-2015	Gedney Drove End: 52°49'N 0°11'E
	Freshly dead	24-07-2016	Agger Tange, Vestervig: 56°42'N 8°13'E (Viborg) Denmark 671km NE 0y 9m 28d
NOS	First-year	18-08-2015	Longyearbyen: 78°13'N 15°40'E Svalbard
8N58011	Alive (colour rings seen)	23-08-2016	Frampton Marsh: 52°55'N 0°0'E 2,886km SSW 1y 0m 5d

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Rare/scarcie passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal.

At Gibraltar Point there was a juvenile on Aug 21st-22nd, then one on Oct 26th and one on Nov 11th. Also in November, there were single birds at Covenham Res on the 1st-4th, at Cleethorpes on the 6th and at Immingham Docks on the 24th.



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* Covenham Res Nov 3rd 2016 © John Clarkson

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Passage migrant, very scarce in spring and scarce/fairly common in autumn with rare/very scarce winter records.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	7	15	1	1	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	2	1	-	-
Covenham Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	6	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	2	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	4	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	5	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	1	1	2	6	-	3	40	20	7	10	5

A wintering bird, presumably the same as that present there at the end of 2015, was recorded at Frampton Marsh during Jan 20th-Apr 10th, joined by a second bird on the last date. There was then one again until the appearance of four birds on May 7th. Up to five were quite regular at Frampton Marsh during May, with a peak of six on the 13th and the last bird of the spring was on the 26th. Elsewhere in May, there was one at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on the 9th-10th, one at Alkborough Flats on the 10th-11th, one at Gibraltar Point on the 11th, one at Woodhall Spa Airfield on the 15th and one at Donna Nook also on the 15th with two there on 24th. An early bird returned to Frampton Marsh on Jul 7th and after one on the 21st there were 1-3 birds regularly to the end of the month. Singles, thought to be different, were at Barton Pits on Jul 24th and 28th, and two there during Jul 31st-Aug 10th. One was at Alkborough Flats on Jul 27th, one at Saltfleet on the 27th and 30th, and two were at Donna Nook on the 30th-31st. Birds were well-distributed during August and September, with the first juvenile bird noted on Aug 7th, followed by more regular sightings from the 14th onwards. The bulk of records came from Frampton Marsh where 1-2 birds, occasionally up to six, were present in early August, then up to ten from the 22nd, plus counts of 40 on Aug 28th and 20 on the 29th. Good numbers continued into Sep with up to ten daily and peaks of 14 on the 7th and 12 on the 4th and 11th-12th. There were also 20 in the Frampton Marsh Compartment 24 on Sep 29th. Migrants were present at 14 other sites during this period, most recording 1-3 birds and some with occasionally up to five. Higher counts were of six at Alkborough Flats on Aug 16th with seven there on Aug 20th, 15 on Sep 3rd and six next day and, inland, six at Covenham Res on Aug 29th-30th and Sep 8th. Other inland records included two at Deeping Lakes on Aug 21st, with one there on Sep 4th, and a peak of three at Bardney Pits on Aug 28th. Numbers quickly dwindled in October. Frampton Marsh had seven on the 1st, then 1-2 until the 25th. The only other records involved single birds at Middlemarsh Farm,

Skegness, on Oct 5th, Donna Nook on the 6th and Alkborough Flats on the 10th and 24th-25th. Later birds were one at Frampton Marsh on Nov 12th, one at Tetney Marsh on Nov 16th and one at Alkborough Flats during Nov 25th-Dec 7th. The ringing details concern a colour-ringed bird, marked in Norway about three weeks before appearing at Freiston Shore. The only previous Little Stint recovery affecting Lincolnshire was one found dead at Grimsby on 18th September 1949, that also having been ringed in Norway, 19 days earlier.

NOS	First-year	22-08-2016	Makkevika, Giske: 62°30'N 6°1'E (Møre og Romsdal) Norway
ED04716	Alive (colour rings seen)	12-09-2016	Freiston Shore: 52°57'N 0°5'E 1,118km SSW Oy 0m 21d



Little Stint *Calidris minuta* Frampton Marsh Aug 28th 2016 © Steve Nikols

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

Very scarce migrant. **LBRC**

An adult was at Frampton Marsh from Jul 28th to Aug 9th (PS *et al.*). There have now been 25 White-rumped Sandpipers in Lincolnshire, from the first in 1955, and they have occurred in all but one of the last ten years, with an average of 1.3 birds per year.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Rare autumn migrant, vagrant in spring. **LBRC**

The run of years with multiple records continues. The first was an adult at West Ashby Pits during Jul 16th-24th (MEH, RTf *et al.*), quickly followed by another adult at Frampton Marsh on Jul 23rd-27th (SK, DWd *et al.*). An adult was also present at Freiston Shore for much of Aug 1st-9th (DRob, BWd *et al.*); that bird is assumed to have been the same as that at Frampton Marsh (and indeed one was reported but with no details back at Frampton Marsh on the 3rd) but it could have been different. The next was a juvenile at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on Sep 5th (EJM, NAL *et al.*), and there was one at Bardney Pit from Sep 18th to Oct 2nd (DMJ). Finally, there were two (ages not known) at Frampton Marsh on Sep 26th, one of them remaining to the 27th (TC *et al.*).

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

A dowitcher flew S past Gibraltar Point on Sep 7th (KMW), with Bar-tailed Godwits. It could not be identified to species but is assumed to have been the same as the bird that was found at Frampton Marsh on Oct 1st, where it was seen to be a first calendar year Long-billed Dowitcher (TC *et al.*). It remained at Frampton Marsh until Nov 8th, though it was also seen at nearby Freiston Shore on Oct 3rd (EEdwards, SML). Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.583).



Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* Frampton Marsh Oct 23rd 2016 © Russell Hayes



Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* Frampton Marsh Oct 22nd 2016 © Roy Harvey



Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* Frampton Marsh Oct 23rd 2016 © Steve Nikols

2002 addition: A juvenile was at Saltfleet Haven during 1st-17th November (SIMW, ICW, AGW *et al.*). Accepted by BBRC (BB 96 p.470). This record was omitted from the text of the Lincolnshire Rare & Scarce Bird Report of 2000-2002 – though a photograph of the bird was included, opposite page 39.

The 2016 individual was the tenth Long-billed Dowitcher to be identified in Lincolnshire, and the first since 2012. The first specifically identified was found at Wisbech sewage farm on 28th September 1963, but there is also a much older record of a dowitcher not identified to species, shot at Humberston on 15th August 1882. They have all been found in autumn, with first dates (including the dowitcher sp) falling in July (3), August (1), September (5), October (1) and November (1).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Fairly common resident in restricted habitat, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point 2016	13	7	28	1	-	-	-	-	1	5	11	5
Average 2011-2015	13.2	16	9.2	14.4	-	-	-	-	1	4.2	8.4	14.6

The majority of counts of four or more came from Gibraltar Point. There were three counts of ten or more there in January, including 13 on the 6th, but counts then were lower until spring passage began in March. Peaks then, at Gibraltar Point, were ten on Mar 21st and 28 on Mar 24th. Numbers reported towards the end of the year were rather low. The peaks at Gibraltar Point was 11 on Nov 8th. At inland sites, maxima included seven at Low Hameringham on Dec 3rd, six at Swinn Wood (near Alford) on Dec 5th, and six at West Ashby on Dec 29th. Larger numbers are often flushed by beaters at Pheasant shoots – but they mostly don't get reported.

During the breeding season, reports came from the survey sites discussed below, and also from Skellingthorpe Old Wood and Twyford Wood. There was coverage this year at eight sites for the BTO/Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust Woodcock monitoring survey. This involves three dusk visits to a fixed point in each wood, counting the number of passes by roding and other Woodcock. The table below summarises the results, showing the average number of birds counted per visit at each site (n.s. = not surveyed). The numbers are not the number of birds present (typically each bird will make several passes) but consistent coverage allows them to be a reliable index of abundance. Potterhanworth Wood had not been included before, but at the other sites, presence has been maintained. At Kirkby Moor, the count in 2016 was higher than in the previous two surveys. Elsewhere, however, the trend is one of decline; for the six sites covered in all four years, the sum of mean counts has declined from 49.7 in 2003 to 29.3 in 2016. The UK trend is also one of decline, evident from 2008 onwards, but with a marked upturn between 2015 and 2016 (with no Lincolnshire coverage in 2015, we don't know whether that applied here). For more information on this survey see www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/woodcock-survey/results.

	2003	2013	2014	2016
Crowle Moors	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3
Stonepit Wood	10.0	13.3	8.3	6.3
W Laughton	11.0	8.7	11.3	7.7
E Laughton	4.0	4.3	6.7	4.0
Potterhanworth Wood	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	13.5
Willingham Woods	13.7	3.8	5.3	5.3
Chambers Farm Wood	10.7	9.8	8.3	5.7
Kirkby Moor	n.s.	4.8	3.7	8.0

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtes minimus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Probably much under-recorded.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	7	8	8	5	4	10	7	7
Minimum Lincs total	11	16	8	8	5	17	10	10

Similar numbers were reported to the past few years. In most cases, only 1-2 were seen but there were a few instances where more were recorded. Three were seen in Laughton Forest on Jan 13th. Three were found between Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe on Feb 20th and six were at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on Feb 22nd, the highest count of the year. There was also a late count of three at Gibraltar Point on Apr 17th. The only records after that in spring were singles at Trent Port (Marton) and at Willow Tree Fen on Apr 24th. In autumn, the first reports were of singles at Willow Tree Fen on Sep 13th and at Frampton Marsh on Sep 24th. The highest counts in the last

quarter were three at Tetney Marsh on Oct 28th, three at Gibraltar Point on Oct 31st, three at Alkborough Flats on Nov 8th and three at Rimac on Dec 23rd.



Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* Frampton Marsh Sep 3rd 2016 © Neil Smith

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Very scarce breeder, fairly common/common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	45	8	42	40	-	-	6	8	27	264	112	110
Barton Pits	47	9	1	1	1	-	1	8	-	46	33	1
Tetney Marsh	1	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	12	6
Donna Nook	40	3	8	3	-	-	1	3	10	5	12	13
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	66	14	4	4	-	-	2	2	6	7	19	26
Manby Wetland	7	-	-	3	-	1	12	18	30	26	6	8
Middlemarsh Farm	-	20	1	12	1	-	5	22	8	7	4	20
Gibraltar Point	28	9	21	30	3	1	4	13	32	40	28	18
Freiston Shore	20	1	-	5	-	-	-	5	2	2	5	2
Frampton Marsh	2	2	2	1	1	1	8	28	15	9	5	11
Laughton Forest	41	31	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trent Port (Marton)	28	52	1	9	-	-	-	-	5	1	-	15
Whisby NR	25	19	12	4	-	-	2	3	13	20	43	12
Woodhall Spa Airfield	15	-	88	2	-	3	-	9	4	-	-	-
Willow Tree Fen	-	-	1	7	2	1	-	1	17	1	-	-

The table includes most sites recording counts of 20 or more, but there were also counts of 20 at Bardney Pits in September, 43 at Killingholme Haven Pits in November, and 20 at Grimsthorpe Lake in December. Counts were generally unremarkable this year, except at Alkborough Flats, where there was a sharp autumn build-up to a peak of 264 on Oct 18th, with 110 or more remaining in November-December. Other notable counts were 47 in a single flock at Far Ings, Barton, on Jan 5th, 66 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Jan 15th, 52 at Trent Port (Marton), on Feb 26th, and 88 at Woodhall Spa Airfield on Mar 17th. As last year, the decline of Snipe as a breeding species in Britain was backed up by evidence from the county. Only at Crowle Moors was there strong evidence of breeding, with drumming and display noted in May and June;

confirmation of breeding by Snipe is difficult, and at Crowle that is particularly true. Drumming birds were noted also at Alkborough Flats in April and at Frampton Marsh in June, but on single dates only and there was no other evidence that breeding occurred.



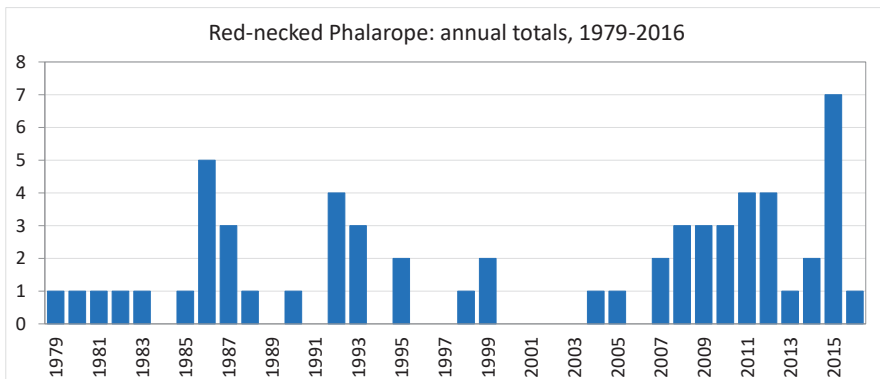
Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* Crook Bank Jun 1st 2016 © Dave Roberts

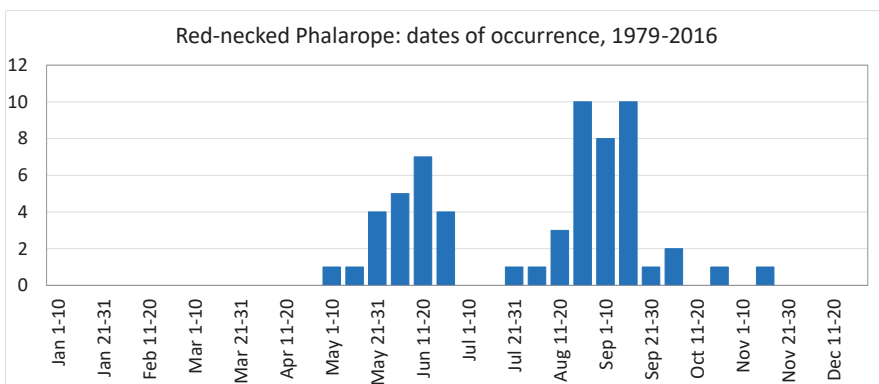
Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Very scarce passage migrant, more in autumn than in spring. **LBRC**

A male was found, associating with Sanderling, on the shore off Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Jun 1st (DRob, BWd).

During the ten years to 2016, an average of three Red-necked Phalaropes has been recorded annually, contrasting with an average of less than one for the previous 20 years. About one third of individuals have occurred in spring, with extreme dates ranging from 5th May to 30th June. Autumn records mainly fall between 30th July and 7th October but there have been a few earlier in July, including one at Wisbech on 18th July 1968, and a few later, including one at Donna Nook on 18th November 1966, and one at Chowder Ness, Barton upon Humber, during 17th-27th November 2009. The charts summarise occurrence since 1979.





Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly autumn, rare in winter. **LBRC**

One was seen at Tetney Marsh on Jan 17th (RL), the eighth January-February record for Lincolnshire. At a more typical time of year, one flew S at Gibraltar Point on Sep 25th, landing on the sea several times (KMW), one was seen at Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 2nd and another, a first winter bird, at Frampton Marsh on Oct 4th-6th (IE, DNw, JB *et al.*). A little later in the autumn, one was at Tetney Marsh on Nov 7th (CA).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Fairly common passage migrant, rare in winter. Bred in 1979.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	2	2	-	15	7	2	1	-	-
Barton Pits	-	-	-	1	3	-	6	9	3	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	1	-	10	5	2	-	-	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	3	-	2	5	2	-	-	-
Covenham Res	-	-	-	4	10	2	7	8	6	1	-	-
Manby Wetland	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	8	1	7	19	3	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	2	3	-	5	2	-	-	-	-
Boston-Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10	3	1	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	-	1	2	1	5	6	3	1	-	-
Terrington*	-	-	-	-	5	-	9	1	1	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	4	1	-	-	-

The table includes all sites attracting eight or more, including the two RSPB Wash reserves and Boston Haven-Witham Mouth, where there is some overlap. The table threshold is lower than in 2015, as numbers this year were small. Following the one there on Dec 7th-10th 2015, one was at Frampton Marsh on Feb 10th. The first in spring was one at Covenham Res on Apr 14th, with singles there, and at Barton Pits and North Hykeham Pits on the 15th. Counts in April were low, and May's scarcely better: the only locations with more than four were Covenham Res, with a peak of ten on the 9th, Gibraltar Point with eight on the 11th, and Middlemarsh Farm, with five on the 8th. The only records between one at Covenham Res on May 22nd and one at Frampton Marsh on Jun 25th were singles (perhaps just one individual) at Gibraltar Point on Jun 6th, 7th and 16th. The only double figure counts in July were ten at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 22nd and 15 roosting on a floating log at Alkborough Flats on the 24th. Similarly, the peaks in August were c10 on Boston Haven on the 14th and 19 at Gibraltar Point on the 28th. Counts in September were mainly in low single figures, and there were singles in October intermittently through to one at Tetney Marsh on the 31st. There was also a winter record again, but this time more unusually inland, at Gainsborough STW on Dec 18th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Fairly common autumn passage migrant, scarce in spring and also as a regular winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	1	-	-	1	-	1	6	6	1	-	-	-
Tetney-Grainthorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	3	-	1	1	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	3	-	-	4	2	6	1	1	-
Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness)	-	-	1	2	-	3	3	8	1	1	1	1
Gibraltar Point	-	-	1	1	1	2	3	6	5	2	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	1	1	8	7	6	3	3	-	-
Manby Wetland	-	-	-	-	-	4	15	5	1	1	-	1
Woodhall Spa/R Witham	1	3	1	1	-	1	1	2	2	-	1	1
Kirkby on Bain GP	1	1	-	-	-	-	6	6	1	1	-	-
West Ashby Pits	2	1	-	2	-	-	8	8	-	-	-	-
Marston STW	2	1	1	1	-	4	6	3	6	-	1	-
Number of sites	11	9	8	12	3	10	22	28	22	14	10	6
Minimum Lincs total	14	11	8	18	3	26	89	98	50	19	14	7

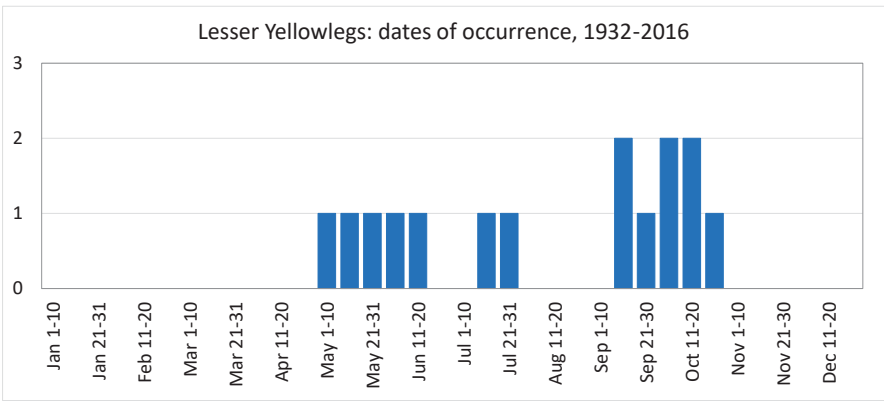
The table above includes all sites recording birds in at least four months and with maxima of three or more. Winter and spring numbers were typical but autumn passage was noticeably poorer than for a few years. The largest winter count, at either end of the year, was three at Woodhall Spa on Feb 13th and 25th, and the only count of three in spring was at Grainthorpe Marsh on Apr 20th. Autumn passage got under way from mid June but the only place to see counts above eight was Manby Wetland, where there were 11 on Jul 10th and 15 on Jul 13th. Counts of eight were made at Frampton Marsh on Jun 25th, at West Ashby Pits on four dates during Jul 25th-Aug 7th, at Middlemarsh Farm on Aug 12th and 17th, and at Hagnaby Lock/Fen on Aug 15th.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

A juvenile was found at Butterwick Hale on Oct 6th and remained until Oct 9th (JTH, GPC *et al.*). Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.582).

This was the fifteenth for Lincolnshire. The first was shot at Tetney on 15th September 1932 and more regular records started in 1966, though there has never been more than one in a year. The majority (see chart) have been in autumn, including a couple of adults in July, but five have occurred in spring between 5th May and 15th June. Four of those were present for single days, but the other was at Freiston Shore and then Gibraltar Point throughout 7th June-23rd September 2006. The two July birds both stayed a while, during 25th July-5th August 1976 and 11th-26th July 2014. The earliest of the main period of autumn records was that at Tetney on 15th September 1932. The latest arrival was one at Bagmoor Floods on 30th October 2011. That bird stayed there or at Alkborough Flats until 29th January 2012, and what is assumed to have been the same bird was back at Alkborough Flats during 28th October-8th December 2012. The latter occurrence is not shown in the chart, which displays arrival dates for the 15 separate individuals.





Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* East Butterwick Oct 7th 2016 © Graham Catley



Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* East Butterwick Oct 7th 2016 © Graham Catley

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor, and fairly common breeding species of coastal marshes. Scarce/very scarce inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	1419	1065	1161	673	170	65	564	1766	715	1204	1580	1013
Alkborough Flats	90	118	146	148	108	2	92	120	124	116	96	67
Read's Island-South Ferriby	16	22	5	-	-	1	176	340	121	37	30	21
Barrow-East Halton	190	97	38	67	-	7	3	15	29	6	62	19
Killingholme-Immingham	100	-	170	-	-	-	150	325	1	-	140	10
Pyewipe	136	228	142	216	-	-	26	375	193	375	459	210
Cleethorpes-Grainthorpe	102	154	163	125	118	34	110	136	152	279	295	239
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	521	316	713	210	45	8	200	352	270	259	238	220
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	320	230	132	77	30	16	102	261	100	252	365	303
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	1328	1396	1361	2298	893	119	1458	3485	2551	1340	1487	1218
Gibraltar Point	418	196	356	500	50	135	250	1000	179	252	220	275
Wainfleet*	47	74	113	203	112	-	23	77	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	120	468	155	282	128	32	-	-	56	69	24	50
Wrangle*	230	215	-	232	154	-	78	-	45	110	-	298
Leverton*	16	53	35	523	181	-	27	66	-	-	-	-
Benington*	-	21	22	55	-	10	-	-	-	-	80	-
Freiston Shore	1200	72	250	52	13	20	800	1703	1103	371	725	363
Witham	1	100	10	10	15	-	150	900	1	-	200	50
Frampton Marsh	176	138	182	57	152	66	373	172	393	353	182	212
Welland*	112	36	348	225	40	-	216	1070	368	-	-	-
Dawsmere*	-	-	45	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gedney	49	-	50	-	-	14	-	-	-	7	-	-
Terrington*	16	203	145	38	44	-	10	57	270	273	33	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Covenham Res	8	8	7	11	1	1	1	1	2	5	9	6
Kirkby-on-Bain GP	1	1	4	9	3	-	-	2	-	10	5	2
Chapel Hill-Kirkstead	6	4	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Hagnaby Lock/Fen	8	10	20	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The table shows all inland sites with ten or more and all coastal sites with 100 or more. Through most of the year, numbers in the key sites were similar to those in recent years, but there was a strong passage in *The Wash* in August. The two estuaries are of major importance for Redshank, as for many other waterfowl; the thresholds for national and international importance are, respectively, 1200 and 2400. The highest site count early in the year was an estimate of 1200 at Freiston Shore on Jan 1st; there had been high numbers there in December 2015. In spring, notable counts were 550 at Donna Nook on Mar 3rd and 500 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 5th. In autumn, numbers built up strongly at Freiston Shore in late July to reach a peak of 1700 on Aug 5th, with 1100 still there on Sep 4th. Meanwhile, at Gibraltar Point, movement was evident from early July, including 57 S on the 9th, and a large pulse of passage took place in the second half of August, with 1000 on the 19th and 550 on the 23rd. In the breeding season, the largest counts again came from the RSPB's reserves. There were 31 pairs at Freiston Shore (a recovery from 11 in 2015), and 130 pairs at Frampton Marsh, where a sample of 47 pairs produce 0.21 fledged young/pair. At Tetney Marsh, an estimate based on two visits in early May suggested that 63 pairs were present.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Scarce passage migrant, in spring and autumn.

One was at Frampton Marsh from Apr 21st-May 2nd followed by two on May 6th, five on the 7th-9th, two on the 12th, four on the 14th and 1-2 until the 17th. One was at Alkborough Flats on May 2nd, one was at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on the 3rd and one was at Gibraltar Point on the 6th-8th. One was at Alkborough Flats on May 10th-11th, three were at Anderby Marsh on the 11th with one next day and two on the 15th, two at Manby Wetland on the 12th-13th, four at Donna Nook on the 13th and two at Willow Tree Fen NR on the 14th and one on the 15th. June records were confined to two at Frampton Marsh on the 8th, plus one on the 14th and the 27th, also one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 15th and the 26th-30th. Three at Frampton

Marsh on Jul 1st were followed by frequent records of 1-2 birds at this location until Oct 2nd. Just 1-2 birds were more sporadic at Alkborough Flats, Manby Wetland, Gibraltar Point and Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, during Jul 11th-Sep 15th, while single birds were present at seven other sites. The only higher autumn count was seven at Butterwick Hale on Jul 27th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Passage migrant, very scarce in spring but fairly common in autumn. Very scarce but regular in winter.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	8	9	13	15	7	3	19	27	27	21	10	9
Gibraltar Point	2	-	-	2	1	1	-	10	9	10	3	1
Freiston Shore	-	1	-	-	-	-	13	1	7	8	-	-
Frampton Marsh	4	3	3	3	3	1	4	4	17	14	10	5
Boatmere Scrape, Gedney	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	-	-	-

Wintering birds in January-March included regular sightings of 8-9 birds at Alkborough Flats rising to 12 on Mar 23rd and 13 on the 26th. Up to three were frequent at Frampton Marsh, though 1-2 were seen less often at Gibraltar Point. The only other records during this period were single birds at Holbeach Marsh on Jan 19th, Freiston Shore on Feb 9th-10th, Tetney Marsh on Mar 8th and Read's Island Flats on Mar 14th. Passage was most marked at Alkborough Flats during April with double figures noted on most days and a peak of 15 on the 24th. Frampton Marsh had 1-3 birds present all month and 1-2 were at Gibraltar Point from the 12th onwards. There was one at Butterwick (Wash) on Apr 10th, one at Donna Nook on the 13th and one at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on the 21st. Migrants soon dwindled during May. After seven on the 1st and five on the 2nd-3rd, Alkborough Flats noted just 1-3 until May 11th. One was at Grainthorpe Marsh on May 4th, it, or another, was at Horseshoe Point-Tetney Haven on the 6th and one was at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on the 10th. Gibraltar Point recorded single birds until May 9th and 1-2 were at Frampton Marsh until the 14th.

Single birds began to reappear at the three main sites of Alkborough Flats, Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh from Jun 12th onwards. At Alkborough Flats numbers rose to 19 by Jul 10th, and by late August and September there were several good counts of 25 or more, including 27 on Aug 29th and Sep 1st. Up to 21 were seen in October followed by 8-9 to the end of the year. Passage at Frampton Marsh saw 1-4 regularly until the arrival of 14 birds on Sep 8th. Counts of up to 17 were maintained until Oct 15th, thereafter up to ten were seen until Oct 28th, and then 1-3 in November-December, although ten were present on Nov 12th and five on Dec 18th. Fluctuating numbers at Gibraltar Point involved mostly single figures from Aug 13th-Nov 4th with peaks of ten on Aug 27th and Oct 5th-14th. One was also seen there on Dec 1st. Only light passage was recorded at 16 other sites. Most recorded just 1-2 birds, occasionally three; exceptions being 13 at Freiston Shore on Jul 23rd, five at Read's Island on Aug 15th, eight at Riseholme on Sep 3rd, five at Freiston Shore on Sep 4th, with seven there on Sep 28th and eight on Oct 2nd.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Passage migrant, scarce in spring, fairly common in autumn. Very scarce in winter.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Coast & estuaries</i>												
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	6	17	3	8	14	27	4	5	-
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	-	-	-	3	5	-	12	11	28	10	1	-
Gibraltar Point	-	1	-	3	4	2	21	21	16	5	1	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	5	1	20	35	24	10	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	-	-	4	26	5	6	18	35	10	3	-
Boatmere Scrape	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	78	60	-	-	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Covenham Res	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	6	1	-	-	-

The table includes all sites holding 15 birds or more. Inland records were few, but in addition to Covenham Res (included in the table and peaking at six on Aug 25th), there were maxima of three at Manby Wetland on May 13th, and four at Willow Tree Fen on May 15th, with three there on Aug 10th. On the estuaries there was as usual a scattering of winter records, including three in the Welland sector of The Wash on Feb 13th. One at Covenham Res on Feb 12th was more unusual. There were some unusual concentrations in spring. At Alkborough Flats, the peak of 17 on May 11th contrasted with previous spring peaks there in the range 1-5 during 2007-2015. At Frampton



Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* Gibraltar Point Aug 29th 2016 © Paul Neale

Marsh, there were double figure counts throughout May 10th-17th, peaking at 26 on the 14th. In autumn, Alkborough Flats had another record count, of 27 on Sep 4th, the previous maximum being 20. But it was Boatmere Scrape, near Gedney Drove End, which again stood out, with regular counts of 50 or more from Jul 24th to Sep 5th, peaking at 78 on Aug 22nd. There was one at Alkborough Flats on Nov 16th, but the last record of the year was more surprising: one flying over East Keal on Dec 17th.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Fairly common/common but declining passage migrant and winter visitor with small numbers in summer. Scarce inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donna Nook	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	19	-
Sutton on Sea	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	-
Huttoft Car Terrace	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	1	215	-
Gibraltar Point	30	57	6	1	1	3	-	4	8	10	459	-

Recorded in small numbers in each month during the first half of the year with winter monthly peaks of 30 off Gibraltar Point on Jan 16th and 57 from the same location on Feb 14th, of which three flew N and 54 S. A good spring count of 49, all of which were adults, was made from Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Jun 1st. The first juveniles to be observed were four off Gibraltar Point on Aug 25th. Typically good numbers were recorded during autumn passage, though considerably down on last year's numbers, with five three figure counts made, the first of which were 215 past Huttoft Car Terrace and 112 N past Gibraltar Point on Nov 1st, and then 300 past Sutton on Sea on Nov 5th and the year's peak count came the following day on Nov 6th when 459 flew S past Gibraltar Point during an afternoon seawatch. The only inland record was of an adult at Boultham Mere on Mar 5th, and there were very few in the inner parts of The Wash or the Humber. The highest counts in these areas were at the Humber Bridge at Barton, where there were five on Jan 2nd and c12 on Feb 13th.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

Very scarce coastal migrant in autumn, mainly Aug-Oct. Exceptional inland. **LBRC**

As last year, just two records of this exciting high Arctic breeding rarity, coming on consecutive days. The first, a juvenile, flew N past Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 17th (SLe, EJM); the second on Sep 18th, again a juvenile, was seen flying N before landing on the sea off Gibraltar Point (NCr, KMW).

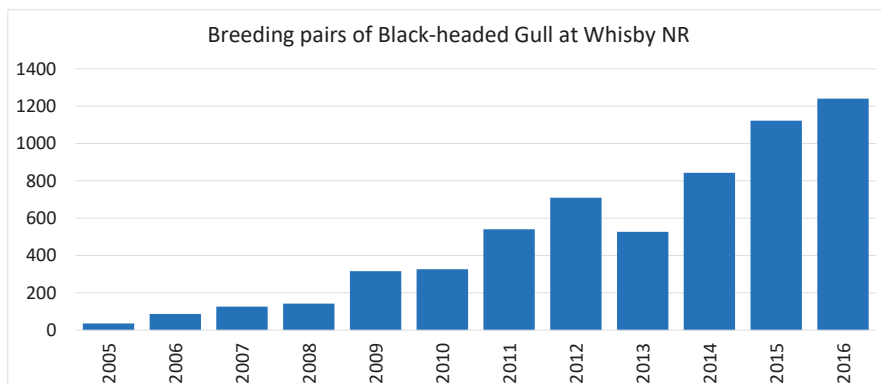
Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	636	281	305	84	59	77	2717	7687	6124	4189	563	1321
Alkborough Flats	200	1	1	1	59	50	206	1000	1000	23	6	15
Barton Pits	250	25	5	10	21	5	37	115	16	72	2	7
Cleethorpes-Tetney	1500	150	1500	50	13	1	440	-	1	1200	1000	1500
Tetney-Grainthorpe	33	69	57	79	53	49	104	1000	1080	420	140	320
Donna Nook	20	44	40	7	4	8	850	2500	1400	360	100	43
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	200	200	200	20	8	10	568	3000	2700	2780	104	150
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	539	819	1917	711	2808	1512	6157	7859	6965	1085	1304	813
Middlemarsh Farm	414	300	300	700	500	300	450	450	866	300	350	250
Gibraltar Point	10000	1000	5250	1087	200	315	2642	7000	3000	4000	4165	300
Leverton*	-	181	-	2	190	-	1926	2500	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	200	150	1000	500	48	21	152	143	50	114	32	50
Frampton Marsh	200	200	745	1000	1888	1293	228	496	220	200	15	17
Welland*	-	66	34	251	306	-	1308	210	615	-	-	-
Terrington*	-	-	-	-	-	-	650	2500	500	-	-	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Cadney Res	70	153	3	1	4	-	26	1000	-	3500	7	5000
Covenham Res	60	1200	20	210	80	7	38	1600	900	450	5000	200

Toft Newton Res	3800	12	1500	-	5	-	14	50	105	110	45	300
North Hykeham Pits	8000	1500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2200	5750	8830
Whisby NR	2500	1500	800	1500	1500	580	200	-	-	1500	800	-
Norton Disney/Thurlby	150	500	300	100	29	13	5	4	1	40	150	60
Kirkby on Bain GP	150	59	293	204	200	100	300	1200	128	267	200	400
Tattershall Lakes CP	6000	25	55	8	2	6	20	10	80	25	30	40

At Whisby NR the first noticeable arrival of birds back at their breeding grounds came on 23rd Feb; during the nesting season a total of 1240 breeding pairs were counted, with 846 at Thorpe Lake, 377 at Grebe Lake, 11 at Teal Lake and six at Coot Lake. It has proved difficult to estimate the number of young fledged this year with any degree of accuracy, and fledging success was very mixed, with the islands at Thorpe Lake and Butchers Island at Grebe Lake being the most productive areas. In contrast Bruce's Island on Grebe Lake was heavily predated with no young birds fledged.



Elsewhere in the county, reported colonies holding significant numbers included 1386 pairs at Frampton Marsh, with a further 47 pairs at Freiston Shore, 350 pairs at Middlemarsh Farm, 130 pairs at Kirkby on Bain GP, 40 pairs at Woodhall Spa Airfield and 32 nests at Barton Pits, which fledged 11 juveniles and had repeat clutches mostly taken by Otter or Mink. There were also 15 nests at Boultham Mere where most pairs fledged young, nine nests at Gibraltar Point and although confirmed breeding was recorded at Messingham SQ and Deeping Lakes, no further details were received. Traditional winter roost site peak counts were as follows: 10000 at Gibraltar Point on Jan 1st, 3800 at Toft Newton Res on Jan 22nd, 6000 at Tattershall Lakes CP on Jan 24th, 5000 at Covenham Res on Nov 4th, 5000 at Cadney Res on Dec 18th and 8830 at North Hykeham Pits on Dec 23rd. Two ringing recoveries are shown from the BTO 2016 ringing report: the longest-distance one within Britain and one moving between Britain and Poland. Also shown is the oldest of eight other overseas movements of colour-marked birds reported by LBC members; the others involved movements between Lincolnshire and Poland (2), Lithuania (1), Norway (3) and Denmark (1).

EY85042	Adult	07-02-2015	Pitsea Landfill Site: 51°32'N 0°30'E (Essex)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	02-09-2015	Tennyson Sands, Gibraltar Point NNR, Skegness: 53°5'N 0°18'E 175km N 0y 6m 26d
	- ditto -	14-02-2016	Cleethorpes: 53°32'N 0°1'W 225km N 1y 0m 7d
EX70817	Adult	13-10-2012	Pitsea Landfill Site: 51°32'N 0°30'E (Essex)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	02-04-2013	Ostrow Tumski, Poznan: 52°24'N 16°57'E (Wielkopolskie) Poland 1,131km E 0y 5m 20d
	- ditto -	21-08-2016	Saltfleet: 53°24'N 0°10'E 211km N 3y 10m 8d
Colour ring	Adult	08-05-2003	Malmo: 55°36'N 12°58'E Sweden
White VEC	Alive (colour rings seen)	21-10-2011	North Parade car park, Skegness: 53°08'N 0°20'E 880km SW
	Resighted 26 times		North Parade car park, Skegness: 53°08'N 0°20'E 880km SW
	- ditto -	17-01-2016	North Parade car park, Skegness: 53°08'N 0°20'E 880km SW

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Fairly common passage migrant in spring and autumn, scarce/very scarce in summer and winter.
RBBP

Despite the status of Little Gull being typically scarce in winter, January saw Little Gulls regularly reported throughout the month, starting on the 2nd when nine adults and two first winter birds were seen at Donna Nook and on the same date there was an adult at Gibraltar Point, four adults at Witham Mouth and four that flew W at Barton Pits. Over the following days Gibraltar Point recorded good movement with 31 S on the 4th, ten S on the 5th and 18 S on the 6th. From then until early April, there were just scattered records in single figures. During the spring, passage was steady. Inland there were an exceptional 19 at Thurlby Pit on Apr 11th followed by an adult at Whisby NR on Apr 12th, a first summer at Covenham Res Apr 13th-17th, one at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 15th and again a first summer at Covenham Res on May 17th. Frampton Marsh held up to six summering birds, which were regularly recorded from May 10th until Jul 2nd. A very early and pristine juvenile was at Norton Disney Pits on Aug 11th. During the autumn, passage was light, with the peak count of 12 coming on Oct 8th off Skegness. The last birds for the year were one N and two S past Gibraltar Point and seven off Huttoft Car Terrace on Nov 7th.



Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus* Frampton Marsh May 28th 2016 © Neil Smith

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

Scarce, but increasing visitor throughout the year, most frequent in late summer/early autumn.
RBBP

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	-
Barton Pits	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
Pyewipe-Cleethorpes	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	6	1	-	-	-
Tetney-Horseshoe Pt	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2	-	1	-	-
Donna Nook area	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	7	4	2	-	-
Covenham Res	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	5	-	-
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	3
North Hykeham Pits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	1
Whisby NR	-	-	3	4	4	4	3	2	-	2	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	2	4	1	1	3	-	1	-	2	-
Gibraltar Point	2	-	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	2	5	2	3	2	-	-	-	-	-



Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus* Frampton Marsh Apr 30th 2016 © Neil Smith



Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus* Frampton Marsh Apr 30th 2016 © Neil Smith

The table includes areas that held at least two birds with records in at least three months. Recorded in small numbers year round, typically scarcer during the winter months. During the first winter period, singles were reported largely from coastal locations and close to the Humber, with the exception of Covenham Res, where an adult and a second calendar year bird were on Feb 9th and 24th. During the spring, records primarily related to birds attending Black-headed Gull colonies. At Whisby NR, with apparently increasing numbers visiting the recording area, it is becoming difficult to keep track of the exact number of birds involved, but a minimum of 17 birds was recorded throughout the year. Most significant of these were the four that over-summered on Thorpe Lake and attempted to nest. An adult summer male and a second summer female nested but no chicks were seen and two adult summer females both built nest scrapes and laid two infertile eggs each, which soon succumbed to predation or abandonment. Other sites holding Mediterranean Gulls within Black-headed Gull colonies were Middlemarsh Farm and Frampton Marsh, both with up to three pairs present, though no nesting attempts took place. Post-breeding dispersal became apparent by mid-July when a pristine juvenile appeared at Whisby NR on the 20th; a second juvenile, this time in the company of an adult, was seen there on Aug 2nd. Not surprisingly, August accounted for the year's highest counts, with six at Pyewipe on the 16th and up to seven at Donna Nook on the 21st-27th. There was a good count of five from Covenham Res on Oct 14th. From November onwards, few records were received away from the Lincoln area where various individuals were observed at the traditional winter roost at North Hykeham Pits.

The 2016 BTO Ringing Report records 14 'recoveries' during the year, all of which involved sightings of colour-marked birds from Poland. Interestingly, 39 of the total of 42 overseas movements affecting Lincolnshire have been from Poland, with singles from Hungary, The Netherlands and Belgium. This distribution contrasts with that for the UK as a whole, for which more recoveries involve Hungary and especially Belgium than Poland.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	2230	154	1262	96	3	11	441	2314	532	444	339	459
Cleethorpes-Horseshoe Pt	80	30	40	30	7	2	2	-	-	30	250	60
Donna Nook	322	150	270	78	-	6	100	50	100	256	177	105
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	1878	600	1200	95	30	16	402	2199	429	161	109	326
Huttoft-Anderby	75	64	2	1	5	3	40	20	70	50	350	500
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	276	94	38	20	12	3	336	537	9	1	104	16
Gibraltar Point	4000	150	1000	30	150	10	250	450	60	500	576	125
<i>Inland</i>												
Covenham Res	200	2500	80	70	10	3	16	60	8	100	100	600
Biscathorpe-Stenigot	-	600	500	80	-	-	-	-	25	300	150	400
Toft Newton Res	200	10	3000	4	2	-	6	9	-	5	5	4
Whisby NR	200	100	9	1	2	1	4	2	11	100	66	1
North Hykeham Pits	600	100	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	450	1150	1760

The table includes most counts of 500 or more, apart from 600 at Old Bolingbroke in January and 500 at Cadney Res in December. The first winter period saw what turned out to be the year's peak of 4000 at Gibraltar Point during a roost count on New Year's Day. Other areas holding significant numbers were typically coastal and estuarine; traditional inland winter roosts recorded a couple of vast counts, most notably 2500 at Covenham Res on Feb 27th and an exceptional count of 3000 at Toft Newton Res on Mar 15th. Typically summering in small numbers there was a good count of 150 immatures feeding offshore at Gibraltar Point on 6th May. It wasn't until 21st Jul that the next three figure count was made with 100 at Donna Nook, with birds now starting to return from their breeding grounds. The first juvenile to be noted was at Whisby NR on Jul 28th and by mid-August birds were flooding back. The second winter period only saw Common Gull twice being recorded into four figures, both being winter roost counts made at North Hykeham Pits, with 1150 on Nov 20th and 1760 on Dec 23rd.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor with some immatures remaining in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	331	132	110	127	35	30	82	98	545	162	265	405
Bagmoor/Winterton	140	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Barton Pits	10	30	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	1
Cleethorpe-Tetney	140	16	22	9	4	-	-	-	-	52	46	86
Donna Nook	80	55	34	75	20	10	40	50	400	30	100	250
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	89	35	33	18	15	11	23	30	41	74	100	100
Huttoft-Anderby	1	3	-	7	-	-	1	4	3	55	140	13
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	112	16	24	15	5	35	15	43	21	247	157	87
Middlemarsh, Skegness	80	14	4	9	9	2	3	39	54	71	40	12
Gibraltar Point	150	104	60	48	14	35	40	150	80	205	250	70
Frampton-Witham	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	320	14	101	6
<i>Inland</i>												
North Hykeham Pits	2	-	5	-	-	-	-	1	5	9	35	30
Whisby NR	82	-	4	1	2	-	-	-	-	6	7	35
Norton Disney/Thurlby	9	12	17	-	1	4	-	-	-	2	1	4
Kirkby on Bain GP	80	80	4	17	4	2	20	50	110	200	200	250

The table includes most counts of 100 or more but excludes some one-off high counts (see below). It was an average year in terms of numbers recorded. The opportunistic nature of this large larid was noted at Gibraltar Point on Jan 16th when one was observed killing a Sanderling prior to swallowing it whole. During the first third of the year, only six sites recorded Great Black-backed Gull into three figures; most notable there were 700 at Scunthorpe Steelworks on Jan 24th and what turned out to be the year's peak count of 800 at South Ferriby on Apr 8th. Also, not listed in the table above, were 150 at Risby Warren on Apr 30th. On May 14th, 100 were at Bagmoor/Winterton Floods, and between then and Aug 8th, when 100 were at Gibraltar Point, the majority of records in the intervening period related to summering immature individuals. September saw numbers again swell and accounted for some good counts, with 320 at Frampton on the 13th and 400 at Donna Nook on the 19th. During the final quarter, again only six sites held birds into three figures, including Kirkby on Bain GP, which remains an important area for this species whilst landfilling is still operational there. Three ringing recoveries below indicate the nesting areas of Great Black-backed Gulls that winter here.

DKC	Nestling	29-06-2015	Nordre Ronner: 57°21'N 10°55'E (Nordjyllands) Denmark
3M3374	Alive (colour rings seen)	02-01-2016	Middlemarsh Farm, Croft, Skegness: 53°8'N 0°17'E 820km WSW 0y 6m 4d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	16-05-2016	Hinxton Hall Genome Campus: 52°4'N 0°10'E (Cambridgeshire) 905km SW 0y 10m 17d
NOS	Nestling	13-07-2016	Jarstein: 59°7'N 5°10'E (Rogaland) Norway
3020773	Freshly dead	02-10-2016	Rimac: 53°23'N 0°12'E 707km SSW 0y 2m 19d
NOS	Nestling	29-06-2014	Storoytaa, Mandal: 57°58'N 7°25'E (Vest-Agder) Norway
3039473	Alive (colour rings seen)	10-11-2014	Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe: 53°21'N 0°13'E 684km SW 0y 4m 12d

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Rare/scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer. **LBRC**

The first birds for the year were an adult and a first winter at the Tata Steel tip in Scunthorpe on Jan 24th (ND, WG), and there was a first winter at Alkborough Flats on Feb 12th, Mar 5th, Mar 20th and Mar 27th (ND), and also at nearby Bagmoor/Winterton Floods on Mar 5th (ND); all six of those records of a first winter are treated as being of just one bird. An immature was seen flying SE over Kirkby Moor on Mar 13th (CA). A first winter frequented Grimsby Docks between Apr 13th and 19th (DJB *et al.*) and there was a first winter at New Holland on May 2nd (CAdl *et al.*). During the second winter period, there were only two records, both relating to birds moving S offshore; the first, a first winter past Sutton on Sea on Nov 11th (CA, GPC), and the second, again a first winter, past Gibraltar Point on Christmas Day (RDn).



Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* New Holland Outfall May 2nd 2016 © Chaz Adland

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor Aug-May. The subspecies known as Kumlien's Gull *L.g. kumlieni* is a vagrant. **LBRC**

A poor year for this species, involving between one and three individuals but counted as two. With no records at the beginning of the year it was not until Nov 13th that the first bird was discovered, coming in the form of a first winter bird on the beach between Crook Bank and Mablethorpe North End (GHo). Probably the same first winter was at Manby Wetland two days later, on Nov 15th, before flying back towards the coast (GW, RJa) and it was seen at Manby on four further occasions up to the 30th. In December, there was a first winter at Cleethorpes during the 19th-28th (CA).



Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides* Manby Wetland Nov 17th 2016 © John Clarkson

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Very common passage migrant and common winter visitor; very scarce breeding species.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	1797	282	370	521	185	264	306	335	182	557	566	400
Cleethorpes-Tetney	720	30	80	258	248	1	6	-	1	200	200	350
Donna Nook	500	170	220	300	104	70	137	230	100	156	200	236
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	1234	204	244	600	180	211	127	56	80	337	341	110
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	1939	232	1355	1105	794	1159	3221	1625	657	1280	1408	258
Middlemarsh, Skegness	94	120	45	191	158	220	52	110	68	70	120	57
Gibraltar Point	940	460	5500	400	450	600	300	850	500	1200	1000	425
Wainfleet*	21	33	181	-	86	-	9	131	-	-	-	-
Friskney*	388	47	88	304	204	31	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wrangle*	112	10	-	193	120	-	480	-	310	322	-	49
Leverton*	313	49	278	63	147	-	2515	533	-	-	-	-
Benington*	-	-	80	140	-	233	-	125	10	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	42	58	160	97	121	248	40	505	10	20	32	23
Frampton Marsh	1	100	100	17	30	32	16	40	30	358	24	8
Welland*	6	15	17	97	-	-	38	66	265	-	-	-
Terrington*	-	-	-	-	44	-	10	30	-	300	-	-
<i>Inland</i>												
Kirkby on Bain GP	48	700	2200	1200	500	1100	700	857	1400	600	4000	4000

The vast majority of birds recorded in the county are of the subspecies *argenteus*, but on passage and during the winter months good numbers of the more easterly and northerly nominate *L.a. argentatus* are present; typically these are larger and darker birds. The table includes all counts of 500 or more except for 3000 at Scunthorpe steelworks on Jan 24th and 1200 in the Witham sector of The Wash in December. During the spring, six pairs nested at Freiston Shore and one pair, unsuccessfully, at Frampton Marsh. Breeding was also confirmed at Deeping Lakes, where there were at least two pairs, and at Read's Island, where one nest was seen. Two further sites recorded probable breeding. Herring Gull is much under-recorded as a breeding species in the county; in coming years, a coordinated county wide effort would provide a far better understanding of the true status of this species, targeting sites that have previously held pairs and in particular areas such as Grimsby and Boston that may hold roof-nesting pairs. The year's peak count was 5500 at Gibraltar Point on Mar 7th; the second highest countywide counts of c4000 came from Kirkby on Bain GP on Nov 27th and Dec 9th, demonstrating the importance of this inland site to this species, where of course the main attraction is the county's last operational landfill.

There were numerous sightings of colour-ringed Herring Gulls, especially around Gibraltar Point thanks to NALs efforts. Most were fairly short-term records, involving transfers from especially the York area and Essex, where much ringing takes place at rubbish tips. The one shown below is the only report of an overseas transfer that we have noted, and involves a bird of greater age (though far short of the BTO longevity record of 32 years).

Colour ring	Adult female	04-05-2005	Moerdijk (Tetra Pak), Noord-Brabant: 51°41'N 4°36' E	The Netherlands
Green IE		* Numerous sightings Noord-Brabant, NL, 2005-2014 *		
		16-09-2014	Middlemarsh Farm: 53°8'N 0°16'E 330km NE 9y 4m 12d	
		* Feb-Mar 2015 at Noord-Brabant, NL *		
		06-10-2015	Middlemarsh Farm: 53°8'N 0°16'E 330km NE 10y 5m 2d	
		10-09-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 325km NE 11y 4m 6d	

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

Very scarce all-year visitor. **LBRC**

This was a good year that likely involved 16 different individuals. The first bird to be identified was an adult at Norton Disney Pits on Feb 2nd (DN) followed by a first winter on the beach at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Mar 8th (NAL). It wasn't until May that the next bird was discovered, again at Norton Disney Pits, with a first summer there on the 11th (DN), two birds there on Jul 23rd (BWd, DRob), a first summer and a juvenile, in fact the first juvenile to be seen anywhere in Britain (DN, BWd). An adult there the following day (BWd, DRob) was the famous 'Stumpy', first recorded in the county as an adult in 2005 and seen sporadically since, making this bird at least 15 years old now. Two birds were discovered on Jul 25th: an adult male at Kirkby on Bain GP (GPC) and a Polish-ringed first summer at Norton Disney Pits (see ringing details

below) which frequented the same area until Aug 3rd (DN). Also at this time, a new first summer appeared on Aug 1st (DN). What may have been the same adult male from the end of the previous month was at Kirkby on Bain GP on Aug 5th (NAL). A juvenile was at Gibraltar Point on Aug 27th (JS *et al.*) followed by a juvenile at Huttoft on 10th Sep (JS). There was a first summer at Sturton by Stow on Sep 23rd (CSc), and a first summer at Marston on Sep 26th (TML). In October, there was a first winter at Rimac on the 16th (NAL) and an adult at Norton Disney Pits on the 19th (DN). The final bird for the year was an adult that roosted at North Hykeham Pits on Nov 30th and again on Dec 1st (BWd).

PLG	Nestling	21-05-2015	Zb Kozielno, Paczkow: 50°28'N 16°58'E (Opolskie) Poland
DN31401	Alive (colour rings seen)	01-10-2015	Albion Landfill Site, Albert Village: 52°44'N 1°32'W (Leicestershire) 1,302km WNW 0y 4m 10d
	- ditto -	23-06-2016	Albion Landfill Site, Albert Village: 52°44'N 1°32'W (Leicestershire) 1,302km WNW 1y 1m 2d
	- ditto -	25-07-2016	Norton Disney: 53°7'N 0°40'W 1,247km WNW 1y 2m 4d
	- ditto -	03-08-2016	Norton Disney: 53°7'N 0°40'W 1,247km WNW 1y 2m 13d

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Scarce visitor, mainly in late summer/autumn. **RBBP** Azorean Yellow-legged Gull *L.m. atlantis* is a very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites 2016	3	1	2	3	4	0	7	6	6	4	4	1
Minimum total 2016	3	1	2	3	6	0	40	35	9	6	4	1
Average total 2011-2015	3.8	1.4	3.0	3.6	3.6	10.2	38.6	51.8	22.6	12.0	5.8	1.6

During the first winter period there were unseasonal birds in January with an adult at Whisby NR on the 5th, a single at Covenham Res on the 6th and again on the 12th, a first winter at Gibraltar Point on the 23rd, followed by a second winter there on the 27th. There was one at Freiston Shore on Feb 2nd. A first winter was at Gibraltar Point on Mar 7th. A single was at Donna Nook on Apr 11th, a single at Freiston Shore on Apr 23rd, followed by a second summer at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Apr 27th. A second summer was at Middlemarsh Farm on May 5th, three were at Norton Disney Pits on May 11th, a second summer at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 16th, followed by at first winter at Gibraltar Point on May 31st.

It became apparent that autumn passage had begun on Jul 4th when there were eight at Norton Disney Pits. Reports were widespread from Jul 22nd, when there were 29 at Norton Disney Pits, which (not surprisingly) turned out to be the peak count for the year. There were 14 again at Norton Disney Pits on Jul 23rd with four at Kirkby on Bain GP on the same date. In August, 23 were at Norton Disney Pits on the 1st, two at Gibraltar Point on the 8th, three at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 15th, three at Donna Nook on the 17th, 14 at Norton Disney Pits on the 18th, four at Gibraltar Point on the 20th-21st, six at Norton Disney Pits on the 22nd and three at Gibraltar Point on the 23rd. During September, reports were received from six sites with the only multiple counts coming from Gibraltar Point, where there were two on the 2nd, Donna Nook, where there were two on the 13th and Norton Disney Pits where there were two on the 19th. Two were at North Hykeham Pits on Oct 1st and two at Marston on Oct 23rd. Only four birds were recorded during November, and in December there was one at Freiston Shore on the 17th, and likely the same bird at the Witham Mouth on the 19th.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Present all year: common on spring and autumn passage, scarce but increasing in winter and as breeding species. Many immatures summer.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
WeBS totals	1	3	6	27	12	8	39	47	16	8	18	9
New Holland-Goxhill	-	-	-	-	1	-	10	35	2	-	-	-
<i>The Wash</i>												
WeBS totals	-	8	3	156	26	24	69	112	28	36	64	84
Gibraltar Point	2	3	15	9	17	7	34	76	22	5	3	1
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	1	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	-	3	1	8	5	-	6	25	56	69
Welland*	-	-	-	137	9	-	60	42	13	-	-	-
Terrington*	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	30	-	9	-	-

Inland

Covenham Res	14	4	5	5	12	10	91	27	17	6	22	17
Boultham Mere	1	3	5	15	11	7	6	16	66	17	15	3
North Hykeham Pits	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	48	400	250	15	4
Norton Disney/Thurlby	-	3	3	2	-	-	290	310	4	10	20	1
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	14	100	150	50	14	200	382	5	1	-	3
Deeping Lakes	1	16	47	113	83	58	85	82	27	1	1	1

The table includes most counts of 30 or more. It was a rather poor year in terms of numbers recorded, but nevertheless some good passage counts were made. During the first winter period there were widespread records, typically singles or very small numbers. The exceptions were 14 at Covenham Res on Jan 3rd, 14 at East Keal on Jan 16th and 16 at Welbourn Heath on Feb 2nd, but by the end of February it is likely that early passage migrants were being seen. Few high spring passage counts were received, with the first involving three figures being 100 at Kirkby on Bain GP on Mar 31st. During the breeding season, there were 34 occupied nests on Read's Island, and breeding was also confirmed at Deeping Lakes, where there were around 25 pairs and a maximum count of 37 juveniles. Return passage was evident in July, the first significant counts being 290 at Norton Disney Pits and 91 at Covenham Res on the 4th, followed by 200 at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 25th. Further three figure counts were made in August, including 300 at Norton Disney Pits on the 1st, 250 at Fillingham Lake on the 8th, 110 at Witham Mouth on the 13th, 382 at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 15th and 310 at Norton Disney Pits on the 18th. During September, there were 400 at North Hykeham Pits on the 24th, with 120 there on the 29th. In October, there were 200 at North Hykeham Pits on the 1st and the year's peak count came on the 23rd, when there were 750 at Marston. Records were received regularly through the final winter period, typically in small numbers and no further counts exceeded 30, though at Frampton Marsh there were WeBS totals of 56 on Nov 19th and 69 on Dec 12th.

Below are the two longest distance ringing recoveries this year. The second one was seen repeatedly in Gloucestershire before disappearing for almost seven years, then re-appearing in the East Midlands.

GR27120	Nestling	28-06-2014	Havergate Island: 52°4'N 1°30'E (Suffolk)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	30-06-2016	Albion Landfill Site, Albert Village: 52°44'N 1°32'W (Leicestershire) 221km WNW 2y 0m 2d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	18-08-2016	Norton Disney: 53°7'N 0°41'W 190km NW 2y 1m 21d
FP77896	Second-year	26-03-2005	near Wingmore Farm, Stoke Orchard: 51°56'N 2°6'W (Gloucestershire)
	Alive (colour marks seen)	25-07-2005	near Hempsted, Gloucester: 51°50'N 2°16'W (Gloucestershire) 16km SW 0y 3m 29d
	Alive (colour marks seen)	15-12-2005	Grundon Landfill Site, near Stoke Orchard: 51°56'N 2°6'W (Gloucestershire) 2km 0y 8m 19d
	* Seven sightings in Gloucestershire Jan 2006, Nov 2007-Jan 2008, Nov 2008-Dec 2009 *		
	Alive (colour marks seen)	16-12-2009	Grundon Landfill Site, near Stoke Orchard: 51°56'N 2°6'W (Gloucestershire) 2km 4y 8m 20d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	19-09-2016	Norton Disney Quarry: 53°7'N 0°40'W 164km NE 11y 5m 24d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	17-12-2016	Shawell Landfill Site: 52°24'N 1°12'W (Leicestershire) 82km NE 11y 8m 21d

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

A record three individuals were recorded this year, all adults. The first was seen at Middlemarsh Farm, near Skegness, on Jun 13th-15th (NAL *et al.*). At Gibraltar Point, about 10 km away, two were present on Jun 14th-18th (BBa, JPS *et al.*) and it is assumed that the one seen at Middlemarsh Farm was one of these. Later in the summer, one present in the upper Humber, mainly on the Yorkshire side, was briefly at Alkborough Flats on Jul 24th (GPC, ND *et al.*). All accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.586).

These three take the total number of Caspian Terns seen in Lincolnshire to 15. The first was shot at Caythorpe on 23rd May 1853, and the next was over 100 years later at Gibraltar Point on 5th September 1971. More have followed more or less regularly since, including two in both 1979 and

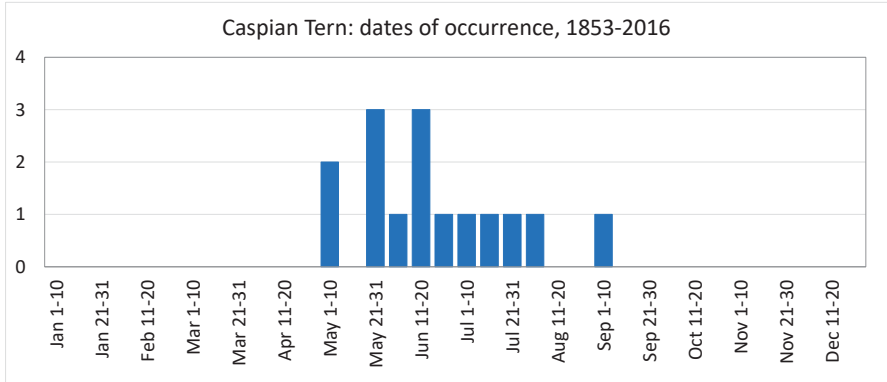


Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* Gibraltar Point Jun 16th 2016 © John Clarkson



Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* Gibraltar Point Jun 14th 2016 © Paul Neale

1988. The period of occurrence spans the summer (see chart below) with extreme dates being 5th May and 10th August, plus the one in September.



Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Passage migrant, scarce in spring but common in autumn. Rare inland. Occasional pairs in summer.

Peak monthly counts	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
<i>The Humber & coast</i>								
WeBS totals	-	-	3	718	628	92	5	-
Cleethorpes-Horseshoe Point	-	-	-	30	50	35	1	-
Grainthorpe-Somerscotes	1	12	-	581	102	60	6	-
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	-	2	12	210	800	112	11	-
Mablethorpe-Chapel Point	-	-	3	113	474	180	20	-
<i>The Wash</i>								
WeBS totals	-	4	11	642	381	1029	22	-
Gibraltar Point	125	49	48	2980	3000	1280	55	3
Wainfleet-Butterwick*	-	4	11	365	13	360	-	-
Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth	-	-	1	260	130	1	26	1
Frampton Marsh	-	3	1	-	3	9	18	-

Singles at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point on Apr 1st were the first of the year, though no more appeared until the 12th. Spring passage peaked at the end of April, with 40 N at Gibraltar Point on the 26th and 125 N on the 29th. Inland, there were three at Kirkby on Bain GP on Apr 13th, one at Willow Tree Fen on May 1st, and one on the R Witham near Kirkstead Bridge on May 9th. There were no counts over 12 during May 3rd-Jun 21st, but numbers soon built up with three figure counts or more throughout mid July to late September. As usual, the largest counts were at Gibraltar Point: all totals of 1000 or more were there. The peak day counts were 2980 on Jul 29th, 3000 on Aug 14th and 2680 on Aug 23rd. Many counts there are dominated by birds feeding or roosting in the area but there is also pronounced southerly movement. This year, the sum count of birds moving south during July-September was 10149. Numbers fell quickly at the very end of September, and there were only single figure counts from Oct 5th onwards with a few right to the end of that month. Three flew N at Gibraltar Point on Nov 1st and there was one at Witham Mouth on Nov 7th.

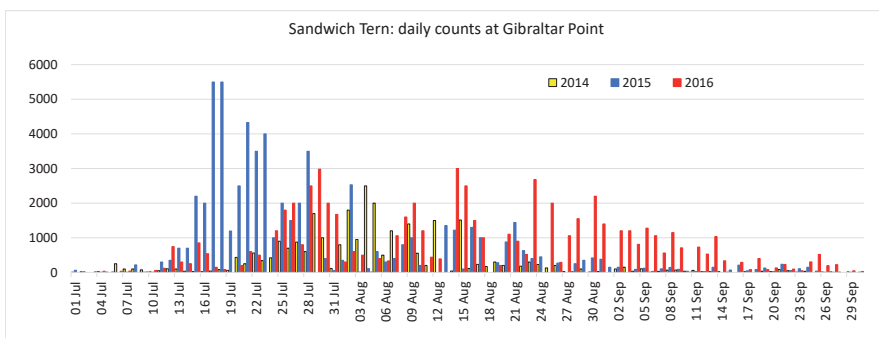
We included charts of autumn Sandwich Tern numbers (all counts, not just those moving south) at Gibraltar Point in 2014 and 2015 and do so again as this year's passage began at a similar point to that of 2014 (not early, as in 2015) but continued in strength well into September. Even though the counts in 2016 did not reach so high as in 2015, the volume appears to have been similar. The bird-day totals for July-September for the three years were 2014 – 27160; 2015 – 62811; 2016 – 63494, though it should be borne in mind that we do not know how much day by day turnover/retention of individuals there is.



Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* Rimac Aug 2nd 2016 © Graham Catley



Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* Frampton Marsh Jun 6th 2016 © Neil Smith



Two sets of ringing details, derived from colour ring sightings, are shown. The first has spent some time touring Europe as a youngster, before border controls make it difficult. The second involves the longest recorded movement within Britain this year:

DS00577	Nestling	19-06-2013	Blakeney Point: 52°58'N 0°58'E (Norfolk)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	08-08-2013	Camperduin: 52°43'N 4°39'E (Noord-Holland) The Netherlands 248km E 0y 1m 20d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	20-08-2013	Wangeroege Island, Lower Saxony: 53°46'N 7°58'E (Ostfriesische Inseln) Germany 472km E 0y 2m 1d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	13-09-2013	Vejers Beach: 55°37'N 8°7'E (Ribe) Denmark 549km ENE 0y 2m 25d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	31-10-2014	Saint Laurent sur Mer: 49°22'N 0°52'W (Calvados) France 421km SSW 1y 4m 12d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	01-09-2016	Gibraltar Point NNR, Skegness: 53°5'N 0°19'E 46km WNW 3y 2m 13d
DS14898	Nestling	19-06-2013	Blakeney Point: 52°58'N 0°58'E (Norfolk)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	27-08-2015	Coquet Island: 55°19'N 1°32'W (Northumberland) 311km NNW 2y 2m 8d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	31-08-2016	Gibraltar Point NNR: 53°5'N 0°18'E 47km WNW 3y 2m 12d

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Scarce summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Occasional inland. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Humberston-Grainthorpe	-	7	-	-	-	-
Grainthorpe-Donna Nook	-	35	2	2	4	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	3	2	1	2	-
Gibraltar Point	15	251	75	114	99	2
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	13	1
Frampton Marsh	-	1	1	-	1	-

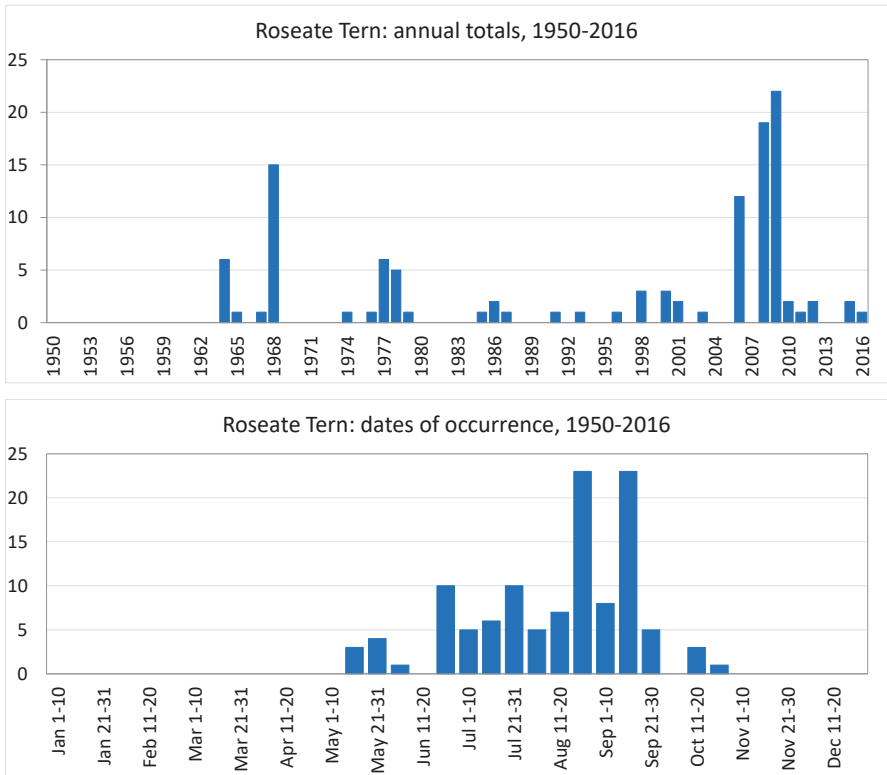
The first of spring were two S at Gibraltar Point on Apr 18th and three N on Apr 22nd. There were 15 birds at Gibraltar Point on Apr 29th and 50 on May 2nd, peaking at 251 on May 14th, which included 246 moving N. The movement around this time resulted in the only inland record of the year of one at Whisby NR on May 13th. Donna Nook's peak count was 35 on May 23rd. The well monitored and protected Gibraltar Point breeding colony held 23 pairs, down from 32 in 2015. A pair was displaying on Millennium Ridge from May 6th. In all there were 30 attempted nesting at Gibraltar Point and there were more birds present through May to July than actually nested, over 60 being regularly reported. Sixteen chicks hatched and 11 fledged, well down on 30 fledging in 2015. One other confirmed pair bred further north on the coast but failed to hatch any eggs. The peak roost at Gibraltar Point was on Jul 22nd with 114 birds counted, half the number of 2015. The inner Wash had a maximum of 13 reported at Witham Mouth on Aug 13th. The last birds of the year were two juveniles at Gibraltar Point on Sep 9th.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Very scarce passage migrant, May-Oct. **LBRC RBBP**

An adult flew S with Sandwich Terns at Gibraltar Point on the afternoon of Jul 24th (NAL).

One in the year is fairly typical, but there have been years, notably during 2006-2009, with many more. Roseate Tern was unrecorded in Lincolnshire until 1964, when one was seen at Gibraltar Point on 30th May and four there on 1st September. There have been plenty of blank years since then (see first chart) but never more than five in a row. Five or more have been recorded in seven years, and more than ten in 1968, 2006, 2008 and 2009. Rather few Roseate Terns are seen on spring passage (see second chart): there are records of seven individuals in May, the earliest at Tetney on 11th May 1977. Perhaps significantly, all of those May birds were in the period 1964-1986, as was the only one in the first half of June. Autumn records extend from the last ten days of June to the end of September, before dwindling in October. The latest record was at Freiston Shore on 22nd October 2006.



Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Fairly common summer visitor and common passage migrant. Most breeding colonies are now inland.

Peak monthly counts	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
<i>The Humber & coast</i>								
WeBS totals	-	6	-	82	776	10	-	-
Barton area (Chowder-New Holland)	2	12	6	9	5	-	-	-
Cleethorpes-Horseshoe Point	-	1	-	37	10	92	1	-
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	-	2	-	60	1630	90	2	-
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	-	2	1	71	304	10	-	-
Huttoft-Anderby	-	2	-	11	40	30	-	-
<i>The Wash</i>								
WeBS totals	-	66	46	263	426	218	6	-

Gibraltar Point	1	5	9	250	350	263	3	-
Wrangle*	-	-	-	3	-	77	-	-
Freiston Shore & Witham Mouth	10	40	84	350	700	1	5	1
Frampton Marsh	4	40	32	481	5	120	3	-
<i>Inland</i>								
Messingham SQ	1	4	3	2	-	-	-	-
Covenham Res	3	28	5	2	2	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	1	11	4	11	10	-	-	-
Whisby NR	2	15	15	10	5	-	-	-
Bardney Pits	-	31	5	-	-	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	7	40	55	55	20	-	-	-
Tattershall Lakes CP	2	11	2	2	1	-	-	-
Four Mile Bar-Borough Fen	-	9	6	1	3	-	-	-
Deeping Lakes	4	25	20	28	1	1	-	-

The first were all at inland sites: three at Covenham Res on Apr 11th, two at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 13th and two at Deeping Lakes on the 14th. Spring passage was unexceptional, and most of the concentrations at that time were at breeding sites. 54 nests at Freiston Shore (up from 21 in 2015), 29 nests at Frampton Marsh (down from 43), between 33 and 38 pairs at Kirkby on Bain GP (with at least 30 chicks seen near to fledging), four nests at Barton Pits (down from a peak of 14, and raising only one chick in 2016, the poor performance attributed to otter or mink predation) and one pair nesting at New Holland. There was confirmed breeding also at Messingham SQ, Boultham Mere, West Ashby Pits, Middlemarsh Farm and Deeping Lakes, but with no report of numbers of nests at those. There were some large numbers in The Wash before the end of July, including 350 at Freiston Shore on the 26th and 481 at Frampton Marsh on the 27th. The Freiston Shore counts peaked at 700 on Aug 3rd, and the highest count at Gibraltar Point was 350 S on Aug 9th. Elsewhere numbers were relatively modest, apart from a single big count of 1630 at Donna Nook on Aug 24th. Numbers fell quickly in September, with 120 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 11th, the last three figure count. There were only single figure counts in October, becoming increasingly irregular through to one at Frampton Marsh on the 23rd. However, the last of the year was a first calendar year bird at Witham Mouth two weeks later on Nov 8th. That was the latest recorded for Lincolnshire, though there was a wintering bird seen at Freiston Shore on Jan 11th 2012 and at Wrangle Marsh on Feb 12th 2012. There have been November records in three previous years, the latest until now being one, just a day earlier, at Witham Mouth on Nov 7th 2014. Curiously, while most 'last dates' are in October, that for 2015 was Sep 26th, so the earliest and latest have followed one another.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal but there is a regular inland passage in spring. Has bred.

Peak monthly counts	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Alkborough Flats	1	6	-	-	-	-	-
Barton Pits	-	15	-	-	-	-	1
Donna Nook	-	10	-	10	10	-	-
Covenham Res	22	1	-	-	-	2	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	1	-	8	-	-
Huttoft-Chapel Point	-	-	-	-	24	1	-
Gibraltar Point	4	20	6	9	14	7	5
Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth	-	1	-	5	3	-	-
Toft Newton Res	-	20	-	-	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby/North Hykeham	-	10	-	-	-	-	-
Thurlby Pit (Bassingham)	8	56	-	-	-	-	-

The table includes all counts of five or more. The first was one at Thurlby Pit (Bassingham) on Apr 12th. The heaviest spring passage was in the second week of May, but there was an early flock of 22 at Covenham Res on Apr 23rd. On May 9th, there were 15 at Chowder Ness, Barton, and another 15 flew E at Barton Pits on the 10th. The largest count of the year was 56 at Thurlby Pit on May 11th when there were also ten at Whisby NR, with 20 at Toft Newton Res on the 12th. A little later, there were ten at Donna Nook on May 29th. The last of spring were singles at Frampton Marsh and the Butterwick sector of The Wash on Jun 5th. Two at Gibraltar Point were the first returning birds, and there was an early high count of ten at Donna Nook on Jul 21st.

The largest autumn counts came on Aug 8th, with 34 S at Gibraltar Point and 24 at Chapel Point, with 31 S at Gibraltar Point on the 9th. There were also ten at both Huttoft Car Terrace on Aug 19th and Donna Nook on Aug 24th. The only reports after Sep 17th were four at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd, two there on the 6th and the last one, a juvenile, at the Humber Bridge, Barton, on Oct 7th.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

An adult was seen and photographed at North Hykeham Pits on May 13th (BWd). By almost a month, this was the earliest record for the county so far. Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.586).

Whiskered Tern has been increasing in frequency, and more were recorded in Britain than usual in 2016, though the ten records were well short of the 25 in 2009. The first for Lincolnshire was as recently as 1987, and the seven records to date are as follows:

- 1987 One, thought to be in first summer plumage, at Covenham Reservoir from 10th to 15th June.
- 2004 An adult at Gibraltar Point on 8th August
- 2006 An adult at Gibraltar Point on 20th-21st June.
- 2008 An adult at Barton Pits on 7th June.
- 2009 An adult at Alkborough Flats on 27th June.
- 2009 An adult at Fiskerton Fen on 2nd August.
- 2016 An adult at North Hykeham Pits on 13th May.



Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* North Hykeham Pits (Millennium Green) May 13th 2016
© Ben Ward

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Scarce/fairly common passage migrant in spring and autumn. **RBBP**. *Chlidonias niger surinamensis* (American Black Tern) Vagrant. **BBRC**

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Barton upon Humber	-	15	-	-	-	-	-
Donna Nook	-	4	-	1	2	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Huttoft Bank-Chapel Point	-	-	-	-	1	7	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	-	4	14	1
Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	4	1	-

Toft Newton Res	-	6	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby/North Hykeham	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
Thurlby/Norton Disney Pits	-	3	-	-	1	-	-
Bardney Pits	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Woodhall Spa Airfield	-	9	-	-	-	-	-
Baston-Langtoft Pits/Fen	-	9	-	-	-	-	-
Deeping Lakes	-	8	-	-	7	-	-
Number of sites	0	16	2	2	8	7	1
Minimum Lincs total	0	77	2	2	21	32	1
Average total 2011-2015	6.8	9.6	3	2.8	51	17.6	0.4

The table includes all sites with peak counts of three or more. There was a late start to passage this year, with eight at Baston-Langtoft Pits and five at Whisby NR on May 5th being the first. Counts on the following days included nine at Baston-Langtoft Pits and nine at Woodhall Spa Airfield on the 6th, eight at Deeping Lakes on the 8th and 15 past Chowder Ness at Barton on the 9th. Several of these groups were reported to be moving through quickly and it is possible that true totals at any one site could be higher, but there may be duplication between sites. Small numbers were reported on subsequent days and there was another slightly larger pulse of movement on May 13th, including six at Thurlby Pit (Bassingham) and seven at Whisby/North Hykeham. One at Frampton Marsh on May 15th was the last of a spring passage that was heavier than the recent average (see table) but there were also two reports in June: one at Alkborough Flats on the 4th and one at Frampton Marsh on the 16th. An unremarkable autumn passage began with one at Donna Nook on Jul 21st. Most records involved 1-4 birds but higher counts included seven at Deeping Lakes on Aug 5th, seven at Huttoft Car Terrace and 13 S at Gibraltar Point on Sep 12th, and 14 S at the latter site on the 13th. The last of the year was one S at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd.



Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* Barton Pits May 12th 2016 © Graham Catley

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Fairly common autumn passage migrant, but rare in winter and spring. Rare inland.

There was a typical cluster of January records, beginning with one at Donna Nook on the 1st, then two at Gibraltar Point on the 4th and singles there on the 6th, 9th and 16th (possibly just one individual), plus one at Freiston Shore on the 5th. One flew over Alkborough Flats on Jun 19th and one flew S at Gibraltar Point on Jun 25th. Autumn passage began with one at Boston Haven on Aug 14th, and there were 1-4 on 15 dates to Sep 16th, mainly between Huttoft and Frampton Marsh but including singles at Cleethorpes on Sep 7th and 8th. On Sep 17th there were more, including 13 S at Huttoft Car Terrace, three N at Gibraltar Point, at least six at Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth, and 50 at Gedney Drove End. The last were all flying WNW but 24 rose high and probably flew inland. A trickle of birds continued to early November, most counts in the range 1-4, but occasional larger. There were ten at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on Sep 21st; 18 N at Gibraltar Point and ten at Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 2nd; 11 at Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 13th; 12 at Sutton on Sea on Nov 5th; 14 (mostly S) at Gibraltar Point on the 6th, and 14 N there on the 7th. The one later record involved two at Huttoft Car Terrace on Nov 24th.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

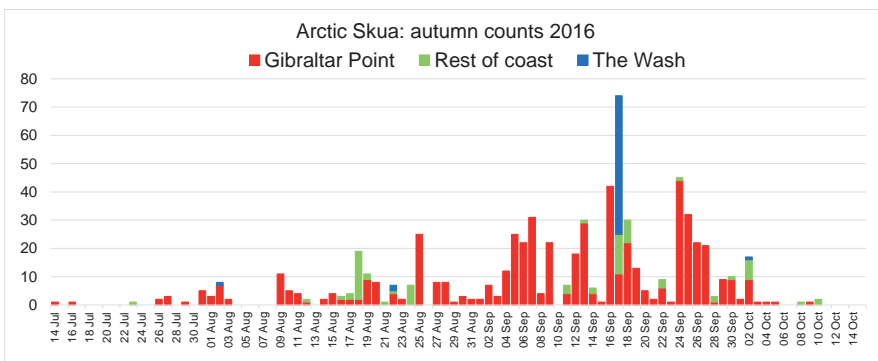
Generally scarce but exceptionally fairly common autumn passage migrant. Rare in winter and spring. Exceptional inland.

A juvenile flew S at Gibraltar Point on Jan 4th. An adult was seen at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on May 25th. All other records were in the autumn. One was off Chapel Point on Aug 16th and two off Anderby Marsh on Aug 18th. Two, three and one were seen at Gibraltar Point on successive days during Sep 5th-7th, then singles there on the 9th and 13th and two on the 16th. There was also one at Donna Nook on Sep 11th. More widespread sightings on Sep 17th were three N at Huttoft Car Terrace, one at Gibraltar Point and four at Freiston Shore. There were 1-2 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 24th, 26th and 27th. On Oct 2nd, there were three at Donna Nook, ten at Huttoft Car Terrace, three at Gibraltar Point and one at Freiston Shore. One at North Killingholme Haven on Oct 5th was followed by one N at Gibraltar Point on Oct 8th, and a little later three at Gibraltar Point and one at Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 20th. Early November saw the most consistent movement. There were 21 at Huttoft Car Terrace and one at Gibraltar Point on the 1st, one at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd, seven at Donna Nook, two at Sutton on Sea and seven at Huttoft Car Terrace and nine S at Gibraltar Point on the 5th. Finally, two were at Donna Nook and one at Gibraltar Point on the 6th.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Fairly common/common autumn passage migrant. Very scarce in spring and winter, and inland.

There were four records in the first half of the year. One flew N at Gibraltar Point on Feb 27th and there were five there on Mar 20th. One was seen at Donna Nook on May 15th and a light morph adult was at Gibraltar Point on Jun 14th. There was another at Donna Nook on Jul 3rd, and then more regular sightings began on Jul 14th. The chart summarises autumn passage, showing peak daily counts in each of three areas. In July and the first half of August, these were predominantly at Gibraltar Point and in single figures, but included 11 S at Gibraltar Point on Aug 9th. A similar pattern continued to mid September, but with more records from along the coast north to Donna Nook and more double figure counts from Gibraltar Point. The maxima there were 25 on Aug 25th and Sep 5th, 31 on Sep 7th and 29 on Sep 13th. The largest counts elsewhere were 17 off Anderby Marsh on Aug 18th and seven at Donna Nook on Aug 24th. The biggest movement of the year came on Sep 16th-18th, with 42 at Gibraltar Point on the 16th, then widespread records on the 17th including 14 at Huttoft Car Terrace, 11 at Gibraltar Point, 45 at Freiston Shore (with 34 at Witham Mouth perhaps mainly the same), and 49 WNW at Gedney Drove End (of which 13 then flew WSW inland). On the 18th, 22 were seen at Gibraltar Point and six at Rimac, Saltfleetby. After that, reports again were mainly from Gibraltar Point, including peaks of 44 on Sep 24th, 32 on the 25th and 21-22 on the 26th-27th. Most October counts were in single figures. There was a small movement on Oct 2nd, with seven at Huttoft Car Terrace, nine at Gibraltar Point, one at Freiston Shore and 12 in the Terrington sector of The Wash. November records were three at Gibraltar Point on the 1st, one at Sutton on Sea on the 5th and one at Gibraltar Point on the 7th. The only later record was of one S at Gibraltar Point on Dec 21st.



Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Very scarce/scarse passage migrant, mainly August-October. Exceptional inland. **LBRC**

There were eight autumn records, involving twelve birds. The first was a dark morph juvenile S at Gibraltar Point on Sep 2nd (KMW). A week later, an intermediate morph juvenile was at Gibraltar Point on Sep 9th, both offshore and on the beach (KMW, NAL, JPS). After another week, another dark morph juvenile was seen there on Sep 16th (KMW). At Donna Nook, single birds (both probably intermediate morph) were seen on Sep 17th, at rest in flooded saltmarsh (DCo, JGr), and flying N on Sep 18th (SL); these could have been the same but are counted as different. An adult was at Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth on Sep 17th (SK, DRob). Three juveniles flew N at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd, including one dark and two pale morph birds (KMW, NAL). On Oct 5th, three juveniles flew W up the Humber, seen from North Killingholme Haven (GPC).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, with occasional larger influxes.

Nine at Witham Mouth on Jan 14th was a very good record but regrettably did not presage a general influx. Further singles were seen in January flying S at Gibraltar Point on the 16th and at Freiston Shore on the 26th. These were the only records in the first quarter. At the start of November, the weather in Britain was quiet and mild in the south, but cold bright weather soon spread from the north and there was another cold northerly incursion between the 5th and 7th. Snow fell in many low-lying parts of Scotland and northern England on the 8th and 9th and it was generally unsettled between the 9th and 21st. Against this backdrop Little Auks arrived on cue, in the first week of November, with records between the 2nd-7th at six coastal locations and one in the Humber. Four were off Huttoft Car Terrace on the 2nd, three went S at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd when there were also two at Barton Pits. On the 4th, one was seen at Huttoft Car Terrace, while on the 5th there were three at Sutton on Sea, two (presumably the same) at Huttoft and three at Donna Nook. Further birds were seen at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 6th (one) and 7th (ten), with two at Anderby Creek on the 7th (presumably the same as at Huttoft). Gibraltar Point also recorded its highest count on the 7th, involving four north, three south and one other, which (as is often the case) was predated by a Great Black-backed Gull. Also on the 7th, five were seen at the Witham Mouth. The only record after this small influx was of two at Gibraltar Point on Dec 3rd.

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, but can occur in any month. Rare inland.

Small numbers were present around The Wash in January with an exceptional 20 at Freiston Shore on the 15th. Ten were nearby at the Witham Mouth on the 16th and 11 flew S at Gibraltar Point on the 26th. The picture remained little changed until mid-February when 40 were recorded at Witham Mouth on the 14th. Up to six birds were seen further north along the coast at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR and the final wintering birds were two at Witham Mouth on Mar 12th. As with Razorbill, there were some late spring records during May and June, with seven at Freiston Shore on May 2nd and nine at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on May 9th, increasing to 11 on Jun 1st.

Twenty were noted at Donna Nook on Aug 21st, the first of the autumn. Small numbers were seen at most coastal sites during September, with most being at Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 17th. The highest count in October was of 100 at Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 2nd, but only small numbers were recorded elsewhere along the coast. Apart from 16 at Huttoft Car Terrace on Nov 1st and 12 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 7th there were very few elsewhere, with just 1-3 on the coast up to Nov 24th.

Unidentified auks, at the usual seawatching sites and often at distance, were presumed to be mostly Common Guillemots. Most winter records came from Gibraltar Point (14, Jan 29th; 42, Feb 9th; 17, Feb 14th & 22nd), Freiston Shore (33, Jan 31st; 20, Feb 13th) and Huttoft Car Terrace (23, Feb 2nd). Small numbers lingered off Gibraltar Point into April and May. As with Razorbill, sizeable flocks were noted at both Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes in early June, with peaks of 36 at the former on Jun 2nd and 45 at the latter on Jun 3rd. Small numbers up to 20 were noted in autumn, and the highest counts were 84 N at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd and 162 N on Oct 20th. At Huttoft Car Terrace, 148 were noted on Oct 10th. A further 47 flew N at Gibraltar Point on Nov 7th.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, but can occur in any month. Exceptional inland.

Razorbills were few and far between in the first quarter, with reports of 1-3 birds at Donna Nook, Freiston Shore, Gibraltar Point, Huttoft Car Terrace and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR between Jan 4th and Mar 4th. Some late spring movement was noted in the first week of June, presumably non-breeding birds, when 23 N were seen at Gibraltar Point and 18 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Jun 1st. Ten remained at Gibraltar Point on Jun 2nd and three at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Jun 3rd. Two noted at Donna Nook on Aug 21st were the first of the autumn, but few were seen for the remainder of the year, with 12 at Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 10th the highest number reported. The final sighting of the year was of a single bird at Gibraltar Point on Nov 24th.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Rare passage migrant, but can occur in any month. Exceptional inland. **LBRC**

There were no spring records. In the autumn one flew S at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd (NAL, KW) and there was another, probably a first winter bird, at Huttoft Car Terrace on Nov 7th (JRC).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Common and widespread resident.

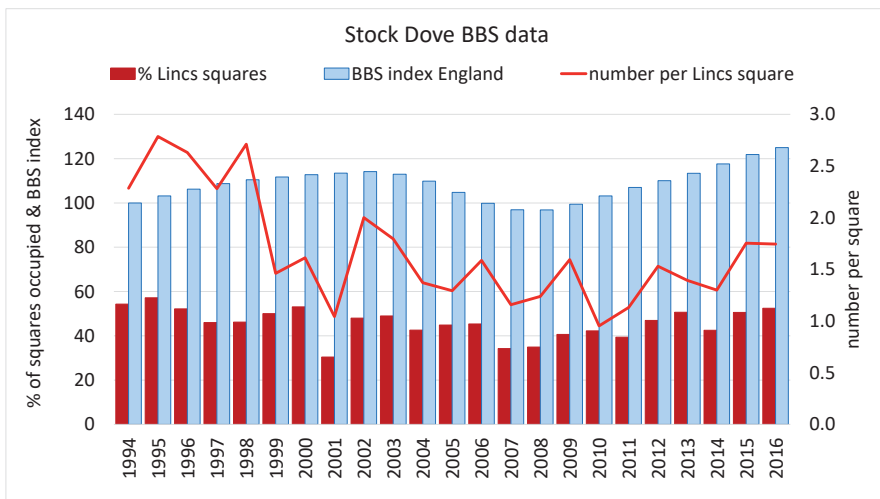
Counts of 50 or more came from eight locations. The largest of these were: 100 at Branston in the first half of January; up to 150 at Freiston Shore in January-March and 120 there in September; 162 at Barton Pits on Oct 7th; and 250 at Grantham on Dec 22nd. With no ringing recoveries and no confirmed reports of breeding, it could be inferred that they have no need to breed as they live for ever, but this may be an unsafe conclusion.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Common resident and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Garthorpe	15	-	-	30	4	3	-	-	3	10	-	85
Donna Nook	36	29	29	28	33	78	98	58	34	26	14	8
Covenham Res	19	38	59	10	3	3	1	5	-	-	75	40
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	54	41	38	4	5	4	2	3	4	6	5	2
Gibraltar Point	44	24	42	5	7	10	10	6	5	34	8	7
Freiston Shore	57	49	7	10	-	-	-	-	-	1	28	-
Willow Tree Fen	118	-	35	5	11	-	-	4	1	-	-	-

Despite over 1500 records being received this year, this sedentary and common bird is under-recorded, partly through being ignored and partly through being concentrated in farmland not much visited by birders. The table includes most sites with records of 40 or more. Those not included were 50 at Wold Newton in January and 40 at Saxilby in April. Breeding was confirmed at Market Rasen, Morton (Gainsborough) and Scopwick Heath, and considered probable at eleven other locations, but that clearly understates its status. The England BBS index has recorded a rise over the past ten years, and Lincolnshire data suggest the county is following that trend (see chart). There were several records of small numbers of birds moving S, all at Gibraltar Point and especially in March.



Stock Dove *Columba oenas* Grantham Apr 3rd 2016 © Steve Nesbitt

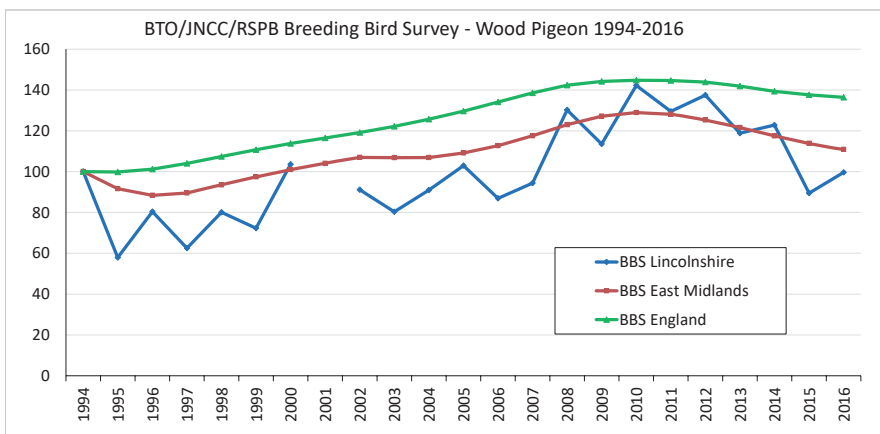
Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tetney Marsh	800	750	401	250	80	2	1	-	1	700	600	400
Donna Nook	900	400	850	350	150	150	120	100	70	200	600	600
Gibraltar Point	120	850	620	610	262	30	74	150	150	2370	2390	400
Middlemarsh Farm	100	50	150	300	600	400	300	500	200	150	200	300
Normanby-by-Spital	114	190	25	172	30	-	27	36	54	93	117	500

East Keal	620	650	600	230	72	75	22	-	80	-	110	120
Welbourn area	285	277	390	60	-	57	58	-	81	470	767	3000

The table includes the more consistently counted sites with maxima of 500 or more. Well over 4000 records were received from about 188 different locations, giving an enormous amount of data to sift through. Over a third of the records were just marked as present, but of the 2626 records for which counts were available, 554 involved 100 or more birds, and 48 counts were of 500 or more. Those largest counts were mainly in January-March and October-December. The highest of all was c5000 at Old Bolingbroke on Jan 23rd, while at the other end of the year there were 3000 at Welbourn Heath on Dec 21st. The peak of autumn passage fell during late October-early November, with four days on which more than 2000 were counted at Gibraltar Point: 2370 S on Oct 27th, 2300 including 1700 S on the 28th, 2270 S on the 29th and 2390 S on Nov 3rd. Peak southerly counts there in the four previous years were higher (see chart in 2015 report). Non-tabulated sites holding 500 or more were Scunthorpe, Marshchapel, Aubourn and (see above) Old Bolingbroke in January, Thoresby Bridge, Market Rasen and Dunston Fen in February, Marton in November and Normanby-by-Spital and Covenham Res in December. BBS data indicated a rise in breeding numbers in Lincolnshire between 2015 and 2016 (see chart) but the smoothed regional and national indices suggest that populations are currently in a gentle decline. Negligible other breeding information was received.



The first of the ringing details below concerns a bird retrapped at Gibraltar Point that has survived a long time (the British longevity record is 17 years 8 months). More typical were the fates of the other two, which were the only recoveries this year in Lincolnshire of Wood Pigeons, other than retraps by ringers.

FC75021	Adult	03-09-2004	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E
	Caught by ringer	30-07-2015	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 10y 10m 27d
	Caught by ringer	04-06-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 11y 9m 1d
FV86905	First-year	01-10-2015	Moulton Seas End: c. 52°49'N 0°2'W
	Freshly dead (shot)	23-04-2016	Moulton Marsh, near Fosdyke Bridge: 52°51'N 0°1'W 4km 0y 6m 22d
FH93904	Nestling	12-08-2016	Sleaford: 52°59'N 0°24'W
	Freshly dead (cat)	04-09-2016	Sleaford: 52°59'N 0°24'W 0km 0y 0m 23d

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Fairly common/scarse and declining summer visitor and passage migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	-	-	7	5	3	1	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	2	4	3	5	7	1	-
Baumber	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	1	2	2	1	2	-	-

Dunsby	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	-
Thurlby Fen	-	-	2	1	2	1	-	-
Number of sites 2016	0	7	24	25	23	12	2	0
Mean number of sites 2012-2015	0.0	7.5	29.5	30.0	19.5	14.8	6.8	1.0

The table includes all sites with records in four or more months. The first of the year was one at Frampton Marsh from Apr 16th onwards, and there was one at Morton (Gainsborough) on the 17th. One photographed at Goxhill on Mar 17th had plumage in poor condition; while it could have over-wintered, it is considered more likely to have been an escape from captivity. About five pairs attempted to breed in the Crook Bank-Churchill Lane area of Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes, where the peak count of ten was made on May 7th. Other breeding evidence included several singing males at Gibraltar Point, five singing at Old Bolingbroke in late June, and two singing at Kirkby on Bain GP for much of the spring/summer. Possible/probable breeding was reported at 19 other localities; where stated, this involved single singing males but there may have been more than one at some, e.g. at Whisby NR. In total, around 54 sites played host to the species with about 55% of these being inland. Thus the species has not yet gone completely – but more information on breeding status, especially counts of singing males, would be welcome. The final bird of the year was recorded at Frampton Marsh on Sep 24th.

2015 correction The record of one at Frampton Marsh on Mar 30th was included in error. The first bird in 2015 thus was one at Tydd St Mary's Marsh on Apr 16th-17th.



Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* Fulbeck Jun 26th 2016 © Andrew P. Chick

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Very common resident.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tetney Marsh	40	1	15	15	15	2	1	-	-	10	30	30
Ruskington Fen	23	-	-	-	-	-	6	38	28	-	-	-
Anwick	2	2	2	3	3	4	22	38	5	11	15	28
Spalding-Borough Fen	-	2	10	3	8	2	3	3	6	-	48	11

The table includes all maxima of 30 or more, apart from 45 at Tanvats in November and 35 at South Ferriby Cliff in December. The total number of records was around 100 down on that of last year, and whereas 86 counts totalled 30 or more during 2015, only 37 such counts were returned this year. Fifty-one of the reports of 30 or over came from Tetney Marsh, all from one observer. Minimal breeding information was received; the BBS suggests a slight downward trend in numbers.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

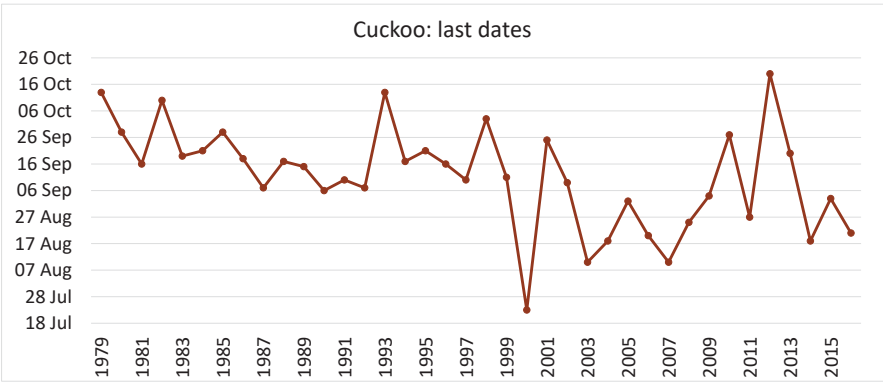
Fairly common but declining summer visitor.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Donna Nook	4	8	2	-	1	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes	3	4	4	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	5	7	7	4	2	-	-
Sum of site peaks 2016	32	108	45	14	3	-	-
Sum of site peaks 2015	36	87	41	13	15	1	-
Number of sites 2016	22	64	31	11	4	-	-
Average number of sites 2011-2014	24	60	29	9	9	3	2

The first birds of the spring duly arrived in the second week of April, with the first at Alkborough Flats on Apr 13th followed by others at Temple Wood, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR, Boultham Mere and Gibraltar Point on Apr 14th or 15th. Twenty-two sites recorded Cuckoos in April, although only three sites recorded two or more: Donna Nook (maximum of four birds on the 27th), Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (maximum of three on the 21st) and Gibraltar Point (maximum of three on the 28th). There was a larger and more widespread arrival during May with 1-2 birds being fairly regular at various coastal and inland sites, although six were seen at Laughton Forest on the 14th, six at Gibraltar Point on the 16th and eight were at Donna Nook on May 22nd. Forty-five sites recorded Cuckoos in June with most at Gibraltar Point (seven on the 21st) and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes (four on the 15th). Possible or probable breeding was recorded at more than twenty-five sites but only confirmed at Gibraltar Point where the first juvenile was noted on Jul 14th. One was present in Aylmer Avenue on Jul 18th, a Meadow Pipit on Millennium Ridge was feeding another juvenile on Jul 29th and another was in Beach Car Park on Aug 19th. Gibraltar Point and Donna Nook were the only sites to record Cuckoos in August. The last bird at Donna Nook was on Aug 2nd and at Gibraltar Point on Aug 21st. There were no September records.

The average dates of the first Cuckoo in spring and last in autumn have been remarkably consistent over the last thirty-six years, once some dubious reports have been weeded out. However, although it is impossible to attach any degree of statistical significance to these data, the average length of stay has decreased by about three weeks since the early 1980s, mainly because of last dates becoming earlier. It is noticeable that, with fewer present in autumn, there is now more variation between years for the last date than there used to be.

Averages	First spring date	Last autumn date
1979-1997	13 Apr	20 Sep
1997-2016	11 Apr	02 Sep





Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* Kirkby on Bain May 22nd 2016 © Russell Hayes



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* and Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* using the same nestbox, Scunthorpe Jul 10th 2016 © Graham Taylor



(left) Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Oct 2nd 2016 © Jack Dawson
(right) Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Manby Wetland Jun 16th 2016 © John Clarkson

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Common and widespread resident with good breeding years coinciding with peaks in the vole population.

Dark-breasted Barn Owl *T. a. guttata* is a rare vagrant. **BBRC7**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total number of nests†	298	‡ 330	155	394	77	272
Failures	40	131	18	38	20	41
Broods ringed	243	185	126	333	44	198
Chicks ringed	627	427	378	1214	104	522
Mean no. chicks ringed per brood	2.6	2.3	3.0	3.6	2.4	2.6

† "Total nests" includes broods not ringed and with unknown outcome as well as those ringed or failing. Note that boxes containing no clutch or brood are excluded.

‡ High number of nests in 2012 due to early failures and subsequent re-laying.

Brood size 2016	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Number	32	69	56	27	10	2	2	198
Total chicks	32	138	168	108	50	12	14	

There were reports from 167 sites across the county, considerably fewer than in 2015; Barn Owl evidently remains widespread in Lincolnshire. Most casual reports were of 1-2 birds, but threes and fours were noted at several sites. Bob Sheppard and Alan Ball as usual kindly supplied a summary of their nestbox data for 2011-2016, summarised in the tables above. An article on Barn Owls in Lincolnshire churches follows on page 227 of this report.

The preliminary data from the BTO's Nest Record Scheme (NRS) show that Barn Owl was by far the most delayed breeder in 2016; the mean laying date was 25 days later than the five-year average and was the latest recorded since the NRS began in 1939. Mean clutch size (4.7% below the five-year average) and brood size (18.9% down) were significantly below average. The picture in Lincolnshire was not so bad, with a reduction in brood size at ringing of only 7% relative to the five-year average. Most broods had between two and four chicks, and fourteen broods had between five and seven chicks. The year was thus more nearly an average one, particularly when compared to the exceptional one in 2014. Perhaps related to the late season, one pair at Gibraltar Point reared young in a nest box in which Tawny Owls has raised a brood earlier in the year.

Four ringing returns are shown this year: the oldest, two long distance movements in Britain and a foreign-bred bird. The longevity record for a Barn Owl in Britain is 15 years 4 months. It was noteworthy that three 12 year-olds and a ten-year old were recorded in Lincolnshire this year, all still alive: this was the oldest of them. The longest British movement, to Scotland, is shown, as is one involving a bird that was adult when ringed in Cambridgeshire but is now breeding in north Lincolnshire. The foreign bird was a Dutch-ringed bird of the year hit by a car in November. Before this, only one foreign-ringed Barn Owl, from Belgium, had been recorded in Lincolnshire (and none has gone the other way).

GN88857	Nestling Female	24-06-2004	Murrow: 52°38'N 0°2'E (Cambridgeshire)
	Caught by ringer	06-07-2013	Sutton St James: c. 52°44'N 0°3'E 12km NNE 9y 0m 12d
	Caught by ringer	03-07-2016	Sutton St James: c. 52°44'N 0°3'E 12km NNE 12y 0m 9d
	Caught by ringer	25-09-2016	Sutton St James: c. 52°44'N 0°3'E 12km NNE 12y 3m 1d
GR82530	Nestling	28-06-2014	Digby Barn, near Scopwick: 53°5'N 0°25'W
	Freshly dead (hit by car)	22-04-2016	Houndwood: 55°51'N 2°15'W (Scottish Borders) 328km NNW 1y 9m 25d
GR12323	Adult Female	28-07-2010	near March: 52°33'N 0°2'E (Cambridgeshire)
	Caught by ringer	28-06-2011	near Broughton Common: 53°35'N 0°32'W 120km NNW 0y 11m 0d
	Caught by ringer	23-06-2012	near Broughton Common: 53°35'N 0°32'W 120km NNW 1y 10m 26d
	Caught in nestbox	10-05-2013	near Broughton: 53°35'N 0°32'W 121km NNW 2y 9m 12d
	Caught by ringer	18-06-2016	near Broughton Common: 53°35'N 0°32'W 120km NNW 5y 10m 21d
NLA	Nestling	22-06-2016	Loolaan: 51°55'N 6°15'E (Gelderland) The Netherlands
5514902	Freshly dead (hit by car)	03-11-2016	near Navenby: 53°6'N 0°35'W 482km WNW 0y 4m 12d

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Common resident, widespread but predominantly in wooded areas.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total number of nests	34	18	13	60	6	23
Failures	3	1	3	4	0	2
Broods ringed	31	17	8	53	3	20
Chicks ringed	70	30	12	112	5	40
Mean no. chicks ringed per brood	2.3	1.8	1.5	2.1	1.7	2.0

There was no indication of any significant change in status. Records came from 94 locations, with the majority being of 1-2 birds, but 3-10 birds were reported from 16 sites. Despite their widespread distribution across the county, they remain a difficult species in which to confirm breeding, ringing sites apart. Confirmed breeding was reported from just nine sites – Anwick STW, Barton Pits, Crowle Moors, Gibraltar Point, Hill Holt Wood, Midville, Sleaford, Upton and West Halton. Given their sedentary nature, any calling pairs are likely to be on nesting territories. As with Barn and Little Owls, the BTO Nest Record Scheme for 2016 showed a significant change in Tawny Owl laying dates, which were 14.5 days later compared with the five-year average (2011-2015). Clutch size (-11.8%) and brood size (-14.7%) were also significantly reduced, presumably a reflection of the condition of the adult birds. Chick survival and numbers fledged remained very similar to the 5-year average. Alan Ball and Bob Sheppard recorded 23 nests in 2016 showing average productivity.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Common resident, very sedentary.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total number of nests†	68	59	70	80	70	78
Failures	18	18	20	16	17	23
Broods ringed	44	37	45	57	44	51
Chicks ringed	133	105	103	188	108	138
Mean no. chicks ringed per brood	3.0	2.8	2.3	3.3	2.5	2.7

† "Total nests" includes broods not ringed and with unknown outcome as well as those ringed or failing.

Note that boxes containing no clutch or brood are excluded.

Reporting of this species was similar to the rate in 2015, with records coming from 60 localities, but still well down on the 83 sites reporting Little Owl in 2014. Counts were of 1-2 birds without exception and 44 localities reported sightings in one month of the year only. Bob Sheppard and Alan Ball kindly provided a summary of their nest box data from 2011-2016, as in the table. They ringed 138 chicks in 2016 from 51 broods, an average of 2.7 chicks per brood; there were 23 failures. The BTO Nest Record Scheme for Little Owls in 2016 showed that the national average for laying dates was 7.6 days later than the five-year (2011-15) average. It is speculated that this may be due to either poor weather and prey availability in the spring, or to the mild conditions in late summer and autumn combining with increasingly buoyant prey populations, which may be shifting the average laying date to later in the year.



Little Owl *Athene noctua* Brandon Feb 2nd 2016 © Steve Nesbitt

The first of the ringing details concerns a bird that set a new longevity record, by almost three years, for a Little Owl in the BTO ringing scheme. The second is the next longest surviving reported this year, which has shown characteristic sedentariness.

EG60419	Nestling	03-06-2002	Ewerby, Sleaford: 53°0'N 0°19'W
	Freshly dead (drowned)	06-04-2016	Howell: 52°59'N 0°19'W 3km 13y 10m 3d
EW30521	Adult Female	08-05-2008	Walcott Dales: c. 53°5'N 0°13'W
		also retrapped once in each of 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012	
	Caught by ringer	02-07-2013	Walcott Dales: c. 53°5'N 0°13'W 0km 5y 1m 24d
	Caught by ringer	02-06-2014	Walcott Dales: c. 53°5'N 0°13'W 0km 6y 0m 25d
	Caught by ringer	24-04-2016	Walcott Dales: c. 53°5'N 0°13'W 0km 7y 11m 16d

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Scarce and declining breeding bird in county and winter visitor. **RBBP**

Birds were recorded from 11 locations during 2016, two more than in 2015. In the first three months of the year, wintering birds were reported from five sites. A roost located the previous December at Metheringham Delph held three birds on Jan 18th and two on Mar 13th and Apr 17th. There were three at Owston Ferry on Jan 17th and six there on Feb 4th, one near Wispington on Jan 23rd, and one at Wainfleet Common on Feb 19th. Seven birds were reported at five different possible breeding sites. One was recorded at Laughton Forest on May 14th and another there on Jun 29th. One was at Gibraltar Point on May 14th and a first summer female was trapped there on June 10th. Elsewhere, records involved one photographed at Bonby Carrs on May 26th, at least two at Ancaster on Jun 15th and one at Crowle Moors on Jun 24th. This species remains under-recorded in Lincolnshire during the breeding season. In the autumn, singles were reported at Gibraltar Point on Sep 8th, Oct 12th, 23rd, 24th and 27th, and one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Oct 6th. Reports from the regular winter roost at Deeping Lakes were of one to five roosting birds between Oct 24th and Dec 31st, though curiously there were no reports in the first quarter of the year.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Scarce winter visitor and occasional breeder. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	3	2	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Bonby Carrs	2	2	4	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Goxhill-East Halton Skitter	3	1	-	1	2	1	2	-	-	-	1	2
Tetney-Grainthorpe	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	-	4	5	6
Grainthorpe-Somercotes	1	1	-	2	5	3	1	-	-	3	1	1
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	-	2	1	2	4	1	1	2	-	2	3	1
Gibraltar Point	1	1	2	5	2	2	1	-	-	2	2	-
Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	-
Frampton Marsh	1	2	1	3	4	4	3	2	3	4	1	2
Gedney Drove End-Guy's Head	-	-	-	2	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Kyme	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	8
Woodhall Spa	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Metheringham-Dunston Fen	3	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deeping High Bank	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Dunsby Fen	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5
Hawthorpe	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	6
Number of sites 2016	28	26	15	26	24	11	10	3	1	11	14	11
Sum of site peaks 2016	38	34	22	39	40	19	14	5	3	23	26	34
Average of site peaks 2012-15	32.5	18.5	31.3	27.3	25.5	5.3	6.0	9.3	10.5	20.8	26.5	29.0

The table shows all areas with at least three birds or records in at least three months. Numbers were generally up on preceding years and birds were widespread in the first three months of the year continuing into May, June and July, so it is particularly disappointing to report no confirmed breeding records this year, with only one possible breeding record at Gibraltar Point where one to two birds were present throughout May. One was photographed at Bonby Carrs on the same day as a Long-eared Owl. Numbers fell away in August and September but migrants coming in from October to December lifted the late year position above the recent average.



Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* Gibraltar Point May 3rd 2016 © Paul Neale

European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Scarce summer visitor and very scarce passage migrant.

No full survey was undertaken in Laughton Forest but the long-running wet heath survey located nine males on territory equalling the maximum number recorded from 1997-2016. A female with two well grown young was found on Aug 8th; elsewhere a female fledged two young on Aug 12th and numbers were considered probably to be equal to those in 2015. On Crowle Moors, the annual survey by Middleton Ecological Consultancy (covering Crowle as part of the whole Humberhead Peatlands NNR) recorded 11 churring males, the lowest total since the sequence of surveys began in 2005; the ten-year average there for 2006-2015 was 14.2 (range 12-20). The only other records were of two (including a churring male) in Willingham Forest on Jul 8th and two autumn migrants, photographed in gardens in Lincoln on Sep 2nd and at Baston on Sep 10th.



European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* Baston Sep 10th 2016 © Peter Dewar



European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* Laughton Forest Aug 9th 2016 © Graham Catley



European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* Laughton Forest Aug 9th 2016 © Graham Catley

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Two were at Gibraltar Point on Apr 21st, followed by singles at Covenham Res on the 22nd-23rd and Frampton Marsh on the 23rd. Larger numbers soon appeared, with 30 at Frampton Marsh on Apr 29th and 110 near Barton upon Humber on May 2nd. Counts of 250 or more were made regularly between mid May and early August, but mainly in locations where the species congregates for feeding or on passage. In May, there were up to 400 at both Covenham Res and Whisby NR, while later in the summer most high counts were at Gibraltar Point, though there were 700 at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on Jun 29th. Peaks at Gibraltar point were 2872 on Jul 11th, 1100 on Jul 27th and 956 on Aug 4th, all of these involving birds moving S. The sum total of counts of southerly movement at Gibraltar Point was 12596 during Jun 16th-Aug 31st. Records in September were all of 1-2, and the only ones after mid month were singles at Frampton Marsh on Sep 20th and Donna Nook on Sep 23rd. Two middle-aged Swifts, retrapped at Marston STW, are shown below.

SB85180	Adult Caught by ringer	15-05-2007 02-06-2016	Marston Sewage Farm, Grantham: 52°57'N 0°39'W Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W 0km 9y 0m 18d
SA40735	Adult Caught by ringer	03-06-2008 02-06-2016	Marston Sewage Farm, Grantham: 52°57'N 0°39'W Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W 0km 7y 11m 30d



Common Swift *Apus apus* Frampton Marsh Jul 2nd 2016 © Neil Smith

Roller *Coracias garrulus*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

2008 addition: One was seen at Donna Nook on May 28th (JS). It flew in from the north, alighted briefly then continued south in the direction of North Somercotes; unfortunately it could not be relocated. Accepted by BBRC (BB 104 p.592). This was the seventh record for Lincolnshire; its late acceptance by BBRC meant that it was overlooked for publication in previous LBRs. There were four between the first in 1863 and 1901, then a long gap until one was shot "in mistake for a Jay" at Grainthorpe on 13th June 1962, a long-stayer near Woodhall Spa during 2nd-19th October 1983 and then this one in 2008.

Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly totals 2016	47	33	39	20	27	13	29	40	60	52	41	36
Average totals 2011-15	30.0	20.8	27.4	23.8	17.8	19.0	20.6	37.2	45.2	37.2	30.8	24.2

The numbers reported this year were a little down on those of 2015 but above the previous five year average, which began after the severe winter of 2010/11. The highest count this year was four at Frampton Marsh on Sep 23rd, but counts of three came from ten locations widely spread throughout the county. Only two instances of confirmed breeding were reported, at Barton Pits and Heighington Fen, clearly under-representing the status of this species. It was recorded in almost 5% of the 82 BBS squares covered in Lincolnshire this year, the second highest proportion since the BBS began in 1994.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly Apr-Oct, rarely to Dec. **LBRC**

There were two records this year, an average total but following a year with none. Both were found in private gardens close to the coast. The first was at Burgh le Marsh on Apr 26th-28th (MWi), which is close to the time of peak occurrence in Lincolnshire. The second was at Trusthorpe on Jun 25th (BWr), a less typical date.



Hoopoe *Upupa epops* Burgh le Marsh Apr 28th 2016 © John Clarkson

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Rare/scarc passage migrant Apr-May and Aug-Oct, mainly coastal. Bred to early 20th century. **RBBP**

One was at Frampton Marsh on May 9th-12th. There was also one heard singing at Gibraltar Point on May 9th and, in the same area (and thought to be the same bird) on May 15th. Inland, and in the south of the county, one was observed at Swinstead on May 29th. In autumn, one was at Gibraltar Point on Aug 21st-22nd, followed by one at Frampton Marsh on Aug 28th and one at Gibraltar Point on Sep 1st. This last bird could have been the same as that present at Gibraltar Point a week or so earlier, but is counted as different. The year's total is thus six individuals, just above the average (5.4) for the previous ten years but well below the exceptional 16 in 2015.

2014 addition: One was found dead in Market Deeping, probably in spring but exact date unknown. The corpse was kept in a freezer and only reported to LBC in 2017.



Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* Gibraltar Point Aug 22nd 2016 © Paul Neale



Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* Frampton Marsh May 9th 2016 © Sean Brown

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor*

Rare resident. **RBBP**

Records came from just six sites, three in the Lincoln area, close to and including a remarkable repeat breeding record in Swanpool, in the same nest hole as in 2015. Activity was closely monitored there between Feb 4th and Jun 5th. Two young were raised by a lone male after the disappearance of the female. It is possible that all records in the vicinity, especially those at Boultham Park during January and at Hartsholme CP in February and March could be attributed to this pair. Birds were seen flying between Hartsholme CP and Swanpool on Mar 3rd. A detailed report of this breeding event can be found in a paper by A C Sims in the 2015 Lincolnshire Bird Report which covers 2015 and 2016. Away from a two mile radius of Swanpool, a male was reported at Aubourn on Jan 8th, a drumming bird was near Grantham on Apr 14th, and a single bird was reported at Linwood Warren on May 10th and 30th. There were no reports of the species anywhere in the county after Jun 5th. This species may now be Lincolnshire's rarest breeding bird and all reports are of value. A website giving guidance on finding and reporting nesting Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers can be found at www.woodpecker-network.org.uk; please support this, as well as reporting all sightings of the species at any time of year to LBC or through BirdTrack.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	1	1	1	1	1
Town's Holt (Grimsby)	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	3
Covenham Res	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	2	3	2	-	2
Gibraltar Point	3	3	2	3	2	3	4	4	5	4	3	4
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	3	5	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	1	2
Whisby NR	2	1	2	-	1	1	-	1	2	3	1	1
Branston	2	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	1
Woodhall Spa	4	1	1	-	1	2	-	2	1	1	1	2
East Keal	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	1
Dunsby	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	1
Anwick	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	-	1	1
Number of sites 2016	53	33	45	36	38	35	20	23	21	24	30	27
Average 2013-15	36	34	44	50	31	28	20	21	26	30	26	32

The table includes all sites where there were counts in eight months or more. There were nearly 1100 records from about 150 locations; down on last year but, with birds noted somewhere in the county on about 94% of days, this is now a very widespread and frequently encountered species. The highest counts of the year were of just five birds, at Gibraltar Point on Sep 14th-15th, Swanholme Lakes on Feb 2nd and 10th, Swanpool on Feb 10th, Hartsholme Park on Mar 12th and Elsea/Math Woods on Mar 25th. Just over 50 counts of four were received, with most from Gibraltar Point or the Lincoln area. Breeding was confirmed at eight locations but clearly is very widespread.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	-
Laughton Forest	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	6	-	-	-	-
Dunholme	-	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	-	-	1	-
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	2	2	4	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	1
Whisby NR	1	1	1	-	2	1	1	2	2	1	-	1
Branston	1	1	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Norton Disney/Thurlby	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
Woodhall Spa	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

Tetford	-	-	3	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Old Bolingbroke	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
East Keal	1	2	1	4	4	1	5	-	1	-	1	1
Gibraltar Point	1	-	1	2	1	2	4	2	2	2	1	2
Anwick/Anwick Fen	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Elsea/Math Woods	-	1	4	3	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Willow Tree Fen	1	1	2	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	-
Deeping Lakes NR	1	-	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	3
Number of sites 2016	33	36	48	47	35	26	38	40	28	21	21	23
Average 2013-15	24	30	39	51	27	23	31	30	24	22	17	18

The table includes all sites where there were counts of four or more, or records in eight months or more, apart from one record of six at Scothern in July. Submissions were down by about 10% and came from around 10% fewer sites, compared to 2015, but it is unlikely that that has any great significance. Counts of six (Scothern and Laughton Forest) and five (East Keal and Elsea/Math Woods) were made in July and early August, and some of those at least were family parties. Counts of four were also made at the latter two sites and at Swanpool, Tetford and Old Bolingbroke. Just under 20% of records came from coastal locations, in every month, indicating that the occupation of these areas highlighted in last year's report is sustained.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Common resident and passage migrant.

Alan Ball and Bob Sheppard have kindly provided data from their Kestrel ringing programme. The majority of nests are located within chambers incorporated above pole mounted barn owl nest boxes, although they additionally monitor a number of bespoke Kestrel nest boxes and occasionally birds will commandeer the main chamber of a barn owl nest box. This year they monitored 98 nests, of which five failed and 35 were not ringed for various reasons, meaning that 58 broods were ringed, well above the very low figure of 17 broods in 2015. A total of 203 chicks were ringed (with an average of 3.5 per brood), making this year a little above the recent average for productivity. The table below shows the data collected in 2016 and compares them with averages for 2011-2015.

	Mean 2011-2015	2016
Total number of nests†	95.4	98
Failures	13.0	5
Broods ringed	60.6	58
Chicks ringed	217.6	203
Mean no. chicks ringed per brood	3.38	3.5

† "Total nests" includes broods not ringed and with unknown outcome as well as those ringed or failing. Note that boxes containing no clutch or brood are excluded.

Brood size 2016	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Number	3	10	15	21	9	1	58
Total chicks	3	20	45	84	45	6	203

Between January and August, birds were recorded across the county, with the majority of records relating to single individuals with occasional groups but no significant counts. The highest counts early in the year were eight along Louth Canal on Jan 1st and seven at Metheringham Delph on Jan 18th. No large autumn counts were recorded, with coastal migration limited to eight at Gibraltar Point on Aug 7th-10th, six at Donna Nook on 2nd-24th with 12 there on Sep 5th, and nine at Frampton Marsh on 8th, increasing to 15 on the 11th. The following two ringing records both involve nestlings ringed in Jun 2016. The first originated in North Yorkshire and travelled south, while the second was a continental bird caught on the Lincolnshire coast.

EX72774	Nestling Freshly dead	28-06-2016 09-11-2016	Barden: c. 54°19'N 1°47'W (North Yorkshire) near Louth: 53°21'N 0°0'W 160km SE 0y 4m 12d
BLB E439549	Nestling Caught by ringer	08-06-2016 02-10-2016	Torhout: 51°4'N 3°4'E (West-Vlaanderen) Belgium Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 295km NW 0y 3m 24d

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; very scarce in summer. Bred sporadically in the 19th century.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>The Humber</i>												
Alkborough Flats	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Tetney Marsh	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	2
Donna Nook	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	1	3	2	1
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
<i>The Wash</i>												
Gibraltar Point	2	2	2	2	-	-	1	1	2	4	2	2
Freiston Shore	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
Witham Mouth	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-
Frampton Marsh	3	3	3	2	1	-	1	2	2	2	2	2

Birds were seen most consistently at coastal sites, including both The Wash and Humber, with eight sites recording birds in five or more months, as shown in the above table. RSPB Frampton Marsh was the most reliable site to see this species with a total of 323 records submitted during the year, covering 166 different dates, and with birds recorded in all months except June (the high frequency of records more an indication of site coverage rather than number of birds). Counts of three or more birds at tabulated sites were: three at Frampton Marsh on Jan 6th and 23rd, Feb 18th and 27th, and Mar 10th; three at Donna Nook on Oct 11th; four at Gibraltar Point on Oct 28th; and three at Tetney on Nov 13th and 25th. Regular occurrence continued in spring to Apr 23rd, after which there were singles at Frampton Marsh on May 8th and 20th, and one mid-summer bird at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on Jun 15th, before frequent sightings recommenced from Jul 19th.



Merlin *Falco columbarius* North Killingholme Haven Jan 11th 2016 © Graham Catley

Away from tabulated sites, birds on the coast in January were singles recorded at North Cotes on Jan 1st, East Butterwick on Jan 5th, Barton upon Humber on Jan 11th, Holbeach Marsh on Jan 19th and Middlemarsh Farm on Jan 21st-22nd. In February, birds (singles unless stated) were

recorded at Terrington on 12th, two birds were at Gedney Drove End on 13th, Wainfleet on 13th, Horseshoe Point on 15th, North Killingholme Haven on 23rd, Wainfleet Marsh on 29th and South Ferriby on 29th. One was at Horseshoe Point on Mar 10th and in April singles were recorded during WeBS counts on the 10th at Friskney and Dawsmere. During the second winter period, birds were at Horseshoe Point to Tetney Haven on Sep 22nd, Cleethorpes on Oct 31st, Grimsby on Nov 4th, Huttoft Bank on Nov 6th, Humberston Fitties on Nov 8th-13th, Grainthorpe Marsh during Nov 10th-19th, Horseshoe Point on Nov 15th, Northcoates Point on Nov 19th and Dec 10th, North Killingholme Haven on Nov 24th, Middlemarsh Farm on Dec 24th, Kirton Marsh on Dec 27th and Goxhill Marsh on Dec 29th.

There were just 28 inland records, all involving single birds. In the first winter period birds were at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jan 5th, Morton (Gainsborough) on Jan 10th, Willow Tree Fen on Jan 30th, RAF Coningsby on Feb 2nd, Burnham on Feb 2nd, Thurlby Fen on Feb 10th and Mar 31st, Bonby Carrs on Feb 14th (eating a reed bunting) and Apr 16th, Hainton on Feb 18th, Dunsby on Feb 19th, Trent Port on Feb 26th, Covenham Res on Mar 2nd, East Keal on Mar 9th, Culverthorpe Lakes on Mar 18th and North Hykeham Pits on Apr 16th. In the second winter period inland birds were at Trent Port on Sep 29th, Wasps Nest on Oct 26th, Garthorpe on Nov 15th and Deeping High Bank on Oct 29th, Nov 19th and Dec 18th.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Bred to early 1900s and sporadically in the 1970s, regularly from the mid-1980s. **RBBP**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites 2016	1	1	1	7	32	25	28	27	22	3	-	-
Number of sites 2015	-	-	-	13	34	33	31	43	41	5	1	-
Number of sites 2014	-	-	-	6	34	25	26	32	29	4	-	-

The table shows the numbers of sites reporting birds per month. An exceptionally early first winter bird was reported from Marston STW on Jan 4th, 5th and 16th (PAH, DJR *et al.*). One might speculate that this bird never migrated south at all. Equally exceptional early reports of single birds came from Gibraltar Point on Feb 1st (JPS) and 4th (MTh), and Frampton Marsh on Mar 29th and Apr 3rd (RSPB). It is possible that all these records relate to the same individual. As confirmed by the BTO BirdTrack arrivals chart for Hobby, records before the second week of April are exceptional. The bulk of arrivals occur in the last week of April and the first week or two of May. The first birds fitting this arrival pattern were singles at Potterhanworth on Apr 23rd, at Dunsby, Thorney and Whisby NR on Apr 29th and at Frampton Marsh and Willow Tree Fen on Apr 30th. The pattern of occurrence suggests that birds were less widespread in August and September in 2016 compared to 2015. It was however a good year for confirmed breeding in Lincolnshire with 14 confirmed pairs, for which fledgling details were reported for eight pairs. Six pairs produced two chicks each and two pairs produced three chicks each. Using the same criteria as in previous years, there were a further 29 probable pairs and 28 possible pairs. Three of the confirmed breeding pairs were reported from north-west Lincolnshire, two from the Lincoln area and six in East Lindsey. The maximum daily count at any site was three birds as follows: Messingham SQ on May 10th, Frampton Marsh on May 14th, at Whisby NR and nearby Doddington on Aug 30th and Sep 1st (an adult with two juveniles at both), and at Whisby NR on Sep 7th (three adults). The last birds of the year were singles at Donna Nook on Oct 16th and Frampton Marsh on Oct 20th.

In the 38 years from 1979 to 2016, Hobby spring first arrival dates have moved progressively earlier (see table and chart below). The last dates in autumn have become later, but with a less clear trend. The calculations for first dates exclude a few anomalously early reports (of which the 2016 records are the most marked) but also including one at Covenham Res on 20th January 1987, one at RAF Waddington on 27th March 2002 and one at Hobhole Drain on 20th March 2011. The autumn calculations exclude one found dead on 5th October 1984 and one found injured in early October 1990. To a degree, the extended period when Hobbies are present may be related to the larger population, and thus a higher chance of birds arriving early or staying late, but it may well be a genuine trend for the whole population.

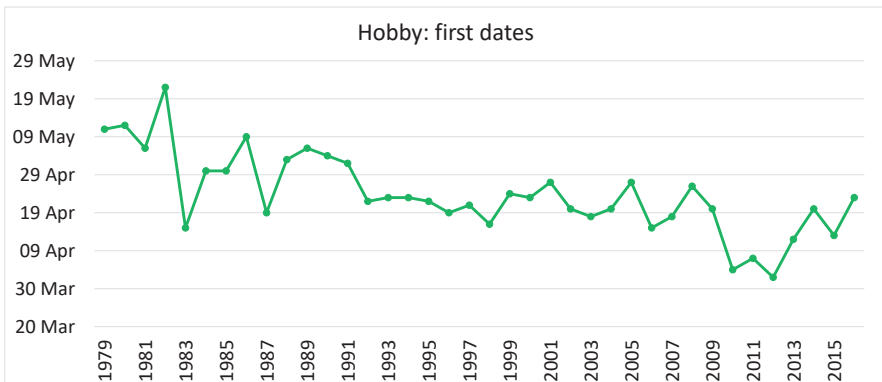
Averages	First spring date	Last autumn date
1979-1997	29 Apr	01 Oct
1997-2016	15 Apr	08 Oct



Hobby *Falco subbuteo* male and juvenile, North Lincolnshire Sep 1st 2016 © Graham Catley



Hobby *Falco subbuteo* female, North Lincolnshire Aug 24th 2016 © Graham Catley



Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Scarce, but widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor; now breeds in larger numbers than previously recorded. **RBBP**

Peregrines are now becoming so commonplace in Lincolnshire that it seems we are becoming blasé about them. Of 32 known breeding territories that have been used in the last five years, nine were not checked this year, although two of these were at “secret” sites where access is not allowed. On the positive side, 13 confirmed pairs fledged 28 young.

Brood size 2016	0	1	2	3	4
Numbers of broods	1	3	3	5	1



Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* juvenile North Lincolnshire Jun 25th 2016 © Graham Catley

The one complete failure was where the young in a quarry nest were killed in a rock fall. At 2.2 chicks per pair, productivity was better than the previous record year of 2011 when 16 pairs fledged 31 young (1.9 chicks per pair). Of the 12 successful pairs, the well-watched ecclesiastical birds at St James Church, Louth, fledged four young, Boston Stump two and Lincoln Cathedral

one. In addition, there were six probable and two possible pairs and birds did not nest at three previously occupied sites. At at least two of the unoccupied sites, one of which was St Wulfram's Church, Grantham, Ravens used the site and probably displaced the Peregrines. Birds can now be seen almost anywhere in the county, though at higher frequencies on the coast. Almost 90% of reports this year were of single birds, with just a few records of two or three. Birds are seen throughout the year, with a lower frequency of sightings only at the time when birds are sitting on nests. For those wishing to see Peregrines the period from March to mid July at the three sites mentioned above should, with patience, guarantee a sighting.

Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Rare. Vagrant from feral populations and occasional local escapes.

Two were seen at Bratoft on Feb 22nd and Apr 3rd, three were at Friskney on Mar 4th and four were noted at Irby in the Marsh on Mar 14th. The only reports in autumn were of a juvenile bird at Toft Newton Res on Sep 3rd and one at Midville on Oct 3rd.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Very scarce passage migrant. Former rare breeder. **LBRC RBBP**

There were two brief sightings this year. A female was seen in the Crook Bank area of Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Jun 1st (NAL), and a male was at Frampton Marsh on Aug 22nd (OD).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

Very scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor Oct-Apr. Exceptional in summer. **LBRC**

The only record from the first half of the year was of one seen by the A16 near Crowland on Apr 5th (TBg). In autumn, the first was one at Gibraltar Point on Oct 9th (AHy, RHy) with sightings on Oct 11th-13th (MDw et al.) assumed to have related to the same bird. There was also one at Donna Nook on Oct 12th (MBe), and another one there on Oct 21st (GW). The next was one at Wolla Bank on Oct 25th (DRob), and the last coastal record was of one at Skegness on Nov 11th (KJW). The final record of the year involved one at Claxby, near Alford, on Dec 19th (EJM).

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Very scarce migrant, mainly spring/early summer, but recorded Apr-Aug. **LBRC RBBP**

One flew SW along the sea bank at Frampton Marsh on May 20th, the first reserve record (JB, TC). A male was seen at Gibraltar Point on Jun 7th (TWr).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

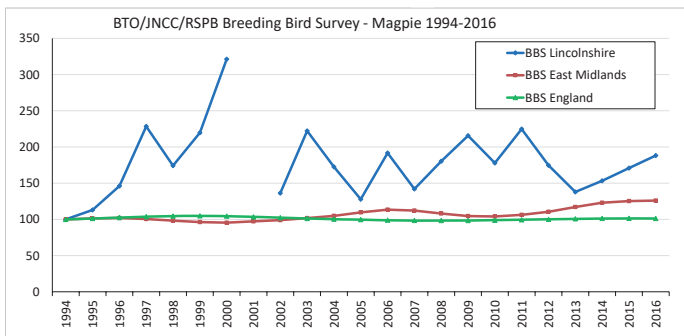
Common resident, irregular migrant and winter visitor.

A total of about 100 sites reported Jays during 2016, somewhat fewer than in 2015, and there was no sign of a repeat of the significant spring movement on the coast at Gibraltar Point that occurred in 2015, or of any autumn movement. Low counts were reported throughout the year and across the county. Several sites recorded 3-5 birds in the spring and summer months. The picture was similar in the autumn and winter with low counts throughout, with a maximum of ten at Boultham Mere on Nov 4th and nine at Stenigot on Nov 8th. Overall 2016 was a thoroughly unremarkable year.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Very common resident.

Counts of ten or more came from 28 sites, with totals tending to be largest over-winter and especially during January-March. Roosts and flocks of birds contribute many of the reports of this species, and thus counts tend to fall away after pre-breeding dispersal in March. The highest counts anywhere in the county were of 60 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes in January and February. Almost all other high counts (20-41) were made on the coast at either Tetney Marsh, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes or Gibraltar Point, and most were in January-February or October-December. There was no evidence of any autumn movements. The all-England BBS results from the BTO showed no statistically significant change between 2015 and 2016 and the county BBS picture is one of a steady breeding population (see chart). A minimum of five active nests was recorded at Gibraltar Point and there were four pairs at Frampton Marsh, but there were no counts from elsewhere.



One ringing recovery was of a bird found shot in Spalding at an age of 8 years and 4 months. The BTO longevity record for this species is 21 years and 8 months.

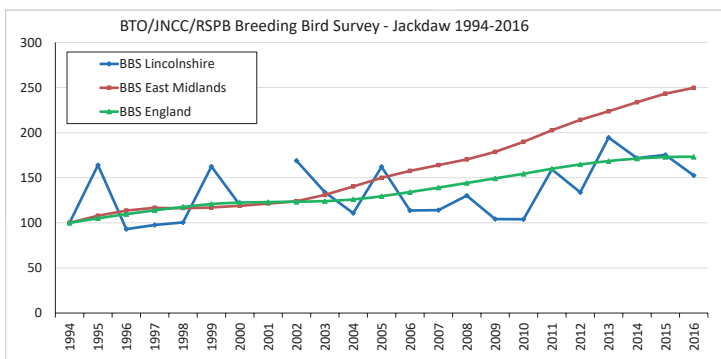
ED01425	First-year	27-10-2007	Arnold's Meadow, Spalding; 52°46'N 0°7'W
	Freshly dead (shot)	28-02-2016	Spalding; c. 52°46'N 0°8'W 3km 8y 4m 1d

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

Very common resident, also passage migrant and winter visitor.

Nordic Jackdaw *C.m.monedula*. Rare or overlooked winter visitor.

BBS indices show a growing Jackdaw population, with an increase in England of 65% between 1995 and 2015 and an even larger gain of 125% across the East Midlands (see chart). This rise shows some signs of flattening out though, with the all-England change between 2015 and 2016 showing a significant decrease of 10%. Reports this year came from more than 250 sites across the county, slightly less than the 2015 total. There were some counts of 100 or more in every month except June, but with the largest totals mainly at the year-ends. Counts of 250-600 during the first quarter were recorded at Boultham Mere/Swanpool, Branston, East Keal and Nocton Wood, with the largest being 600 at Swanpool on Jan 26th, 500 there on the 29th and 320 at East Keal on Jan 11th. Less typical was a summer count of c500 at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jul 25th. As in previous years, there were some large flocks in December, with 350 noted at Anwick STW on Dec 17th-18th, 550 at North Hykeham Pits on Dec 20th, and 770 at Tetney Marsh on Dec 29th. One count was made of the large roost at Belton Park, estimating that c2500 were present on Dec 31st. There were typical prolonged, but small, southward movements at Gibraltar Point in spring and autumn. Daily counts of up to 176 were recorded there during early March-late May, and occasional counts of up to 34 S per day were noted from mid September through to November. Birds showing characters of the Nordic race *C.m. monedula* were noted at Whisby NR on four dates in January, including two on the 26th, and two were seen at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jan 10th. One was at Marston STW on Apr 17th and, later in the year, four were at Whisby NR on Nov 5th and two there on Dec 23rd.



Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

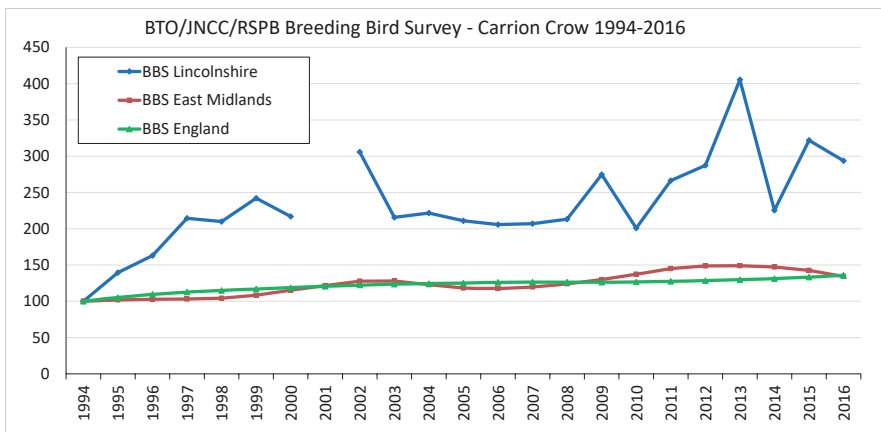
Very common/abundant resident, also passage migrant and winter visitor.

Rook remains an abundant and widespread species and it was second only to Wood Pigeon in terms of the number of individual birds recorded in Lincolnshire BBS squares this year. The BBS population trend for England has shown a significant downward trend since 1995 (-13%) but that for the East Midlands has been fairly static. As with many common species, Rook is not very well reported in the county, although counts were received from about 205 sites (slightly fewer than in 2015). In the first quarter of the year, monthly peaks of 150 or more came from 14 sites, including Owlet Plantation (250), R Welland (Spalding-Borough Fen) (260), Risby Warren (300), East Keal (420) and Normanby Hall CP (1000). That last count was the highest of the year, and was a roost count. A small amount of movement was noted at Gibraltar Point during March, the largest counts being 28 S on Mar 29th and 29 S on the 30th, with a trickle of birds still moving in early May. Nests counts at seven rookeries were received. The largest of these were 74 at Hagnaby Lock/Fen, c70 at Kirkby on Bain GP, c50 at Harrington Hill, Bag Enderby and 26 at Donington on Bain. In the last quarter of the year, several sites recorded 100-250 birds, but the highest counts were 400 roosting at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, in October, 300 at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on Dec 22nd and 500 at Tetney Marsh on Dec 29th.

Carriion Crow *Corvus corone*

Very common resident, also passage migrant and winter visitor.

The national and regional breeding population trends for this species show a steady but slow increase, something also reflected by the Lincolnshire data (see chart). The number of sites reporting Carriion Crow (about 310) reflects its common status across the county. There were counts of 100 or more in the first quarter of the year from four sites, at Blackmoor Bridge (100), Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes (120), Marston STW (185) and Normanby Hall CP (200 at a roost). There were no notable spring or summer records but there was a modest build-up again during the autumn and winter, with most seen on the coast. There were up to 120 at Donna Nook in November. Inland, flocks of 20-75 were also widely reported, and there were 100 at Kirkby GP on Aug 5th, 127 Whisby NR on Oct 25th and the largest count of the year, 375 at Marston STW on Dec 27th.



As with many other species of land birds, movement of Carriion Crows is seen at Gibraltar Point in spring and autumn. This is puzzling for a couple of reasons. First, the species is thought to be highly sedentary. Second, as at other places along the coast, such as Spurn, the movement is mostly southward in both spring and autumn (this applies to many land birds, of course). The data suggest that movements are more or less restricted to the 'passage' times and, so far as we know, these are not daily movements from and to roosts (which might be south in the morning and north in the evening). The spring counts of Carriion Crow at Gibraltar Point this year were a little higher than usual. A total of 364 moved S between Mar 12th and May 20th, with 84 S on Apr 5th being the peak; the average total for March-May for 2012-2015 is 224. Autumn counts are typically

smaller; there were 77 during Sep 11th-Nov 23rd in 2016 compared to the September-November average for 2012-2015 of 130.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Very scarce migrant and winter visitor; formerly much more common in winter. **LBRC**

Hooded Crow remains a rare visitor but there were records from four sites during 2016: four in spring and one in the autumn. The first of the year was at Gibraltar Point on Apr 8th and one was also present there during May 11-17th. That could have been the same as the April bird but is counted as different. A third spring bird turned up at Kirton Holme on Apr 14th but was noted on one day only. The last of the spring was at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 14th-15th. In the autumn there was just a single record of one on the foreshore and then flying N at Skidbrooke on Nov 25th.



Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix* Kirkby on Bain May 15th 2016 © Dave Roberts

Raven *Corvus corax*

Resident to 18th century but was extirpated; now a very scarce but increasing resident.

Reports came from 51 sites this year, slightly more than the 42 in 2015, and involving between two and 16 sites per month. The reports were concentrated in the south-west and into the Wolds, with a scattering along the Lincoln edge and a few in north Lincolnshire and along the coast. The number of breeding pairs is slowly increasing but incompletely recorded. As in 2015, there were two reports of confirmed breeding and two of probable breeding. The ringing details below show an unexceptional history, but one that is notable for being the first Raven ringing recovery affecting Lincolnshire.

HT66329	Nestling	17-04-2014	Near Grantham
	Freshly dead (hit by car)	29-05-2016	Threackingham: 52°54'N 0°22'W 17km SE 2y 1m 12d

Waxwing *Bombus garrulus*

Passage migrant and winter visitor, most in Oct-Apr. Scarce most winters, but fairly common in irruption years.

Another poor year overall, with the low counts from winter 2015 continuing into the early part of 2016 when only nine records of Waxwings were reported from four sites, all in January. One was at Deeping High Bank on Jan 6th, up to four birds were at Frampton Marsh on Jan 9th-12th, with two at Slippery Gowt Pits on the 9th, and one was caught by a Sparrowhawk at Fillingham Lake on Jan 29th. From October to December, Waxwings were reported from 29 sites. The first birds of the autumn were one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Oct 16th and two there on the 18th

and 20th. Other October records included four at Gibraltar Point on the 26th and 1-2 at eight other, mostly, east coast sites. Records in November were more widespread, from 21 sites, and with larger numbers of birds. Records of over ten birds were: 20 at Barton Pits on Nov 7th, 24 at Burgh le Marsh on Nov 12th, 20 at Holbeach St Johns on Nov 9th and 12 at Dunsby on Nov 12th. Two birds were at Grimsby from Nov 14th to 18th but most other birds were singles recorded on one day only. By December, records came from only four sites, with a single bird at Barton Pits on Dec 9th, two at Alford on Dec 22nd-23rd, ten at Burton upon Stather on Dec 28th-29th and 15 birds at Grimsby on Dec 29th bringing the year to a close.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

Widespread resident and passage migrant.

Records were received from 118 sites spread widely around the county, a total not dissimilar to the 130 sites recorded in 2015. Double figures were noted at three sites only, all in January; namely 20 at both Boultham Park and Messingham SQ and 25 at Osgodby Moor. Elsewhere, counts of five birds or more were recorded at a further seven sites: Hartsholme CP, Owlet Plantation and Twigmoor Woods in January, Willingham Forest and Chambers Farm Wood in February, Callan's Lane Wood in March, and Gibraltar Point in June. Breeding was confirmed at only four sites, with possible or probable breeding at a further 14 sites. The ringing details concern two sedentary but fairly long-lived Coal Tits (the BTO longevity record is 9 years 2 months).

L363915	First-year	25-09-2010	Willingham Forest: 53°24'N 0°18'W
	Caught by ringer	19-04-2011	Willingham Forest: 53°24'N 0°18'W 0km 0y 6m 25d
	Caught by ringer	09-01-2012	Willingham Forest: 53°24'N 0°18'W 0km 1y 3m 15d
	Caught by ringer	16-11-2015	Willingham Forest: 53°24'N 0°18'W 0km 5y 1m 22d
L441773	Adult	06-01-2011	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W
	Caught by ringer	24-11-2012	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 1y 10m 18d
	Caught by ringer	10-04-2013	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 2y 3m 4d
	Caught by ringer	02-11-2013	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 2y 9m 27d
	Caught by ringer	14-02-2016	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 5y 1m 8d

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

Fairly common but local resident, mainly in the south-west.

Despite this species being red-listed in BoCC4, only 52 records were received, a total and pattern not dissimilar to previous years. All but one of the records were from just 18 sites in the species' established range in the south-west part of the county and south-west side of the Witham valley. Most records were of 1-3 birds, apart from Callan's Lane Wood (four in August), Neville Wood (four in February and five in March) and Temple Wood (five in October). Probable breeding was recorded from Callan's Lane Wood and Potterhanworth Wood only. Four records from sites known to hold only Willow Tit emphasise the continued need for care in the identification of this and the previous species. However, a confirmed record of a single bird at Freiston Shore on Oct 27th was noteworthy and indicates, as for records at Gibraltar Point in 2014 and Alkborough in 2013-15, that some individuals are not entirely sedentary. Submitted records suggest little recent change in distribution of the species but Marsh Tit is certainly under-recorded and we repeat our appeal for additional records.

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

Once common and widespread, now seriously declining and scarce. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Barton Pits	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
New Holland Pits	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Messingham SQ	4	4	4	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Stenigot-Biscathorpe	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Whisby NR	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Norton Disney Pits	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anwick STW	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	2	-	3
Number of sites	8	6	5	9	3	4	3	5	4	2	2	4



Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris* Nocton Apr 3rd 2016 © Russell Hayes



Willow Tit *Poecile montanus* Messingham SQ Mar 3rd 2016 © John Clarkson

The table includes sites with counts of two or more and those with records in four or more months. Willow Tits were recorded from 22 sites, compared to 29 sites in 2015, across the north and centre of the county, with only three sites recording three or more birds. Anwick STW was the only site from which both Willow Tit and Marsh Tit were reported. The pattern of decline continues, with no confirmed breeding this year and only three probable pairs and a further 13 singing males. With the ongoing decline in this and the previous species, Marsh Tit, we repeat the appeal, made annually since the 2010 LBC report, for all records of these species to be submitted, taking care to distinguish between the two, and for efforts to confirm breeding.

It has recently been reported (*British Birds* 110: 233-240) that there is still a healthy population of Willow Tits in South Yorkshire, only 30 km to the west of north-west Lincolnshire but their sedentary behaviour makes it unlikely that replenishment of the Lincolnshire population could occur from there. Willow Tit became a reportable RBBP species in 2011. The pattern of annual breeding reports from Lincolnshire from 2011 to 2016 is shown below.

Year	Singing males	Possible Pairs	Probable pairs	Confirmed pairs	Total
2011	-	-	34	7	41
2012	-	3	39	5	47
2013	-	-	36	-	36
2014	2	9	10	7	28
2015	-	-	25	-	25
2016	13	-	3	-	16

These figures portray a decline by two thirds in the last five years. It is deeply worrying that no confirmed breeding has been reported in the last two years. If steps are not taken to stem this decline it is possible that Willow Tit will be lost as a breeding species in Lincolnshire within five years.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Very common resident.

As in previous years, most records received continue to be of ten birds or fewer. Records were received from 270 sites, widely spread across the county, sixteen of which recorded 20 birds or more, most of these high totals being in winter months. The most notable count was of 88 birds at Whisby NP on Jan 27th; other significant counts were of 58 birds at Gibraltar Point (January), 50 at Hartsholme CP (January & February), 42 at Linwood Warren (May) and 40 at Marston STW (January). Gibraltar Point recorded more than 20 birds in every month except May. Despite being such a common and widespread species, or perhaps because of it, breeding was confirmed at only 19 sites. Movements S of 40 birds were recorded at Gibraltar Point spread over 13 days in March and April with, in the autumn, ten birds S over four days from late September into October.

Four sets of ringing retraps are shown below. These are typical for Blue Tit: sedentary birds often caught repeatedly in mist nets. These were the oldest recoveries affecting Lincolnshire this year; the BTO longevity record is 10 years 3 months.

V696056	First-year	07-09-2007	Kirmond-Le-Mire: 53°24'N 0°13'W
	Caught by ringer	10-03-2016	Kirmond-Le-Mire: 53°24'N 0°13'W 0km 8y 6m 3d
V597788	Juvenile Female	06-08-2008	Butterwick, Boston: 52°58'N 0°3'E
	Caught by ringer	29-01-2011	Butterwick, Boston: 52°58'N 0°3'E 0km 2y 5m 23d
	Caught by ringer	19-12-2012	Butterwick, Boston: 52°58'N 0°3'E 0km 4y 4m 13d
	Caught by ringer	22-05-2014	Butterwick, Boston: 52°58'N 0°3'E 0km 5y 9m 16d
	Caught by ringer	13-03-2016	Butterwick, Boston: 52°58'N 0°3'E 0km 7y 7m 7d
X498536	First-year Male	14-01-2009	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W
	Caught by ringer	19-01-2011	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 2y 0m 5d
	Caught by ringer	16-01-2013	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 4y 0m 2d
	Caught by ringer	10-04-2014	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 5y 2m 27d
	Caught by ringer	09-04-2016	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 0km 7y 2m 26d
X487475	First-year	04-12-2009	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W
	Caught by ringer	29-12-2009	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 0y 0m 25d
	Caught by ringer	30-12-2010	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 1y 0m 26d
	Caught by ringer	02-12-2011	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 1y 11m 28d
	Caught by ringer	24-11-2012	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 2y 11m 20d
	Caught by ringer	28-02-2016	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 6y 2m 24d

Great Tit *Parus major*

Very common resident.

Records were received from about 250 sites, with 11 recording more than 20 birds; Gibraltar Point again (and alone in the county) recorded more than 20 birds in every month, with more than 30 birds in nine months. The peak count for the county also came from Gibraltar Point with 69 birds in January; other notable counts of 30 or more birds included: 30 at Messingham SQ, 30 at Hartshome CP and 40 at Marston STW, all in January also, and 30 at Market Rasen in May. Breeding was probable or confirmed at only 23 sites but no doubt was likely at the majority of sites for this very common resident. Movements S of 34 birds spread over nine days from February to April were recorded at Gibraltar Point; in autumn, only two birds were seen moving S, both in October. A bird trapped at Gibraltar Point in February was notable for apparently imitating a Sardinian Warbler in its alarm call.

Three fairly old Great Tits are shown in the ringing details (the BTO longevity record is 13 years 11 months). As for the previous species, most Great Tits are highly sedentary.

X820862	First-year Female	17-01-2010	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W
	Caught by ringer	12-02-2010	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 0y 0m 26d
	Caught by ringer	08-12-2012	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 2y 10m 21d
	Caught by ringer	13-11-2016	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 6y 9m 27d
TJ55853	Nestling Male	14-05-2010	Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W
	Caught by ringer	21-08-2010	Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W 0km 0y 3m 7d
	Caught by ringer	05-03-2011	Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W 0km 0y 9m 19d
	Caught by ringer	01-03-2012	Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W 0km 1y 9m 16d
	Caught by ringer	10-12-2016	Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W 0km 6y 6m 26d
L039734	First-year Male	05-01-2010	Kirmond-Le-Mire: 53°24'N 0°13'W
	Caught by ringer	05-11-2010	Kirmond-Le-Mire: 53°24'N 0°13'W 0km 0y 10m 0d
	Caught by ringer	07-02-2012	Kirmond-Le-Mire: 53°24'N 0°13'W 0km 2y 1m 2d
	Caught by ringer	30-11-2012	Kirmond-Le-Mire: 53°24'N 0°13'W 0km 2y 10m 25d
	Caught by ringer	08-04-2016	Kirmond-Le-Mire: 53°24'N 0°13'W 0km 6y 3m 3d



Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* Gibraltar Point Feb 16th 2016 © Paul Neale

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Scarce and localised, but increasing, resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	8	-	7	66	5	66	55	5	6	40	100	50
Barton Pits	2	2	6	4	1	1	13	20	160	20	-	1
Huttoft-Chapel Point	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	4	8
Frampton Marsh	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	5	4

It was another good year for breeding Bearded Tits. The Alkborough Flats population was studied closely through the breeding season and 33 pairs bred, with many broods seen to have fledged. Subsequently, a peak of 100 was estimated there on Nov 8th. Along the Humber Bank two pairs were confirmed to breed at Barton Pits and one pair at Goxhill, making 36 confirmed pairs in all. The highest counts at Barton were c20 on Aug 5th and Oct 10th. Other less typical records along the Humber were three at Cleethorpes CP on Mar 31st and c11 at Killingholme Haven Pits on Dec 12th. Bearded Tits were much more widespread away from the Humber this year. Frampton Marsh appears in the table for the first time, with six on Feb 18th, and in autumn a flock built up from one on Oct 3rd to 16 on Oct 28th and birds were present up to Dec 31st. Gibraltar Point had a flock of up to ten between Oct 1st and Oct 22nd. Further north on the coast there were four juveniles at Anderby Marsh on Aug 18th and 24th, four at Huttoft Bank Pit on Nov 13th and eight at Chapel Six Marshes on Dec 19th. Inland there were six at Butterwick Hale on Oct 7th and two at Deeping Lakes NR on Oct 17th.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant, rare in winter. Bred to 1959 and again from 1984, with numbers peaking around the year 2000, although now steadily declining. **RBBP**

There were no early winter records, with the first birds back on territories at Kirkby Moor and Laughton Forest on Feb 29th. There was no full survey at Laughton but two pairs bred and another male held a territory. Again no full surveys were undertaken at other known sites, but at least four pairs were at Manton-Greetwell, single pairs at Keb Wood and Haverholme Common and one pair on Risby Warren, with one pair reported at Kirkby Moor. This is probably the worst showing in recent years but surveys in 2017 suggest that the data are minimal. Away from breeding sites singles were at Gibraltar Point on Mar 19th and Apr 3rd, 5th and 14th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Breeding numbers have declined in recent years.

Significant counts of 100 or more were made at only five sites in January and February, the highest being 400 in the Wrangle sector of The Wash on Jan 16th and 220 at Donna Nook on Feb 19th. Numbers decreased in March, but there was no evidence of any visible spring movements. Breeding territories were widespread across the county, but few comprehensive breeding estimates were received. There was an estimate of 84 territories at Frampton Marsh and 14 at Freiston Shore, plus 25 territories in restricted coverage at Alkborough Flats. Southerly passage in autumn was lighter than usual along the coast, due to largely unfavourable winds. Movement was most apparent at Gibraltar Point between Sep 30th and Dec 18th, but low numbers were usual and the best days produced counts of just 360 S on Oct 17th and 131 S on Nov 16th. Only five other sites made autumn counts in excess of 100 birds, the peaks being 250 at Donna Nook on Oct 14th and 250 S at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the following day.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

Scarce winter visitor. Currently low numbers compared to the 1960s and 1970s. Exceptional inland.

The only bird in the early part of the year was one at Cleethorpes from Jan 19th-Mar 4th. It was an adult male that was heard singing on Mar 2nd. Two at Donna Nook from Oct 11th-15th, increased to five by the 22nd, seven on the 25th, nine on the 27th and 16 on the 29th. Ten were usually present in November with a peak of 18 on 23rd and the last record was of one on Nov 29th. Seven at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Oct 21st rose to 26 by the 23rd, 28 on the 24th, 26 again on the 25th and down to 16 on the 29th. Between 5-13 birds were seen in November, then after six on Dec 16th there were two on the 19th and the 23rd. The only other records were of one at Gibraltar Point on Nov 3rd, and three at Tetney Marsh on Nov 4th, plus one there on the 11th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first arrivals were on Mar 26th (two weeks later than the previous eight year average). This was simultaneously across five or more sites, including 17 at Whisby NR, followed by groups of up to 30 at most regular sites by the close of March and counts of 300 at Alkborough Flats on Apr 4th and 200 at Barton Pits on the same day. Further spring concentrations were 500 at Thurlby Pit on May 13th and 300 at North Hykeham on the same day, with 250 at Covenham Res on



Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris* Cleethorpes Mar 2nd 2016 © Graham Catley



Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris* Cleethorpes Mar 2nd 2016 © Graham Catley

Apr 26th and 220 at Toft Newton Res on both Apr 24th and 29th. The only report of confirmed breeding was from Hagworthingham, with fledged young at a sand cliff on Jul 1st, but probable breeding was reported from Messingham SQ. More information, including nest counts would be welcome. As in previous years, numbers built up again in the second week of July, with movement noted especially at Gibraltar Point, with maxima of 257 S on Jul 9th and over 900 S on both Jul 10th and 16th (see discussion of hirundines movements under Barn Swallow). Elsewhere, 570 were noted moving through Donna Nook on Jul 10th and an estimated 1500 were at Frampton Marsh on Jul 25th. Roost counts at Barton Pits showed numbers building from c500 on Aug 2nd to an estimated 7000 on Aug 10th, with a fall-off in numbers to c300 by Aug 28th. There were still over 100 moving daily through Gibraltar Point in early September and the last double figure counts were of 20 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 29th and 17 at Gibraltar Point the same day. Nearly all birds had departed by Oct 2nd, although one was at Frampton Marsh on Oct 16th and the last were two W at Barton Pits on the late date of Oct 27th (this was 16 days later than the average for the previous eight years). Two ringing recoveries are shown; these are unexceptional but involve the longest movements this year.

D536835	Juvenile Male	06-08-2013	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E
	Caught by ringer	27-07-2016	Kiplin Hall, Catterick: c. 54°21'N 1°35'W (North Yorkshire) 189km NW 2y 11m 21d
Z335585	First-year	22-07-2015	Shorne Marshes, Gravesend: 51°26'N 0°24'E (Kent)
	Caught by ringer	16-05-2016	Vernatt's Drain, nr Spalding: c. 52°49'N 0°6'W 158km NNW 0y 9m 24d
	Caught by ringer	06-06-2016	Vernatt's Drain, nr Spalding: c. 52°49'N 0°6'W 158km NNW 0y 10m 15d

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant. Exceptional in winter but recorded in most months.

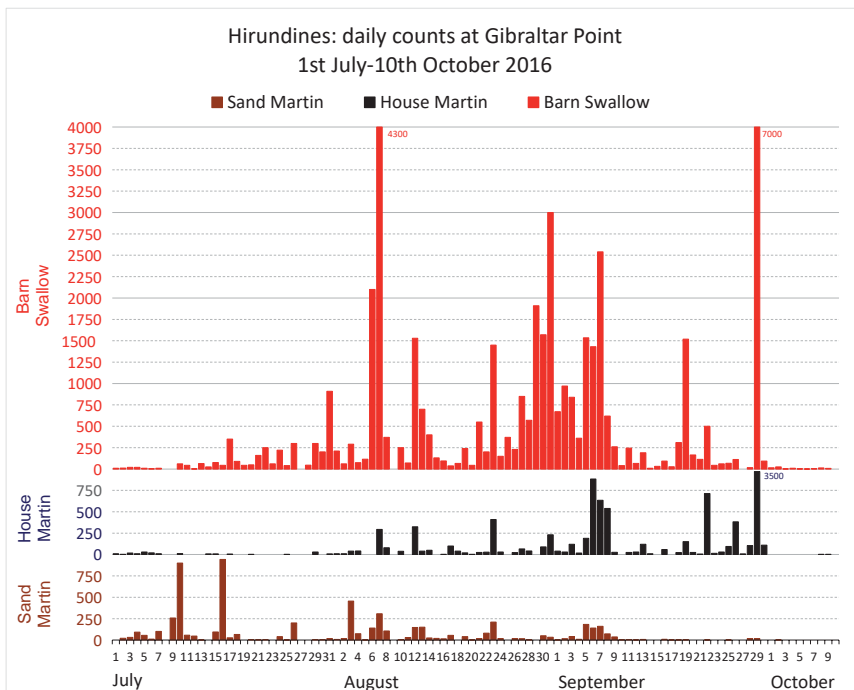
One at Nettleton on Mar 25th was the first arrival, a week later than the recent average. There were small numbers widely in the final days of March, with the first double figure counts of 12 at Boston on Mar 30th and 14 at Covenham Res on Apr 4th. The largest spring counts were all at Covenham Res, with 350 on Apr 16th, 600 on Apr 26th and 450 on May 13th. Numbers elsewhere were generally below 100, although with a wide distribution throughout the county. There were a few confirmed breeding records, although not reflecting the true breeding status in the county. Movements at Gibraltar Point (see also below) started to rise from mid-July, culminating in the highest day counts of 4300 (3300 S and 1000 to roost) on Aug 7th and 7000 S on Sep 29th. Peak counts during autumn at other sites were 500 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Aug 29th, 400 at Freiston Shore on Sep 17th and at Frampton Marsh on Sep 19th, and 250 at Donna Nook on Sep 18th, with an unusually high inland count of 250 at Ruskington on Sep 6th. Regular sightings of small numbers continued to Oct 27th, but the only double figure counts after mid-month were 21 at Marston STW on Oct 16th and 18 at Gibraltar Point the following day. There were only four records in November, including two together at Willow Tree Fen on Nov 5th and the last one of the year over the A15 near Hibaldstow on Nov 14th.



Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Frampton Marsh May 4th 2016 © Neil Smith

Hirundine movements at Gibraltar Point

The chart below shows daily hirundine counts at Gibraltar Point in autumn 2016. Most of these counts involve birds moving south, but a few are of birds present during the day or roosting there. The overall numbers of Swallows are far higher than those of the other two species; the cumulative sums of daily counts for the whole period are Sand Martin 5755, House Martin 7577 and Barn Swallow 42084. Passage of Sand Martins starts ten days or so earlier than that of the other species, and it ends almost a full month earlier. The variations in numbers from day to day, no doubt, are governed to a large extent by weather conditions; it is noticeable that peaks for two or all three species coincide on several occasions. The general pattern and timing of these movements are likely to be broadly similar each year, but one striking feature of this year's counts is the sudden clear-out of Swallows and House Martins in the largest movement of the year, on Sep 29th.



House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

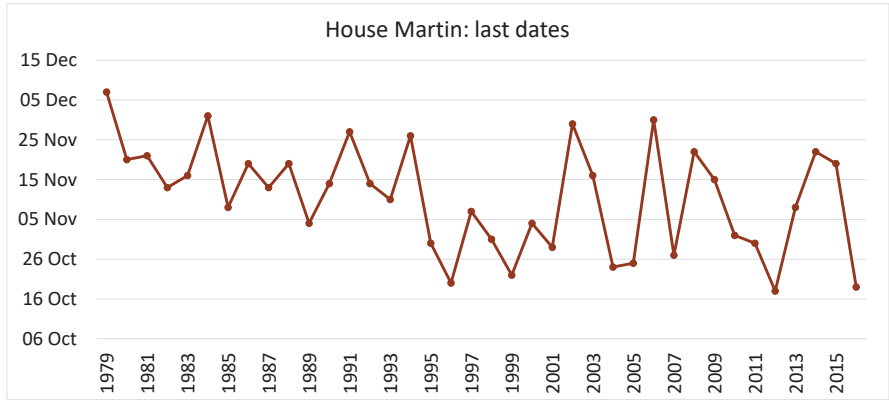
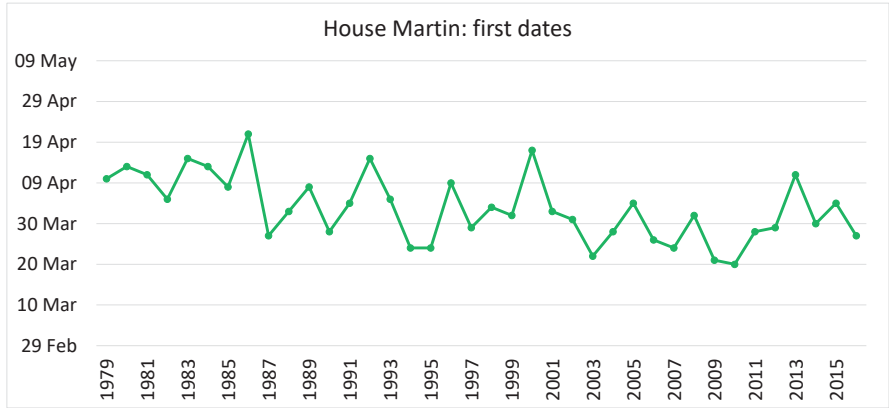
The first was one on the slightly early date of Mar 27th at North Hykeham Pits, followed by one in Boston the following day and five at Willow Tree Fen on the 29th. Numbers gradually increased in April, peaking at 150 at Covenham Res on Apr 26th and 120 at North Hykeham Pits on Apr 29th. Following early May peaks at Covenham Res of 190 on the 10th, numbers rose further to 550 on the 13th, before birds dispersed to breeding sites. May 13th also saw peak numbers of 500 at Thurlby Pits and 200 at nearby North Hykeham Pits. There was a small mid-spring passage at Gibraltar Point, but numbers were generally small, although including 70 on May 10th and 81 on May 29th. Breeding was only confirmed (three pairs) at Brigg, though there were probable/possible breeding records at other sites, although this is not a true reflection of the status in the county. There were noted concentrations during August/September, with 200 at Frithville on Aug 17th and at Normanby on Aug 27th, followed by 220 at Barton on Sep 9th, 200 at Covenham Res on Sep 10th and 200 at Trent Port on Sep 14th. The largest numbers were seen, however, at Gibraltar

Point, particularly during early and then late September, including 883 on Sep 6th and culminating in a count of 3500 S on Sep 29th (see chart above, and discussion under Barn Swallow). Numbers dwindled rapidly after early October, with the only double figure counts being ten at Knaith on the 14th and 12 at Marston STW on the 16th. The last record was one at Gibraltar Point on Oct 19th, some three weeks earlier than the recent average, with birds often seen into late November. Almost any recovery of a ringed House Martin is notable, so the following involving the repeat captures of one at Bourne, is worth including.

Y767887	Adult Male	05-08-2012	Middle Farm, Haconby Fen, Bourne: 52°48'N 0°19'W
	Caught by ringer	13-07-2013	Middle Farm, Haconby Fen, Bourne: 52°48'N 0°19'W 0km 0y 11m 8d
	Caught by ringer	07-08-2014	Middle Farm, Haconby Fen, Bourne: 52°48'N 0°19'W 0km 2y 0m 2d
	Caught by ringer	05-08-2016	Middle Farm, Haconby Fen, Bourne: 52°48'N 0°19'W 0km 4y 0m 0d

In common with a number of declining trans-Saharan migrants, both arrival and departure dates of House Martin are getting earlier. In contrast, for increasing species (see for example Hobby in this report) arrival dates tend to have become earlier and departure dates later. First/last dates do not necessarily correlate with the timing of the bulk of arrival/departure, but they may well often reflect them. For House Martin, the changes have not been large, and there is much variation from year to year, but the trend over the 38 year period seems quite clear.

Averages	First spring date	Last autumn date
1979-1997	6 Apr	15 Nov
1997-2016	30 Mar	5 Nov





House Martin *Delichon urbicum* Covenham Res May 13th 2016 © John Clarkson

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Vagrant. **LBRC**

There was only one record this year; one flew S with a group of other hirundines over the wetland at Freiston Shore on Apr 15th (PS). This was the earliest record for Lincolnshire and the third at this site.

This takes the county total to 37 birds, with increasing regularity of records since 2003, in line with national trends. Over two-thirds of the records have occurred at Gibraltar Point, with the others spread between well-watched areas such as Messingham SQ, Barton and sites along the coast. The majority (29 birds) have been in spring, between Apr 15th (this year's) and May 29th, and the remaining eight in autumn between Oct 5th and Nov 14th.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Rare but increasing breeding resident and passage migrant/winter visitor; first proven breeding in 2008. **RBBP**

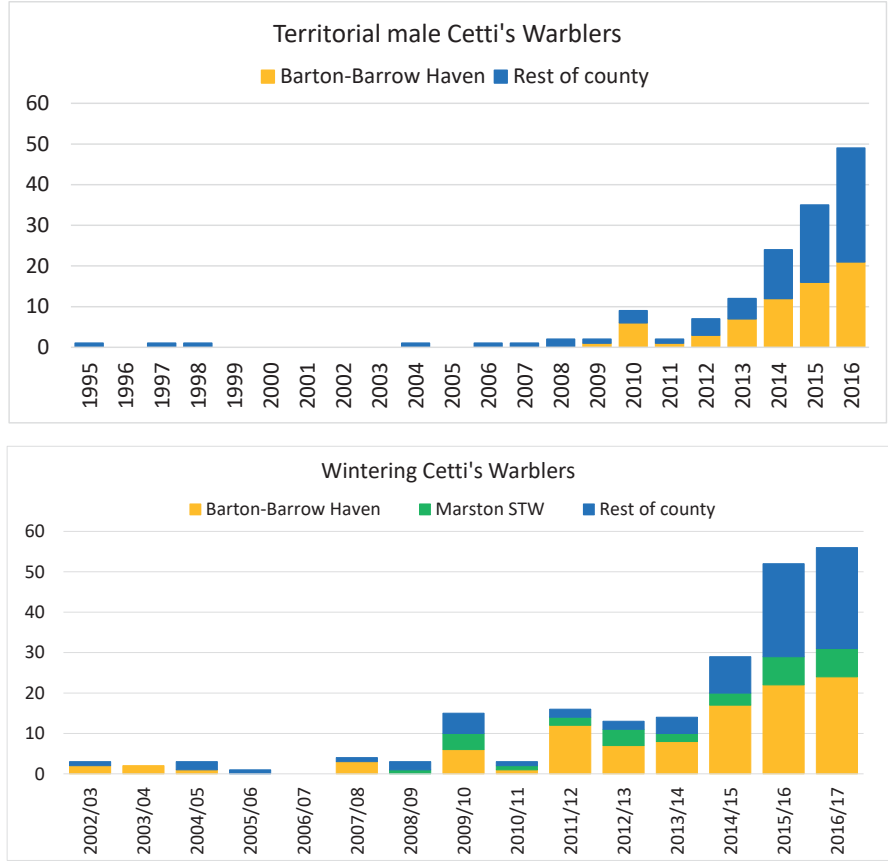
Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	4	3	3	3	3	1	3	2	2	3	5	3
Winteringham Haven	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
Barton-New Holland	5	3	5	27	30+	30+	30+	20+	20+	20+	20	20+
Goxhill-Killingholme	-	1	-	4	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	1
Town's Holt (Grimsby)	1	1	1	7	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Frampton Marsh	1	1	1	2	3	5	1	1	1	3	3	2
Thurlby Fen	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-
Marston STW	7	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	7	1	-

The table includes all sites with counts of three or more. In the analyses that follow, a wintering bird has been recorded as any bird staying in a locality for seven days or more between October and February; with breeding territories being assumed for singing males remaining for seven days or more between April and July.

The year 2016 saw a monumental jump in the number of occupied breeding territories to a new record total of 49 at 15 different sites but even these figures are known to be below the actual number of birds present, as there were no records from some previously occupied territories where breeding is likely to have occurred. The most important site in the county remains the complex of flooded clay pits between Barton and Barrow Haven where a total of 21 males held breeding territories and a high proportion of these are known to have bred. The second most important area was along the River Freshney between Laceby and Town's Holt, Grimsby, where eight territories were located. No other site was reported as holding more than two territories. The spread of

breeding sites covers most of the county but there are glaring gaps between known sites, and it is quite likely that along some of the more extensive river systems and large gravel pit complexes there must be other birds.

The number of birds located in the 2015/16 winter also reached a new high of 52 birds, being beaten again in the ensuing first half of the 2016/17 winter, with 56 wintering birds reported. But, as with the breeding totals, these figures are surely a gross underestimate as some of the regular breeding sites such as Deeping Lakes had no wintering birds reported and only two were noted along the Freshney complex, where eight breeding territories were occupied and many more birds would presumably be wintering. In the second winter period, in the Barton-Barrow Haven complex a minimum of 24 birds were located and there were other peak counts of five at Alkborough Flats, seven at Marston STW and five between Winteringham Haven and Whitton, also on the south Humber bank, where 34 of the 56 birds were located in the second winter. Locating wintering birds often relies upon hearing the distinctive (but sometimes infrequently heard) call note, as some males will sing all through the winter but some are much quieter, and females typically only give the call note. In addition to the summering and wintering birds there were a series of records of birds presumed to be on passage mainly in the autumn, and frequently from coastal sites. In alphabetical order one was at East Butterwick on Oct 8th, one at Cleethorpes CP on Jan 6th, one at Donna Nook on Oct 14th-15th, singles at Gibraltar Point on Jan 9th, May 7th, Sep 25th and Oct 14th, with two on the 15th and one to the 22nd, singles at Keadby on Apr 10th, South Killingholme Haven on Dec 20th, Stamford on Apr 14th, Tetney Marsh on Jan 20th and Mar 8th and Trent Port on Oct 6th.





Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* Frampton Marsh Nov 27th 2016 © Steve Keightley

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Common resident and partial migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Messingham SQ	20	12	8	7	10	15	1	15	-	8	-	10
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	13	5	6	5	12	10	-	20	11	17	8	11
Gibraltar Point	12	15	10	6	5	8	10	6	15	35	15	20
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	20	10	8	4	6	6	4	20	10	15	15	20
Swanholme Lakes	7	5	3	-	10	2	3	-	5	-	2	22
Whisby NR	14	12	10	2	2	-	-	30	18	24	15	10

The table includes all sites with counts of 20 or more and records in nine months or more. With records from just under 200 sites across the county, the species remains common and widespread. Only 17 sites recorded 20 or more birds, fewer than the 29 sites in 2015. Peak counts were recorded throughout the year but with fewer such peaks from February to July. Counts exceeding 20 birds came from Anwick STW (29 in November), Denton Reservoir (25 in August), Gibraltar Point (35 in October), Kirkby on Bain GP (21 in June), North Hykeham Pits (30 in December), Swanholme Lakes (22 in December), Tetney Marsh (22 in October), Whisby NP (30 in August and 24 in October) and Willow Tree Fen (25 in October). Breeding was confirmed at four sites and was probable at a further 16. One set of ringing details is shown, of a moderately old bird, seemingly happy with life in Market Stainton.

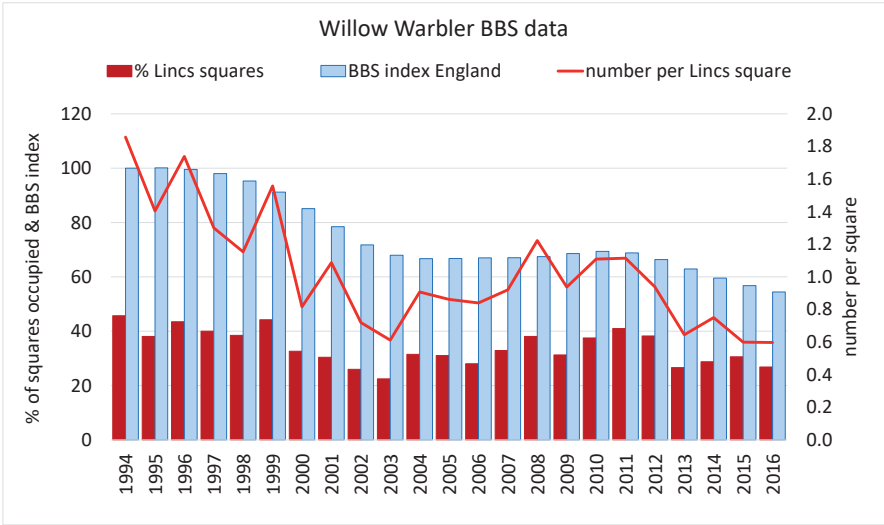
CVP034	Nestling	13-05-2010	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W
	Caught by ringer	13-06-2010	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 0y 1m 0d
	Caught by ringer	02-01-2011	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 0y 7m 20d
	Caught by ringer	04-11-2011	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 1y 5m 22d
	Caught by ringer	20-10-2012	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 2y 5m 7d
	Caught by ringer	20-10-2013	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 3y 5m 7d
	Caught by ringer	04-02-2016	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 5y 8m 22d

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Peak counts	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Barton Pits	-	8	4	1	-	4	2	-
Donna Nook	-	4	3	-	1	20	7	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	8	12	4	-	70	1	-
Gibraltar Point	0	16	10	6	18	250	17	2
Whisby NR	1	24	29	-	5	2	-	-

There were singles at Whisby NR and the adjoining North Hykeham Pits on Mar 31st, and more quickly followed, especially on Apr 3rd-5th. The first two figure counts were 17 at Whisby NR and 14 at Thurlby Pit (Bassingham) on Apr 10th. The spring peak at Whisby NR was 29 on May 4th, and the highest coastal count was 16 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 17th. Willow Warbler is not frequent enough for a Lincolnshire index to be generated, but the raw BBS data (see chart) illustrate the downward trend of distribution and, especially, numbers. The trend mirrors that for England as a whole, and the contrast with that for Chiffchaff is vivid. Breeding is still being reported widely, though the only counts this year were two pairs at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, and 43 territories in the wet heath survey area at Laughton Forest. Autumn passage was underway before the end of July, and was well marked through to early September. At Gibraltar Point, there were 20 days with 20 or more, and peaks of 94 on Aug 22nd, 250 on Aug 23rd and 52 on Aug 24th. The largest counts elsewhere were 70 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Aug 22nd, 25 at Witham Mouth on Aug 23rd and 20 at Donna Nook on Aug 25th. The last two figure count was 15 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 11th. There were a few mainly coastal records in early October, with the last one at Donna Nook on Oct 14th.



Only one ringing recovery was reported this year, the movement of a bird of the year from south-west Scotland.

HPK078	First-year	01-08-2016	Millhousebridge: c. 55°8'N 3°24'W (Dumfries and Galloway)
	Caught by ringer	10-08-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 334km SE Oy 0m 9d

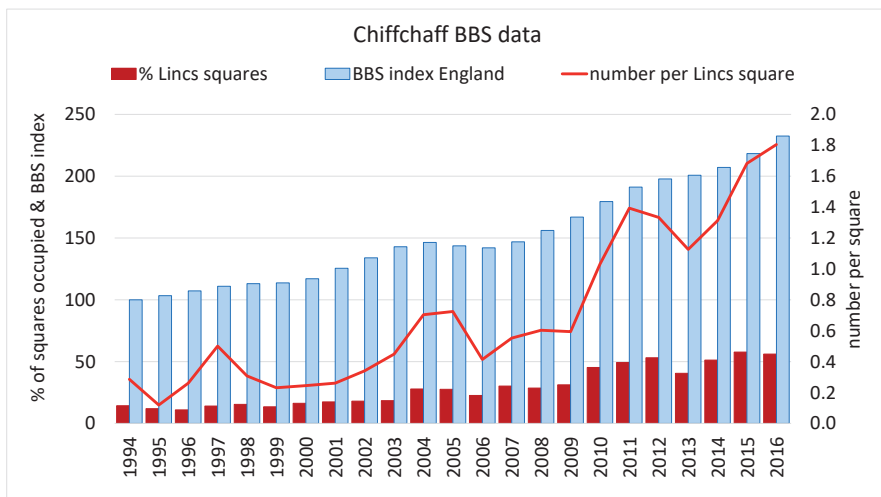
Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Rare/scarse in winter.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barton Pits	1	1	10	54	6	1	3	2	2	1	-	1
Donna Nook	-	-	20	8	3	1	-	1	4	15	-	-

Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1	-	5	12	9	6	1	2	6	10	-	-
Gibraltar Point	1	-	27	22	9	6	5	11	31	36	2	2
Whisby NR	1	-	8	30	20	1	1	-	7	2	1	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	-	12	9	4	-	-	2	2	1	-	-
Marston STW	5	-	1	3	-	-	-	3	13	3	2	5

Reports came from 21 locations in January-February, mostly singles, but there were three at Alkborough Flats during Jan 1st-18th, three at Culverthorpe Lakes on Feb 12th and up to four at Marston STW in early January. Obvious arrivals of passage birds took place from Mar 21st, with ten at Barton Pits by the 25th. On Mar 27th, there were 27 at Gibraltar Point and 20 at Donna Nook. There were 54 singing at Barton Pits on Apr 5th and 30 at Whisby NR on Apr 18th. Chiffchaff numbers in Lincolnshire are not yet high enough for a county BBS index to be generated but this may soon be possible. The steep increase over the past twenty years has been the reverse of the trend for Willow Warbler (as shown by the chart of raw BBS data, plus the smoothed England index). After lower counts through the summer, relatively high numbers started to appear on the coast from Aug 21st, and passage numbers peaked between Sep 18th and Oct 9th. Typically, larger counts were predominantly from Gibraltar point, with peaks of 30 on Sep 18th and 36 on Oct 8th. Maxima elsewhere were 15 at Donna Nook on Oct 6th and ten at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Oct 8th. The last two figure count was 11 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 21st. Records came from nine sites in December, singles, except for two at Gibraltar Point on the 8th and five at Marston STW on the 17th.



Two ringing recoveries are shown: the longest distance within Britain and the one overseas movement reported this year (though dating from 2015).

HXX626	Adult	17-05-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E
	Caught by ringer	10-11-2016	Lundy Island: c. 51°9'N 4°39'W (Devon) 402km WSW 0y 5m 24d
ERY338	Full-grown	12-10-2013	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E
	Caught by ringer	05-03-2015	Reserva del Tancat de la Pipa: 39°21'N 0°21'W (Valencia) Spain 1,529km S 1y 4m 21d

Siberian Chiffchaff *P. tristis*: very scarce migrant and winter visitor. LBRC

One was at Marston STW on Jan 4th-5th (ACL et al.), the only one early in the year. One was at Gibraltar Point on Oct 9th (KMW), and the next was inland at Marston STW again on Oct 23rd (ACL). The final record was of two at Alkborough Flats on Nov 26th-27th (ND, GPC).



Siberian Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis* Alkborough Flats Nov 27th 2016 © Graham Catley

Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli*

Very rare vagrant. **LBRC**

A male was at Gibraltar Point on May 8th, first identified as a Bonelli's warbler from its song (KMW *et al.*). It was soon seen and heard well enough to determine that it belonged to the Western species. An article describing its finding and its plumage and calls appears on p.234. This was the first record of either Bonelli's species for Lincolnshire. Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.601).



Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* Gibraltar Point May 8th 2016 © Graham Catley



Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Rimac May 8th 2016 © Graham Catley



Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Rimac May 8th 2016 © Richard Jackson

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Rare passage migrant. **LBRC**

As in 2015, there was only one record in the year, this time in spring, with a well-watched male bird, singing a little, at Sea View Farm, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes, on May 8th (JFJ *et al.*). This continues the recent downturn in records in the county (see chart in the 2015 report).

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

Very rare vagrant. **LBRC**

One was heard at Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th-13th and then trapped in the same area on Oct 15th, remaining present to Oct 18th (MRB, KMW *et al.*). It is assumed to have been the same bird throughout. This was the eleventh for Lincolnshire, and followed two in 2013 and two in 2015. All have been in autumn, with finding dates ranging from Sep 25th to Nov 3rd.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

Very rare vagrant. **LBRC**

On Oct 15th, two were trapped and ringed (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) at Donna Nook (SL, JMS *et al.*). On Oct 18th, one was seen at Gibraltar Point (WPB). These three equalled the previous annual record of three in 2014 and take the county total to 15, all of which have occurred in October.

Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

Very scarce autumn passage migrant; one spring record. **LBRC**

With at least 12 individuals occurring, this was the second best year for Pallas's Leaf Warbler in Lincolnshire, after 2003 when there were 17. The majority this year were at Donna Nook, where the best estimate is that nine were seen, though it could have been more, with most seen by multiple observers (SL *et al.*). The arrival began with three on Oct 7th between Pye's Hall and the RAF base, all of which were seen again on the 8th. On the 9th, one was seen at Pye's Hall (assumed to be one of the three) and another trapped and ringed at Quad 3, to the south. After a short gap, one was seen at Stonebridge on Oct 12th. On the 14th, two were at the North Flash willows, and on the 16th, one at Pye's Hall. A longer gap then ensued before the final bird was seen near the old coastguard cottages on Nov 8th. Elsewhere, the first sighting was of one at Skegness North Shore on Oct 8th (DMJ). On Oct 15th, one was photographed in the East Dunes at Gibraltar Point (JS *et al.*). There was also one in the northern part of Gibraltar Point reserve on Oct 25th (NAL *et al.*).

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Scarce passage migrant Sep-Nov, rare inland. Has increased and become regular in recent years.

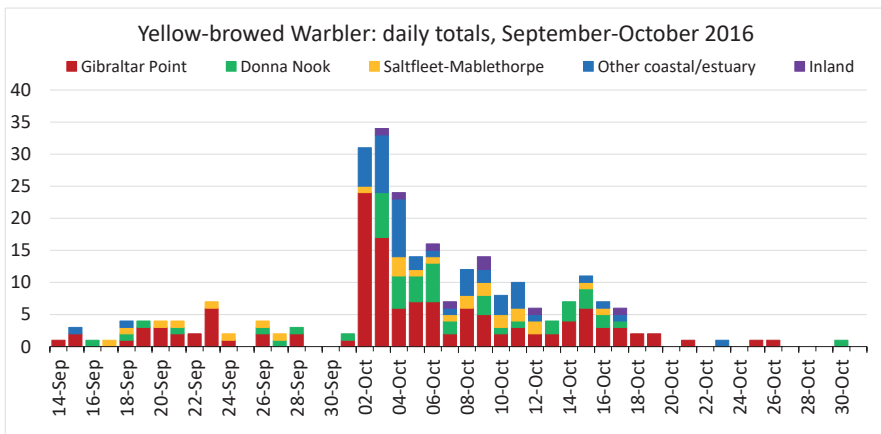
A very rough estimate of the total this year gives 148, including 70 at Gibraltar Point, 30 at Donna Nook, 12 between Saltfleet and Mablethorpe, 30 in other coastal and estuarine areas, and six inland. Thus the record total of 94 in 2015 was promptly exceeded by around 50% in 2016. The first was one at Gibraltar Point on Sep 14th, and there were two there and one at Chapel Pit on the 15th. Small numbers continued to be seen until the 28th along the coast from Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point, with high points being three at Gibraltar Point on both the 19th and 20th and six there on the 23rd. After singles at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point on Oct 1st, the big arrival came on Oct 2nd involving 24 at Gibraltar Point, seven elsewhere along the coast, but strangely none at Donna Nook. On the 3rd, there were seven at Donna Nook, 17 at Gibraltar Point and ten elsewhere including one at Covenham Res, the first inland. Moderately high numbers were maintained for another ten days or so, including up to seven at Gibraltar Point and up to six at Donna Nook, and there were no fewer than eight in Cleethorpes on the 8th. That last count, by an observer searching an otherwise poorly covered area, hints at the number that must have been missed away from the hot spots. A scattering of inland records also shows that birds were spread across the county; as well as the one at Covenham on the 3rd, there were singles at Gayton le Marsh on Oct 4th, Covenham Res again on Oct 6th and Whisby NR on Oct 7th, two at Willow Tree Fen on Oct 9th, and singles on Alkborough Flats and Ruskington on Oct 12th, and Alkborough village and Deeping Lakes on Oct 17th. The chart below shows daily totals (including birds remaining from previous days) up to the end of October. The one later record was of one at Gibraltar Point on Nov 23rd.



Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* Donna Nook Oct 9th 2016 © John Clarkson



Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* Donna Nook Oct 8th 2016 © Graham Catley



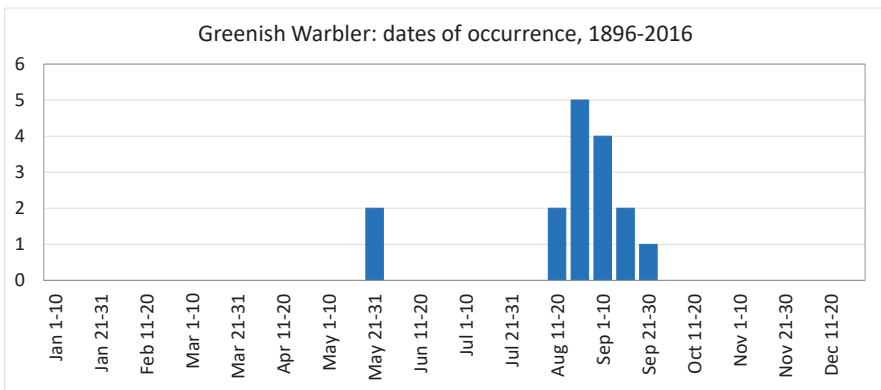
Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* Donna Nook Oct 4th © John Clarkson

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

Rare vagrant. **LBRC**

One was trapped and ringed at Gibraltar Point on Aug 16th (GGr, JS).

This was the sixteenth Greenish Warbler for Lincolnshire. The first was shot at North Cotes on 5th September 1896, which had the distinction of being also the first for Britain. The next was trapped at Gibraltar Point in 1958 and the rest followed somewhat erratically. There were three in 1976 and two in both 1977 and 1981, but otherwise there has been no more than one per year. Most (see chart below) have appeared within a fairly short period of early autumn, with extreme dates of 14th August and 22nd September, but a couple of birds have been found in spring, on 29th-31st May 2013 and 31st May 2014. All have been along the coast from Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point, six of them at the latter site.



Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* Gibraltar Point Aug 16th 2016 © George Gregory

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

A singing male was at Waters' Edge, Barton, on June 5th-6th (MBa, GPC *et al.*). This was the eleventh record for Lincolnshire. Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.605).

The first Lincolnshire record was of one heard singing for several weeks in July 1897 in a reedbed near Tetney Lock. This record was thought unconvincing by Smith & Cornwallis (1955) but has generally been acceptable to other authors, including Lorand & Atkin (1989). The bird was heard by J. Cordeaux on 28th July and, given the species' distinctive song and the typical date, we see no reason to exclude it. Of the eleven birds, seven have been found in May, two in June and two in July. As well as the one in 1897, some others have stayed for significant periods, notably one in 1976 which was in the Chapel Pit-Huttoft Pit area from 23rd May to 28th July. Nine of the eleven were singing males, while the other two were trapped (and one of those sang briefly on release). It may be that males are more likely than females to overshoot on passage, but it might also be that females are less likely to be detected in reedbeds than the noisy males.



Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* Waters' Edge, Barton Jun 5th 2016 © Graham Catley

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.



Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Frampton Marsh Apr 30th 2016 © Neil Smith

The first single was at Alkborough Flats on the comparatively early date of Apr 3rd, with the next birds simultaneously at Frampton Marsh, North Hykeham Pits and Willow Tree Fen on Apr 8th, before becoming widespread by the middle of the month. The largest counts in April were at Gibraltar Point with 17 on the 30th, and around Midville with 25 on the same day. Other notable concentrations later in spring were 20 at Fiskerton Fen on May 27th and a rise in the counts at Gibraltar Point to 28 by May 27th. Although widespread in occurrence throughout the summer, there were limited confirmations of breeding, notable exceptions being 47 territories at Alkborough Flats (in restricted coverage) and 28 territories at Frampton Marsh. There were 25 around Donington-on-Bain on Jul 2nd. From August, the reports started to diminish, Gibraltar Point being the only site to report numbers with any regularity, although there were still double figure counts at Midville, with 20 on Aug 3rd, a maximum of 16 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 6th and 11 at Barton Pits on Aug 23rd. A few remained into September, with the last record, of two, at

Gibraltar Point on Sep 22nd. The three ringing recoveries are unexceptional, but note that the first one was found at Messingham, only eleven days after being ringed on the Isle of Arran.

S030078	Juvenile	17-08-2016	Rinn A' Chrubain: 55°27'N 5°19'W (North Ayrshire)
	Freshly dead	28-08-2016	Messingham: 53°31'N 0°39'W 370km SE 0y 0m 11d
Z379712	First-year Male	31-07-2015	Tidmoor, The Fleet: 50°35'N 2°30'W (Dorset)
	Caught by ringer	27-05-2016	Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W 345km NNE 0y 9m 26d
	Caught by ringer	19-06-2016	Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W 345km NNE 0y 10m 19d
D132490	Adult Male	14-06-2014	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W
	Caught by ringer	06-09-2015	Lagunas de Atapuerca, Atapuerca: 42°22'N 3°30'W (Burgos) Spain 1,240km SSW 1y 2m 23d



Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* Gibraltar Point May 8th 2016 © Richard Jackson

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant, has increased in the last ten years.

Normally arriving a few days after the Sedge Warblers, the first Reed Warblers duly arrived on Apr 8th, with three at Frampton Marsh and singles at Barton (in song) and at Deeping Lakes. Thereafter numbers slowly rose through April, although there were no large counts until early May, with 15 at Willow Tree Fen on May 7th and 18 at Frampton Marsh and also 15 near Garthorpe the next day. Other similar counts were 18 at Metheringham Delph on May 16th, 17 at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 28th and 20 at Gibraltar Point on Jun 6th. All these records show the wide distribution to every corner of the county in suitable reedbed habitats. A survey at Alkborough found 308 (!) territories on Jun 1st, a further 36% rise from the 227 territories found there in 2015, with 22 territories at Frampton Marsh and confirmed breeding reported at a few other sites. Autumn counts (when birds are still present but less obvious) were generally smaller, with nine at Pinchbeck on Aug 10th and 11 still at Frampton Marsh on Aug 25th, although records continued regularly at most reedbeds until late September. There was some evidence of southbound migration, with up to four at Donna Nook (on Sep 21st) and two on both Oct 3rd and 6th. The final bird was trapped at Gibraltar Point on Oct 9th and still present the following day. The first of the ringing details below concerns a bird caught as an adult, so almost eight years old when retrapped in 2016, but still short of the BTO longevity record of almost 13 years. The others are fairly typical movements for the species; the French one was ringed just across the Channel, at Dunkirk.

X885365	Adult Female	14-08-2009	Marston Sewage Farm, Grantham: 52°57'N 0°39'W
	Caught by ringer	24-08-2012	Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W 0km 3y 0m 10d
	Caught by ringer	08-06-2016	Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W 0km 6y 9m 25d
	Caught by ringer	23-06-2016	Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W 0km 6y 10m 9d

L498448	First-year Caught by ringer	09-10-2010 07-05-2016	Pitsea Marshes, Basildon: 51°31'N 0°30'E (Essex) Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W 205km NNW 5y 6m 28d
Z790380	First-year Caught by ringer	02-09-2015 09-06-2016	Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W Great Livermere: 52°18'N 0°45'E (Suffolk) 121km SE 0y 9m 7d
FRP 7313733	Adult Caught by ringer	20-05-2014 27-05-2016	Station Stoc No. 263, Grande-Synthe: 51°0'N 2°16'E (Nord) France Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W 298km NW 2y 0m 7d

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Rare migrant. **LBRC**

A singing male was seen (and filmed and sound-recorded) at Huttoft Pit on Jun 6th (JS). In 2008, a remarkable 12 birds occurred, but in most years there is only one or none. From the first in 1961, there have now been 40 individuals recorded in Lincolnshire.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

Very scarce passage migrant May-Jun and late Jul-Oct, exceptional inland. **LBRC RBBP**

The only one found this year was at Gibraltar Point on Sep 5th (KMW, JPS *et al.*). One in the year is typical of recent years. The average for 2000-2016 has been 1.7 per year, whereas for 1970-1999 it was 4.8 per year.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Declined in late 20th century, but recent trend uncertain because of small population size and fluctuations.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Number of sites	8	12	9	8	2	1	0
Sum of site peaks	11	21	11	11	2	1	0

Records came from 20 locations in total, the majority in coastal locations or by the Humber. The first of the year was one at Rimac, Theddlethorpe, on Apr 8th, but reports did not become frequent until after mid month. Most records were of 1-2 but higher counts were five singing at Alkborough Flats during April-June, three at Gibraltar Point on May 4th and 6th, and on Jul 13th, 15th and 22nd, and three at Rimac on Jun 22nd. The few records after the end of July included one at Anderby Marsh on Aug 18th but all others were at Gibraltar Point, with the last one (and the only one in September) on Sep 18th.

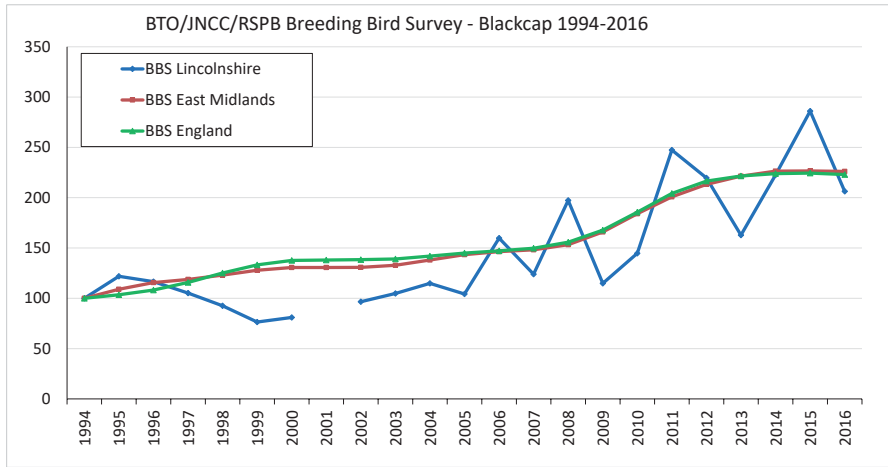
Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Scarce winter visitor Dec-Mar.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barton Pits	-	-	-	6	8	1	3	-	3	-	-	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	3	5	2	1	1	4	40	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	1	3	6	20	6	-	2	8	24	-	-
Gibraltar Point	1	1	1	25	23	11	12	33	21	38	2	-
Whisby NR	-	-	-	24	34	5	-	2	2	2	-	-

Reports came from 12 sites in January-February, mostly singles, but with two at Winterton on Jan 1st, North Thoresby in early January and East Keal on Feb 26th. Birds appeared at more locations during March but it was not until April when passage become obvious. There were two at North Hykeham Pits and three at Whisby NR on Apr 2nd, and the first double figure count was 13 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 14th. The peak spring count at Gibraltar Point was 25 on Apr 30th. The highest count at Whisby NR was 34 on May 4th, and notable totals elsewhere were 20 in the Crook Bank-Churchill Lane section of Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on May 7th and 26 at Bag Enderby on May 17th. The BBS chart has been adjusted to remove an anomalous sharp increase in the Lincolnshire index between 1994 and 1995. The trend remains the same and can now be seen clearly to parallel the regional and English trends. Along with Chiffchaff, Blackcap has undergone a persistent and strong population increase, generally attributed to climate warming. Autumn passage was most marked during Aug 21st-Oct 25th. Most of the high counts were on the coast, but there was an estimate of 30 at Laughton Forest on Sep 8th. During the period, there were nine records of 20 or more at Gibraltar Point, with maxima of 33 on Aug 23rd and Oct 6th and 38 on Oct 8th. Elsewhere, high totals were 40 at Donna Nook on Oct 9th and 24 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Oct 15th. Numbers fell away after mid October, though there was a late peak

of 23 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 25th. No counts exceeding five ensued and the only November records were of 1-2 on three dates to the 8th, and one on the 13th, all at Gibraltar Point. None were reported in December.



A mixed bag of ringing recoveries is shown. The first was the oldest one this year, though still well short of the BTO longevity record of 10 years 8 months. The next is an autumn passage bird through Donna Nook that seemed to be heading in the wrong direction to Barra, and then the three overseas movements of the year.

L273184	First-year Male	26-09-2010	Wilstone Reservoir, near Tring: 51°47'N 0°41'W (Hertfordshire)
	Freshly dead (cat)	29-07-2016	Ruskington, Sleaford: 53°2'N 0°23'W 139km N 5y 10m 3d
S310604	First-year Male	08-10-2016	near North Somercotes: 53°26'N 0°9'E
	Caught by ringer	20-10-2016	Bruairnis, Barra: c. 56°59'N 7°24'W (Western Isles) 620km NW 0y 0m 12d
Z364000	First-year Female	19-10-2015	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E
	Caught by ringer	29-10-2015	Herne: 50°43'N 4°1'E (Brabant) Belgium 367km SE 0y 0m 10d
CIJ	Second-year Female	14-05-2016	Longis Reserve: 49°43'N 2°10'W (Alderney) Channel Islands
AE10139	Caught by ringer	12-07-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 414km NNE 0y 1m 28d
POL	Adult Female	27-09-2015	Charrito - Silves, Faro: 37°10'N 8°27'W (Faro) Portugal
A161195	Caught by ringer	03-07-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 1,897km NNE 0y 9m 6d

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first were singles at New Waltham and Whisby NR on Apr 23rd. Records were regular and widespread after that but mostly in single figures. A few larger totals were recorded at Whisby NR, where 42 birds (36 of them singing) were counted on May 4th. About 20 were noted at Loughton Forest on May 15th. From the end of July onwards, most reports came from the coast, but counts there too were typically very small. The peak was four at Gibraltar Point on Aug 23rd. Sightings petered out at the end of September but there were singles at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd and Donna Nook on Oct 14th. Ringing details of a local breeding bird at Donington on Bain are shown. Garden Warblers have been recorded living up to ten years but this bird is doing reasonably well.

Y475892	Adult Male	19-05-2012	Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W
	Caught by ringer	02-06-2012	Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W 0km 0y 0m 14d
	Caught by ringer	31-05-2014	Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W 0km 2y 0m 12d
	Caught by ringer	04-05-2015	Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W 0km 2y 11m 15d
	Caught by ringer	07-05-2016	Donington-on-Bain: 53°19'N 0°9'W 0km 3y 11m 18d

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

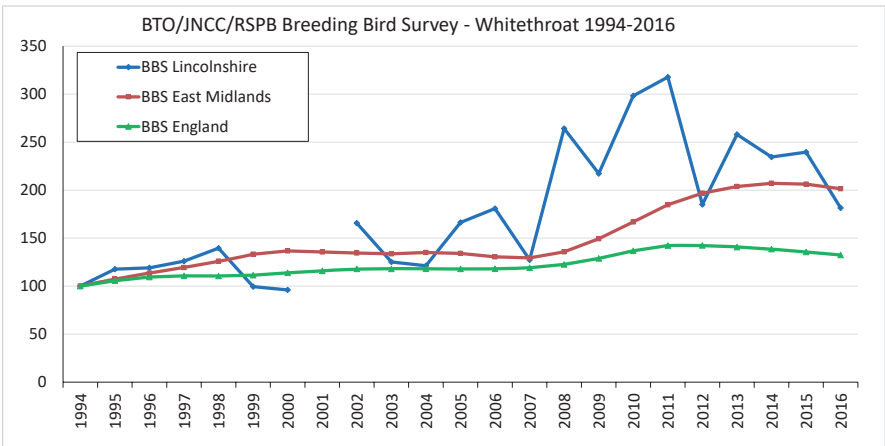
The first record of the year was one at Barton Pits on Apr 12th, and there were widespread reports on the 13th. The only extensive breeding information reported was from Whisby NR, where 11 singing males were located. The species is well distributed through Lincolnshire, but at low densities, and it is difficult to be sure of any trend. The BBS for England as a whole suggests a gentle rise in numbers over the past twenty years. In spring, most of the higher counts came from Gibraltar Point, including 11 on Apr 30th and May 3rd, and ten on May 4th. There were 8-9 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on three dates during Apr 20th-May 7th. In autumn, passage birds were most evident on the coast during Aug 20th-Sep 7th, including peaks at Gibraltar Point of 65 on Aug 23rd, 20 on Aug 24th and 16 on Aug 29th, and 17 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Aug 29th. The highest autumn total away from the coast was eight at Barton Pits on Aug 26th. Numbers diminished through September, but there was a smattering of October records, the last being one at Gibraltar Point on Oct 22nd.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	10	15	9	10	6	2	-
Donna Nook	32	55	60	60	30	7	1
Tetney Marsh	16	34	1	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	10	27	14	4	11	3	-
Gibraltar Point	44	82	63	69	135	31	1
Woodhall Spa	4	20	8	2	10	2	-

The table shows localities with consistent recording and counts of 15 or more. Counts of 30 or more were reported only from Tetney Marsh, Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point. An early arrival was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 2nd-3rd, and there was another at North Hykeham Pits on Apr 5th. Records became widespread by mid month and spring counts peaked at the end of April and the first half of May. The maximum at Gibraltar Point was 82 on May 7th, while at Donna Nook it was 55 on May 8th. There were also estimates of up to 60 at Donna Nook during June-July. Breeding populations continue to be at a relatively high level by recent standards (see chart). Autumn passage counts on the coast were, typically, smaller than those in the spring. However, one isolated larger fall of 135 occurred at Gibraltar Point on Aug 23rd, the same date as the marked peak for Lesser Whitethroat. There was a handful of singles in October, with the last at Gibraltar Point on Oct 18th.



One ringing return this year shows a breeding bird at Gibraltar Point that left Britain via Beachy Head in the previous autumn.

Z173646	First-year	02-09-2015	Beachy Head: 50°44'N 0°15'E (East Sussex)
	Caught by ringer	08-05-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 263km N 0y 8m 6d
	Caught by ringer	16-06-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 263km N 0y 9m 14d

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Rare summer records and territorial behaviour.
BBBB

A good year for this species which started with a winter bird at Dunston in a private garden on Jan 31st and Feb 1st. Another was at nearby Nocton Wood on Feb 24th. Spring migration began with a bird at Gibraltar Point on Mar 18th and birds were present through to Apr 19th, with two on Mar 26th, four on Mar 27th and 29th-30th, two on Apr 2nd and five on Apr 5th. One male was singing for much of this period. Donna Nook had one at Pye's Hall on Mar 22nd-27th and another arrived at Quad 3 on Mar 27th-29th. A third was seen at Donna Nook for one day on May 1st. Singles were reported from Frampton Marsh on Mar 25th, Mar 27th and May 2nd. One was at Huttoft Bank Pit on Mar 30th, with another there on May 2nd, and another at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Apr 5th. A male sang for three days at Far Ings on Apr 9th-11th. With spring influxes like this, one might hope breeding in Lincolnshire may not be far away. There were no further records until autumn migration began with one at Witham Mouth on Oct 5th-6th. Donna Nook had one on Oct 7th and singles were present there on seven more dates up to Oct 22nd. There was one at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Oct 13th-16th. One was at Anderby Creek on Oct 9th. At Gibraltar Point there were singles on Oct 7th, 14th, 17th and 25th. The final bird of the year was at Goxhill Haven on Dec 26th-27th, a pretty Christmas present for the finder.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tetney Marsh	-	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	40	3	3
Messingham SQ	6	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	10	-	1	-
Donna Nook	1	-	3	4	-	-	-	-	8	200	1	1
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1	1	1	2	1	1	-	1	6	500	4	3
Huttoft Bank	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	31	-	-
Anderby Creek	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-
Gibraltar Point	3	4	20	12	2	9	5	7	40	320	15	8
Louth	6	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	10	-	1	-
Whisby NR	10	4	4	3	2	1	-	3	8	16	12	6
Woodhall Spa	1	2	2	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3

The table includes all sites at which more than 30 were noted, or with records in nine or more months. Breeding was confirmed at only three sites, namely Gibraltar Point, Louth and Messingham SQ, and was probable at a further nine. However, the species was recorded at 160 sites spread widely across the county and breeding was likely elsewhere, even if unreported. Numbers in the early part of the year were low, with sites recording ten or more birds including Barton Pits, Belton Park, Louth Canal and Whisby NP (each with ten in January), 12 at Willingham Park (February), and ten at Hartsholme CP and 20 at Gibraltar Point in March (and 12 there in April). Autumn arrivals in significant numbers began in October, with 127 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 6th and 320 counted there on Oct 15th, but numbers diminishing to c35 at the month end. Ringing totals included 79 trapped on the 7th and 57 on the 16th; one bearing a Norwegian ring was caught on the 11th (details not yet available). At Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes, 500 were estimated on Oct 8th diminishing to c250 on Oct 11th and 100 on Oct 15th. Likewise, numbers peaked at 200 at Donna Nook on Oct 10th and 14th. Smaller peaks were recorded in October at other coastal sites and also at some inland sites such as Anwick STW (17), Temple Wood (15) and Whisby NR (16). Overall, perhaps, a more typical autumn for Goldcrest than the peak years of 2014 and 2015. The October bird-day total at Gibraltar Point this year was 2890 contrasting with 7915 in 2015. Five sets of ringing details are shown. The first three are the longest movements within Britain, all involving birds passing through the Lincolnshire coast in the heavy passage of October 2015 but with divergent ringing/retrapping sites. The first of the foreign recoveries was also here in October 2015, this one possibly near its breeding area in Sweden. The other was retrapped on a small island in the Baltic Sea eight days after being ringed near Boston.

HJC734	First-year Male	24-09-2014	Crombie Park, Carnoustie: 56°32'N 2°46'W (Angus)
	Caught by ringer	19-10-2015	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 432km SSE 1y 0m 25d

HLX705	First-year Male	15-08-2014	South Milton Ley: 50°15'N 3°51'W (Devon)
	Caught by ringer	19-10-2015	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 426km NE 1y 2m 4d
CPX749	First-year Male	18-10-2015	Seacroft, Skegness: 53°6'N 0°19'E
	Caught by ringer	20-01-2016	Lower Brucklands Ponds: 50°43'N 3°2'W (Devon) 350km SW 0y 3m 2d
CNT269	First-year Female	16-10-2015	Theddlethorpe St Helen, Mablethorpe: 53°21'N 0°13'E
	Caught by ringer	12-04-2016	Bredmar/Byn, Landsort: 58°45'N 17°52'E (Stockholm) Sweden 1,246km ENE 0y 5m 27d
EAD497	First-year Female	25-03-2016	Skirbeck Quarter, Boston: 52°57'N 0°2'W
	Caught by ringer	02-04-2016 also on 3rd	Griefswalder Oie, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: 54°15'N 13°55'E (Mecklenburg - Vorpommern) Germany 931km E 0y 0m 8d

Wren Troglodytes troglodytes

Abundant resident and partial migrant.

The status and distribution of this very common and cosmopolitan species has hardly changed, with records from about 285 locations (315 in 2015) throughout the year. During the nesting season it remains a common breeding bird, although little information was received, with either confirmed, probable or possible breeding from 50 sites. The BBS shows a continuing rise in the breeding population in Lincolnshire and, more widely, with numbers currently at a higher level than at any time since 1994. Selected high counts of 30 or over for the year include 58 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 30th, 33 at Anwick STW on Nov 6th, and 30 at Marston STW on Dec 27th. One set of ringing details is shown: a bird repeatedly trapped at Gibraltar Point in autumn. At four years, this is fairly old for a Wren (the BTO longevity record is only 7 years 3 months). One would assume that this was a local resident but why is it only caught in autumn?

DPR884	First-year	06-10-2012	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E
	Caught by ringer	04-11-2012	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 0y 0m 29d
	Caught by ringer	11-10-2015	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 3y 0m 5d
	Caught by ringer	31-10-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 4y 0m 25d



Wren Troglodytes troglodytes Frampton Marsh Dec 5th 2016 © Neil Smith

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Fairly common and increasing woodland resident.

Records were received from 63 sites, a reduction from the 72 sites in 2016. It seems unlikely that the recent increase in range of the species, documented in the 2015 LBR, has gone into reverse and a lack of recording effort is a more likely explanation for the change. As in previous years, records peaked in the early part of the year, with records from 21 sites in January and 23 in April, and were fewest in July and August (seven sites each). Records from more than ten sites were made in February (14), March (18), May (11) and August (10). The highest count of the year came from Belton Park in January (eight birds); other counts of four or more included counts of six at Neville Wood (February), five at Elsea/Math Woods (March) and four at Morton, near Gainsborough (April), Temple Wood (May) and Twigmoor Woods (December). Breeding was confirmed at one site (Linwood Warren – the first breeding record there) and was probable at a further five, but was likely, if unreported, at many more.



Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* Nocton Jan 17th 2016 © Russell Hayes

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Common resident and partial migrant.

Treecreeper was recorded from 86 sites, rather fewer than the 110 sites recorded in 2015. Records peaked from January to April from 23-26 sites and were fewest in July and August (from seven sites) rising to 19 sites by December. As in previous years, most records were of 1-3 birds but seven birds were seen at Hartsholme CP (February), six at Messingham SQ (April), five at Denton Reservoir (August) and Swanholme Lakes (February), and four at Barton Pits (January), Belton Park (January), Burton by Lincoln (June) and Whisby NR (March). Breeding was confirmed at five sites and was probable at another six. A small number of birds were trapped and ringed at Gibraltar Point but there was no discernible pattern in records; a bird trapped at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Oct 15th showed some characteristics of the northern race *C.f. familiaris* but no BBRC submission has been made.

Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus*

Rare passage migrant. **LBRC**

A well-watched juvenile arrived in the Stonebridge area of Donna Nook on Oct 7th and remained until the 13th (ZH, SL *et al.*). It represented the 29th record for the county.



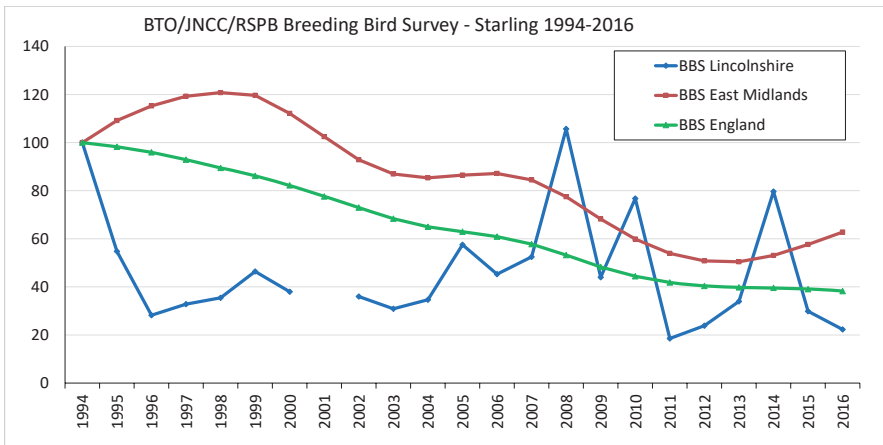
Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus* Donna Nook Oct 10th 2016 © Graham Catley

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Vey common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Starlings still remain a common and widespread species and were recorded from around 265 locations (260 in 2015) throughout the year. However, the number of sites during the nesting season where possible, probable or confirmed breeding were reported was low, with only 20 locations submitted. It is still a widespread and common breeding bird but continues to decline, as recorded by the BBS (see chart). Early year high counts included 25000 roosting at Alkborough Flats on Jan 18th and 8000 roosting at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jan 5th, whilst on Mar 14th 4600 flew S at Gibraltar Point and 2000 were recorded at Freiston Shore. The now to be expected autumn murmurations involving birds at roost sites included peak counts of 40000 at Barton Pits on Nov 11th, 12000 at Kirkby on Bain GP on Dec 29th, 10500 at Whisby NR on Dec 21st and 5000 at Frampton Marsh on Dec 24th-27th. The ringing details show the contrasting breeding areas of two birds ringed in autumn in the same area near Boston: one a local breeding bird, the other from Poland. The latter was the twenty-third recorded Starling movement between Lincolnshire and Poland, but the only overseas movement anywhere recorded in 2016.

LB67520	First-year Female	26-07-2009	Kirton, near Boston: 52°55'N 0°4'W
	Caught by ringer	06-05-2012	Wyberton: 52°56'N 0°3'W 4km 2y 9m 10d
	Caught by ringer	18-05-2013	Wyberton: 52°56'N 0°3'W 4km 3y 9m 22d
	Caught by ringer	16-05-2015	Wyberton: 52°56'N 0°3'W 4km 5y 9m 20d
	Caught by ringer	20-04-2016	Wyberton: 52°56'N 0°3'W 4km 6y 8m 25d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	07-06-2016	Wyberton: 52°56'N 0°3'W 4km 6y 10m 12d
LJ15310	Juvenile Female	06-09-2015	Wyberton: 52°56'N 0°3'W
	Freshly dead	10-06-2016	Donatowo, Powiat Drawski: 53°37'N 15°55'E (Zachodnio-Pomorskie) Poland 1,065km E 0y 9m 4d



Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Scarce passage migrant Mar-May and Sep-Nov; rare in winter.

The first returning male was at Gibraltar Point on Apr 5th, followed by two males near Marston STW on Apr 8th, whilst passage for the rest of the month was average based on recent years, with one or two birds at each of 11 coastal and four inland sites. May was particularly quiet, with records only of singles at Barton Pits on 1st (present from Apr 29th), Wood Enderby also on the 1st, Donna Nook on the 3rd-4th and Gibraltar Point on the 15th. With no September records, autumn passage didn't start until early October with a widespread arrival on the 2nd which included singles at Deeping Lakes NR, Grimsby and Witham Mouth, two at Frampton Marsh and six at Gibraltar Point. Passage was more noticeable and widespread for the rest of the month, with a mostly coastal bias involving 15 locations. Typical day counts involved between one and nine birds, but Gibraltar Point excelled and during Oct 5th-15th achieved double figure counts on an almost daily basis, peaking at 24 on the 8th. In addition, there were three inland records during October, namely singles at Deeping Lakes NR on the 2nd, and Swanpool (Lincoln) and Covenham Res both on the 5th. Few birds lingered beyond October, with November producing single birds at Gibraltar Point on the 1st, Spalding on the 7th and the final bird of the year at Frampton Marsh on the 12th.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

As usual, the larger counts were made in the first and last quarters of the year. In January-March, counts of 50 or more came from eight sites, with the maxima being 65 at Gibraltar Point on Jan 6th, with 85 there on Mar 15th, 54 at Wold Newton on Jan 23rd and 59 at Tetford on Mar 22nd. Long-term population trends continue to be fairly stable, but the BBS showed a marked increase for the East Midlands region between 2015 and 2016. Autumn passage was most marked during early October-mid November. A lot of the largest counts were made at Gibraltar Point, including 183 on Oct 9th, 230 on Nov 1st, 400 on the 3rd, 480 on the 4th, 250 on the 8th and 480 on the 9th. High counts elsewhere included: 250 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, and 120 at Donna Nook on Oct 15th; 150 at Donna Nook on Oct 31st, 110 at Tetney; 300 at Donna Nook and 200 at Crook Bank on Nov 3rd; and 200 at Killingholme Haven Pits on Nov 4th. At the end of the year, there were up to 89 at Goulceby during Nov 30th-Dec 7th, 78 at Anwick STW on Dec 27th and 70 at Barton Pits on Dec 31st.

The ringing details below are not exceptional but concern the oldest and longest distance recoveries available this year (two relating to 2015). The BTO longevity record for Blackbird is over 14 years.

LA25399	First-year Female	19-12-2007	near Graveney, Faversham: 51°19'N 0°55'E (Kent)
	Freshly dead (bird of prey)	08-01-2016	Hogsthorpe: 53°13'N 0°17'E 216km N 8y 0m 20d



Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* Gibraltar Point Oct 17th 2016 © Paul Neale



Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* Donna Nook Oct 9th 2016 © Russell Hayes

LA06376	First-year Female Caught by ringer	27-11-2007 26-06-2015	Westonzoyland: c. 51°6'N 2°56'W (Somerset) Boothby Graffoe: 53°7'N 0°32'W 279km NE 7y 6m 30d
CW79939	Juvenile Female Caught by ringer Caught by ringer Caught by ringer Caught by ringer Caught by ringer	22-07-2008 06-02-2010 28-05-2012 26-08-2013 04-05-2015 16-08-2015	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 1y 6m 15d Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 3y 10m 6d Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 5y 1m 4d Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 6y 9m 12d Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 0km 7y 0m 25d
LB04359	Adult Female Caught by ringer Freshly dead (cat)	23-01-2010 31-01-2010 04-12-2016	Warren Wood, Gainsborough: 53°22'N 0°46'W Warren Wood, Gainsborough: 53°22'N 0°46'W 0km 0y 0m 8d Hunwick, Bishop Auckland: 54°40'N 1°42'W (Durham) 157km NNW 6y 10m 11d

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr; rare in summer. **RBBP**

Counts of 250 or more came from eleven widely spread localities in the first quarter. The largest of these were 1400 at Frampton Marsh on Jan 9th, 500 at Woodhall Spa on Jan 13th and 450 at East Keal on Feb 19th. There were a few in early May, the last one at Gibraltar Point on the 10th, and then one at Anderby Marsh on Jun 12th. The first in autumn was not until one was at Witham Mouth on Oct 2nd. There were three figure counts at Gibraltar Point from Oct 12th to Oct 23rd, with one more of 156 on Oct 31st. The peaks there were 520 on Oct 15th and 510 on the 16th (the latter including 120 in from the east and 130 moving south) with 350 on Croftmarsh LNR the same day. There were soon flocks inland, including 200 at Woodhall Spa on Oct 20th, 300 at Northorpe (Gainsborough) on the 22nd, 200 at Normanby-by-Spital on the 23rd, 200 at Bardney-Nocton on the 25th-26th and 300 at Bonby Carrs on the 28th. The largest coastal count away from Gibraltar Point was 450 at Donna Nook on Oct 31st. There were no totals over 400 in November but the largest counts in December were 1000 at Frampton Marsh on the 3rd with 2000 there on the 6th, 880 at Alkborough Flats on the 8th, 1500 at Barton Pits on the 9th and 1500 at Kirton Marsh on the 27th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr; rare in summer. **RBBP**

High counts early in the year included 175 at Louth on Jan 3rd, 500 at Belton Park on Mar 13th, 150 at Tetford on Mar 19th and 150 at Swanpool on Mar 22nd. There were only two records in the second half of April and the last away from Gibraltar Point was one at Tydd St Mary on May 2nd. At Gibraltar Point, a single bird (probably always the same) was seen on May 17th and 19th and then trapped on Jun 21st. One (presumably the same) was seen in a different area on Jun 29th and the ringed bird was retrapped on Aug 15th and 24th. Singles were then seen there on three dates during Sep 8th-18th, before two certain migrants were at Frampton Marsh on Sep 24th, followed by 15 at Ruskington on the 27th. A major arrival took place on Oct 2nd, including 99 at Gibraltar Point and 100 at Covenham St Bartholomew. Autumn passage on the coast was concentrated in October. Highlights were 557 at Gibraltar Point on the 8th, with 720 there on the 9th, 552 at Gibraltar Point on the 12th, 800 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on the 13th, 500 at both Donna Nook and Crook Bank on the 14th, and the largest arrival of all on the 15th, including 600 at Tetney Marsh, 500 at Donna Nook, 600 at Crook Bank and 1180 at Gibraltar Point. There were also 500 at Crook Bank on the 18th. There were some high counts towards the end of the year, including 1000 at Dunsby on Nov 30th, 600 at Barton Pits on Dec 6th with 1500 there on the 9th, 600 at Alkborough Flats on the 7th and 200 at Swanpool on the 9th.

The majority of Redwings seen in Lincolnshire belong to *iliacus*, breeding in Scandinavia, Finland and Russia, and the first set of ringing details are typical of those. The second set represent the first ringing recovery in either direction between Lincolnshire and Iceland or the Faroes, the breeding area for the larger and darker subspecies, *coburni*. This bird, an adult, was first caught at Gibraltar Point on Oct 30th, and retrapped on the 31st (not shown below) as well as Nov 1st. Between the 30th and 31st, it had gone from 56.7g to 61.3g, an increase of 4.6g, though it was still at 61.0g on the 1st. The wing length (128mm) was within the range for *coburni*. However, rarely, *iliacus* can have wings of that length and photographs of the bird in the hand do not conclusively identify it as *coburni*, although it is more likely than not that it was. There are four previous Lincolnshire records said to have been of *coburni*, all shot at North Cotes between 1935 and 1945.

RF73267	First-year	18-10-2015	Seacroft, Skegness: 53°6'N 0°19'E
	Caught by ringer	30-04-2016	Sore Merkeskog, Utsira: 59°18'N 4°52'E (Rogaland) Norway 744km NNE 0y 6m 12d
ISR	Adult	22-09-2016	Akureyri, Nordur: 65°40'N 18°7'W (Eyjafjarðarsýsla) Iceland
8102483	Caught by ringer	30-10-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 1,736km SE 0y 1m 8d
	Caught by ringer	01-11-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 1,736km SE 0y 1m 10d

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The BBS in the East Midlands region and in England as a whole showed significant population increases between 2015 and 2016, and this trend was evident too in the Lincolnshire index, which has now shown three successive increases. There were three counts at Gibraltar Point in January-February in the range 20-23 but, otherwise, all counts of 20 or more were in October. The first three figure count was 120 at Gibraltar Point on the 5th and there were nine more such totals through to the 17th. The largest were 190 on the 6th, 215 on the 9th and 179 on the 17th. High counts elsewhere along the coast were 150 at Donna Nook on Oct 7th, 100 at Donna Nook on both the 14th and 15th, and 100 at Tetney Marsh on the 15th. One overseas ringing recovery was received this year, involving a (presumably continental) bird passing through Gibraltar Point on its way to south-west France.

RL27893	First-year	06-10-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E
	Freshly dead (shot)	25-10-2016	Ludon-Medoc: 44°58'N 0°36'W (Gironde) France 907km S 0y 0m 19d

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Common resident and partial migrant.

Reports came from 150 or more locations, but counts of five or more from only 21 sites. There were 25 or more at Gibraltar Point on five dates during Aug 19th-Sep 8th, the highest being 28 on the first date. Large counts elsewhere included 23 at Keb Wood on Sep 24th, 23 at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on Dec 3rd, and 15 at Lincoln on Sep 6th. There is no sign of any recovery in numbers. One observer, returning to this country after time abroad, described the "frisson of excitement" in encountering what is fast becoming a notable bird. One at Stickford was heard in full song occasionally during mid August-early November, unusual behaviour for that time of year.



Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* Swanpool Cowfields Aug 23rd 2016 © Chris Grimshaw

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Fairly common, but much decreased and now very local summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first spring arrivals were all from Frampton Marsh, with singles on Apr 29th, May 3rd and May 6th. A widespread arrival occurred from May 7th, although numbers remained low with one or two birds observed at 20 locations throughout May and only one higher count of three at Gibraltar Point on the 15th. However, spring passage extended into early June, with six at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 1st, and singles at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd and Huttoft Bank Pit and Donna Nook both on the 6th. During the breeding season from June until early August, records came from around 23 locations, a big decrease on the previous two years' data, with confirmed breeding from just six sites and possible/probable breeding from a further four sites. Although this appears alarming, it should be noted that the efforts of a single observer to record this species in previous years were not repeated during 2016. Autumn passage commenced around mid August with between one and four birds at most locations, and higher counts including eight at Fillingham Lake on the 17th, seven at Laughton Forest on the 24th, whilst at Gibraltar Point there were 13 on the 23rd and six on the 25th. September was somewhat similar with one to four recorded from both coastal and inland locations with no higher counts, so maximum day counts were disappointing with just four from Stoke Rochford & Park on the 11th and Gibraltar Point on the 18th. There was just one October record with a single at Gibraltar Point on the 6th.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A very common and widespread species, with reports from around 290 locations (320 in 2015) from all over the county. Evidence of either possible, probable or confirmed breeding was recorded at 49 sites. Early in the year, selected peak counts included 56 between Normanby and Scunthorpe, and 46 at Gibraltar Point, both on Jan 6th, 42 at Tetford on Mar 11th and 34 at Gibraltar Point on Mar 31st. Autumn typically brings a pronounced passage between September and November, particularly at coastal sites, and peak day counts this year included 320 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 8th, 300 at Donna Nook on Oct 14th, and 150 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and 50 at Tetney Marsh, both on Oct 15th. All of the three figure counts this year fell during Oct 5th-30th. There were fewer inland peak day records but these did include counts from the Ruskington-Anwick area of 91 on Sep 6th and 60 on Oct 29th.

The ringing information includes: first, a local breeding bird that is almost six years old; the BTO longevity record is 8 years 4 months. Next, are two migrants passing through Lincolnshire in October 2016. One was in northern Germany seven days before being caught at Gibraltar Point, the other continued to the south-west, reaching the Isles of Scilly nine days later. A Danish-ringed bird was trapped at Gibraltar Point the day before the German one, but we do not yet have the details of that.

L053290	Juvenile Caught by ringer Caught by ringer	30-06-2010 01-07-2011 03-04-2016	Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W 0km 1y 0m 1d Newball Wood, near Langworth: c. 53°16'N 0°22'W 0km 5y 9m 4d
DEW 90453273	Full-grown Caught by ringer	01-04-2016 07-10-2016	Lutjenholm-Sonksenweg: 54°40'N 9°1'E (Schleswig-Holstein) Germany Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 596km WSW 0y 6m 6d
D892166	First-year Caught by ringer	15-10-2016 24-10-2016	Theddlethorpe St Helen, Mablethorpe: 53°21'N 0°13'E Porth Hellick, St Mary's: 49°54'N 6°17'W (Isles of Scilly) 590km SW 0y 0m 9d

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

Rare migrant. **LBRC RBBP**

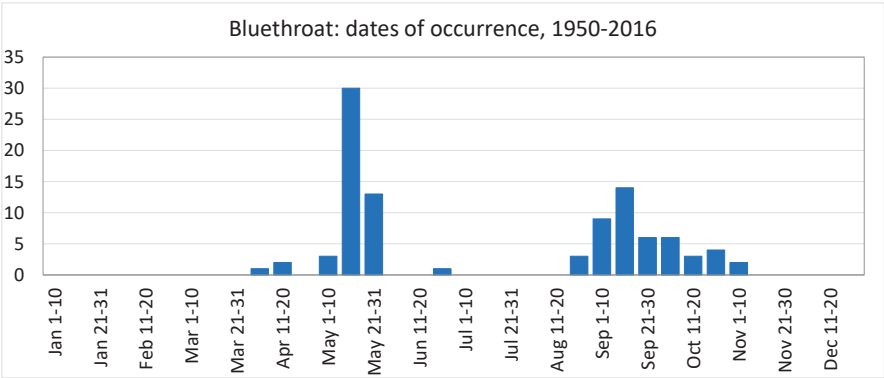
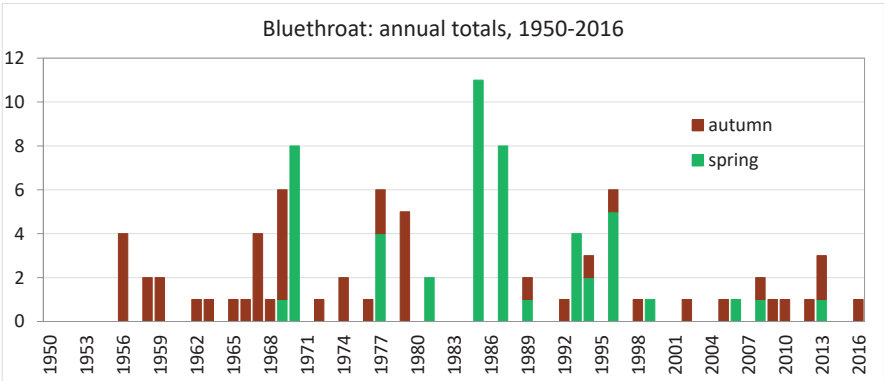
The first record since 2013, a first winter bird was at the North Shore golf course at Skegness on Oct 8th (WB, MWe).

Bluethroat is currently a rarity in Lincolnshire, averaging only 0.7 per year during 1997-2016, but this is a marked change from its earlier status. The first county record was at North Cotes on 21st September 1892. There were six more up to 1924 but then a gap until one was trapped at the newly established Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory on 14th September 1949. From 1956 onwards, the species became almost regular, averaging 1.5 per year in the 1960s and 2.3 per year in both the 1970s and 1980s. However, during that period, occurrence became more erratic, with years with multiple records interspersed by blank years. Also, spring records suddenly predominated: the first ever spring record was at Donna Nook on 31st May 1969 but during 1970-1999 there were 46 in spring and only 16 in autumn. At the end of the 1990s, annual totals dropped and

the predominance of spring records ceased, with nine of the 12 birds during 2000-2016 being in autumn.

The red-spotted subspecies *L.s.svecica* from northern Europe has contributed most records (though there are quite a few records for which this is not recorded), but it should be noted that distinguishing the subspecies is not wholly straightforward, as some belonging to the white-spotted race *L.s.cyanecula* can show orange spots. There are seven birds, out of the total of 105, that are attributed to *cyanecula*. The first of these was one said to be showing the right characteristics, seen at Chapel Point on 4th September 1963. An almost spotless male at Saltfleetby on 5th-6th April 1987 is assumed to have been white-spotted, and subsequent records include a singing male at Whisby during 21st June-4th July 1987, singles at Cleethorpes on 12th-13th April 1996 and (assumed different) at Immingham on 16th April 1996, and one trapped and ringed at Gibraltar Point on 4th May 2008.

The white-spotted birds have tended to occur early in spring; they account for all three April records (see above) and the earliest one in May. Spring records of red-spotted or unattributed birds span 5th-31st May. The earliest in autumn were birds at Saltfleetby on 21st August 1966 and at Gibraltar Point on 25th-26th August 1966, while the latest were at Gibraltar Point on 3rd November 2012 and 4th November 2008.



Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Scarce and declining local summer visitor and very scarce passage migrant.

Whisby NR and a small part of the adjacent North Hykeham Pits are now the only reliable location for Nightingales in the county. The first bird arrived back on Apr 12th, followed by



Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* Oak Wood, Whisby NR 19th May 2016 © Chris Grimshaw



Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* Oak Wood, Whisby NR 14th May 2016 © Steve Nesbitt

expected further birds, and the annual breeding census of this population produced a total of eight singing males, worryingly down from the 11 in 2015. The two sub-populations were once again represented with four of these males around Coot Lake and three around the Teal Lake/Apex Pit/Butterley's Pit area. Surveys of nocturnal song at the end of May (which may indicate that the males involved are unpaired) detected four singing birds. However, although indicative, these night visits are evidently not conclusive, as one of these males was paired and was observed feeding at least one fledged young during early June. Although this remained the only confirmed breeding record, elsewhere at least three territories (all around Coot Lake) were known to contain pairs, with nest-building recorded in at least one of them. Elsewhere in the county, migrant birds included a singing male at Huttoft Bank Pit on May 4th whilst two birds were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on May 7th. Sadly, the only other record of a potential bird in suitable habitat during the breeding season was one at Bourne Wood on May 16th, but it is likely that coverage away from Whisby was incomplete. A juvenile bird at Whisby NR on Jul 17th was the last record for this site, but one later autumn record was a single at Ruskington Fen on Aug 6th which unsurprisingly was the last for the year.

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

In an exceptional year for this once hallowed species, two individuals were found during the autumn, representing the ninth and tenth records for the county. A well-watched and photographed bird (not conclusively aged) was in the Stonebridge area of Donna Nook during Oct 10th-16th (ABe *et al.*), whilst a more elusive first winter individual was at Chapel Six Marshes from Oct 22nd-23rd (NGM, ACL *et al.*). Both have been accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.610).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly coastal; very scarce in spring and scarce in autumn.

In a slightly better spring passage than last year (when no birds were recorded), there were three records, with singles at Gibraltar Point on Apr 13th, Anderby Marsh on May 11th and Donna Nook on May 11th-12th. Autumn passage commenced with singles at Horseshoe Point and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes both on Aug 17th, followed by a marked passage for the rest of the month. Excluding Gibraltar Point, between one and six birds were recorded from ten coastal locations whilst inland singles were at Laughton Forest on the 24th and Deeping Lakes on the 29th. Gibraltar Point was the only site to feature double figure counts, with peaks including 12 on the 21st, ten on the 23rd and 14 on the 24th. September was far quieter, with records from just four coastal locations, mostly involving only single birds, with higher counts from Gibraltar Point only which included six on the 14th and four on the 15th. There were also singles by the Humber at Whitton Ness on Sep 5th and at Far Ings on Sep 11th. During October, two were at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd with singles there on the 5th and 7th. Elsewhere singles were at Cleethorpes on the 7th, and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 10th and the 15th, with this latter record, involving one trapped at Crook Bank, the last bird of the year.



Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* Donna Nook Oct 6th 2016 © Graham Catley



Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* Donna Nook Oct 15th 2016 © Graham Catley



Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* Donna Nook Oct 15th 2016 © Graham Catley

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Very scarce passage migrant in May and Sep-Nov. Exceptional inland and in spring. **LBRC**

It was a quiet year, with two first winter birds at Donna Nook on Oct 5th (SL) and 6th (GPC *et al.*). The sightings on the two days were about a mile apart and it has been assumed that different birds were involved.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Scarce passage migrant, rare and irregular breeder and very scarce winter visitor. **RBBP**

At the beginning of the year, wintering birds included singles at Freiston Shore from Jan 16th to Feb 3rd and briefly in a private garden at Middle Rasen on Feb 10th. Spring passage commenced in March with singles at Sturton by Stow on the 10th, Freiston Shore on the 13th-14th, Gibraltar Point on the 20th and the 31st, and Pyewipe (Grimsby) on the 31st. April produced singles at Gibraltar Point on the 2nd-3rd and on the 12th, Donna Nook on the 4th, and Frampton Marsh on the 18th-19th. There was just a single record during May of a male at Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness) on the 14th. There were two summer records: singles at Belchford on Jul 9th and Frampton Marsh during Jul 21st-27th, although nothing suggested that these referred to breeding records. Autumn passage commenced with one at Gibraltar Point on Sep 3rd and was followed by a very poor October (by recent standards) with singles at Donna Nook on the 14th and 21st the only records. At the end of the year, singles were at Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness) on Nov 24th and Mablethorpe on Dec 17th.

Eastern Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros phoenicuroides/rufiventris/xerophilus*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

After a prolonged easterly airstream during the autumn, an exceptional number of Black Redstarts belonging to one or more of the eastern races (involving first winter males in the distinctive 'paradoxus' plumage) were recorded in Britain, the seven accepted records taking the British total to 13. In Lincolnshire, one was at Donna Nook from Oct 26th-28th (SL *et al.*). Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.612). This was the first record for the county and a finder's report is on p.244.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Rare summer visitor and scarce passage migrant in spring, fairly common in autumn.

Migrants during April were earlier and a little more widespread than in 2015, with singles at Gibraltar Point on the 5th, Frampton Marsh on the 10th, 18th, 21st and 27th, Ruskington on the 13th, Rimac (Saltfleetby) and Tetney Marsh both on the 18th, Barton Pits on the 25th and Donna Nook on the 28th-30th. There was a similar pattern during May with two birds at Donna Nook on the 3rd, and singles there on the 1st, 2nd, 5th and 12th, at Frampton Marsh on the 2nd, at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 2nd, 7th and 23rd, and at Gibraltar Point on the 22nd. There was just a single record of possible breeding with a male at Linwood Warren during May 14th-30th. Although not usually still on passage during June, singles were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 6th and Town's Holt (Grimsby) on the 12th. The first bird of autumn was a juvenile at Gibraltar Point on Aug 5th, although the rest of the month at this location was light, with a peak late month which included 16 on the 23rd, eight on the 24th and four on the 25th. Elsewhere only one to two birds were recorded at just seven coastal/estuarine and a single inland location. September was similar, with peak day counts of one to two migrants from seven locations, all coast/estuaries, with just a handful of higher counts at Gibraltar Point, with five on the 7th and three on the 11th and Donna Nook with four on the 14th and another four on the 18th. Migrants continued well into October with one to two birds at 11 coastal and one inland location. The only higher day counts were from Donna Nook with four on the 6th and five on the 7th. The last bird for the year was a female or immature at Gibraltar Point on Oct 23rd.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Scarce/fairly common passage migrant. Formerly bred.

The first migrant was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 28th, followed by singles at Swanpool (Lincoln) and Willow Tree Fen, both on Apr 29th. A further four singles were recorded at Fiskerton Fen Scrapes, Ancaster, Risby Warren and Bonby Carrs on the 30th. May produced one or two birds at ten locations, mostly on the coast and estuaries as expected, although there was one inland at Broadholme on the 3rd. The last in spring was one at New Holland on May 15th. Autumn passage started with a single at the Withern on Jul 21st, followed by singles at Horseshoe Point on Jul 23rd, Barton Pits on Jul 28th and up to three at Alkborough Flats during Jul 23rd-31st. After a short break, passage recommenced on Aug 7th, with typically one to four birds recorded

at 14 coastal/estuarine and three inland locations, and higher counts all from Gibraltar Point including seven on the 21st, ten on the 22nd, 20 on the 23rd and nine on the 24th. September was similar, with typical day counts of between one and five birds at eight coastal/estuarine and three inland locations, with higher counts including seven at Gibraltar Point on the 3rd, nine at Alkborough Flats on the 18th and seven at Donna Nook on the 22nd. Passage continued well into October this year, with between one and three recorded almost daily from Gibraltar Point, Donna Nook, Frampton Marsh or Saltfleet, but also including one inland at Willow Tree Fen on the 19th. With a late passage it was perhaps not surprising that there were two November records: one at Covenham Res on the 9th and the last bird of the year at Frampton Marsh on the 26th.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

Scarce/fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr. Rare and sporadic breeder.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	21	12	10	6	2	1	1	4	10	23	28	22
Sum of site peaks	44	44	15	8	2	1	1	4	20	63	55	43

There was a similar spread of records and locations to the previous year, with widespread winter records and a notable passage during the autumn. Maximum day counts during the first quarter of the year peaked with four at a number of locations including Seacroft Marsh during Jan 4th-Feb 9th, Gibraltar Point on Jan 16th and Alkborough Flats during Jan 25th-Feb 28th, whilst five were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Feb 18th. During the breeding season, 12 birds from nine locations were reported, including pairs at Alkborough Flats on Apr 3rd-6th and at Gibraltar Point on Apr 13th, but there was little to suggest that these records referred to nesting attempts. The only reports between May 6th and Aug 5th were juveniles at Garthorpe on Jun 9th and Gibraltar Point on Jul 18th, but their origin is unknown. Autumn passage and end of year maximum day counts included seven at Gibraltar Point on four dates during September-October, peaking with 14 on Oct 11th, seven at Donna Nook on Oct 14th and 29th, six at Alkborough Flats on Oct 27th and Nov 16th, and four at Wolla Bank on Oct 25th, Frampton Marsh on Dec 11th and 17th, Seacroft Marsh on Dec 16th and Spalding on Dec 18th. A colour-marked bird ringed as a nestling in County Durham in 2015 was at Marston STW in October.

D740989	Nestling Female	07-05-2015	Stanhope Burn: 54°46'N 2°1'W (Durham)
	Alive (colour marks seen)	23-10-2016	Marston Sewage Works: 52°57'N 0°39'W 220km SSE 1y 5m 16d



European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola* Frampton Marsh Dec 11th 2016 © Neil Smith

Siberian/Stejneger's Stonechat *Saxicola maurus/stejnegeri*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

In an exceptional autumn for far eastern vagrants, two first winter males were found at Donna Nook, with the first on Oct 6th-10th (SL *et al.*) and the second on Oct 14th-16th (GPC *et al.*). Both have been accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.614). An article about these two birds in on p.238. The first showed characteristics of the form *stejnegeri*; while the second seemed most likely to be *maurus*. However, the separation of the two is still in its infancy and, based on current knowledge, it is not possible to assign either to one or the other species with certainty.

There have been nine previous examples of these eastern stonechats in Lincolnshire, as follows:

- 1978 An adult male, considered at the time to be *stejnegeri*, at Donna Nook on 23rd May. This remains the only spring record.
- 1978 A first winter male at Donna Nook on 7th-8th October.
- 1980 A female or immature at Donna Nook on 9th November.
- 1987 A female or immature at Donna Nook on 2nd October.
- 1990 A female or immature at Skegness on 21st-25th October.
- 1990 Another female or immature at Skegness on 23rd-25th October.
- 1994 A female or immature at Donna Nook on 22nd September.
- 2000 A female or immature at Saltfleet Haven on 1st-3rd October.
- 2013 A first winter male at Gibraltar Point on 5th October. This was not present on the 6th as stated in the 2013 BBRC report.



Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola maurus* Donna Nook Oct 16th 2016 © Russell Hayes

With the separation of *maurus* and *stejnegeri* as full species, BBRC will publish records of the two separately from 2017 onwards. It seems unlikely, in the absence of material permitting DNA analysis, that determination of any of the Lincolnshire birds can be made retrospectively. It remains possible that identification criteria based on plumage will be established in future and identifications might be made using photographic evidence. Until then, however, the eleven county records will have to remain as Siberian/Stejneger's Stonechats.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Fairly common passage migrant. Former local breeder but no recent certainty, although pairs are regular in late spring.

Greenland Wheatear *O.o. leucorrhoa* Scarce migrant in spring/autumn.

The first returning migrants arrived as usual during March with one at Frampton Marsh on the 26th-27th, followed by singles at Donna Nook on the 27th and Covenham Res on the 29th. Widespread records followed thereafter throughout April and May with typical day counts of between one and four, with higher counts including five at the Witham Mouth on Apr 8th, six at Gibraltar Point on Apr 13th, seven at Covenham Res on Apr 19th, 21 at Risby Warren, eight near Ancaster on Apr 30th, and six at Alkborough Flats on May 7th. One spent several days at Frampton Marsh from Jun 3rd to 12th but otherwise none were reported between May 30th and Jul 2nd, when a juvenile at Anderby Marsh marked the start of autumn passage. It was followed by singles at Covenham Res and Donna Nook, both on Jul 7th. They were widespread throughout the rest of July and August/September with peak day counts typically of between one and five. Higher counts included 11 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 22nd, followed by 20 on Aug 23rd, six on Sep 4th and 18 on Sep 11th, whilst there were eight at Frampton Marsh on both Aug 28th and Sep 6th. Typically, October was quieter, with peak day counts of one or two birds, with three at Gibraltar Point on the 8th and 11th and at Donna Nook on the 14th, whilst the last bird of the year was at Gibraltar Point on the 27th.

There were few reports of individuals showing characteristics of the Greenland race *leucorrhoa*, with no spring records, and two autumn records of birds trapped and ringed at Gibraltar Point on Sep 2nd and Sep 11th.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common resident and partial migrant.

The population trend for House Sparrow, both nationally and in Lincolnshire, continues to be one of slow decline. Counts of 50 or more came from only nine localities (12 in 2015), in January-February and July-November. The highest of all were up to 170 feeding on winter wheat close to the Barton upon Humber allotments in August, 150 at Humberston Fitties on Feb 14th, 150 in the Ruskington Fen area on Sep 11th, 120 around Anwick on Jul 26th, and 100 at both Midville on Aug 3rd and Alkborough village on Sep 2nd. One set of ringing details is shown, for the oldest reported in the county this year (the BTO longevity record is 12 years).

TS19400	Full-grown Male	08-11-2011	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W
	Caught by ringer	09-02-2013	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 1y 3m 1d
	Caught by ringer	03-03-2016	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 4y 3m 24d
	Caught by ringer	08-11-2016	Market Stainton: c. 53°18'N 0°9'W 0km 5y 0m 0d

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

BBS data for Lincolnshire, and England as a whole, suggest that the rise of Tree Sparrow numbers since the early 1990s has stopped. The county does, though, have more than many parts of the country: whereas only about 3% of English BBS squares are in Lincolnshire, 11% of the squares holding Tree Sparrows during 1994-2016 were in the county. Counts of 30 or more were made predominantly in January-March and August-December. The highest totals early in the year were 80 at Martin Moor on Jan 24th and c150 at Ingham on Feb 7th. There were more frequent high counts later in the year, once the year's young were fledged, including 100 at Donna Nook on Aug 10th, c120 at Baumber on Sep 18th, 216 at Freiston Shore on Oct 27th and 130 there on Nov 28th. On the coast, movement was noted especially during October, including c150 S at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on Oct 17th, 114 S at Gibraltar Point on Oct 18th and 188 (including 181 S) on Oct 29th. The monthly totals for birds seen moving south at Gibraltar Point were: 62 in September, 898 in October, and 32 in November.



Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* North Somercotes May 14th 2016 © Mark Johnson

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

A small influx of three birds into Britain during the spring included a one-day bird at Gibraltar Point, on May 7th (RDn *et al.*). This bird was found at the bird feeders at Sykes Farm, and filmed feeding on the bird table. Accepted by BBRC (BB 110 p.619). This represents only the second county record after a well-watched bird, also an adult, was at Saltfleetby on Nov 14th-18th 1994.



Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* Gibraltar Point May 7th 2016 © James Siddle



Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* Gibraltar Point May 7th 2016 © James Siddle

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Very common resident and partial migrant.

Common and widespread, with a similar number of reports to the previous year, from around 240 sites throughout the county. Although confirmed breeding was received for just a very small number of locations, there is nothing to suggest that this isn't a very common breeding bird throughout the area. The BBS suggests that populations in Lincolnshire and more widely are fairly stable. Some notable spring counts were recorded from Gibraltar Point, including 48 on Mar 11th and 29th, 52 on Apr 5th and 51 on Apr 14th, whilst 30 were at Donna Nook also on the 14th. During the autumn, peak day counts at Gibraltar Point included 82 on Sep 11th, 76 on Oct 3rd and 72 on Oct 8th. At Donna Nook there were counts of c100 on Oct 3rd and 14th, 70 on Oct 9th and 120 on Oct 15th. No especially significant ringing details were received, though two individuals, retrapped at Theddlethorpe and Gibraltar Point, were five years old. The latter bird had been caught at least once each year during 2011-2016.



Dunnock *Prunella modularis* Frampton Marsh Dec 13th 2016 © Neil Smith

Yellow Wagtail group *Motacilla flava*

Summer visitor and passage migrant. One common race occurs and several others are scarce/rare.

Yellow Wagtail *M.f. flavissima*: common summer visitor and passage migrant mostly Apr-Sep.

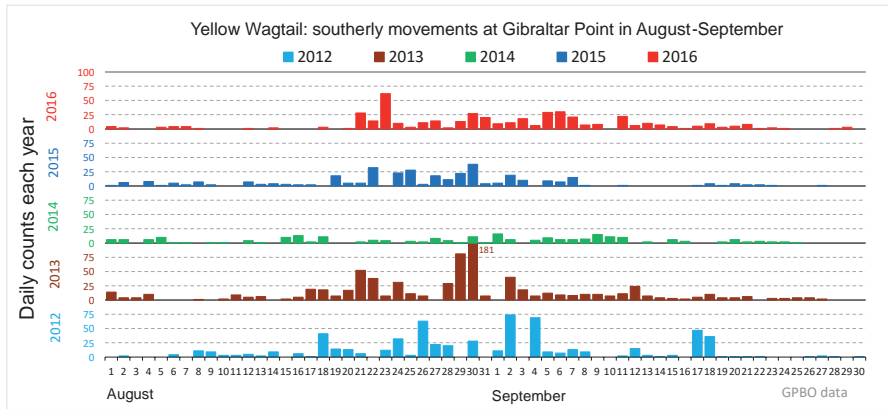
Peak counts	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Alkborough Flats	-	16	2	3	50	60	25	-
Barton Pits	-	1	-	-	-	30	10	1
Toft Newton Res	-	27	6	1	2	22	10	-
Gibraltar Point	-	15	23	1	10	105	47	2
Friskney Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	10	4	1	27	50	80	1
Midville	-	15	10	-	-	30	-	-
Pinchbeck Slupe NR	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	-
Willow Tree Fen NR	-	40	2	1	-	40	50	-
Marston STW	-	50	-	-	-	68	50	-



Yellow Wagtail *M.f. flavissima* Frampton Marsh Apr 24th 2016 ©Neil Smith

The table includes all sites with records of more than 25 birds, apart from 40 at Boston Haven on Aug 14th. The first birds of the year were three reported from Frampton Marsh and one from Caistor on Apr 2nd. On Apr 3rd, there were singles at Covenham Reservoir and Donna Nook, four at Frampton Marsh and eight at Toft Newton Reservoir. Peak April counts involved 50 at Marston STW on 19th and 21st, 40 at Willow Tree Fen, and 27 at Toft Newton Res on the 24th. Peak May counts were 23 at Gibraltar Point on 2nd and 12 at Covenham Reservoir on 6th. The peak numbers on spring migration at the six best reported sites were 40% lower than 2015. Breeding numbers were similar to those in 2015. Birds were recorded in 34 out of 82 BBS squares surveyed with a total of 105 birds counted. Yellow Wagtails were found in 222 BBS squares in UK as a whole, and Lincolnshire thus contributed around 19% of occupied squares. It continues to be the UK red-listed species (BOCC4) for which Lincolnshire is most important. Autumn migration counts were well up on those in spring and on autumn 2015, perhaps suggesting a productive breeding season. The July peak was 50 at Alkborough on the 20th-27th. In August, there were 60 at Alkborough during the 3rd-16th, 100 at Friskney Marsh on the 21st, 105 at Gibraltar Point on the 23rd, and 68 at Marston STW on the 31st. In September, there were 50 at Willow Tree Fen NR on the 3rd, 50 at Marston STW on the 10th and 80 at Frampton Marsh on the 19th. The last records of the year were singles at Gibraltar Point on Oct 8th and 9th.

The chart below shows daily counts of Yellow Wagtails moving S at Gibraltar Point, during August-September each year during 2012-2016. Naturally, numbers recorded will be affected by the level of coverage, but that is thought to have been fairly consistent over the period. The period of movement has been similar each year, but there has been considerable difference in volume between years. During the two months, when the majority of autumn movement occurs, totals have ranged from a maximum of 784 in 2013 to a minimum of 234 in 2014.



Blue-headed Wagtail *M.f. flava*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly spring. Has bred sporadically. **LBRC RBBP**

At least five individual birds resembling *M.f. flava* were reported and two “Channel” Wagtails (*flava* x *flavissima*). The first was one at Frampton Marsh on Apr 14th. Marston STW reported a “Channel” Wagtail during Apr 17th-30th, and three *flava* (two males and a female) during the 20th-30th, though not all were reported every day. During May, there were single “Channel” Wagtails at Nene Bridge on May 4th and 17th, and at Sutton Bridge on May 15th, perhaps all the same bird. There was also a *flava* at Tetney Marsh on May 9th.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Scarce passage migrant (mainly coastal) and winter visitor (mostly inland). Very scarce breeder, formerly sporadic, but has become regular in recent years.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	29	23	21	11	15	5	15	12	30	32	30	31
Min number of birds	37	27	28	11	28	8	24	38	50	58	39	42

Records were received from around 100 sites (up from 80 in 2015) which suggests that this species is either becoming more widespread or better recorded. For some reason birds were noticeably less reported in April compared to 2015 and peak autumn counts were lower too. It is relatively widely, but thinly, spread in winter, with most records being of single birds. The peak coastal counts were 11 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 11th, with nine on the 22nd, 11 on the 29th and ten on Oct 29th, all of those counts involving birds moving south. Inland, the maximum count by far was 21 at Anwick STW on Aug 9th, and indeed that was the highest total anywhere for the year. Breeding was confirmed at Cogglesford Mill, Sleaford, on May 9th, Kirkby on Bain GP where two adults were seen feeding two young throughout April-June, and Boultham Mere/Swanpool. The species was recorded in one of the 82 BBS squares surveyed in Lincs in 2016, with one bird being counted.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

Common resident and passage migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Res	4	4	4	10	19	11	18	16	21	10	15	8
Toft Newton Res	6	8	30	25	25	15	25	35	40	22	8	8

Lincoln	200	300	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Nocton/Wasp's Nest	1	30	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	200	-	-
Gibraltar Point	140	101	93	48	7	5	15	80	132	91	67	54
Frampton Marsh	1	1	6	21	4	4	50	40	7	13	1	1
Marston STW	13	10	2	30	-	-	-	1	25	3	2	250

The table includes all sites recording 50 or more, plus two regularly-counted reservoirs. Many of the higher counts were at roosts or pre-roost gatherings. The highest count at Gibraltar Point was 140 on Jan 5th, at a gathering prior to roosting around Freshwater Mere. The highest totals were in trees near the Stonebow in Lincoln city centre, where there were c200 on Jan 15th and 300 on Feb 10th. At Wasp's Nest, there were 200 on Oct 26th. Marston STW had high numbers throughout December with c250 on the 18th. Breeding information from the BBS found a total of 107 birds in 52 out of 82 surveyed squares, which was up on 2015, suggesting that the general increasing trend reported in the Lincolnshire BBS index in last year's report has continued into its fifth year.

White Wagtail *M.a. alba*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly Mar-Jun. **RBBP**

Spring passage started two weeks later than 2015, with two birds at Toft Newton Res and a single at Frampton Marsh on Mar 26th. There were also singles at East Keal on Mar 27th and Donna Nook on Mar 29th. From then until Jun 6th, adult breeding plumaged birds were reported from 19 sites, down from 23 sites in 2015. Peak counts were of 30 at Frampton Marsh on Apr 15th-21st, 19 at Trent Port (Marton) on Apr 20th and 15 at Marston STW on Apr 16th. A number of birds were reported in autumn, but it is sometimes not clear whether birds are being reported as true White Wagtails or merely as Pied/White. No adult birds were reported. Autumn identification is not easy and we are not publishing birds as White Wagtail unless we are sure that identification was certain.



Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* Goxhill Haven Feb 27th 2016 © Graham Catley

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly Sep-Nov, rarely Dec-Jan and Apr-May. **LBRC**

One moulting from first winter to adult plumage was at Goxhill Marsh during Feb 26th-Mar 14th (GPC). Another was at Appleby Carrs on Mar 6th (ND *et al.*). The first in autumn was one flying S calling at Gibraltar Point on Sep 26th (KMW). The next were singles at Donna Nook (SL *et al.*) and Rimac, Saltfleetby (NAL) on Oct 8th, followed by one at Covenham Res on Oct 10th (GPL). Further singles occurred at Gibraltar Point on Oct 16th (KMW), Covenham Res on Oct 20th and 23rd (GPL, KRo), and Gibraltar Point on Oct 25th (MEd). The total of two early in the year, eight in autumn (assuming the Oct 20th-23rd records involved one bird) and one in December means that there were 11 this year. It was the first time that more than one had occurred in the first half of the year.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tetney Marsh	1	1	6	10	10	1	3	-	-	25	15	4
Donna Nook	20	43	25	83	35	44	70	44	160	210	15	5
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	14	5	7	12	20	16	13	7	100	250	16	11
Gibraltar Point	22	10	128	147	48	37	30	68	4800	223	27	8
Wainfleet-Wrangle*	34	29	57	118	76	35	53	5	38	62	-	32
Frampton Marsh	9	20	2	10	20	5	35	100	100	20	2	12
Covenham Res	38	25	1	2	-	-	1	2	34	35	30	45
Branston	100	40	20	20	4	-	-	-	-	6	-	-

The table includes some of the more consistently recorded coastal sites, plus a couple of inland ones, including all areas with records of 75 or more birds. There were high numbers inland at Branston early in the year, including estimates of 100 on Jan 8th and 23rd. More typical were spring passage peaks at Gibraltar Point of 128 (mostly flying SW) on Mar 30th and 147 on Apr 2nd. Breeding estimates included 54 territories located in restricted coverage at Alkborough Flats, 38 territories at Frampton Marsh and 18 territories at Freiston Shore. Autumn passage was heavy throughout September. The highest count at Donna Nook was 160 on Sep 5th, and that was quickly followed by the first four figure total of 1115 (965 S) at Gibraltar Point on the 6th. Other such counts there included the peak of 4800 (4600 S) on Sep 11th, 1410 S on the 12th, 1720 on the 18th and 1390 on Sep 29th. High counts at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes were 100 on Sep 13th and 29th. The sum of visible migration counts at Gibraltar Point amounted to 16582 birds S during September and 763 in October; the respective totals in 2015 were 10360 and 610.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Breeds locally, mainly in the western half of the county.

Very early birds were reported at Gibraltar Point and Cleethorpes on Apr 2nd, with the first bird on a breeding site in Laughton Forest on the 9th. In Laughton Forest, the key breeding site remaining in the county, there were 14 territories on the wet heath and a total of at least 20 territories in the whole forest area, but there was no dedicated survey in 2016, so this figure is a minimum. Single pairs were at Manton Warren and Linwood Warren, and two birds were reported from Crowle Moors where there are known to be several pairs. These were the only breeding season records reported; the last bird in Laughton Forest was one on Aug 26th. Spring coastal passage saw 1-2 at Donna Nook on five dates from Apr 17th to May 28th and singles at Gibraltar Point on seven dates from Apr 2nd to May 12th, with one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on May 18th. In the autumn, one was at Barton on Sep 9th, and there were singles at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Aug 22nd, Cleethorpes on Sep 11th, Donna Nook on Sep 19th and Oct 10th, and 1-2 at Gibraltar Point on 20 dates from Aug 5th to Oct 15th, with 16 on Aug 23rd, three on the 25th, and a late bird on Oct 30th.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor Oct-Apr. Mainly coastal, possibly increasing but can be elusive, making counting difficult. **LBRC**

At Gibraltar Point, 1-3 were regularly seen during Jan 1st-Mar 30th, with occasional larger counts. Most notably these included 23 seen on Jackson's Marsh on Feb 4th (JPS), probably arriving from a Croftmarsh roost and then flying off towards the R Steeping channel. Nine were seen, flying over to the old saltmarsh in late afternoon, on the following day. The final records of spring there were singles on Apr 5th and 8th, and there was also one not far away at Middlemarsh Farm on Mar 29th. At Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes, there were six records at Rimac during Jan 17th-Apr 8th, most of singles but with two on Jan 30th and six on Feb 22nd. At Frampton Marsh, singles were seen on six dates during Jan 1st-17th, with two on the 18th and one on Apr 8th. At Donna Nook, singles were seen on nine dates during Jan 14th-Mar 12th, and at Tetney Marsh there were singles on seven dates during Jan 1st-Mar 8th. There were occasional sightings of one at Alkborough Flats from Jan 1st to Feb 27th, with three there on Jan 18th and two on Feb 20th-21st. Elsewhere, on the Humber there was one at East Halton Pits on Jan 16th. The last confirmed sightings of spring were the singles at Rimac, Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh on Apr 8th. The first of autumn was one at Anderby Marsh on Oct 3rd (EJM). The next was one at Gibraltar Point on Oct 18th, and there were frequent counts there of 1-4 and occasionally more through to the end of the year. The higher counts included seven on Nov 19th and 23rd, eight on Dec 11th

and five on Dec 19th. Smaller numbers elsewhere included, in the northern part of the county, up to three at Alkborough Flats during Oct 24th-Dec 18th, two at East Halton Skitter on Dec 20th, one at Killingholme Haven Pits on Oct 23rd, one at Cleethorpes on Oct 28th, and singles at Tetney Marsh on Nov 7th and Dec 20th. Continuing south, there were singles at Donna Nook on six dates during Nov 5th-Dec 21st, frequent sightings of one at Covenham Res during Nov 10th-28th with two there on the 12th-13th, singles at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on Nov 30th and Dec 30th, and at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, four on Oct 30th and singles on three dates in December. None were seen at Frampton Marsh in the second half of the year.



Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* Gibraltar Point Oct 29th 2016 © Philip Millns

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor Sep-Apr; scarce inland. Most may be Scandinavian Rock Pipit *A.p. littoralis* rather than the British *A.p. petrosus*.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Goxhill-East Halton	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1
Donna Nook	40	18	7	1	-	-	-	-	3	8	22	30
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	40	50	12	1	-	-	-	-	1	4	40	50
Gibraltar Point	67	36	11	2	-	-	-	-	12	141	38	56
Wainfleet Marsh	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	22	11
Freiston Shore	11	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	21	-
Frampton Marsh	5	4	2	4	4	2	-	-	1	1	5	-
Terrington*	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-

The coastal and estuarine areas holding most wintering birds are given in the table. Early and late in the year, most Rock Pipits are found along the shore and in saltmarsh, but there is also a pronounced visible passage at Gibraltar Point in autumn. The highest counts in January-February were 67 at Gibraltar Point on Jan 13th and c50 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Feb 18th. Most had left by early May but there was one in the Butterwick WeBS sector of The Wash on Jun 5th and two at Frampton Marsh on Jun 16th. The first one in autumn was at Frampton Marsh on Sep 13th, with others soon following elsewhere. In autumn, there were four day counts of above 50 at Gibraltar Point in October, the largest being 141 on Oct 17th and 73 on Oct 26th. Southerly movement there totalled 789 birds during Sep 17th-Nov 17th, with 621 of them in October. The largest day movement by far was 139 S on Oct 17th. Peaks towards the end of the year were 56 at Gibraltar Point on Dec 4th and c50 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Dec 26th. Up the Humber, there was one at Alkborough Flats on Oct 12th and two there on Dec 14th, while at Barton there were up to three on four dates in October and one on Dec 9th, the first in winter there for several years. Inland, there were two singles at Covenham Res in February and March,

and regular sightings of 1-2 during Sep 16th-Nov 26th. A typical origin for wintering Rock Pipits is given by the colour ring details below.

NOS	First-year Female	04-08-2014	Makkevika, Giske: 62°30'N 6°1'E (More og Romsdal) Norway
5E01294	Alive (colour rings seen)	15-01-2016	Pyewipe Mudflats, Grimsby: 53°34'N 0°4'W 1,054km SSW 1y 5m 11d

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

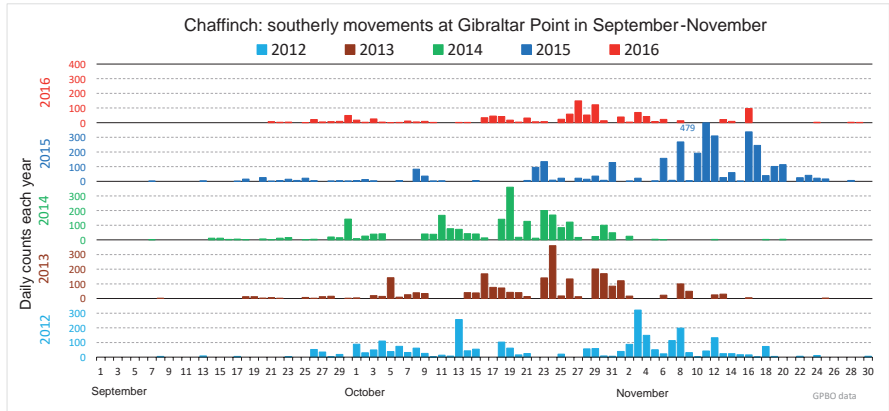
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sum of all site peaks	1656	1040	957	939	609	387	233	141	348	526	673	738

The table shows sums of monthly peaks from about 290 sites, and the totals are remarkably similar to those for 2015. Local Chaffinches are highly sedentary but from autumn onwards, large numbers of Scandinavian migrants join them. Peak counts during the first quarter changed little. The highest counts in January-February were 300 at Nocton Fen on Jan 1st, with 100 there on the 17th, 100 at Navenby on Jan 9th and 200 at Stenigot-Biscathorpe on Feb 14th. Other notable counts at this time were of 80 at Barton Pits on Jan 9th, 75 at Wold Newton on Jan 23rd, 70 at Horkstow Top on Feb 16th, and 60 at Gibraltar Point, Benniworth, Boultham Mere, Aubourn and Dunston Fen. Spring migration at Gibraltar Point began slightly later in March than in previous years, with only small numbers recorded moving south; the monthly total was just 143 with a peak of 84 S on the 29th. Elsewhere 40-60 were recorded during March at Morton (Gainsborough), Wellingore Heath, Welbourn Heath, Tetford and Pinchbeck. Numbers continued to move south at Gibraltar Point during early April but with a modest peak of just 37 on Apr 5th. There were 57 at Welbourn Heath on Apr 26th. See box below for breeding trends.

Early autumn flocks included 34 at Ruskington on Sep 11th and 50 at Welbourn Heath on the 15th. On the coast, 50 were counted at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Sep 29th and 70 were at Gibraltar Point on the 30th. The “viz migging” peaks at Gibraltar Point were 149 S on Oct 27th and 122 S on the 29th, but these were lower than the peaks in the last four years (see chart below). The total count of birds moving south was 1125, well below the average of 2362 (range 2327-3120) for 2012-2015. As can be seen in the chart, passage can last from late September to the end of November (or even into December) but its timing varies between years, presumably depending on weather conditions. Counts towards the end of the year were unexceptional, the largest being 75 at Welbourn Heath on Nov 24th, 180 at Stenigot-Biscathorpe on Dec 13th and 60 at Winterton on Dec 27th.

The ringing details include the two oldest reported during the year which are well short of the BTO record of almost 14 years, both local controls at the same sites where they were both originally ringed.

X487089	Adult Female	25-03-2009	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W
	Caught by ringer	08-04-2016	Brackenborough Hall, Louth: c. 53°23'N 0°0'W 0km 7y 0m 14d
X475103	First-year Male	20-03-2009	Muckton Bottom: 53°18'N 0°2'E
	Caught by ringer	21-03-2016	Muckton Bottom: 53°18'N 0°2'E 0km 7y 0m 1d





Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* Grantham Apr 3rd 2016 © Steve Nesbitt

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Exceptional in summer. **RBBP**

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Broughton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	12
Donna Nook	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	63	1	1
Gibraltar Point	-	3	5	7	-	-	-	-	-	210	16	22
Saltfleetby- Theddlethorpe Dunes	6	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-
Market Rasen	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	-
Dunston Fen/Nocton Wood	22	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easton/Stoke Rochford	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	60

Just under 70 sites reported Bramblings, although (as in 2015) they were decidedly thin on the ground in the first quarter of the year. The only substantial count was of up to 22 birds at Dunston Fen in January, continuing the picture of December 2015. Numbers fell even lower in February-March, and the spring maximum was just seven birds at each of Gibraltar Point on Apr 6th, Scotton Common on the 8th and Worlaby Carrs on the 10th. Birds continued to linger in ones and twos throughout April with the two at North Hykeham Pits on Apr 30th being the last.

Autumn arrivals were not noted until October, with 41, including 16 S, an abrupt start of passage at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd. Numbers built up to a peak mid-month, with over 117 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 13th (including an impressive flock of 80 on the reserve), 130 on the 14th (including 20 S) and the peak of 210 on the 15th (with 68 of them ringed). Southerly movement there during October amounted to 349 birds. Peaks elsewhere were 20 at Saltfleet on Oct 9th, 63 at Donna Nook on Oct 14th and 30 S at Crook Bank on Oct 17th. Few remained at Gibraltar Point in November, with a peak of just 16 on the 13th, but a flock of 22 were on the reserve on Dec 10th. Inland numbers were generally very small towards the end of the year, but there were 25 at Market Rasen on Nov 7th and a flock of 40 in the Easton-Stoke Rochford area on Nov 10th and 30-60 there on Dec 12th-16th.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Very scarce local resident and rare passage migrant. **LBRC RBBP**

Continuing the run of poor years for this increasingly rare visitor there was, as in 2015, just a single spring record. This was of a bird flying NE over Gibraltar Point on Apr 3rd (GPBO). Autumn records were of a single bird on the coast in September, five in October and two in November. One flew S over Gibraltar Point on Sep 21st (KMW). In October, one was at Donna Nook on the

4th (CA, GPC), singles were seen at Gibraltar Point on the 13th (RDn, FCC) and 15th (RDn), both seeming to be on the move to the south, and another flew S there on the 28th (RDn). Finally, there were two at Gibraltar Point on Nov 3rd (RDn, KMW). These records continue the county trend for most records to come during autumn migration in coastal or estuarine areas away from traditional breeding sites.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Common resident, but largely absent from the fens.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sum of all site peaks	208	123	103	103	69	46	45	44	46	80	99	115

This somewhat secretive species is certainly being under-recorded, and the counts above merely give an indication of the relative frequency of birds seen each month, based on records from about 150 sites, a similar number to 2015. The largest monthly peak counts were made (as was the case in 2015) at the beginning and end of the year, when birds are most noticeable. In the first quarter, counts in double figures came from Barton Pits (16), Tetford (12), Owllet Plantation (10), and Whisby NR (19). One high count in summer was of 13 at Bag Enderby on Jul 3rd. The only double figure counts in the last quarter came from Whisby NR where there were up to 15 in October and 12 in December. Confirmed breeding was reported from East Keal and Normanby-by-Spital and 15 sites reported possible or probable breeding. There were no significant counts from coastal sites. The total ringed in the county this year was 123, compared with 195 in 2015 and 191 in 2014, and the two recoveries reported (one for 2015) are both of birds less than one year old.

D902602	Juvenile	12-08-2014	Willingham by Stow: 53°20'N 0°41'W
	Caught by ringer	21-06-2015	Cottam: c. 53°17'N 0°46'W (Nottinghamshire) 8km SW Oy 10m 9d
Z523926	Juvenile	28-08-2015	Willingham Forest: 53°24'N 0°18'W
	Freshly dead (cat)	09-07-2016	Market Rasen: 53°23'N 0°19'W 3km Oy 10m 11d

Northern Bullfinch *P.p. pyrrhula*

Rare migrant. **LBRC**

Two were recorded at Donna Nook in late October and one at Gibraltar Point in early November. The first was an adult male trapped and ringed at Donna Nook on the 24th, and seen again on the morning of the 25th (SAB, JMS, SL *et al.*). The second was another male seen and heard there on Oct 29th (GPC, ND). The third was a female, also heard, ranging widely at Gibraltar Point on Nov 8th (KMW).

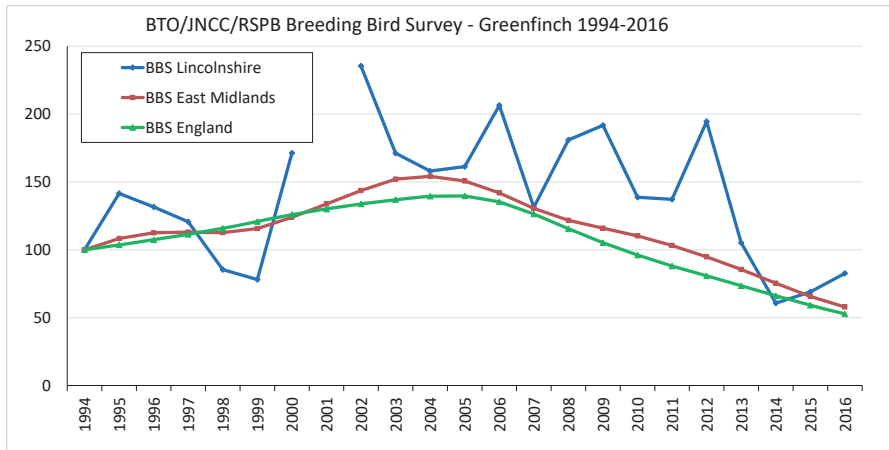
The northern European subspecies *pyrrhula* of Bullfinch differs from the British *pileata* in its larger size, somewhat brighter plumage, and especially in distinctive and often louder, more 'trumpeting' calls. These three take the total recorded in Lincolnshire to 17, as listed below. Note that the records in 1978 published in Lorand & Atkin (Birds of Lincolnshire and South Humberside) were later withdrawn by the observer.

- 1990 A male at Ponderosa, Donna Nook, on 21st October.
- 1994 Two (male and female) at Ponderosa, Donna Nook, on 16th October.
- 1994 Four (two males & two females) at Ponderosa, Donna Nook, on 17th October. It is assumed that two were the birds present on the 16th.
- 1994 One female at Pye's Hall, Donna Nook, on 17th October.
- 1994 Two females at Saltfleet village on 17th October.
- 2003 A female at Gibraltar Point.
- 2003 Two at Gibraltar Point on 30th October.
- 2003 A female at Gibraltar Point on 15th November.
- 2010 Two at Waters' Edge, Barton upon Humber, on 27th November.
- 2016 A male at Donna Nook on 24th-25th October, trapped and ringed on the first date.
- 2016 A male at Donna Nook on 29th October.
- 2016 A female at Gibraltar Point on 8th November.

Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Very common but declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Counts were received from around 180 sites, reflecting this species' widespread distribution across the county. Greenfinch numbers nationally, regionally and in Lincolnshire have continued to fall as a result of the protozoan parasite *Trichomonas gallinae*, a phenomenon first noted in 2005 and which had spread to Finland by 2008. One study showed a decline of 47% in breeding numbers and 65% in wintering numbers in southern Finland during 2006–2010 (*Ibis* 155: 357-366). In Britain, the decline continues, as illustrated by the chart below showing the BBS trends in Lincolnshire and more widely. The BBS has shown a 46% decline in the UK between 1995 and 2015. See box below for breeding trends of this and other finches.



Wintering flocks of 20 or more during the first quarter were noted at thirteen sites across the county, with the largest being 144 at Gibraltar Point on Jan 1st (many feeding on Sea Rocket seed along the shore) and 75 at Whisby NR during Jan 24th-Feb 5th. After March, numbers quickly fell as wintering flocks dispersed to breeding territories. In the autumn, there was evidence of a small coastal passage during October with maxima of 110 at Frampton Marsh (27th), 100 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 16th, and 40 at both Donna Nook (24th & 30th) and Gibraltar Point (26th). Small southward movements continued throughout September-November at Gibraltar Point, though the highest count was a modest 27 on Oct 26th. The Frampton count rose to a maximum of 150 on Nov 2nd and around 100 remained there during December, when there were up to 100 at Whisby NR. Three ringing recoveries are included, providing evidence of wintering birds on their breeding grounds.

TV98816	Adult Female	10-10-2015	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E			
	Freshly dead	15-07-2016	Great Ayton: 54°29'N 1°8'W (North Yorkshire) 181km NNW 0y 9m 5d			
TT89075	First-year Male	13-10-2012	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E			
	Freshly dead	15-08-2016	Lythe: 54°30'N 0°42'W (North Yorkshire) 170km NNW 3y 10m 2d			
TZ12006	First-year Female	09-11-2014	Barrow: 52°14'N 0°34'E (Suffolk)			
	Caught by ringer	25-07-2016	Muckton Bottom: 53°18'N 0°2'E 126km NNW 1y 8m 16d			

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

Fairly common coastal winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly Sep-Apr. Rare inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cleethorpes	-	40	-	-	-	1	15	-
Tetney Haven-Horseshoe Point	37	80	22	-	-	6	100	130
Donna Nook	121	75	75	10	-	28	65	170
Howden's Pullover-Saltfleet	-	120	-	-	-	-	36	-
Saltfleetby-Mablethorpe	200	150	-	-	-	-	48	62
Wainfleet Marsh	-	-	48	-	-	-	-	-

Butterwick Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	50
Frampton Marsh	5	-	11	-	-	1	-	25	-
Kirton Marsh	28	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	10
Holbeach Marsh	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Terrington	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sum of all site peaks	441	494	172	10	-	1	41	335	435

Around twenty-three sites recorded Twite in total during 2016. The most significant flocks were as usual on the north-east coast between Tetney and Mablethorpe, where about 80% of the total throughout the year occurred. Numbers in January-February were well down on those of 2015; indeed winter 2013/14 saw substantially larger numbers than the winters before and after. The highest March counts were of 75 at Donna Nook on the 8th and 48 on The Wash at Wainfleet on the 13th. Inland, there was one with Linnets at Marston STW on Mar 1st. Marston has a history of attracting Twite, presumably on passage to the breeding grounds, as there were six there in both March 2013 and March 2014. Back on the coast, most had departed by mid-April, with the last record being of a single bird at Donna Nook on Apr 16th.

Ten birds seen at Donna Nook on Oct 9th were the first of autumn. A sharp build-up of numbers occurred from Oct 29th, when there were 28 at Donna Nook and birds began to appear further south into November, when there were 25 at Frampton Marsh on Nov 7th. By the end of November, good numbers had arrived at their favoured sites along the north-east coast with 65 at Donna Nook on Nov 23rd and 100 at Tetney Marsh on the 28th. There were 130 at Tetney Marsh by Dec 2nd and Donna Nook had a maximum of 170 on Dec 16th; slightly smaller numbers were between Saltfleetby and Mablethorpe North End (62 in the WeBS counts of Dec 17th). The highest count on The Wash in December was 50 at Butterwick Marsh on Dec 17th.

Three colour-ringed birds seen at Tetney Marshes in winter belonged, as is the case for many of those wintering on the Lincolnshire coast, from the population breeding in the Pennines. All were ringed at the same site.

Z649173	First-year	17-10-2015	Booth Wood Reservoir, Rishworth: 53°38'N 1°58'W (West Yorkshire)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	28-02-2016	Tetney Marshes: 53°30'N 0°3'E 134km E 0y 4m 11d
	- ditto -	17-08-2016	Whitworth: 53°38'N 2°10'W (Lancashire) 15km W 0y 10m 0d
S109819	First-year	09-09-2016	Booth Wood Reservoir, Rishworth: 53°38'N 1°58'W (West Yorkshire)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	19-11-2016	Tetney Marshes: 53°30'N 0°3'E 134km E 0y 2m 10d
	- ditto -	28-11-2016	Tetney Marshes: 53°30'N 0°3'E 134km E 0y 2m 19d
S109682	First-year	29-08-2016	Booth Wood Reservoir, Rishworth: 53°38'N 1°58'W (West Yorkshire)
	Caught by ringer	09-09-2016	Booth Wood Reservoir, Rishworth: 53°38'N 1°58'W (West Yorkshire) 0km 0y 0m 11d
	Alive (colour rings seen)	28-11-2016	Tetney Marshes: 53°30'N 0°3'E 134km E 0y 2m 30d

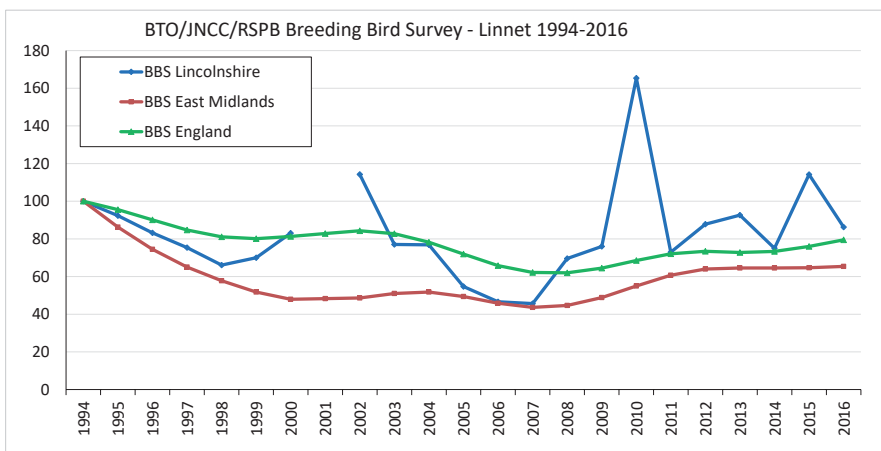
Linnets *Linaria cannabina*

Very common/abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	60	-	4	2	20	18	6	10	200	80	160	70
Garthorpe	145	-	-	32	31	4	-	-	35	125	-	505
Cleethorpes-Tetney	65	40	32	26	20	1	4	-	45	80	120	120
Donna Nook	16	52	55	240	200	110	40	140	120	120	45	70
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	120	40	40	54	40	16	3	21	150	200	50	80
Gibraltar Point	50	50	80	203	209	66	45	62	966	451	219	58
Freiston Shore	800	360	100	125	6	1	5	1	12	256	94	452
Frampton Marsh	150	200	36	6	20	4	50	50	100	300	25	40
Sum of all site peaks	2677	1828	1289	1754	1025	424	497	1010	3144	2444	1730	2818

Recorded widely throughout the county all year, with counts from about 200 sites. Peak counts were similar to those of 2015, except at Gibraltar Point where the autumn counts appeared significantly higher. January was the peak winter month, and flocks of 100 or more were recorded at eleven sites in the first quarter: Freiston recorded the highest number (800 on Jan 16th), with impressive counts at Baumber (250, Feb), Dunsby Fen (150, Jan), Morton (160, Mar) and Garthorpe (145, Jan). Spring passage saw numbers increase, reflecting the national picture on BirdTrack, which records maxima in mid- to late-April. Spring peaks were 203 at Gibraltar Point and 240 at Donna Nook, both on Apr 30th, and southerly movement at Gibraltar Point totalled 838 during April and 646 during May. Summer counts were much lower as birds dispersed to breed but with an

increase in the all-sites peak in August as juveniles fledged and movement started. The BBS index graphs for the East Midlands and England as a whole have been showing a gentle increase for about ten years, a pattern mirrored by the Lincolnshire data (though with an anomalous value in 2010). This recent increase is welcome, coming against the background of a period of often steep decline from the 1960s onwards. See box below for breeding trends for this and other finches.



At Gibraltar Point, visual migration was impressive with a total of 2292 (1032) S in September and 1182 (485) S in October (2015 figures in parentheses). Maximum day counts there were 966 on Sep 30th and 451 on Oct 17th. Elsewhere in the autumn, there were 200 at Alkborough on Sep 4th-10th and, inland, 174 at Doddington on Sep 5th and 433 at Ruskington Fen on Sep 11th. Flocks of 40-80 were widespread on the coast and inland during October-November. At Gibraltar Point, movement continued all month in November with a maximum of 207 S on Nov 16th. Eight sites recorded 100 or more birds in December, with a maximum of 505 at Garthorpe on Dec 27th, and another twenty recorded flocks of between 20 and 80. Finally, a ringing control provided evidence of post-breeding dispersal when a first calendar year male was trapped at Gibraltar Point having been ringed in Suffolk.

S232047	First-year Male	10-04-2016	Brewery Farm, Earl Stonham: c. 52°10'N 1°5'E (Suffolk)
	Caught by ringer	01-07-2016	Gibraltar Point: 53°5'N 0°18'E 115km NNW 0y 2m 21d

Redpoll reminder

Some observers continue to confuse Lesser and Common Redpolls. This may be a problem as much with terminology as with identification. All Redpolls can be variable and confident identification in the field can be difficult. For this reason observers are reminded that **all** field records of **Common** (formerly **Mealy**) **Redpolls** in Lincolnshire should be supplemented by supporting details such as a written description, ringing report and/or photographic evidence. Only the following records below met these criteria and were deemed acceptable.

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

Scarce winter visitor. **LBRC**

Common Redpoll remains a truly scarce winter visitor. One bird seen in Knaith between Jan 16th and 25th (DN, BHe) was the only record until early March, when another was at Marston on Mar 9th. Further singles were seen on Apr 3rd at Gibraltar Point (RDn) and on Apr 3rd-9th at Anwick (GH). The last record of the spring was of two with a flock of Lesser Redpolls at Gibraltar Point on Apr 18th (KMW). The first of the autumn were three at Donna Nook on Oct 12th (SL *et al.*) with a single at Gibraltar Point on Oct 13th (KMW). The flock at Donna Nook increased to six, eight and twelve on successive days to Oct 15th, but it was then seen to depart to the south (SL *et al.*). There were also three at Donna Nook on Oct 20th (SL). The last record was of one at Waters' Edge, Barton, on the last day of the year, Dec 31st (GPC).

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*

Rare breeding bird, common passage migrant and winter visitor.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sum of all site peaks	366	208	363	248	18	-	-	2	1	336	86	119

Records were received from about 75 sites across the county, and the monthly totals in the first five months of the year were higher than in 2015, although in autumn numbers were overall lower, and immigration started a little later, with only one bird recorded in September. There was a notable flock of approximately 100 birds at Nocton Fen on Jan 1st and smaller flocks of up to ten in the Lincoln area during the first quarter of 2016. Elsewhere 30 were at Trent Port (Marton) on Jan 3rd, 33 at Marston STW on Jan 7th, 30 at Boultham Mere on Jan 11th, 40 at Knaith on Jan 17th and 50 at Owlet Plantation on Jan 23rd. These counts contributed to the sum of January peaks being the highest of 2016. A flock of 100 was recorded in the Stenigot-Biscathorpe area on Feb 14th and numbers built up at Knaith into March with 150 there on the 19th. Very few were recorded on the coast during this first quarter of the year; most birds being inland at garden feeding stations or in suitable woodland areas. Birds moved away during April and although very few were recorded moving on the coast, the last birds of the spring were five at Donna Nook on May 29th.



Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret* Lincoln Apr 3rd 2016 © Chris Grimshaw

There were no reports of breeding attempts, and the first autumn immigrants appeared at Donna Nook, where two were seen on Aug 22nd. Passage began in earnest on Oct 9th. About 440 flew S there during October, peaking at 72 on the 14th, with relatively few seen elsewhere on the coast, though there were c20 at Crook Bank, Theddlethorpe, on both the 9th and 17th and, inland, 30 at Whisby NR on the 13th. Movements at Gibraltar Point had dried to a trickle by the first week in November, at which point flocks began appearing inland. The highest counts in November were 22 at Laughton Forest on Nov 15th, 20 at Whisby NR on Nov 30th and 15 at Boultham Mere on Nov 8th. In December, Whisby NR continued to hold a sizeable flock of up to 50, and there were 42 in Laughton Forest on Dec 3rd. Elsewhere in December 1-7 were recorded at Barton Pits, Marston STW, Messingham SQ, North Hykeham Pits, Owlet Plantation and Tealby.

Lesser Redpolls move long distances both within Britain and between Britain and the near continent. There have been several records of birds ringed in Highland region caught again in Lincolnshire and

vice-versa, for example, and there are 14 recorded movements between Lincolnshire and Belgium or The Netherlands. The ringing recoveries below are not particularly unusual but provide more evidence of the movements of our wintering population. Note that the two caught on the same day in October 2015 in Ulster, were present together in Bourne Wood late the same winter.

Z230316	Full-grown	21-12-2014	Ordiequish Forest, Thief's Hill, Fochabers: c. 57°34'N 3°5'W (Moray)
	Dead	14-04-2016	near Scawby: 53°31'N 0°34'W 475km SSE 1y 3m 24d
Z128448	Adult Female	18-10-2015	Drum, Peterculter: 57°5'N 2°19'W (Aberdeenshire)
	Caught by ringer	04-02-2016	Warren Wood, Gainsborough: 53°22'N 0°46'W 423km SSE 0y 3m 17d
Y518947	First-year Male	04-10-2015	Copeland Bird Observatory: 54°41'N 5°32'W (Down)
	Caught by ringer	28-02-2016	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 399km ESE 0y 4m 24d
	Caught by ringer	23-03-2016	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 399km ESE 0y 5m 19d
Y519000	First-year	04-10-2015	Copeland Bird Observatory: 54°41'N 5°32'W (Down)
	Caught by ringer	25-02-2016	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 399km ESE 0y 4m 21d
	Caught by ringer	31-03-2016	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 399km ESE 0y 5m 27d

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Scarce/fairly common irruptive passage migrant and visitor, mainly Jun-Apr, occasionally all year. Proved to breed on a few occasions.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sum of all site peaks	-	-	8	1	4	17	2	1	-	10	8	1

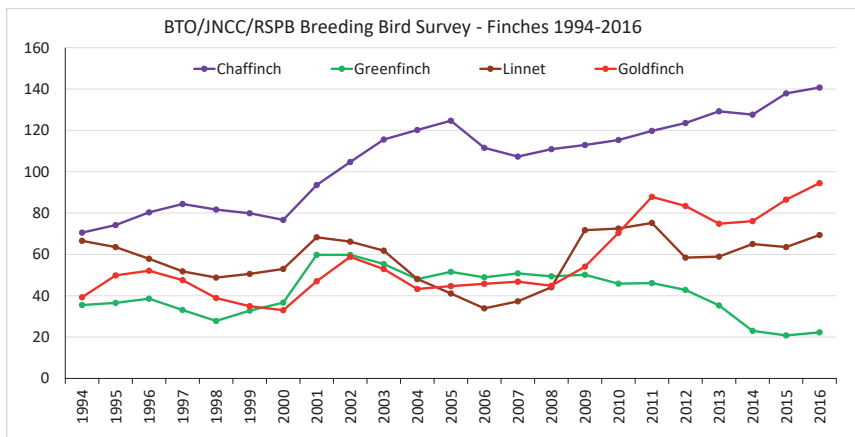
Crossbills were reported from just nine sites: another poor year overall and with even fewer records than in 2015. No reports were received before Mar 25th, when eight were seen at Gibraltar Point, and one flew S there on Mar 29th. No confirmed breeding attempts were reported, but sightings of single birds at Market Rasen on two dates in April suggested that breeding possibly was attempted there. Four flew S at Gibraltar Point on May 26th, and singles were seen there on Jun 2nd and 3rd, with eight at Walesby Moor on Jun 7th. Later in June, there were four at Haltham and one at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on the 27th, two at Laughton Forest on the 28th and one at Linwood Warren on the 29th. Two at Gibraltar Point on Jul 4th and one on Aug 5th completed the summer records. In autumn, very few were recorded, with most of these being in October: nine were at Gibraltar Point on the 16th, with two there and one S at Alkborough on the 17th, and another S at Alkborough on the 21st. A series of records at Gibraltar Point followed: one on Oct 27th, five on Nov 2nd, four (including three S) on Nov 3rd and two S on Nov 4th. Two went S at Alkborough on Nov 6th. To complete the year, one was at Covenham St Bartholomew on Nov 28th and one flew over Normanby on Dec 3rd.



Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* Gibraltar Point Nov 2nd 2016 © Paul Neale

Trends in finch numbers

The chart below shows the varying fortunes of the four most numerous breeding finches in Lincolnshire since 1994. The indices for each species effectively show relative abundance. They are set relative to the average count per BBS square for 1994 and 1995; thus the starting index is 100 x count/10. The index lines are smoothed by showing, for each year, the average of that year and the previous and following years. Chaffinch, which is most numerous and widespread, continues to rise at a gentle rate. Linnet, once an abundant species of hedgerows and scrub, suffered 40 years of decline driven mainly by agricultural changes, but has been making a slow recovery from the low point of 2006; its Lincolnshire population density is higher than the UK average. Greenfinch, once seemingly common everywhere but increasingly restricted to towns and villages, has been in steep decline since 2000 due to the disease trichomonosis, something perhaps related to its reliance on garden bird feeders. Goldfinch, in contrast, has been increasing sharply; the reasons for this may include adaptation to using garden feeders (especially Niger seed) and milder winters allowing birds to avoid the risks of migration. It has, so far, escaped significant disease outbreaks, perhaps helped by its different feeding habits from those of Greenfinch.



Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Common resident and passage migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	8	8	1	5	2	2	80	250	14	18	12
Tetney Marsh	170	35	20	20	30	-	6	-	160	80	130	250
Donna Nook	30	55	12	7	8	5	14	17	200	125	72	80
Saltfleet-Theddlethorpe	30	20	11	16	12	16	1	8	116	280	40	50
Middlemarsh Farm	24	10	40	12	16	12	18	50	100	30	22	16
Gibraltar Point	51	30	41	57	78	31	39	90	608	720	90	27
Freiston Shore	10	50	1	2	-	1	3	1	20	130	4	-
Frampton Marsh	16	28	12	10	20	20	30	150	100	50	45	42
Whisby NR	20	-	4	4	2	-	2	14	40	490	50	30

Goldfinch is one of the commoner finches in the county and the table summarises sites with maxima of 100 or more and with records in six months or more of the year. See box for breeding trends. Most British Goldfinches move to Iberia in winter but some remain in the UK. The UK population has been increasing since around 2000 and, although showing signs of flattening out, the population is currently at an all-time high. In the first quarter, many sites held 10-50 birds, with the largest flocks being of 170 at Tetney Marsh and 51 at Gibraltar Point. Numbers tailed off a little in the spring months, but there was some modest movement along the coast during March to

May at Gibraltar Point, with 263 S between Apr 14th and May 7th including a peak of 48 on May 5th. Autumn counts were very much larger with passage building up during August and September, and peak numbers during late September and October. The totals moving south at Gibraltar Point were exactly 1000 during September (peak of 608 on the 30th) and 1658 during October (peak of 369 on the 17th). Flocks of up to 250 were present during October feeding on the saltmarsh and in the dunes (presumably feeding prior to moving on). Donna Nook, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Alkborough Flats also recorded flocks of 200 or more in September and October. Small southerly movements continued at Gibraltar Point during November with a monthly maximum of 90 S on Nov 16th. The wintering population in November and December was substantially lower, though during December there were flocks of 50 or more wintering at Donna Nook, Gibraltar Point, Marton, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Tetney Marsh. The last site had the highest winter count, of 250 on Dec 2nd. Three ringing recoveries are shown: the longest distance one within Britain and both overseas movements of 2016. These are unexceptional, along the main migration route of British Goldfinches.

Y804183	Adult Male Caught by ringer	11-11-2012 11-04-2016	College Farm, Frampton: 52°54'N 0°0'E Cotehill, near Collieston: 57°20'N 1°58'W (Aberdeenshire) 510km NNW 3y 5m 0d
D373793	First-year Female Caught by ringer	18-10-2013 05-03-2016	Butterwick, Boston: 52°58'N 0°3'E Wirwignes: 50°40'N 1°45'E (Pas-de-Calais) France 280km SSE 2y 4m 16d
BLB 14271712	Adult Male Freshly dead	13-12-2015 15-07-2016	Berchem, Kluisbergen: 50°46'N 3°30'E (Oost-Vlaanderen) Belgium Scunthorpe: 53°35'N 0°39'W 421km NW 0y 7m 2d

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

Very scarce migrant, mainly Apr-Jun and Oct-Nov. **LBRC**

Two birds were seen and heard flying past at Frampton Marsh on May 5th (JB, TC). They landed in the distance but could not be found again.

Siskin *Spinus spinus*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce in summer but may breed in some years.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	25	33	15	18	2	2	1	-	58	216	132	10
Number of sites	33	44	54	30	7	2	1	0	4	22	11	20
Sum of all site peaks	647	494	671	171	28	4	1	0	66	662	157	221

Counts were received from around 105 sites in 2016. The large numbers reported during the last quarter of 2015 are reflected in a larger than average winter population during the first quarter of 2016. Flocks of 50 or more during January were seen at Barton Pits (60), Bracebridge (100), Cleethorpes CP (50) and Keal Carr NR (65). These high numbers persisted across all sites well into March, when 80 were seen at Hartsholme CP. At this time, when natural foods become scarce, Siskins often visit garden feeders and can be caught for ringing. This year, notable catches were 97 in three visits to Osgodby up to Mar 8th and 90 at Bourne on Mar 20th. There was a steady southward trickle on the coast during March and April and small numbers lingered at a number of sites into the later spring and summer. Two males were singing on the Hobhole Bank on Apr 2nd and a notable flock of 50 was still at Market Rasen GC on Apr 4th. Near the latter site, breeding was confirmed in Willingham Forest when a female with a brood patch was trapped on Apr 21st, a newly fledged juvenile on May 5th, and two birds in post-juvenile moult on Aug 25th, indicating a successful second brood. Probable breeding was reported from Ruskington in April and display flights and feeding were noted in Laughton Forest on Apr 30th. A juvenile recorded at Gibraltar Point on Jul 4th was not necessarily a locally bred bird. The last summer record was from Gibraltar Point on Jul 13th, and the first of autumn there on Sep 7th. Records came largely from Gibraltar Point during September with a total of 257 S in the month and a maximum of 58 S on the 21st. Elsewhere, just single figure counts came from Covenham Res, Donna Nook and Whisby NR: an exceptionally poor month overall. October saw movements pick up with a total of 1282 logged going south at Gibraltar Point, with a peak of 216 on Oct 29th. The only other coastal site to record significant movement was Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes that had 300 S on Oct 15th and 30 S on each of Oct 16th and 17th. Thirty-five were recorded at Covenham Res on Oct 16th and 30 were seen at Donna Nook on Oct 28th. Fifteen seen at Temple Wood on Oct

10th was the highest inland count. The events of autumn 2015 were not repeated. Southward movements continued throughout November at Gibraltar Point when 358 were logged with a monthly peak of 132 on the 3rd. December saw numbers fall considerably with flocks into double figures at Kirkby on Bain GP (12 on the 2nd), Woodhall Spa (20 on the 4th), Broughton (30 on the 11th), Messingham SQ (10 on the 18th), Holywell Lake (12 on the 19th), Whisby NR (40 on the 24th) and Chambers Farm Wood (50 on the 31st). The three longest distance movements tracked by ringing in 2016 are shown below.

D220253	Adult Male	31-03-2016	Owston Ferry, Epworth: c. 53°29'N 0°47'W
	Caught by ringer	18-05-2016	Balantrath: 58°14'N 3°27'W (Highland) 555km NNW 0y 1m 17d
D694155	Adult Female	18-03-2014	Craibstone: 57°10'N 2°12'W (Aberdeen)
	Caught by ringer	18-03-2016	Bourne Wood: 52°45'N 0°23'W 505km SSE 2y 0m 0d
S126059	First-year Female	29-02-2016	Usselby Plantation, near Market Rasen: 53°24'N 0°20'W
	Caught by ringer	06-05-2016	Cnoc: c. 56°12'N 4°42'W (Argyll and Bute) 417km NW 0y 2m 7d



Siskin *Spinus spinus* Grantham Mar 25th 2016 © Steve Nesbitt

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Fairly common but somewhat localised and declining resident.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bonby/Worlaby Carrs	32	30	-	1	15	-	-	-	-	17	-	-
Donna Nook	-	-	1	17	5	6	3	5	-	15	-	-
Gibraltar Point	45	81	84	36	1	-	-	1	-	16	35	70
Freiston Shore	35	12	5	6	2	1	2	2	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	8	2	1	5	6	2	3	2	-	1	3	1
Sum of all site peaks	209	164	139	114	55	37	30	11	1	66	40	71

Records were received from about 60 sites across the county, slightly fewer than in 2015. The table includes most of the more significant counts but, in addition, there were 30 at both Croft and Northorpe Fen in January, 18 at Dunsby Fen in March and 15 at Thurlby Fen in February. Except at Gibraltar Point, where the peak count of 84 was on Mar 1st, numbers that month were strangely low; it is not known if this is genuine or merely the result of reduced recording effort. Reports during the breeding season included 20 pairs in the Deeping St. Nicholas area (see the article by Nicholas Watts on p.221), five pairs at Frampton Marsh and one pair at Freiston Shore.

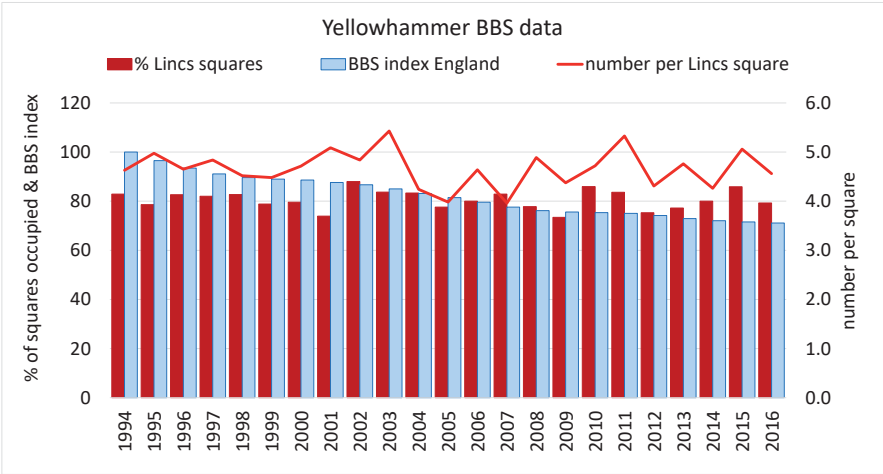
Possible or probable breeding, largely based on singing males, was reported from a further eleven sites. The BBS population trend for the UK continues to be one of decline, and more counts of singing males from defined areas would be welcome.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Common resident, but numbers have decreased.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Keelby	21	-	-	2	1	1	1	-	-	3	-	15
Donna Nook	6	5	8	10	13	6	8	9	10	25	7	3
Saltfleetby- Theddlethorpe Dunes	29	15	4	4	2	2	2	-	-	8	21	9
Covenham Reservoir	5	23	20	4	2	2	3	-	3	20	-	7
Market Rasen	2	42	1	17	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
Toft Newton Res	2	2	5	6	4	5	7	2	-	2	12	30
Trent Port (Marton)	15	12	2	3	3	-	-	-	-	5	-	60
Boultham Mere/Swanpool	7	12	7	5	4	4	4	3	2	7	5	45
Welbourn/Welbourn Heath	76	44	50	17	-	11	10	-	2	60	118	95
Sum of all site peaks	808	620	451	288	181	122	193	97	68	294	320	376

The table includes all sites with counts of 20 or more and in seven months or more. Flocks of Yellowhammers are somewhat diminished across England but still a familiar scene in winter in many parts of the county. BBS data for England (see chart below) showed a 41% decline during 1995-2015 and a steeper decline before that; Lincolnshire BBS data have shown little change during the same period but some observers' experience is that decline is now under way.



Counts were received from about 180 sites across the county, slightly fewer than in previous years. The monthly peak totals show little change, with maximum numbers recorded in January. In the first quarter, the largest flocks were of 100 or more on wild bird cover crops at Holme Hall, near Scunthorpe, in January and Nebraska Farm, Kirton in Lindsey, in January-March. Other large totals not in the table were 60 at Barton Pits, 65 at Thurlby Fen and 50 at Wold Newton in January, and 80 at Louth and 50 at Saxby Wold in February. Numbers decreased after mid February, low counts reflecting birds dispersing and returning to breeding territories. In the autumn, small numbers moved south along the coast during October with 25 at Donna Nook on Oct 3rd and inland a flock of 60 had built up at Welbourn by Oct 11th and 80 were at Bonby Carrs by Oct 28th. The Welbourn flock stood at 118 by Nov 24th.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

Rare vagrant. **LBRC**

There was just one confirmed record in 2016, at Donna Nook on Oct 4th (APC).

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

Very rare vagrant. **BBRC**

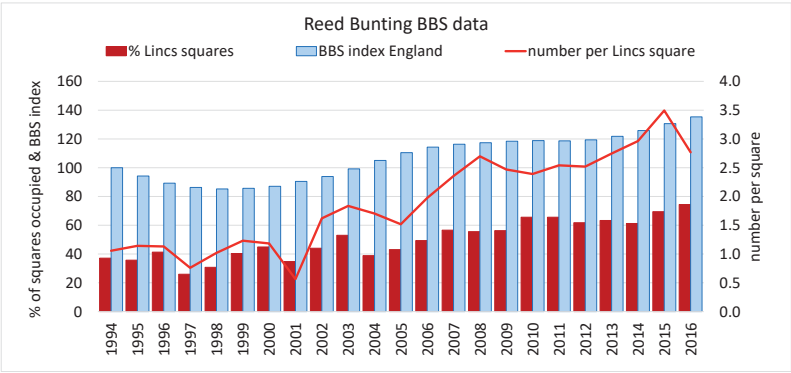
1906 correction: Lorand & Atkin (1989, *The Birds of Lincolnshire and South Humberside*) included a record of one seen by J. Whitaker at Chapel St Leonards on 22nd September 1906 (Whitaker 1906, *The Zoologist* 10: 392). However, the supporting details are sparse, even for the time, and authorities of the early twentieth century placed the record in square brackets (Witherby & Ticehurst 1908, *British Birds* 1: 246-256; Blathwayt 1912, *The Zoologist* 16: 60-63). Consequently, we now treat the 1906 record as unacceptable, and a male seen at Gibraltar Point on 11th May 1975 becomes the first record. There have now been seven acceptable records for Lincolnshire, the most recent in 2015.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Common/very common resident and passage migrant.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	-	1	7	1	10	161	13	10	25	8	10	250
Garthorpe	50	-	-	21	24	17	-	-	25	110	-	140
Donna Nook	20	15	10	11	16	15	7	17	25	180	25	22
Gibraltar Point	32	28	26	21	20	10	10	9	451	128	33	57
Freiston Shore	62	39	4	4	3	7	2	1	5	20	83	6
Sum of all site peaks	579	361	357	412	322	503	258	167	695	696	491	765

Reed Buntings were widely recorded across the county in all months with counts from around 210 sites. Peak counts were recorded in January and December, and during autumn passage in October. As a breeding bird, they are now present in 75% of Lincs BBS squares (see chart below) with numbers in the UK and Lincolnshire having shown a steady increase during much of 1994-2016.



The highest counts in the first quarter are mostly in the table but there were also 31 at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, in February, and 30 at both Marston STW and Nebraska Farm, Kirton in Lindsey, in January. Numbers began falling from late February as birds dispersed to breeding areas. Some observers recorded evidence of breeding, but systematic counts were generally lacking apart from, notably, Alkborough Flats where 161 territories were mapped in a restricted area (in which there had been 133 territories in 2015). Elsewhere, Frampton Marsh held 18 territories and Freiston Shore held seven. In the autumn, counts built up, especially at coastal sites, towards the middle of September and into October. There was significant southward movement along the coast, especially at Gibraltar Point, where 672 went south during September, peaking at 104 on the 26th and 439 on the 30th, and 432 in October, peaking at 104 on the 1st and 58 on the 17th. The peaks at Donna Nook were 180 on Oct 3rd and 150 on Oct 15th. Counts elsewhere were unremarkable.

The largest counts in December, after passage had ended, were either side of the mouth of the R Trent, including 250 at Alkborough Flats on the 14th-15th and 140 at Garthorpe on the 27th.

Most British-ringed Reed Buntings tend not to move far, as evidenced by X678487 re-trapped for the fourth time after initial capture and just less than six years old. The British longevity record for this species is almost ten years, set in 1978; that for Lincolnshire is of a first-year male trapped at Wainfleet Marsh in November 1968 and re-trapped in Skegness in October 1978, when just less than ten years old. The other two records concern slightly longer movements, although they are not unusual.

X678487	First-year Male	02-03-2010	Northorpe Fen: 52°44'N 0°20'W
	Caught by ringer	28-03-2010	Northorpe Fen: 52°44'N 0°20'W 0km 0y 0m 26d
	Caught by ringer	25-03-2012	Northorpe Fen: 52°44'N 0°20'W 0km 2y 0m 23d
	Caught by ringer	16-01-2013	Northorpe Fen: 52°44'N 0°20'W 0km 2y 10m 14d
	Caught by ringer	21-01-2016	Northorpe Fen: 52°44'N 0°20'W 0km 5y 10m 19
D987728	First-year	13-12-2014	Alton Water Reservoir, near Tattingstone: c. 51°58'N 1°6'E (Suffolk)
	Long dead	30-05-2016	Scunthorpe: 53°34'N 0°41'W (North Lincolnshire) 215km NNW 1y 5m 17d
S310289	First-year Female	21-09-2016	Near North Somercotes: 53°26'N 0°9'E
	Caught by ringer	23-10-2016	Marsworth Reservoir, near Tring: 51°48'N 0°39'W (Hertfordshire) 190km SSW 0y 1m 2d

White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*

Very rare vagrant.

2010 correction: The dates (in April) for the bird in Fulbeck given in the 2010 Lincolnshire Bird Report were incorrect. The correct dates were 18th-19th June.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Scarce local passage migrant and winter visitor Sep-Apr. Rare inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cleethorpes-Horseshoe Point	5	1	-	-	-	4	2	2
Donna Nook	3	2	-	-	1	1	5	2
Saltfleet-Mablethorpe	1	6	-	-	1	-	2	6
Gibraltar Point	-	-	5	-	2	2	2	2
Witham-Frampton	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Number of sites	6	5	2	-	6	5	6	6
Sum of all site peaks	13	15	10	-	7	9	14	15

Around fifteen coastal sites recorded Lapland Bunting, with some overlap possible. This was another quiet year for the species, with numbers similar to those of 2015; the last year with substantially more was 2011. Small numbers were present on the north-east coast during January, with a maximum of five at Tetney Marsh and three at Donna Nook on the 13th. The peak counts in February were six at Rimac, Saltfleetby, on the 19th and five still there on the 22nd. There were 1-2 at Gibraltar Point in March, plus five at Croftmarsh LNR on the 13th, and the last one flew south at Gibraltar Point on Mar 27th. Autumn arrivals were very sparse, beginning with one at Frampton Marsh on Sep 15th. There were further arrivals of 1-2 birds along the coast up to the end of the month including single birds S at Gibraltar Point on the 18th and 20th, and two S there on the 21st. Small numbers continued to be seen through October-December with just 1-3 coastal birds being reported at the usual sites, plus maxima of four at Tetney Marsh on Oct 21st, five at Donna Nook on Nov 8th and six at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Dec 30th.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant on coast, mainly Sep-Apr; exceptional in summer. Scarce but fairly regular inland.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cleethorpes-Horseshoe Point	35	29	8	-	-	-	25	29
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	-	2	11	-
Saltfleetby-Mablethorpe	30	12	-	2	-	-	29	-
Sandilands-Ingoldmells	-	-	-	-	-	3	15	-
Gibraltar Point	-	1	1	-	-	3	3	2

Number of sites	2	3	2	1	-	6	8	3
Sum of all site peaks	65	42	9	2	-	12	94	31

Counts were received from around 17 sites across the county, less than half of the 2015 total, reflecting a much poorer year for this species. As expected, the vast majority of these were coastal with only small numbers in The Wash and Humber. Wintering birds in the first quarter were scarce compared to the high numbers reported early in 2015, and lower even than those in December 2015. The largest flocks were 35 at Cleethorpes LNR on Jan 4th, 30 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on Jan 18th, and 20 at Humberston Fitties on Jan 24th. Gibraltar Point had an exceptionally poor year with just single birds in on Feb 19th and Mar 19th. Elsewhere most birds had left by the end of March, but two were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes until Apr 10th. A sprinkling of autumn birds arrived in October, with the first record being three at Sutton on Sea on the 4th followed by 1-3 birds along the coast at Donna Nook, Gibraltar Point, Goxhill Haven and Huttoft Car Terrace. Further arrivals occurred during November with maxima of 29 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes on the 13th, 15 at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 24th, and 25 at Cleethorpes on the 30th. The highest peak counts are given in the summary table, although it should be borne in mind that the flocks can move between areas. The highest count during December was a flock of 29 ranging between Tetney Marsh and Cleethorpes. The only records away from the coast this year were, by a couple of miles, two at Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness, on Oct 30th with one there on the 31st and, up the Humber, one at Goxhill Haven on Nov 19th-29th.

Appendix 1

Records of birds of suspect origin in 2016, including escapes and those released from captivity

This list includes those species that may have non self-sustaining wild populations and any individuals from species that are on the British list, but which are known or strongly believed to have been of captive origin. The Lincolnshire Bird Club request all records of these 'category E' species recorded in Lincolnshire. We are aware that the species on this list and other escapes are under-recorded.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Two birds showing features of the small race *B. c. parvipes* were at Willow Tree Fen on Mar 14th. They were, however, extremely tame and appeared to be pinioned; their origin remains unknown.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*

Two at East Halton Skitter-Goxhill Haven on Dec 18th.

Ross's Goose *Anser rossii*

Two at Sutton Bridge on Apr 18th.

Swan Goose *Anser cygnoides*

Single at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jun 4th.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Two at Woodhall Spa on Jan 19th, Apr 3rd and Jun 14th, singles at Holywell Lake on Jan 16th, Feb 18th, Sep 15th, Oct 17th, Nov 11th and Dec 19th, Alkborough Flats on Feb 18th, Nocton Fen on Feb 21st and between Feb 28th and Mar 6th, Fillingham Lake on Jan 22nd, Potterhanworth Fen on Mar 3rd, North Somercoates and Thurby Fen Sluice on Mar 31st and Woodhall Spa on Dec 28th.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Singles at Bracebridge on Jan 15th, Feb 21st and May 11th, at Boultham Park on Jan 15th, Feb 21st, May 11th, Jun 5th, Jul 28th, Oct 14th, Nov 13th and Dec between 5th and 28th, two at Brayford Pool on Jan 17th, May 4th and Jun 7th, singles at Tetney Outfall Sluice on Jan 19th, at Stoke Rochford Park on Jun 9th, at North Hykeham Pits the same all black bird seen on Jun 9th, Jul 15th, Aug 2nd, 19th and 20th, again the same bird was seen at Whisby NP on Aug 10th.

Maned Duck *Chenonetta jubata*

Single at Horncastle between Jun 29th and Jul 2nd.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*

Eight at Leake Commonsides on Feb 12th and a single at Buslingthorpe Wood on May 10th.

Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

Five at Stickney on Feb 13th, singles at Frampton (village) on Mar 10th and at Healing on Apr 7th and Jul 30th.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Singles at Fulbeck on Apr 2nd, Allington on Apr 12th, Red Hill (Goulceby) on Apr 18th and Donna Nook on May 5th.

Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus*

Single at Gibraltar Point on Sep 12th.

Alexandrine Parakeet *Psittacula eupatria*

Single at Fishtoft on Mar 15th and 19th.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*

Single at Weelsby Woods on May 9th.

Ringing Report 2016

This short report summarises bird ringing activity in the county in 2016. First, there is a table showing the numbers ringed of each species, and below that some commentary on the totals and on the most noteworthy recoveries. Details of many more recoveries are contained within the systematic list.

Ringing recovery information is placed within the systematic list in order to provide all significant information about each species in one place. By doing this, we hope that non-ringers will derive knowledge and understanding of the value of ringing, while ringers will see how their efforts fit into the wider sphere of bird studies. However, we would welcome analyses of Lincolnshire ringing data to appear in future reports as featured articles.

Notes: The ringing totals presented this year are for the whole of Lincolnshire, including the administrative areas of North and North East Lincolnshire. For previous reports covering 2008-2014, the tables of ringing totals excluded those in the former Humberside, while the recovery details included the former Humberside for 2013-2014, but were incomplete during 2008-2012. The BTO website now carries complete totals for the traditional county of Lincolnshire, and the summary below of annual totals during 2007-2015 has been corrected to reflect ringing activity for the full county.

Pullis are birds ringed in the nest, juveniles are those identified as being in their first calendar year, adults are all birds in their second or later calendar year. Some birds cannot be aged by plumage characteristics, these unaged birds are not tabulated but are included in the totals for the year. A few birds (mostly scarcer raptors) ringed at confidential locations have been excluded from the county totals.

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	30,035	34,146	30,943	44,060	37,157	36,831	34,329	33,369	30,741	30,141

These totals are of ringing data that have been submitted electronically to BTO.

Species	Pullus	Juvenile	Adult	2016 Total
Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>	0	0	0	0
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	0	0	1	1
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	0	0	4	4
Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	0	0	1	1
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	0	0	0	0
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	4	0	0	4
Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>	9	0	0	9
Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	3	0	0	3
Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	0	10	11	21
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	3	0	0	3
Water Rail <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	0	2	0	2
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	0	1	1	2
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	2	130	154	286
Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	0	9	30	39
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	13	0	0	13
Little Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius dubius</i>	0	0	0	0
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	0	1	7	8
Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	0	1	3	4
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	0	2	29	31
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>	0	3	4	7
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	0	50	14	64
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	0	22	2	24
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	0	206	5	211
Ruff <i>Calidris pugnax</i>	0	1	0	1
Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	0	2	0	2
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	0	1	0	1
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>	0	448	205	654
Spotted Redshank <i>Tringa erythropus</i>	0	0	1	1
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	0	5	2	7
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	0	332	129	462
Jack Snipe <i>Lymnocyrtus minimus</i>	0	2	0	2
Woodcock <i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	0	3	8	14

Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	0	2	1	3
Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus</i>				
<i>ridibundus</i>	87	0	3	90
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	0	0	1	1
Stock Dove <i>Columba oenas</i>	25	0	34	59
Woodpigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	4	5	38	47
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	0	5	22	33
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	0	1	2	3
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	869	5	117	991
Little Owl <i>Athene noctua</i>	137	0	25	162
Tawny Owl <i>Strix aluco</i>	83	0	13	96
Long-eared Owl <i>Asio otus</i>	0	0	2	2
Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	6	0	191	197
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	0	10	2	12
Green Woodpecker <i>Picus viridis</i>	0	5	2	8
Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos</i>				
<i>major</i>	0	27	24	51
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	263	3	8	274
Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	4	1	0	5
Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	0	3	2	5
Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	0	1	3	4
Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>	334	1	7	342
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	0	0	4	4
Carion Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	0	0	1	1
Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>	5	0	0	5
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>	0	1,260	161	1,611
Firecrest <i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	0	3	0	3
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	925	1,038	1,105	3,069
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	454	571	748	1,776
Coal Tit <i>Pariparus ater</i>	11	99	152	280
Willow Tit <i>Poecile montana</i>	0	8	0	8
Marsh Tit <i>Poecile palustris</i>	7	1	4	13
Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	0	0	1	1
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>	65	91	161	318
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	153	85	64	302
House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>	0	58	443	501
Cetti's Warbler <i>Cettia cetti</i>	0	0	0	2
Long-tailed Tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	0	33	254	511
Greenish Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>	0	1	0	1
Pallas's Warbler <i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	0	0	0	1
Yellow-browed Warbler <i>Phylloscopus</i>				
<i>inornatus</i>	0	0	0	14
Radde's Warbler <i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>	0	0	0	2
Dusky Warbler <i>Phylloscopus fuscatus</i>	0	1	0	1
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	0	321	126	521
Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	2	278	47	342
Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	0	318	127	491
Garden Warbler <i>Sylvia borin</i>	0	15	10	25
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia curruca</i>	2	65	28	95
Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>	1	249	96	347
Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella naevia</i>	0	3	3	6
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	0	46	42	88
Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	0	79	59	138
Nuthatch <i>Sitta europaea</i>	0	1	6	12
Treecreeper <i>Certhia familiaris</i>	0	12	19	42
Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	13	463	147	654
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	0	333	178	570
Ring Ouzel <i>Turdus torquatus</i>	0	1	2	3
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	34	817	783	1,644
Fieldfare <i>Turdus pilaris</i>	0	20	23	45
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	1	266	49	325
Redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>	0	395	104	518

Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	0	5	7	12
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	3	3	1	7
Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	17	777	339	1,275
Nightingale <i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	0	0	1	1
Pied Flycatcher <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	0	10	0	10
Redstart <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	0	6	3	11
Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	0	5	2	7
Stonechat <i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	0	1	0	1
Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	0	4	3	7
Dunnoek <i>Prunella modularis</i>	10	680	310	1,048
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	0	217	183	583
Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	947	110	258	1,561
Grey Wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	0	2	0	2
Pied/White Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	6	3	6	15
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	0	1	0	2
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	5	189	46	259
Rock Pipit <i>Anthus petrosus</i>	0	0	0	1
Brambling <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	0	70	45	122
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	5	314	700	1,050
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	0	52	71	123
Greenfinch <i>Chloris chloris</i>	1	613	773	1,403
Linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i>	20	80	104	209
Lesser Redpoll <i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	0	21	223	255
Common Redpoll <i>Acanthis flammea</i>	0	1	1	2
Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	0	845	1,110	1,996
Siskin <i>Spinus spinus</i>	0	12	612	624
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	0	40	204	245
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	0	331	342	741
Corn Bunting <i>Emberiza calandra</i>	0	0	2	3
Grand Total	4,533	12,623	11,401	30,141

Ringling and recovery totals

The total number of birds ringed in the county in 2016 was at the lower end of the range achieved over the past ten years. However, for some species far more were ringed than is usual. That applied especially to various waders, where significant effort on The Wash resulted in notable totals of, for example, Oystercatcher (13%), Grey Plover (48%), Bar-tailed Godwit (19%), Knot (36%), Dunlin (12%), Spotted Redshank (33%), Greenshank (18%) and Redshank (15%). The 2016 totals are shown as percentages of all those ringed in Lincolnshire over the years. Other species with relatively high numbers ringed included Barn Owl (12%), Little Owl (36%), Swift (26%), Kestrel (11%), Jackdaw (13%), House Martin (13%) and Tree Sparrow (11%). This latter group include some ringed mainly as pulli in nest-boxes, but Swifts and House Martins are caught mainly by netting, notably at Marston STW. A glance at the systematic list entries for some of these species will reveal some of the results from this activity.

The full version of the above table on the BTO website includes the numbers of retraps (birds caught again close to the ringing site) or recoveries (caught, seen or found dead away from the ringing site) of each species. The results for some species in 2016 were well above average. Particularly striking is the figure for Little Egret (28 recoveries; only 56 have ever been ringed in the county); such apparent anomalies result from the counting of each sighting of a single colour-ringed bird as a recovery. High retrap/recovery rates for species not subject to colour marking included Swift (18 retraps and one recovery from a grand total of 747 ringed in the county; 2.5%) and Dunnock (560 retraps and six recoveries from a grand total of 21,875; 2.6%).

Incidentally, the colour mark sightings included in the BTO data (as for Little Egret above) often do not include many recent sightings (details of which take time to reach BTO, if at all). The summaries of ringing details contained in the systematic list do include some additional information from colour marking, when this has been reported to LBC.

Selected recoveries

Single ringing recoveries do not necessarily tell us much about the movements and activity of the species as a whole; it is the synthesis of many recoveries that can do that. However, they can be indicative of patterns, and often provide arresting illustrations of bird migration. Here we draw attention to a few of those included in the main body of the report.

White-fronted Goose	In the past few years, small numbers of White-fronts have recommenced spending part of the winter in Lincolnshire. The sighting of a marked bird at Middlemarsh Farm, near Skegness, has indicated that these birds belong, as expected, to the population usually wintering in The Netherlands.
Cormorant	Another example of the value of colour-marking; a bird bred in a colony on the Baltic coast of Germany was the first from that country to be found in Lincolnshire, seen in November 2015 at Covenham Reservoir.
Oystercatcher	Two recoveries of birds ringed on The Wash in 1983 were notable for their age. One of them was found dead, the other was re-caught by ringers. The longevity record for Oystercatcher from the BTO is 40 years but, at 33 years, these two birds were still of impressive age.
Little Ringed Plover	Only 89 Little Ringed Plovers have been ringed in Lincolnshire, but they have generated some interesting results. A nestling ringed at Blankney in 1998 was later found dead in, or before, 2003 in Burkina Faso, one of only six British-ringed individuals to be found in Africa and the only one in that country. This year's featured details are of the oldest bird recorded in the BTO scheme; a male ringed and presumably nesting at Blankney in June 1998 has been sighted at Scaling Dam in north Yorkshire (where it presumably has been nesting) several times from 2013 onwards, and in 2016 the bird reached 17 years 10 months.
Caspian Gull	A bird that had been ringed in Poland as a nestling in 2015 was seen in June and July 2016 at Norton Disney. Still regarded as a scarce visitor to Britain, the majority of ringed Caspian Gulls seen here come from Poland.
Baltic Gull	Baltic Gull is a subspecies of Lesser Black-backed Gull that breeds, surprisingly enough, around the Baltic Sea but also in northern Norway. Features distinguishing it from other subspecies are not fully understood and some hybridisation with them takes place. A bird colour-ringed as a nestling within the Baltic Gull range in Norway (though close to the hybrid zone) in 2010 was seen at Norton Disney in July 2016. This taxon may be less rare in Britain than has been thought, but records currently are considered by BBRC. This Lincolnshire sighting remains under consideration and is not included in the systematic list, but it is mentioned here for the record.
Barn Owl	One of the recoveries shown this year involves a bird found dead at Navenby in November which had been ringed in The Netherlands in June 2016. This is the first recorded movement from that country to Lincolnshire, though there has been one from Belgium. For Britain and Ireland as a whole, 26 recoveries are recorded from abroad, half from The Netherlands and the others divided between Germany, Belgium and Denmark. Only two have travelled in the reverse direction to those countries, but there have been a few others to points in the North Sea or North Atlantic, single birds to France and Spain ... and one from Oxfordshire to Afghanistan. That last recovery illustrates that birds prone to being hit by vehicles can be carried for some distance.
Raven	A nestling ringed near Grantham in 2014 was found dead on the road 17 km away in May 2015. The distance and time span are far from unusual, but this is notable for being the first recovery from the recently re-established breeding population of Ravens in the county.
Redwing	A Redwing ringed in Iceland in September 2016 was retrapped at Gibraltar Point at the end of October, the first recovery in the county of one ringed in either Iceland or the Faroe Islands. Those are the breeding areas of the <i>coburni</i> subspecies of Redwing and, while it cannot be said to be with 100% certainty, it is highly likely that this bird was of that subspecies, which mostly winters in Ireland and south-western Europe.

Birds of Deeping Fen: an update, including status during 2016

Nicholas Watts

Deeping Fen is an area of some 19,000 acres (7,700 ha), occupying a block of the Fens measuring five by six miles between Spalding and Market Deeping. All of it lies about one or two metres above sea level. It is typical productive fenland farmland, consisting predominantly of open fields separated by ditches or trackways. Small areas of temporary grassland are present in some years but most of the land holds arable crops. Winter wheat is the main crop by area but other autumn-sown crops include oil seed rape and winter barley, and large areas also support spring-sown crops such as peas and beans, sugar beet, potatoes and linseed. The distribution and proportions of crops varies from year to year, depending on farm rotations and market conditions.

Also within the farmland, there are small areas of other habitats. The ditches are mostly narrow, but well-vegetated by reeds and other species, and a few more extensive ponds have been created to benefit wildlife. There are scattered hedges, bushes or trees along some field edges, and occasional small blocks of woodland. Houses and farmyards are largely located along the A16 road, which forms the southern boundary of the area, but some lie next to farm roads and tracks within the body of the fen. Other artificial structures include eight 2MW wind turbines and features such as the five brick towers built to attract Barn Owls and other birds.

On our farms, we have entered Entry and Higher Level Environmental Stewardship Schemes (www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-stewardship). This has supported the implementation of a range of measures to help wildlife, including grass margins, field weed margins, hedge planting and wild flower meadows. More details of what we do for wildlife can be found on our website (www.vinehousefarm.co.uk). Several other farmers in Deeping Fen went into the Entry Level Scheme in 2005, although the majority have since dropped out.

My interest in the birds of the area goes back a long way. I have taken part in all of the BTO surveys in TF11 since 1970, including the first breeding bird atlas, and have surveyed about 4000 acres of the Fen each year in late May, since 1992. The summaries of the status of individual species below concentrates on our own and our neighbours' farms in Deeping Fen, but also covers additional land that we farm on Baston and Langtoft Fens, and nearby wetlands including the gravel workings of Deeping Lakes Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT) reserve and at Baston & Langtoft Fens, the LWT reserve at Willow Tree Fen, and the River Welland.

Great Crested Grebe	A pair probably nest about every half mile on the Welland every year. Birds also nest on the old gravel workings but this population appears to be declining possibly because of Crows or other predators.
Little Grebe	One or two pairs nest annually.
Cormorant	A common bird with up to 40 present in old gravel pits. Immature birds frequented Deeping Lakes in the late 1980s and bred for the first time there in 1992, when 16 nests were found (Lincolnshire Bird Report 1992). At least 13 pairs were present in 2016.
Bittern	One heard booming for two-three weeks in old gravel workings in the spring of 2016, and one was flushed out of reeds during the winter on the farm.
Mute Swan	Thought to number ten breeding pairs. Wintering population probably 120. Both stable.
Whooper Swan	There is a variable wintering population; the count in 2016/17 was the highest for several years, with a maximum of about 100 birds.
Bewick's Swan	As for Whooper Swans, the 2016/17 winter was the best for some time, with a maximum count of 77 birds; in past winters numbers were considerably smaller.
Greylag Goose	The resident population in Baston and Langtoft Fen gravel workings is increasing and is now around 800.
Pink-footed Goose	An irregular winter visitor, usually with the Greylag Geese.
Canada Goose	The resident population is around 30 birds and is declining for no obvious reason.

Grey Heron	There is a small Heronry of five pairs on the River Welland but Grey Herons are seen commonly around the Fen.
Little Egret	Frequently seen around the area in small numbers and a few pairs now nest in an old gravel working in Baston Fen.
Mallard	Mallards have declined significantly during the past 50 years but they are nevertheless still a common bird. They don't rear many young. This may be because the young cannot find sufficient insects in their early life to survive, and also because of predation.
Teal	A few winter in Deeping Fen, but more winter in the Baston and Langtoft Fens old gravel workings, up to a maximum of 50.
Wigeon	Up to 300 winter in the Fen, mainly on Willow Tree Fen with probably another 400 in the old gravel workings in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Shoveler	Seen occasionally in spring and winter on the Welland, but up to 50 on Willow Tree Fen and also up to 50 on the old gravel workings in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Gadwall	Seen in small numbers in Deeping Fen with up to 100 seen on the nearby old gravel workings in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Tufted Duck	30 or 40 pairs of Tufted Ducks breed in Deeping Fen most years, with up to 100 wintering.
Pochard	A decreasing wintering population with around 25 birds in 2016/17 and with five pairs staying to breed in Baston and Langtoft Fens old gravel workings.
Red-crested Pochard	A stable population of about eight breeding pairs.
Goldeneye	One or two birds can usually be seen on the Welland during the winter with up to 40 wintering on the Baston and Langtoft Fen old gravel workings.
Goosander	Ten or 15 birds winter on the river Welland. When the river is in flood and brown with silt they go inland to the old gravel workings.
Smew	Formerly a regular winter visitor to Langtoft West End gravel working, but not seen in the last ten years.
Shelduck	One or two pairs breed in the fen but don't seem site faithful, so they turn up in different places each year.
Red Kite	Seen commonly about in the winter.
Marsh Harrier	Up to three pairs breed, with one or two birds wintering.
Hen Harrier	Two birds seen in the 2016/17 winter.
Sparrowhawk	Probably four or five breeding pairs.
Common Buzzard	Seen throughout the year and probably four or five breeding pairs. As elsewhere in the county, Buzzards have spread from west to east in the past 30 years.
Hobby	Usually one or two pairs breeding.
Kestrel	Thought to be eight breeding pairs in 2016. As with Barn Owls, their population depends on the abundance of voles.
Merlin	Only occasionally seen during the winter.
Peregrine	Three or four seen during the winter and occasionally seen in the summer as they breed nearby in Peterborough.
Pheasant.	No pheasants are reared in Deeping Fen but there is still a reasonable wild population and farmers may shoot a bag of 100 in a day.
Red-legged Partridge	Probably 20 pairs in the fen; no one rears them for release.
Grey Partridge	Probably about ten pairs in the fen.
Quail	None have been heard calling these last few years. Used to be heard calling when someone had a poor crop and there were lots of weeds around.
Water Rail	One or two heard calling most winters, none proved to have bred.

Coot	A few pairs breed on the River Welland, a lot fewer than 20 years ago, and the nests are often predated by Carrion Crows and other predators.
Moorhen	Still quite a common bird, but as with Coots, Carrion Crows and other predators take their toll.
Oystercatcher	Three pairs were thought to have bred in Deeping Fen in 2016, all on the side or near to the River Welland and another ten pairs in Baston and Langtoft Fens around the old gravel workings and the farm reservoir.
Ringed Plover	None breed in Deeping Fen but two or three pairs breed in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Little Ringed Plover	None breed in Deeping Fen but two or three pairs breed in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Dunlin	Small numbers on passage in the old gravel workings in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Common Sandpiper	One or two seen on the side of the River Welland during the autumn; also seen in Baston and Langtoft Fens on passage.
Green Sandpiper	Small numbers seen on migration and also one or two winter in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Redshank	One or two pairs breed on the side of the River Welland, and one or two pairs breed around the old gravel workings.
Greenshank	Small numbers on passage in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Golden Plover	Present on passage in the autumn, and good-sized flocks winter feeding mainly on slugs on fields that grew oil seed rape during the previous summer. An exceptionally large flock of up to 2000 birds was present on Deeping Common, which is in Deeping St James parish, in 2016/17.
Lapwing	About 40 pairs breed in Deeping Fen, an increase from 20 pairs ten years ago. Another 40 pairs breed in Baston and Langtoft Fens. A flock of up to 1000 birds wintered in Baston and Langtoft Fens in 2016/17.
Whimbrel	Seen annually in small numbers, usually heard before being identified flying over.
Curlew	Seen annually in small numbers, usually heard before being identified flying over.
Common Snipe	Seen from September to April in low numbers, none breeding.
Jack Snipe	Very scarce; one was wintering during November and December 2016 on the farm reservoir in Baston Fen.
Black-headed Gull	150 pairs breed on the farm reservoir in Baston Fen and another 500 pairs breed on an old gravel working in Langtoft Fen.
Mediterranean Gull	One or two birds sometimes visit the Baston Fen Black-headed Gull colony, but there has been no proof of breeding to date.
Common Gull	A few birds can be found wintering on the fields in Deeping Fen and two corpses of this species have been found dead minus a wing under the wind turbines on Deeping Fen.
Herring Gull	Herring Gulls can be seen passing through most times of the year but none have bred. Three or four pairs do breed at the LWT Deeping Lakes NR.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	In 2016, 25 pairs bred at Deepings Lakes where there were none four years ago. They have spread in from the large breeding colony on the outer bund in The Wash where up to 3,000 pairs of these and Herring Gulls had nested successfully over the last 20 years; recently though a fox has taken up residence on this bund and none have bred successfully.
Great Black-backed Gull	Seen flying over in small numbers during the winter.

Common Tern	Up to 80 pairs bred on the reservoir in Baston Fen, although they have suffered from mink predation. Now up to 30 pairs breed in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Feral Pigeon	Resident breeder in small numbers.
Stock Dove	Stock Dove is a common resident breeder in old barns and owl boxes. A flock of over 200 can be found feeding on the wild bird cover crops in Baston Fen.
Wood Pigeon	Doing very well as a resident breeder due to the surplus of food and water all year round.
Collared Dove	A common resident breeder around farmyards and gardens, a stable population.
Turtle Dove	There were no breeding pairs in Deeping Fen during 2016 and, as throughout the UK, they have steadily declined during the last 40 years.
Cuckoo	There were probably three pairs in Deeping Fen in 2016 compared with ten pairs 15 years ago.
Tawny Owl	Three breeding pairs in Deeping Fen, an area with very little woodland.
Barn Owl	20 breeding pairs in 2016 with reasonable success: some pairs had two broods, one pair had six young and another had seven young, both second broods. None bred in 2015 because there were so few voles around, 20 pairs bred in 2014 with great success. As elsewhere, the number of breeding Barn Owls in the Fen is dependent on the size of the vole population.
Short-eared Owl	Seen every winter but few or none in years of low vole populations.
Long-eared Owl	A very scarce bird now and there were none in Deeping Fen in 2016 but three wintered at Deeping Lakes.
Little Owl	Probably four or five breeding pairs.
Swift	Up to 12 pairs breed in the council houses in Deeping St Nicholas.
Kingfisher	No breeding pairs in Deeping Fen but they do breed in Baston and Langtoft Fens.
Green Woodpecker	Heard and seen quite commonly, but no proof of breeding yet.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Probably three pairs breeding in this largely treeless area.
Skylark	Thought to be around 300 breeding pairs in Deeping Fen, compared with around 450 pairs 20 years ago.
Sand Martin	None breed in Deeping Fen but 100 pairs bred in a heap of gravel with a vertical face in Langtoft Fen during 2016. Down from 600 pairs 20 years ago when the gravel firms left a vertical face of gravel in their pits.
Swallow	15 pairs breed annually. Most have left the fen by the second week in September.
House Martin	Probably 60 pairs breeding annually in Deeping Fen, does not seem to have declined lately.
Meadow Pipit	There were around 100 breeding pairs in 2000, but just five pairs in 2011. By 2016, there had been a slight recovery to 12-15 breeding pairs. Small numbers winter.
Grey Wagtail	A winter visitor in small numbers.
Yellow Wagtail	Probably 70 pairs breed in Deeping Fen annually, a stable population over the last 20 years.
Pied Wagtail	Probably 20 pairs of Pied Wagtails bred in 2016.
Duncock	The Fen has some 60-70 breeding pairs.
Wren	Common breeder with probably 100 pairs breeding, numbers holding up.

Robin	Common breeder around houses and farmyards, maybe 100 breeding pairs.
Whinchat	Sometimes seen on autumn migration, but not in 2016.
Stonechat	Winters in areas where the previous year's vegetation has not been trashed by a flail mower. Probably eight or ten birds wintered in 2016, but none in 2015.
Wheatear	Seen in small numbers on autumn and spring migration.
Blackbird	A common breeder, mainly in gardens and farmyards but some now nest in rape crops, as there is plenty of food for them. Blackbirds can be seen flying up to 300 yards going to collect food from rape crops for their young.
Fieldfare	Up to 300 can be seen in the autumn on the few hedges in Deeping Fen. Most of the uncut ones are on NW's farm. We can also see up to 300 when they are returning in the spring on grass where there are ponies or other organic land.
Song Thrush	Not a numerous species but it is widespread in gardens and spinneys, probably 20 breeding pairs in Deeping Fen.
Redwing	Present every winter, but far fewer than the Fieldfare, with a maximum of up to 100.
Mistle Thrush	A breeding resident, maybe ten breeding pairs.
Sedge Warbler	Widespread summer visitor with probably 80 breeding pairs. Nests in brambles, oil seed rape and dykes that haven't been mown for two or three years.
Cetti's Warbler	None in Deeping Fen, but there was one pair in 2016 in Langtoft parish in an old gravel working.
Reed Warbler	Widespread summer visitor with probably 120 pairs in Deeping Fen. Uses pure stands of reeds and oil seed rape to nest in.
Chiffchaff	Often heard on migration, but only two or three breeding pairs.
Willow Warbler	Heard on migration, but does not breed.
Whitethroat	Twenty years ago nearly all the Whitethroats in Deeping Fen used to nest on the farm as very little flail mowing was done and Whitethroats like to nest in vegetation that was still standing from the year before. Numbers have gradually increased over the past 20 years and they are now using oil seed rape to nest in, or vegetation that was not mown the previous year. Probably 90 pairs nesting in Deeping Fen now.
Lesser Whitethroat	An uncommon breeder that uses hedges and thickets to nest in, but only sings for a short while so can easily go undetected.
Blackcap	Probably ten breeding pairs were present in 2016.
Garden Warbler	Not known to nest in Deeping Fen but nests in the old gravel workings in Langtoft and Baston Fen.
Goldcrest	A male usually heard singing in Deeping St Nicholas graveyard, and may have bred.
Long-tailed Tit	An uncommon breeder with little suitable habitat present.
Blue Tit	Probably 30 breeding pairs.
Coal Tit	An uncommon breeder, only one or two breeding pairs.
Great Tit	Probably 40 breeding pairs.
Treecreeper	An uncommon breeder with probably five pairs in the Fen.
Starling	Nests mostly in houses, with around 60 pairs. They don't seem to do very well without supplementary feeding.
Jay	Three or four breeding pairs.
Magpie	Not many pairs nest successfully as most farmers operate Larsen traps.
Jackdaw	There are more Jackdaws than there are nesting sites, maybe 90 breeding pairs.

Raven	Over the past three years a pair has wintered, but there has been no proof of breeding.
Carrion Crow	Numbers greatly reduced because they are caught in Larsen traps.
Rook	Two rookeries totalling 110 pairs.
House Sparrow	Most farmyards don't have any House Sparrows, but there is a healthy population in Deeping St Nicholas village of about 100 pairs.
Tree Sparrow	There has been a huge increase in recent years, aided by nest boxes erected in all suitable habitat and provision of supplementary food. In 2014, 300 nestlings were ringed from 65 nest boxes; in 2015, a further 35 boxes were put up, and in 2016 there were 110 boxes. After a successful breeding season there were over 1000 Tree Sparrows on the farm in August, with around 900 being ringed.
Brambling	Several about in the spring of 2016, but only one was seen in the autumn.
Chaffinch	An increasing species: probably over 100 pairs nest in Deeping Fen.
Greenfinch	A decreasing species because of <i>trichomonosis</i> . Not very common now.
Siskin	An irregular winter visitor with none present in 2016.
Goldfinch	A resident with probably 50 nesting pairs.
Bullfinch	Not usually seen in Deeping Fen.
Lesser Redpoll	An irregular passage/winter visitor, but none seen in 2016.
Linnet	Probably 60 breeding pairs.
Corn Bunting	This species has declined from 100 singing males in 1992 to 20 in 2016. They do not do well on large farms as they like small fields, winter barley and black land. Various ploys have been tried to try and stop the decline of this species but have failed.
Reed Bunting	Increasing slightly as a breeding bird. Most nests are in oil seed rape fields so if the price of oil seed rape goes down, so does the acreage of oil seed rape, and also the population of Reed Buntings, as it did in 2006. The timing of cutting the crop affects productivity; spraying the crop to help dry it off is preferable to swathing, since it allows more time for young to fledge.
Yellowhammer	Hanging on, with about five pairs breeding on the west side of the parish.

Vine House Farm is a working farm and not suitable for open access, though we do organise farm walks several times each year, and visitors are of course welcome at the farm shop (see our website). However, we do also have a nature reserve at Baston Fen where you can see a variety of birds and wildlife. Most years we have Common Terns breeding as well as Black-headed Gulls, Oystercatchers and Lapwing. You are more than welcome to visit our nature reserve and use the bird hide. The reserve is located about two miles east of the village of Baston, behind the yellow gates by an old barn at grid reference TF143160 (the nearest postcode for the nature reserve is PE6 9PU, which will take you to within a few hundred yards).

Other publicly accessible areas mentioned above include Deeping Lakes and Willow Tree Fen LWT reserves. Deeping Lakes can be found south of the level crossing on the B1166 south of Deeping St James, at TF187083. The Willow Tree Fen car park entrance is over the small bridge opposite Bank House Farm, at TF181213. Both are well worth a visit at any time of year but, as I hope this article has shown, there is much of interest to be seen in the wider Fens. Much can be seen by scanning from minor roads and other rights of way.

Return of the Church Owl

Barn Owl nest boxes into Lincolnshire Churches initiative – 1993 to 2017

Garry Steele



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Adult with prey, St Helen's Church Stickford 1996 © Garry Steele

Background

Following the post-war decline of the barn owl *Tyto alba* population throughout the UK and its resultant designation as a Schedule 1 bird species, the 1980s saw the beginning of focused efforts to recover their numbers, which continues to this day.

Given the decrease in mature, cavity-bearing trees (the natural breeding site of barn owls), one of the key elements towards achieving this recovery has been the provision of dedicated barn owl nest boxes, installed by forward-thinking individuals, land owners, public bodies and private organisations.

Traditionally many of these boxes have been sited within little used or redundant farm outbuildings. Others have been fitted to trees, or recycled telegraph poles, with purpose built 'Owl Towers' making an appearance more recently.

In 1990, during the course of volunteering to help with the 'Lincolnshire Bird Club/Hawk & Owl Trust Barn Owl Pellet Survey' overseen by Lincolnshire owl conservation champion Bob Sheppard, I assisted with ringing a brood of barn owlets in one of his nest boxes. This was located in the same disused range of traditional farm buildings forming my allocated pellet collection site, close to where I live, on the East Fen, north of Boston.



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Breeding site, Stickney East Fen 2017 © Garry Steele

Seeing young barn owls for the very first time and experiencing first-hand the value of installing boxes for this species proved to be a seminal moment, and as I knew several co-operative farmers with similar buildings locally, I decided to start installing my own barn owl nest boxes.



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Juveniles, Stickney East Fen 1990 & 2015 © Garry Steele

Success was not long coming, with premier county ringer Alan Ball ringing both young and adult barn owls using my boxes under his British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) ringing permit, something I didn't possess at the time, but later acquired under Alan's excellent tutelage.

It soon became apparent, however, that the number of traditional barn sites, suitable for installing barn owl nest boxes, was diminishing. This was not so much at the time through being sold off and repaired to form either private dwellings or holiday lets, as tends to be the case today, but rather through collapsing due to lack of maintenance or otherwise being deliberately demolished, to recover the bricks and roof tiles, commanding high prices as reclaims.

Fixing barn owl boxes to mature trees and purposely installed poles remained an alternative option to me, but I was conscious of the fact that such boxes have an inherently reduced life span through exposure to the elements, when compared with those fitted inside buildings.

Inspiration

Searching at that time for suitable alternative buildings, I gradually began to turn my thoughts to the feasibility of utilising the **inside of Church Towers** to house barn owl nest boxes, in part inspired by the fact that historically there has been a long association between barn owls, churchyards and churches. Indeed, one of the best known of the many alternative country names for the barn owl being that of 'Church Owl'.

The poem 'The Owl', written in 1830 by the county's most revered poet, Alfred Lord Tennyson, clearly refers to the barn owl, and includes the famous couplet:

*'Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.'*

Prior to the rise in the populations of Feral Pigeon *Columba livia domestica* and Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*, and measures taken in more recent times in many churches to deny entry to these two colonially nesting species by the fitting of exclusion mesh, it was not that unusual for church towers and steeples to offer access and play host to roosting and breeding barn owls.

This long-term association between barn owl and churches is perhaps nowhere better exemplified in the county than at Lincoln Cathedral, which has a fine 13th Century medieval stone carved capital of two owls at the west entrance to the south choir aisle, both of which, I would suggest, given their heart-shaped facial discs, are clearly intended to depict barn owls.



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* 13th C stone carvings, Lincoln Cathedral 2017 © Garry Steele

Further 13th Century stone-carved barn owls in the Cathedral can also be found on the choir screen and as a pillar capital on the east side of the cloisters, the latter gripping a somewhat oversized bird prey item in its talons!

Much closer to where I live, in the neighbouring village of Stickney, the upper part of the nave in the parish church of St Luke's supports a splendid 15th Century carved stone corbel, clearly in the form of the head of a barn owl.



15th C carved corbel, St Luke's Church
Stickney 1992



Stained glass image (dating to 1923),
east Chancel window, St Luke's
Church Stickney 1992

© Garry Steele

Even more fascinating still, it is recorded that in the latter part of the 19th Century the tower of this church housed a resident pair of barn owls, with their presence being obviously venerated by the vicar, the Rev George Henry Hales. Remarkably for that time, he insisted that two dedicated nesting chambers for barn owls be incorporated high up into the stonework when the failing tower was restored in 1900. Incredibly, these features are still regularly utilised by barn owls to this day, well over 100 years later.

When Rev Hales died in 1922, such was his known love of birds that a memorial stained glass window, commissioned by public subscription and dedicated to his life of service to the local community, included two images of barn owls.

Inspired by what Rev Hales had achieved and seeking out a first church tower site in which to install a dedicated barn owl nest box to help offset the reducing number of suitable barn options, where better to begin than St Helen's parish church in my home village of Stickford, just two miles to the north of Stickney. In 1993 permission was given to remove an already damaged piece of plain glass fitted to a small, recessed window aperture on the east side of the tower. This was

replaced with a projecting wooden landing, leading directly into an internally fitted barn owl nest box.



One of two dedicated barn owl nesting chambers (dating to 1900) set within tower walls, St Luke's Church, Stickney 1992 © Garry Steele



Landing ledge and entrance opening leading to barn owl nest box inside tower, St Helen's Church, Stickford 1993 © Garry Steele

Two years after installing the box, kestrels were the first bird of prey species to utilise it for breeding, successfully rearing four young. More satisfying still, the following year saw the first take up by a pair of breeding barn owls. Further broods of barn owlets then successfully fledged from this same box continuously for the next 12 years. This cycle was broken following a Natural England approved pre-breeding temporary exclusion due to essential repairs to the tower roof, after firstly fitting an alternative box on a tree in the churchyard. Following the completion of these works, barn owls returned and regularly used the tower box for roosting, before finally making a welcome return to breeding this year (2017), successfully raising four young.



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Juveniles in nest box within tower St Helen's Church Stickford 2017 © Garry Steele

Greatly encouraged by the successful outcome of this initial venture at Stickford church and following necessary permissions, I went on to organise the fitting of barn owl nest boxes at three further Lincolnshire church towers in the local area: St Margaret's, Sibsey, St Mary's, Frampton and All Saint's, Friskney, with the box at Sibsey (in this instance fitted externally due to constraints), also rapidly attracting the 'target' species to take up residence and breed.



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Adult departing nest box St Margaret's Church Sibsey 1998
© Maureen Humberstone

In 1999 I became a freelance ecological consultant, resulting in overseeing a number of bat-related mitigation projects within churches requiring repair works in other parts of the county. This, in turn, provided an opportunity to suggest making future provision for nesting barn owls, more particularly when scaffolding and building contractors were on site, making for a much easier task.

As a result, barn owl boxes were installed inside four further Lincolnshire church towers: St Martin's, Waithe; St Mary's, Covenham St Mary; St Botolph's, Skidbrooke and St Peter's, Aisthorpe. Three of these boxes have subsequently been adopted by barn owls, with the remaining one for breeding by kestrels.

In each of these cases, it was a relatively simple task to create a dedicated barn owl entry point, complete with projecting landing ledge, through timber louvres and fixing the nest boxes immediately to the rear of these, to ensure there was no access for feral pigeons or jackdaws inside the tower itself.



Purpose built access point leading to barn owl nest box inside tower, St Mary's Church Covenham St Mary 2006 © Garry Steele

More recently I have been involved with two interesting projects involving the disused churches of St John the Baptist at Sutterby, in the Wolds, and St Martin's at Midville on the Fens north of Boston. These both required extensive remedial works after falling into a state of disrepair. In each case barn owls had surreptitiously gained prior access and were using the insides of the separate roof voids for breeding.

At Sutterby church the solution was to firstly install two mitigation barn owl nest boxes on nearby trees ahead of the forthcoming breeding season to allow for their discovery and utilisation by

the resident pair of barn owls. Following agreement by Natural England, this was followed by temporarily excluding the barn owls from the church in late winter to allow works to take place in suitable weather conditions. With the barn owls having successfully discovered and bred in one of these mitigation boxes, English Heritage (now Historic England) approved my proposal to create a dedicated barn owl access point through the masonry at upper west gable wall level, leading directly into a bespoke nest box. On completion of the repairs the barn owls duly returned to the building and adopted this box, successfully raising broods for the past three years – with kestrels, for good measure, taking over and nesting in one of the tree boxes in 2015 and 2016.



Purpose-built access point leading to barn owl nest box inside roof void plus approaching adult
St John the Baptist Church Sutterby © Garry Steele (left) © Mick Holmes (right)

Meanwhile, in 2016 at Midville church the barn owls were unexpectedly discovered breeding inside the roof void at the onset of the repairs, gaining access via a hole at the eaves. The works were therefore suspended until the young had fledged, with two mitigation boxes fitted to the outside walls of the building on completion of the works. This was followed by the resident pair of barn owls readily adopting both these boxes for roosting, followed by breeding in one of them in the current year (2017).



Building in the process of repair and one of two barn owl mitigation nest boxes installed post-works
St Martin's Church, Midville 2016 © Garry Steele

Summary

Resulting from these initiatives, **ten** Lincolnshire churches across the county now support barn owl nest boxes, with a 70% success rate in terms of subsequently being used for either roosting or breeding by barn owls.

With approximately 550 parish churches in Lincolnshire, potentially there is a lot of scope to expand much further still on top of what has already been accomplished, focusing more particularly on those churches subject to proposed repairs in the future, after the necessary permissions have firstly been secured. Perhaps the overriding benefit of placing barn owl nest boxes inside church towers is their permanency, free of wear and tear from the elements and potentially remaining available and offering sanctuary to successive generations of barn owls over many decades, if not centuries, to come. Finally, I would briefly like to take this opportunity to mention that I am

particularly keen to learn of, and collate information, on any other Lincolnshire churches which historically or currently support roosting or breeding barn owls.

I would also be very interested to know of and record any other examples of owl imagery in Lincolnshire churches as part of a wider study I am undertaking of wildlife representation in the county's churches.

I can be contacted at gcsteele@tiscali.co.uk

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Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* at Gibraltar Point on 8th May 2016 – the first county record

Kevin Wilson (Reserve Manager, Gibraltar Point)

On 8th May 2016 I left home at about 0645 with the intention of doing a sea-watch, in the hope of a few Black Terns or Arctic Terns offshore in the easterly wind. Whilst passing through an area of dune scrub, I heard a strident trill that stopped me in my tracks. It sounded spot on for Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. I waited for a few minutes and the bird sang again. Sure, the trill sounded like Wood Warbler but where was the fore-song?

I briefly mulled over the possibility of these vocals coming from a Great Tit *Parus major*. In recent weeks, one Great Tit mimic had been performing Willow Tit *Poecile montanus* song (an extreme rarity now at Gibraltar Point) and another doing a pretty good Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* call close to my current location. After another burst of song, the penny dropped (or perhaps the “spinning coin”)! I was listening to a Bonelli's Warbler. The bird was singing from the back of three mature hawthorns and I was facing into the strong early morning sun. There was no option of moving my location without the risk of disturbing the bird, so I sat tight with scope at the ready. The bird eventually worked its way to the front bush and then luckily appeared near the crown for a few seconds.

In the scope I saw the front end well. The characteristic facial expression, with bland features, subdued supercilium and pale surround to the eye, without darker lores and eye-stripe, quite greyish upperparts and clear white underparts – so it was a Bonelli's Warbler but which one? I knew that pretty much the only diagnostic in field feature for separating Eastern and Western was the call.

I had no camera or recording equipment on me but I did have my phone and was able to get hold of James Siddle, who was not far away. He was quickly able to hear the bird, then a handful of other birders arrived to help sort out the identification, including Graham Catley, Dave Hursthouse and Neil Drinkall.

The bird's chosen area was in varied scrub with occasional pine trees – actually not dissimilar to the habitat where I have watched breeding Western Bonelli's Warblers *P. bonelli* in Europe. It was quite mobile around about three acres of habitat and narrowly missed going into a mist net on a few occasions. It regularly returned to a mature sycamore where it sang. The upperparts colouration overall seemed very greyish and not olive-y. This raised suspicions that it might be an Eastern Bonelli's *P. orientalis*. On occasions, the bird perched side on or back on in full sun and the bright greenish edging to the secondaries formed a bright panel. Additionally, the carpal area, tail edgings and rump were bright yellowish green. With patience, some good scope views were possible and the leg colour was determined as being yellowish-pink and the bill looked predominantly dark. The primary length was at least as long as Willow Warbler's.

Mindful that there was a crowd of up to 60 birders on site looking for the previous day's Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* we wanted to establish the bird's identity as quickly as possible, record it on film and audio, and plan access for a twitch in a difficult situation. Graham Catley was able to play the songs of both Eastern and Western Bonelli's Warbler on his phone app and we agreed that the song pitch was closer to Western Bonelli's Warbler. Fortunately, after about an hour, the Bonelli's had an interaction with a Willow Warbler *P. trochilus* that encouraged it to call. The call “hweet” was a bit like Willow Warbler, but slightly finch-like and with a hint of Pallas's Warbler *P. proregulus*. Its bout of calling was not particularly loud but continued intermittently for several minutes. This established the identification as a Western Bonelli's Warbler.

The bird was in a restricted-access ringing site. Despite the prospect of catching the bird, Dave Vincent kindly agreed to close and furl the nets early so that we could “facilitate” the “twitch” now that the bird had been identified. Before long, many birders were at the site and getting views.

The Bonelli's showed on and off with regular bouts of song until 0945, before moving over 100m into an adjacent grazing enclosure where it remained in a small hawthorn long enough to train a scope onto it and get the last few birders brief views. It then disappeared into the mass complex

of scrub between the Freshwater Marsh and the Golf Course where there is no access. About 60 birders saw the bird and, despite the fact that the crowd was pretty well behaved, the bird may have moved due to the human activity, as some time after the crowd had dispersed at 1000hrs, the bird returned to its favoured area, showing and singing again between 1300 and 1400hrs. This was the last reliable sighting.



Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* Gibraltar Point May 8th 2016 © Graham Catley

Western Swamphen at Alkborough Flats, new for Lincolnshire

Graham P Catley

Introduction

Even the name Western Swamphen may be unfamiliar to most people who are not involved in the taxonomy of birds, for the bird formerly known as Purple Gallinule and then Purple Swamphen is now widely being promoted to a full species, the Western Swamphen. It differs from other former subspecies that occur eastwards to Australia and New Zealand and south to southernmost Africa, mainly in back and head colour. The Western Swamphen breeds in southern Europe, with the bulk of the population in southern Spain and recently in southern France. Until 31st July 2016 there had never been a Western Swamphen in Britain, so when a bird arrived at Minsmere in Suffolk it caused something of a stir in the birding world, as there seemed to be good support for the bird being of wild origin rather than an escapee from a wildlife park. The bird was unringed with no obvious signs of feather wear. Recent droughts in southern Spain in summer have seen birds moving away from their desiccated habitats, and other individuals had been reported well to the north in France in summer 2016. The Minsmere bird was seen on 5th August but not thereafter, denying many would-be watchers of the chance to see this species in Britain. Alkborough Flats came to the rescue.

Alkborough Flats

On a very hot and sunny 30th August, a number of observers including Peter Cleford and little Sid noticed a large purple bird walking about on the mud opposite the first hide and news quickly disseminated via the usual birding channels that a Western Swamphen was at Alkborough Flats. It was far too hot to be out birding, so I was at home working when the phone started going off; first Lee Evans, then Neil Drinkall (ND) asking what I knew of the reported Swamphen at Alkborough Flats. Clearly the answer was nothing, but within 30 minutes I was in the hide with a few hopefuls and looking at an image on the back of someone's camera.

Since the managed realignment site was first flooded in 2006, Neil Drinkall has spent thousands of hours at the site, and GPC a few thousand, and between the two of us we had found most of the rare birds seen in that ten year period, but the really big rarity had always eluded us. On the evening of 29th August ND had been in the hide until 20:00 and had seen nothing of note. Sitting down to wait in the sauna of the hide it still seemed incredible that after a combined 20 years of watching the site the two of us had missed out on the really big find by a few hours, but that's bird finding!

After about a 20-minute wait the swamp donkey emerged from its favoured patch of Phragmites and scope views confirmed that it was indeed a western Swamphen and not one of the other eastern races. It then proceeded to walk about eating Phragmites rhizomes in typical foot to bill manner. I took some distant photos in the heat to confirm the bird's identification. On the evening of the 30th, Kev Wilson and Nige Lound saw the bird fly from its favoured area to the north-western part of the inundation area and land in an area of reeds that is not visible from the hide.

On the following day, it could not be found and I spent most of the day looking around other parts of the site, but failed to see it. Then, on 1st September, Clare Gillatt was in the hide when the Swamphen appeared in the same location opposite the hide. From then on, it developed a habit of moving to an enclosed area of open water within the main reedbed and spending most of its time in there, but occasionally returning to the site opposite the hide mainly on spring tides when the site was flooded. It was never closer than 250m and when on the enclosed water area it was only visible from the adjacent hillside 800m away, making it particularly difficult to see even from the adjacent escarpment and proving the value of having a 70x scope! Observations then continued daily until early November, albeit with the bird being seen for increasingly shorter periods and with many observers making repeat visits in order to obtain brief and distant views. The bird was not seen for over a week in mid November but I picked it up again in the same location on 23rd November and this proved to be what we assumed was the last observation of the bird, as regular searches by ND and GPC failed to reveal any sign of it. Then, on 4th January 2017, GPC was undertaking a regular wintering bird survey count from the Maze at Julian's Bower, when the Swamphen appeared out in the open at the back of the inundation area where it had never been seen before. After a couple of minutes it disappeared in the reeds again and in spite of regular searches from then onwards it was never seen again.

After giving poor views and being particularly elusive on 3rd September, a planned visit by Mike Dilger and a team from the BBC's One Show on the 4th seemed doomed to fail, but amazingly the bird was back in front of the hide at dawn and the cameraman was able to obtain some excellent footage of the bird that duly appeared on the BBC later in the year.

Description

A large gallinule, over twice the size of adjacent Moorhens; plumage all blue with purple sheen in good light; bill large conical and bright pink; extensive frontal shield over fore-crown also bright reddish pink; legs and feet same bright reddish pink. Head and fore neck brighter blue than the rest of the body plumage, and wing coverts also brighter marine blue than body and flight feathers; undertail coverts contrastingly bright white. Flew with ease, trailing feet and legs, keeping low over the reeds. No calls were heard. Its general behaviour involved walking around the edges of the reedbed pulling reed rhizomes from the mud then holding them in its large toes while stripping them in its bill before consuming the inner parts.

First for Britain

It was an adult, in the same plumage as the Minsmere bird, so the question on everyone's mind was: is it the same bird? The answer would appear to be yes, as both birds had a part grown out secondary feather on the left wing. That was surely too much of coincidence for there have been two birds involved. The distance from Minsmere in a direct line is 225kms in a NNW direction, but where was the bird between 6th and 30th August?

Following acceptance by the BBRC (see *British Birds* 110: 573-574), Western Swampphen was admitted to the British List by the BOURC (www.bou.org.uk/british-list/purple-swampphen/).



Western Swampphen *Porphyrio porphyrio* Alkborough Sep 4th 2016 © Graham Catley

Siberian/Stejneger's Stonechats at Donna Nook, 6th-10th October and 14th-16th October 2016

Steve Lorand and Graham P. Catley

Putative Stejneger's Stonechat

Early October 2016 (writes SL) had seen a steady flow of thrushes, Yellow-browed Warblers and other eastern birds along the North Sea coasts and the fresh to strong easterly wind from the 4th onwards quickly gave rise to hopes of more to come. At the southern end of Donna Nook, on the morning of the 6th, I had been searching without success for a Red-breasted Flycatcher, which I had seen on the previous day, but was nonetheless pleased to be able to watch a few migrants including a couple of Yellow-browed Warblers and a Ring Ouzel in nearby bushes.

By 0950 I was walking along a stretch of dunes that borders a field, which has been growing lucerne for over forty years. A broad strip of set-aside runs along its full border and is separated, by a stock fence, from a grazing section of the dunes. As in most autumns, this rough overgrown strip and its fence are much favoured by European Stonechats and Whinchats, and this morning I scanned the area as usual. One bird flew onto the fence about 40 yards in front of me and as I raised my binoculars I was expecting it to be the Whinchat that had been around for several days. However, as soon as I saw the bird through binoculars, I realized that this was not the case, so I carefully edged closer to what I suspected might be a Siberian Stonechat. The bird was fairly wary and kept dropping to the ground out of sight amongst the dense vegetation, but I managed to take a few distant record photographs and became confident that the bird was at least a richly coloured Siberian Stonechat.

I put the news out onto BirdLine and also rang GPC, who was about two and a half miles away at Pye's Hall. I withdrew from the immediate area since the bird was so flighty and waited until Graham arrived about one hour later, accompanied by Chris Atkin, Neil Drinkall and Dave Hursthouse. Soon we were rewarded with some reasonable views, despite the bird's regular incursions into the long vegetation, and Graham was able to obtain some better photographs. The wariness of the bird made it one of the least approachable Stonechats any of us had ever encountered. Often it would suddenly dart away, hover before landing, then disappear into the dense vegetation, only to reappear at a considerable distance away some time later.

At distance, it resembled a female European Stonechat, but differing light intensities and viewing angles could cause some variation in impressions of the bird's general colouration. It was overall darker and more richly coloured than any *maurus* birds seen by any of us, while the obvious sharply demarcated throat patch and the deep orange rump were particularly striking features. In very good sunlight, the dark mottled crown and ear-coverts contrasted with the pale cream supercilium that met just above the base of the bill. A broad dark line from the bill passed through the eye and widened to form a patch on the ear-coverts. The creamy throat patch was very conspicuous, particularly with the sharp demarcation from the warm peachy-buff of the breast and slightly paler belly. The undertail-coverts were whitish. The underwing was silvery-grey with black axillaries and underwing-coverts, thus determining the bird as a male. The upperparts were dark brown with orange-buff fringes on the mantle and scapulars. The greater coverts were tipped orange-buff. The primaries, secondaries and tertials were brown-black with cream fringes. The rump was a striking clean deep orange and the tail feathers were brown-black narrowly tipped with orange-white that extended along the outer webs of the outer feathers. One or two of Graham's photographs show a creamy suffusion on the upper rump and also dark shaft streaks to two central uppertail coverts. The bill, legs and feet were blackish.

During its five-day stay, about 150 observers saw the bird. The difficulty of public access and the long walk necessary to reach this point obviously deterred some, while the fact that the bird often disappeared for long periods could make viewing frustrating. Several observers had to wait in excess of two hours before they achieved a sighting. I managed to see the bird on each day of its stay and on the second day when I accidentally flushed it at close range, it flew into some Sea Buckthorn and called a short, low, down-slurred whistle. At all times it remained in the same small area and became quite territorial, often driving away European Stonechats and Meadow Pipits, although it would tolerate other birds on some occasions. It was last seen on 10th October.

Siberian Stonechat

The easterly weather continued well into October and a few thundery showers on the 13th ensured that good numbers of migrants had been grounded by the following day. The list for the 14th was growing and as well as a complex array of commoner species, there were heartening totals of

thrushes, chats, Goldcrests, Bramblings and Common Redpolls, plus 63 White-fronted Geese, four Bean Geese, a Cetti's Warbler, a Yellow-browed Warbler, two Pallas's Warblers and a Firecrest to add spice to the mix. A Red-flanked Bluetail was also still around for its fifth day and continued to draw admirers near the Stonebridge car park.

For Neil Drinkall (ND) and Graham Catley (GPC), October 14th had been another of those days: after the euphoria of the previous day's Paddyfield and Siberian Accentor they had high hopes of finding something good on the Lincolnshire coast but, after seven and a half hours of slog, had found 'merely' four Tundra Bean Geese, 31 White-fronted Geese, a Firecrest and a Yellow-browed Warbler.

GPC continues: we took time out to have more looks at the Red-flanked Bluetail, then I suggested that we walk the outer dune ridge one more time for a late arriving wheatear. We walked out to the edge of the dunes at Stonebridge car park and started scanning the saltmarsh when a wheatear flew past and perched on a wooden fence post; needless to say it was a Northern, but perched on the post next to it was a pale looking Stonechat; we both looked at it through bins and I said "Well, it has to be a Siberian" as it was clearly much paler and a different bird to the possible *stejnegeri* we had seen at the south end of Donna Nook a week previously.

We then looked at it through ND's scope and I set out to get some images of the bird, but it proved somewhat flighty at first and disappeared over the dunes. We rang Chris Atkin and Dave Wright who were in the car park, and SL, and all three joined us as we managed better views and tracked it down onto the fences near the car park.

Essentially as a European Stonechat in jizz and general structure, but with distinctive plumage features:

- Bill, legs and feet: all black.
- Eye: black with narrow pale eye ring, most pronounced under the eye.
- Underparts: chin and throat to underside of ear coverts all off-white, sharply demarcated from upper breast which was peachy orange with paler creamy feather tips forming a scaly pattern on the breast and belly, with the vent and undertail coverts being white.
- Lores and ear coverts were pale dirty brown; hint of a paler supercilium, though this was less obvious than in the first individual. Crown, nape and mantle all a uniform, slightly grey-tinged fawn-brown background colour, with darker blackish-brown streaking on the crown and narrow pointed blackish centres to the scapulars.
- Greater coverts were basally blackish with fairly broad white tips; alula black with a narrow white fringe; median wing coverts black-based with broad buff tips and fringes. Tertiaries blackish with a white tip and outer web the latter tinged buff towards feather bases. Secondaries blackish, with narrow creamy buff outer webs forming pale panel on closed wing. Primaries blackish with narrow pale pointed tips. Tail feathers black with whitish tips. The rump was unmarked and deep orange becoming paler creamy towards the lower back. The uppertail coverts were the same deep, dark orange but with two blackish shaft streaks visible in photos. The underwing coverts were blackish and contrasted with pale undersides to the flight feathers, as for the first bird, indicating that this was a male.

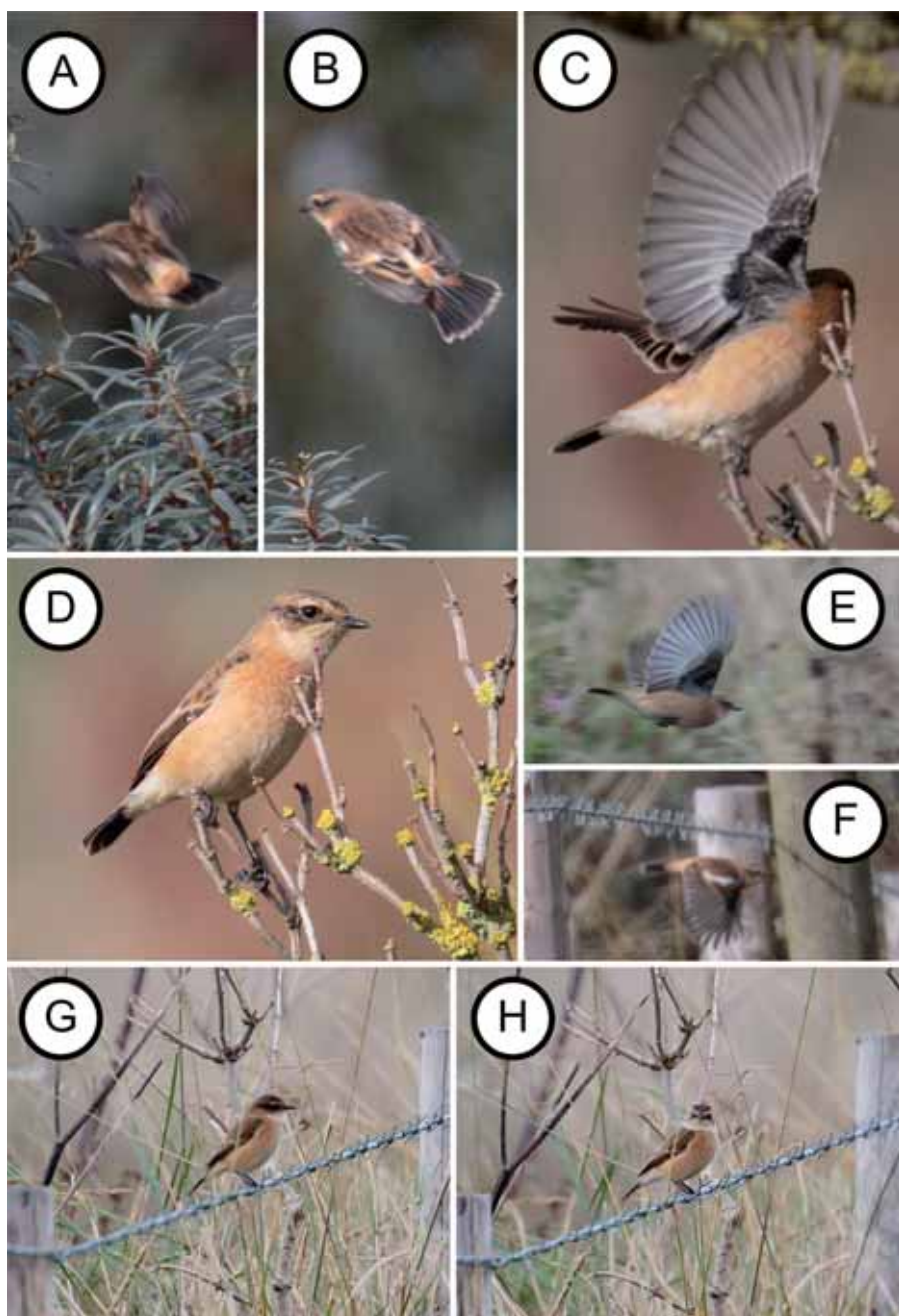
It fed in the manner of a European Stonechat making sallies after insects from perches, but also spent quite a bit of time low down in the grass and marram, which was similar behaviour to the *stejnegeri* type seen the previous week.

We are assuming that this bird was a *maurus*, but the depth of colour in the rump was unexpected and the dark centres to the uppertail coverts were much the same as the same area on the previous week's Donna Nook bird, though that individual was darker on the underparts. The supercilia were also rather indistinct and there remains the possibility that this bird was a paler *stejnegeri* and not a *maurus* but, without DNA evidence, unfortunately on current criteria the true identity of these birds will for now remain indeterminate.

There was no sign of the bird on the 15th when it may have wandered to the marshes over the nearby sea-bank, but it was relocated and showing well in the original part of the area on the 16th, when it was seen and photographed by a number of observers.

Discussion

The Siberian Stonechat was classified as a race of Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus* until 2011, but is now recognized as a full species *S. maurus*, distinct from the European Stonechat *S. rubicola*. More recently, the East Asian race *stejnegeri* has been split from *maurus* as the species Stejneger's Stonechat *S. stejnegeri* and accordingly *maurus* and *stejnegeri* will be treated as separate species by the BBRC for records from 2017 onwards.



2016 was an excellent year for Siberian Stonechats nationally, and 21 accepted records, including the two birds above, represented about double the average number of annual occurrences. The only two records definitely assigned to *stejnegeri* were each confirmed by samples of DNA. Phil Hyde, who also saw the earlier Donna Nook bird shortly afterwards saw one of these *stejnegeri* at Landguard, Suffolk, on 6th-7th October. He was struck by the close similarities in appearance and behaviour of the two birds and how they used similar habitat. However, without DNA samples, our present knowledge means that positively separating *stejnegeri* from *maurus* remains debatable and difficult. It seems that most records of suspected *stejnegeri*, including the first bird, will have to be assigned to Siberian/Stejneger's Stonechat for the time being.

Some photographs of the second bird revealed dark central shaft streaks on the deep orange uppertail coverts that, despite the bird's overall paleness, offer some potential for consideration as a possible Stejneger's. There is only limited published material discussing the determination of Stonechat taxa in the field, and the most useful recent material can be found in Martin Garner (2014). The bird of 6th October closely corresponds with the information and photographs of *stejnegeri* in this work, while the second bird is a good match to *maurus*. As Garner stated, more research is required, and he stressed that there is little information from the range of overlap of *stejnegeri* and *maurus*.

Garner, M. (2014) *Challenge Series: Autumn*. Birding Frontiers, Sheffield.

Possible Stejneger's Stonechat, Donna Nook (south end), 6th October 2016

- A Note pale creamy upper rump; lower rump and uppertail coverts rich deep orange with two blackish shaft streaks on longest central uppertail coverts. Tail black with narrow buff tips.
- B Tail fully spread showing pale creamy-buff tips and outer web to outermost tail feathers. Note uppertail coverts forced open by movement. Blackish tertials with pale creamy-buff fringes.
- C Black underwing coverts makes this a male.
- D Dull and unobvious pale supercilium; pale throat demarcated from peachy upper breast; rather obvious dark ear covert patch.
- E Blackish underwing coverts indicative of male; deep coloured underparts with no obvious paler rump wrapping around onto flanks; darker coloured upper breast.
- F Deep orange coloured rump patch; orangey-buff tips to greater coverts; dark upperpart colouration.
- G Overall impression of perched bird more akin to European Stonechat than pale *maurus*.
- H Impression like female European Stonechat at distance – note dark underparts compared to *maurus* and sharply demarcated creamy throat.

All images © Graham Catley



Siberian Stonechat, Donna Nook (Stonebridge), 14th October 2016

Is this also a Stejneger's candidate?

- M Note orange, deep-coloured rump, black tail with narrow creamy tips to feathers and outer web to outers; black tertials with whitish fringes narrower than on other bird.
- N Blackish underwing coverts so male; deep orange rump wrapped round onto flanks; underparts fairly uniform colour from upper breast to undertail coverts; indistinct supercilium.
- O Paler look in some lights to overall bird; underparts distinctly paler orange with creamy feather tips creating slightly scaly effect; supercilium very indistinct; greater covert tips creamy white; sharply demarcated creamy throat patch.
- P Note deeper orange rump with dark shaft streaks in centre; darker looking upperparts in this view; some buffy-orange in tertial fringes; very indistinct supercilium.
- Q Deep orange uppertail coverts with dark central streaks visible.
- R Even darker looking uppertail coverts due to shadow effect but stronger dark central streaks; black tail with whitish tips and outer fringe to outers.
- S Compare with perched shot of Stejneger's (H above).

All images © Graham Catley

Eastern Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* *phoenicuroides/rufiventris/xerophilus*: first record for Lincolnshire at Donna Nook on 26th-28th October 2016

Steve Lorand

An almost continuous easterly airflow during October ensured a succession of Siberian and Asian rarities along the east coast of Britain, and Donna Nook certainly received its fair share of memorable vagrants. The best of these included a Great Grey Shrike, two Radde's Warblers, several Pallas's Warblers, good numbers of Yellow-browed Warblers, several Firecrests, a Rosy Starling, a Red-flanked Bluetail, two Siberian Stonechats, two Red-breasted Flycatchers, a Richard's Pipit, an Arctic Redpoll, at least two Northern Bullfinches and a Little Bunting.

Of course, all good things come to an end, and so it was on 26th October when the wind switched, albeit only to a gentle blow from the SSW. After such a run of good sightings, I began the day in an optimistic mood. Heartened by the locating of a couple of Shore Larks on the beach and two Hen Harriers and two Bean Geese on the coastal fields, I moved along the dunes, but only a handful of thrushes and Robins appeared to be present. At 10:30 I reached a section of the dunes which had been recently cleared of Sea Buckthorn and fenced for the purpose of grazing sheep. I refer to this part of the area as the North Hills in my notes and it has become one of my favourite spots on my patch. The dunes here are quite hilly, grassy and with a good scattering of Hawthorns and Elders. At passage times, the shrubs and fences are particularly attractive to flycatchers, warblers, chats and the occasional shrike, while the close-grazed pasture is often frequented by Wheatears, thrushes and pipits.

As I neared the gate to the enclosure, I suddenly obtained brief views of a male Redstart at c40 yards range. It was perched with a nearby Robin on a fallen dead Elder, but after only 3-4 seconds, a Sparrowhawk passed low overhead and caused both birds to dart into a patch of Hawthorns. My initial impression had been of a bright Common Redstart, but the bird seemed wrong, somehow. The head and chest were too dark, there seemed no white on the head and the orange underparts were quite striking. Even after such a brief view, I sensed that this was perhaps not a Common Redstart, but despite a long wait and fairly thorough search, I was unable to find the bird again. Doubts began to set in and I resigned myself to the bird perhaps being an imperfectly observed Common Redstart. Later I made a note in the log that a Redstart on the North Hills could have been an Eastern bird and left it as such until the evening when I read on the Spurn website that an Eastern Black Redstart had been recorded at Easington on the previous day. This news from just across the mouth of the Humber was frustrating and started thoughts racing through my head, but at least fresh hopes were raised for the following day.

Next morning when I returned to the area, I had no difficulty in relocating the bird. However, once again it proved to be evasive, frequenting the Hawthorn bushes and being continually chased and driven off by Robins. As in the case of the recent Red-flanked Bluetail at Stonebridge, the mobbing and very active aggression of the Robins was a constant threat to any prolonged views out in the open. The day's views of the Redstart were all fleeting and at distance, and not once did I manage to see the bird at rest. I went for long periods without seeing the bird at all, then a Robin would chase it from one bush to another until eventually it resorted to a large section of Sea Buckthorn outside the enclosure and was not seen again. All I had obtained were a few views of the upperparts in flight and no photographs, and as I noted on the LBC website that evening, its constant manner of diving into cover seemed hardly suggestive of *ochruros*.

After two days of frustrating glimpses and disappearances of the flighty Redstart, I was finally able to obtain short, but better views and a few poor distant record photographs on 28th October. I had to spend the entire morning watching and waiting, but was at last able to ascertain that the bird was an Eastern Black Redstart. Initially, as on the previous day, I was trying to stalk the bird with a camera, but soon realized that I could easily finish with no results at all. Instead, I concentrated on field views and notes and then managed some photographs later. I first saw the bird come from the seaward side of the dunes and land for 3-4 seconds at the top of a Hawthorn. From there it dropped down onto another Hawthorn and sat on the edge in full sunshine for a short while before it disappeared again. Over the next three hours, I stayed mostly still, but saw it only fleetingly on each occasion that it showed itself at ranges mainly between 20-40 yards. This day it was being harassed less often by the Robins. Occasionally it would emerge from a bush, take flight and snap at flying insects, then return to a perch within the bush, bob its body and quiver its tail. Sometimes

it would drop to the ground, hop quickly to seize a food item and return almost immediately up into the bush where it was usually out of sight. One is used to observing more confident Black Redstarts on fences, buildings and on open ground, rather than this bird, which was so difficult to see in the confines of leafy bushes.

From the accumulation of short views, I could see that the upperparts were a clean mid-grey with a very slight trace of a light brown wash on the mantle, which was visible on nearer rear views in the good light. The primaries, greater coverts and secondaries were dark blackish-brown, edged and tipped orange-buff. The tips to the primary coverts formed a very narrow wing-bar. There was no trace of any wing panel, nor was there any white on the head above the black of the lores and throat. The black bib with some admixture of greyish tips to the feathers came well down onto the upper breast and was sharply demarcated from the strong orange of the underparts which extended fully to the undertail coverts and tail. I could not make out the extent of the orange on the underwing coverts, but certainly did not note any contrasting colours when the bird flew. The orange of the dark-centred tail was slightly darker than the underparts. The eye was dark and the bill and legs were black.

After the problems of the two previous days, I was pleased to be able to obtain some description of the bird even though it was briefer than I would have liked. In the early afternoon I put out the news that I had confirmed identification onto BirdLine and to some of the Lincolnshire observers, but owing to the difficult access to the site and the shortening daylight hours, only Roy and Linda Harvey made the journey. Unfortunately, the bird reverted to its elusive ways during the afternoon and, despite an extensive search, the only person to see it was Linda, to whom I am grateful for the following details. She had experienced the Scarborough bird in December 2014. On this date, she saw this individual on a Sea Buckthorn bush at c25 yards range. In the few seconds that she could watch it through binoculars, she could clearly see the upperparts and the extent of the orange on the underparts before it dropped into thicker vegetation. Roy was c100 yards away at the time and missed the bird altogether.

Next day, a Saturday, saw the arrival of c30 observers, but quite typically there were no further signs of the bird. Earlier, when I was talking to John McLoughlin at BirdLine, he informed me that wintering birds of this race that he had seen in Oman behaved very much like this bird and would dart into Acacia scrub and be almost impossible to see again.

This record was accepted by BBRC and is published in *British Birds* vol. 110 page 612. This bird constitutes the 8th British record and the first for Lincolnshire. The bird seen at Easington on 25th October may have been the same individual.

Discussion.

Incomplete knowledge of the variations of plumage of Eastern Black Redstart led to a review by BOURC in 1998-99 and consequently the earlier records were removed from the British list. Two of these birds were Lincolnshire examples. The first, an adult male at Saltfleetby on 15th-17th October 1978 was deemed to be a hybrid Black x Common Redstart while the second bird at Donna Nook on 16th-22nd October 1988 was judged to be within the range of variation of the race *gibraltariensis*. After its removal from the national list, it was not long before Eastern Black Redstart was reinstated. Improved understanding of its plumages, particularly the "*paradoxus*" type led to some recent records being accepted. "*Paradoxus*" type plumage is the adult-like plumage which is acquired by some males in their first autumn.

The original first national record in Kent in 1981 was reinstated and by the end of 2015 there was a total of six British records accepted. Seven more records were added during the autumn influx of 2016. So far, all of the records are of first calendar year males and no doubt the much trickier female-type plumages are causing birds to be overlooked. A comprehensive paper on Eastern Black Redstarts by Andy Stoddart can be found in *British Birds* vol. 109 pages 211-219.

British records preceding this bird are as follows:-

Dungeness, Kent: 7th November 1981.

Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk: 9th November 2003.

Foreness Point, Kent: 11th-17th November 2011.

Holy Island, Northumberland: 16th-21st November 2011.

Scalby, Yorkshire: 29th November-3rd December 2014.

St. Mary's, Isles of Scilly: 30th November 2014-12th January 2015.

Easington, Yorkshire: 25th October 2016.

Other birds identified in autumn 2016 after the Donna Nook occurrence were in Cleveland, Lothian, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, and Cornwall.

Contributors to LBC records in 2016, with initials for reference

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ABa	Alison Baldwin	CSc	Colin Scott
ABar	A Bartholomew	CWd	Cheryl Wood
ABe	Anthony Bentley	DCo	David Cohen
ACa	Alastair Carr	DE	Dean Eades
ACBH	Andrew Henderson	DEv	Derick Evans
ACL	Alexander Lees	DHur	D Hursthouse
ACm	Andrew Carmichael	DJB	Dave Bradbeer
ACo	Andrew Cockroft	DJn	Denis Jones
ACS	Andrew Sims	DKW	Dave Wright
ADv	Andy Dove	DMJ	David Jenkins
AFP	Alkborough Flats Partnership	DMn	David Morison
AGB	Alan Ball	DMy	Derek Morley
AHd	Tony Houlden	DN	Dean Nicholson
AHy	Annie Haycock	DNw	Daniel Newton
AJ	Antony Jarvis	DRo	Donald Ross
AJH	Tony Housman	DRob	David Roberts
APC	Andy Chick	DSP	Dave Purnell
ARj	Amy Robjohns	DWd	Dave Woods
ASd	Ashley Saunders	DWo	Dave Worrell
ASh	A Shearsmith	DWs	Danny Walsh
ASha	Andy Sharp	EJM	Edmund Mackrill
AT	Alan Temple	EJR	John Redshaw
ATD	Alan Daws	FJ	Freddy Johnson
ATu	Aidan Turner	GAM	Grimsby Area Members
AV	Andrew Vaughan	GAt	Gill Atkins
BHa	Barry Hancock	GBi	George Bishop
BHe	Brian Hedley	GCS	Garry Steele
BMcL	Brian McLean	GF	Graham Fordham
BRG	Birklands Ringing Group	GH	Graham Hardy
BWd	Benjamin Ward	GHA	Geoff Annibal
BWr	Barry Wardle	GHo	Grahame Hopwood
CA	Chris Atkin	GJF	Gary Fenwick
CAd	Chris Andrews	GJT	Graham J Taylor
CAdl	Chaz Adland	GKn	Garry Knight
CBe	Colin Beck	GMO	Gervase Orton
CBl	Chris Bell	GMu	Geoff Mullett
CCG	Clare Gillatt	GPBO	Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory
CCl	C Clarke	GPC	Graham Catley
CCu	Chris Cullen	GPL	Guy Langan
CDa	Colin Davies	GRu	George Rutter
CG	Chris Grimshaw	GW	Geoff Williams
CHa	Christine Hancock	GWi	Geoff Williamson
CJ	Chris Jarvis	GWr	Garry Wright
CJJ	Colin Jennings	HB	Howard Bunn

HJM Heber Martin
 HJo Hugh Jones
 HM Hugh Middleton
 IAA I A Ashworth
 IB Ian Birch
 IE Ian Ellis
 IG Ian Gordon
 IGS Ian Shepherd
 ILy Ian Lyall
 IM Ian Macalpine-Leny
 IPM Ian Misselbrook
 ISm Ian Smith
 JAS J A Smith
 JB John Badley
 JBy Jonathan Bye
 JDk Jon Drakes
 JDR John Robinson
 JFa John Farmer
 JGr Jim Graham
 JHe James Hewson
 JJF Josh Forrester
 JOv John Oliver
 JPe John Pegden
 JPr Jonathan Price
 JPS J P Shaughnessey
 JPu Julian Purvis
 JRC John Clarkson
 JRN J R Nelson
 JRs Jan Rousseau
 JRW John Walker
 JS James Siddle
 JTG John Goy
 JTH John T Harriman
 JWa John Watt
 JWg Jim Wright
 JWh J Wheldon
 JWo Jane Woodcock
 JWW John Walton
 KAM Kevin Marshall
 KBi Katherine Birkett
 KDR Keith Robertson
 KH Kay Heath
 KJW Kit Wallace
 KKH Kerry Harrison
 KMW Kevin Wilson
 KRo Keith Robinson
 LHa Linda Harvey
 LNU Lincolnshire Naturalists Union

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 MEH Mike Harrison
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 MHa Matt Harrison
 MHar Michael Harrison
 MJa Martin Jackson
 MJG Martin Gray
 MJn Mark Johnson
 MJT Mike Tarrant
 MM Monica Marks
 MMk Monica Mackrill
 MPi Mike Pilsworth
 MPn Mick Paine
 MPv Mark Paver
 MTa Matt Taylor
 MTh Mel Thorn
 MW M Welbourne
 MWe Mike Weedon
 MWi Mick Widdowson
 MWs Mandy West
 NAL Nigel Lound
 NCl Nick Clayton
 NCr Nigel Cross
 ND Neil Drinkall
 NGM Nargila Moura
 NHD N H Dorrington
 NKz Neil Kurz
 NPT Nick Tribe
 NRo Neil Roberts
 OB Oliver Beacock
 OD Oliver Davies
 OM Owen Marks
 OW Oliver Woodman
 PAH Phil Hyde
 PAI Paul Alvey
 PBe Patrick Bell
 PBH Peter Haywood
 PCc Peter Crick
 PCf Peter Cleford
 PCr P Croft
 PCro Pete Cross
 PDb Paul Daubney
 PDr Peter Dryburgh
 PDu Paul Dumbleton
 PEs Phil Espin

PHI	Phillip Harland	SAB	S A Britton
PNe	Paul Neale	SBk	Steven Black
PNW	Nicholas Watts	SDW	Simon Wellock
PP	Phil Porter	SE	S Evans
PRo	Peter Roworth	SGC	Steve Cross
PS	Paul Sullivan	SHi	Steve Hiner
PSc	Pete Scott	SJ	Sheila Jennings
PSm	Paul Smith	SJM	Steve Meek
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RC	Robert Carr	SL	Steve Lorand
RCa	Richard Caney	SLe	Steven Lewis
RCm	Richard Camm	SLo	Steve Lovell
RDn	Richard Doan	SLy	Steve Lyon
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RJa	Richard Jackson	SWa	Steve Watson
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RKW	Rob K Watson	TBa	Terry Barnatt
RL	R Lorand	TBg	Tim Bagworth
RLa	R Lamin	TC	Toby Collett
RLb	Roger Labbett	TCo	Terry Corlett
RMr	Ron Marshall	TGu	Trevor Gunby
RNH	Roger Hebb	TK	Trevor Kerry
RP	R Parsons	TML	Trevor Lee
RPi	Richard Pipe	TWh	Terry Whalin
RPr	Roy Pearson	TWo	Tomas Wood
RR	R Riddington	TWr	Trevor Wright
RSh	Bob Sheppard	VF	Vin Fleming
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	WB	William Bowell
RTa	Ruth Taylor	WBR	Whisby Nature Reserve Bird Report
RTf	Russ Telfer	WBS	Bill Sterling
RWk	Robert Walker	WG	Wayne Gillatt
RWo	Ray Woodcock	WM	Bill Meek
RWr	Roger Wardle	WPB	William Brooking
		ZH	Zac Hinchcliffe

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Lincolnshire Red Data Breeding Birds of Conservation Concern: BBS Trends 1995-2016

Distribution and Population change in Lincolnshire and other parts of UK

Ranked in order of frequency of occurrence in Lincolnshire

Species	% Squares Lincs 2016	% Squares UK 2016	% UK birds in Lincs 2016	% Change Lincolnshire	% Change East Midlands	% Change England	Trend
Skylark	92.7	59.4	4.7	-37	-22	-23	worse
Yellowhammer	79.3	38.4	5.6	27	-3	-26	better
Linnet	79.3	42.2	5.4	-14	-25	-20	better
Song Thrush	74.4	78.4	1.3	9	35	20	worse
Starling	65.9	52.4	2.2	-77	-47	-60	worse
House Sparrow	63.4	57.0	2.5	-8	-1	-18	better
Yellow Wagtail	41.5	5.8	18.7	*	-42	-41	
Tree Sparrow	32.9	7.1	7.3	*	11	69	
Grey Partridge	22.0	5.0	11.9	*	-32	-57	
Lapwing	36.6	19.2	2.5	*	-19	-25	
Corn Bunting	11.0	3.9	6.0	*	*	-33	
Cuckoo	13.4	16.9	1.1	*	-86	-69	
Spotted Flycatcher	2.4	5.1	0.6	*	*	-61	
Turtle Dove	1.2	0.7	2.8	*	*	-94	
Marsh Tit	1.2	3.7	0.5	*	*	-41	
Grasshopper Warbler	1.2	2.5	0.8	*	*	-94	
Tree Pipit	0.0	4.8	0.0	*	*	-46	
Willow Tit	0.0	0.6	0.0	*	*	-82	
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	0.0	0.6	0.0	*	*	*	

Notes

1. % Squares UK is extracted from the BTO website and refers to the proportion of BBS squares in which each species was recorded in 2016 (Lincolnshire 82 and UK 3837).
2. Figures in bold indicate statistically significant change at the 95% level.
3. * indicates insufficient BBS squares covered to provide data to compute changes.
4. Trend is % change in Lincolnshire compared to % change in England.
5. Lincolnshire Skylarks had a poor year and the position of our Linnets and Starlings deteriorated.
6. The data suggest Yellow Wagtail, Tree Sparrow, Corn Bunting and Grey Partridge continue to be significantly more widespread in Lincolnshire than the rest of UK but the position of Corn Bunting continued to deteriorate and Grey Partridge also had a poor year.
7. % UK birds in Lincs indicates the % of number of birds recorded in Lincolnshire in BBS compared to total birds recorded in UK, provided for information interest.
8. Lincolnshire comprises 3.3% of the land area of UK.

● Main Lincolnshire bird sites



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Front cover: **Common Swift** *Apus apus*
Frampton Marsh Jul 2nd 2016 © Neil Smith