

THE **Lincolnshire** **BIRD REPORT 2018**



**The
Lincolnshire
Bird Club**
www.lincsbirdclub.co.uk

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2019-20

HON PRESIDENT: Prof Ian Newton

CHAIRMAN: Phil Espin (chairman@lincsbirdclub.co.uk)

SECRETARY: Jim Wright (secretary@lincsbirdclub.co.uk)

TREASURER: John Watt

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Michael Harrison

SALES OFFICER: Bill Sterling (wbsterling@hotmail.com)
Newlyn, 5 Carlton Avenue, Healing, N.E.Lincs, DN41 7PW

IT OFFICER/ EDITOR, THE HERON: Andrew Chick (andrew@forktail.co.uk)

COUNTY RECORDER: Phil Hyde (Philhyde55@gmail.com)
The Hawthorns, Legbourne, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 8NH
Tel: 07876-080008

GIBRALTAR POINT REPRESENTATIVE: Kevin Wilson

LNU REPRESENTATIVE: Nick Tribe

RSPB REPRESENTATIVE: John Badley

LWT REPRESENTATIVE: Grahame Hopwood

LINCOLNSHIRE BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: James Siddle (Chairman), Roy Harvey
(Secretary: roy.harvey100@btinternet.com) Phil Hyde, Steve Keightley, Nige Lound, Andy Sims.

LINCOLNSHIRE RARE BREEDING BIRD REPRESENTATIVE:
Phil Espin (pmjespin@gmail.com)

WeBS OFFICE

BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2PU Tel: 01842 750050 email: WeBS@bto.org

WeBS COUNTY CO-ORDINATORS

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE (INLAND)
(Ms) Chris Gunn - donandchris@hotmail.co.uk

SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE/P'BO (INLAND)
Bob Titman Please contact via the WeBS Office

THE WASH
Jim Scott (jim.scott@rspb.org.uk)

HUMBER ESTUARY INNER SOUTH
Keith Parker Please contact via the WeBS Office

HUMBER ESTUARY MID SOUTH
Harriet Billanie Please contact via the WeBS Office

HUMBER ESTUARY OUTER SOUTH
John Walker contact via the WeBS Office

BTO REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES
North: (Ms) Chris Gunn - donandchris@hotmail.co.uk
East: Phil Espin - pmjespin@gmail.com
South: Hugh Dorrington - hdorrington@btconnect.com
West: Mike Daly - Mike.btorrwl@gmail.com

FRONT COVER: *Ruff Philomachus pugnax*
Frampton Marsh, May 12th 2018 © Neil Smith

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Welcome to the 2018 Bird Report



Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Bardney Mar 26th 2018 © Russell Hayes



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THE LINCOLNSHIRE BIRD CLUB 2018 REPORT

Welcome to the 2018 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 and organizations who submit and share records to LBC. We have had two bird recorders for more than ten years but when John Clarkson retired at our March 2019 AGM, Phil Hyde agreed to continue as Recorder for the whole county on a trial basis. We'd like to thank both of them for all their hard and dedicated work. The Lincolnshire Bird Records Committee (LBRC) vets our records, Roy Harvey has provided stalwart support as secretary of the LBRC and thanks to James Siddle for recently taking on the role of Chair of LBRC. Particular thanks are due to Colin and Sheila Jennings for all the work undertaken in converting the raw data into the building blocks of the report, Colin Casey has continued to improve our Wildlife Recorder database most especially by developing machine means to convert external data into our database which continues to radically improve our data management for the purpose of report writing. We are extremely grateful to him and Jack Levene of Wildlife Recorder for the work they have done. We are also grateful to John and Nicky Clarkson for proof reading this 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 2018 report:

Graham Catley
Andrew Chick
John Clarkson

Phil Espin
Vin Fleming
Chris Grimshaw

Phil Hyde
Richard Jackson
Steve Keightley

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.

Graham Catley
Andrew Chick
John Clarkson
Nick Crouch
Gary Fenwick
Chris Grimshaw
Roy Harvey

Russell Hayes
Phil Hyde
Mark Johnson
Steve Keightley
Nige Lound
Cliff Morrison
Paul Neale

Steve Nesbitt
Steve Nikols
Steve Routledge
Neil Smith
Graham Taylor
Ben Ward

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. Please ensure your BirdTrack sites have a clear geographic place name in them and an accurate OS grid reference or we cannot use the data. Site names like “Home”, “Patch” or “A52” are unuseable.

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: Steve Keightley, Nigel Lound, James Siddle and Andy Sims. The chairman of the 2016-17 LBRC is James Siddle 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). In most cases a decent photo will be sufficient for submission. 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 the county recorder.

Lincolnshire recorder

Phil Hyde

Gamekeeper’s Cottage, Manor Close, Legbourne, Louth, Lincs LN11 8NH

Email: recorder_south@lincsbirdclub.co.uk

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. Searches can be made online at www.glnp.org.uk



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NATURE PARTNERSHIP

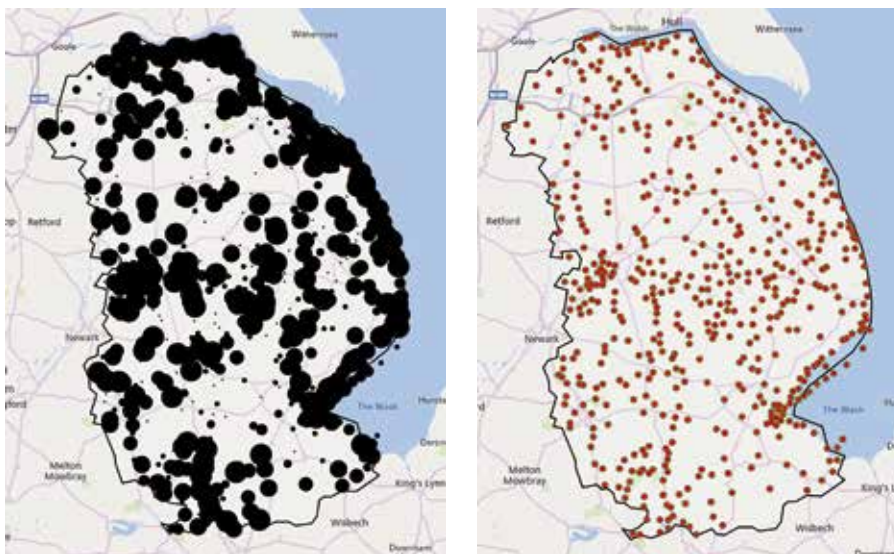


Figure 1 and 2. Show the density of records (left) and location of record (right) submitted in 2018.

Data Sources used in the 2018 Bird Report

LBC offers their thanks to the following individuals and organizations for supplying and letting us use their data in the 2018 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 2018 bird report. Further details can be found at www.birdguides.com/.

BTO BBS Data. Neil Calbrade, the Data Requests Coordinator of the Breeding Birds Survey, for providing Lincolnshire specific BBS data. The BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey is a partnership jointly funded by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), with fieldwork conducted by volunteers.

BTO BirdTrack Data. Data supplied by BirdTrack has been used in the production of the 2018 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).

eBird. Data supplied by eBird has been used in the in the publication of the 2018 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.

Gibraltar Point Dataset. Key Wilson 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) was made during 2017, with work on it continuing. 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.

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/>

Ringing 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, January 2020

2018 Review of the Year

- 2nd Stilt Sandpiper
- 2nd Snowy Owl
- 2nd and 3rd Pallid Swifts
- 4th White-billed Diver (found dead)
- 10th Arctic Warbler
- 12th Long-billed Dowitcher
- 13th Olive-backed Pipit
- 16th American Wigeon
- First county record of Balearic Shearwater for 11 years

In terms of breeding birds there were no confirmed breeding **Garganey** or **Black-necked Grebes** and **Woodlarks** continued to decline but **Bittern** bred in the north of the county and **Cetti's Warbler** continued to increase. In the north of the county it was the most successful breeding season for **Marsh Harriers** on the Humber since 2015. It was another poor year for **Montagu's Harrier** and **Quail**.

Increasing numbers of **Spoonbills** were seen in the county and **Great-White Egrets** noted at 61 sites with up to five birds together. There was a good spring passage of **Pied Flycatchers** but low numbers of **Common Redstarts** at both seasons. There was the highest ever county count of **Sanderling** and large numbers of **Pomarine Skuas** were noted in late Oct. There were only two records each of **Dotterel** and **Grey Phalarope** and no records of **Purple Heron** or **Honey Buzzard**.

January

A female **Ring-necked Duck** was at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 3rd. On the 5th a **Black Brant** was noted at Donna Nook with this bird subsequently seen around the north of the county into Feb. Also on the 5th a **Rough-legged Buzzard** was at Alkborough Flats. A **Sooty Shearwater** off Gibraltar Point on the 7th was an unusual record.

On the 14th a **Garganey** was noted at Alkborough Flats. A flock of 53 **Eurasian White-fronted Geese** arrived in the Saltfleetby area on the 18th and increased to 75 by the 19th with birds noted there until the beginning of Mar. This was the largest flock noted in the county by some margin during the year. A **Siberian Chiffchaff** was reported at Marston STW on the 26th with it or another also noted in Feb.

February

In Feb a **Green-winged Teal** was at Alkborough Flats on the 6th. A **Glossy Ibis** was at Frampton on the 15th and a **Black Brant** was at the same site on the 19th. A redhead **Smew** at Barton Pits on the 26th was one of only five records of six birds during the year.

March

An immature female **Snowy Owl** at Wainfleet Marsh from the 21st to 22nd was, remarkably, in the same area as the first county record back in 1990. In bitter conditions a superb immature **White-tailed Eagle** was noted at Theddlethorpe on the 3rd – the first county record for three years. The plummeting temperatures resulted in a large influx of **Woodcock** peaking at 119 at Gibraltar Point on the 12th.

An adult male **Ring-necked Duck** at Bagmoor from the 18th then roamed around various sites across the county during the year. An **Alpine Swift** was over Crowland on the 22nd when a **Serin** was at Gibraltar Point. These spring migrants beat the first record of **Northern Wheatear** which didn't arrive until the 28th at Wressle.

April

An intriguing record on the 1st was of a satellite-tagged **Goshawk** roosting overnight at Sutton Crosses. The first **Osprey** of the spring was noted at Deeping Lakes NR on the 2nd. A male **White-spotted Bluethroat** was an excellent find at East Halton from the 3rd. **Garganey** at Gibraltar Point and Alkborough Flats on the 4th were significantly later than the first spring migrants in 2017. The previous autumn's influx of **Hawfinches** continued into spring 2018 with a peak of 24 in East Keal on the 8th (and 12 at Belton on the 10th and 20 in Lincoln on the 11th).

A **Hoopoe** was at Gibraltar Point on the 20th. A series of records of **Red-rumped Swallow** began with two over Gibraltar Point from the 23rd with singles on two dates noted over Frampton

Marsh and another at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 29th. An **Alpine Swift** flew south over Gibraltar Point on the 24th. On the 26th a female **Montagu's Harrier** was noted in the Grimoldby area. A **Green-winged Teal** was at Frampton Marsh from the 27th when a **Dotterel** was also noted. A **Wood Warbler** was at Gibraltar Point from the 29th.



Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* North Somercotes Apr 16th 2018 © Mark Johnson

May

A **Black-winged Stilt** at Frampton from the 1st also commuted to Freiston Shore and was noted on several dates to the Jun 1st. Also on the 1st a dozen **Pied Flycatchers** were at Gibraltar Point – part of a much better spring showing than in recent years. An early **Red-backed Shrike** was at Grimsby Docks on the 5th. The **Snowy Owl** was relocated at Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore from the 1st-10th. A **Goshawk** was over Dunston on the 3rd. Also from the 3rd the returning female **Montagu's Harrier** was noted in the north of the county and a **Corncrake** was first heard calling at Baston Fen and at Frampton Marsh a **Dotterel** – only potentially the second, but final, bird of a very poor year. On the 5th a male **Serin** was at Gibraltar Point.

Following a quiet spell mid-month, a female **Red-necked Phalarope** was at West Ashby on the 20th. The next day a **White-winged Black Tern** was at Covenham Reservoir. A **White-billed Diver** found dead on the foreshore at Freiston Shore on the 22nd was only the fourth county record. Also on the 22nd a **Glossy Ibis** was found at Anderby Marsh and then relocated to Gibraltar Point and on to Freiston Shore and Frampton Marsh. On the 23rd a **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Frampton with further singles at this site in Jun, Jul, Aug and Oct.

A switch to easterly winds produced a nice run of typical late-May scarcities in the county. These kicked off with an elusive singing **Icterine Warbler** at Huttoft Pit on the 24th. The 25th was a very good day at Gibraltar Point with a smart male **Red-backed Shrike** on Storm Ridge, a singing **Marsh Warbler** in the East Dunes, a singing **Wood Warbler** (with another on the 31st) and two singing **Common Rosefinches** in the Plantation. A new **Common Rosefinch** was singing in the East Dunes at Gibraltar Point early next morning. The run of good birds continued with a **Bee-eater** flying south on the 27th and, next day, a **Hoopoe** was just north of North Building which was the last in a memorable run of scarce birds at Gibraltar Point. A **Serin** was at Tetney Marsh on the 28th and a **Red-backed Shrike** was at Donna Nook from the 29th.

June

A **Rose-coloured Starling** was at Saltfleetby St Clement on Jun 7th with another at Deeping St Nicholas on the 11th – part of a UK-wide influx. A **Green-winged Teal** was at Deeping Lakes NR on the 8th when the fourth **Common Rosefinch** of the spring was noted at Gibraltar Point.

On the 9th a **Golden Oriole** was at Crowle and was followed by one singing in the Plantation at Gibraltar Point next day when a **Serin** was also noted – one of four records at Gibraltar Point during Jun and Jul, presumably related to the same, elusive long-stayer. A **Montagu's Harrier** was noted at Gibraltar Point on the 13th. A **Quail** at Fillingham on the 21st was part of another poor year in the county.

July

A **Bee-eater** was over Gibraltar Point on the 4th. A **Roseate Tern** off Gibraltar Point on the 10th was the first of about half a dozen birds through to the last – also off Gibraltar Point – on the Oct 7th. An adult **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at Frampton Marsh from the 19th.

A **Glossy Ibis** was at Whisby NP on the 23rd. An adult **White-winged Black Tern** was at Frampton on the 26th where a **Spotted Crake** was seen briefly on the 30th and 50 **Curlew Sandpipers** were also noted. From the 29th a **Red-backed Shrike** was a nice record at Middlemarsh Farm.



Hobby *Falco subbuteo* Rimac Jun 10th 2018 © Mark Johnson

August

The 13 **Pied Flycatchers** at Gibraltar Point on the 4th was a good early autumn count but proved to be the highest of the year. A juvenile **Spotted Crake** was located at Gibraltar Point on the 9th and remained in situ until the Sep 1st, with presumably the same bird there from the 25th to Oct 11th. Another **Spotted Crake**, this one at Town Holt, Grimsby, was noted from the 11th. The only **Wood Warbler** of the autumn was trapped at Gibraltar Point on the 14th. A count of 10,121 **Sanderling** at Gibraltar Point on the 14th was the highest total ever noted in the county.

Some reasonable warbler passage was noted in the second half of the month. On the 17th an estimated 500 **Willow Warblers** were at Freiston Shore and 280 were noted at Gibraltar Point on the same day. On the 20th there were 41 **Lesser Whitethroats** and 112 **Common Whitethroats** at Gibraltar Point along with a dozen **Spotted Flycatchers**. An adult **Sabine's Gull** was also off Gibraltar Point on the 20th and presumably the same bird noted off Skegness on the 22nd.

One of the highlights of the year – the second county record of **Stilt Sandpiper** - was found at Frampton Marsh on the 22nd. This moulting adult remained until the 3rd Sep and was sometimes seen in close proximity with a **Long-billed Dowitcher** from the 24th and a **Red-necked Phalarope**! Another **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Gibraltar Point on the 29th when two **Sabine's Gulls** were between Horseshoe Point and Tetney Marsh.



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Donna Nook Sep 27th 2018 © Mark Johnson

September

A **Cattle Egret** at Freiston Shore on the 3rd was one of two or three birds noted around the county during the autumn. A **Sabine's Gull** was off Huttoft Car Terrace on the 5th. A **Ruddy Duck** from the 7th was the first county record for three years; also on the 7th a **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at Manby Wetlands, with the third and final **Pectoral Sandpiper** of the year at Deeping Lakes NR on the 14th.

The **Icterine Warbler** trapped at Gibraltar Point on the 7th was re-trapped six days later and again two days after that, without having been seen in the field at all. Also at Gibraltar Point on the 7th was a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** in the West Dunes. A superb juvenile **Red-footed Falcon** lingered in the West Dunes at Gibraltar Point from the 10th (which showed very well perched up that evening with the **Red-breasted Flycatcher** calling in the same area of bushes).

The first **Long-tailed Skua** of a moderate autumn passage was noted off Gibraltar Point on the 18th. A **Corncrake** was flushed at Boultham Mere on the 21st when 2837 **Meadow Pipits** moved through Gibraltar Point – part of a heavy passage through this site during the month with over 17,000 birds noted. The count of 21 **Sooty Shearwaters** off Gibraltar Point on the 23rd occurred in a fairly light north-westerly wind. A **Leach's Petrel** off Huttoft Car Terrace on the 28th was one of only four birds noted during the year. Also on the 28th an adult **White-rumped Sandpiper** was noted in the Greenshank Creek wader roost at Gibraltar Point.

October

A **Balearic Shearwater** off Huttoft Car Terrace on the 1st was the first county record for 11 years and a **Sabine's Gull** was off Gibraltar Point next day. The first **Yellow-browed Warbler** of another good autumn passage was noted at Huttoft on the 4th. They were then noted through to the 2nd Nov. Apart from Gibraltar Point, which recorded a maximum of 18 on the 7th (down to two on 8th but back up to 10 on the 9th indicating a good turnover of birds at this site), overall numbers were down on 2017. This is owing to limited coverage at sites like Donna Nook. A **Corncrake** was flushed at East Halton on the 5th when an adult **American Golden Plover** – the first in the county

for five years – was at East Butterwick. A **Grey Phalarope** was at Winterton Carrs on the 6th when a **Serin** was at Gibraltar Point. Next day two **Barred Warblers** – the first county records for three years – were at Gibraltar Point and the first **Richard's Pipit** of the autumn was at the same site. Continuing its run of good warbler records, the county's 10th **Arctic Warbler** was a nice find at Gibraltar Point on the 11th when a **Richard's Pipit** was at Humberston with three more noted in the county mid-month.

A **Great-Grey Shrike** was at Tab's Head/ Frampton on the 13th. The only **Temminck's Stint** of the year was noted at Baston and Langtoft GP from the 15th. Thrush numbers mid-month included 1730 **Redwing** at Gibraltar Point on the 16th (when 240 Robins were also noted) but **Ring Ouzel** numbers were unspectacular with a peak of just 13 at Gibraltar Point on the 17th. On the 19th an **Olive-backed Pipit** was found along the sea bank between Tetney Haven and North Cotes Point. A **Rough-legged Buzzard** was at Gibraltar Point on the 22nd.

From the 24th a remarkable period of sea passage began in cold northerly winds beginning with 27 **Pomarine Skuas** off Gibraltar Point with 37 there next day when 15 were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR. These numbers were comprehensively beaten on the 27th when 188 were off Gibraltar Point and 52 noted at Huttoft Car Terrace the next highest count. The following day there were 100 at Witham Mouth and 59 at Gibraltar Point. Also noted were numbers of **Little Auks** (a peak of 47 off Gibraltar Point on the 28th), three **Leach's Petrels** and a **Grey Phalarope** off Gibraltar Point, **Long-tailed Ducks** and a couple of **Iceland Gulls** as well as good numbers of **Short-Eared Owls** coming in-off the sea - with 12 birds at Gibraltar Point on the 27th - and the first **Waxwings** of the autumn from the 24th. On the 26th some 405 **Whooper Swans** were noted at Gibraltar Point. The second and final **Grey Phalarope** of another poor year was at Gibraltar Point on the 27th. A **Sabine's Gull** was at Tetney Marsh on the 30th. Thrushes also arrived in the same conditions with 1672 Fieldfare near Lincoln on the 28th and 690 **Blackbirds** at Gibraltar Point on the 29th.



Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* Donna Nook Apr 29th 2018 © Mark Johnson

November

A **Rough-legged Buzzard** was at Tetney Marsh on the 3rd and over Donna Nook next day with another at Gedney Drove End on the 4th. The county's second **Pallid Swift** showed well at Gibraltar Point on the 7th (subject to acceptance) and was followed by the county's third at Goxhill on the 11th. **Shorelark** numbers at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR had been building up since mid-Oct and peaked at 24 on the 11th. There was also a flock of 100 **Snow Bunting** at this site – the highest

count of the year. On the 13th an exceptional 12,062 **Wood Pigeons** were noted moving through Gibraltar Point when a **Siberian Chiffchaff** was also noted.

A female **Parrot Crossbill** was at Gibraltar Point from the 14th – the first record for five years and associated with a small influx of **Common Crossbills** at the same site (including a couple of intriguing large-billed males). A **Great-Grey Shrike** was noted coming in-off the sea at Gibraltar Point on the 18th. A **Black Brant** was at Donna Nook on the 25th and was noted into Dec. Next day two **Taiga Bean Geese** were noted at Huttoft Bank Pit. A **Siberian Chiffchaff** noted at Whisby NP on the 30th was seen again in Dec.

December

A drake **American Wigeon** was found at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 14th. A count of 11 Bewick's Swans at Wroot on the 16th was the only double-figure count of the year. A count of 1000 **Fieldfare** was at Frampton on the 17th. A **Black Brant** was at Kirton Marsh on the 30th.



Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* Little Grimsby Mar 2nd 2018 © Mark Johnson

SYSTEMATIC LIST 2018

Collated and edited by: Phil Hyde, Phil Espin, John Clarkson

Contributing Authors: Graham Catley, Andrew Chick, John Clarkson, Phil Espin, Vin Fleming, Chris Grimshaw, Phil Hyde, Richard Jackson, Steve Keightley.

Key to abbreviations:

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 Rarities 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.

RBBP - 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: 7080746.

Available online at britishbirds.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/BoCC4.pdf

JNCC (2016) Seabird Population Trends and Causes of Change: 1986-2015 Report. Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Updated Sep 2016. <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/seabird-population-trends-and-causes-of-change-1986-2015-report-category/>

Wintering waterbirds thresholds. Frost, T., Austin, G., Hearn, R. et al. (2019). Population estimates of wintering waterbirds in Great Britain. *British Birds* 112: 130-145

Abbreviations used in the report:

BB	British Birds
BBRC	British Birds Rarities Committee
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey
BOU	British Ornithologists' Union
BOURC	British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CP	Country Park
GC	Golf Course
GP	Gravel Pit(s)
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LBC	Lincolnshire Bird Club
LBRC	Lincolnshire Bird Club Records Committee
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NR	Nature Reserve
RBBP	Rare Breeding Birds Panel
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SQ	Sand Quarry
STW	Sewage Treatment Works
WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
WWT	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

Bird names used in this report

From Jan 1st 2018 the BOU voted to adopt the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) World Bird List. The LBC followed this recommendation in full and used the new taxonomy in its 2017 annual report (written in mid- late-2018). However, there has been much debate about the vernacular names most familiar to British birders and the BOURC decided to use those in current usage within Britain. The vernacular names differ from those used by IOC even though the scientific names are as the IOC recommend. In the LBC reports there has been some variation in the usage of common names and following discussion by the LBC Committee it was decided to follow the BOURC. So in this LBC report and others in the future, 'Eurasian Teal' and 'Northern

Shoveler' become plain 'Teal' and 'Shoveler' and so on. A full discussion of this issue can be found at <https://www.bou.org.uk/british-list/bird-names/>

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, WeBS data are used, kindly made available by the WeBS partnership, a joint scheme of the BTO, the RSPB and JNCC (the last on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland) in association with the WWT. 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). 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 Marsh reserves.

BBS data

The BTO kindly supplies the BBS data. The BBS is run by the BTO and is jointly funded by the BTO, the JNCC (on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies listed above) and the 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. 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 average number of individuals of a species counted in each BBS square in the county, and the percentage of squares in which that species occurred each year. 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 recovery data included in either a summary table or as additional comments 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 only LBC members can see more detailed information (please join!). Population trends and seasonal patterns of occurrence are described, with detailed listing of the records of the rarest species. This can be found at:

<https://lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/information/the-lincs-list>

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

<https://lincsbirdclub.co.uk/site/index.php/sightings>

Conservation status

The species header indicates whether the species/sub-species is in the Red, Amber or Green List of the BOCC4 (britishbirds.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/BoCC4.pdf).

Those in the 'Red List' are 'Globally Threatened'. Those in the 'Amber List' are those with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe and those on the 'Green List' are those that don't meet the criteria for inclusion in the Red or Green Lists (see BoCC4 for further definition of these terms).

WeBS thresholds for international or national (Great Britain) importance are given for all species where numbers approach, match or exceed one or more thresholds. International importance signifies that 1% of the birds of a particular flyway, regularly use a site during their annual cycle (in Frost, T., Austin, G., Hearn, R. et al. (2019). Population estimates of wintering waterbirds in Great Britain. *British Birds* 112: 130-145).

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*



Winter visitor. Three distinct races occur. Amber List (nominate and hrota). WeBS threshold for international importance 2400 and national importance 980 (nominate).



Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* Donna Nook Nov 25th 2018 © Graham Catley



Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* Donna Nook Nov 25th 2018 © Graham Catley

Black Brant *B.b.nigricans*

Former vagrant, first seen in 1982 with just three records to 1991. Very scarce but annual in small numbers, with Dark-bellied flocks. LBRC

One was at Donna Nook on Jan 5th and presumably the same bird was seen at Tetney Marsh on Feb 8th and Feb 14th (SL, RL et al). Another was at Frampton Marsh on Feb 19th (TWh). In the last quarter, one was again at Donna Nook on Nov 25th (ND, GPC), Dec 16th and Dec 28th. On the Wash one was at Kirton Marsh on Dec 30th (SK).

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.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	3000	5000	2000	1200	2500	7	2	6	2	1000	3000	5000
Witham Mouth	1000	1200	1100	1800	1000	-	1	1	175	1100	-	1000
Freiston Shore	2000	1	280	950	500	-	-	1	100	1200	-	1100
Welland Marsh	1280	930	-	800	-	-	-	-	-	65	500	1200
Wrangle	1300	1060	1050	-	-	1	-	-	16	250	-	690
Gibraltar Point	750	900	1000	110	100	20	-	-	72	249	504	300
Grainthorpe	522	522	800	350	250	-	-	-	-	410	350	450
Wainfleet	388	665	148	72	102	-	-	-	-	1200	416	370
Kirton Marsh	160	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1800	1200
Donna Nook	800	433	500	10	-	1	-	-	-	454	600	300
Tetney Marsh	600	630	-	220	60	7	-	-	7	350	550	420
Saltfleet	550	660	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	298	907
Butterwick	780	288	-	67	53	4	-	2	6	500	197	181
Friskney	445	912	338	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terrington	-	835	-	-	33	-	-	-	8	-	280	-
Dawsmere	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	500
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500

The table includes all counts of 500 or more. Other significant counts included 461 at Leverton in Jan, 215 at Marshchapel and 187 at Cleethorpes in Feb, 200 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe in Mar and 300 at Boston in May. In the final quarter there were 148 at Benington and 241 at Huttoft in

Oct, 300 at Marshchapel and 150 at Humberston in Nov. Away from coastal sites there was one at Crowland on Feb 23rd and again there on Apr 13th and there were 90 at Covenham Reservoir on Dec 3rd.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *B.b. brota*



Scarce coastal winter visitor, in variable numbers.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	1	1	-	1	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Gibraltar Point	2	1	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney Marsh	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
Kirton Marsh	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Freiston Shore	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Croft	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Another unremarkable year for this well-defined sub-species. The table includes all reports. An unseasonal bird on Aug 17th was at Frampton Marsh where a few Dark-bellied Brent Geese are present all year round.

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.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	200	122	30	50	100	30	128	300	100	236	128	500
Gibraltar Point	200	110	70	30	29	62	130	365	400	180	89	120
Wilsford	2	92	27	8	25	5	8	-	-	220	600	210
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	364	100	30	-	2	-	-	20	271	120	-	10
Middlemarsh Farm	50	90	50	20	40	20	30	1	300	300	10	-
Fiskerton	6	28	6	-	6	-	40	-	-	500	3	-
Reads Island	153	15	20	-	84	111	71	18	2	2	-	-
Fillingham	78	52	1	1	1	63	57	1	1	57	74	73
Covenham Reservoir	30	14	4	2	-	3	3	26	280	35	-	-
Saltfleet	155	2	-	1	-	28	6	-	56	-	-	130

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 370 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Overall peak counts were up on 2017. The species was found in 18% of BBS squares (2017 8%) with an average of 3.3 birds per occupied square (2017 4.1).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*



Fairly common localised feral population. Has bred as a feral bird since the late 1980s, with a large population established on the Humber (most nesting in Yorkshire). Wild birds are scarce but erratic winter visitors, mainly to the coast. Amber listed.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	1450	1700	1370	1	50	1	-	200	-	210	1	-
Keelby	350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	350	-	125
Whitton	-	-	28	198	-	36	-	25	300	-	-	32
Cleethorpes	-	100	-	-	32	50	40	18	110	-	-	1
Frampton Marsh	5	4	8	7	4	12	2	5	5	3	45	6
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	36	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sutton Bridge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-
Baston	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Reads Island	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby St Clement	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wilsford	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

The great majority of records from the Humber area refer to the resident feral population which nest on the Humber at Whitton Sand, hence the low numbers through the summer. Away from

the Humber region it is still a fairly scarce bird. Apart from those tabulated, in Jan there was one at Freiston Shore on 1st, possibly the same bird there on 26th, one at East Halton Skitter on 7th and one at Barton Pits on 27th. Single birds were at Thurlby (nr Bourne) Mar 17th, Deeping St James Mar 25th, Whisby NP May 17th, Saltfleet Jun 17th, two at Witham Mouth Jul 19th, one at Deeping St James Aug 11th, one at Fillingham Oct 9th, two at Terrington Nov 11th, one at Donna Nook Nov 25th and finally one at Witham Mouth Dec 12th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* ▣

The nominate form is a fairly common but localised feral resident and has bred since the late 1980s, with a widespread population established throughout the county. Wild birds from the Scottish population are likely to be scarce but erratic winter visitors mainly to the coast but are difficult to detect. Icelandic and northern European/Russian birds may also occur but are likewise difficult to detect. Amber listed (nominate form)

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Baston	896	150	240	107	11	1	320	445	650	1000	650	
Alkborough Flats	342	77	129	83	200	70	250	418	20	139	380	160
Marston	455	16	135	24	33	-	9	-	-	367	262	670
Langtoft	-	420	74	-	-	-	-	200	-	300	900	5
Kirkby on Bain	160	150	110	30	62	365	330	150	70	60	120	166
Fillingham	3	18	50	1	1	399	267	134	200	32	300	350
Tattershall Thorpe	170	-	1	1	39	-	259	-	-	-	1100	1
Covenham Reservoir	6	105	8	2	8	-	13	200	415	207	180	331
Bassingham	250	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	400	-
Messingham	255	1	34	41	40	21	14	22	4	7	519	326

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 1260 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Reports of over 500 birds included 500 at Bardney on Sep 26th, 535 Manby Wetlands Dec 15th and 800 at Kirton in Lindsey Aug 27th. The species was found in 42% of BBS squares (2017 37%) with an average of five birds per occupied square (2017 4.7). Bird 5168741 was a rare Greylag ringing recovery. Having been ringed as an adult at Derwent Ings in Jun 1998 it was shot at Whitton in Jan 2018, aged 19 years and 7 months.

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* ▣

Rare winter visitor with occasional larger influxes. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 4. LBRC

The only record of the year was of two found on fields south of Huttoft Bank Pit LWT reserve on Nov 26th grazing on a winter grain crop (RDn, PAH).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* ▣

A very common winter visitor during Sep-Apr, mainly to the Humber and The Wash, but there are many coastal and inland movements. Numbers on the Humber especially have increased greatly since 2000 with peak autumn counts now exceeding 20,000. A few injured birds remain in summer. Amber Listed. WeBS threshold for international importance: 3500. WeBS threshold for national importance: 5100.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2400	1200	75	64	4	-	-	-	1650	2358	3650	3200
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1400	1050	40	-	-	-	-	-	390	1850	1050	1500
Terrington	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5500	-
Bonby	-	3100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	480	-	600
Whitton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2000	1850	-	-
Wroot	400	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	1150	1500	-
Goxhill	1000	1000	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	300	700	52
Wressle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3000	-	-
Frampton Marsh	450	150	10	-	1	1	10	1	20	200	500	1500
Tetney Marsh	240	190	-	-	-	-	-	-	900	270	380	260
Manby Wetlands	650	700	600	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	45
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2000
Saltfleetby St Clement	634	1000	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	900	120	420	103
Alkborough Flats	144	-	-	40	-	-	-	-	1	1000	8	342

Eastoft	1500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	546	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	700	-
Witham Mouth	900	300	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	8	-	-
Barton Pits	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1002	18	-	1
Worlabby (Brigg)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1000	-	-

The table includes all sites where the annual total exceeded 1000. Other significant counts at the start of the year included: in Jan, 382 at Boultham Mere, 600 at Kirkby on Bain, 300 at Frithville, 250 at Whisby and 400 at Ruskington; in Feb there were 400 at Reads Island, 258 at North Hykeham and 240 at Toft next Newton. High counts of returning birds in the autumn included 526 at Anderby in Sep, 550 at Reads Island and 310 at Covenham Reservoir in Oct, 380 at Donna Nook in Nov and at the very end of the year there were 155 at Boultham Mere, 260 at Kirkby on Bain and 230 at Middlemarsh Farm.

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris* ■

Rare winter visitor, with occasional larger influxes. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 2. **LBRC**.

One turned up at Gibraltar Point on Jan 16th with a flock of Pink-footed Geese *Anser brachyrhynchus* but wasn't seen subsequently. The only other record of the first quarter was of one at Marston STW which arrived shortly afterwards on Jan 22nd and stayed until 28th; presumably the same bird reappeared there on Mar 5th. In the autumn four were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Nov 13th and again Nov 15th and then five, perhaps some of the same birds, were at Covenham Reservoir on Nov 23rd. The last birds of the year were three at Gibraltar Point flying over southwest on Dec 11th.



Tundra Bean Goose *Anser serrirostris* Marston STW Jan 25th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* ■

Scarce winter visitor Sep-Apr, occasionally fairly common. Two distinct races occur. Red List (both forms). WeBS threshold for national importance: 21 (*albifrons*).

Greenland White-fronted Goose *A.a. flavirostris*

Very rare or scarce winter visitor. **LBRC**.

No records of this scarce subspecies were received in 2018.

Eurasian White-fronted Goose *A.a. albifrons*

Scarce winter visitor, mostly Nov-Mar, numbers variable between years.

A lone bird was at Elm House Farm on Jan 1st, 7th and 14th. On Jan 18th a flock of 53 arrived, increasing to 75 by Jan 19th. This flock wintered in the Saltfleetby area until Mar 5th with numbers 71 on Feb 4th, 65 on Feb 21st decreasing to 23 on Feb 23rd and Mar 5th, the last record there in the first quarter. Small numbers were also recorded at Donna Nook, Frampton Marsh, Freiston Shore, Gibraltar Point, Messingham SQ, Torksey and Wroot Jan-Mar with a flock of 14-16 at

Gibraltar Point Jan 14th-20th the highest counts. The last bird of the first quarter was a single at Messingham SQ on Mar 30th.

There were far fewer in the last quarter of the year with the first bird at Gibraltar Point on Oct 9th. A group of six birds then appeared in the fields around Huttoft Bank Pit LWT reserve on Nov 19th-30th; four were also at Wroot on Nov 30th. In Dec there was a single at Gibraltar Point on 3rd, 16 at Wainfleet Marsh on 12th, five at Frampton Marsh on 14th, four at Langham Lakes on 16th and seven at Tetney Marsh on Dec 25th.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cowbit	66	127	105	76	95	105	24	20	67	-	100	155
Deeping St James	80	18	11	18	15	96	209	194	148	69	6	6
Norton Disney	-	-	-	1	3	-	86	58	60	62	52	49
Barton Pits	13	11	13	18	24	11	99	57	1	17	56	49
Crowland	141	79	130	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	-
Whisby	20	7	14	10	14	11	13	34	37	51	54	52
Kirkby on Bain	10	5	16	4	8	25	15	28	31	33	39	39
Woodhall Spa	5	5	20	-	21	19	11	17	12	57	46	25
Fiskerton	60	2	-	3	-	-	40	-	-	-	71	61
Messingham	29	6	3	13	18	16	26	29	26	22	20	19

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 220 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. All counts over 60 are shown. There were 59 at Nocton Fen on Nov 23rd. The species was found in 23% of BBS squares (2017 17%) with an average of 2.6 birds per occupied square (2017 5.9). Mute Swans ringed in Lincoln continue to provide interesting longevity and movement data: ZZ7066 was seen in Lincoln and identified from its colour ring now aged 10 years and two months; W28439 was ringed as a 2CY female at Brayford Pool in Jul 2010 and was identified from its colour ring in Aug 2018 in Hyde Park, 194km to the south

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*



Scarce passage migrant and very scarce winter visitor, mainly Oct-Mar, exceptional in summer. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 44.

Another very poor year for this species: just one double-figure count in the entire year and reports received from just 15 sites/geographical areas. Counts in the first winter period included a single bird at Frampton Marsh from Jan 1st-20th, single birds at Crowland on Jan 1st, Kirton Marsh on Jan 6th and two in the Wroot area from Jan 24th until at least Feb 15th. During Feb a single bird was with the swan herd at Huttoft from 14th and lingered until at least Mar 13th. There were two records from Frampton Marsh during Feb, involving five birds on the 9th and two on the 10th.

The first record of the second winter period was five adults at Gibraltar Point recorded in off the sea on Nov 2nd, followed by a single at Nocton on 18th, two at Thorney on 25th, five (two adults and three juveniles) at Huttoft on 26th, four at Wroot from 28th-29th and four at Anderby on 30th. Dec proved to be the busier month for this species with six at Butterwick (recorded during WeBS counts) on 9th, four at Wroot on 9th increasing to 11 from the 16th-31st, five at Gibraltar Point/Wainfleet (again two adults and three juveniles suggesting the same birds that were at Huttoft) from 21st-30th, two at Haxey on 12th and a single bird at Nocton on the 13th.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*



Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, with a notable increase since the late 1990s. Occurs mainly Oct-Apr, exceptional in summer. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 270. WeBS threshold for national importance: 160.

Coastal	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Donna Nook	24	9	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	10
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	25	14	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	44	-	5
Huttoft	90	125	101	1	-	-	-	-	-	108	130	152
Gibraltar Point	14	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	405	323	57
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3	66	15	-
Frampton Marsh	71	62	50	16	2	1	2	1	15	99	43	150

<i>Upper Humber</i>													
Alkborough Flat	6	-	36	2	-	-	-	-	3	32	13	4	
<i>Inland</i>													
Toft next Newton	-	2	39	5	-	-	-	-	1	1	9	-	
Nocton	93	93	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	73	
Crowland	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	32	-	
Baston	3	1	55	11	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	14	

Tabulated sites include locations with counts in five or more months and/or peak counts, although it is possible that some records will relate to birds on passage or a combination of birds present and on passage on the same date. With almost 1000 records submitted in 2018 the peak passage was recorded from mid-Mar to early Apr and again from mid-Oct to early Nov. During these periods numerous family parties and small groups were recorded across the county. In the first winter period peak counts at traditional overwintering sites included 125 (98 Ad, 27 juv.) at Huttoft on Feb 24th, 93 at Nocton on Feb 17th, a peak count of 71 at Frampton Marsh Jan 20th (overwintering at College Farm and roosting overnight on the RSPB reserve). Away from these sites numbers overwintering were much smaller or were passage birds recorded in flight only. A single bird at Frampton Marsh remained throughout the year and was regularly recorded throughout 2018 with two birds recorded on site on May 5th and from Jul 16th-18th. Elsewhere a single bird was at Freiston Shore on May 3rd and 5th, Saltfleetby St Clement from May 10th-13th and at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on May 9th. During the second winter period return birds were recorded from late Sep with four at Gibraltar Point on 20th, 19 on 22nd and 15 on 23rd. During Oct birds were recorded from 37 location with strongest passage recorded on the coast with Gibraltar Point recording in excess of 100 birds on nine dates including 405 on the 26th, 184 on 27th, 182 on 29th and 215 on 31st. At the year's end up to 50 birds wintered at Gibraltar Point, up to 80 were at Frampton Marsh with a peak count of 150 on Dec 28th. Inland, five were at Boultham Mere throughout Dec and c.40 were at Nocton with a peak count of 73 on Dec 30th.



Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* Huttoft Pits Oct 29th 2018 © Chris Grimshaw

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

A scarce feral resident. Numbers have so far been concentrated in the Tattershall/Kirkby on Bain area but recent increases have seen a spread of records, including breeding, more widely across the county.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Kirkby on Bain	3	5	9	7	8	14	7	13	16	4	10	4
Woodhall Spa	2	-	1	2	-	-	2	21	10	8	14	10
Messingham	11	3	3	4	7	4	6	6	6	4	2	-

Tattershall Thorpe	5	-	1	1	17	-	20	-	-	-	1	1
Frampton Marsh	-	1	-	3	-	9	9	4	5	5	4	2
Tattershall	2	1	6	5	1	-	6	7	2	2	1	-
Deeping St James	5	-	2	5	1	3	2	-	6	4	2	2
Whisby	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	4	-	-	2	2
Fillingham	-	1	-	1	4	4	1	-	3	3	3	3
Boultham Mere	2	2	-	2	2	-	-	-	3	3	2	4
North Hykeham	2	2	-	3	2	2	2	-	2	2	-	-

This year 33 sites reported the presence of Egyptian Geese, which represents a decline in the number of sites supporting this species. However, the stronghold is still located in the Kirkby-Tattershall-Woodhall Spa area with peak counts of 16 at Kirkby on Bain on Sep 1st, 21 at Woodhall Spa on Aug 13th and 20 at Tattershall Thorpe on Jul 12th. Away from the tabulated sites counts of three or more birds included five at Wroot during Feb, three at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Apr 14th, six at Freiston Shore on Jun 3rd, three at Wilsford on Jun 17th, four at Gibraltar Point on Oct 8th, four at Fishtoft on Oct 21st, three at West Ashby on Nov 25th and ten at Kirkstead Bridge on Dec 25th.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor, with concentrations mainly in the Humber, on the north-east coast and in The Wash. Fairly common as a breeding species in estuaries and coastal areas but scarce inland. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 3000. WeBS threshold for national importance: 610.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Grimsby	380	335	280	212	124	239	360	480	258	860	1830	250
Reads Island	580	700	250	-	390	440	284	381	-	120	180	250
Donna Nook	380	18	33	22	-	27	2	3	46	604	840	568
Grainthorpe	330	270	151	170	103	8	106	138	243	144	495	320
Tetney Marsh	680	154	-	44	66	78	82	10	256	283	350	450
Gibraltar Point	69	70	400	40	40	160	173	48	183	213	143	115
Saltfleet	100	160	41	17	-	6	14	7	8	180	91	313
Alkborough Flats	54	63	80	157	260	48	4	48	2	54	41	64
Marshchapel	174	76	50	39	6	3	-	-	-	3	495	15
Frampton Marsh	24	250	80	50	151	30	50	40	30	47	20	40

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 800 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The peak count of 1830 at Pyewipe Marsh, Grimsby on Nov 18th was well up on the peak of 1216 at the same site in Oct 2017. Other sites reporting over 300 birds were Freiston Shore with 400 Jan 26th, Leverton 351 Jan 6th and Wrangle 300 Oct 13th. The species was found in 13% of BBS squares (2017 9%) with an average of 2.9 birds per occupied square (2017 3.4).

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Very scarce. Birds are recorded in most years, mostly in late summer/early autumn. The probability that records of this species relate to individuals of feral or captive origin is very high, and most if not all are assumed to come from feral stock in the Netherlands. Vagrancy remains possible and is perhaps most likely to involve males in their second calendar year. RBBP

All reports were from Sep and Oct. The first was at Frampton Marsh on Sep 5th and later on Sep 6th, 7th, 14th 20th and 21st and it or another on Oct 16th, 18th and 26th. Elsewhere two were at South Ferriby on Sep 11th, an adult and a juvenile, another was at Huttoft Bank Pit LWT reserve on Sep 27th and one was at Alkborough Flats on Sep 28th.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Scarce feral resident or visitor and local escapee, possibly increasing.

The UK strongholds of Mandarin Duck are in southeast England, the Severn Vale and the Peak District. In autumn and winter there are regularly 250+ in lowland Derbyshire and at the Nottinghamshire Dukeries; the species looks set to become firmly established in this county too. Records were received from around 14 sites in 2018 and in all months of the year. A family group of six birds, one female and five immatures, from last year's breeding pair was at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jan 1st. Presumably the same female was seen with eight small ducklings on May 19th with five surviving until Jun 25th, and four still on Jul 4th. Two birds were present through the

summer and autumn with the last record of two there on Oct 15th. The usual adult male was at North Somercotes Warren on Jan 5th and again on Mar 5th; one at Elm House Farm, Saltfleetby on Mar 7th may have referred to this bird but the sex of the bird was not reported. Another long stayer was an adult female on the River Sleas in Sleaford on and off from Jul 7th-Nov 17th. Also in the southwest a pair were on the River Witham in Grantham on Feb 11th and 20th. A female with an unspecified number of ducklings was captured on a trail camera at Belton Park Lake in May and a pair was there on Sep 29th with three (two males and a female) on Dec 24th. Five were at Grimsthorpe Lake on Dec 10th. At other times in the year there were singles at Bourne Wellhead on Mar 3rd, 27th, 29th and Dec 27th. On Apr 28th a male was disturbed from a Tawny Owl nest-box in Bourne Woods that later held a female incubating 10 eggs, although the outcome of this nest is not known. Another male was on the River Welland in Stamford on May 21st and four including an adult male were at Messingham SQ on Apr 5th, with two there Apr 14th-15th and one on Oct 9th. Finally singles were reported at Fillingham on Aug 16th, 19th and Dec 22nd, Boston on Aug 25th, and an adult male at Covenham Reservoir on Oct 7th-8th.

2017 addition: A pair was at Hagnaby Lock Fen Mar 7th.

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*



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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	1	-	-	12	15	7	4	5	5	1	-	-
Minimum Lincs Total	1	-	-	28	28	15	5	15	12	1	-	-

Garganey were reported from 25 sites this year up from 24 in 2017. A rare winter record came from Alkborough Flats on Jan 14th and what was probably the same bird was also seen there on Jan 27th. The earliest spring migrants came in on Apr 4th when there were two males and a female at Gibraltar Point and a pair at Alkborough Flats. These were 19 days later than the earliest birds in 2017. Further pairs arrived at Baston Fen and Frampton Marsh on Apr 7th. In all 11 pairs were present during Apr and nine during May. There was no confirmed breeding for the third consecutive year. Pairs present for more than seven days, meeting the criteria for probable breeding were present at Alkborough Flats, Frampton Marsh (two), Freiston Shore and Gibraltar Point. The maximum day count reported was six at Alkborough Flats on Aug 30th. Counts of four were received from Freiston Shore on Apr 22nd and 23rd, May 12th, 28th, 29th and Jun 6th, Frampton Marsh on Jun 8th and Baston Fen on Sep 12th. No juveniles were reported this year. The latest records were singles at Baston Fen and Gibraltar Point on Sep 15th and Alkborough Flats on Oct 13th.



Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* with Eurasian Teal & Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* Alkborough Aug 11th 2018 © Graham Catley

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*

Vagrant. **BBRC**

A 2CY male was at Alkborough Flats Aug 11th (ND et al), accepted by **BBRC**.

Shoveler *Spatula clypeata* ■

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, and very scarce/scarcely breeding species. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 400. WeBS threshold for national importance: 190. RBBP

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	28	78	72	100	20	33	70	120	50	160	40	200
Alkborough Flats	18	126	96	57	3	28	15	115	115	60	58	82
Gibraltar Point	108	24	17	21	9	13	10	25	171	32	40	88
Killingholme	78	47	58	40	10	-	-	3	-	-	70	56
Freiston Shore	75	25	1	150	10	-	-	2	2	3	-	50
Whisby	30	28	52	48	5	-	-	2	12	66	22	22
Barton Pits	45	56	65	1	-	-	-	3	2	16	32	50
Kirkby on Bain	44	28	23	22	3	4	5	11	35	37	30	26
Boultham Mere	7	9	15	14	2	1	5	38	61	55	26	26
Bardney	-	80	-	15	2	-	20	2	35	-	-	98

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 250 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Only three other sites reported single counts of more than 50 birds: Langtoft 175 on Feb 18th, Tattershall Thorpe Pits 136 on Nov 29th and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NR 56 on Feb 4th. The maximum monthly total across all sites was 988 in Dec compared to 1140 in Mar the previous year. Ten sites held birds through May and Jun with four reporting confirmed breeding as follows: (figures in brackets are probable pairs) Alkborough Flats a brood of 12 on Jun 9th, Baston Fen a brood of five on Jun 3rd, Gibraltar Point a brood of three on Jun 21st, Middlemarsh Farm, Skegness two broods totalling 11 juveniles on Jul 25th, Frampton Marsh (34) Manby Wetlands (3), Boultham Mere (1), Deeping St James (1), Kirkby on Bain GP (1) and Messingham SQ (1). In total there were 46 reported pairs compared to 35 in 2017.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera* ■

Fairly common though localised breeding species and winter visitor. Numbers have increased greatly since the 1970s. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 310.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	1	196	69	27	125	130	1	-	24	93	123	122
Barton Pits	67	50	42	5	2	1	-	18	65	105	83	87
Boultham Mere	27	21	13	10	7	91	60	86	241	50	57	16
Frampton Marsh	73	46	100	55	30	50	100	130	60	22	4	60
Kirkby on Bain	133	170	15	40	44	30	40	140	115	125	210	175
Lincoln	89	134	100	3	-	-	-	2	24	54	114	100
Tattershall Thorpe	163	-	1	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	350	1
Whisby	139	130	69	22	11	29	94	44	199	343	305	496

The table shows all sites having a count of at least 100 birds in at least one month. In the first winter period the highest counts came from Alkborough Flats with 120 on Feb 9th, 177 on Feb 12th and 196 on Feb 23rd, elsewhere there were 170 at Kirkby on Bain on Feb 11th, 163 at Tattershall Thorpe on Jan 25th and 133 at Kirkby on Bain on Jan 1st. In the second winter period the highest counts were predominantly in the Lincoln area; the highest being at Whisby NP with 199 on Sep 22nd, 343 on Oct 13th, 305 on Nov 10th and 496 on Dec 8th, the later count possibly a record for Lincolnshire. Away from Whisby other notable high counts included 350 at Tattershall Thorpe on Nov 29th, 210 at Kirkby on Bain on Nov 11th, 241 at Boultham Mere on Sep 4th. Although there is insufficient BBS data for Lincolnshire, the BTO trend graph for Gadwall in England, 1994-2018, has shown an upward trend and the population has more than tripled in that time with the Lincolnshire status following this trend.

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. WeBS threshold for international importance: 15,000. WeBS threshold for national importance: 4500. RBBP

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	5000	5464	3500	560	14	6	50	90	580	3500	4000	5000
Welland Marsh	800	95	-	-	-	-	-	-	160	85	2700	5000
Freiston Shore	3000	1	8	420	12	-	3	2	1100	950	-	1000

Alkborough Flats	228	200	1920	94	10	-	-	-	16	1000	616	1600
Middlemarsh Farm	700	1000	800	250	2	2	1	1	30	150	800	600
Witham Mouth	200	1100	400	-	-	-	-	-	250	1800	-	-
Gibraltar Point	423	286	600	52	4	3	3	23	159	498	520	610
Tetney Marsh	200	62	14	-	-	-	-	-	40	1100	700	438
Tattershall Thorpe	315		300	1	1	-	3	-	50	-	1500	1
Covenham Reservoir	308	280	189	34	1	-	-	-	10	257	567	515

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 2000 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Other sites with counts of more than 500 birds were Baston Fen 521 Feb 27th, 791 Mar 3rd, Huttoft 550 Feb 18th, 509 Mar 6th and Willow Tree Fen 500 on Feb 4th. Single summering pairs were reported from Frampton Marsh, Gibraltar Point, Middlemarsh Farm and Kirkby on Bain Pits but there was no evidence of breeding. Significant movements at sea from Gibraltar Point included 120 N on Sep 29th, 205 N on Oct 28th and 42 S On Nov 21st.



Wigeon *Mareca penelope* Frampton Marsh Jan 7th 2018 © Neil Smith

American Wigeon *Mareca americana*

Vagrant. LBRC

A drake was found at Kirkby on Bain GP on Dec 14th (NAL et al) which was the 16th record for Lincolnshire.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*



Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber Listed. WeBS threshold for national importance: 6700.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	248	209	89	62	73	172	87	165	151	198	216	168
Gibraltar Point	132	74	130	20	46	110	92	232	159	100	170	82
Frampton Marsh	91	60	100	100	50	75	100	250	150	80	100	58
Alkborough Flats	77	92	77	60	104	150	40	110	100	200	96	86
Woodhall Spa	72	78	47	36	70	48	36	63	225	153	74	142
Holywell	141	107	30	-	-	-	-	-	138	174	149	204
Boultham Mere	62	79	42	33	43	74	95	122	143	60	95	81
Kirkby on Bain	35	15	28	12	29	85	122	151	103	128	107	102
Barton Pits	85	81	64	54	57	9	103	92	77	77	70	57
Manby Wetlands	68	46	24	17	88	121	140	174	20	5	0	90

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 750 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The peak count of 250 at Frampton Marsh in Aug was down from the peak of 330 in Jan 2017 at Deeping St James. Mallard was found in 69% of BBS squares (2017 69%) with an average of 5.6 birds per occupied square (2017 6.3).



Pintail *Anas acuta* Frampton Marsh Mar 25th 2018 © Neil Smith

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Very scarce in summer. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 200. **RBBP**

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	31	14	13	10	2	1	5	15	152	78	70	294
Freiston Shore	200	1	1	4	-	-	-	-	1	21	-	40
Terrington	-	209	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
Witham Mouth	64	25	6	-	-	-	-	-	25	6	-	-
Gibraltar Point	2	2	7	2	2	2	1	-	33	36	22	8
Alkborough Flats	2	2	24	18	2	2	-	-	20	4	1	-

The table shows the top six sites holding counts of 20 or more birds in any month ranked from highest to lowest. The only other counts of more than ten birds were 12 at Butterwick on Nov 10th and 14 at Gedney Drove End on Mar 3rd. A flock of 14 was seen heading south along the coast from sea-watches at Mablethorpe and Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 27th. The peak total from 34 sites was 365 in Dec well down from the Jan 2017 peak of 784. This was consistent with a British-wide fall in wintering numbers in early 2018 as reflected in the WeBS online report. Single pairs lingered in late May and early Jun at Alkborough Flats, Frampton Marsh and Gibraltar Point but there was no other evidence of any kind to suggest breeding.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Common migrant and winter visitor. Scarce in summer, and very scarce and localised as a breeding species. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 5000. WeBS threshold for national importance 2100.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	1400	1000	3000	1500	6	30	60	600	600	500	500	2000
Alkborough Flats	315	228	760	500	4	130	36	182	800	1000	381	750
Reads Island	-	450	360	-	2	30	-	30	400	1160	110	500
Gibraltar Point	200	92	110	175	97	84	95	394	333	409	285	291
Donna Nook	350	133	56	82	-	-	-	-	24	238	650	540

Kirkby on Bain	122	80	56	9	2	8	9	51	140	416	480	430
Killingholme	376	273	150	63	-	-	-	12	-	298	303	296
Middlemarsh Farm	200	350	250	42	3	9	11	80	120	100	100	128
Freiston Shore	700	1	2	150	2	34	2	8	53	50	-	350
Tattershall Thorpe	201	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	800	1
Wilsford	-	16	80	-	-	14	-	-	120	180	340	8
Huttoft	18	90	12	2	-	-	13	75	73	410	28	13
Mablethorpe	1	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	410	-	-

The table shows all sites with counts of 300 or more in at least one month. In 2018 only Frampton Marsh had a count that exceeded the WeBS threshold for national importance with a count of 3000 on Mar 20th. Two counts of 2000 on Dec 27th and 29th also came close to the threshold of 2100. Birds were present in every month of the year.

In the summer months, birds were present at several sites and sometimes in reasonable numbers but the only evidence of possible breeding was when a photograph (DRo) was taken of a juvenile at Frampton Marsh on Aug 13th. Some movement of the species flying south was observed at Gibraltar Point with 157 on Aug 22nd, 174 on Sep 18th and 153 on Sep 24th with around another 180 birds present in the River Steeping or Greenshank Creek at the same time.

Green-winged Teal *Anas carolinensis*

Very scarce visitor, first record in 1984 and almost annual since 1996. LBRC

There were three records this year, all adult males. The first was at Alkborough Flats on Feb 6th, presumably the returning bird of previous years. Then another drake was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 27th-28th (RSPB) and the third was at Deeping Lakes NR on Jun 8th (MWe, D Gardener). Three a year is about average and the number of records is now around 44-45 with mobile and returning birds making an exact estimate difficult.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Scarce winter visitor and very scarce breeding species. Increasing numbers of feral birds present in the county, especially in the southwest. RBBP.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Baston	12	18	23	10	20	28	7	22	82	104	35	55
Deeping St James	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	4	-
Langtoft	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	1	-	69	-	-
Messingham	-	-	5	6	3	17	5	6	4	-	-	-
Lincoln	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	2
Hartsholme	-	5	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Tallington	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than ten birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Records were received from 17 sites with the three top ones in the south west of the county - Baston, Deeping St James and Langtoft - accounting for 83% of them. The peak count of 106 was at Baston on Oct 12th. Confirmed breeding reports were received from two sites. At Baston a brood of five was reported on May 26th and there were a total of four broods there on Jun 13th and a late brood of two on Aug 19th. At Messingham SQ three pairs turned up on Mar 31st and summered, one pair was seen with a brood of two on Jun 6th. There were therefore six confirmed and two probable breeding pairs. There was no confirmed breeding in 2017. Interestingly the reliable Swanholme Pits Lincoln pair disappeared throughout May, Jun, and Jul as they did in 2017. Where do they go? It would be helpful if reports of this species could include the sex and age of birds where possible.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*



Fairly common winter visitor, and a scarce breeding species found mostly around the major estuaries. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance 230. RBBP.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Baston	47	7	53	1	-	-	-	12	75	61	10	113
Messingham	50	42	30	12	14	25	4	2	10	3	21	44
North Hykeham	23	43	43	-	-	-	8	-	-	20	49	48
Frampton Marsh	51	30	30	20	9	7	10	5	1	9	3	20
Deeping St James	10	14	4	-	-	1	57	81	8	4	4	1



Teal *Anas crecca* (Female) Alkborough Dec 17th 2018 © Paul Coombes



Teal *Anas crecca* (Drake) Alkborough Dec 17th 2018 © Paul Coombes



Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* with Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* Barton Pits Apr 1st 2018
© Graham Catley



Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* Far Ings Apr 1st 2018 © Mark Johnson

Whisby	45	48	33	2	1	-	-	-	7	10	8	5
Kirkby on Bain	26	24	40	12	4	11	11	10	-	-	1	4
Toft next Newton	38	24	29	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	25	11
Bassingham	100	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	6	
Bardney	-	40	-	27	10	-	23	2	1	-	-	2

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 100 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Reports were received from 32 sites this year compared to 53 in 2017. The county total across all sites in Feb was 395 compared to 569 in 2017. Interestingly the top site this year did not feature in the table in the previous two years, which implies that wintering birds may change their sites quite freely. There were reports of a total of 20 breeding pairs compared to 27 in 2017. In terms of confirmed breeding Barton to Barrow Haven Pits was as usual the most productive area; seven females were seen with broods and five of these had seven, two, three, four and four ducklings. There were four other probable breeding females here.

Three broods were reported from Frampton Marsh. Other probable pairs were reported from Frampton Marsh (3), Kirkby on Bain GP (1), Alkborough Flats (1) and Boultham Mere (1). Birds were present in May and Jun at Bardney Pits and Messingham but as no details of the sex of these birds was submitted it is difficult to know if these birds were summering or probable breeders. It would be helpful if all Pochard reports, especially in the breeding season, could specify the sex of the birds counted.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

Scarce migrant. First county record was in Jun 1979 with at least 36 more since although individuals wander making accurate record assessment difficult. **LBRC**

An immature female was at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jan 3rd (PAH) and an adult male was at Bagmoor Mar 18th-30th (ND *et al*). The latter bird then relocated to Far Ings NR on Apr 1st (RHa *et al*), Bardney Pits on Apr 14th (DMJ) finally ending up at Woodhall Spa Airfield NR on Apr 24th (DRob) where it remained until Apr 30th. Presumably the same bird arrived back at Woodhall Spa Airfield NR on Nov 6th (RHa) where it was seen on Nov 12th, 16th, 20th, 23rd and Nov 25th-Dec 5th before relocating to Kirkby on Bain GP on Dec 17th, the final sighting of the year.



Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* Waters Edge Mar 29th 2018 © Paul Coombes

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*



Fairly common breeding species on gravel pits and similar water bodies, and fairly common or common winter visitor. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1100.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	103	95	90	79	47	22	30	52	235	238	162	153
Whisby	104	112	122	132	27	19	65	135	68	136	91	108
Cadney	-	3	10	2	2	17	180	350	128	170	120	80
Frampton Marsh	43	44	100	200	50	41	50	18	32	115	29	80
North Hykeham	53	57	51	22	8	12	4	1	131	199	52	169
Messingham	58	44	36	72	41	41	32	41	45	41	67	78
Lincoln	60	81	96	53	18	3	25	20	54	35	81	56
Barton Pits	73	53	59	70	25	10	55	31	8	40	50	83
Kirkby on Bain	118	50	45	30	22	20	32	21	9	43	30	49
Norton Disney	29	66		60	10	-	14	31	70	48	37	48

The table shows the top ten sites holding accumulated counts of more than 400 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. There was also a count of 188 at Baston Fen on Mar 7th. The peak count of 350 at Cadney in Aug was up from the 2017 Aug peak count of 250. The species was found in 12% of BBS squares (2017 12%) with an average of 4.4 birds per occupied square (2017 3.9).



Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* Kirkstead Bridge Mar 7th 2018 © Steve Keightley

Scaup *Aythya marila* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor to estuaries and coast; numbers have declined. Rare in summer; bred in 1944. Red List. Threshold for national importance: 39.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Witham Mouth	-	2	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Whisby	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bardney	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Hykeham	2	2	4	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Barton Pits	1	-	3	3	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	1	-	5	1	1		2	1	-
Kirkstead Bridge	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Sightings of Scaup came from 29 locations, which was slightly down on last year, and in every month of the year. The highest total was a flock of 30 on the sea noted at Witham Mouth on Mar 8th-9th. 21 were counted on the Witham between Bardney and Kirkstead Bridges on Mar 6th and nine were counted during a WeBS count between the same two bridges on Mar 22nd which consisted of eight females and one male. Six were reported on the Witham at Stixwold on the same day and were possibly part of the nine birds count. Five were observed flying north at Gibraltar Point on Jun 10th. A combined total of eight between Stixwold and Kirkstead Bridge

was made up of two counts of four on Mar 7th. Two other counts of four on the same date came from Woodhall Spa and Dogdyke. Four were on Richmond Lake, Lincoln on Mar 15th and four on Tetney Marsh RSPB five days later. Three were counted at Barton Pits (twice), North Cotes, Tetney Marsh, Butterwick, Tattershall Bridge and at Witham Mouth.

Eider *Somateria mollissima* ▣

Present offshore throughout the year: fairly common on passage and in winter, scarce in summer. Mainly found in The Wash and rare inland. Under-recorded because most of the population stays well offshore; however, numbers have recently declined. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 770.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wrangle	16	10	340	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	327
Gibraltar Point	8	54	26	5	7	7	2	2	2	136	133	143
Friskney	91	364	-	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Leverton	71	221	-	87	-	37	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	-	173	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Witham Mouth	12	70	8	8	-	-	-	3	-	43	-	-
Freiston Shore	30	-	9	7	5	-	-	1	14	30	6	36
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	36	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	-	-
Butterwick	12	1	-	2	-	-	-	1	2	6	7	5
Grainthorpe	-	-	-	6	21	-	-	9	-	-	-	-
Mablethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	9	3	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-

Records came from 21 locations with numbers significantly higher than during 2017. There were nine counts of over 100 with the top five totals coming during WeBS counts, the highest of which was 364 at Friskney on Mar 5th. The same day, five miles down the coast, 340 were counted at Wrangle where there were still 327 on Dec 10th. On Feb 3rd 221 were noted at Leverton and 173 at Wainfleet the following day. Four other counts totalling between 130-143 came from Gibraltar Point in the last three months of the year. The highest count from non-Wash locations was 45 at Huttoft on Oct 28th.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca* ▣

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare inland and in summer. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 34.

The first quarter saw only three records, continuing the trend from Oct-Dec 2017. The first was a single off Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Jan 2nd, followed by three north off Gibraltar Point on Mar 20th and another single off Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Mar 23rd.

There were two early autumn records with a male off Anderby on Aug 2nd and another off Huttoft Car Terrace on Aug 20th. The next wasn't until Sep 28th also off Huttoft Car Terrace. More followed in Oct when maxima were six off Huttoft Car Terrace (28th), five Gibraltar Point (30th), eight Mablethorpe (21st), three North Coates (19th), two Tetney Marsh (2nd), two Witham Mouth (27th) and singles off Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (14th) and Anderby (29th). Similar numbers were present in Nov with some redistribution along the coast with maxima of four at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (10th and 17th) and eight Gibraltar Point (Nov 25th). The species was recorded on 12 dates in Nov at Gibraltar Point and on two at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR, the only records of the month. Dec followed a similar pattern with birds seemingly concentrating off Gibraltar Point with double-figure flocks on six dates, maximum 14 on 22nd and 31st. The only other records in the month were four at Trusthorpe Dec 3rd and a single at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Dec 28th.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* ▣

Fairly common offshore passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce in summer but autumn movements begin in Jun-Jul. Rare inland. Red List. WeBS for national importance: 1300.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	90	629	16	150	150	200	285	110	299	680	250	300
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	200	40	6	-	-	-	18	13	110	260	1500	20
Friskney	-	1650	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Tetney Marsh	43	4	-	-	3	-	80	-	-	350	250	100
Mablethorpe	200	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	458	-	-
Huttoft	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	151	445	-	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	1	70	100	23	34	500	-
Trusthorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	11	-	160	-	240
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	200	130	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	110	7
North Cotes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	133	-	-

Sites recording 100 or more in any one month are tabulated. Common Scoters were observed in 35 locations with eight of the sites being inland. The two largest flocks were recorded during WeBS counts in different months: 1650 at Friskney on Feb 4th and 1500 on the sea at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Nov 13th. Two large movements were observed at Gibraltar Point: 620 flew south on Feb 5th and in the autumn 597 flew north out of a total for the day of 680 on Oct 28th. After the large counts in Jan and Feb, numbers fell right off during Mar with substantial counts only coming from Gibraltar Point and Saltfleet during Jun-Jul.

Inland, Covenham Reservoir had a single bird between Mar 4th-8th, four on 25th, one on 26th and two on 29th. Four were present on Apr 30th with single birds in May and Aug and two in Oct. At Toft next Newton a single bird was present on May 18th, two on Oct 28th and possibly the same between Nov 2nd-10th; four were present on Nov 28th and two on three dates in Dec. At Fillingham Lake there were three on Jul 12th. Denton had four on the same date. The North Hykeham Pits complex had four birds on Apr 8th and one on Apr 14th. Six were present at Bassingham on Thurlby GP on Apr 14th, and a single was at Crowland on Apr 20th.



Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* Toft Newton Oct 28th © Gary Fenwick

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*



Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer and inland. Red List. WeBS for national importance: 130

Records in the first quarter fell between Jan 1st-Apr 20th and all related to single birds. The long-staying bird in Market Deeping commuted between Deeping Lakes NR and Baston and Langtoft GP. It was still present on Jan 1st and again on Mar 4th and 6th in the Deeping Lakes/High Bank area. Presumably the same bird moved to Baston and Langtoft GP on Mar 16th where it remained until Apr 20th, the last spring record. Other birds were seen at Gibraltar Point on Jan 3rd, Witham Mouth on Jan 7th (an adult male) and Feb 4th, Grainthorpe Haven on Jan 19th, Gibraltar Point on Mar 17th and Bardney Pits on Apr 2nd-3rd.

The first of the autumn arrived in late Oct. Six were off Huttoft Car Terrace on 27th and three on 28th; one was at East Halton 27th-28th; one to two at Gibraltar Point 27th-30th; one off

Mablethorpe 27th-29th; one off Witham Mouth 28th-30th, presumably one of the two reported at Freiston Shore 30th; one off Tetney Marsh 31st.

In Nov one was again at Tetney Marsh on 2nd and another was at Chapman's Pond, Cleethorpes 2nd-19th. Singles were off Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on the 10th, Gibraltar Point 10th, 26th and 30th, and one was again inland at Baston and Langtoft GP from Nov 22nd-Dec 29th, perhaps the returning bird from the first quarter. Another less expected inland record was of one at Swanholme Lakes on Nov 27th. A single was also off Freiston Shore on Nov 27th and two late birds at Donna Nook on Dec 10th, 14th and 16th were the last of the year.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* □

Fairly common but somewhat localised winter visitor, rare in summer. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 190.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Goxhill	44	17	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	340
Covenham Reservoir	70	82	72	16	-	-	-	1	-	32	70	78
North Hykeham	21	18	25	21	-	-	-	-	-	1	26	24
Toft next Newton	22	20	17	3	-	-	-	-	-	11	38	21
Deeping St James	20	18	22	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	15
Freiston Shore	22	12	1	8	-	-	-	-	-	14	15	16
Barton Pits	23	24	20	2	1	-	-	-	1	2	3	7
Frampton Marsh	20	8	20	7	-	1	-	3	-	1	6	4
Whisby NP	12	12	13	5	-	-	-	-	1	2	6	7
Gibraltar Point	3	2	2	22	-	-	-	-	-	17	8	-

Apart from the impressive record of 340 birds at Goxhill during the Dec 11th WeBS count, the maximum counts were generally reduced compared to those in 2017, continuing the downward trend. The table shows the maximum monthly counts at the most important wintering sites in the county, although many other deep-water bodies hosted small numbers during the months from Oct to Apr, with records from 42 sites. The only other counts over 20 were at Bassingham on Feb 21st (24) and at East Halton on Oct 28th (29). Mostly absent during the summer, but in Jun one was at Frampton Marsh on 16th and two at Messingham on 17th. In Aug one was at Frampton Marsh on 14th, three on 21st and one on 29th. Elsewhere two were at Denton on Aug 12th and one was at Covenham Reservoir on Aug 31st.

Smew *Mergellus albellus* □

Very scarce winter visitor, with occasional larger influxes in severe weather. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1.

Sightings came from just four locations in what was an extremely poor year for Smew in the county. The first of the year was a redhead at Barton Pits on Feb 26th and the only other records of the first quarter were two redheads at Deeping Lakes NR on Mar 7th and one on Mar 8th.

In the autumn one was at Covenham Reservoir on Nov 23rd, one at Goxhill on Nov 25th and another at Deeping Lakes NR on Nov 25th-26th.

Goosander *Mergus merganser* □

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly inland. Rare in summer. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 150

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Willow Tree Fen	33	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66
River Witham #	21	32	36	1	-	-	-	-	-	21
Fillingham	14	11	1	-	-	-	1	9	17	13
Lincoln area*	20	15	8	-	-	-	-	8	9	20
Deeping St James	10	21	9	1	-	-	-	-	2	7
Cadney	-	6	5	1	-	-	-	10	-	27
Fiskerton	12	17	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Covenham Reservoir	10	6	14	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Crowland	2	6	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Lincoln area covers Swanholme Lakes, Hartsholme Park, Boultham Park and Boultham Mere

#Counts on the River Witham from Chapel Hill upstream to Kirkstead Bridge, Southrey and Bardney

Goosanders were recorded at over 50 sites spread throughout the county. The Lincoln area, Fillingham Lake and the River Witham past Woodall Spa continued to be the most regular areas for sightings in both winter periods, although maximum numbers were down on those during 2017, except for the count of 66 coming in to roost at Willow Tree Fen on Dec 26th, with 50 there on Dec 30th.

Most birds had vacated their wintering sites before the end of Mar, with only small numbers of migrants still noted in Apr and into early May. The first to return was at Fillingham on Sep 25th, with a few more during Oct, although many birds did not arrive until Nov or even Dec. A female was also observed at Alkborough Flats on the unusual date of Jul 24th.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal and especially in The Wash. Scarce inland and in summer. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 100.

The species was noted from 22 locations and in the first quarter records were received between Jan 1st-Apr 30th. Records in Jan came from nine locations around the Wash, highest counts being of 20 off Freiston Shore on Jan 20th, with 27 at Gibraltar Point on that date and 22 on Jan 26th. In Feb the highest Wash counts were 21 at Leverton and ten at Witham Mouth on Feb 3rd, and 15 at Gibraltar Point on Feb 18th. There was an inland bird at Deeping Lakes NR on Mar 2nd and smaller counts on the coast as birds moved north to breed with most at Witham Mouth, 12 Mar 9th, Freiston Shore 13 Mar 22nd and 22 Apr 1st; Freiston Shore accounted for the last bird of the spring on Apr 30th and the first of the autumn, six on Aug 25th. Small numbers appeared during Sep and a few double-figure flocks appeared in Oct with the most being 13 at Butterwick on Oct 7th, 13 at Freiston Shore on Oct 8th (the same flock?) and ten at Gibraltar Point on Oct 12th. Small flocks were present in the Wash during Nov, maximum of eight with a few more appearing during Dec: 15 off Freiston Shore on 10th and 26 off Gibraltar Point on 24th the highest totals. There were very few records north of Skegness with just one to four birds recorded at various coastal sites in Mar-Apr and Sep-Dec.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Former scarce feral breeder and winter visitor, now very rare. RBBP

An adult male was seen on several dates between Sep 7th-16th at a site in the south after a three-year absence from the county.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

A common species of arable farmland, with a resident population augmented each year by releases for shooting.

The species was found in 51% of BBS squares (2017 43%) with an average of 2.3 birds per occupied square (2017 3.0). BBS data indicates the feral breeding population has declined 51% in Lincolnshire since 1994 despite the many thousands released each year.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix* ■

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

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Baumber	12	4	-	2	2	3	4	19	26	17	15	18
Tetney Marsh	4	-	-	2	4	3	12	2	-	7	30	7
Toft next Newton	2	-	2	2	-	2	1	10	8	18	16	-
Welbourn	5	11	-	18	2	3	9	-	-	-	8	-
Fillingham	1	4	-	1	1	1	1	12	12	1	15	1
Great Sturton	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	20	28	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	4	3	3	1	1	2	-	2	4	4	4	4
Nocton	11	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	5	3

The table shows the top sites from which reports were received, holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 20 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Grey Partridge was recorded in 25% of BBS squares (2017 20%) with an average of 2.5 birds per occupied square (2017 2.8/sq.). It is the 46th most widespread breeding species in Lincolnshire. BBS data for the period 1995-2017 shows declines of 60% in England and 36% in the East Midlands. The regional data suggests Grey Partridge is holding up better in the East Midlands than any other region of England.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*



Scarce summer visitor Apr-Sep, rare in winter. Probably much under-recorded. Amber List. RBBP

It was an exceptionally poor year for Quail in Lincolnshire. There were no reports from the coast and only a maximum of four birds inland. Fillingham had the most activity with one on Jun 21st, two on 22nd, one on 23rd and 28th and also on Jul 31st. At Tupholme there was one on Aug 1st and one at Thurlby, near Bourne on Aug 2nd.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

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

The species was found in 88% of BBS squares (2017 92%) with an average of 5.4 birds per occupied square (2017 5.4). Pheasant ranks as the 9th most widespread species in the county and 19th in terms of total numbers counted. Given the volume of releases it is no surprise that overall total peak counts across the county triple between Aug-Nov and that's on sites where there are generally no releases.



Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* Frampton Marsh May 4th 2018 © Neil Smith

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

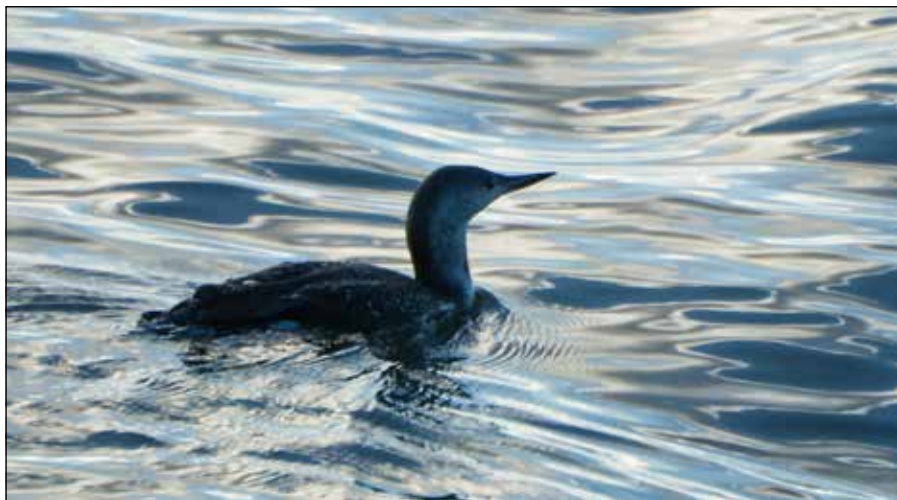


Fairly common offshore passage migrant and winter visitor Aug-May with peaks in mid-winter. Rare inland and in summer. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 210.

In the first quarter the vast majority of records came from Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR, Mablethorpe and Gibraltar Point. Peak counts in the first quarter were all in Jan and Feb: 506 north between Crook Bank and Churchill Lane (Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR) on Jan 21st, 344 off Mablethorpe on Jan 22nd and 351 there on Feb 16th, 172 south at Gibraltar Point on Jan 20th and 173 south on Jan 30th. Numbers tailed off dramatically during Mar with small double-figure counts recorded at Crook Bank on 5th (18), at Gibraltar Point on 19th (10) and Crook Bank again on 30th (29). In Apr and May one to three birds were recorded on the sea at various sites with the last bird recorded at Gibraltar Point on May 10th.

The first bird of the autumn was recorded at Gibraltar Point on Aug 21st and more arrived during Sep, most after mid-month with 55 at Gibraltar Point on 23rd when there were also 33 offshore at Huttoft Car Terrace, and 48 at Anderby Creek on 30th. Smaller numbers were seen during Oct with 20 off Huttoft Car Terrace and 14 off Crook Bank on 1st, 28 at Gibraltar Point on 8th and 37 on 26th. In the Wash one to six birds were noted during the month with a peak of 13 at Witham Mouth on 29th. More birds appeared during Nov with 27 on 15th at Gibraltar Point increasing to 58 on 25th and 61 on 30th. The only other double-figure counts were 15 at Anderby Creek on 26th and 11 at Witham Mouth on 27th. Gibraltar Point continued to dominate the counts during

Dec with 56 on 2nd, 48 on 16th, 86 on 22nd and 50 on 29th. The only other double-figure count was of ten at Freiston Shore on 10th and 27 south past Skegness on 30th.



Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* Witham Mouth Oct 29th 2018 © Steve Keightley

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*



Scarce winter visitor to coastal and inland waters. Mainly Sep-Apr, rare in summer. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 6.

There was just a single record in the first quarter with four reports of a single off Gibraltar Point Jan 15th-Mar 2nd, presumed to relate to the same individual.

The first bird of the autumn was an adult in summer plumage at Gibraltar Point on Sep 16th, three days later than in 2017. An adult was also seen there on 22nd and 23rd, presumably the same bird. This was followed by an exceptional six birds going south, and then soon after back north, at Chapel Point on Sep 23rd. Another off Huttoft Car Terrace on 25th was the last record of Sep. In Oct Gibraltar Point recorded several birds beginning with one on 1st, two on 26th and three on 27th and 28th. Elsewhere there was one at Freiston Shore and Winterton Carrs on 6th and more sea-watches saw singles off Huttoft Car Terrace and Mablethorpe on 27th and 28th. In Nov singles were off Gibraltar Point on 4th-9th and again on 30th. One was at Covenham Reservoir on 23rd; another off Anderby Creek on 26th and the final bird of the year was one off Chapel Point on Dec 15th. A maximum of 25 birds were seen during 2018 but this is probably an over-estimate with some duplication of records as birds flew past seawatching points. With this in mind, there may have been as few as 18.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*



Rare/scarce winter visitor Aug-May. Mainly coastal and exceptional in summer. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 43.

There were few records in the first half of the year with single birds at Leverton on Jan 6th and another at Tetney Marsh on Jan 25th. There were further records in the Wash at Freiston Shore, Friskney, Leverton and Witham Mouth between Jan 26th and Mar 18th which seem likely to refer to the same wintering individual.

The first two birds of the autumn flew south at Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 1st with another there on the 3rd. No more were reported until the end of Oct when there was a small passage of birds on the coast: one at Gibraltar Point on 26th with three south there on 27th and another two north on 28th when two were also seen from Huttoft Car Terrace, perhaps the same birds, and another at Witham Mouth. An adult in summer plumage was at Freiston Shore still on Oct 31st.

Birds continued to be seen at Gibraltar Point throughout Nov and Dec with birds moving both north and south, mostly one to two birds but with three on Dec 11th, perhaps reflecting a small

wintering population offshore there. The final records were of single birds at Donna Nook and Witham Mouth, both on Dec 28th. This continues to be a scarce bird in the county.

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*

Vagrant. LBRC

A dead White-billed Diver was discovered on the foreshore at Freiston Shore on May 22nd (ABE), the fourth county record, only two of which have been found alive. The first was found dead at Friskney Marsh in the Wash in Mar 1976 and the two other records refer to the two well-watched birds found on the same stretch of the river Witham in Feb 1996 and in Jan 2017

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. Amber List. LBRC

No records were received of this species in 2018. Since 2000, there have been around 26 records but with nine of those in 2013 skewing the archive it remains a rare offshore migrant. There were none in 2000, 2002-3, 2005, 2007-10, 2012 or 2017.

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* □

Rare offshore migrant generally Sep-Nov, but also May and Dec-Jan. Exceptional inland. Amber List. LBRC

Another poor year for this species with just three records. The first flew past Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 28th (PAH, RL, CMO) then one flew north past Gibraltar Point on Oct 27th (NAL, BWD) and two went past there on Oct 28th (NAL, JPS, BWD *et al*), one close in and briefly harassed by a Pomarine Skua.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* □

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

Fulmars were recorded on 45 dates between Jan-Oct in 2018 with the majority of records coming from Gibraltar Point. Of these 45 dates, they were seen at Gibraltar Point on 35, Huttoft Car Terrace on five, Tetney Marsh and Witham Mouth on three, Freiston Shore on two and on just one date at Chapel St Leonard.

The first of the year were single birds seen on Jan 7th at Gibraltar Point and in the Wash at Freiston Shore and Witham Mouth. There was one other Jan record on 8th at Tetney Marsh. One or two birds were reported along the North Sea coast during Feb-Apr with a peak of five south at Gibraltar Point on Feb 13th. Summing the records in the first quarter, and ignoring the possibility of duplicates which is quite high, in the first quarter there were five sightings in Jan, seven in Feb, five in Mar and seven in Apr confirming its status as a scarce seabird in the county. This theme continued through the spring and summer with ten sightings in May, three in Jun and three in Jul. As the autumn progressed there were nine in Aug, 25 in Sep and 18 in Oct. The final birds of the year were eight reported at Tetney Marsh on Oct 30th. There were no records in Nov and Dec.

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea* □

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

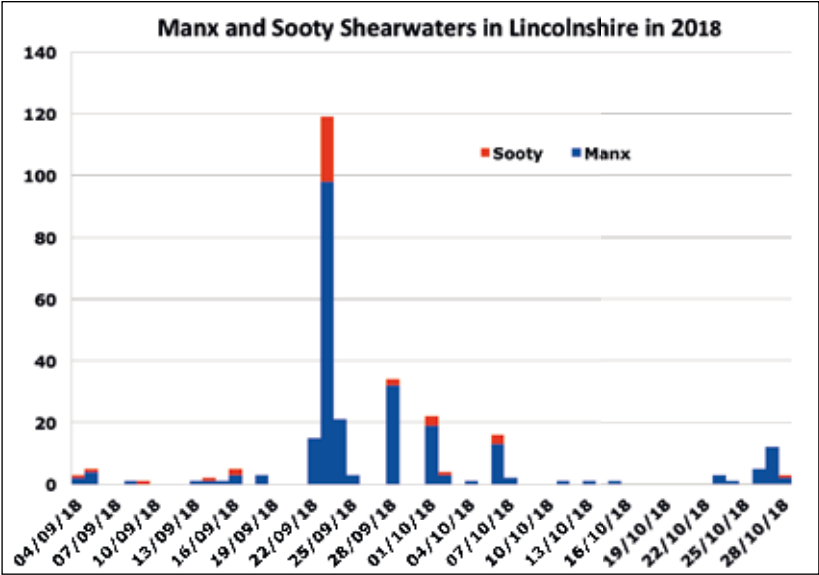
The first of the year was an unusually early record on Jan 7th at Gibraltar Point. Records then ran true to form with most in Sep and just a few in Oct-Nov, overall a rather poor year with birds recorded on just 13 dates in 2018.

The first birds of the autumn were seen at Gibraltar Point on Sep 4th and from Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 5th. Singles were seen at Gibraltar Point again on Sep 9th and 14th with two there on 16th. The 'big day' at Gibraltar Point occurred on Sep 23rd when 21 were seen but there were no other coastal counts on that date. Thereafter just single birds were noted at Gibraltar Point on Sep 28th, Oct 1st and 2nd, with three on Oct 6th. There were also singles recorded at Chapel St Leonard's on Sep 28th, and Huttoft and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 1st. The last birds of the year were at Huttoft on Oct 28th and at Gibraltar Point on Nov 30th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* □

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

No Manx Shearwaters were reported in the first eight months of the year, all records were received on 26 dates between Sep 4th and Oct 28th with the great majority of sightings at Gibraltar Point. First of the year were two at Gibraltar Point on Sep 4th with five at Huttoft car terrace on Sep 5th. Up to three birds were seen at Gibraltar Point and Anderby up to Sep 22nd when 12 were seen at Gibraltar Point. Passage peaked on 23rd though with a peak of 76 past Gibraltar Point, 14 past Huttoft Car Terrace, five past Chapel St Leonard's, and three in the Wash at Freiston Shore. Numbers fell away thereafter although there were 25 past Gibraltar Point on Sep 28th, one to eight at several other coastal sites going into Oct with a peak of 11 past Gibraltar Point on 6th and one to five until the end of the month. The last birds of the year were two past Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 28th.



Total numbers of Manx and Sooty Shearwaters are charted. Note that these are the sum of counts from all coastal sites and no attempt has been made to remove subjectively potential duplicate sightings.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Rare migrant recorded less than annually. LBRC

One flew past Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 1st (CMo, RL). This is only just outside the peak time for the species, the second and third weeks of Sep, although there are three previous records in Oct-Dec. This was the first since 2007, when there were four, and only the 23rd record in all.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*



Fairly common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor, the latter especially noticeable in coastal regions. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 160.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	11	3	2	3	2	5	24	65	54	35	6	-
Gibraltar Point	16	10	9	6	5	8	22	17	19	11	9	8
Kirkby on Bain	6	10	4	10	4	-	1	41	35	2	4	20
Deeping St James	21	8	3	4	1	1	8	10	29	16	3	26
Holywell	24	1	12	-	-	-	3	-	16	20	28	19
Freiston Shore	14	12	1	1	2	1	6	16	20	11	-	4
Welland Marsh	6	36	-	7	-	-	1	9	7	1	9	7
Alkborough Flats	-	1	7	20	1	2	-	30	14	5	1	2

Toft next Newton	13	11	7	-	-	-	-	2	8	6	13	12
Barton Pits	10	4	3	2	1	2	2	10	8	9	17	2

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of 70 or more birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The only other count over 20 was a report of 22 at Bassingham on Oct 22nd. The peak count of 65 at Frampton Marsh in Aug was well up on the peak of 40 at the same site in Sep 2017. The species was found in 10% of BBS squares (2017 8%) with an average of 2.6 birds per occupied square (2017 1.9).

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* ■

Rare/scarse passage migrant and winter visitor, Sep-Apr, rare in summer. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1.

The first record of the year was from Deeping High Bank on Jan 4th, which may have been the bird seen at Deeping St James in Dec 2017, with two more on Jan 5th at Gibraltar Point and Witham Mouth. There were further sightings from the latter site on Jan 8th, Feb 4th, 5th and 25th and Mar 8th all of which may refer to the same individual. There followed three long-staying individuals: Covenham Reservoir from Jan 26th-Mar 13th; Bagmoor from Mar 3rd-Apr 2nd; Barton Pits from Mar 6th-24th. The Bagmoor bird was the last of the first half of the year. The first autumn bird was seen on Sep 19th at Gibraltar Point where there were further records on Oct 26th, Nov 30th and Dec 3rd. The only other records were from Trusthorpe on Oct 31st and Chapel St Leonard's on Dec 15th and 16th. Overall a decent year with three long-stayers and at least 12 individuals involved.



Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* Covenham Res Jan 20th 2018 © John Clarkson

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* ■

Common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 170.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	5	5	8	7	5	1	22	43	46	44	32	45
Toft next Newton	30	16	13	4	3	2	9	11	21	37	39	36
Cowbit	3	11	17	24	20	10	18	33	23	-	12	-
North Hykeham	27	14	12	3	7	6	5	-	21	13	21	22
Gibraltar Point	32	8	1	2	5	3	2	2	4	19	8	21
Whisby NP	3	3	9	8	15	9	10	13	6	8	3	3
Barton Pits	11	10	8	11	13	1	7	2	3	2	5	1
Norton Disney	-	2	-	1	5	-	16	12	12	5	5	9
Deeping St James	3	4	7	6	3	6	3	5	4	7	3	-
Scunthorpe	3	3	4	5	2	1	7	7	6	3	6	4

This species remains relatively common on the larger inland waters of the county and in winter months, offshore as well. Numbers overall were similar to 2017, although some sites gained in prominence (e.g. Cowbit), whilst numbers at others sites were stable or showed small decreases. In addition to the sites in the table there were notable coastal concentrations in Jan and Feb, with over 90 off Leverton in both months, 42 at Wainfleet and up to 57 off Mablethorpe, both in Feb. Breeding activity continues to be under-reported, with fledged young reported at Frampton Marsh and just 11 other sites recording other evidence of breeding.



Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* Frampton Marsh Apr 14th 2018 © Neil Smith

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* ■

Rare/ scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Aug-May. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 9.

Gibraltar Point had a wintering bird present intermittently from Jan 1st-Feb 9th and elsewhere birds were present in the Wash at Frampton Marsh and Leverton on Jan 6th. Also, at Witham Mouth one or more birds were present intermittently from Jan 6th-Mar 8th, the bird there on Mar 8th being in partial summer plumage. The only other wintering birds were at Barton Pits where three appeared on Feb 26th with one to two birds remaining until Apr 1st. Spring migrants appeared at Barrow Haven on Mar 24th, Deeping High Bank on Apr 10th-11th and at Middlemarsh Farm (Skegness) on Apr 20th. In the autumn the first record was at Covenham Reservoir on Oct 15th. In the Wash one or, possibly, two birds were seen between Freiston Shore and Witham Mouth on Oct 26th-31st and one was off Huttoft on Oct 28th. Subsequently one was off Gibraltar Point on Nov 26th and 30th and Dec 16th and 21st. The last bird of the winter was at Freiston Shore on Dec 27th.

In total there were at least ten birds in the first half of the year and up to seven in the second half.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* ■

Rare breeder, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1. **RBBP**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of Birds	5	1	1	3	2	-	1	2	4	2	1	-
Number of Sites	4	1	1	2	1	-	1	2	4	2	1	-

As the table shows it was a good year for records but a terrible year for breeding; no confirmed breeding for the third consecutive year. The year started with two at Toft Newton Reservoir from Jan 4th-23rd and a single till Feb 11th with singles at Frampton Marsh on Jan 9th and 14th, one at Crowland on Jan 20th and Cleethorpes on Jan 25th. Site A had its only bird of the year on Mar 16th, Site B had no records and Site C had a breeding plumage pair on Apr 14th and one on Jul



White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* Barton May 3rd 2018 © Graham Catley



Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* Gibraltar Point Aug 5th 2018 © Paul Neale



Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Frampton Marsh Oct 5th 2018 © Gary Fenwick



Great White Egret *Ardea alba* River Witham Tattershall Bridge Mar 4th 2018 © Phil Hyde

21st. Elsewhere there was a breeding plumage bird at Crowle on Apr 8th and a pair at Alkborough Flats on May 4th. In autumn there were long-staying birds at Baston and Langtoft GP from Aug 20th-Oct 20th and Frampton Marsh from Sep 9th-26th. Covenham Reservoir had one from Sep 9th-12th. In Oct there was one at Freiston Shore on Oct 30th and the last one of the year was at Covenham Reservoir on Nov 23rd.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Rare vagrant. Status complicated by the existence of reintroduction schemes on the near continent. LBRC

The 2018 saga began on Mar 27th-28th when a White Stork of unknown origin turned up at Baston Fen (VF et al) carrying an unusual metal ring thought not to be a BTO ring. It was later recorded at Norton Green, Stevenage on Apr 1st. One was then seen at Barton on Humber on May 3rd (GPC, JTH) and presumably the same bird flew over Frampton Marsh on May 4th (RDn). It or another turned up at Manby Wetlands on May 12th (JRC, PEs). The last record came on Jun 6th when one was seen flying over Gibraltar Point (J. Shaw et al) and then later over Middlemarsh Farm (NAL). Arguably the May-Jun records may just have involved a single wandering bird.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Rare but increasing passage migrant; breeding attempt in 2014. LBRC RBBP

One was found at Frampton Marsh on Feb 15th (JSa) followed by the second of the year at Anderby Marsh on May 22nd (DJM, et al) which relocated to Gibraltar Point on May 24th before departing high north down the Wash to land at Freiston Shore on the same date (ABe, JPor et al). It then turned up across the Witham on Frampton Marsh on May 26th-28th (PS et al). Finally one was at Whisby NP mid-evening of Jul 23rd (GHO, DMJ). These are the 25th and 26th county records.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*



Scarce visitor, mainly coastal in Apr-Sep, and exceptionally in winter. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1. RBBP

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	2	1	8	27	27	12	1	1	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	1	2	6	14	10	12	14	1	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	6	1	1	4	10	13	6	-	-	1
Witham Mouth*	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	20	-	-	-

(* The records at Witham Mouth are probably birds transferring from nearby Frampton Marsh)

Away from the main sites there were two at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Apr 22nd, two at Keadby on Jun 26th, four at Gedney on Jul 7th and three at Terrington on Aug 14th, with singles at other coastal sites probably reflecting local movements from the three main centres. More unusually there was a record of two in the heronry at Kirkby on Bain on Apr 26th and a single at Deeping St James on Jun 7th. Although movements between sites will inevitably obscure the numbers, it is estimated that there were at least 60-75 birds in the county this year, a further increase on the c.30-50 annually reported from 2010 onwards and probably reflecting the growing breeding colonies in Norfolk/West Yorkshire as well as those over-spilling from the large colonies in The Netherlands.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*



Rare breeder, rare winter visitor. Bred to early 19th century, from 1940s-1979 and in recent years. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 8. RBBP

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

Reports came from 14 sites, down from 17 in 2017. Barton as usual had the most records with reports from every month and a maximum count of five in Sep. It was an excellent year for confirmed breeding with three pairs confirmed. At Alkborough Flats three booming birds were reported from Mar 23rd and there were two certain nests that fledged two young between them, one of which was soon killed, possibly by a Buzzard. At Barton a male boomed regularly from Mar to Jul mainly from Hotel Pit. Regular feeding flights were noted throughout Jun and a female was seen with two recently fledged young on Jul 4th. All three continued to be seen through to Sep. At Barrow Haven and adjacent pits a bird boomed throughout spring and summer but there was no

evidence of breeding there. At Whisby the long-staying winterer from 2017 was seen on 20 dates from Jan 3rd-Mar 30th and came back on Oct 19th and was seen on 37 dates to Dec 30th. What may have been the same bird was seen at nearby Boultham Mere on seven dates from Jan 3rd-Feb 4th and five dates from Oct 25th-Dec 1st.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Rare vagrant. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1. LBRC

One was found at Freiston Shore on Sep 3rd (SK) and commuted between there and Frampton Marsh on Sep 8th, 20th, 23rd and Oct 5th and 14th. It or another was at Gibraltar Point on Sep 22nd (NAL et al). Elsewhere another was at Alkborough Flats on Sep 27th (GPC) and at Baston and Langtoft GP on Oct 12th (JJ). Not as prolific a year as 2017, but since the first record in Oct 1986 this species and the other two white egrets have become a familiar sight in the county.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*



Fairly common resident, partial migrant and winter visitor. WeBS threshold for national importance: 450 Green List.

Site of heronry	Nests	Site	Nests
Abbey Wood	21	Lea Marsh	10
Appletree Ness	13	Long Wood	7
Baston and Langtoft GP	6	Nocton Wood	6
Belton Park	3	North Cotes Spinney	6
Bishopbridge	2	Patterson's Pit	16
Dowsby Fen	0	The Deepes	7
Fitties nature reserve	4	The Mere, Deeping St James	9
Hartsholme Country Park	15	Troy Wood	5
Hospital Cottage Spinney	20	Warren Plantation	3
Howsham Barff Wood	-	Welland Farm	5
Kingerby Wood	-	Willoughby Wood	16
Kirkby Pits (west)	18		

A total of 192 occupied grey heron nests was recorded in 2018, distributed between sites as tabulated, and broadly similar in numbers to the 194 nests recorded in 2017. Even so, this number is well below the peak numbers (of c.400 nests) recorded in the 1980s (see 2016 LBR) but perhaps suggests the post-1990 decline may have levelled off, at least in the short-term.

Peak counts were largely associated with heronries. Away from these, the species was widely recorded across the county from over 150 sites. Most records were of one to three birds. Notable counts of over ten birds (excluding heronries) included 13 at Frampton Marsh (Feb 20th), 10-11 at Tetney Marsh (May-Jun), 12 at Lincoln (May 10th), ten at Manby Wetlands (Jun 20th and Jul 6th), ten at Gibraltar Point (Jun 25th), 14 at Alkborough Flats (Jul 13th), with 17 there on Jul 15th and 12 on Aug 7th, 12 at Middlemarsh Farm (Jul 5th), 24 at Frampton Marsh (Jul 17th) and 12 at Thorpe Fen (Dec 10th).

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Rare vagrant. LBRC.

No records of this species were received in 2018.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

Scarce but increasing visitor recorded in all months, scarcer Jul-Aug. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1.

The species continues to increase with records in all months of the year and from 61 sites (up from 35 sites in 2016). Birds were recorded from 16 sites in Jan 12 in Mar, only four in May and Jun, before increasing through the autumn to peak at 22 in Nov.

Five sites recorded the species in 6 months or more including Gibraltar Point (nine months, Apr-Sep), Kirkby on Bain (eight months), Boultham Mere (seven months), and Frampton Marsh and Woodhall Spa (six months). At Boultham Mere three birds were present continuously throughout Aug with one to three present in Sep peaking at six birds on Sep 29th with a single bird remaining until late Dec. Gibraltar Point had several birds noted as moving through the site including on single dates in Jun and in Jul, on three dates in Aug, one in Sept and four dates in Oct including one in off the sea on the 21st and five birds in from the south on 31st.



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Frampton Marsh May 27th 2018 © Neil Smith



Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* Witham Mouth Mar 11th 2018 © John Clarkson

Other notable counts included four on the Witham in the Tattershall/Kirkstead Bridge area in Mar and four at Freiston Shore in Nov. Otherwise most other records were of one to three birds, widely distributed across the county. Estimating actual numbers of birds in the county is difficult due to the movement of birds between sites but a conservative interpretation of records suggests a minimum of seven birds present in Jan, down to three in May and over twelve in Nov.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* ■

Formerly a rare/scarcely visitor in all months, a few wintering since 1993/94. Now a scarce breeding bird and increasingly common resident. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 110. RBBP

District minimum totals	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
The Humber	41	33	24	53	52	81	86	142	144	112	67	59
East coast	18	13	2	4	3	6	8	54	41	133	20	22
The Wash	78	97	46	59	55	208	339	428	304	365	92	95
Inland	88	61	40	29	26	80	37	41	34	27	42	54
Minimum Lincs total	224	204	112	145	136	375	470	665	493	517	221	230

The summary table above shows the monthly minimum peak counts of all birds recorded in each of four districts comprising the whole county; the East Coast includes Saltfleetby to Skegness. The total in Aug of 665 is well down on the 2017 figure of 956. The Jan figures show a much smaller fall from 257 to 224. There is no ready explanation for this fall in numbers but it is also reflected in breeding numbers.

The table below (sites anonymised) shows that the number of breeding pairs halved from 218 pairs in 2017 to 106 in 2018. This is largely attributable to a big fall in pairs at site A. It should be noted that this is still the second largest total of Lincs breeding pairs reported since colonisation in 2006. Up at The Humber sites B and D also fell in breeding pairs. Little Egret was still found in 6% of Lincolnshire BBS squares, the same as 2017. Another new egret, site J was located inland in association with an existing heronry.

Number of nests	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
A Wash	-	5	7	6	6	8	6	7	6	25	5	150	60
B Humber	1	11	14	11	27	17	12	-	8	14	13	22	6
C Inland	-	-	1	4	5	7	6	8	10	12	6	4	2
D Humber	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	4	20	15	22	18	13
E Humber	-	-	-	-	-	8	32	20	32	21	11	-	-
F Inland	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	5	8	8	10	14	11
G Wash	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
H Inland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	5	6
I Humber	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	5	5
J Inland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Total	1	16	22	21	40	45	63	44	84	101	74	218	106

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. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3	1	3	4	29	13	30	113	831	950	126	2
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	190	337	1	-
Witham Mouth	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77	400	-	-
Freiston Shore	1	-	-	12	-	-	-	12	9	350	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	31	273	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	200	-	2
Skegness	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	16	-	-	-

The table includes all sites with a maximum of 100 or more. There were few records in the first half of the year with one to four birds on 14 dates from Jan-Apr at Gibraltar Point and Freiston Shore/Witham Mouth and 12 birds at Freiston Shore (Apr 30th). The only inland birds of the spring were singles at Scunthorpe on Apr 15th and 16th. Records in May and Jun were almost exclusively from Gibraltar Point with 29 on May 17th and 13 on Jun 5th. Records increased from Jul onwards to peak in Oct. Gibraltar Point dominated with peak counts of 831 on Sep 23rd and >900 on both Oct 27th and 28th. Counts exceeding 200 birds elsewhere came from Witham

Mouth (400 Oct 1st), Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (273 Oct 1st), Huttoft (280 Oct 1st; 337 Oct 3rd; 200 Oct 27th), Freiston Shore (350 Oct 6th) and Chapel St Leonards (200 Oct 24th). Inland records in autumn included one at Grantham (Sep 25th), two over Ruskington and one at Baston (both on Oct 28th). Records diminished through Nov into Dec when there were six records of one or two birds only.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* ■

Usually rare/scarse winter visitor Aug-May to the coast and inland, with occasional larger influxes. Exceptional in summer. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1100. Red List.

Ten sites reported this species in 2018. In the first quarter of the year singles were seen at Witham Mouth between Feb 4th and Apr 3rd, possibly the same over-wintering individual. Singles were also reported at Frampton Marsh on Feb 5th, Boston on Feb 12th, Freiston Shore and Gibraltar Point on Mar 22nd, and at Anderby and Tetney Marsh on Mar 23rd.

The first autumn bird was at Gibraltar Point on Sep 9th followed by singles at Huttoft car terrace and Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd, where further singles were reported on Oct 4th, 14th, and 25th; one was at Huttoft car terrace on Oct 27th. In Nov Gibraltar Point reported singles on 27th and 30th and at Covenham Reservoir one was present Dec 28th-31st.

There were four notable ringing recoveries in the county, all four of them ringed as nestlings and all found freshly dead (natural causes) at Gedney Drove End, Skegness, Anderby Creek and Theddlethorpe Dunes. Three were from the Isle of May and one was from Inchkeith, Firth of Forth, and they had travelled between 365-409km to the Lincolnshire coast.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* ■

Fairly common winter visitor, mainly coastal but increasing numbers inland and in summer. Inland breeding colony established 1992. Amber List. WeBS for international importance: 1200. WeBS threshold for national importance: 620.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Coastal</i>												
Gibraltar Point	500	440	133	45	17	12	56	58	100	457	528	390
Tetney Marsh	56	570	-	11	8	16	18	24	22	47	31	66
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe												
Dunes NNR	51	405	124	63	3	5	21	10	31	13	12	9
Terrington	-	220	-	-	2	-	-	70	50	150	11	-
Saltfleet	83	84	74	-	3	-	20	23	-	32	13	137
Donna Nook	53	92	3	3	-	2	2	3	11	9	12	3
<i>Inland</i>												
North Hykeham	83	84	74	-	3	-	20	23	-	32	13	137
Deeping St James	24	30	37	49	1	45	54	38	30	4	30	31
Boultham Mere	35	34	45	35	14	3	11	17	24	26	19	24
Whisby	30	30	16	11	5	1	14	15	26	50	50	31
Baston	13	18	15	8	5	-	1	15	27	41	13	7
Covenham Reservoir	3	1	11	3	2	1	4	6	71	37	5	4

The table shows all coastal sites with more than 50 birds and all inland sites with more than 30 birds. Cormorants were recorded from >110 widely distributed sites but with the highest counts coming from coastal sites from Jan to Feb and Oct to Dec.

Gibraltar Point recorded counts of over 300 birds in Jan (500 on Jan 5th), Feb (440 on Feb 4th) and from Oct to Dec (457 Oct 25th; 528 Nov 30th; 390 Dec 25th); other counts of over 300 birds were recorded from Tetney Marsh (570 Feb 8th) and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (405 Feb 6th). Inland notable counts included over 80 at North Hykeham in Jan and Feb and 137 there in Dec.

Counts in most locations diminished from Apr to Jul apart from at Deeping St James (the low number for May due to the absence of full counts) where Deeping Lakes NR holds Lincolnshire's only breeding colony. This had at least 26 occupied nests on Apr 14th when 45 birds were present. Some of these nests were occupied from Feb 3rd with large fledged young present from Jun 10th and three young still being fed in a nest on Sep 7th.

Away from tabulated sites, other notable counts came from Middlemarsh Farm (42 Mar 17th), Friskney (47 May 20th), Wainfleet (44 May 20th), Kirkby on Bain (40 Aug 21st), Lincoln (39 Oct 17th), Grainthorpe (39 Nov 27th Nov) and Marshchapel (48 Nov 27th).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*



Scarce passage migrant, rare in summer. Amber List. RBBP

The first bird of the spring was at Deeping Lakes NR on Apr 2nd and 3rd followed by another west at Gibraltar Point on Apr 12th. Birds were seen on another 14 dates up to Jun 7th, with most being one-day birds. Gibraltar Point saw birds go west over the Steeping on Apr 20th; another went north offshore on 22nd with another north there over Tennyson Sands on 24th. Overall, the spring arrivals appeared to involve around 17 birds.

There were several summer records during Jul at Fillingham on 7th, Tallington on 11th, Frampton Marsh on 12th, Deeping Lakes NR on 17th, Covenham and Tetney Marsh on 20th (presumed to be the same bird), Welland Bank Pits on 24th and Ruskington on 28th. Immature Ospreys usually return to their breeding areas when they are 2 years old, but do not usually begin to breed until they are 3 to 5 years old, so these Jul records most likely relate to wandering immature birds.

Autumn migration usually begins in mid-Aug and so the bird seen at Gibraltar Point on Aug 19th was bang on time. A further 18 autumn records involving around a dozen birds were reported between Aug 28th and Oct 2nd, the last of the autumn again at Gibraltar Point on the same date as in 2017.

Honey-buzzard *Pernis apivorus*



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

No records of this species were received in 2018.

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. Green List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3	2	7	6	4	2	3	3	7	6	4	2
Boultham Mere	2	2	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	-
Whisby	2	1	1	2	2	3	1	3	1	1	2	1
Tetney Marsh	2	2	-	2	1	1	1		2	1	5	2
Frampton Marsh	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	1

The table shows the top five sites holding maximum accumulated counts of 20 or more birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. It contrasts the regular pattern of occurrence at well-watched inland sites with the pattern of migration observed at three coastal sites, reflecting a coastal autumn peak. The species was found in 5% of BBS squares (2017 11%) with an average of 1.0 bird per occupied square (2017 1.2). Although Lincolnshire sample sizes are too small to draw meaningful conclusions it should be noted that Sparrowhawk has declined by 29% over the period 1997 to 2017 across England as a whole.

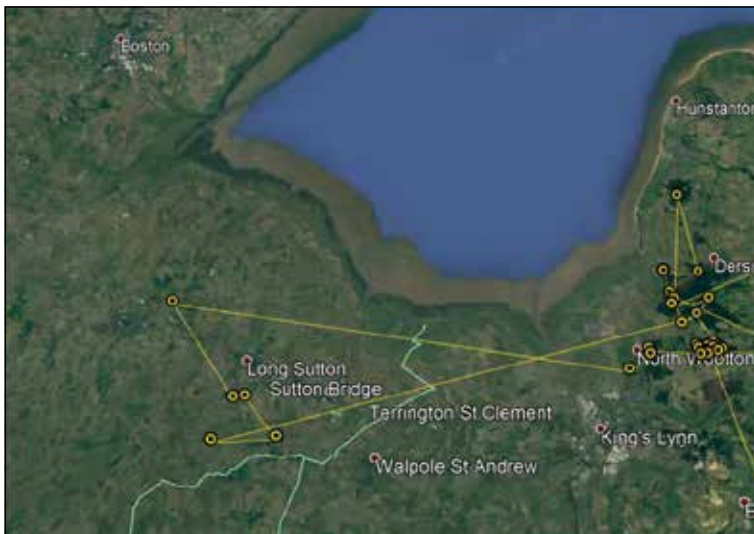
Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*



Rare visitor/passage migrant, mainly autumn to spring. Green List. LBRC, RBBP

There were two records of this rare *Accipiter* in 2018. An immature female ringed and satellite-tagged as a nestling in the Brecks flew into the county on Apr 1st and roosted overnight in a small copse at Sutton Crosses (Long Sutton) before returning whence it came on Apr 2nd (I. Henderson, BTO). The satellite tag recorded five positions and the locations are accurate to +/- 10 to 20m. This immature female was in a very exploratory phase, having trekked around East Anglia during the preceding two weeks, before returning to the Brecks.

A second record was of an adult, thought to be a male, over Dunston on May 3rd (MHa) seen well before disappearing north towards Nocton.



Map 1: Satellite-tracked movements of the immature female Breckland Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* in the south of the county on Apr 1st (© Dr Ian Henderson, BTO, Thetford).



Map 2: Shows the roosting site of the immature female Breckland Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* at Sutton Crosses on Apr 1st. (© Dr Ian Henderson, BTO, Thetford).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*



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

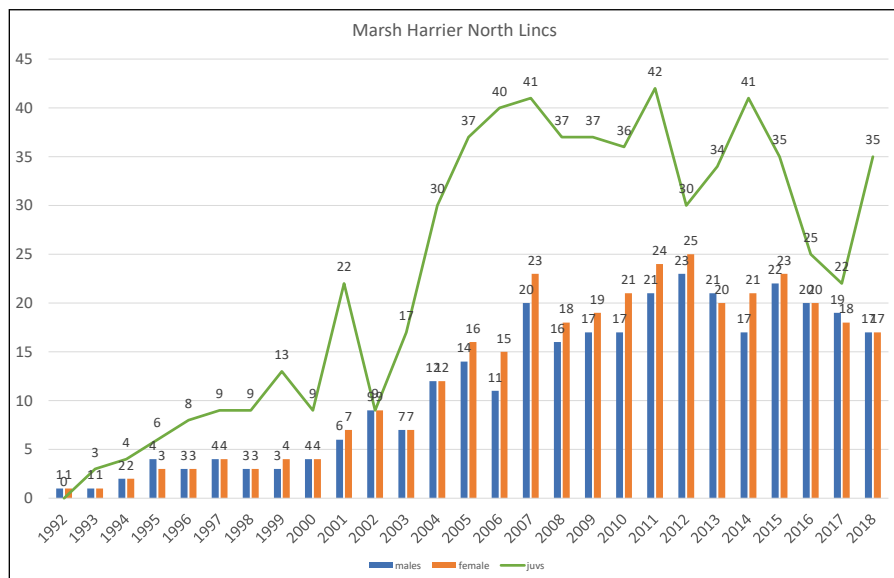
In the south Humber bank area of North Lincolnshire surveyed by GPC since 1992 there was a third successive year of decline in breeding males and females down to 17 of each. However, it was a much more successful breeding season with a total of 35 young fledging, the highest total since 2015. Elsewhere in the county the only reports of breeding were as follows: coast two confirmed pairs fledged six young and three probable pairs; inland seven confirmed and three probable pairs but only five fledged young reported; around the Wash five probable pairs which is surely a serious under-reporting of this former breeding area. In all, this represents a county total of 37 proven or probable pairs and 46 fledged young but note that 35 of those 46 were in the well-monitored area in the North.

In the two winter periods the number of birds appeared to be down again following a decline noted in 2017; on the Humber there were at least 18 birds in Jan–Feb; inland single birds were recorded on at least one date during Jan–Feb at Boultham Mere, Branstons Booths, Kirtton Lindsey, Deeping St James, Withern, Willow Tree Fen and Marston STW; around the Wash, Gibraltar Point to Nene Mouth up 14 birds were present with five at Frampton Marsh Jan 6th the highest total; on the coast only two to four birds were recorded producing a combined county early winter total of 41–43 birds.

During Mar–Oct and excluding breeding records notable occurrences included six at Willow Tree Fen on Mar 7th, five at Gibraltar Point on Sep 11th (including four south), Sep 22nd, Oct 7th and 9th and seven at Witham Mouth on Sep 2nd.

In the late winter Nov–Dec on the Humber at least 14 birds were present with three along the coast, seven around the Wash and inland singles on at least one date at Baston Fen, Boultham Mere, Cowbit, Messingham, Withern and Wressle producing a total of only 30 birds.

A juvenile with green wing tags VS seen at Alkborough Flats on Dec 28th 2017 was seen again in the Ancholme Valley at Bonby Carrs on Jan 24th and Feb 25th; it was a juvenile female ringed on Jun 4th 2017 at Cantley in Norfolk.



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. Red List. **RBBP**



Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* Far Ings LWT Jan 7th 2018 © Paul Coombes



Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* Far Ings LWT Jan 7th 2018 © Paul Coombes

Thirty-eight sites recorded Hen Harrier in 2018 but peak counts continue to be low. Highest counts came from Frampton Marsh (3), Gibraltar Point (4) and Gedney Drove End with an exceptional five on Dec 29th. Over-wintering birds were reported from Jan 1st through Apr with the last bird at Crowle on May 5th, mostly one to two birds but with up to four on the Wash. Late birds were at Gibraltar Point on Jun 18th, Fillingham on Jun 22nd and Baston Fen on Jun 30th.

In autumn the first bird was at Frampton Marsh on Sep 3rd where one or two birds were recorded until the end of the year but with three on several dates: Oct 22nd, Nov 4th and 17th, Dec 26th, 28th and 29th. Gibraltar Point records followed a similar pattern with four on Oct 28th and 29th and three on Nov 3rd and Dec 2nd. It is difficult to know the degree of duplication at sites on the Wash with records elsewhere of four birds at Dawsmere on Nov 25th, Dec 1st and 16th and an exceptional five at Gedney Drove End on Dec 29th. There were other records of one or two birds at various other coastal sites as well as at several inland sites: Crowland, the Deepings, Sandtoft, and Withern all recorded singles between Oct 29th-Dec 24th on one or more dates.

Aging and sexing birds was infrequent, but adult males were reported on the Wash at Frampton Marsh, Gibraltar Point, Kirton Marsh, Wainfleet and Witham Mouth.



Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* Wainfleet Marsh Mar 22nd 2018 © Paul Coombes

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* ■

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

The dire state of this species in Lincolnshire continues to suggest that a year with no records is not far away. The last successful nest was in 2012 and the last nesting attempt in 2014. It is worth remembering that as recently as 2001 four pairs fledged five young in the Wash.

An adult female was seen in the Grimoldby/South Thoresby area on Apr 26th and the returning adult female (possibly the same bird as on Apr 26th) again spent the summer on the upper Humber mainly around Blacktoft Sands East Yorks but was seen at Alkborough Flats and Garthorpe on a few dates from May 3rd to Sep 2nd. The only other record was of a ringtail at Gibraltar Point on Jun 13th.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* ■

Scarce resident and, from 2008, very scarce breeding species mainly in the southwest of the county. Green List.

Red Kites continue to spread slowly into the county with reports of mainly singles at 113 sites. Although the concentration remains in the southwest it is spreading increasingly into the Wolds. Breeding was confirmed at only a couple of sites in the Bourne area. The peak counts were down on last year, with a maximum of 13 at Temple Wood on Dec 9th indicating a potential local roost

site. As with other raptors, there were some reports of birds moving along the coast with six at North Somercotes on Apr 22nd and five at Gibraltar Point the following day and on Jun 14th.



Red Kite *Milvus milvus* Sleaford Sep 25th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Rare vagrant. The first to be recorded in Lincolnshire was shot at Nocton in 1732; there have been more than 20 further records.

Two lucky observers brave enough to venture out on to the foreshore at Churchill Lane, Theddlethorpe at the height of the 'Beast from the East' had good views of an immature White-tailed Eagle on Mar 3rd (CMo, JW). It eventually flew south down the beach towards Mablethorpe. This constituted the 22nd record for the county all occurring between Oct-Apr, the last in 2015 at Gibraltar Point. A bird that had been a recent release in Scotland was seen in the county in 2010, but is not included in the county totals.



White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* Churchill Lane Theddlethorpe St Helen
Mar 3rd 2018 © Clif Morris



Buzzard *Buteo buteo* East Keal Mar 26th 2018 (left)
and Snipe Dales Country Park Apr 4th 2018 (right) © Phil Hyde



Buzzard *Buteo buteo* Alkborough Feb 24th 2018 © Graham Catley

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Rare/scarse coastal passage migrant and winter visitor, chiefly Oct-Nov and occasionally Dec-May. LBRC.

One at Alkborough Flats on Jan 5th (per GPC) was the only one of the first quarter of the year. In the autumn the first bird was at Gibraltar Point on Oct 22nd watched hunting from the Wash viewpoint (P. Dillon-Hopper). Another was found at Tetney Marsh on Nov 3rd (RL) and was presumably the bird seen on Nov 4th at Donna Nook (T. Green); there was also another bird at Gedney Drove End on Nov 4th (WB).

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*



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

Buzzards are now commonly seen throughout the county and at all times of the year. There were observations from over 220 sites, although breeding activity was reported from only 15 of these, despite 60% occupancy of BBS squares in 2018 (46/77 BBS squares). The highest counts in the first half of the year were of 16 at Marton (Trent Port) on Mar 25th and 12 at Messingham on Apr 5th, possibly migrants, and in the second half of the year 12 were at Alkborough Flats on Aug 14th, 15 at Deeping St James on Oct 7th and 11 at Lincoln on Oct 20th potentially indicating either local breeding successful or migration. As usual, there was also evidence of migratory movements, particularly at Gibraltar Point, with counts of 16 on Mar 21st and similar numbers on Aug 31st and Sep 24th.



Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* Gibraltar Point Feb 18th 2018 © Paul Neale

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*



Scarce resident fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Much under-recorded. Green List.

The reported numbers for this species are heavily dependent on specific site surveys, which were not carried out this year, so peak numbers are well reduced from 2017. The observations showed small wintering numbers at nearly 40 sites, the most important ones shown on the table. Breeding was confirmed/probable at four sites (marked * in the table), including a brood of 4 at Kirkby on Bain (a first confirmed breeding record for the site) and fledged young were also seen at Huttoft Pit on Aug 11th. Water Rail was removed from the Rare Birds Breeding Panel list of species requiring notification from 2018 onwards.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	6	4	1	2	-	-	2*	5*	5	8	5	5
Marston	7	1	2	-	-	-	1	2	3	2	2	16
Alkborough Flats	2	-	1	4	1	1	14	-	4	3	1	-
Barton Pits	5	1	1	2	-	1	-	-	1	2	8	3
Whisby	2	2	3	1	-	-	-	1	1	2	4	4
Kirkby on Bain	2	2	1	1	1	6*	1	1	2	1	-	2
Boultham Mere	2	2	2	1	-	-	2	2*	2	2	1	2
Frampton Marsh	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1

Corncrake *Crex crex*



Very scarce passage migrant. Red List. **LBRC RBBP**

A bird was heard calling at Baston Fen on May 3rd, Jun 7th, 8th and 12th, the only possible breeding activity this year. In the autumn a bird was flushed from a grassy field at Boultham Mere on Sep 21st (ACS) and another found in similar circumstances at East Halton on Oct 5th (GPC). With suitable habitat and relatively close proximity to the reintroduced Nene Washes population, wet grassland in South Lincs is worth checking; sooner or later we may get breeding Corncrakes!

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

Rare migrant, though historically a breeding species up to the latter half of the 19th Century. **LBRC**

The autumn of 2018 was an excellent one for this species with three to four birds at three different sites. The first was glimpsed briefly at Frampton Marsh on Jul 30th (TW et al). A juvenile followed this on the Freshwater Mere at Gibraltar Point on Aug 9th (NAL) well watched by many observers on 26 dates from then until Sep 1st (NAL, SK et al). A more difficult single was reported at Town Holt, Grimsby on five dates between Aug 11th and Sep 4th (JWW et al). The action switched back to Gibraltar Point at the end of Sep when the same or a different juvenile again showed well on the Freshwater Mere on 12 dates between Sep 25th and Oct 11th (NAL et al).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*



Very common resident and partial migrant. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 3000.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Middlemarsh Farm	39	28	38	22	20	30	50	20	15	7	25	29
Frampton Marsh	20	18	50	30	20	12	30	30	38	20	12	29
Whisby	12	13	5	7	11	11	36	34	27	45	25	16
Tetney Marsh	35	32	-	16	12	10	12	-	35	20	24	32
Kirkstead Bridge	20	19	13	8	3	4	20	9	21	37	15	37
Stamford	24	22	30	12	16	-	-	-	-	22	24	24
Bardney	-	19	13	8	4	4	20	9	21	37	15	23
Boultham Mere	7	9	10	5	6	8	6	15	25	35	22	18
Kirkby on Bain	10	7	10	8	4	2	12	16	15	8	7	32
Gibraltar Point	11	4	6	8	5	14	13	18	18	9	7	8

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 120 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Peak count numbers were similar to 2017. The species was found in 30% of BBS squares (2017 31%) with an average of 1.6 birds per occupied square (2017 2.0).



Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana* Town's Holt, Grimsby Aug 11th 2018 Graham Catley



Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana* Town's Holt, Grimsby Aug 11th 2018 Graham Catley



Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana* Gibraltar Point Aug 10th 2018 © Graham Catley



Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana* Gibraltar Point Aug 10th 2018 © Graham Catley

Coot *Fulica atra*



Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 2000.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Whisby	190	163	76	34	33	43	81	63	183	199	251	211
Covenham Reservoir	89	91	67	10	3	1	57	185	221	325	278	184
Barton Pits	185	195	95	36	28	11	107	100	47	65	133	161
Kirkby on Bain	105	50	32	30	16	33	99	90	110	149	191	250
Toft next Newton	162	103	33	17	1	1	1	44	105	138	172	161
Lincoln	83	150	66	17	11	8	14	14	150	52	79	96
Messingham	88	47	24	37	29	35	79	90	88	66	67	77
Boultham Mere	26	41	45	10	12	40	69	32	86	104	118	98
Deeping St James	38	68	24	10	1	14	96	204	58	97	2	1
Bassingham	150	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	200	-

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 600 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Peak counts at the top sites were broadly in line with 2017. The species was found in 12% of BBS squares (2017 17%) with an average of 2.7 birds per occupied square (2017 2.2).

Crane *Grus grus*



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

All the action in the first seven months of the year took place in Apr. Six were seen flying south over Churchill Road, Theddlethorpe at 16.55 on the 7th (CMo) and then seen again 45 mins later over Gibraltar Point (GWr, BWd), ultimately flying across the Wash south east towards Norfolk. The following day 8th, 11 were seen at Alkborough Flats (ND). The last bird in Apr was one seen at Marton flying north up the Trent Valley on the 22nd (BHe).

Autumn migration kicked off in Aug with two seen flying south at Gibraltar Point at 15.40 on 4th (GPBO). They had previously been seen flying south from Spurn at 13.00. Also in Aug there were singles at Alkborough Flats on 18th (ND) and Messingham on 22nd (IB). In Sep there were two at Market Rasen on 3rd (DWo) and one at Ruskington on 5th (JDa). At Gibraltar Point one was seen at 06.00 on 22nd and two were seen flying over later that morning at 11.00 (GPBO). What may have been the same birds were seen flying over Wainfleet Range early afternoon and later seen flying over Frampton Marsh (IE) and the last of the year was at Covenham Reservoir on Dec 14th (KRo).



Crane *Grus grus* Gibraltar Point Sep 22nd 2018 © Owen Beaumont

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*



Very common coastal passage migrant / winter visitor and fairly common resident. Less common inland but now breeds in small numbers. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 8200. WeBS for national importance: 2900.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3400	5202	3230	2700	1050	250	701	5300	8490	8339	3500	6000
Marshchapel	2872	3700	547	400	134	299	425	817	-	2100	3600	800
Freiston Shore	2000	1	1	1500	1200	500	800	4000	3000	850	-	800
Wrangle	2000	660	350	-	-	2302	2100	-	120	5000	-	1100
Grainthorpe	274	630	475	420	273	10	240	470	1300	2000	3600	2100
Witham Mouth	240	1000	2200	1700	3	16	1200	680	1250	1	-	-
Tetney Marsh	1200	800	-	200	262	224	570	400	600	800	1000	1000
Cleethorpes	332	450	420	70	30	35	250	800	2000	1600	378	136
Welland Marsh	5	800	-	350	-	-	7	3	-	1400	2300	700
Wainfleet	1356	2571	480	-	649	118	2	-	-	-	-	-

The table shows the maximum monthly counts at the main Lincolnshire sites, with Gibraltar Point just passing the threshold for international importance for this species, and several other coastal sites of national importance. Breeding was more scattered than in winter, with reports from 18 sites, several adjacent to reservoirs or gravel pits inland, including confirmed breeding at Kirkby on Bain and the unlikely sounding venue of Sleaford Enterprise Park! There were some interesting ringing recoveries: FA07301, originally ringed as an adult at Friskney in 1983 was trapped for the second time in its life at Wainfleet Marsh in Aug 2018, now aged 35 years. A second long-lived bird was FA47184 found freshly dead at de Westernen, Netherlands in May 2018, aged 25 years and eight months. A second adult, FA46511 ringed at Holbeach St Matthew in Aug 1983 was re-trapped in Denmark in Mar 2018 aged 24 years and six months. There were three long distance movements of birds ringed in the county and being seen in Devon; an 11 year old Welsh-ringed bird trapped at Wainfleet in Aug; and conversely a bird ringed at Wainfleet seen at Llangorse lake in Powys in Mar aged seven years.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Very rare, but increasing, visitor. RBBP LBRC

What may have been the same single bird was reported from Frampton Marsh on May 1st (PCa *et al*) and subsequently on May 9th, 11th, 20th and 28th, then at nearby Freiston Shore May 29th – 31st (PS) and back at Frampton Marsh on Jun 1st (RSPB).



Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Frampton Marsh May 28th 2018 © Russell Hayes



Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Frampton Marsh May 2018 © Steve Keightley

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. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 730. WeBS threshold for national importance: 75. RBBP

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Reads Island	-	-	150	-	25	358	2100	2200	2700	-	-	50
Alkborough Flats	-	1	240	104	70	320	96	170	570	72	45	1
Frampton Marsh	2	3	200	242	200	318	300	100	40	30	4	3
Gibraltar Point	-	1	39	42	59	97	142	133	92	21	3	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	20	24	32	64	66	40	4	-	-	-
South Ferriby	16	-	-	130	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	72
Killingholme	-	11	50	29	24	-	-	6	-	48	33	5
Donna Nook	-	-	27	50	13	18	-	-	1	-	7	-
Scunthorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	7	22	15	10	14	2	3	9	4	-

The table above shows the top ten sites ranked in order of cumulative annual monthly peak totals. As has become usual in recent years, birds were present all year round with Reads Island contributing the peak count of 2700 birds in Aug; it is Lincolnshire's only internationally important site for this species.

The second table, below, summarises the pattern of breeding pairs at the top ten sites in 2018 and over the previous ten years. The sites are ranked in descending order of total of cumulative pairs over the ten-year period. Avocets are quick to colonise new sites and abandon unsuitable ones. Sadly the news from our most important but now declining breeding site at Read's Island continues to be negative and the site was completely abandoned by breeding birds in 2019. The good news is that a new, better protected site, has been established by RSPB on nearby Whitton Sands and colonisation by breeding Avocets is keenly anticipated. None of the 25 pairs at Read's Island were successful in 2018. The table indicates that Avocets are always prospecting new breeding sites but few establish as good ones and there is a lot of turnover across the smaller sites. In all, in 2018 181 pairs were reported the lowest total since 2009. Very little information on fledging success was received. At Killingholme Pits three pairs out of nine present laid eggs and five chicks were fledged. In the southeast at Middlemarsh Farm, five pairs out of nine present laid eggs and five young were fledged.

Breeding pairs	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of sites	7	9	19	16	12	11	11	13	8	11	12
Cumulative Sites	7	12	23	24	24	24	26	26	26	27	28
Pairs per annum	156	106	387	282	366	218	209	266	248	240	181
Reads Island	Unk	Unk	250	70	220	80	90	100	80	40	25
Frampton Marsh	-	18	44	9	61	59	74	81	94	81	94
Freiston Shore	41	33	39	48	22	19	6	0	14	50	28
Alkborough Flats	84	28	5	95	12	7	0	20	0	1	1
Gibraltar Point	24	11	17	25	-	32	19	20	22	21	33
Barton Pits	-	4	3	9	31	10	3	11	4	1	0
Donna Nook Realignment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	17	14	9
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	4	2	3	-	6	3	12	8	7
Killingholme	2	6	-	3	-	1	-	5	-	15	9
Kirkby on Bain	1	-	1	4	1	1	2	6	5	6	3

NOTE: A zero in the table means no birds were present; a dash (-) means no count was available, zero or otherwise. 'Unk' = unknown.



Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* and Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* Frampton Marsh
June 10th 2018 © Neil Smith

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*



Declining breeding species, becoming scarce, and very common passage migrant and winter visitor. Red List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 20,000. WeBS threshold for national importance: 6200.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	2110	2749	66	10	50	225	159	47	500	1000	2895	8560
Frampton Marsh	3000	1000	3000	200	300	50	150	300	250	500	1200	4000
Reads Island	1300	2600	5	-	2	198	230	58	1	-	400	8000
Baston	250	350	353	13	4	34	315	500	224	550	2800	1500
Gibraltar Point	2100	600	550	150	15	17	41	140	200	160	800	900
Middlemarsh Farm	1400	800	1200	50	40	40	40	500	100	30	200	450
Tetney Marsh	600	1230	16	1	2	-	5	3	4	71	800	1500
Freiston Shore	1800	1	1	2	28	4	6	50	25	400	-	1500
Donna Nook	850	120	4	-	-	-	5	-	-	192	430	1000
Messingham	500	800	51	3	18	50	50	150	207	250	78	400

Lapwings were recorded from 125 sites across the county; two individual sites, Alkborough Flats and Read's Island both held numbers that exceeded the threshold (6200) for national significance as did the collective sites on the Wash (8884) and Humber (13,135). The ten most significant sites (highest collective monthly totals) are listed in the table. Other individual sites holding significant numbers in at least one month were Branstons Booths (2000 Jan), Welland Marsh (1200 Feb), Dunsby (1400 Nov) and Marshchapel (1100 Nov). Peak counts were predominantly over autumn and winter from Aug to Feb before birds dispersed to breeding grounds. Numbers vary hugely from year to year, as Lapwings are susceptible to hard weather movements.

The BBS trend for Lapwing in the East Midlands continues to decline and this is reflected in probable and confirmed breeding being reported from only seven sites. BBS surveys recorded birds in 26% of squares (2017 28%) with an average of 3.7 birds per occupied square (2017 2.9). It is the 43rd most widespread bird in the county and our 34th commonest in terms of numbers.



Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* Alkborough 17th Dec 2018 © Paul Coombes

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*



Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, occasional in summer. Green List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 9200. WeBS threshold for national importance: 4000.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	10000	9267	4500	1000	200	1	67	50	50	500	2000	6000
Reads Island	3000	6000	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	700	8000
Gibraltar Point	2000	2500	1000	500	-	-	39	30	650	600	600	4500
Tetney Marsh	500	250	-	450	-	-	13	150	1500	3000	3000	1000
Pyewipe	1900	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1500	-	-	2650
Middlemarsh Farm	1400	800	1200	50	40	40	40	500	100	30	200	450
Alkborough Flats	300	1300	1	-	-	1	2	1	1	465	2500	138
Wainfleet	376	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4000	270	-
Terrington	-	440	-	-	-	-	-	45	2	-	3900	-
Wrangle	1500	1800	300	-	-	-	5	-	150	14	-	300

The key sites for the species in Lincolnshire are tabulated, some of them counted only irregularly. Frampton Marsh (peak 10000 birds in Jan) was the only individual site in 2018 to host numbers of international importance (>9300), although the annual WeBS peak totals for the Wash (14944) and Humber (20116) sites collectively were also of international importance as usual. Other sites that recorded counts of national importance (>4000) in one or more months were Read's Island, Gibraltar Point and Wainfleet. Terrington, Whitton and Tetney Marsh were just below the 4000

threshold having counts of 3000-3900 in at least one month. Overall, 17 sites had counts that exceeded 1000 birds, the majority being on or near the coast.

Small numbers of birds persisted into May and Jun with the last notable flock of 100 recorded at Frampton Marsh on May 8th. Returning birds were at Wrangle on Jul 14th (23), Tetney Marsh Jul 17th (13), Gibraltar Point Jul 18th (39) and Frampton Marsh Jul 21st (67). Larger numbers arrived during Aug with 950 at Welland Marsh on Aug 13th with more arriving across the county in Sep with 1500 at Pyewipe from Sep 11th. Arrivals continued through Oct and Nov with the winter maxima in Dec.

American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*

Vagrant. LBRC

A moulting adult was found at East Butterwick on Oct 5th, constituting the 22nd county record and the first since 2013 (JTH). Of the 19 birds that were aged only four have been juveniles.



American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica* East Butterwick Oct 5th 2018 © Graham Catley and insert © Roy Harvey

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*



Common passage migrant and common winter visitor. Rare inland. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 2500. WeBS threshold for national importance: 430.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1500	3200	3100	3250	950	20	100	2540	3200	3384	1900	1800
Tetney Marsh	12	9	-	40	1	-	2	-	65	1200	7	120
Freiston Shore	4	2	1	50	9	-	-	1	1000	4	-	-
Marshchapel	615	690	618	50	4	-	-	212	-	420	1080	8
Wrangle	1500	1800	300	-	-	-	5	-	150	14	-	300
Frampton Marsh	50	50	15	17	61	-	4	490	-	1	2	-
Friskney	379	457	481	263	977	63	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	1902	1914	-	885	374	141	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cleethorpes	1	150	-	3	-	-	-	240	700	500	600	100

The table shows monthly counts from the nine sites where at least one count was above the threshold for national importance (430). The WeBS annual peak totals for the Wash (9298) and the Humber (4434) sites collectively exceeded the threshold for international importance (2500). Gibraltar Point maintains its position as the key site for the species in Lincolnshire with the highest

monthly count (3384) and with counts in six months exceeding the threshold for international importance including impressive pre-departure counts in the spring.

There were just a very few records at inland sites with single birds recorded in spring at Frithville (Mar 1st), North Hykeham (Apr 11th), and Baston (May 28th-30th). In the winter, one was recorded at Covenham Reservoir on Nov 23rd.



Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* Frampton Marsh Apr 6th 2018 © Steve Nikols

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

■ (nominate) ■ (tundrae)

Nominate British and southern Scandinavian form fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal. Breeding has spread to inland sites in last 40 years. Northern Scandinavian and Russian form *tundrae* ("Tundra Ringed Plover") fairly common passage migrants. Red List (nominate) and Green List (*tundrae*). WeBS threshold for international importance: 730. WeBS threshold for national importance: 340.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	4	9	37	124	900	60	142	600	101	30	2	12
Freiston Shore	6	-	2	1	150	-	19	500	350	40	-	150
Frampton Marsh	55	17	20	62	100	100	20	200	300	50	-	1
Marshchapel	5	53	31	-	19	1	1	356	-	72	1	-
Cleethorpes	1	20	1	5	-	-	4	26	194	-	-	150
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	7	9	26	12	75	5	3	130	29	17	-	-
Tetney Marsh	70	-	1	1	9	2	3	1	60	63	43	3
Grainthorpe	16	21	9	25	38	2	23	36	24	9	-	25
Friskney	-	-	-	-	171	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	-	-	-	-	102	37	-	-	-	-	-	-

The highest (collective) monthly counts were both in Aug; on the Wash (1090) which exceeded the threshold for an internationally important site and for the Humber (606) which exceeded the threshold for a nationally important site. Wintering numbers in the first quarter were unremarkable and all apart from a solitary individual at Baston and Langtoft GP were on the coast. The latter site had an interesting series of records during the year for an inland location.

Spring passage however was impressive with a peak of 900 at Gibraltar Point on May 11th. Most had departed the county by the end of the month although there were still 100 at Frampton Marsh Jun 1st-3rd. The smaller, darker race *C.h.tundrae* passes through in significant numbers at this time. Twelve inland sites recorded passage birds, highest being seven at Marston STW on Apr 28th and six at Middlemarsh Farm on Aug 8th.

There were small numbers in the county during the summer largely reflecting the small breeding population, with evidence of proven breeding coming from Gibraltar Point, Middlemarsh Farm, Alkborough Flats, Saltfleet and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR.

Return passage in the autumn began in Jul with numbers building up from mid-month and by Jul 31st there were 142 at Gibraltar Point. Numbers peaked mid-Aug when there were 600 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 12th, 500 at Freiston Shore on Aug 15th and 356 at Marshchapel on Aug 17th. Large numbers were still present during Sep, with 101 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 10th, 194 at Cleethorpes on Sep 10th, 300 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 15th and 350 at Freiston Shore on Sep 29th. Numbers fell dramatically as birds moved south to the continent and coastal Africa for the winter although sizeable flocks remained at Cleethorpes (150 Dec 17th) and Freiston Shore (150 Dec 27th).

There was an interesting record of a colour-ringed bird at Tetney Marsh in 2018. It was originally ringed as a chick at Beltringharder Koog Nature Reserve, Schleswig-Holstein on Jun 19th 2017 and last seen there on 5th Jul. The next sighting was in spring 2018 at Tetney Marsh on Mar 21st (CA) and in autumn 2018 it was seen on Aug 27th on Omev Island, Claddaghduff, Co Galway.



Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* Frampton Marsh Jul 22nd 2018 © Steve Nikols

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*



Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant since 1950. Green List. RBBP

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Frampton Marsh	2	10	10	38	13	34	8
Gibraltar Point	-	3	3	4	10	7	2
Baston	1	6	4	2	2	4	2
Alkborough Flats	-	-	1	7	4	9	-
Whisby	1	1	1	4	9	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	1	4	2	1	1	2	1
Kirkby on Bain	-	3	4	1	2	-	-
Manby Wetlands	-	-	-	1	8	1	-
Messingham	-	-	3	-	4	-	-
North Hykeham	-	-	-	2	3	2	-
Minimum Lincs total	6	37	37	35	67	66	16
Number of sites	5	15	13	12	17	11	5

All records for this species occurred between the months of Mar and Sep. It was a poor spring for Little Ringed Plover in Lincolnshire. Peak spring numbers across all sites were down from 87 in 2017 to 37 while autumn passage peak in Jul was exactly the same at 67. The first bird

reported was at Frampton Marsh on Mar 19th, a week later than 2017. Other singles followed at West Deeping on Mar 23rd, Baston on Mar 24th and Middlemarsh on Mar 25th. The rush came from Apr 5th onwards. In total 28 pairs bred at eight sites, down from 33 at 12 sites in 2017. Confirmed breeding of single pairs was reported from five sites (number of fledged young in brackets): Frampton Marsh (0), North Hykeham (1), Seacroft (3), Whisby Pits (3) and Woodhall Spa Airfield NR (3). At Gibraltar Point two pairs laid, one nest failed and the other fledged three young. At Middlemarsh Farm two pairs raised at least two chicks. Frampton Marsh had a further 18 probable breeding pairs and there was also a probable pair at Kirkby on Bain GP. The latest birds were two at Gibraltar Point on Sep 15th and singles at Middlemarsh and Frampton Marsh on Sep 21st.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* ▣

Rare/scarse passage migrant, mainly spring. Red List. LBRC

Easily the worst year in recent memory with just two records in the entire year: one, probably a male, was at Frampton Marsh Apr 27th-30th and it or another also there on May 3rd. Spring passage in the UK was generally very poor with most records coming from the north and west of the country. Traditional stop-off sites in eastern England fared very poorly overall.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* ▣

Fairly common passage migrant, mainly coastal. Rare in winter. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Witham Mouth	-	35	10	-	85	25	20	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	35	20	1	28	19	3	1	-
Frampton Marsh	-	7	4	1	5	33	10	-	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	-	35	1	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	2	-	25	4	4	-
Wingland Marsh	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	10	6	-	2	12	-	-	-
Tetney Marsh	-	6	11	-	5	5	-	-	-
Terrington	-	-	-	-	-	26	-	-	-
Saltfleetby St Clement	-	-	22	-	-	-	-	-	-

There was one over-wintering record of a Whimbrel at Gedney on Jan 8th (AHJH) after which the first record of the year was on Mar 29th at Covenham Reservoir (neither tabulated). Monthly maxima at the main sites are tabulated. Returning birds were evident from mid-Jul onwards as Whimbrel typically arrive on their breeding grounds in late May but leave a relatively short time later in Jul. Though Whimbrel is a commonly seen and heard passage migrant, total monthly autumn numbers are modest. The monthly peak WeBS counts for sites on the Wash and Humber both occurred in Jul (171 and 55, respectively) and with an impressive count of 85 at the Witham Mouth on Jul 19th. Passage continued through Aug with most gone by mid-Sep. Singles remained into Oct with the last one at Grainthorpe on Nov 11th.

Curlew *Numenius arquata* ▣

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce and local breeder. Red List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 8400. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1400.

Site name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	200	500	203	209	20	138	781	560	500	300	217	250
Freiston Shore	230	250	15	325	3	-	250	850	600	20	-	25
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	471	426	301	134	4	19	64	103	128	177	278	456
Terrington	-	55	-	-	4	-	-	769	1126	111	300	-
Alkborough	410	357	330	310	1	2	125	100	100	191	75	136
Reads Island	60	25	5	-	4	480	172	722	46	72	2	50
Grimsby	175	450	387	3	1	33	41	65	11	39	330	102
Wrangle	50	63	100	-	-	8	210	-	540	30	-	160
Goxhill	402	266	90	110	10	-	7	78	10	23	48	104
Wainfleet	106	182	200	289	99	107	-	-	-	40	40	17

The top ten sites in the county with regard to year-round counts are tabulated. No single site exceeded the WeBS threshold for national importance alone but collectively the Wash sites (4369 Aug) and the Humber sites (3018 Jan) did. Notable counts from other sites were 560 at Welland

Marsh and 500 at Frampton Marsh both in Aug, the peak month for Wash Curlew. The largest individual site count was of 1126 at Terrington on Sep 29th. No records were received of breeding activity of any kind.

An interesting ringing record comes from FP32856 ringed as an adult at Holbeach St Matthew in 2005 and since seen in spring and summer in Finland presumed breeding in 2011-13 and 2016-18 and now at least 12y old. The UK is estimated to hold over 30% of the European breeding population of this species which is classified as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List which makes the decision of the French government (Aug 2019) to allow a hunters bag-limit of 6000 Curlew all the more shocking (shooting Curlew in the UK was banned in 1981).

2017 addition: Wintering flock of 111 Hagnaby Lock Fen Feb 13th-Mar 19th.



Curlew *Numenius arquata* Frampton Marsh Apr 6th 2018 © Steve Nikols

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* ■

Very common coastal passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce inland. Amber List (nominate). WeBS threshold for international importance 1200. WeBS threshold for national importance: 380.

Site name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	3800	650	4000	2506	300	-	150	4350	4990	4210	600	400
Wrangle	6300	7000	2500	-	-	3	1290	-	750	100	-	1800
Friskney	5030	2534	1350	606	190	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	992	3450	1400	281	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Leverton	740	391	1124	96	117	77	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cleethorpes	12	114	2	-	-	-	16	200	200	200	1200	205
Welland Marsh	260	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	600
Frampton Marsh	40	25	2	1	20	300	100	100	3	3	-	-
Witham Mouth	200	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	12	-	-

The table summarises all sites where at least 200 were recorded in one month, all of them coastal as expected. Counts exceeding that for international importance came from The Wash at Friskney, Gibraltar Point, Wainfleet and Wrangle. Nationally important counts came from Cleethorpes, Leverton, Frampton Marsh and Witham Mouth. Bar-tailed Godwits wintering here breed in northern Fennoscandia and western Siberia. Around 10-15% of those caught on The Wash in mid to late Aug are thought to be from the Siberian breeding population that winters in West Africa. The UK all-sites peak of 22478 on the Wash in Feb was the highest in 2017/8 and the highest since 2001/02. Three ringed birds were re-trapped on the Wash in 2018, two in Aug and one in Feb. Of these DB61726 was the oldest at 12y 5m. Clearly, Lincolnshire is an extremely important county for this species.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

▣ (*islandica*) ▣ (*nominate*)

L.l. *islandica*: common passage migrant and winter visitor. L.l. *limosa*: rare migrant and has bred, last in 1974. Amber List (*islandica*) and Red List (*nominate*). WeBS threshold for international importance: 610. WeBS threshold for national importance: 430. RBBP

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	50	40	110	230	200	150	1800	4000	5000	4000	200	140
Grimsby	1138	937	1245	-	-	37	75	420	3	180	2025	730
Killingholme	2	52	7	290	63	-	-	2770	-	1900	6	1
Freiston Shore	1200	11	53	540	2	-	2	6	100	10	-	1000
Terrington	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	450	-	1800	
Alkborough Flats	94	156	366	410	250	165	272	170	144	72	41	35
Gibraltar Point	9	3	40	21	46	81	424	714	611	20	8	3
Goxhill	15	20	-	-	1	-	-	1315	95	500	17	5
Welland Marsh	-	450	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	600	-	-
Witham Mouth	20	300	224	-	-	-	-	6	400	40	-	-

Peak monthly counts at the main sites are shown in the table. Highest counts recorded were 5000 at Frampton Marsh high tide roost on Sep 11th (same date as last year's peak), 2770 at Killingholme on Aug 13th, 2025 at Pyewipe on Nov 18th and 1800 at Terrington on Nov 11th. As in 2017, birds were recorded in twelve months of the year at Frampton Marsh, Alkborough Flats and Gibraltar Point.

Notable counts from non-coastal locations included a good autumn passage at Manby Wetlands where numbers built up throughout Jul peaking at 83 on Jul 29th; most had left by mid-Aug. Good numbers passed through Middlemarsh Farm later in the autumn with 47 there on Oct 2nd. Baston and Langtoft GP (13 Aug 2nd) and Kirkby on Bain GP (10 Jul 21st) were the only other inland sites to note double figures in the autumn.

Colour-ringed Black-tailed Godwits, virtually all of the Icelandic race *L.l.islandica*, are a regular sight in the county. Two examples (among many) provided more evidence of their longevity, both colour-ringed on the Wash at Holbeach St Matthew: EN91439 was seen alive on Belfast Lough on Nov 8th, now aged 16y 1m and EL09039 was at a confidential site in Co Down on May 3rd when 7y 8m old, presumably staging before departing for Iceland.

The complete catalogue of colour-ring sightings and recoveries can be found on the BTO website at https://app.bto.org/ring_content/countyrec/results2018/recGBLI2018.htm



Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* Frampton Marsh Apr 19th 2018 © Neil Smith

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*



Fairly common/common passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare inland. Amber List. WeBS for international importance: 1400. WeBS threshold for national importance: 480.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore	63	12	1	1	1	1	123	325	200	72	-	85
Goxhill	198	285	6	31	-	-	-	-	2	6	112	61
Cleethorpes	78	41	87	81	-	-	11	38	56	8	22	52
Witham Mouth	20	20	35	-	1	-	100	55	155	14	-	-
Grimsby	75	115	95	-	17	-	-	39	-	-	-	2
Gibraltar Point	35	47	28	24	18	3	45	46	11	36	24	24
Immingham	-	-	19	-	-	-	-	170	-	32	1	-
Grainthorpe	23	22	19	31	44	-	9	11	26	17	8	9
Frampton Marsh	30	32	24	4	7	10	13	2	2	2	-	-
Wrangle	90	12	5	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-

There were counts from 36 sites during the year and the species was seen in every month. As in 2017, maximum counts occurred at Freiston Shore in Aug, the highest being 325 on Aug 11th. Significant counts in the first quarter included 198 at Goxhill 22nd Jan and 285 there on 18th Feb. From mid-Jul there was an increase in returning birds with the highest counts of the month being 100 Witham Mouth Jul 19th, 123 Freiston Shore Jul 30th, and 45 at Gibraltar Point Jul 31st.

Inland there was one at Frithville on Mar 1st, one at Covenham Reservoir May 13th; three at Deeping Lakes NR May 24th and singles there on May 26th and Jun 2nd; two at Toft Newton Reservoir Jun 2nd.

Over the year 178 (29%) sightings were made in the first quarter, 98 (16%) in the second, 164 (37%) in the third and 166 (20%) in the last quarter.



Knot *Calidris canutus* Anderby Cree Aug 19th 2018 © Russell Hayes

Knot *Calidris canutus*



Greenland and Canadian form islandica abundant passage migrant and very common winter visitor. Very scarce inland. Amber List (islandica). WeBS threshold for international importance: 4500. WeBS threshold for national importance: 3200.

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	8000	7000	24370	50000	5000	15	1300	80000	80000	82000	62500	9950
Cleethorpes	85	4500	14	-	-	-	8	2000	10001	10000	20000	2000
Friskney	11270	10570	750	2437	837	133	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grainthorpe	7730	5700	5950	2230	-	-	-	-	136	830	200	2240
Wainfleet	4700	6270	1560	7760	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marshchapel	8000	1650	5063	-	-	-	3	380	-	640	200	-
Butterwick	60	15000	-	12	-	-	-	10	-	-	320	15
Welland Marsh	-	600	-	2000	-	-	-	-	320	2000	7000	2200
Leverton	2200	3400	179	2816	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wrangle	2000	3500	1200	-	-	-	300	-	750	50	-	300

There were counts from 34 sites during the year with the highest count one of 82000 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 10th; that site also recorded 80000 birds in Aug and Sep, with 62500 in Nov. The species was seen in every month of the year. Single bird, inland records were received in spring from Whisby NP Apr 13th, Baston and Langtoft GP Apr 14th-15th and May 13th, Deeping Lakes NR May 25th. Over the year 200 (27%) sightings were made in the first quarter, 117 (16%) in the second, 275 (37%) in the third and 144 (20%) in the last quarter.

Three birds all originally ringed on the Wash were re-trapped: SR46587 ringed Aug 3rd 2008 at Wainfleet Marsh was re-trapped at Snettisham on Aug 14th now aged 10 yrs; ST32200 ringed Sep 15th 2016 as a 1CY bird was re-trapped wintering on Merseyside on Feb 15th and ST31096 colour-ringed as an adult Jul 26th 2013 was seen alive (colour rings read) at Marske, Redcar Aug 16th.



Knot *Calidris canutus* Freiston Shore Jul 7th 2018 © Steve Keightley

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*



Fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Bred to nineteenth century. Red List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 8. RBBP



Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* Frampton Marsh Apr 6th 2018 © Steve Nikols



Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* Frampton Marsh May 18th 2018 © Neil Smith

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frampton Marsh	32	10	40	75	60	5	70	100	40	24	23	60
Alkborough Flats	10	-	8	10	4	3	42	50	50	74	38	47
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	50	1	-	-
Manby Wetlands	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	17	15	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	4	7	5	-	3	4	11	3	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	5	1	1	2	3	6	6	1	-
Toft next Newton	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby St Clement	4	5	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
Kirkby on Bain	-	-	1	2	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	-

The table shows the top ten sites ranked in order of cumulative annual monthly totals. Frampton Marsh and Alkborough Flats continue to be the most important sites for Ruff in Lincolnshire but the maximum counts in 2018 at both sites were less than half those of 2017. Birds were present throughout the year at both sites. Lekking behaviour was observed on several dates in late May at Frampton Marsh involving up to three males and two females but there was no confirmed evidence of breeding.

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

No reports of this species were received in 2018.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*

Very rare vagrant. Two records prior to this year.

An adult (2CY+) adult was found at Frampton Marsh on Aug 22nd that stayed until Sep 3rd (P Buxton, R Rogers et al). This was the third county record and the first since 1965. Accepted by BBRC, BB 112:575.

The two previous records were both adults and were found at the now defunct Wisbech Sewage Farm. The first was there Jul 17th-Aug 7th, being trapped and ringed on Jul 19th. The second was found at the same site on Aug 12th-26th. Both birds were seen to fly into the Lincolnshire section of the sewage farm (J A W Moyes, pers. comm.).

(See summary article on p213.)

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*



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

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Frampton Marsh	-	4	8	2	50	20	14	1	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	1	32	2	4	1	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	2	-	1	10	5	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Boston	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

Only recorded at six sites, from Apr to Oct. The first bird was at Frampton Marsh Apr 19th-26th and there were four Apr 29th. Maximum monthly counts were in Jul with 50 at Frampton Marsh on the 30th and 32 at Gibraltar Point on the same day. Away from well-watched Frampton Marsh there were two nearby at Freiston Shore on May 30th, singles were at Gibraltar Point on Jun 5th and Alkborough Flats on Jun 10th. The last bird of the year was reported from Tennyson Sands at Gibraltar Point on Oct 22nd.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*



Rare passage migrant. Red List. **LBRC**

This rare passage migrant lived up to its name in 2018 with just a single late autumn record in Oct seen at Baston and Langtoft GP from Oct 15th-20th (H. Lewis-Wright).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*



Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce inland. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 1200. WeBS threshold for national importance: 160.



Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* Frampton Marsh Aug 23rd 2018 © Steve Keightley



Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* Frampton Marsh Aug 23rd 2018 © Paul Coombes



Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* Frampton Marsh Aug 23rd 2018 © Paul Coombes



Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* & Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*
Frampton Marsh Aug 23rd 2018 © Paul Coombes

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	340	800	410	800	4000	286	3513	10121	3500	2355	460	425
Wainfleet	235	840	-	178	-	211	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	70	96	200	20	3	6	2	193	13	47	61	162
Trusthorpe	-	-	139	250	-	-	-	6	170	60		1
Cleethorpes	25	113		45	-	-	-	8	128	30	36	12
Anderby	3	-	150	60	15	-	-	55	3	1	10	1
Friskney	-	82	-	-	191	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grainthorpe	28	34	12	43	17	-	19	17	20	16	23	28
Tetney Marsh	64	12	-	11	5	10	5	-	45	39	35	17
Grimsby	115	87	-	-	-	-	-	41	-	-	-	-

There were counts from 27 sites during the year and the species was seen in every month of the year. The highest count recorded was 10121 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 14th, the highest ever Lincolnshire count more than confirming its enormous importance as a staging post for this species during its southwards migration.

Records of single birds inland were received from Baston and Langtoft GP May 13th-14th and Covenham Reservoir May 21st and 27th. Over the year 208 (30%) sightings were made in the first quarter, 112 (16%) in the second, 175 (37%) in the third and 199 (20%) in the last quarter.



Sanderling *Calidris alba* Skegness Nov 10th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

■ (*arctica*) ■ (*schinzii* and *alpina*)

Southern form '*schinzii*' a common passage migrant; north-east Greenland form '*arctica*' a passage migrant in unknown numbers; Scandinavian/Russian form '*alpina*' a very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal. Bred to early 20th century and in 1958. Green List (*arctica*). Amber List (*schinzii* and *alpina*).

Dunlin arriving back in the UK in Jul are mainly of the race *schinzii*. The races *alpina* (far north of Scandinavia and across to Siberia) and *arctica* (northern Greenland) arrive later.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Ma	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2400	2980	5270	6270	2400	300	7578	16300	5700	8000	3100	2500
Cleethorpes	147	2000	222	415	-	-	67	300	1000	2000	3000	4000
Grimsby	2230	1360	2400	-	-	-	-	-	140	2220	1650	720
Wrangle	2100	3700	2000	-	-	-	1000	-	200	25	-	1000
Marshchapel	3000	750	614	-	13	-	17	420	-	610	2550	3
Freiston Shore	1400	100	1	500	40	15	1300	2000	500	750	-	350
Friskney	1185	981	356	1723	1276	430	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wainfleet	1510	1768	550	-	-	168	-	-	-	1000	-	-
Frampton Marsh	500	500	350	150	150	100	600	1000	280	350	20	12
Leverton	1549	730	369	610	145	402	-	-	-	-	-	-

Only 28 areas recorded this common wading bird during the year, just half that of 2017. Dunlins tend to favour the major estuaries and this was generally seen in Lincolnshire with large numbers in the Wash. Slightly smaller numbers came from the Humber in this period. Numbers then dropped off, with the departure of the birds to their Arctic breeding grounds in late spring, early summer.

There were 45 counts of over 2500 with all but four of these coming from Gibraltar Point where last year the highest count was 7690. During 2018 this count was exceeded on six occasions: between Aug 12th-15th there were counts of 11000, 16300, 13920 and 12000 and on 27th there were 9030. Later in Oct there were 8000 there on 13th.

Manby Wetlands held the largest total of birds away from the coast and Humber with 26 on Jul 26th. There were 14 at Baston on Mar 26th and smaller numbers at Middlemarsh Farm, Toft next Newton, Langtoft, Covenham Reservoir and Kirkby on Bain GP.



Dunlin *Calidris alpina* Toft Newton Aug 4th 2018 © Gary Fenwick

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*



Rare/scarse passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly coastal. Amber List.

This was a poor year for Purple Sandpipers; numbers vary considerably though with between three and 10-12 occurring annually in recent years. A bird at Cleethorpes on Feb 23rd was the first of the year. Presumably the same bird was still present on Mar 18th, there were two there on Mar 31st and a single bird on Apr 7th and 10th. The final spring record was of two on Apr 23rd at Trusthorpe.

In the autumn four sites recorded the species in Sep: the first was at Gibraltar Point on 11th followed by other singles at Huttoft (23rd), Covenham Reservoir (26th) and Trusthorpe (28th-29th). Singles were seen at Huttoft on Oct 2nd and 3rd with another at Trusthorpe on Oct 18th; these records may involve just one bird moving along the coast according to the state of the tide. Nov saw just one record on 9th at Gibraltar Point and the final bird of the year was at Cleethorpes on Dec 11th.



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* Covenham Res Sep 26th 2018 © Owen Beaumont

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*



Passage migrant, very scarce in spring and scarce/fairly common in autumn with rare/very scarce winter records. Green List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1.

This was another poor year for the species especially in early spring and late autumn/early winter. Ten sites in the county recorded the species but only Frampton Marsh returned a double-figure count with ten on May 14th. The next best count was also at Frampton Marsh where there were just four on Sep 29th. All counts of two or more came from opposite ends of the county, at Alkborough Flats, Frampton Marsh or the Witham Mouth.

Autumn passage was barely noticeable this year with one bird on the Millennium Ridge at Gibraltar Point on Jul 9th and three at Frampton Marsh on Jul 15th and 23rd. Frampton Marsh had two present on a further five days.

Inland, a single bird was present at Deeping St James on May 27th and another at Hagnaby Fen on Aug 1st was only the second for the site. At Baston and Langtoft GP a bird was present for four consecutive days from Sep 19th-22nd.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

Very scarce migrant. **LBRC**

A very lean year with just one record of an adult in winter plumage on Sep 27th in the Greenshank Creek wader roost at high tide at Gibraltar Point (KMW). This is the 28th county record.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Rare autumn passage migrant and very rare in spring. **LBRC**

There were no spring records. Autumn wader migration is usually evident from Jul onwards and the first Pectoral Sandpiper was found at Frampton Marsh on Jul 19th-30th (IE). A second bird was at Manby Wetlands on Sep 7th (PEs) and the third of the autumn was found at Deeping Lakes NR on Sep 14th (MWe).

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Rare vagrant. **BBRC**

A 2CY+ bird was at Frampton Marsh on Aug 24th and remained into 2019 (C. Casey, S Keightley et al). Accepted by BBRC (BB 112 p578). This was the 12th Long-billed Dowitcher to be identified in the county, and the third successive year this species has been found in Lincolnshire.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*



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

In autumn and winter the British population is greatly increased by up to a million Scandinavian and northern Europe birds. In 2018 Woodcock were recorded in 41 different locations; in the first half of the year the majority of sightings were between Jan-Apr. Jan was a fairly quiet month with singles at many sites; Gibraltar Point recorded three to five birds and there were six at Sowdale on Feb 17th. This was literally the lull before the storm as from Feb 22nd the UK was affected by a cold wave, dubbed the Beast from the East by the media and officially named Anticyclone Hartmut, which brought unusually low temperatures and heavy snowfall to many places. During this spell, Gibraltar Point had record numbers of Woodcock with 29 on Feb 28th, 62 on Mar 1st, 87 on Mar 2nd and 119 on Mar 12th. Smaller numbers were recorded elsewhere during the severe weather with seven at Tetney Marsh on Mar 3rd, six at Anderby and four at Haverholme on Mar 2nd. Dead birds were found along the coast in small numbers but elsewhere in the UK several 1000s were found on beaches in Kent and Suffolk. The effects on the breeding populations in the UK, and in those countries whose birds were heading to the UK, must have been severe. The last countrywide survey of breeding Woodcock in the UK in 2013 estimated a 23% reduction in the population between 2003 and 2013.

Thereafter the highest spring count was of 11 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 11th with the last spring record being three on Apr 15th. A single bird was seen at Frampton Marsh on Apr 29th. Very few records were received during the breeding season with three in Laughton Forest on May 5th and two on Jul 7th. One was seen in Willingham Forest on May 23rd and two there on Jun 6th. There was no proof of breeding from any location.

Events in the autumn and winter of 2018 were less dramatic. The first of the autumn was on a typical date of Oct 3rd at Gibraltar Point. There was a marked arrival there on Oct 28th when 26 were recorded and 13 on Oct 29th. There were one to two birds at 26 other sites. Small influxes occurred on Nov 19th when Gibraltar Point recorded 12 and again on Dec 22nd when there were nine there. The last record of the year, fittingly perhaps, was at Gibraltar Point on Dec 31st.

Jack Snipe *Lympocryptes minimus*



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

This secretive species was observed in 21 locations, probably an unrepresentative total. Around 28 records came from Gibraltar Point, nine from Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR, eight from Frampton Marsh and five from Manby Wetlands and Huttoft Bank Pit. The highest count of the year was three observed on Gainsborough Golf Course on Mar 18th and at Frampton Marsh on Oct 19th.

Two birds were recorded at Boultham Mere (once), Manby Wetlands (three times), Dunholme (once), Gibraltar Point (three times), Haverholme (once), Humberston (once), Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (twice), Tetney Marsh (once) and Whisby NP (once).

16 locations held birds in the first five months of the year, the last of this period was noted at Manby Wetlands on May 9th. The first returning bird was reported on Aug 29th at Dunholme



Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* and Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Frampton Marsh Sep 21st 2018 © Chris Grimshaw



Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* Frampton Marsh Sep 4th 2018 © Owen Beaumont

and Sep saw just one bird at Gibraltar Point. There were around 32 sightings in various locations during Oct, dropping to a dozen during Nov and two in Dec.



Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* Manby Wetlands Mar 4th 2018 © John Clarkson

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*



Very scarce breeder, fairly common/common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List (nominate).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	19	7	20	58	3	1	29	21	30	51	31	40
Frampton Marsh	3	2	4	4	-	1	30	40	40	7	3	4
Alkborough Flats	3	9	8	26	3	-	3	4	10	17	47	4
Manby Wetlands	6	19	20	8	7	1	14	23	35	-	-	1
Killingholme	11	52	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	7
Middlemarsh Farm	11	4	18	7	-	1	11	14	7	5	1	8
Tetney Marsh	70		1	3	-	-	-	-	2	2	5	4
Cleethorpes	8	17	23		-	-	-	2	1	3	18	2
Donna Nook	3	15	-	6	-	-	-	2	3	6	21	11
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	10	4	6	1	-	-	5	3	6	5	12	11

The BTO's Breeding Atlas reports a decline in the species and this seems to be reflected in Lincolnshire returns. Records came from only 38 locations, which was half the number of sites that returned counts the previous year. The highest count was made at Tetney Marsh where there were 70 on Jan 23rd and the next best of 58 came from Gibraltar Point on Apr 11th. The maximum count for May was only three with little evidence of breeding observed other than a bird recorded in suitable habitat. After just five single birds at five locations in Jun, sightings increased rapidly with returns on all but one day in Jul. Visible migration was observed at Anderby, Gibraltar Point and Huttoft with several small flocks coming in off the sea.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*



Very scarce passage migrant, with generally more in autumn than in spring. Red List. **LBRC**

The first of the year was an adult female at West Ashby on May 20th (MEH) that flew off NW up the Bain valley. Frampton Marsh then stole the show with birds on May 23rd (MPn), Jun 19th (RSPB) and an adult female on 22nd (RSPB); a fourth bird was found on Jul 16th (SK et al) followed by one on Aug 23rd (JRC et al) and another on Oct 13th (PAH). In the midst of this flurry of Frampton Marsh records one was at Gibraltar Point on Aug 29th (KMW).



Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* Frampton Marsh Aug 23rd 2018 © Paul Coombes

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

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

Following the single record of this species in 2017, 2018 hardly fared much better with just two records in the year both in Oct: one at Winterton Carrs on Oct 6th (DRob) and a second at Gibraltar Point on Oct 27th (NAL, KMW).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*



Fairly common passage migrant, rare in winter. Bred in 1979. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	2	3	4	8	21	4	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	7	6	-	11	5	4	2	2	-
Tetney Marsh	-	2	5	-	5	10	7	-	-	-
Manby Wetlands	-	1	2	-	3	2	20	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	3	2	1	8	6	3	-	-	1
Toft next Newton	-	7	3	-	5	6	2	-	-	-
Cleethorpes	-	-	20	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	1	-	3	4	12	1	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	2	1	-	5	4	3	-	-	-

There were no apparent wintering reports from early in the year, although the first record on Mar 5th at Nocton Fen was quite early for a migrant. The next followed at Frampton Marsh on Mar 21st, with a broader arrival in mid-Apr. Spring passage had cleared through by the end of May,

although birds soon started to return from Jun 18th onwards. Autumn migrants had generally departed by end of Sep, with up to two continuing to be reported at Covenham Reservoir until Nov 11th and singles at Deeping Lakes NR on Nov 3rd and at Goxhill on Nov 18th. The last of the year was at Frampton Marsh on Dec 28th. The table shows peak monthly counts at the main sites, although there were reports from 50 sites in total.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* □

Fairly common autumn passage migrant, scarce in spring and also as a regular winter visitor. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 9.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Manby Wetlands	-	1	2	-	-	7	23	15	2	2	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	1	-	1	2	3	19	12	3	1	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	1	-	1	9	7	2	1	-	1
Marston	2		1	1	-	-	4	3	1	2	1	-
Kirkby on Bain	-	-		1	-	-	4	5	4	-	1	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	1	1	-	1	2	5	2	1	1	-
Messingham	-	-			-	1	1	8	3	-	-	-
Baston	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	4	1	-	1

Wintering birds were reported from six sites during Jan, including one on Jan 1st at Marston, two there on Jan 24th and two more at Immingham on Jan 5th. Spring passage was weak, as usual, with mainly singles at most sites. Larger numbers started to build from mid-Jun, but only Manby Wetlands and Frampton Marsh had double-figure counts, signifying national importance. Singles and duos were observed at a few sites until mid-Nov, with the only Dec records at Middlemarsh Farm on Dec 7th and then an undoubted wintering bird at Baston on Dec 23rd and 26th.



Redshank *Tringa totanus* Alkborough 17th Dec 2018 © Paul Coombes

Redshank *Tringa totanus* □

Nominate British and continental form a common passage migrant and winter visitor, and fairly common breeding species of coastal marshes. Scarce/very scarce inland. Icelandic form (*robusta*) a common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List (both forms). WeBS threshold for international importance 2400. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1200.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Freiston Shore	300	1	9	17	32	2	1200	1200	1000	950	-	160
Gibraltar Point	200	200	155	155	60	50	1000	502	300	150	157	345
Welland Marsh	30	6	-	355	-	-	290	1680	45	600	150	49
Grimsby	195	427	104	47	2	-	130	160	6	42	320	420
Wrangle	90	70	1005	-	-	22	40	-	100	100	-	25
Donna Nook	80	291	189	63	-	10	78	162	165	33	119	206
Read's Island	-	50	30	-	-	5	100	295	568	128	10	50
Killingholme	166	154	33	210	-	-	-	215	-	86	108	240
Grainthorpe	94	131	210	93	131	17	66	83	66	57	148	111
Terrington	-	740	-	-	16	-	-	173	37	80	60	-

The Lincolnshire part of The Wash remains of international importance for this species and individual sites such as Freiston Shore and Welland Marsh reach the threshold for national importance, particularly in late summer. The coastal areas tabled had the largest gatherings but there were reports from over 80 sites including many inland areas, although numbers there were generally small. Similar to last year, possible breeding activity was reported at only six sites, with fledged young observed at Frampton Marsh and Middlemarsh Farm.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatalis*

Rare vagrant. BBRC

Additional date for 2017: The 1CY individual found at Freiston Shore on 25th Jul (ABe and RDn) and accepted by BBRC (BB 111 p 576) was also present at the same location on Jul 28th (DRo). This constituted the fifth record for Lincolnshire.

No records for this species were received in 2018.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*



Scarce passage migrant, in spring and autumn. Amber List.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Frampton Marsh	-	1	4	1	3	2	1	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Baston Fen	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-
Saltfleetby St. Clement	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manby Wetlands	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1

Another relatively poor showing for this species with the highest counts of the year being of four birds at both Frampton Marsh (May) and Covenham Reservoir (Aug). The first bird of the spring was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 29th. Birds were around throughout May and then again from early Jul to late Aug, with the last bird at Alkborough Flats on Sep 4th and Frampton Marsh on Sep 18th. Late birds were at Baston Fen from Oct 11th-17th, a single at North Cotes on Oct 9th and a lingering bird at Tetney Marsh from Oct 3rd-Nov 2nd.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*



Passage migrant, very scarce in spring but fairly common in autumn. Very scarce but regular in winter. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alkborough Flats	8	8	11	15	11	6	3	31	34	5	13	6
Frampton Marsh	5	4	3	3	3	4	16	26	29	25	4	3
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	1	2	3	2	4	11	6	1	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	2	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	5	3	-	-

The table shows all sites recording more than ten birds or sightings in more than three months of the year. Alkborough Flats and Frampton Marsh remain the dominant sites with small numbers continuing to winter at both. Spring passage peaked Mar-May with a notable count of 15 at Alkborough Flats on Apr 22nd; return passage Jul-Oct peaked in Sep with notable counts of 34 at Alkborough Flats (1st), 29 at Frampton Marsh (8th) and 25 at the Witham Mouth (4th). Of the

18 sites with records, all were coastal or estuarine with the exception of records from three inland sites, all in Aug, with singles at Baston (4th), Manby Wetlands (6th) and Covenham Reservoir (31st).



Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* Alkborough 17th Dec 2018 © Paul Coombes

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*



Passage migrant, scarce in spring, fairly common in autumn. Very scarce in winter. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: six.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	-	-	13	3	3	12	29	15	3	1	-
Gedney	-	-	-	-	-	-	73	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	3	-	-	3	2	3	9	11	12	1	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	4	4		12	6	12	2	-	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-		1		4	5	11	9	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	3	4	1	3	6	3	2	1	-

The table includes all sites recording over five birds. Three at Frampton Marsh on Jan 29th were the only birds recorded in the first winter period. A single inland at Marton on Mar 18th preceded the beginning of the main spring passage through Apr-May when birds peaked at 13 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 18th and up to four birds were recorded at Freiston Shore (Apr 24th and May 3rd), Grainthorpe (May 1st) and Alkborough Flats (May 29th). Records diminished during Jun with records from only eight sites. Return passage continued Jul-Oct; the most notable counts, as in recent years, came from Boatmere Scrape (Gedney) with counts in Jul of 13 (7th), 46 (11th) and 73 (13th) but no records from the rest of the year. Counts exceeding ten birds came from several other coastal and estuarine sites. Inland, single birds were recorded from four sites in the spring, two in Jun and ten in the autumn. Singles in Nov at Alkborough Flats (2nd), Gibraltar Point (4th) and Frampton Marsh (8th) were the final records for the year.



Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* Donna Nook Sep 9th 2018 © Mark Johnson

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*



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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	18	60	107	3	59	5	3	2	16	884	165	1
Huttoft	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	15	270	-	-
Witham Mouth	1	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	130	-	-
Mablethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	127	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	82	-	-
East Halton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	-	-

The table includes all counts over ten. In the first half of the year, most records, and all significant counts came from Gibraltar Point with 18 Jan 6th, 60 Feb 4th, 107 Mar 17th and 59 May 17th. The only inland records for the year were of single birds, all in late winter or spring, at Wroot (Feb 2nd), Baston (Mar 25th and Apr 6-8th), Whisby (Apr 10th) and Kirby GP (Apr 13-14th). With few records in the summer and low numbers in Sep, autumn passage picked up during Oct with the peak numbers all coming from the three-day period of Oct 26-28th inclusive. A smaller peak of birds occurred over Nov 17-20th with 165 on 17th at Gibraltar Point; single birds there on 2nd and Dec 29th were the final records of the year.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

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

An adult in summer plumage performed well for lucky sea-watchers at Gibraltar Point on Aug 20th (BWd, KMW et al) and it or another was seen on Aug 22nd at the south end of Skegness (RDn). Even better was the find of two largely summer plumaged adults on the beach between Horseshoe Point and Tetney Marsh on Aug 29th (ICS). In Sep a juvenile was seen from Huttoft Car Terrace on Sep 5th (CMo, RL) and an adult was seen at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd (KMW). The last of the year was a juvenile bird at Tetney Marsh on Oct 30th (RL).

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*



Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. WeBS threshold for international importance: 20,000/ WeBS threshold for national importance: 22,000.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Coastal</i>												
Gibraltar Point	3300	4000	5100	600	210	199	2500	6500	10000	8000	12000	6300
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1000	50	1500	21	-	8	426	3250	3320	422	458	80
Tetney Marsh	800	300	-	300	10	250	600	-	1000	2000	1000	800
Freiston Shore	2000	1	8	300	44	130	350	800	15	22	-	550
Terrington	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3000	500	-	250	-
<i>Inland</i>												
North Hykeham	6000	7000	8800		30	8	-	4	5	2500	300	12795
Covenham Reservoir	40	80	30	90	21	-	270	800	10000	350	240	50
Toft next Newton	5200	400	600	12	2	1	30	65	160	4000	1000	350
Cadney	-	5	1	8	-	-	2	13	200	2000	400	4000

The table shows all sites recording 2000 birds or more. Gibraltar Point dominated counts at coastal sites with 12000 roosting on Nov 21st and 5100 on Mar 4th. Inland North Hykeham remains the most significant roost with a spring peak of 8800 on Mar 3rd and a winter maximum of 12795 on Dec 31st; indeed this was the peak count for the year. Other significant inland counts were at Covenham Reservoir (10000 on Sep 12th) and Toft next Newton (5200 on Jan 18th).

Breeding was confirmed or reported at Barton Pits, Boultham Mere, Deeping Lakes NR, Frampton Marsh, Freiston Shore, Gibraltar Point, Kirkby on Bain, Middlemarsh Farm and Whisby. Whisby held a total of 751 nests (comprising 499 on Thorpe Lake, seven on Coot Lake, 214 on Grebe Lake, and 31 on Teal Lake), a decline from the three preceding years when over 1000 nests were recorded. Gibraltar Point held 100 nests (90 on Tennyson Sands, five on Jackson's Marsh, three on the Fenland Lagoon and two on Freshwater mere); Deeping Lakes NR had 41 nests on Jun 10th with 22 young on 16th and 100 chicks were reported at Kirkby on Bain on Jun 23rd. No data on breeding were provided from other sites.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*



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

The first of the year was at Boultham Mere on Mar 2nd followed by singles on the 3rd at Bagmoor, Kirkby on Bain and Gibraltar Point where there were six on Mar 4th. There was almost a fortnight gap before two were seen at Gibraltar Point on Mar 17th and four on the 18th. The month's high was at Trusthorpe where 14 flew past on the 20th while one to two were noted at Baston, Bagmoor, Tetney Marsh and Grimsby up to the 23rd. Apr began slowly with one to three widespread until the 15th when there were nine at Baston, 32 at Covenham Reservoir, 12 at Middlemarsh Farm, 40 at Barton Pits, 33 at Frampton Marsh and 21 at Gibraltar Point. The final flurry of this influx was at Freiston Shore where there were 43 on Mar 18th. During May small numbers were widespread and birds were present at Frampton Marsh all through the month with up to seven in the final



Little Gull *Larus minutus* Barton Pits Apr 2018 © Graham Catley



week. Jun saw eight there on 1st with up to three throughout the month, five at Freiston on 4th, two at Alkborough Flats on 15th, two at Gibraltar Point on 16th and two at Manby Wetlands on 28th. One was at Alkborough Flats on Jul 1st and all other birds that month were at Frampton Marsh where there were one to three up to the 17th. There was a trickle through Aug with one to three at southern coastal sites on eight dates, a trend continuing into the beginning of Sep. There were ten at Gibraltar Point on Sep 24th followed by five there on Oct 6th, two at Huttoft on the same date, two again at Huttoft on Oct 28th when there were also seven at Gibraltar Point and three at Huttoft. There was a single bird at Gibraltar Point Nov 17th-18th and a surprisingly good sea-watch at Huttoft saw 48 past there on Nov 20th. The final birds of the year were eight at Gibraltar Point on Nov 26th.

Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*



Scarce, but increasing visitor throughout the year, most frequent in late summer/early autumn. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 40. **RBBP**

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	-	2	4	2	3	7	5	2	2	2	1
Whisby	-	-	2	4	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	4	3	2	2	-	1	-	-	-
North Hykeham	2	1	1	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	1
Middlemarsh Farm	-	-	2	3	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
Baston	-	-	2	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	1	-	-
Kirkby on Bain	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Boultham Mere	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

The table shows the top nine sites holding maximum accumulated peak counts of more than four birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Apex Pits at North Hykeham held up to two 1st winter birds in the gull roost through Jan to Feb and Gibraltar Point had an adult on Jan 6th. There was also a 1st winter at Thurlby Pit Bassingham on Jan 6th. Med Gull has still not been confirmed to breed in Lincolnshire and despite there being up to eight possible pairs of adult birds around the county in the spring there was no first breeding in 2018. The first adult summer plumage bird turned up in the Black-headed Gull colony at Whisby Pits, Thorpe Pit on Mar 22nd, it was joined by another on Mar 25th and there were up to four during the main breeding period to May 31st. There was however no evidence reported of nest building. There were four summer plumaged birds at Gibraltar Point from Apr 5th-18th and two at Frampton Marsh from Apr 4th with four on Apr 25th and adults present through to Jul 2nd but no reported evidence of breeding at either site. A pair was present at Middlemarsh Farm from Mar 29th-Apr 19th and at Baston on May 7th; a pair was seen displaying on an island at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 25th but there was no other evidence of breeding at any of these sites. The first juvenile of the year was at Gibraltar Point on Jul 13th, origin unknown. The peak count of the year of seven at Gibraltar Point on Jul 15th comprised 3 adults, two 2nd summers and two juveniles. Wintering birds were present right up to Dec 31st.

Common Gull *Larus canus*



Very common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 7000.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Covenham Reservoir	20	40	45	53	12	-	80	50	-	75	4000	250
Gibraltar Point	500	2320	3000	60	25	15	100	400	400	122	4000	940
North Hykeham	300	2300	2200	8	-	5	17	7	-	131	2145	3655
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	1400	1000	3000	206	42	116	43	116	51	400	67	290
Toft next Newton	2200	2200	450	25	-	1	15	-	3	6	21	30
Saltfleet	70	224	100	400	-	-	2	-	20	100	1	10
Huttoft	21	25	66	40	-	8	8	75	80	101	250	20
Grainthorpe	-	24	85	39	-	-	47	19	61	70	200	135
Freiston Shore	300	2	45	6	5	20	15	42	-	3	-	-

Peak monthly counts are summarised in the table with Gibraltar Point, North Hykeham, Crook Bank-Churchill Lane roost and Toft Newton Reservoir all having 1000 or more in the first quarter. In addition there were 180 at Manby Wetlands on Jan 26th, and 100 at both Witham Mouth on Feb 3rd and Frampton Marsh on Feb 7th. Numbers were typically low during the second quarter with small numbers of immatures staying to summer on the coast. The first signs that return

passage was underway came when 100 roosted at Gibraltar Point on Jul 20th with 80 at Covenham Reservoir on Jul 23rd. Numbers slowly built up during Aug-Oct but the next significant counts were not until well into the fourth quarter when wintering totals at Covenham Reservoir, Gibraltar Point, North Hykeham were the most significant. The 2017/18 BTO WeBS report noted that the WeBS trend for Common Gull has been declining since 1999/2000, and has reached a record low.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* □

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor with some immatures remaining in summer. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 760.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	255	116	200	120	160	330	300	240	350	200	350	260
Middlemarsh Farm	3	3	23	8	9	20	8	30	130	500	50	50
Kirkby on Bain	16	-	25	150	7	1	1	150	-	-	150	250
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	70	40	120	57	11	20	21	27	62	68	29	31
Donna Nook	80	15	10	9	-	3	19	11	41	41	46	63
Tetney Marsh	33	30	-	18	11	3	9	-	24	45	65	53
Saltfleet	12	30	20	40	-	8	-	6	82	18	2	22
Butterwick	54	-	-	41	21	4	17	21	19	-	19	38
Freiston Shore	24	-	1	1	5	5	-	6	2	2	-	170
Deeping St James	2	1	2	-	-	-	200	-	-	-	-	1

An average, if concerning, year for this apparently declining passage migrant and winter visitor. The top ten sites are tabulated and there were only five sites having three-figure counts apart from Gibraltar Point and one of those was nearby Middlemarsh Farm; Kirkby on Bain GP and Deeping Lakes NR were the only inland sites in this category. This is in line with the findings of the JNCC Seabird Report (2016) which has reported a continuous decline in the UK population since 1969-70 with the latest estimate being 11% between 1998/02 and 2015.

There were two observations of colour-ringed British Great Black-backed Gulls in the county, both ringed in 2012 in Nottinghamshire, one as a 1CY, the second as an adult. HW93611 was seen in Denmark in Apr 2013, then twice at Middlemarsh Farm in 2014 and twice in Dec 2018 at Kirkby on Bain GP. HW93617, ringed in 2012, wasn't seen again until 2018 when it was seen on several occasions: Nov 9th at Kirkby on Bain GP, Dec 1st at Middlemarsh Farm and Dec 14th back at Kirkby on Bain GP. Both birds were identified in the field from their colour rings.



Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* Skegness Apr 8th 2018 © Phil Hyde

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*



Rare/scarse passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer. Amber List. LBRC

A long staying second year bird was at Grimsby Docks from Jan 2nd-Feb 24th; another was at Saltfleetby- Theddlethorpe NNR from Jan 5th-17th. Also in the early part of the year singles were at Boultham Mere Jan 18th, Gibraltar Point Feb 4th-6th, Anderby Creek Mar 30th and Huttoft on Apr 2nd. A 2CY was coming to bread at the Festival Pavilion car park, Skegness Apr 8th-9th, and then at Gibraltar Point Apr 9th-16th and probably the same bird Gibraltar Point Apr 29th-May 1st and Jun 13th-27th. The only other bird in the first half of the year was at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Apr 14th and 27th. Autumn birds were scarce with just two at Huttoft Car Terrace, one at Gibraltar Point and two at East Halton Pits all on Oct 28th.

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. Amber List (nominate) LBRC

One was at Gibraltar Point on Jan 6th then a third calendar year bird was seen occasionally at Manby Wetlands from Jan 13th-25th. A juvenile was seen at Chapman's Pond, Cleethorpes on Jan 21st and one was at Kirkby on Bain GP on Jan 23rd-24th. One was at Grimsby Docks on Feb 9th-10th and again on the 22nd and one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Feb 12th was noted there again on Mar 7th, 10th and 14th. A first winter bird was at Gibraltar Point on Mar 17th and again on the 22nd. What was probably the same bird was at Kirkby on Bain on Mar 27th-30th, Apr 7th, 16th and 28th and May 2nd. One was at Covenham Reservoir on Apr 4th and one at Saltfleet on Apr 14th might have been the bird seen earlier at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR. At the end of the year one was at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 22nd, a juvenile was at Gibraltar Point on Oct 28th, one was at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Nov 23rd and, finally, one moved between Gibraltar Point and Middlemarsh Farm from Dec 27th until the end of the year.



Iceland Gulls *Larus glaucooides* Kirkby on Bain Mar 30th 2018, adult left and 2CY right © Russell Hayes

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

■ (*argenteus*) ■ (*argentatus*)

British form '*argenteus*' a common passage migrant and winter visitor; very scarce breeding species. Nominate northern European form '*argentatus*' a fairly common winter visitor. Red List (*argenteus*) and Green List (*argentatus*). WeBS threshold for national importance: 7300.

It is worth mentioning the 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, adults being safely identifiable, as primary pattern differs to that of the British breeding subspecies *argenteus*.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	6000	1766	10500	2700	1200	1440	1200	600	1070	3500	2100	3300
Kirkby on Bain	130	600	600	1800	30	1	30	1400	-	-	1200	4000
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	50	80	2500	696	60	355	27	38	270	200	400	442
Middlemarsh Farm	150	100	220	400	150	500	300	150	300	350	150	300
Tetney Marsh	80	150	-	170	98	84	45	-	300	300	400	230

Donna Nook	250	96	270	67	-	2	27	20	75	670	110	48
Wrangle	40	30	6	-	-	650	600	-	100	15	-	40
Freiston Shore	5	13	1	20	50	250	75	120	4	15	-	800
Saltfleet	5	100	288	80	-	112	30	120	30	30	14	60
Cleethorpes	6	40	62	200	10	64	65	56	60	150	40	48

All four-figure counts this year were made at Gibraltar Point, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR and Kirkby on Bain landfill site. The trend is that this is becoming a species confined more to coastal habitats due to inland feeding opportunities disappearing with the eventual cessation of landfill activities within the county. No breeding records were received this year.

Colour-ringed birds continue to be reported in numbers, with three ringed in Aberdeenshire in breeding colonies in Jul 2013 and 2014 being seen at Fox Covert in Nov and Dec 462 km to the south. Two others ringed as 1CY and 2CY birds at Pitsea landfill site were both seen at Kirkby on Bain landfill site in Dec 2018. One of these, GN87749 was seen in northern France in Feb 2014.



Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* (juvenile) Middlemarsh Aug 6th 2018 © Nige Lound

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* ■

Very scarce all-year visitor, first county record in 1995. Amber List. WeBS threshold for national importance: 1. **LBRC**

Caspian Gulls are still not an easy gull to identify and submissions should ideally come with photographs as most accepted records do. In 2018 records were received from seven sites: Fillingham, Gibraltar Point, Kirkby on Bain GP, Marton, Middlemarsh Farm, Tetney Marsh and Torksey. Most records occurred between Jan-Apr and then Aug-Dec; a single Jun record at Gibraltar Point was an exception.

An adult at Gibraltar Point on Jan 4th (NAL) was the first of the year and there were no further records until Mar when single 2CY and 3CY birds were seen there on various dates including a colour-ringed Polish bird Red 834P (NAL, KMW et al). There was a 2CY, Mar 5th, a 3CY (Red 834P) and a 2CY, Mar 6th and a 3CY, (a new bird) on Mar 7th-8th. Then 3CY Red 834P was at Middlemarsh Farm Mar 17th-18th, Gibraltar Point Mar 19th, and back at Middlemarsh Farm on

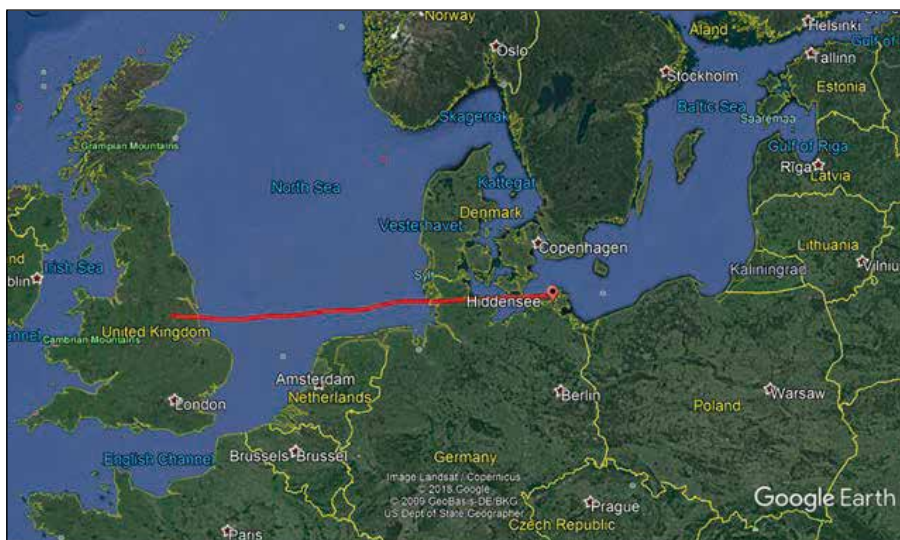
Mar 20th and 30th. There were two records away from the Skegness area at this time – one was at Tetney Marsh on Mar 19th (CA) and a 2CY bird was photographed at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on 21st Mar (NAL). Finally in the spring a 2CY bird was at Middlemarsh Farm on Mar 27th, Apr 8th-9th, 12th and 15th (NAL).

A 2CY bird at Gibraltar Point on Jun 15th (BW) was the sole summer record before several early autumn birds returned. A juvenile bird was at Middlemarsh Farm (NAL) on Aug 6th followed by an adult at Gibraltar Point on Aug 10th (KMW). A 4CY was at Trent Port Wetland, Marton on Aug 2nd and a German-ringed 1CY bird, (Yellow X34E), turned up there on Aug 15th and was seen on several dates in Sep-Oct and lastly on Nov 4th (DN); this bird commuted between Marton and Langford Lowfields, Nottinghamshire. There was also an adult on Aug 29th and two un-ringed 1CY birds on Aug 31st at Marton (DN); one of these was probably the same bird seen at Torksey on Nov 1st (DN).

A 1CY bird was at Gibraltar Point and Middlemarsh Farm on Sep 7th (BW, NAL) and presumably the same bird again at Middlemarsh Farm on Sep 20th (NAL). A large 1CY bird assumed to be a male was seen offshore at Gibraltar Point on several dates between Sep 15th-Oct 29th and again on Nov 21st (KMW). A 2CY bird was at Fillingham on Oct 20th (per DN). An adult and a 1CY were at Middlemarsh Farm on several dates in Nov-Dec, and another 2CY bird on Dec 31st (NAL). Finally, the landfill site at Kirkby on Bain saw a 3CY bird on Nov 9th and again on Dec 4th, with a different 3CY bird seen on numerous occasions from Nov 16th-Dec 28th (NAL). A 1CY bird was present on Nov 23rd with two present on Nov 26th (NAL).



Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* (2CY) Kirkby on Bain Tip Dec 4th 2018 © Nige Lound



The pure Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* colony in Germany where X34E was ringed as a juvenile



Map showing the movements of Polish-ringed bird Red 834P

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**. Amber List (nominate). WeBS threshold for national importance: 8. **LBRC**

There were a handful of records in the first quarter beginning with one at Deeping Lakes NR on Jan 18th, a 3CY bird at Grimsby Docks on Feb 12th then one at Gibraltar Point on Mar 6th followed by three sightings of what was presumably the same bird at Deeping Lakes NR on

Mar 7th, 16th and 23rd. One at North Hykeham on Apr 12th was probably the bird that was noted at Boultham Mere on the 15th. A 2CY bird was at Gibraltar Point on Apr 16th, on which date there was another at Deeping Lakes NR that was seen on occasions up to Jun 16th. A 3CY bird was again at Gibraltar Point on Jun 15th and was seen at the reserve until the 23rd when there were two. Passage birds are often noted from Jul-Aug in significant numbers but this year there was a trickle with one at Gibraltar Point on Jul 9th, one at Frampton Marsh on the 13th, a juvenile at Gibraltar Point on 16th-17th, 22nd and 31st, with a 2CY bird on the 20th. One was at North Hykeham on Jul 25th and one at Middlemarsh Farm on the 29th. In Aug one was at Baston Fen on the 3rd and one frequented Middlemarsh Farm 4th-12th, probably moving from there to Gibraltar Point to join the juvenile that was there from the 2nd and where there were one to two on several dates up to the 29th on which date there was also one at Frampton Marsh. This was probably the bird that was seen there on Sep 3rd; at Gibraltar Point there were two on Sep 4th and one to two were recorded there on several dates until the end of the month. One was at Marston on Sep 16th and another was seen at Boultham Mere on Sep 30th. Records in the final quarter included a 2CY bird at Gibraltar Point on Oct 2nd and a 3CY bird there on the 3rd; singles were at Basingham Oct 7th, Langtoft Oct 11th, Baston and Langtoft GP and Frampton Marsh on Oct 14th, Covenham Reservoir Oct 25th, a 3CY at Middlemarsh Farm Nov 8th, one at Covenham Reservoir Nov 9th, and a 2CY bird at Gibraltar Point on Nov 21st. Dec birds were singles at Covenham Reservoir on the 3rd, Middlemarsh Farm on the 6th and 19th and, finally, one at Kirkby on Bain GP on the 20th.



Yellow-legged Gull on nest at Deeping Lakes NR May 13th 2018
paired with a Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* © Phil Hyde

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

□ (*graeellsii*) ■ (*intermedius*)

Present all year: western European form '*graeellsii*' common on spring and autumn passage, scarce but increasing in winter and as breeding species. Danish and southern Scandinavian form '*intermedius*' is a fairly common passage migrant. Birds showing characters of the northern Scandinavian form '*fuscus*' (Baltic Gull) have been noted but none accepted as yet. Amber List (*graeellsii*) and Green List (*intermedius*). WeBS threshold for national importance: 1200. Many immatu summer.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Deeping Lakes NR	1	8	72	94	82	95	114	159	20	-	-	-
Toft next Newton	1	1	1	3	9	1	3	38	500	30	5	
Butterwick	60	-	-	53	51	11	20	19	14	-	30	79
Kirkby on Bain	15	-	90	90	40	1	6	50	1	-	2	2
Gibraltar Point	2	14	37	60	14	13	14	20	23	50	4	1
Witham Mouth	-	16	-	-	200	-	12	10	6	1	-	-
Gedney Marsh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	-	-	-
Welland Marsh	-	-	-	100	-	-	60	8		1	-	4
Boultham Mere	3	6	13	20	8	20	7	4	18	26	5	3
Covenham Reservoir	2	3	4	10	12	2	21	27	14	8	15	3

The sites with the highest cumulative peak counts during the year are tabulated. Records were widespread in Jan with small numbers present in the county, most at Butterwick on the Wash. Towards the end of Feb it was apparent that this early migrant was on the move and increasing in numbers from mid-Mar into Apr. There were 100 at Welland Marsh on Apr 1st, 94 at Deeping Lakes NR on Apr 23th and 90 at Kirkby on Bain GP Mar 18th. Return passage began from mid-Jul into Aug with Deeping Lakes NR featuring prominently. There was a notable autumn high of 500 at Toft Newton Reservoir on Sep 19th.

Numbers typically dwindled in Nov-Dec with most in the Wash and few at the inland sites popular with autumn migrants. Breeding records were received from Deeping Lakes NR where there were 36 occupied nests on May 29th and many had half-grown chicks on Jun 10th. Fledged young were also recorded at Boultham Mere. There were no observations of ringed gulls in 2018.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* □

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

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	37	56	201	1452	2100	5360	56	2	1
Witham Mouth	-	-	2	-	150	22	30	26	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	150	58	13	-	-
Anderby	-	-	-	-	2	200	18	-	-	-
Skegness	-	-	-	-	-	100	67	-	-	-
Chapel St Leonards	-	-	-	-	10	102	40	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	14	28	70	35	4	-	-
Saltfleet	-	-	-	6	98	19	3	-	-	-
Butterwick	-	-	5	41	31	31	-	4	-	-
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	27	37	2	-	-	-

Other than the year's two earliest records of four on Mar 24th and seven on Apr 7th at Baston and Langtoft GP all other records were coastal. Counts came from 28 areas and involved just over 500 sightings, half of which numbered less than ten birds. More than 90% of totals of ten and above came from Gibraltar Point along with the dozen sightings of more than 1000 birds. The highest counts were on consecutive days in Sep with 5217 on Sep 4th and 5360 on Sep 5th, including a few colour-ringed birds. There were no reports of any breeding activity or of any ringing recoveries. After these autumn peaks, a few lingered into Nov and Dec at Gibraltar Point with two on Nov 30th and another there on Dec 2nd. The last of the year was at Witham Mouth on Dec 28th. Although a very late bird, perhaps over-wintering in the Wash, it is not unprecedented. There have been previous Dec and Jan records at Donna Nook, Gibraltar Point, Grainthorpe, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR and Witham Mouth.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* □

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

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	15	111	152	86	13	-	-
Wainfleet	-	17	12	-	-	-	-
Grainthorpe	-	-	-	9	-	-	-
Butterwick	-	-	2	4	2	-	-
Frampton Marsh	-	-	1	1	1	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Trusthorpe	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	2	-	-

The table shows the top eight sites holding maximum accumulated peak counts of more than two birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The first three returning birds were seen at Gibraltar Point on Apr 24th, one day later than in 2017. On May 17th of 111 birds recorded, 76 were moving north. The first nest with eggs was reported on May 27th and up to 25 pairs attempted to nest. The first young, two chicks, were seen on Jun 22nd and 152 birds were counted roosting on the beach on Jun 27th after a frantic feeding frenzy. This compares well to the peak of 100 birds in 2017 and 114 in 2016. Five pulli were ringed on Jun 30th and the colony fledged six chicks. One occupied nest was reported at a site in the north east of the county on Jun 7th but its fate was not reported. Only one inland record was received: one flew through Teal Lake, North Hykeham early on May 13th. Birds were present at Gibraltar Point through to Aug 21st when the



Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis* Witham Mouth Jul 19th 2018 © Steve Keightley

last four were reported. There was one at Frampton Marsh on Aug 29th and an exceptionally late bird reported from Tetney Marsh on Oct 16th and 17th (RL).



Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* (Adult and juvenile) Horseshoe Point Aug 28th 2018 © Graham Catley

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*



Very scarce passage migrant, May-Oct. Red List. LBRC RBBP

Typically a summer and autumn bird in the county with the first being seen on the coast on Jul 10th at Gibraltar Point slowly heading south and then into the Wash (GPBO). The same bird or possibly another was seen on Jul 12th heading north with 15 Common Terns (NAL). Another was seen at Gibraltar Point on Jul 30th moving low south with Sandwich Terns on the high tide (BWd). An adult and a juvenile were seen at Horseshoe Point on Aug 28th (GPC). The last bird of the year was on Oct 7th at Gibraltar Point, an adult fishing and moving south along the beach and into the Wash (KMW).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*



Fairly common summer visitor and common passage migrant. Most breeding colonies are now inland. Amber List (nominate).

Site Name	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
North Cotes	-	-	-	-	-	-	5000	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	-	-	3	5	11	45	374	247	7	1
Kirkby on Bain	-	-	50	80	65	115	60	-	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	2	1	3	86	218	-	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	5	40	15	26	150	5	6	-
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	5	-	4	-	218	-	-
Deeping St James	-	-	41	20	74	53	10	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	-	7	22	16	15	100	5	-	-
Skegness	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	8	-	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	2	9	60	40	10	7	-

The first bird was seen on the fairly typical date of Apr 1st at Kirkby on Bain GP. In all there were just under 1800 observations from around 64 sites during the year, of which around half were of fewer than ten birds. Less than ten per cent of records exceeded 100.

Breeding was confirmed at Kirkby on Bain GP with a maximum of 80 adults in the colony on May 23rd, at least 43 downy chicks on Jul 1st and 70 juveniles of various ages on Jul 12th. At Gibraltar

Point up to four nests were counted at Tennyson Sands in Jun with five in Jul and a total of ten fledged juveniles on Jul 10th. Other sites recording fledged young were Boultham Mere (2), Baston and Langtoft GP (8), Freiston Shore (unspecified), and Middlemarsh Farm (3).

In the autumn, inland birds had departed by Aug 22nd with singles lingering into Sep at Bardney (7th), North Hykeham (8th) and Boultham Mere (21st). On the coast there was a very large roost count of 5000 at North Cotes on Aug 28th. The next three largest counts were of 374, 347 and 331 at Gibraltar Point over a five-day period Aug 19th-23rd. The final bird of the year was present at Gibraltar Point for most of the day on Nov 11th.



Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* Kirkby on Bain May 7th 2018 © Russell Hayes

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*



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

In the region of 300 birds were recorded at 23 sites with the first sighting of the year of four birds on Apr 6th at Gibraltar Point. Spring passage was light apart from 100 on Apr 23rd at Deeping Lakes, the highest count of the year. The next highest counts were of just ten at Kirkby on Bain GP on Apr 30th and at Frampton Marsh on May 29th; seven at North Hykeham on May 2nd and at Gibraltar Point on Jun 30th.

Autumn passage was also light with 22 on Jul 11th at Gibraltar Point. In Aug there were 20 at Freiston Shore on 15th, 33 at Gibraltar Point on 19th, 26 on 21st and 15 at Anderby Creek on 29th. The only significant counts in Sep were at Gibraltar Point where there were 14 on 18th and 16 on 21st. Thereafter one to six birds were seen on the coast in Oct and the final bird of the year was seen from Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 29th.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Vagrant. LBRC

An adult was found at Covenham Reservoir on May 21st (KRo et al) and a second adult turned up at Frampton Marsh in the afternoon of Jul 26th (E. Dowding, J. Thorogood) These are the 42nd and 43rd records involving 44 individuals.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*



Scarce/fairly common passage migrant in spring and autumn. **RBBP**. American Black Tern *C.n.surinamensis* is a vagrant. Green List. **BBRC**

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Frampton Marsh	-	-	2	1	10	12	1
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	12	12	-
Gibraltar Point	-	3	1	1	16	2	-
Welland Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	12	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	8	1	-
Barton Pits	1	1	-	-	4	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	4	-	-	-	1	-
Freiston Shore	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
Kirkby on Bain GP	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Deeping St James	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Trusthorpe	-	-	-	-	3	-	-

Maximum monthly counts of three or more birds are shown in the table. The first bird of the year was observed at Chowder Ness on Apr 15th. Nearly a month passed before the next bird was seen at Kirkby on Bain GP on May 11th.

Only five double-figure totals were reported, all in the autumn passage period, with 11 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 20th and the year's largest total of 16 there on Aug 25th when ten also flew over the visitor centre at Frampton Marsh. Birds lingered in the Wash in late Aug and early Sep with 5-12 at Witham/Welland Mouth and the adjacent RSPB Reserves to Sep 4th. Birds lingered on the coast in late Sep but the final bird of the year was at Frampton Marsh on Oct 15th.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*



Fairly common autumn passage migrant, mainly Aug to Nov and rare in winter and spring. Rare inland. Amber List.

There was just one record in the first quarter when a lone bird flew south at Gibraltar Point on Apr 30th. Autumn passage began on Aug 19th with a single at Huttoft Car Terrace followed by one to six mainly at Gibraltar Point to the end of the month. Sep began quietly with low numbers until the middle of the month when there were 29 at Gibraltar Point on the 18th, 40 there on the 23rd on which date there were also 15 at Huttoft. There were 12 at Huttoft and 12 at Chapel Point on the 28th whilst one to four was noted more widely but entirely in the south. The great bulk of records and the highest count came in Oct when birds were recorded on 21 days. There were 30 past Huttoft, six at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR and 33 at Gibraltar Point on the 1st with 62 at the last site on the 2nd. At Huttoft there were 19 on the 6th, and one to six were noted more widely until Oct 15th when there was a hiatus until the 22nd. 60 flew past Chapel Point and 25 at Gibraltar Point on the 24th then 16 at Chapel Point on the 26th, 15 at Gibraltar Point the following day when there were also 40 at Tydd St Mary Marsh and 12 at Witham Mouth. Gibraltar Point recorded 25 on the 28th and there were ten at Witham Mouth the same day. Low numbers were recorded widely and the month ended with three at Tetney Marsh, remarkably the only record north of Mablethorpe since two there on the 2nd in the entire month. The year ended with one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Nov 10th, one at Gibraltar Point on Nov 17th and, finally, two there on the 19th.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*



Generally scarce autumn passage migrant, although occasional larger movements, mainly Sep to Nov. Rare in winter and spring and exceptional inland. Green List.

An early Pomarine Skua was at Gibraltar Point on Aug 24th but autumn migration began in earnest in mid-Sep with one at Huttoft Car Terrace on the 13th then one to four at southern coastal sites on seven dates to the end of the month. More serious passage began on Oct 1st with nine past Huttoft Car Terrace followed by one to four again in the southern half of the county up to the 11th. In the final ten days of the month there were some remarkable records beginning with 27 south at Gibraltar Point on the 24th, 15 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on the 26th, when there were also 37 at Gibraltar Point. But these numbers were eclipsed by the counts on the 27th when there were 28 at Mablethorpe, 52 at Huttoft Car Terrace, 30 at Chapel Point and an astonishing total of 188 at Gibraltar Point. Twelve went south at Chapel Point on 28th, five of which were full-tailed adults and then on the 29th there was 100 at Witham Mouth, 59 at Gibraltar Point and 10 to 12 at Huttoft, Chapel Point and Mablethorpe; even the north of the county got a look in with one at Barton on Humber and two at East Halton. These remarkable

figures faded quickly with only two at Gibraltar Point on Oct 29th, one at Tetney Marsh on the 30th and in Nov there were singles at Cleethorpes on the 1st, Gibraltar Point on the 3rd and the final bird of the year was there on the 11th.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* ■

Fairly common, but decreasing, late summer and autumn passage migrant, mainly Jul to Oct. Very scarce in spring and winter and exceptional inland. Red List.

Records came from 11 sites, all coastal locations apart from one; the sole inland record was from Tydd St Mary that sits on the R Nene, a river that is often followed by Skuas migrating southwest overland towards the Bristol Channel.

The majority of records came from Gibraltar Point where an early bird was recorded on Mar 14th. A single bird was seen off Saltfleet Haven on Jun 16th and small numbers began to appear off Gibraltar Point from Jul 9th with a maximum of six on Jul 31st. As autumn migration proper got underway during Aug: Gibraltar Point recorded double-figure counts on Aug 19th (24), 20th (17), 21st (49), 23rd (17), 24th (12), 25th (28) and 27th (31). This contrasts with one to four recorded at Huttoft and Chapel St Leonard's during Aug.

Sep is usually the month which sees peak passage and counts of more than 40 birds came from Gibraltar Point on Sep 4th (42), Sep 18th (46) and Sep 23rd (58), the last being the highest of the month. Huttoft was the only other site to report double figures with ten past there, also on Sep 23rd. Oct provided one more "big day" when 40 went past Gibraltar Point on 1st; there were also 25 there on Oct 2nd. Chapel St Leonard's, Huttoft and Mablethorpe were the only other sites to record more than five birds, maxima were eight at Huttoft and seven at Mablethorpe both on Oct 6th and eight at Chapel St Leonard's on Oct 26th. Presence in the Wash was negligible with just one to three birds off Freiston and Witham Mouth on six dates only during Sep-Oct. The final birds of the year were three at Gibraltar Point on Oct 31st.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus* ■

Very scarce/scarse autumn passage migrant, mainly Aug to Oct and exceptional inland. Green List. LBRC

The first of the year was a light phase juvenile which lingered close in at Gibraltar Point on Sep 18th (NAL, BWD), and then three juveniles went south together on Sep 21st (KMW, BWD). On Sep 23rd a juvenile went north at Gibraltar Point (NAL, KMW) and another was seen off Huttoft Car Terrace (RLb). The next record was of a dark phase juvenile going north at Gibraltar Point on Oct 1st (BWD, KMW) and Oct 2nd, possibly the same bird (BWD, KMW). Two juveniles went south at Huttoft on Oct 6th (PAH, RL, CMO) and the last record of the autumn was one off Mablethorpe North End on Oct 28th (RL, CMO).

Little Auk *Alle alle* ■

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, with occasional larger influxes. Green List (nominate)

This was a very modest year for Little Auks with most records concentrated in the four days Oct 27th-30th. Four went past Huttoft on Oct 27th with two at Gibraltar Point, and singles past Chapel St Leonard's, Mablethorpe, Sandilands and Witham Mouth. Oct 28th was the day when most birds were seen: off Freiston Shore (1), East Halton (4), Witham Mouth (10), Mablethorpe (11), Huttoft (18) and the days maximum at Gibraltar Point (47). The following day, Oct 29th, was less dramatic with one to seven birds seen at five coastal sites and the month ended with six off Trusthorpe on Oct 30th. Thereafter there were just two more records, both in the Wash: one at Freiston Shore on Nov 27th and another at Witham Mouth on Dec 28th. There were no inland records.

Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* ■

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

In Jan birds were offshore at Gibraltar Point, Mablethorpe, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR and Tetney Marsh and also in the Wash at Freiston Shore and Witham Mouth. These were mostly one to two birds but there were eight at Gibraltar Point on Jan 6th, 12 at Witham Mouth on Jan 7th and eight at Tetney Marsh on Jan 23rd. The same areas saw one to five during Feb with seven at Mablethorpe on Feb 2nd and 18 at Witham Mouth on Feb 4th the highest counts. Numbers fell away during Mar with a maximum of four at Gibraltar Point mid-month. A few lingered into Apr with six off Gibraltar Point on Apr 30th and continued into May when Gibraltar Point recorded 18 on May 15th – perhaps non-breeders and/or survivors of Anticyclone Hartmut?

Birds were offshore again by mid-Jul but going through into Sep numbers were very low and only single figure counts were being recorded – ones and twos up and down the coast with four to five at Gibraltar Point in late Sep being the highest counts during this period. Oct did see some increased numbers: 13 were off Huttoft on Oct 3rd, 11 off Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 26th, 18 off Gibraltar Point and 50 off Huttoft on Oct 28th when 15 were at Witham Mouth in the Wash. Numbers fell away during Nov with the most being ten at both Freiston Shore on Nov 27th and at Gibraltar Point on Nov 30th. By Dec one or two birds remained in the Wash at Freiston Shore and Witham Mouth and up to three remained offshore at Gibraltar Point on Dec 22nd with the last of the year a single there on Dec 29th.

Razorbill *Alca torda* ■

Western European form (*islandica*) scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, but can occur in any month. Exceptional inland. Amber List (*islandica*).

In the first quarter singles were recorded at Gibraltar Point on Jan 5th-7th, 18th, 26th and again Feb 2nd, 3rd and 8th with the last winter birds records on Mar 11th and 18th. Singles in the Wash at Wrangle on Jan 6th and Witham Mouth on Jan 31st and Feb 4th were the only other records. In the spring, Gibraltar Point recorded birds in May on 2nd (4), 14th-15th (3), 16th (1), 17th (5) and 21st (1).

In the autumn the species remained true to form with the first appearing at Gibraltar Point on Aug 22nd. There were just two records in Sep with two at Gibraltar Point on 16th and three at Anderby on 30th. Gibraltar Point recorded up to one to two birds in Oct with three on Oct 28th when one also appeared on East Halton pits. There were no records in Nov and inevitably Gibraltar Point recorded the last birds of the year with singles offshore Dec 20th-22nd.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle* ■

A very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List.

No confirmed reports were received during the year.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica* ■

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

This locally rare auk was recorded just three times in the first half of the year with the first at Witham Mouth on Feb 5th (PS) followed by other singles at Gibraltar Point on Mar 18th (KMW) and May 17th (KMW).

The first record of the autumn was a single flying north on Sep 4th at Gibraltar Point (NAL, KMW) with another there flying on 22nd (JS, KMW). Singles were seen off Huttoft Car Terrace on Oct 1st (PSc) and Oct 2nd (PAH), and six were seen Oct 6th (CMo, RL); one was off Chapel St Leonard's on Oct 24th. The last record of the year was at Gibraltar Point on Nov 3rd.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* ■

Common and widespread resident. Green List.

There were larger counts of this species than in 2017, from around 96 sites across the county, although the reason behind this is indeterminable. Eight sites reported counts of 50 or more with counts of 100 or more at four of these: Freiston Shore 250 (Sep 15th), Lincoln 368 (Nov 9th), Immingham 300 (Jul 29th) and Little Steeping 120 (Jan 29th). These counts compare to the top count of 250 from Grantham in 2016. The species was found in 29% of BBS squares (2017 22%) with an average of about 12 birds per occupied square (2017 10).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas* ■

Common resident and winter visitor. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	9	6	20	11	8	5	13	5	6	18	378	10
Covenham Reservoir	4	4	21	4	-	5	-	1	-	-	140	66
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	34	22	21	36	4	4	3	1	2	28	1	14
Baston	6	7	30	7	6	1	1	2	3	35	10	13
Manby Wetlands	10	40	4	2	5	4	7	2	2	-	15	11
Toft next Newton	-	-	-	8	4	1	7	5	25	-	50	-
Great Limber	-	-	-	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boultham Mere	8	5	6	6	6	5	4	4	3	2	9	8

Saltfleet	3	2	26	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	21
Stenigot	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	50	-

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 50 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The propensity of this species to flock up in winter can lead to big counts when such a flock is encountered. The count of 378 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 13th was exceptional and included 364 birds moving south. The species was found in 39% of BBS squares (2017 50%) with an average of 4.1 birds per occupied square (2017 3.5). The drop in prevalence is unusual as the species population has been stable in the East Midlands over the period 1995 to 2018. It is the 33rd most widespread breeding species in Lincolnshire.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*



Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	500	600	1000	1500	311	200	250	250	216	5100	12062	380
Middlemarsh Farm	500	700	800	300	200	500	200	300	300	500	500	300
Welbourn	1000	238	1	58	60	44	50	-	-	1250	500	80
Tetney Marsh	350	500	-	200	250	220	40	-	300	500	400	350
Manby Wetlands	140	600	800	115	35	25	14	26	50	127	36	400
Lincoln	152	50	28	65	2	4	14	4	12	1010	414	25
Covenham Reservoir	250	600	600	30	1	60	5	1	3	-	50	3
Toft next Newton	500	170	130	30	70	27	15	25	22	46	45	380
Boultham Mere	300	100	200	40	30	25	28	28	10	355	100	200
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	200	300	200	50	23	30	20	3	10	350	30	40

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 1300 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The counts of 5100 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 24th involved 4600 moving south and 250 west and the exceptional count of 12062 there on Nov 13th was by far the largest in the county in this and the previous year. The species was found in 100% of BBS squares (2017 99%) with an average of 39 birds counted per occupied square (2017 43) making it both the most widespread and numerous bird in the county.



European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* Kirkby on Bain May 13th 2018 © Russell Hayes

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*



Scarce and declining summer visitor and passage migrant. Red List. **RBBP**

This species became reportable as an RBBP species in 2018. It's not difficult to see why. It has declined by 94% in England over the period 1994 to 2018. Thank you to everyone who reported all the birds they saw in 2018. To reflect that effort, the table shows all sites reporting birds by maximum accumulated peak counts across the year ranked from highest to lowest. This year reports came from 28 sites compared to 29 in 2017.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Pairs	Possibles
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	1	10	4	15	6	-	5	-
Frampton Marsh	-	1	2	3	7	4	5	1	3	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	4	-	1	8	-	2	-
Gibraltar Point	-	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	1	-
West Keal	-	-	1	4	2	-	-	-	2	-
Gedney Drove End	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	-
Kirkby on Bain	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Dunsby	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	1	-
Swinderby	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	2	-
Eagle	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	-
Boston	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	1
Spalding	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Burgh le Marsh	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Willingham Woods	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Friskney	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Sleaford	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-
Ruskington	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-
Frampton (village)	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-
Wroot	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
Sow Dale	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Horbling	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Stickney	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Old Bolingbroke	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Haconby	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Walesby	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Swaton	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Winteringham	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Gedney	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total Pairs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	12

The first birds were two reported from Spalding on Apr 11th, an early date. Three were at Gibraltar Point on Apr 23rd and on Apr 25th there were singles at Frampton Marsh and Burgh le Marsh. The purring of a Turtle Dove is an enduring reminder of summer days that is becoming increasingly difficult to remember in many parts of the county. The data received can be summarised as representing one confirmed breeding pair (at Frampton Marsh which raised three young), 26 probable pairs and a further 12 possibles. The table reflects the breeding position at each site in terms of probable pairs and single birds that may possibly indicate breeding. The total of 27 pairs compares to 13 singing birds in 2017 indicating that the extra effort in 2018 has paid dividends in providing a better assessment of Turtle Dove status in Lincolnshire. The geographic spread is interesting with coastal sites holding 12 pairs and 15 inland. Looked at another way in terms of Lincs BTO regions (pairs in brackets): North (1), West (5), South (9), East (12). The peak count was of 15 birds seen feeding in an arable field adjacent to Crook Bank, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Aug 27th. There were also eight at Witham Mouth on Sep 2nd. The latest records were of a single bird at Frampton Marsh on Oct 1st and 5th. Hopefully ongoing RSPB research will lead to beneficial changes in farming practices that will boost the numbers of this iconic summer visitor over the coming years.

2017 addition: Two at Sutterby May 9th, two at West Keal May 10th, one at Eagle Jul 15th and 27th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*



Very common resident. Green List.

A widespread bird particularly associated with the built up environment. No late summer high counts this year. The highest counts this year were winter ones with 38 at Covenham Jan 26th, 35 at Baumber Nov 20th and 44 at Kirton Dec 28th. The species was found in 50% of BBS squares (2017 48%) with an average of 5.6 birds per occupied square (2017 5.8). It is the 28th most widespread breeding species in Lincolnshire and the 18th commonest in terms of density per 1 km/square.



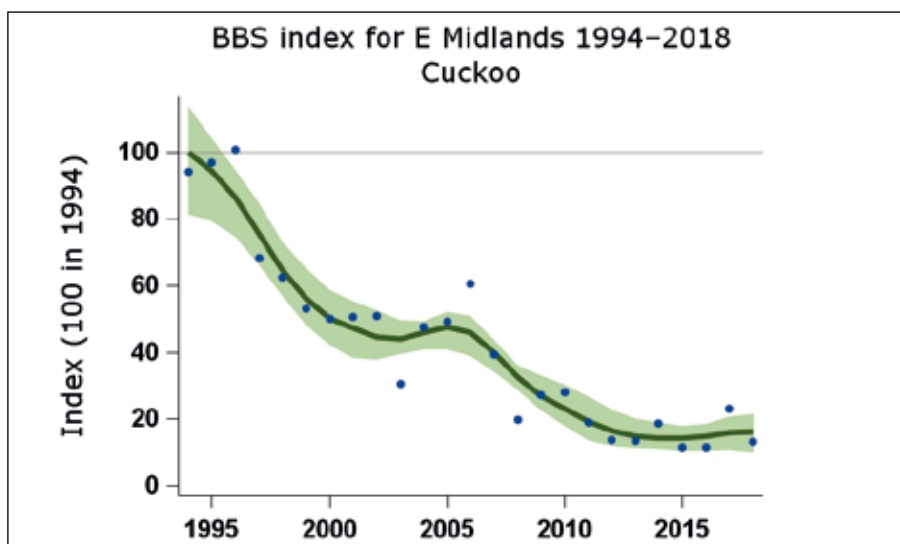
Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* and Dunnock *Prunella modularis* Gibraltar Point Jul 16th 2018 © Paul Neale

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*



Fairly common but declining summer visitor. Red List.

The Cuckoo is still reported widely around the county, with records from 60 sites this year, although it is notably absent from some areas where it was once commonplace, particularly away from the coast. Most observations were of single males or a pair, although the main coastal reserves and inland sites such as Fiskerton, Whisby/North Hykeham and Baston occasionally had sightings of between three and six birds. The first bird of the year was at Gibraltar Point on Apr 14th, which is a typical date, and there were six there on Apr 20th including a female of the rare hepatic morph. Five were present on Apr 21st, four on 22nd and six again on 24th – whether the same birds or migrants moving through is a moot point. There were four to five between May 4th-28th with three to four on the reserve during most of Jun. Overall, between Apr 19th and Jul 14th nine sites recorded three to six birds, four inland and five coastal. Reports noticeably decreased from Jul onwards, when the adults departed. Juvenile records were then confined to the coast, particularly Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR. Several juveniles were seen at Gibraltar Point in Jul and Aug and one was noted on several dates between Jul 11th-22nd begging for food and being fed by Dunnocks. The last record was of a juvenile trapped at Gibraltar Point on Sep 7th. Only 7/77 (9%) BBS plots recorded Cuckoo in 2018 compared to a peak of 22/50 (44%) in 1997 as recently as 2006 22/75 (44%) recorded them. The BBS index graph for the East Midlands reflects this demise, itself almost identical to that for England as a whole.



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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. Green List. BBRC

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Number of nests**	298	330*	155	394	77	272	280	185
Failures	40	131	18	38	20	41	62	31
Broods ringed	243	185	126	333	44	198	191	131
Chicks ringed	627	427	378	1214	104	522	455	313
Average number of chicks/brood ringed	2.6	2.3	3.0	3.6	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.4

** Total nests = "missed" and "outcome unknown" as well as ringed + failures

* High number of Barn Owl nests in 2012 was due to early failures and subsequent re-lays

There were reports from around 116 sites across the county; considerably fewer than in the last three years, but Barn Owls still remain widespread in Lincolnshire. Most casual reports were of one to two birds, but three to five were noted at seven sites and a family of 12 was recorded at a fenland site.

Bob Sheppard and Alan Ball as usual kindly supplied a summary of their nestbox data for 2011-2018, summarised in the table. Numbers of nests reported was significantly below average after two better years in 2016-17. Brood size of those ringed averaged 2.4 chicks.

Three re-trapped adults in 2018 were aged 10-11 yrs. Two nestlings were recovered having moved more than 100km – GV70549 ringed as a nestling in Hertfordshire in Jul was a car collision victim near Grimsby in Sep; GV24643 ringed as a nestling near Spilsby in Jun 2017 was found long dead in a building in Suffolk in Apr 2018.

Snowy Owl *Nyctea scandiaca*

Very rare vagrant, one previous county record Dec 1990-Mar 1991. BBRC

A 2CY female was discovered at Wainfleet Marsh Mar 21st-22nd (A. Rayment et al) presumed to be the same bird present at Frampton Marsh and Freiston Shore May 1st-10th and in Norfolk Mar 9th-11th. This was the second record for the county (Accepted BBRC, BB 112: p588).

The year 2018 was one of the best in recent times in the UK with at least ten accepted records. Snowy Owls are rare in Europe and very few breed in Scandinavia. The westerly bias to UK



Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* Wainfleet Marsh Mar 22nd 2018 © Steve Keightley



Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* Wainfleet Marsh Mar 22nd 2018 © Paul Coombes



Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* Wainfleet Marsh Mar 22nd 2018 © Paul Coombes



Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* Wainfleet Marsh Mar 22nd 2018 © Paul Coombes

records suggests a Nearctic origin where they can be exceptionally numerous in some years. Some undoubtedly make use of ships in the north Atlantic before making landfall on the east coast. However this one arrived, it was a mighty impressive bird.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*



Common resident, widespread but predominantly in wooded areas. Amber List.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Number of nests**	34	18	13	60	6	23	42	8
Failures	3	1	3	4	0	2	1	2
Broods ringed	31	17	8	53	3	20	32	3
Chicks ringed	70	30	12	112	5	40	68	5
Average number of chicks/brood ringed	2.3	1.8	1.5	2.1	1.7	2.0	2.1	1.7

** Total nests = "missed" and "outcome unknown" as well as ringed + failures

Records came from 62 locations similar to the number in 2017. Most reports were of one or two birds, but three to four birds were recorded at Aby, Gibraltar Point, Laughton Forest, and Wold Newton. Exceptionally six were recorded at both Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR and Brocklesby, both records being attributed to three territorial pairs. At least two pairs were at Gibraltar Point, both of which were recorded with juveniles. Territorial calling was commonly recorded and, given their sedentary nature, any calling pairs are likely to be on nesting territories. However, despite their widespread distribution across the county, they remain a difficult species in which to confirm breeding, ringing sites apart.

Alan Ball and Bob Sheppard recorded just eight nests in 2018 ringing just five chicks. The adverse weather in late Feb and Mar may have played a significant part in the ability of adults to hunt as well as reducing prey species. In Bourne Woods for example the 14 pairs in 2017 went to zero in 2018.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Common resident, very sedentary.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Number of nests**	68	59	70	80	70	78	87	88
Failures	18	18	20	16	17	23	26	27
Broods ringed	44	37	45	57	44	51	50	55
Chicks ringed	133	105	103	188	108	138	141	152
Average number of chicks/brood ringed	3.0	2.8	2.3	3.3	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.8

** Total nests = "missed" and "outcome unknown" as well as ringed + failures

Reporting of this species was again down compared to the previous year, with records coming from only 33 localities, compared with 83 sites reporting Little Owl in 2014. All counts were of one to two birds without exception. Bob Sheppard and Alan Ball kindly provided a summary of their nest box data from 2011-2018 as usual in the table. They ringed 152 chicks in 2018 from 55 broods, an average of 2.8 chicks per brood; there were 27 failures. These figures are extremely similar to those of 2016 and 2017. BTO ringing data confirms the very sedentary nature of these owls and there were no recoveries, but four adult females controlled on the nest ranged from six to nearly nine years of age.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*



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

The popular Deeping Lakes NR roost had one to two birds on 13 dates from Jan 1st to Feb 23rd and three on Jan 18th. Single migrants were reported at Gibraltar Point on Mar 26th, Apr 23rd and May 1st, 2nd and 10th. The only possible breeding record was a report of one at Laughton Forest on May 5th. In the autumn there was one at Chapel St Leonards on Oct 27th and Gibraltar Point on Oct 27th and 28th. The Deeping Lakes NR roost was reportedly occupied from Nov 25th with reports on eight dates of one to two birds up to Dec 25th and three on Dec 17th.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*



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

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	12	1	2



Little Owl *Athene noctua* East Keal Jul 18th 2018 © Phil Hyde



Little Owl *Athene noctua* Brandon Jun 14th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt



Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* Undisclosed site (North Lincolnshire) Mar 2018 © Graham Taylor

Frampton Marsh	2	3	3	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	3
Tetney Marsh	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	4
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	7	1
Crowland	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	4	4	2
Bonby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	7
Hawthorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2	2
Butterwick	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-
Witham Mouth	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Donna Nook	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	3

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated peak counts of more than six birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. A quiet beginning to the year reflecting fewer birds overwintering from Dec 2017 compared to the much better 2016/17 winter. There were no confirmed breeding records although summering birds, which might have been breeding, were present at Gibraltar Point where there were up to two birds present. Singles were at Butterwick Marsh and Goxhill Marsh between Jul and Aug. Autumn proved much better with 12 birds at Gibraltar Point on Oct 27th, ten of which were observed coming “in off” and then heading west. The other best counts were seven at Huttoft Bank Pit on Nov 13th and seven at Bonby Carrs on Dec 22nd.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* □

Scarce summer visitor and very scarce passage migrant. Amber List.

The only known breeding sites in the county now appear to be Laughton Forest–Scotton Common, Manton–Greetwell Heath, Crowle Moors, Willingham–Walesby Forest and a new site in 2018 at Tunman Wood, Eagle where a pair were present and assumed to have bred. At Laughton there was no comprehensive survey but eight territories were occupied on the wet heath survey area where a maximum of nine males have been present since 2005 and at least two other pairs bred in the wider forest area. Manton–Greetwell was not surveyed; at Willingham–Walesby five males were present but no results were available from Crowle. Away from breeding sites singles were seen at Gibraltar Point on Aug 3rd and Sep 11th.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

Vagrant. Recorded from Mar-Aug with a single record from Oct. LBRC.

One was seen flying over Crowland on Mar 22nd (N Stimpson) and a second flew south along the beach at Gibraltar Point on Apr 24th (KMW).



Swift *Apus apus* (successfully nesting behind chicken wire) Fulbeck Jun 2018 © Andrew P. Chick

Common Swift *Apus apus*



Very common summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber List.

	2017	2018
June	12407	8357
July	8168	4800
August	2789	671

The first bird of the year arrived on Apr 18th at Spalding, four days later than 2017. Within a week birds had been noted in small numbers at East Keal, North Hykeham Barton Pits, Stickney, Whisby, Lincoln, Gibraltar Point, Frampton Marsh and Covenham Reservoir. Between mid-Jun and end-Jul, six counts were in excess of a thousand birds all observed travelling south. The highest total of the year was 2362 counted over Mill Hill at Gibraltar Point on Jun 14th where further southward movements included 2000 Jun 15th, 1563 Jun 17th and 2332 Jul 29th, when 1100 were also counted at Freiston Shore migrating south. At Gibraltar Point numbers seemed well down on 2017. The sum total of southerly movement is shown in the table. In comparison with last year the species seems to be around 40% down. Late records were of one at Crook Bank Oct 10th and more than a month later the final bird was noted at Gibraltar Point on Nov 15th.



Swift *Apus apus* Gibraltar Point Aug 17th 2018 © Paul Neale

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus*

Very rare vagrant, one previous record in 2004. **BBRC**

A 1CY+ bird was found at Goxhill on Nov 11th (SRo), only the second county record (Accepted BBRC, BB 112: 590). The year 2018 was a good one for this species with at least 15 accepted UK records (See Finder's Report on p215.)

(Note: Another record for consideration from Gibraltar Point was submitted too late for the BBRC 2018 report)



Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus* Dawson City/Goxhill Haven Nov 11th 2018 © Steve Routledge



Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*



Fairly common resident and partial migrant. Red List.

Scattered pairs and wintering Kingfishers occur on many inland lakes, gravel pits, rivers and streams throughout the county as well as coastal lagoons and saltmarsh. Records were received from 72 sites down from 92 in 2017. These were widespread and covered all months of the year, but with a noticeable peak in numbers in late summer, as a result of observations of family parties and then juvenile dispersal. Breeding was confirmed at just three sites – Kirkby on Bain, Boultham Mere and South Kyme – and suspected at two others but this is likely to grossly underestimate breeding numbers across the county. It was not recorded in any of the 77 BBS squares covered in Lincolnshire this year. Kingfishers are not ringed in any numbers in the county and there were no recoveries to report.



Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* Louth Jan 22nd 2018 © John Clarkson

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

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

There were none in 2017 but two in 2018 both at Gibraltar Point: the first was on Apr 20th (KMW, BWd) and the second on May 28th (JS). The total number of records now stands at about 140.

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Vagrant. About 83 county records, 80 of these since 1957. **LBRC**

One flew southwest over Gibraltar Point on May 27th (KMW) and then in Jul four flew south over the east dunes at Gibraltar Point on Jul 4th (KMW).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*



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

There were no records in 2018 after seeing just one in 2017. As noted in last year's report just 11 were ringed in the UK in 2017, only eight were ringed in the UK in 2018.



Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* Gibraltar Point May 27th 2018 © Ben Ward

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor* ■

Rare and declining resident. Red List. **RBBP**

The returning male in the Boultham Mere/Swanpool wood area was seen and heard on 25 dates between Feb 25th-May 7th but failed to find a mate. What was almost certainly the same bird was reported from nearby Hartsholme Park on Mar 25th. There were only two other reports of singles at Nocton Wood on Mar 5th and Potterhanworth Wood on Apr 28th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* ■

Fairly common resident and partial migrant. Amber List.

Spread widely over the county with around 1200 records from about 110 locations, this was virtually the same as last year. The largest count of the year was ten at Callan's Lane Wood on Jul 3rd and six were noted at Boultham Mere on Feb 6th. A single bird flying south on several occasions and two in the east dunes in late summer at Gibraltar Point suggested some migratory movement. There were also a couple of records of birds heading south at Crook Bank. No evidence came from any other site to suggest migration.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis* ■

Fairly common resident and partial migrant. Green List.

More than 900 observations were returned from about 90 countywide locations, about 10% down on 2017. Once again there was little evidence of a recovery in numbers in the north of the county from the ravages of the winter of 2010-11. Other than a single bird on six occasions at Alkborough Flats, two in May in Scunthorpe, three between Ingham and Sturton and one in Aug in Linwood little seems to be improving north of a line drawn through Lincoln. The highest count of the year was five at Whisby on Oct 9th; four were counted at Baston on three occasions, and at Boston, Boultham Mere and Bourne just once.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*



Common resident and passage migrant. Amber List.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Number of nests**	85	117	82	150	43	98	110	98
Failures	7	27	10	16	5	4	4	15
Broods ringed	55	66	54	111	17	58	61	56
Chicks ringed	236	186	171	449	46	203	195	154
Average number of chicks/brood ringed	4.2	2.8	3.2	4.0	2.7	3.5	3.2	2.8

The tabulated data is from the regular Kestrel nest box monitoring and chick-ringing programme as provided by AGB. The numbers of nests and ringed chicks in 2018 was broadly similar to previous years, but failure of nests (perhaps temporarily) was much higher than the previous three years, if generally on a par with 2012-15. Well over 2500 records came from 190 locations spread widely over the county throughout the year. The highest total was 29 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 21st 23 of which flew south. Other than a count of eight at Frampton Marsh, 28 other counts of eight or more came from Gibraltar Point. About three quarters of these records in the Aug-Oct period mentioned birds flying south perhaps on their migratory journeys.



Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* Frampton Marsh May 15th 2018 © Neil Smith

Red-footed Falcon

Vagrant. 34 county records, 32 of these since 1963. LBRC.

A juvenile bird was found in the west dunes at Gibraltar Point on Sep 10th-14th spending much time hawking dragonflies during its stay (KMW). The first record since 2015 when there were three, before then there had been only four records in the 2000s.



Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* Gibraltar Point Sep 13th 2018 © Paul Neale



Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* Gibraltar Point Sep 13th 2018 © Paul Neale

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

■ (*aesalon*) ■ (*subaesalon*)

British form '*aesalon*' is a scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, very scarce in summer. Bred sporadically in the 19th century. Icelandic form '*subaesalon*' may also occur. Red List (*aesalon*) and Amber List (*subaesalon*).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2	2	2	2	1	1	-	1	3	2	3	2
Frampton Marsh	2	3	1	1	1	-	1	1	2	2	4	2
Freiston Shore	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	-
Tetney Marsh	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1
Alkborough Flats	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	1
Witham Mouth	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Donna Nook	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1

This remains primarily a bird of coastal saltmarshes in winter, with an almost continuous presence in small numbers at the sites in the table, but sporadic records do occur inland and also throughout the year. Records were submitted from 41 sites in total, with most of single birds on single dates. There was a mid-summer bird, inland at Blackmoor Farm, Aubourn on Jun 16th and a bird present at Gibraltar Point from mid-Jun managed to take one of the adult Little Terns from the colony there. The only Jul record was of a single at Frampton Marsh on Jul 21st. Historically, there have been a number of recoveries in the county of Merlins ringed elsewhere as nestlings between 1978 and 2012. These have originated in Ayrshire, Highland, Perth, Shetland (2), Outer Hebrides and Iceland and the oldest of these birds was nearly 12 years; two were hit by cars, one flew into a glass window and another overhead wires.



Merlin *Falco columbarius* Alkborough Jan 22nd 2018 © Paul Coombes

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

■

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



Hobby *Falco Subbuteo* Undisclosed site May 14th 2018 © Graham Catley



Hobby *Falco Subbuteo* (juv.) Undisclosed site Aug 15th 2018 © Graham Catley

Site Name	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Gibraltar Point	1	2	3	1	2	3	1
Messingham	-	4	2	1	1	2	-
Frampton Marsh	1	2	1	1	2	1	-
Alkborough Flats	1	3	1	-	1	2	-
Baston	1	1	-	1	2	2	-
Whisby	-	3	1	1	-	1	-
Boultham Mere	-	1	1	1	1	1	-
North Hykeham	-	3	-	-	-	1	1
Crowle	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Willow Tree Fen	-	4	-	-	1	-	-
Kirkby Moor	-	2	2	1	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	1	-	1	1	2	-

The table shows the top 12 sites holding maximum accumulated peak counts of more than five birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. All records occurred between Apr-Oct and there were no exceptional outliers this year. The first of the year was one on Apr 14th at Frampton Marsh, very much in line with the 1997-2016 first date average of around Apr 15th. Singles followed at Alkborough Flats and Gibraltar Point on Apr 21st. There were five reports of confirmed breeding, with three of these coming from GPC's study area in Laughton Forest, where pairs fledged seven young. Confirmed breeding was also reported from Middle Rasen where an adult was seen carrying food for young on Aug 4th and Swaton where a nest with young was observed on Aug 7th. From the data received using the same criteria as in previous years it was judged that there might have been a further 20 probable and 25 possible breeding pairs in Lincolnshire. A total population of 50 pairs compared to an estimated 63 in 2017. The best day count was five at Crowle on May 6th and reports of four came from Messingham SQ on May 18th and 23rd and Willow Tree Fen on May 22nd. The last records in Oct were singles at Allington and Boston on the 13th with the final bird of the year at Gibraltar Point on 31st, even later than last years 28th.



Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* Frampton Marsh Nov 8th 2018 © John Clarkson

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*



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

After a dramatic rise in breeding pairs in the last ten years Peregrines are perhaps starting to stabilise in Lincolnshire. No new nest sites were reported this year and of 36 known nesting sites reports were received of 17 pairs breeding (down from 19 in 2017); one site was damaged by quarry working and no reports were received from 18 others. It is likely the latter category

contains sites that were not used and negative reports were not made. Of the 17 pairs that bred, nine pairs fledged 19 young, three failed and no reports were received from five. Fledging success from successful pairs at 2.1 chicks per nest was down on last years 2.7 chicks per nest. The popular well-watched ecclesiastical sites of St James Church Louth and Boston Stump both produced four chicks. A pair returned to St Wulfram's Grantham and laid one egg that failed to hatch. No reports were received on the success or otherwise of the pair nesting at Lincoln Cathedral.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Rare. Vagrant from feral populations and occasional local escapes.

All of the 2018 records came from Gibraltar Point and Cleethorpes. One was seen at Gibraltar Point on Mar 26th, 29th-31st and Apr 1st and one at Cleethorpes on May 8th-9th. Autumn records came from Gibraltar Point on Sep 10th and Oct 29th and 31st. It is not known if these are escapes or originate from an unknown feral breeding population.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*



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

The first bird of the year was at Clee North Wall in Grimsby Docks on May 5th (JRN) followed by one on May 25th-26th around the Storm Ridge at Gibraltar Point (SAi, NAL, SK). Another bird was present at Donna Nook on May 29th-Jun 1st (SJM). The fourth bird of the year was in the Boston/Wyberton area on Jun 6th (JSc). The final bird of the year was found at Middlemarsh Farm on Jul 29th and Aug 3rd (NAL).



Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* Gibraltar Point May 26th 2018 © Russell Hayes

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

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

A bird was seen at Tabs Head/Frampton Marsh area on Oct 13th (PAH, PS et al). Just over a month later on Nov 18th another was noted coming in off the sea near Mill Hill, Gibraltar Point. Flushed by magpies it soon went to ground and was not relocated (BWd).

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*



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

A singing male was at Crowle on Jun 9th (SRo) and another was singing in the Plantation at Gibraltar Point on Jun 10th (BWd), two typical records after a blank year in 2017.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*



British form 'rufitergum' is a common resident, irregular migrant and winter visitor. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Boultham Mere	4	3	4	10	2	1	6	5	14	26	8	6
Whisby	5	2	5	2	4	1	-	3	2	8	7	3
Gibraltar Point	-	-	1	4	8	4	3	-	1	3	1	-
Lincoln	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	5	5	2	3
Kirkby on Bain	4	-	2	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	1
Hartsholme	2	1	2	3	1	1	-	-	1	3	-	1
North Hykeham	3	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Fillingham	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	2
Baston	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	2	1	2	1
Bourne	3	-	1	1	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	1

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated counts of more than 20 birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. The species was found in 9% of BBS squares (2017 7%) with an average of 1.1 birds per occupied square (2017 1.7). Jay is a scarce bird in much of the east of the county and this is reflected in the distribution of sites in the table, which are primarily from the west. There was some suggestion of a spring coastal movement at Gibraltar Point with birds lingering there into the autumn. In 2018 the BBS data suggests Jay was the 71st most widely spread breeding species in the county and the 86th most numerous. Legal persecution may be limiting Jay in the county but with recent changes to General Licence laws for killing our native birds hopefully things may change through time.

Magpie *Pica pica*



Very common resident. Green List.

This species was found in 78 % of BBS squares (77% in 2017) with an average of 3.0 birds per occupied square (2.7 in 2017). It is the 17th most widespread species in Lincolnshire but only the 44th most numerous as counted on BBS. Legal persecution continues to be an issue, but notwithstanding that, while the English Magpie population has been stable over the period 1995 to 2018 it has increased by 44% in the East Midlands over that period and 65% in Lincolnshire indicating what a low population base it must have been coming from. The only count reported of over 35 birds was of 38 at Gibraltar Point in Nov.

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*



Western European form '*spermologus*' very common resident, also passage migrant and winter visitor. Nordic Jackdaw, *C.m.monedula*, rare or overlooked winter visitor. Green List (both forms).

This species was found in 75% of BBS squares (76% in 2017) with an average of 14 birds per occupied square (15 in 2017). It is the 18th most widespread species in Lincolnshire and the 6th most numerous as counted on BBS. The highest count of the year came from Alford on Aug 25th where there was a flock of 700 birds. At North Hykeham on Dec 2nd there were 300, well down from 12 months previously when there had been 900.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*



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

Counts of Rooks in excess of 100 came from 17 sites down from 28 in 2017. The larger counts were down from the peak 900 at Wellbourn in Jan 2017 to 500 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 14th and 350 at Donna Nook on Sep 12th. The species was found in 66 % of BBS squares (76% in 2017) with an average of 27 birds per occupied square (22 in 2017). Rook is the 21st most widespread species in Lincolnshire but the 2nd most numerous.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*



Very common resident, also passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List.

Carrion Crow was found in 95 % of BBS squares (94% in 2017) with an average of 9 birds per occupied square (8 in 2017). It is the 3rd most widespread species in Lincolnshire and the 11th most numerous. The peak count of 250 was at Marston on Apr 1st. Other large counts included 200 Boultham Mere on Jan 28th and 200 at Brickyard Lane, Theddlethorpe on Nov 23rd. There were 123 at Gibraltar Point on May 3rd.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*



Very scarce migrant and winter visitor formerly much more common in winter. Green List. LBRC

The species was observed at six locations with three birds being the maximum seen. Although difficult to be precise due to duplication of records around 50 records came from Gibraltar Point with the first of the year there on Apr 20th. Most observations came from the final three months of the year. Three birds were counted on eight occasions with the final three occurring at Gibraltar Point on New Year's Eve. One was present at Boultham Mere on Nov 2nd. Donna Nook had five records in Nov and Dec with the maximum count being three. Two were noted at Kirkby on Bain on Dec 28th. One was at Marston SW on Dec 22nd. A bird was observed at Brickyard Lane on Dec 9th and another in the area on Dec 24th.

Raven *Corvus corax*



Resident to 18th century but was extirpated, but now a very scarce but increasing resident. Green List.

Reports came from around 48 sites this year, slightly more than in 2017, and mostly involving between 8-12 sites per month. As in previous years, the reports were concentrated in the southwest and into the Wolds, with a scattering along the Lincoln edge and a few in north Lincolnshire and along the coast largely around the Wash. The number of breeding pairs is incompletely recorded. There were several sightings of up to four birds at Whisby Jan-May but no evidence of breeding activity. There were two reports of confirmed breeding though in central and southwest Lincolnshire; one pair had one fledged chick near the nest and three more in the nest close to fledging on Apr 14th, and another pair had two fledged young on May 13th. In total, nine chicks from three nests were ringed in the southwest of the county (AGB). On the coast, there were one or two birds present at Gibraltar Point between Mar 16th and Apr 21st and a pair was displaying there on Mar 22nd but there was no further evidence of breeding. On the Humber there were several records at Alkborough Flats, with three there on Sep 24th and one or two birds in Oct-Dec. Apart from birds at the breeding sites most records referred to one or two birds and observers are urged to submit all records of breeding activity to monitor ongoing colonisation of the county (or not).



Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus* Louth Jan 18th 2018 © John Clarkson

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*



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

After the 2017 influx that saw hundreds of Waxwings arriving in Scotland and subsequently dispersing southwards to England and Lincolnshire later that winter 2018 was a much leaner year. There were in fact none at all in autumn/winter 2017 but early 2018 saw a meagre arrival with the

first singles at Barton Pits on Jan 7th, and Gibraltar Point and Louth on Jan 11th. The most were four at Gibraltar Point on Jan 25th. Five were at Holton Le Clay on Feb 1st and four still there on Feb 2nd. The only other records in the first quarter were singles at Mablethorpe on Feb 2nd, 3rd and 6th, and at New Holland on 5th. The first of the autumn was seen at Gibraltar Point on Oct 24th with four on 25th, one 26th, two 28th and one 30th; a single bird was seen there on and off from Nov 19th to Dec 29th. Elsewhere four were seen at Chapel Point on Oct 27th with 12 nearby on the same date at Mablethorpe. In Nov there was one at Scunthorpe on 25th and three at Cleethorpes on 27th. There were several Dec records with one at Sturton by Stow on Dec 22nd, one at Frampton Marsh on Dec 24th and nine on Dec 29th, two at Lincoln on Dec 25th and the last bird of the year at Frampton Marsh on Dec 31st.

Coal Tit *Periparus ater*

■ (britannicus) ■ (nominate)

British form 'britannicus' is a widespread resident and passage migrant. Nominate continental form a very scarce irruptive visitor in autumn. Amber List (britannicus) and Green List (nominate).

Reports in double-figures came from four sites this year with Temple Wood reporting 15 on Nov 23rd, Eagle 14 on Dec 15th, Laughton Forest 12 on May 20th and Belton Park 11 on Apr 15th. The species was found in 11.7% of BBS squares (2017 9.3%) with an average of 1.7 birds per occupied square (2017 1.6).

Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*

■

Fairly common but local resident, mainly in the southwest. Red List.

This species is red-listed in BoCC4, and records were reported from ten sites, down from 18 in 2017, primarily in its established range in the southwest part of the county. It is too rare in Lincolnshire to be picked up on BBS. The highest counts were of six birds at Potterhanworth Wood on Jan 3rd, five at Nocton Woods on Feb 17th and six, presumably a family party, at Callan Lane Woods, Bulby on Jul 3rd, the only reported instance of confirmed breeding this year. Probable breeding was reported from Potterhanworth Wood, Temple Wood and Twyford Woods. There was one confirmed coastal record of a single bird at Gibraltar Point on Sep 29th, picked up dead after striking a window.



Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris* Nocton Dec 17th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

Willow Tit *Poecile montanus*

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

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snipe Dales	-	-	-	2	2	6	5	-	1	-	2	-
Barton Pits	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
Messingham	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Boultham Mere	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-
Broughton	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Haverholme	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Holland	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Culverthorpe	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Walesby	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Keelby	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Goxhill	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Crowle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Temple Wood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

The table shows all sites reporting birds by maximum accumulated peak counts across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Last year 21 sites reported birds, this year just 15, all of which are listed above. The good news was that there were two records of confirmed breeding. At Barton Pits there were four territories from Far Ings to Barrow Pits with one brood noted at Pasture Wharf. At Snipe Dales three territories were detected and one brood of three fledged chicks was observed in a family feeding party of five on Jul 11th. Elsewhere reports interpreted as probable breeding of one pair came from Alkborough Flats and Messingham SQ. A total of eight pairs is a bit better than last years optimistic six pairs. Reports of single birds in the breeding season came from five other sites. The use of playback to detect territories is a feature of the 2019/2020 survey of Willow Tits led by RSPB but it must be done at the correct time in late Feb-Mar in the carefully prescribed manner.

Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

British form 'obscurus' a very common resident. Amber List (*obscurus*).

The species was found in 94% of BBS squares (2017 85%) with an average of 4.9 birds per occupied square (2017 4.7). After a poor breeding season in 2016 which improved in 2017, breeding birds were even more widespread and numerous in 2018. In 2017 reports were received from 12 sites regularly holding more than ten birds while in 2018 the population bounced back and more than 40 sites reported more than ten birds. Gibraltar Point had the highest count of 64 birds on Oct 7th having had a peak of 49 birds in Sep 2017. The highest inland count was of 33 at Bourne Woods on Dec 31st. It is the 5th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire from BBS coverage and the 24th most numerous.

Great Tit *Parus major*

British form '*newtoni*' a very common resident. Amber List.

Seven sites reported more than 20 birds this year compared to four in 2017. Top count was 61 from Gibraltar Point on Oct 7th (down from the peak there in Jan 2017 of 85) and there were 30 at Swanholme Lakes, Lincoln on Mar 5th. The species was found in 86 % of BBS squares (2017 87%) with an average of 3.8 birds per occupied square (2017 3.2). It was the 13th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire in 2017 but only the 32nd most numerous.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

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

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barton Pits	-	-	-	26	26	30	30	40	49	30	-	-
Alkborough Flats	4	1	3	2	12	9	3	2	3	6	8	1
South Ferriby	-	-	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	3	9	3
Whitton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	18	-	-
Frampton Marsh	3	7	5	2	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	1
Winteringham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-

Boultham Mere	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	-
Barrow Haven	-	-	-	4	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whisby	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Goxhill	3	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

The table shows the top ten sites holding maximum accumulated peak counts of more than five birds across the year ranked from highest to lowest. Nine out of the top ten sites and over 95% of all records come from reed bed sites along the Humber indicating the importance of this chain of habitats for Bearded Tit in Lincolnshire. Barton Pits had 13 breeding pairs each of which raised three broods so the total counts received are likely to be underestimates. At nearby Barrow Pits two pairs bred. No full breeding survey was carried out at Alkborough Flats but it is estimated there would have been around 45 pairs with a further five pairs on the Winteringham foreshore reedbeds. There were few reports from other coastal areas though two birds were present at Huttoft Pit in Oct and Nov, singles were present in Feb, Mar, Jun and Jul at Gibraltar Point and Frampton Marsh had birds from Jan to Apr with five on Mar 23rd and 24th. Marston STW had three on Dec 23rd.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea* ■

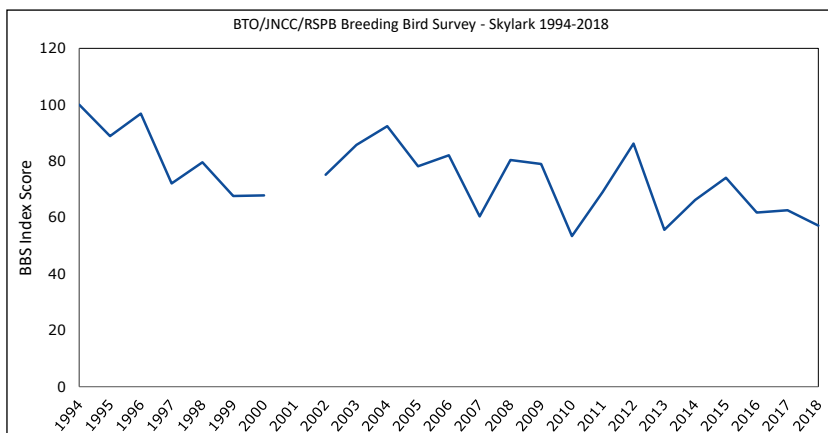
Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant, rare in winter. Bred to 1959 and again from 1984 with numbers peaking around the year 2000, although now steadily declining. Green List. **RBBP**

National surveys in 1986, 1997 and 2006 respectively found four, 37 and 49 occupied territories in Lincolnshire. Full surveys at Laughton Forest found 34 territories in 2000, 17 in 2012 and nine in 2015 showing how the fortunes of this scarce breeding species have declined at that locality in line with changes in forestry practice, namely the reduction in clear felling, and the consequent loss of suitable breeding habitat. In 2018 only four pairs and a single male were located at Laughton. Data from other breeding areas were very limited with no full survey at Manton-Greetwell but two males and a female were already back there on Mar 7th, and, in Jul, three birds were at Risby Warren. Other former sites not surveyed in the north included Black Bank, Broughton East Wood, Keb Wood and Santon Warren. None were found in the Market Rasen Woodland complex in spite of extensive survey effort. A provisional total of between 20 and 25 territories can be calculated from submitted data and supposition of occupation of former breeding territories at sites not surveyed in 2018 but where pairs have been found in recent years; this still shows a decline from the peak total of approximately 70 occupied territories recorded around 2000 and observers are encouraged to submit all details of this species on breeding sites.

Away from breeding areas singles were noted moving south at Gibraltar Point on Feb 17th, Mar 3rd, 9th, 14th, 22nd, 25th, two Apr 14th, 22nd, 23rd, Oct 16th and Nov 2nd; one flew south at East Halton Skitter Mar 9th and one was at Boultham Mere Jul 30th.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis* ■

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



The BBS squares in the county recording Skylark in 2018 fell from 80 in 2017 to 69; in 2018 the number of individuals per square was 9.9, in 2018 it was 9.6. The BBS index fell slightly from 0.63 in 2017 to 0.57 in 2018, compared to a value of 1.0 when the index began in 1994, a statistically significant decline of 43% since then. Across the county 154 locations reported Skylarks with 40 counts of 100 or over and 122 in all of 50 or more. The highest totals of the year were all at Gibraltar Point on Oct 11th (463), Oct 16th (390), Oct 17th (519) and Nov 13th (407). In addition there were significant counts from Friskney (298, Jan 7th), Grainthorpe (260, Nov 27th), Saltfleet (203, Dec 4th), and inland at Boultham Mere (180, Dec 4th), Welbourne (124, Oct 16th) and Roxholm (73, Oct 10th).

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*



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

The first of the year was a single at Cleethorpes on Jan 4th followed by seven at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Jan 5th. The wintering flock there built up to ten on Jan 25th and 26th with eight still there on Mar 15th. Gibraltar Point had three on Jan 26th, their only record of the first quarter. Slightly further north, the Tetney Marsh-North Coates shoreline had six birds from Mar 5th with six still present on Apr 5th, which may or may not have been different birds, and two there on Apr 8th were the last of the spring.

The first bird of the autumn was at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 16th, three were there on Oct 29th and the wintering flock increased to a maximum of 24 on Nov 11th; most of these stayed into Dec with 20 still present on Dec 12th and ten on Dec 16th. Up the coast Donna Nook had records on Nov 17th (2), Nov 24th (12), Nov 25th (2) and Dec 28th (5). As in the first quarter Gibraltar Point had just a single bird, on Nov 2nd and singles were at Cleethorpes on Nov 6th and 8th, and again on Dec 23rd. Those at Donna Nook (5) and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR (1) on Dec 28th were the last records of the year and, in 2018, there were no records away from the coast.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*



Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List.

The first birds of the year were five at Baston on Mar 11th, a more usual date compared to last year's early bird that arrived on Feb 28th. Small numbers trickled in during Mar with nine other sites recording a few each before the first double figure count of 22 at Bassingham on Mar 30th. The main arrivals though were during Apr with 100 at Baston on Apr 8th and 11th, and 100 at North Hykeham on Apr 29th. Elsewhere there were 40 at Alkborough Flats on Apr 4th, 40 at Messingham SQ on Apr 5th, 60 at Frampton Marsh on Apr 29th and 40 at Bardney on Apr 30th. There were no large numbers reported during May with 80 at Alkborough Flats on May 3rd and 50 at North Hykeham on May 16th the highest by some margin. The only record of breeding activity came from Asterby on Jul 1st. In Hagworthingham a colonial breeding site of very long-standing (in a sand cliff on the edge of a car park) was not used in 2018 as overhanging gorse that has been periodically cut back in the past by the Parish Council covered much of the cliff face; several pairs bred successfully at this site in 2017.

Autumn passage was evident from mid-Jul although counts were not as large as in 2018. There were 362 at Gibraltar Point on Jul 15th followed by 600 at Witham Mouth on Jul 19th; Gibraltar Point was the only site to record substantial numbers after this with 211 on Jul 20th, 300 on 24th and 195 on Jul 31st. Larger numbers were seen in Aug with eight counts of more than 100 at Gibraltar Point culminating in 1340 present on Aug 22nd. Alkborough Flats had 300 on Aug 11th, Witham Mouth 350 on Aug 12th and Frampton Marsh had nine days when more than 100 were seen with most on Aug 23rd and 25th (500). In early Sep there were 400 at Frampton Marsh on 1st, 250 there on 3rd and 4th, and 600 at Tattershall Thorpe on 9th. Numbers tailed off thereafter with 150 at Frampton Marsh on Sep 21st the only other significant count of the month and the last bird of the year was seen at Gibraltar Point on Sep 27th.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*



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

The first bird of the year was seen on Mar 16th at Woodhall Spa Airfield NR, a day later than in 2017, and there was one other Mar record at Frampton Marsh on 28th. Small numbers were reported during early Apr but with 30 at North Hykeham on Apr 6th and 20 at Alkborough Flats on Apr 7th followed by 100 at Baston and Langtoft GP on Apr 8th. Counts of 100 or more were reported in late Apr at nine sites with the highest at Deeping Lakes NR (200, Apr



Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris* Theddlethorpe Dec 12th 2018 © Paul Coombes



Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris* Theddlethorpe Dec 12th 2018 © Paul Coombes

25th), Toft Newton Reservoir (300, Apr 28th), Covenham Reservoir (450, Apr 30th). During May smaller numbers continued to arrive with Covenham Reservoir and Gibraltar Point dominating proceedings with five counts of more than 100 from these two sites; highest count was of 180 at Gibraltar Point on 2nd and 150 at Covenham on 23rd. Probable or confirmed breeding was documented at around 16 sites during the summer. Post-breeding numbers built up from early Aug with six counts of 1000 or more at Gibraltar Point on Aug 1st (1115), 8th (1379), 14th (1802), 15th (1139), 20th (1062) and 23rd (3054); most of these were counted moving south. A flock of 1000 was counted at Witham Mouth during the same period on Aug 12th. Large numbers continued to move south through Gibraltar Point in Sep with 1015 on 13th and 1422 on 18th, the highest of the month. Elsewhere 200 were counted at Frampton Marsh on Sep 1st, 200 at Fillingham on Sep 2nd and 250 were at Marston on Sep 7th; six other sites reported 100 or more during the month. Most had left by the end of the month leaving just a trickle moving south in Oct but with 20 seen at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 14th, 10 on 15th and the last bird of the year there on Nov 4th.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*



Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber List.

The first bird of the year was at Frampton Marsh on Mar 31st, the same date as in 2017. In Apr, birds were noted far and wide in small numbers for a couple of weeks before double figure counts came in. The highest counts of the month were 70 at Covenham Reservoir on Apr 27th and 100 at Millennium Green (North Hykeham) on Apr 29th. During May counts of 100 or more occurred only at Covenham Reservoir where there were 150 on May 23rd-24th and 100 on May 29th.

Smaller numbers were recorded in Jun as birds dispersed to their breeding areas, but counts of 250 on Jun 5th at Middlemarsh Farm and 253 at Gibraltar Point on Jun 14th were noteworthy – local feeding flocks? During Jul numbers were generally low until late month when 150 were over Northorpe Fen on 25th. Occupied nests and fledged young were reported from only a very few locations and confirmed breeding is widely under-recorded. Of interest, the provisional results of the 2015 BTO House Martin Survey estimated 750,000 pairs in the UK (range 650,000 to 850,000), with roughly 500,000 estimated to be in England, 150,000 in Scotland, 70,000 in Wales and 30,000 in Northern Ireland.

Post-breeding flocks are a familiar sight in Aug and the largest gatherings were at Gibraltar Point, 290 on Aug 14th, Frampton Marsh, 200 on Aug 24th, Cleethorpes 150 on Aug 31st with four other counts of 100 or just over at Huttoft (Aug 18th), Fillingham (Aug 20th), North Hykeham (Aug 24th) and Howell (Aug 29th). Southward passage continued with 33 totals of 100 birds or more in Sep. The highest counts again came from Gibraltar Point where there were 5078 on 13th, 4409 on 18th, 1860 on 21st and 2469 on 22nd. Another noteworthy count came from Belton House where 700 were grounded by heavy rain on Sep 6th. Numbers rapidly declined going into Oct with 35 south at Gibraltar Point on 2nd and 30 south at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on 21st the last significant counts. The final bird of the year was a late bird at East Halton Skitter on Nov 11th.



Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* Gibraltar Point Apr 25th 2018 © Russell Hayes

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Very scarce migrant, almost annual since 2003. **LBRC**.

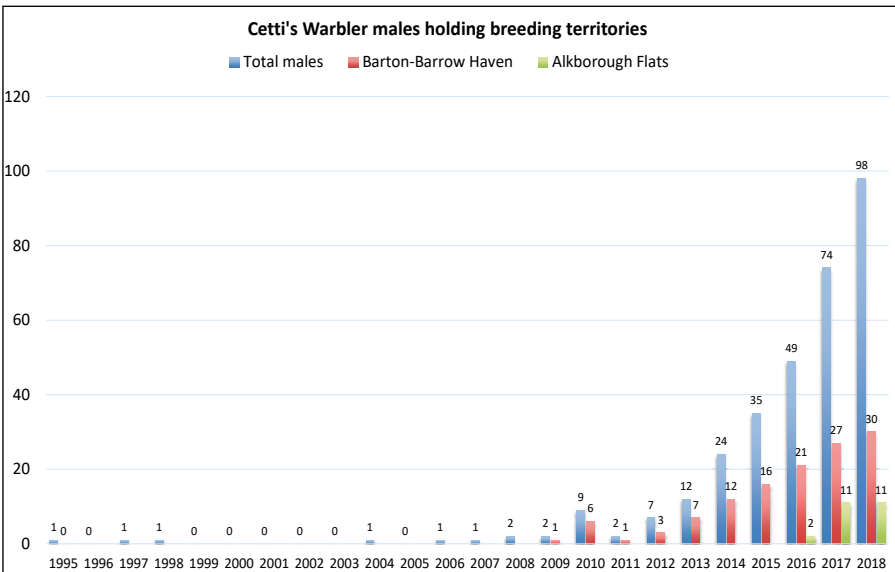
Two were over Jackson's Marsh at Gibraltar Point on Apr 23rd-26th, one on Apr 29th and again May 2nd all assumed to relate to the same birds (RDn, BWd). A single was at Frampton Marsh on Apr 27th and May 3rd (RSPB), and another at Kirkby on Bain GP on Apr 29th (KDR, ABa). It is a moot point whether there was any movement of these birds between sites given the dates of occurrence, but these are all regarded as separate records. There has been a marked increase since 2003 with one to six birds in 12 of the years 2003-18.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

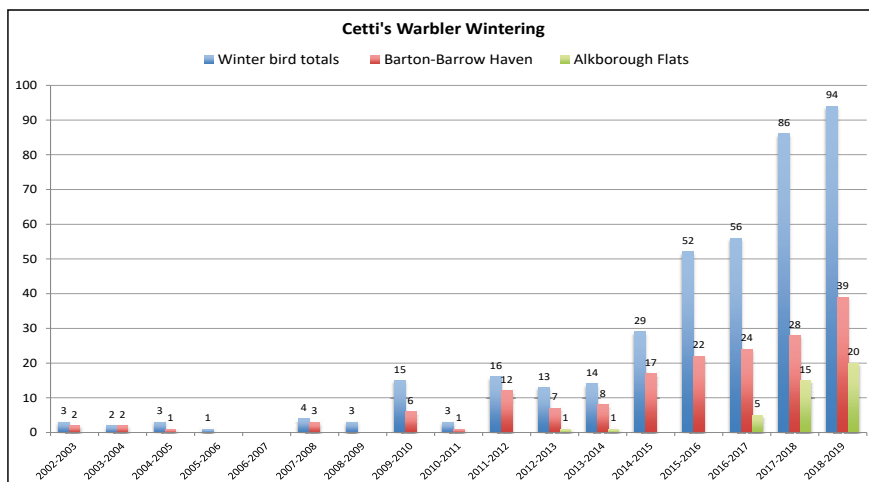


Rare but increasing breeding resident and passage migrant/winter visitor; first proven breeding in 2008. Green List. **RBBP**

In the analyses that follow, a wintering bird has been recorded as any bird staying in a locality for seven days or more between Oct-Feb with breeding territories being assumed for singing males remaining for seven days or more between Apr-Jul. Breeding birds were recorded from 26 sites/areas in 2018 but note that the largest contiguous area Barton-Barrow Haven pits encompasses a number of smaller sub-sites. This compares with 19 sites in 2017. It is noteworthy that some of the sites with only one or two singing males seem to be occupied for short periods of time and then abandoned while the sites with larger populations, like Barton-Barrow Haven, Alkborough Flats and Town's Holt-Freshney are clearly seeing continuous growth in the number of breeding birds. The carrying capacity of some of these areas must be reaching saturation point. The minimum number of territories holding males in the summer was 98 up from 74 in 2017, a 32% increase. Of this total 30 males were at Barton-Barrow Haven with an additional 11 at Alkborough Flats and the total along the south bank of the Humber 58, a massive 59% of the county total. Breeding sites occupied for the first time in 2018 were East Halton Pits, Fiskerton Fen, Gibraltar Point, South Ferriby and Wilsford.



Records of Cetti's Warblers outside the breeding season are heavily biased towards singing males that sing most of the year but in winter there are clearly many more birds than in spring and this is not reflected in the number of records submitted. Bearing this in mind 86 birds were recorded in the first winter period and 94 in the second whilst at Barton-Barrow Haven and Alkborough Flats combined, the counts were 43 and 59, respectively. Why the species is so restricted in some areas of apparently highly suitable habitat remains a mystery but at the key sites the rise in numbers continues apace and without a severe hard winter looks set to continue.



Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

British form 'rosaceous' a common resident and partial migrant. Nominate Scandinavian form ('Northern Long-tailed Tit') extremely rare vagrant. Amber List (*rosaceous*).

The species was found in 31% of BBS squares (2017 30%) with an average of 2.2 birds per occupied square (2017 2.3). It was the 39th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire in 2017 but only the 57th most numerous. Post breeding counts of more than 20 birds came from 15 sites compared to 14 in 2017 and only six in 2016. This year's peak count of 50 came from Boultham Mere on Oct 17th. Whisby had 45 birds on Dec 13th compared to the previous year peak there of 60. Gibraltar Point had 46 on Oct 4th.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Very scarce and declining passage migrant. Red List. LBRC

This was a better year for this scarce migrant with three or four records, all at Gibraltar Point. The first was on Apr 29th-30th near the entrance to Sykes Farm (BWd); the second on May 25th was found singing in the Plantation (NAL) and it or another was singing there on May 31st (BWd et al). The last bird was a juvenile trapped at the Observatory on Aug 14th (GGr).



Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Gibraltar Point Apr 30th 2018 © Ben Ward

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Scarce but increasing passage migrant Sep-Nov, rare inland.

The first bird of the autumn was at Huttoft on Oct 4th. The first record at Gibraltar Point was 18 on Oct 7th followed by a continuous presence there throughout Oct with other peaks of ten on 9th, 16 on 16th, and 12 on 17th. Elsewhere numbers were much lower and all on the coast with one to two birds at Anderby, Humberston Fitties, Skegness North Shore Golf Club and Tetney Marsh between Oct 4th-20th. Four were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 8th and Oct 13th. One or two remained at Gibraltar Point into Nov when the last two birds of the autumn were seen there on Nov 2nd. A decent year, but not as big a year as 2017!

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*



Nominate form a very common summer visitor and passage migrant. Northern form *acredula* scarce passage migrant to the UK. Green List.

Willow Warblers were reported from many sites across the county and the first bird arrived at Whisby NP on Mar 29th, three days later than in 2017. As usual large numbers arrived during Apr with 31 singing males at Twyford Woods on 21st, 24 at Whisby NP on 25th and 67 at Gibraltar Point on 27th. Very little evidence of breeding was reported with only one report of fledged young at Boultham Mere on Jul 5th. Autumn passage was underway by early Aug, and was well marked through to early Sep. At Gibraltar Point, there were peaks of 144 on Aug 13th, 92 on 15th, 125 on 16th, 280 on 17th, 157 on 18th and 125 on 20th. Also in Aug there was a tremendous fall at Freiston Shore on 17th when in excess of 500 were estimated. Elsewhere on the coast 40 were at Anderby and 18 at Huttoft on Aug 6th. Sep counts reflected the rapid southward movement as birds left the county and Gibraltar Point returned the only double-figure counts between Sep 5th-15th, with a peak of 27 on Sep 7th. Just one bird was reported in Oct, the final bird of the year at Gibraltar Point on 16th.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*



Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Rare/scarse in winter. Green List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	-	-	6	25	23	12	8	14	26	28	4	3
Whisby	1	-	6	24	14	1	1	6	1	1	-	2
Snipe Dales	-	-	-	28	-	15	8	-	3	-	-	-
Lincoln	-	-	2	4	27	2	2	-	2	-	-	-
Fillingham	-	-	-	8	1	7	1	11	7	1	2	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	2	6	6	8	2	1	5	3	-	-
Boultham Mere	-	-	3	7	5	4	2	2	3	2	-	-
Kirkby-on-Bain	-	1	3	5	5	1	2	4	2	1	1	1

There were relatively few wintering birds at the start of the year, with records from just nine sites, the most prominent being Marston STW, with up to five on Feb 24th. The first migrant appeared on Mar 9th at New Holland, with a presence at many sites by the end of the month. Peak counts were reduced a little from 2017, both in breeding areas and as migrants, but there were observations at most wooded or scrubby areas. Records in late Nov and Dec, indicating wintering birds, came from 15 sites, with Gibraltar Point hosting up to three and a similar presence in Whisby/North Hykeham. There was an interesting ringing control when JVA650 ringed as an adult female in Willingham Forest on Jun 18th 2017 was caught on the Isle of May on May 15th 2018. Chiffchaff was found in 48% of BBS squares (60% in 2017) with an average of 2.3 birds per occupied square (2.9 in 2017). It is the 29th most widespread species in Lincolnshire and the 52nd most numerous.

Siberian Chiffchaff *P.c. tristis*

Very scarce migrant and winter visitor. LBRC

Marston STW has become a favoured site for over-wintering Siberian Chiffchaffs and there were birds there on Jan 26th and Feb 23rd (DR et al), the only records of the first quarter. In the autumn Gibraltar Point reported one on Nov 13th and 16th (BWd et al). The last record of the year was of one at Whisby NP on Nov 30th and Dec 20th (BWd).

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

Rare vagrant. LBRC



Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* Gibraltar Point Oct 22nd 2018 © Paul Neale



Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* Gibraltar Point Oct 9th 2018 © Owen Beaumont

Correction: One trapped, Donna Nook, May 30th 2014 (not May 31st as published in the 2014 LBR)

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis*

Vagrant, with nine previous county records. The first was shot at North Cotes in 1932; the remainder have all occurred since 1976. LBRC

One was at Gibraltar Point on Oct 11th (NAL *et al*), the 10th county record. Accepted by BBRC (BB 112: 597). 2018 was the last year in which this species was assessed by the BBRC. Records from 1st Jan 2019 are to be assessed by the local rarity committee (LBRC).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*



Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List.

The first bird of the spring was a singing male at Whisby NP on Apr 1st. More followed during the first week of Apr with five at Alkborough Flats on Apr 8th and by the end of Apr double-figure counts of singing males were at Alkborough Flats (10), Frampton Marsh (10), Gibraltar Point (23), Tetney Marsh (12) and Willow Tree Fen (10). More arrived during May and the highest counts were of 28 at Gibraltar Point on 3rd, 23 at Midville (Stickney) on 10th and 20 at Frampton Marsh on 7th. Numbers reported during Jul-Aug showed a diminution in sightings with some double-figure counts from Gibraltar Point, Nocton Fen, and Midville. Sedge Warblers usually depart rapidly in the autumn and in Sep there were very few reports with most at Gibraltar Point (7, Sep 3rd) with one to two there and at Frampton Marsh and Marston STW only until the last bird of the month at Gibraltar Point on Sep 26th.

From BTO ringing data in 2018, birds ringed at North Somercotes and Gibraltar Point on Aug 11th were both controlled in France. ATC7685 had travelled 700km before being re-trapped on Aug 26th and Z915980 had travelled 440 km before being re-trapped on Aug 17th. A third bird ringed as an adult male at Wainfleet in 2014 was re-trapped for the third year in a row at the same site in Norfolk on May 19th, now just over four years old.



Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Frampton Marsh Jun 1st 2018 © John Clarkson



Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* Gibraltar Point Oct 11th 2018 © Ben Ward



Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* Gibraltar Point Oct 11th 2018 Owen Beaumont

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*



Common summer visitor and passage migrant that has increased in the last ten years. Green List.

The first Reed Warbler arrived on Apr 3rd at Barton Pits, the same site as last year'. Most didn't arrive until after mid-Apr and nowhere recorded double figures during the month; highest count was of eight at Willowtree Fen. May saw many more arrive with 25 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR and 21 at Willowtree Fen on May 7th. Other double-figure counts (maxima) were reported at Alkborough Flats (12), Frampton Marsh (20), Kirkby on Bain GP (21), Tetney Marsh (13) and Whisby (12) during May-Jun. The records show the species has a wide distribution to every corner of the county in suitable reedbed habitats, including many *Phragmites*-lined drains and ditches in the Fens. Autumn counts showed only double figures being recorded at coastal sites with 32 at Anderby on Aug 6th, 20 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 13th and 15 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 22nd. By the second week of Sep most birds had departed. Two were at Gibraltar Point on Sep 17th, otherwise reports were of single birds only and the last of the year was at Alkborough Flats on Oct 2nd.

Four birds ringed at Marston STW provided some interesting details. Y985990 was ringed as a juvenile in Aug 2012 and was re-trapped in Sussex on Aug 24th aged six years, its first encounter with a mist net since it was ringed. Z501902 was ringed on Sep 7th at Marston as a 1CY bird and also re-trapped in Sussex, on Sep 22nd. Lastly, AJD0212 ringed as a 1CY bird on Sep 8th was found dead in France, 918km south having flown into a window.



Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* Frampton Marsh May 28th 2018 © Russell Hayes

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*



Very scarce migrant, first recorded in Lincolnshire in 1961. RBBP. LBRC.

A singing male was found in the east dunes at Gibraltar Point on May 25th (KMW). Since the late 1970s Marsh Warbler has averaged one to two birds per year with the exception of 2008 that saw a spring influx in the UK with 12 birds in the county including three each at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point.



Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* Gibraltar Point May 25th 2018 © Ben Ward

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

Very scarce passage migrant May-Jun and late Jul-Oct, exceptional inland. **LBRC. RBBP.**

There were two records in 2018 both on the coast. The first was an elusive singing male at Huttoft Pit on May 24th (JS et al) and the second was a juvenile trapped at Gibraltar Point (GGR et al) Sep 13th. They have averaged 1.7 records per year between 2000-16 with none in 2017, compared to 4.8 per year in the earlier period 1970-99.



Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina* Gibraltar Point Sep 13th 2018 © Owen Beaumont

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*



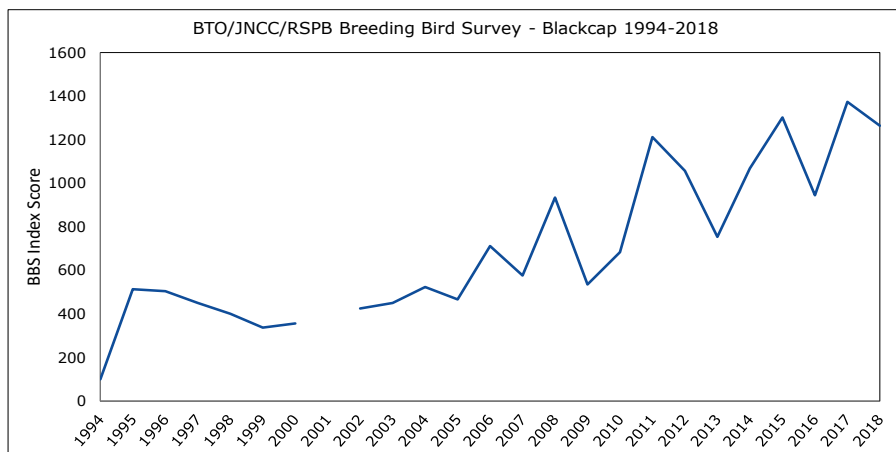
Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Decline in late 20th century but recent trend uncertain because of small population size and fluctuations. Red List.

The first bird of the year was noted on Apr 13th at Gibraltar Point and the last was at Rimac on Sep 17th. A male at Gibraltar Point was recorded singing from early Jun to Aug 10th. One or two birds were recorded at the 17 sites where they were present. Ten locations had birds present just once. Tetney Marsh and Boston Tip had two present on one occasion. Most birds were noted on the coast or the Humber. Inland, there were reports from five locations: Baston Fen (May 3rd), Boultham Mere (seven dates between Apr 19th-Jun 26th), Laughton Forest and Messingham (both May 5th) and Wressle (Apr 25th). All of these records refer to a single singing male with the exception of the Boultham Mere area where two were singing on Apr 19th and Jun 24th. There were no records of proven breeding.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*



Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Scarce winter visitor Dec-Mar. Green List.



The BBS data showed that Blackcaps were recorded in 68.8% of squares (73.3% in 2017) and that 159 birds were recorded in these squares (186 in 2017). The trend for Blackcaps in Lincolnshire is still very strongly upward. Reports came from seven sites in Jan-Feb, the first of these being two at Crook Bank on Jan 1st and three there on Jan 22nd. Single birds were reported at the six other sites, three of these visiting garden feeders. In Mar there were just five reports and given the presence of over-wintering birds it is hard to know when spring birds started to arrive. There were singles at Frampton Marsh on Mar 9th, Boultham Mere on 10th and Gibraltar Point on 26th. The first singing male was reported on Apr 4th at Snipe Dales and thereafter there was a flood of arrivals across the county. Most were recorded during Apr at Whisby NP on 25th when 36 were seen. There were 20 at Snipe Dales on 20th and 30 at Gibraltar Point on 29th rising to 36 on May 1st when there were also 30 at Temple Wood.

Autumn passage was most marked from mid-Aug to early Oct. Gibraltar Point recorded double-figure counts on 41 dates between Aug 1st-Oct 19th with peaks in Aug on 20th (37), in Sep on 3rd (39) and in Oct on 7th (35). Thirty were present on Oct 16th, 20 on Oct 17th and 15th on Oct 19th. Elsewhere there were four to six birds only at several sites both inland and on the coast. Three were at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Nov 2nd but all remaining records were at Gibraltar Point with three on Nov 11th and singles through the month until the final bird of the year on Nov 26th.

There were three interesting ringing controls: Z689927 was ringed as a 1CY male at Theddlethorpe on Aug 27th and re-trapped in Berkshire on Sep 13th having travelled 222km south in 17 days. Y196614 also a 1CY male ringed at Theddlethorpe on Oct 13th 2013 was re-trapped in the Czech Republic on May 19th 2018 1,051 km ESE. The third control was Z915720 ringed as a 1CY bird at Gibraltar Point on Aug 2nd and re-trapped on Sep 25th in Charente-Maritime, France 808km to the south.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*



Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List.

The first of the year was in Temple Wood on Apr 18th and by the end of Apr 11 sites had recorded them with the most being five at Whisby NP. Birds continued to arrive during May with 35 localities recording them. Highest counts were of 27 at Whisby NP on May 17th, 25 at Snipe Dales on Jun 22nd and 11 at Chambers Farm Wood on May 8th. Breeding was confirmed only at Whisby NP when an adult was seen taking food to a nest on Jun 13th.

Numbers were low during Jul-Aug with just 12 sites recording the species and the only sizeable count being seven in Laughton Forest. The dearth of records continued into Sep with singles only at Barton Pits and Frampton Marsh on 2nd, and at Gibraltar Point on 7th and 14th. The only other and final record of the year was on Oct 16th at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR. Garden Warblers were present in only four out of 77 BBS squares (5.2%) and there is insufficient data to calculate a BBS index for the county. The trend graph for the East Midlands is quite variable but in the last three years the index has recovered to 100, exactly where it started in 1994. Its relative scarcity compared to its congener the Blackcap is illustrated by the total birds of each which have ever been ringed in the county – 4,175 compared to 62,176 Blackcaps.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Rare coastal passage migrant mainly Aug-Oct, exceptionally to Dec. LBRC

There were two birds on Oct 7th at Gibraltar Point, one trapped at the Observatory (GGr), the second near the decoy, Croft Marsh LNR (KMW). These are the first records since 2015.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*



Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Siberian form blythi (Siberian Lesser Whitethroat) may have occurred in recent times.

Whisby NP had the first of the year when six were recorded on Apr 1st during a census there and the main arrival began two weeks later when birds trickled in to their breeding habitats. The largest total of 16 was counted at Gibraltar Point on the 20th and the next highest was eight at Burgh le Marsh on 25th. In May numbers peaked at Gibraltar Point on 1st when 22 were recorded and there were ten in the Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR area on May 8th. Smaller numbers of one to five were reported at 25 other sites across the county. Breeding activity was most obviously recorded as singing males but fledged young were only recorded at Crook Bank on Jul 3rd. From Aug 1st double counts began to appear reflecting successful breeding and the start of southern migration. Gibraltar Point recorded 41 on Aug 20th, the largest count of the month by some way; during Sep there were 15 on 1st, 12 on 2nd and 20 on 3rd. No other sites recorded more than one to two individuals and by early Oct most had departed with the last bird of the year seen at Gibraltar Point on Oct 7th. No reports were received of any late autumn/winter birds of the eastern race *S. c. blythi*.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*



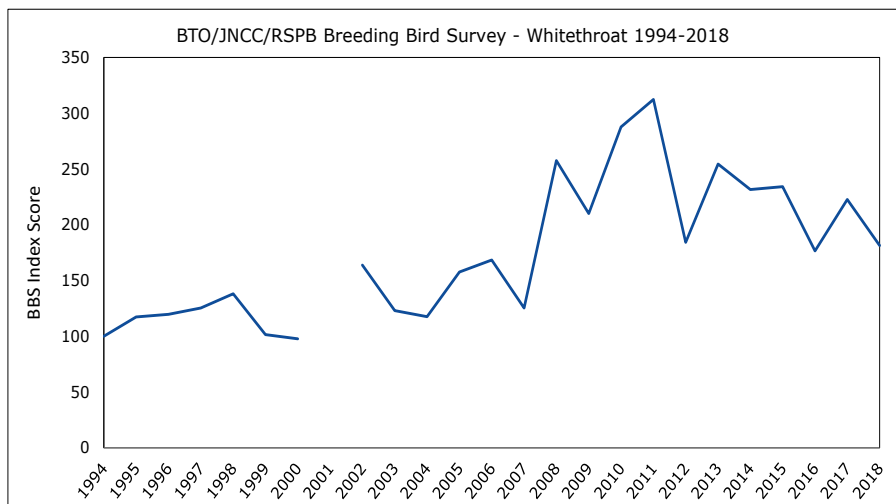
Nominate form a fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant. Green List (nominate form).

Whitethroats were recorded in 67 out of 77 BBS squares in 2018 (87%) and their BBS index is 81% higher than in 1994, the index year. Arguably though the population has been trending downwards since 2008.

The first bird of the year was recorded at Upton on Apr 13th. Most arrived during the period Apr 16th-23rd. On Apr 22nd 13 were noted at Gibraltar Point and numbers peaked there on Apr 26th when 45 were recorded. Elsewhere ten were noted at Boultham Mere on Apr 25th and 18 singing males were recorded at Snipe Dales on Apr 27th. By the end of the month, birds were recorded at 33 sites, which is somewhat down on 2017 (49). In May more than 90 countywide localities held the bird with much breeding activity in evidence and the highest count of the spring was of 101 at Gibraltar Point on May 3rd. Breeding activity was mainly evidenced by the presence of singing males at just 16 sites, surely an under-estimate? Fledged young were seen at Boultham Mere, Frampton Marsh, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR, Toft next Newton and Withern Ings.

In Aug large counts were made on the coast with counts of more than 50 at Gibraltar Point on 11 dates, the highest being of 112 on Aug 20th. 40 were recorded at Huttoft on Aug 6th with 12 at Marton on Aug 13th, 14 at Fillingham on Aug 16th, and 11 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Aug 27th the only other double-figure counts. Numbers quickly declined going into Sep with most again at Gibraltar Point – 26 on 1st, 25 on 2nd, 38 on 3rd declining to ten on 10th, their last double-figure count. 18 other sites recorded one to three birds during Sep and the final birds of

the year were at Frampton Marsh (1) and Gibraltar Point (2) on Sep 25th and at Monk's Wood, Dunholme on Sep 30th (2).



Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*



Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Rare summer records and territorial behaviour. Green List. **RBBP**

An over-wintering male found in a private garden in East Keal on Feb 7th gave brief snatches of song but was not seen again. Gibraltar Point saw most of the action with 28 out of 34 reports, very similar to the situation in 2017. The first spring report was at Gibraltar Point on Mar 16th and further records there followed on Apr 2nd, 4th, 6th, 7th (2), 11th-14th, 15th (3), 16th-19th and 21st. Some of these birds were males that were heard singing but it's impossible to know how many individuals were involved at a migration site like this. Singles were also recorded at Frampton Marsh on Apr 15th and Tetney Marsh on Apr 16th-17th. Lincolnshire still awaits its first confirmed breeding record.



Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla* Frampton Marsh Apr 15th 2018 © Steve Keightley

The first autumn record was of a bird trapped at Gibraltar Point on Oct 10th that was re-trapped the next day and yet again on Oct 17th; it increased its weight in that time from 4.7 to 5.2g. Also in this period probably a second bird was seen on Oct 13th near the cycle track. Another was present at Gibraltar Point on Oct 28th at the Beach Car Park and it or another was trapped at the Observatory on Oct 29th when one was also present at Huttoft Bank Pit. Probably the same bird lingered at Gibraltar Point from Oct 31st-Nov 1st. Another was present on Nov 5th, one was at Tetney Marsh on Nov 7th and the last record of the year was of a bird ringed at Gibraltar Point on Nov 9th and re-trapped there on Nov 10th. Its weight on both days was 4.9g.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*



Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List.

This common little bird was recorded in every month of the year and at 106 localities, similar to 2017 (114). Numbers were oddly low during the first quarter of 2018 with the highest counts being seven at three sites: Normanby Park on Jan 12th, Whisby on Mar 4th and Gibraltar Point on Mar 31st. As spring passage began in Apr and May there were 12 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 7th, ten on Apr 12th and one to six birds at 41 other sites reflecting its ubiquitous presence across the county. Small numbers were recorded during Jun and Jul with evidence of breeding activity largely being confined to the presence of singing males; fledged young were recorded at just one site, Stubton, on Jul 7th.

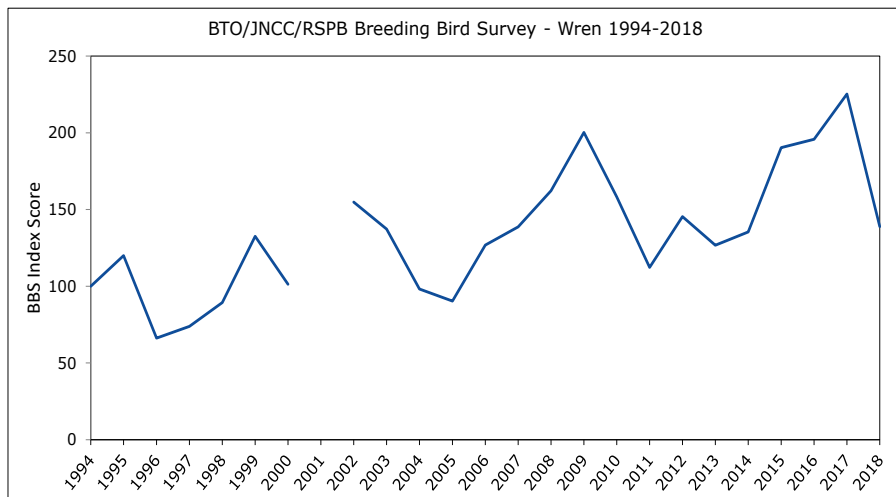
The largest counts were made during Sep as migration began with 12-25 recorded on ten dates at Gibraltar Point. As expected more arrived during Oct with 87 at Gibraltar Point and 100 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 16th and the highest autumn count at Gibraltar Point (120) on Oct 29th. The only other site to record double figures during the month was Anderby with 14 on Oct 29th. This pattern continued into Nov with double figure counts on 19 dates, most on 9th (54). Counts in Dec were unexceptional with the highest being 21 at Tunman Wood, Thorpe on the Hill on Dec 15th.

2017 addition: A pair with fledged young at West Keal in Jun.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*



Abundant resident and partial migrant. Green List.



This species was found in 94% of BBS squares (2017 94%) with an average of 6.0 birds per occupied square (2017 8.1). It is the 6th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire from BBS coverage and the 14th most numerous. Although the BBS index is 39% higher compared to 1994, in the short term (2017-18) it fell by 38% presumably due to mortality suffered during the severe weather that set in from late Feb. All counts of more than 40 came from Gibraltar Point this year between Aug 13th and Nov 2nd with a peak of 66 on Oct 17th.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*



Fairly common and increasing woodland resident. Green List.

This species was found in 3.9% of BBS squares (2017 3.5%) with an average of 2.7 birds per occupied square (2017 1.0). Reports of four or more birds came from five sites, down from nine in 2017. As in 2017 the top count was six birds, recorded at Callan's Lane Wood near Bulby Oct 4th, as well as Normanby Park on Jan 12th and Keelby on Dec 2nd. Reports of five came from Belton Park on Sep 25th. Breeding was confirmed at Callan's Lane Wood and Alkborough Flats.



Nuthatch *Sitta europaea* Nocton Dec 9th 2018 © Neil Smith

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*



British form *britannica* a common resident and partial migrant. Nominate Scandinavian and eastern European form a very rare vagrant. Green List (nominate).

This inconspicuous little bird was recorded in every month of the year on 254 different dates at 62 locations. Reports were mainly of one to two birds with three reported on 14 dates; the largest numbers were six at Tunman Wood, Eagle Dec 15th, seven Rigsby Wood Nov 22nd and eight there Dec 20th. There was very little reported of any breeding activity other than birds in the right habitat, the odd singing male, or displaying birds.

Of the 77 BBS squares in the county five held Treecreepers (in 2017 they were noted in four of 86 BBS squares); there is insufficient data to calculate a BBS index for this species though. The sole ringing datum concerned a bird ringed as a 1CY on Sep 25th 2015 near Market Rasen, since re-trapped three times there most recently on Nov 22nd 2018, when aged just over three yrs. (the longevity record for Britain and Ireland is eight yrs. eight mths.).

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus*

Rare passage migrant. LBRC

An adult was present at Saltfleetby St Clement on Jun 7th and 8th (J and S Crossfield) and another was at Deeping St Nicholas on Jun 11th (N Stimpson). These two records were part of an influx to Britain and Ireland this spring when from May 9th to mid-Jun more than 100 arrived.



Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus* Saltfleetby village Jun 8th 2018 © John Clarkson

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

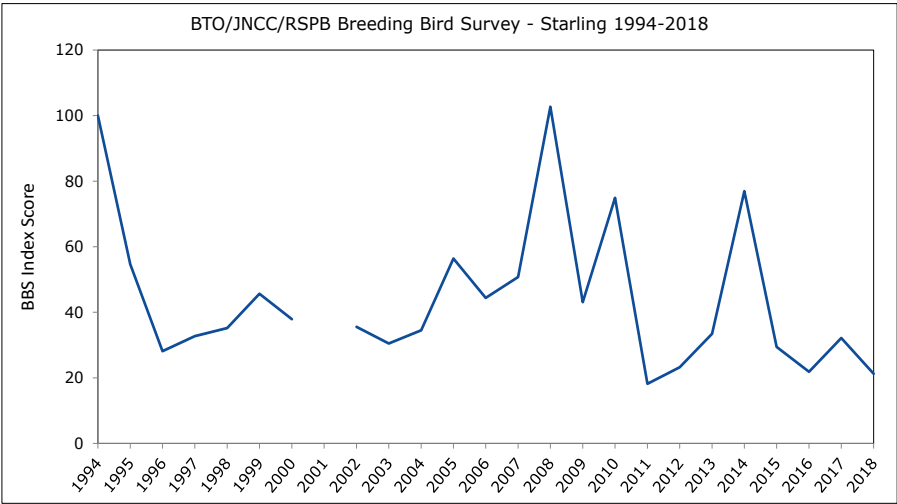


Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Whisby	25000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	380	10000	10000
Alkborough Flats	1500	40	15000	1	1	40		1	1	5000	120	7000
Barton Pits	205	1	15	10	30	3	1	1	50	60	15000	1
Gibraltar Point	367	500	3500	900	24	132	40	44	170	7030	1015	50
Saltfleetby	300	15	250	49	1	-	120	-	-	6500	300	60
North Hykeham	-	7000	-	-	12	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney Marsh	70	250		100	120	120	100		500	2600	1200	150
Middlemarsh Farm	50	100	1500	500	50	200	30	500	50	100	300	150
Lincoln	13	10	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	1679	1582	-
Wilsford	3000	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	30	7	12
Messingham	1	1	1	1	2	-	1	1	1	1	3000	-
Marton	1	-	1800	1	-	-	-	-	120	39	350	250
Huttoft	50	82	200	8	8	40	-	400	500	1000	40	3
Toft next Newton	1600	80	100	30	18	50	18	40	165	100	65	10
Wainfleet	300	270	20	-	31	-	-	-	-	1500	62	53
Witham Mouth	-	20	1	-	15	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stickford	-	-	2000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Baston	40	1	200	5	1	-	-	2	1	60	1200	-

Although numbers have decreased nationally during the last 50 years, and significantly in the county in the past 25 years, birds were recorded somewhere in the county on every day of the year, from around 170 locations. About 60 of the counts totalled over a 1000 birds and came from 20 locations. Numbers are swelled during the winter months by migrants from continental Europe and led to some spectacular murmurations. Whisby and the adjoining North Hykeham Pits was the place to be before dusk at both ends of the year with huge numbers of birds swirling about before abruptly diving down into the reeds to roost in front of awestruck spectators. Highest estimates were 20000 on Jan 1st and 3rd and 25000 on Jan 6th. In all, estimates of 5000 or more occurred on seven occasions. Alkborough Flats was the next best place with a maximum of 15000

on Mar 6th, 5000 on Oct 20th and 7000 on Dec 9th. The presence of juvenile birds in large post-breeding flocks is usually a common sight but was only actually reported from Donna Nook, Pinchbeck and West Ashby.



Starlings are another species that looked to have been hit by the severe weather in late Feb. The BBS index fell by 34% compared with that of 2017 and the index overall is 84% lower than the index year of 1994.



Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* Barton Pits Apr 17th 2018 © Graham Catley

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*



Scarce passage migrant Mar-May and Sep-Nov; rare in winter. Red List.

Around 111 records came from 18 sites during the year, 17 in the spring and just four in the autumn; most of the autumn records were at Gibraltar Point. Spring passage lasted about five and a half weeks, but was almost twice as long in the autumn at nine weeks. The first of the year appeared at Gibraltar Point on Apr 6th with two there the next day. Single birds were also recorded at Baston and Langtoft GP, Grimsby and at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on the 7th. There was a steady passage during Apr-May that ceased fairly abruptly on May 14th when the last bird of the spring was seen at Anderby Creek. Three birds were at Gibraltar Point on Apr 11th, 15th, 28th and 30th and on May 2nd-3rd; the highest count of four was also there on Apr 22nd. Autumn passage was more protracted with the first bird at Gibraltar Point on Sep 22nd and the final bird of the year there on Nov 22nd. Highest counts were all at Gibraltar Point with seven Oct 7th, 13 Oct 17th and 11 Oct 19th. Anderby Creek, Freiston Shore and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR were the only other sites to record Ring Ouzels in the autumn.

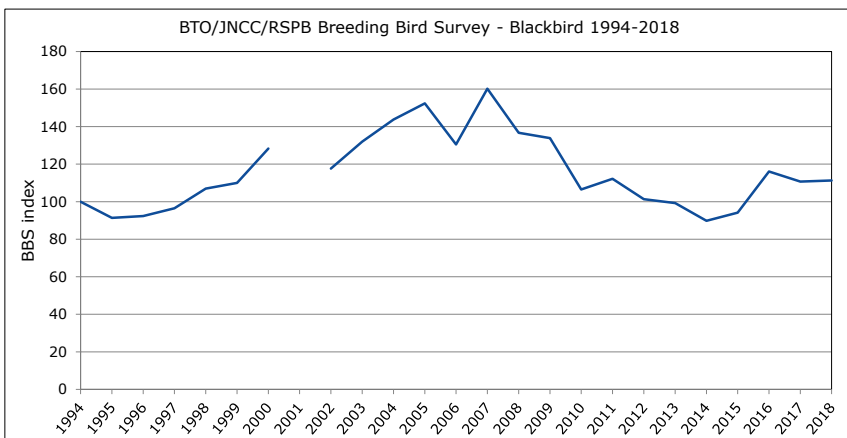
The table summarises the days the species was recorded at the 11 main sites. The grand total is the sum of the highest number recorded on any given day. The totals are likely to under-represent the true totals, especially during the spring at coastal sites like Gibraltar Point where birds move through quickly and counts on consecutive days may be different individuals. In addition to those sites in the table, birds were present at Alkborough Flats (two, Apr 22nd), Barrow Haven (one, Apr 8th), Baston and Langtoft GP (one, Apr 8th), Bransby (two, Apr 8th), Goxhill (two, Apr 8th), Roxby (one, Apr 14th), and Saltfleet Haven (one, May 2nd).

Site	Days present	Grand total (Approx)	First date	Last date
Gibraltar Point	50	152	06/04	04/05
			23/09	22/11
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	10	20	07/04	21/04
			10/10	19/10
Whisby	6	1	22/04	01/05
Covenham Reservoir	3	2	13/04	24/04
Grimsby	3	2	07/04	21/04
Scunthorpe	3	3	14/04	03/05
Tetney Marsh	3	4	16/04	26/04
Anderby Creek	2	5	14/04	-
Barton-upon-Humber	2	1	18/10	-
Donna Nook	2	2	08/04	29/04
Freiston Shore	2	1	06/10	08/10
Total birds		205		

Blackbird *Turdus merula*



Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List.



Blackbirds show a relatively stable BBS index and are found in 97% of BBS squares (2017 99%) with an average of 12 birds per occupied square (2017 12). It is the third most widespread bird in Lincolnshire from BBS coverage and the 8th most numerous. Counts of 50 or more came from ten sites this year compared to 13 last year. The highest counts came from Gibraltar Point where autumn migration rose from a peak of 118 on Oct 16th rising to 420 on Oct 27th and 690 on Oct 29th. There were 270 on Nov 15th. Elsewhere the highest counts were of 83 from West Common, Lincoln on Oct 30th and 76 in the Tetford area on Dec 11th.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* ■

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr; rare in summer. Red List. RBBP

Almost 1100 records were received from 131 localities during the year, and there were 135 counts of 100 more birds. Highest in the first quarter was 590 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Jan 22nd, 400 Deeping Low Bank Feb 22nd and 300 at both Bonby Carrs and Deeping Low Bank on Feb 2nd. Numbers fell during Mar-Apr as birds moved on and departed with a notable 120 in Lincoln on Apr 7th but few thereafter. The final birds of the first half of the year were 20 in Bourne Woods May 1st and a single at Gibraltar Point on May 8th and 10th.

In the autumn returning birds were noted for the first time on Oct 3rd with a single bird on the reserve and four more dropping in to the plantation at Gibraltar Point; further north another was seen on the same date at Covenham Reservoir. The highest count of the year was 1672 on West Common, Lincoln on Oct 28th and 1000 at Frampton Marsh on Dec 17th. There was a single ringing recovery of a bird ringed as an adult male in Norfolk on Jan 8th and found long dead at Holbeach Drove on Mar 14th.



Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* Bardney Mar 2nd 2018 © Russell Hayes

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

■ (nominate) ■ (coburni)

Nominate Scandinavian and Russian form a very common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr, rare in summer. Icelandic form *coburni* a very rare vagrant. Red List (nominate) and Green List (*coburni*). RBBP

Redwings were recorded around 900 times from nearly 120 locations; 100 or more birds were recorded on 48 occasions from eleven different locations. This was double last year's total although counts during Jan-Mar were largely unremarkable but with 155 at Gibraltar Point Mar on 11th, 150 at North Thoresby on Mar 19th, a newly arrived flock of 130 at East Keal on Mar 27th and another of 330 at Fulbeck on Apr 1st the highest as birds began to move northwards in the spring. Lingering birds were at Barton Pits (1), Gibraltar Point (1) and Tetney Marsh (3) on Apr 15th. The last records of the spring were singles at Gibraltar Point on Apr 29th and 30th and a very late record there on Jun 21st.

The first two birds of the autumn were noted at Deeping High Bank on Sep 8th. Just odd single birds arrived during the rest of Sep and the main influx began in earnest in Oct. The three largest

totals were all recorded at Gibraltar Point: 777 were present on Oct 11th, 1730 on Oct 16th 1500 of which came in off the sea; many of these birds passed through south or moved off inland as evidenced by RZ76627 (below). Elsewhere the next highest total was 626 on West Common, Lincoln on Oct 17th. A month later 1047 was counted on Nov 15th, with 624 going south and 151 in off the sea. Inland there were widespread counts of 50-100 with 150 at Candlesby Quarry on Dec 6th, 120 Marton on Dec 2nd, and 114 West Common, Lincoln on Nov 3rd the highest.

RZ76627	First year	30-10-18	Nettleton Beck: 53°28'N 0019'W (Lincs.)
	Caught by ringer	19-11-18	Little Ashton, Sutton Coldfield: 52°35'N 1°52'W (West Midlands), 143km SW

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

■ (*clarkei*) ■ (*nominate*)

British form *clarkei* a common resident. Nominate continental form a common passage migrant.

The species was found in 62% of BBS squares (2017 66%) with an average of 2.2 birds per occupied square (2017 2.6). It was the 23rd most widespread bird in Lincolnshire in 2017 but only the 55th most numerous. This species seems to fare worse in Lincolnshire than other parts of England. Locally it has fallen by 14% since 1995 while across the whole of England it has increased by 26%. The autumn influx of northern European birds is always most noticeable at coastal sites. This year Gibraltar Point had the highest count (117) on Oct 11th, practically the same as the maximum in 2017 (120). The only other count above 15 was 32 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 16th.



Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* Grantham Jul 8th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

■

Common resident and partial migrant. Red List.

The Stormcock was found in 35% of BBS squares (2017 28%) with an average of 1.6 birds per occupied square (1.5 in 2017). Fewer big counts were received; the highest count of 24 came from Welbourn on Jul 13th with 14 there on Aug 15th. Gibraltar Point had 12 on Aug 27th well down from the peak of 36 in Sep 2017. BBS results show the population of this species has been stable across the East Midlands from 1995 to 2018 though it has fallen by 38% across England as a whole.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*



Fairly common but much decreased and now very local summer visitor and passage migrant. Red List.

During the year around 240 records of birds arriving at about 44 locations over a five-month period were recorded. The first bird was present in Twigmoor Woods on May 5th and the last of the year was at Gibraltar Point on Oct 1st. The three largest totals counted were 12 around the reserve at Gibraltar Point on Aug 20th, 11 at Fillingham on Aug 29th and ten at South Ormsby on Sep 6th.

A singing male was in Old Bolingbroke on Jun 15th but the only places where breeding was confirmed were at Keal Hill on Jul 9th where a pair bred in a private garden and fledged at least two young; a passing family at Doddington Park Jul 10-11th, an adult and four juveniles at Langtoft Aug 3rd, Linwood Warren where recently fledged young were noted on Aug 12th, and two families (eight birds) at Kirkby on Bain on Aug 21st.



Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* Gibraltar Point Sep 21st 2018 © Paul Neale

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*



British form melophilus a very common resident. Nominate continental form a common passage migrant and winter visitor. Green List (both forms).

Robins were found in 90% of BBS squares (2017 88%) with an average of 4.2 birds per occupied square (2017 5.3). It is the 8th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire from BBS coverage and the 28th most numerous. Another of our common garden species whose UK population index is still at a 50 year high. All counts of over 50 came from Gibraltar Point this year between Oct 7th and Nov 25th with peaks of 240 on Oct 16th (180 in 2017) and 183 on Nov 15th. Inland the best count was from Swanholme Lakes, Lincoln with an early breeding season peak of 33 on Mar 3rd.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

Nominate Scandinavian form (Red-spotted Bluethroat) rare migrant. Central and southern European form cyanecula (White-spotted Bluethroat) a very rare vagrant. LBRC RBBP

An elusive male White-spotted Bluethroat L.s. cyanecula was found at East Halton on Apr 3rd (SRo), a typically early showing for this form. It remained elusive and was not seen on Apr 4th, but was still present on the morning of Apr 5th. Since 1950 there have been nearly 100 records



Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* (White-spotted) Halton Pits Apr 3rd 2018 Graham Catley



Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* (White-spotted) Halton Pits Apr 3rd 2018 Graham Catley

involving about 105 birds most of them of the red-spotted form L.s. *svecica* and seven definitely attributed to L.s. *cyaneola*.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* ■

Rare and declining local summer visitor and very scarce passage migrant. Red List.

At the northern edge of its breeding range there were just 41 sightings of this declining species all from Whisby apart from a single bird in Bourne Woods on May 12th and a singing male on consecutive days Jun 6th - 7th at the Ancaster railway-line. The first returning bird was noted on Apr 21st, ten days later than last year. Census work at Whisby NP located just three singing males around Coot Lake. One of these paired with a female and nest building was observed on May 9th with the male in full song nearby. This pair was seen carrying food for young on Jun 8th, confirming breeding, but it is not known if any of the young successfully fledged. No birds were found round the adjacent North Hykeham Pits. The final bird of the year was in the fallen oak area of Coot Lake on Jun 30th.



Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* Whisby NR May 25th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Very rare vagrant. BBRC

For the second year in a row no records of this species were received.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* ■

Scarce passage migrant, mainly coastal; very scarce in spring and scarce in autumn. Red List.

Nine localities recorded Pied Flycatchers in 2018 with the first bird of the year on Apr 20th at Gibraltar Point where a good spring was had for this species. Five (one female, four males) were present on Apr 29th, seven (one female, six males) on 30th and 12 (three females, nine males) on May 1st. Three were present May 2nd-3rd and singles on 24th, 26th and the last of the spring on 27th. Elsewhere a female was at Humberston on Apr 29th, one at Donna Nook May 2nd, one at Frampton Marsh May 4th and one at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on May 27th.

The first of the autumn was at Gibraltar Point on Aug 1st with 13 there on 4th. Four were at both Anderby Creek and Huttoft Bank Pit LWT reserve on 6th, one was inland at Fillingham on 16th, three were at Saltfleet on 21st, with four more at Anderby and five at Gibraltar Point on 29th.

Most had gone by mid-Sep with late birds at Gibraltar Point on Sep 27th, and singles there Oct 16th-18th the last of the year.



Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* Gibraltar Point May 1st 208 © Paul Neale

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Very scarce passage migrant in May and Sep-Nov. Exceptional inland and in spring. LBRC.

A very elusive 1CY bird was at Gibraltar Point in the west dunes on Sep 7th, trapped on Sep 8th and then again 10th-11th (KMW). The first record after blank years in 2016-17; 2013-14 were the last good years when 8 and 9 were recorded, respectively.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*



European form gibraltariensis ('Western Black Redstart') a scarce passage migrant, rare and irregular breeder and very scarce winter visitor. One record of 'Eastern Black Redstart' of one of the Central Asian forms *phoenicuroides/rufiventris/xerophilus*. Red List (*gibraltariensis*). RBBP



Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* Donna Nook Apr 3rd 2018 © Mark Johnson

The first bird of the year was one reported at Covenham Reservoir on Jan 17th and 18th. A strong spring passage began with one on Mar 15th at Gibraltar Point and two there the following day. There were one to two birds here on 12 further dates to Apr 16th. Elsewhere in Mar there were singles at Sutton on Sea (18th), Goxhill (20th), Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe (22nd) Humberston Fitties (25th) and Tetney Marsh on six dates from Mar 28th-Apr 11th. In Apr there were singles at Donna Nook (3rd), Boultham Mere (6th–7th), Huttoft (7th), Lincoln (7th), Metheringham (14th), Freiston Shore (16th) and Stickford (20th). There was another small influx in May with single birds at Gibraltar Point on 18th, 25th and 26th, Scunthorpe and Holme (19th) and Donna Nook (30th). The only summer record was one at Gibraltar Point on Jun 11th. There was no evidence of breeding. By contrast the autumn passage was meagre with singles at Gibraltar Point on Nov 14th and 19th and Cleethorpes on Nov 24th–25th.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*



Rare summer visitor and scarce passage migrant in spring, fairly common in autumn. Amber List.

For the second year running both migration periods had comparatively few records and observations in potential breeding areas were also minimal. The first record of the year was at Gedney Drove End on Apr 14th, with the next at Gibraltar Point on Apr 20th. Numbers in spring remained small, with a maximum count of three at Gibraltar Point on May 1st and the last spring record was at Donna Nook on May 30th. The only inland record in this period was a singing bird at Twigmoor on May 5th, but there were no further sightings or suggestions of breeding. The last confirmed breeding in Lincolnshire was in 2013.

Autumn passage was exceptionally poor, commencing with an adult male on Jul 2nd at Gibraltar Point, followed by a spotty juvenile bird on Jul 7th. Singles were the order of the day with a maxima of two there Sep 1st-2nd only, and no records at other coastal sites in Aug/Sep. There were only three records after Sep 11th – one at Tetney Marsh on Oct 11th, a single at Gibraltar Point on Oct 16th and the last bird at Saltfleet on Oct 30th. There were also very few inland autumn records, although three were observed at Sturton-by-Stow on Aug 25th and one on a few dates at Fillingham.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*



Scarce/fairly common passage migrant. Formerly bred. Red List.

As has become usual in Lincolnshire, spring passage was light and commenced with a bird at Boultham Mere on Apr 22nd (the only inland record in spring) and one the following day at Gibraltar Point. Coastal records were limited to around 16 birds at eight sites, with the majority at Gibraltar Point. Adult males were seen there on Apr 23rd and 27th, and May 27th. The last spring records were singles on May 30th at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point.

The autumn passage was a little stronger, although still limited by comparison with other recent years. The first returning bird was on Aug 3rd at Gibraltar Point and this site had single figure numbers on most dates from Aug 11th through to Sep 28th, with higher counts of 13 on Aug 28th, 10 on Sep 17th and the largest of 16 on Sep 22nd. Small numbers, generally singles or duos, were also reported from a further nine coastal sites and seven inland sites during Aug/Sep. There were just two Oct records, both at Frampton Marsh, with one on Oct 3rd and two on the last date of Oct 8th. This compares with a mean last date of Oct 21st over the previous ten years.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*



Scarce/fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly Sep-Apr. Rare and sporadic breeder. Green List.

Fewer records were received compared with 2018 and only Alkborough Flats, Gibraltar Point, Boultham Mere and Donna Nook had counts of five or more. Gibraltar Point had double-figure counts in Oct on 4th (10), 5th (11), 7th (17), 10th (16) and 16th (11). Birds were counted in 41 locations in all months other than Jun and Jul. Juvenile birds were recorded at Gibraltar Point on seven occasions from the beginning of Aug and into Sep. Stonechats used to be regular breeders on the heaths of the northwest and elsewhere in the county in small numbers, but by and large this ceased at some time during the 1950s. The last record of the spring was at Gibraltar Point on May 30th and the first of the autumn also there on Aug 2nd. As is now usual there were no records of any breeding attempts.



Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* Gibraltar Point Feb 6th 2018 © Paul Neale

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*



Fairly common passage migrant and former local breeder but no recent certainty, although pairs are regular in late spring. Greenland form ('Greenland Wheatear') *leucorhoa* is a scarce migrant in spring/autumn. Green List (both forms).



Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* Toft Newton Sep 22nd 2018 Gary Fenwick

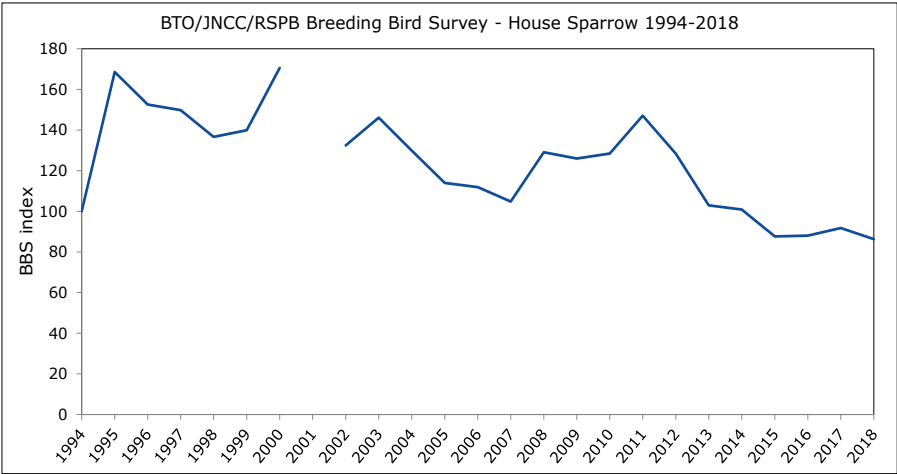
The first bird of the year was on Mar 28th inland at Wressle. This is comparatively late (around 12 days later than the recent average first arrival). The first at Gibraltar Point was on Mar 31st and then there was a broader arrival during the first few days of Apr, evenly split between coastal and inland sites. The largest daily site totals in Apr were 26 at Tetney Marsh on Apr 25th and 23 at Gibraltar Point on Apr 27th. There was continued strong passage in early May, with the largest count being 42 at Gibraltar Point on May 4th. There was an absence of reports from the usual hotspots of RAF Waddington and Risby Warren. Numbers dropped off after mid-May, although

single figure reports continued into early Jun, but there was no suggestion of any breeding activity. Unusually, there were no specific reports relating to birds of the Greenland form *leucorhoa*.

Other than a report at Frampton Marsh on Jun 23rd, the next observations commenced on Aug 6th, with small numbers then present at several coastal sites until the end of Sep, although the only double-figure counts were ten at Gibraltar Point on Aug 19th-20th. Singles were also reported at eight inland sites, with Toft next Newton reservoir the only site having two, on both Aug 24th and Sep 22nd. There were eight records of probably five or six birds during Oct and the last of the year was at Chapel St Leonards on Nov 1st.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* █

Common resident and partial migrant. Red List.



This species was found in 62% of BBS squares (66% in 2017) with an average of 22 birds per occupied square (19 in 2017). It was the 24th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire in 2017 and the 3rd most numerous. The population of this red data bird collapsed nearly four-fold from 1976 to the early 1990s and may have stabilised although the trend still looks to be downwards. Latest indications suggest the crash may have been caused by avian malaria, which may be preventing population resurgence. Flocks of more than 50 were reported from 15 localities, up from 14 in 2017. Counts of 100 were as follows: Anderby Aug 6th, Baumber Sep 10th and Frampton Marsh Sep 15th.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* █

Fairly common resident though localised resident and partial migrant. Red List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Boultham Mere	45	45	35	6	4	15	5	7	7	6	30	20
Baumber	20	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	-	120
Gibraltar Point	1	2	2	1	2	2	-	21	57	88	4	1
Freiston Shore	90	6	2	1	8	10	-	50	4	3	-	1
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	12	12	12	35	-	40	40	20	-
Fockerby	30	40	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	2	2	1	1	20	1	2	11	30	4	20	1
Carrington	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	-	57
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	40	-	-	-
Gedney Drove End	7	3	3	3	4	-	-	13	40	-	-	6
Whitton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	-	20	-	-
Gypsy Bridge	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brocklesby	30	-	6	3	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-

Lincolnshire is important to this species with around a third of all BBS squares occupied in the county compared with 5% nationally. Reports seemingly reflect this local trend with roughly 736 records from about 80 localities all over the county. The largest totals counted were at Baumber where there were 120 on Dec 10th and 100 on Dec 21st. There were 90 at Freiston Shore on Jan 18th and later in the year 88 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 17th. There were six other counts where the total was in excess of 50: Baumber (60 on Sep 20th), Gibraltar Point (57 on Sep 3rd and Oct 22nd), Carrington (57 on Dec 17th), Gipsy Bridge (51 on Jan 1st) and Freiston Shore (50 on Aug 21st). Small signs of autumn passage could be ascertained on the coast from the records returned during Aug-Sep with Gibraltar Point recording most during Sep-Oct. The table shows all sites where 30 or more were recorded at least once in the month.

Dunnoch *Prunella modularis*

▣ (*occidentalis*) ▢ (*nominate*)

British form *occidentalis* a very common resident and partial migrant. Nominate continental form a scarce passage migrant, mostly in autumn. Amber List (*occidentalis*) and Green List (*nominate*). This amber listed species was found in 88% of BBS squares (87% in 2017) with an average of 3.3 birds per occupied square (4.0 in 2017). It is the 10th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire from BBS coverage and the 37th most numerous. The Lincolnshire BBS index shows the population is down slightly by 4% since 1994. It is amber listed because its UK population fell by half from the early 1970s to the early 1990s and it has since recovered only gradually. Gibraltar Point had a spring peak of 41 on Apr 7th. The autumn peak of 65 at Gibraltar Point on Sep 3rd was down from 96 in Sep 2017. Inland the highest count of the year came from East Keal where there were 14 on Mar 26th.

Yellow Wagtail group *Motacilla flava*

Summer visitor and passage migrant. One common race occurs and several others are scarce/rare.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima*

▣

British form a common summer visitor and passage migrant mostly Apr-Sep. Red List.

Site Name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Frampton Marsh	-	38	8	2	10	120	92	-
Freiston Shore	-	1	2	-	22	200	2	-
Gibraltar Point	-	35	4	2	12	104	46	1
Toft next Newton	-	40	30	13	50	40	6	-
Tetney Marsh	-	4	8	4	41	18	3	-
Alkborough Flats	-	10	1	-	-	60	2	-
Middlemarsh Farm	-	7	1	2	-	16	30	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	6	3	-	2	15	28	-
Gedney Drove End	-	2	2	-	-	50	-	-
Wrangle	-	-	-	3	30	-	5	-
Witham Mouth	-	-	-	-	-	13	25	-
Welland Marsh	-	-	-	-	4	30	-	-
Stickney	-	-	15	-	17	-	-	-

The table records all sites with more than 30 birds. The first of the year was at Butterwick on Apr 1st heralding a steady influx with peaks during the month of 40 at Toft Newton Reservoir on 20th, 30 at Frampton Marsh on 15th and 35 at Gibraltar Point on 23rd. High counts noted during May included 30 at Toft Newton Reservoir on the 2nd and 15 at Stickney on the 6th whilst single-figure counts were widespread.

It is pleasing to note that Aug-Sep counts were considerably higher than in 2017 perhaps suggesting a productive breeding season with 200 at Freiston on Aug 18th, 104 at Gibraltar Point on Aug 14th, 120 at Frampton Marsh on Aug 31st and 60 at Alkborough Flats on Aug 5th. In Sep there were 92 at Frampton Marsh on 1st with regular counts of up to 50 there until 11th; there were 46 at Gibraltar Point on 12th, 30 at Middlemarsh Farm on 15th with numbers falling rapidly thereafter. The only Oct records came from Gibraltar Point where singles were noted on five dates with the last on 13th.

Blue-headed Wagtail *M.f. flava*

▣

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly spring. Has bred sporadically. Amber List. LBRC. RBBP

There was no confirmed record in 2018 of this distinctive race of Yellow Wagtail. Retrospective records are welcome if there are any awaiting submission.

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. Red List.

Peak monthly counts	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of sites	19	11	11	9	7	3	8	6	25	22	14	16
Minimum number of birds	24	18	14	11	10	3	12	20	62	32	17	19

Records were received from just 51 sites, down from 73 in 2017 and 100 in 2016. Whether this reflects an actual reduction or observer reporting fatigue is not yet known but all counts in the table are down with the exception of the Sep peak that was boosted by 25 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on the 30th. This reserve noted 11 on Aug 27th and Gibraltar Point saw nine on Aug 22nd and six on Oct 17th. Elsewhere one to four was widespread. Although present at several sites during the breeding season, success was noted only in Louth where a pair was feeding young on the canal in Jul.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*



Common resident and passage migrant. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Toft next Newton	25	4	22	30	16	17	20	25	75	60	12	4
Ruskington	1	150	1	3	-	-	-	-	3	11	-	-
Grimsby Hospital	1	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	150	-
Covenham Reservoir	5	6	8	5	5	4	9	10	16	10	21	12
Tetney Marsh	22	14	-	4	4	6	11	-	5	13	10	4
Gibraltar Point	q	2	3	6	4	6	12	6	5	3	2	1
Marston	55	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	3	-	140
Frampton Marsh	1	15	2	4	2	3	13	10	8	1	1	1
Alkborough Flats	1	-	1	12	1	5	1	6	20	1	10	1
Manby Wetlands	1	10	6	2	7	5	10	7	5	3	-	2

The table includes all sites where the annual total was 50 or more. These figures are somewhat lower than the previous two years perhaps suggesting that the increasing trend for this species has plateaued. Away from the tabulated sites there were 16 at Theddlethorpe St Helen Feb 10th, 14 at Kirkby on Bain Feb 23rd, 20 at Haddington Mar 6th, 16 at Witham Mouth Aug 12th, 10 at Cleethorpes Aug 29th, 25 at Grainthorpe Haven Oct 1st and 11 at Ruskington Oct 5th. Single figure counts were extremely widespread. Pied Wagtails were recorded in 44% of BBS squares (61% in 2017) with an average of 1.3 birds per occupied square (2.1 in 2017). Compared with the BBS index of 1.0 in 1994, the index for 2018 is 0.86 a decrease of 14%.



Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli* Far Ings LWT Mar 29th 2018 © Paul Coombes

White Wagtail *M.a.alba*



Nominate continental form a scarce passage migrant, mainly Mar-Jun. Amber List. **RBBP**

White wagtails are among our earliest migrants often in Mar and the first record of the year just crept in on 31st at Frampton Marsh with the next Apr 10th and with passage evident through until May 4th; peak numbers occurred on Apr 13th (10), 14th (10) and 18th (12). The first at Baston and Langtoft GP was on Apr 8th with two there on 13th and three on 14th and a single 15th-16th. Manby Wetlands had one on Apr 16th.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly Sep-Nov, rarely Dec-Jan and Apr-May. **LBRC**

The first of the autumn was at Gibraltar Point on Oct 7th (KMW et al) followed shortly afterwards by one at Humberston on Oct 11th (O. Metcalf). One flew over Huttoft calling loudly on Oct 15th (RDn) followed by another north at Gibraltar Point on Oct 17th (NAL) and one was at Tetney Marsh the next day, Oct 18th (CS).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*



Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	13	5	70	60	38	43	44	83	2950	851	32	48
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	70	20	5	4	1	8	3	50	100	37	18	1
Donna Nook	12	4	26	11	-	15	12	7	150	46	23	1
Toft next Newton	1	5	12	7	7	6	4	4	50	100	38	4
Anderby	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	5	139	9	20	1
Freiston Shore	4	10	8	4	13	13	-	60	24	15	-	3
Grainthorpe	-	18	3	5	-	6	11	7	51	17	5	22
Marston	-	7	-	5	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	130
Wrangle	5	14	6	-	-	7	24	-	55	16	-	5
Lincoln West Common	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	80	27	-

The summary table includes some of the more consistently recorded sites, plus an inland one, including all areas with records of 50 or more birds. Counts were received from around 110 sites across the county. Low numbers of birds over-wintered in the county with few counts reaching double figures. Spring passage was in evidence at Gibraltar Point in Mar with birds seen moving south on most days in low numbers; the peak count occurred on 21st when 70 were recorded. Breeding estimates included 86 territories at Frampton Marsh and 25 territories at Freiston Shore, significant decreases on the 2017 totals. Singing males were noted at several other sites and an occupied nest found at Gibraltar Point in the outer dunes but no further confirmation of breeding was recorded.

Autumn passage was heavy throughout Sep with more than 17000 moving south at Gibraltar Point during the month. Day totals there were above 200 on 17 dates, with maxima of 2832 south on 21st and 2837 on 21st. Other maxima are tabulated. Smaller numbers were recorded in Oct although Gibraltar Point logged more than 100 birds on 13 dates during the month. On Oct 21st 100 were at Toft Newton Reservoir and visible migration at West Common Lincoln saw 80 over on 17th and 58 on 20th. Numbers dwindled rapidly after the end of Nov with 40 at Boultham Mere on 12th but few other significant numbers moving or indeed wintering, as at the start of the year.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*



Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Breeds locally, mainly in the western half of the county. Red List.

Breeding season records came from just two localities all in the north of the county; at Laughton Forest after the first nine males on Apr 19th an incomplete survey located 11 occupied territories on the wet heath area. This compares badly with 2006 when territories peaked at 27 and there were an additional six territories elsewhere, demonstrating the ongoing decline of this species in the forest area. From surveys in 2019 it would appear that up to ten additional territories could have been occupied in the greater forest area but even a combined total of 27 territories would be well down on the peaks of 40 territories in 1992, 45 in 2000, 52 in 2003 and 42 in 2006. The last two birds were seen there on Aug 22nd. At Crowle Moors at least three males held territories but none were found in surveys of Willingham-Walesby Forest.

On the coast a total of 24 birds were logged at Gibraltar Point in spring between Apr 9th–May 27th and 47 between Jul 14th and Oct 16th with peaks of 4 on Aug 16th and Sep 13th; elsewhere one was noted at Alkborough Flats on Jul 22nd.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*

Vagrant. **LBRC**

One was found at North Cotes on Oct 19th (CA) when it was flushed from the sea bank between Tetney Haven and North Cotes Point before dropping into the adjacent saltmarsh. This was the 13th Lincolnshire record following the bird last year at Gibraltar Point.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*



Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor Oct–Apr. Mainly coastal, possibly increasing but can be elusive, making counting difficult. Amber List. **LBRC**

Water Pipits were recorded at around 13 sites, all of them coastal apart from Baston and Langtoft GP and Middlemarsh Farm. Birds were present from Jan 1st–Apr 18th and again from Oct 10th–Dec 30th. Gibraltar Point regularly recorded one to four birds during Jan–Apr with a maximum of seven birds on Feb 16th. Alkborough Flats, Donna Nook, East Halton Skitter, Frampton Marsh, Goxhill, Middlemarsh Farm and Tetney Marsh all reported one to two birds during Jan–Apr and Willow Tree Fen had one on Feb 9th, the only inland site. The last report of the spring was of one at Gibraltar Point on Apr 21st.

The first autumn record was at Frampton Marsh on Oct 10th with just one to two at Gibraltar Point and Huttoft. Single birds predominated on the coast at several sites in Nov–Dec with maxima of four at Goxhill Nov 23rd, at East Halton on Dec 2nd and 22nd, and at Alkborough Flats on Dec 9th. The only inland sites recording Water Pipits were Middlemarsh Farm where one was seen on Nov 15th, 22nd and Dec 6th; and Baston and Langtoft GP where there was a single on Dec 23rd and 26th, three on 29th and two on 30th.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

■ (*littoralis*) □ (*nominate*)

Scandinavian Rock form *littoralis* a fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor Sep–Apr; scarce inland. Nominate British and Irish form essentially resident so probably a very scarce winter visitor. Green List (*littoralis*) and Amber List (*nominate*).

Site name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	-	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	33	81	20	5	-	36	156	58	30
Saltfleetby-Theddelethorpe	20	30	6	1	-	-	7	16	14
Donna Nook	20	8	1	-	-	-	37	18	9
Somercotes - Horseshoe Point	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	95	8
Saltfleet	2	30	17	-	-	-	2	20	30
Tetney Marsh	47	4	-	-	-	-	5	15	4

The coastal and estuarine areas holding most wintering birds are given in the table which shows the highest day counts in a given month. Early and late in the year, most Rock Pipits are found along the shore and in saltmarsh between Gibraltar Point and Tetney Marsh/Grainthorpe but there is also a pronounced visible passage at Gibraltar Point in autumn. As in 2017, there was a roost on the old saltmarsh: the 81 birds in this roost on Feb 16th was the highest count in the first quarter. Most had left by the end of Mar with a very few lingering into Apr, when the last two of the spring were at Gibraltar Point on Apr 16th.

The first in the autumn was at Frampton Marsh on Sep 11th, with others soon following elsewhere and the majority arriving between end-Sep and end-Oct. Visible migration counts at Gibraltar Point recorded 86 birds south in Sep and 974 south in Oct. This was well down on 2017 (1969) with just one day with more than 100 recorded (126 on Oct 17th). Southwards passage continued through Nov with 46 over Gibraltar Point on 13th. There were fewer in Dec as autumn movements ceased but some good wintering flocks in the Tetney Marsh/Grainthorpe area.

British and Irish Rock Pipits are essentially resident and with none breeding between the south Yorkshire coast and the Thames. The autumn and winter arrivals are largely of the Scandinavian race *A.p. littoralis*. Very few Rock Pipits have ever been ringed in the county but recently three Norwegian colour-ringed birds have been seen: Oct 17th 2013 at Barton upon Humber, Jan 15th 2016 at Pyewipe and Oct 16th 2018 at Witham Mouth.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

■ (gengleri) ■ (nominate)

British form gengleri an abundant resident. Nominate continental form a passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List (gengleri) and Green List (nominate).

Peak counts during Jan-Feb saw many areas recording small flocks in double figures. Larger numbers were recorded at Nocton Fen, 100 on Jan 2nd-3rd, and 80 at Brocklesby-Croxton Jan 26th, Frampton Marsh Feb 7th and Gibraltar Point Mar 23rd. Coastal passage was evident at Gibraltar Point from early Mar building throughout the month with a total of 811 logged going south in Mar with a peak of 659 on Mar 14th. Passage continued through Apr with peaks of 2526 south on Apr 4th and 953 south on Apr 6th. Elsewhere smaller flocks of 10-30 were noted at both coastal and inland locations.

May-Aug was quieter as expected and autumn passage began from late Sep with 72 south at Gibraltar Point on 22nd the most recorded in that month. Significant movements weren't seen until Oct with 18 counts of 100 or more at Gibraltar Point between Oct 7th-31st and a maximum of 720 on Oct 17th most heading south. Elsewhere numbers were more modest with 53 over Lincoln West Common on Oct 20th and 20-40 at several other coastal and inland sites. Southwards movements at Gibraltar Point continued throughout Nov with 513 on 12th and 1511 on 13th. Inland 75 were at Stenigot on Nov 24th, 60 at Kirkby GP Nov 16th and 26th, 40 at Stickney on Nov 4th and 30 Tetney Marsh Nov 8th the highest counts. Many fewer were present in the county in Dec with up to 91 at Gibraltar Point and inland flocks of 50 at Kirkby on Bain GP Dec 14th, 40 at Marston STW Dec 23rd, 38 at Thimbleby Dec 14th and 33 at Louth Canal Dec 26th the only flocks of more than 30 recorded. Three ringing recoveries were of birds ringed in the county, all of six to eight years of age.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

■

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Exceptional in summer. Green List. RBBP

Bramblings were reported from 39 sites in 2018, roughly the same as in 2017 but less than half the number in 2016. In Jan-Mar up to 50 were at Wroot (Jan 29th) but just one to four at a few other sites. This was also the picture in Apr-May apart from an exceptional day at Gibraltar Point on Apr 6th when 78 were recorded including 71 south over the west dunes. The last of the spring was there on May 4th.

The first autumn bird was one at Gibraltar Point on Sep 25th but followed by some large numbers in Oct, all on the coast. Peak numbers at Gibraltar Point were 461 on 7th, 142 on 11th and 203 on 17th; 869 were logged going south during the month. There were some significant numbers logged elsewhere with 200 at Butterwick Marsh on Oct 9th, 22 at Fillingham Oct 20th, 31 Saltfleetby 23rd and up to eight over Lincoln West Common Oct 21st-28th. Southward movements continued at Gibraltar Point with 105 on Nov 12th and 125 on Nov 13th. In Dec just one to four birds were present at several sites but with 60 at Asterby on Dec 21st and a single at Gibraltar Point and three at Fillingham on Dec 31st the last of the year.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

■

Very scarce local resident and rare passage migrant, occasionally irruptive. Red List. LBRC RBBP

The extraordinary influx of this usually rare species in Lincolnshire continued into 2018 with birds reported at 22 sites across the county. Most was a flock of 60 at Forest Pines (Broughton). A popular flock in the churchyard at East Keal peaked at 24 on Apr 8th with other double-figure counts coming from Lincoln (20, Apr 11th), and Belton (12, Apr 10th). The final few remained into late spring on the coast at Gibraltar Point where the last record was of a single on Jun 1st. Regrettably there was no repeat in the autumn with the first at Marton on Sep 30th and other singles at Gibraltar Point on six dates in Oct and one on Nov 15th the final bird of the year.

(See review of the Hawfinch influx of 2017/18 on p183)

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

■

British form pileata a fairly common resident, but largely absent from the fens. Nominate Scandinavian form ('Northern Bullfinch') a very rare irruptive visitor in autumn and winter. Amber List (pileata).

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Fillingham	3	1	-	2	1	1	1	12	6	9	9	4
Whisby	10	8	4	4	2	2	2	2	-	6	-	4
Snipe Dales	-	-	-	18	6	15	3	-	1	-	1	-
Welbourn	3	-	1	1	2	7	10	6	6	4	-	3



Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* Gibraltar Point Oct 7th 2018 © Paul Neale



Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Forest Pines Jan 22nd 2018 © Graham Catley



Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Forest Pines Jan 22nd & Mar 7th 2018 © Graham Catley

Tetney Marsh	3	5	-	4	4	2	4	-	5	6	4	3
North Hykeham	6	10	-	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	10	3
Boultham Mere	6	6	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	6	5	5
Barton Pits	7	1	6	4	4	2	1	-	1	1	4	1
Marton	10	4	1	2	-	-	1	-	4	1	6	3
Saltfleetby Theddlethorpe	4	6	3	2	2	2	1	6	3	2	-	-

The table shows all sites recording an annual total of greater than 30. Records were received from 96 sites, considerably fewer than the previous two years. There is little doubt that this species is under-recorded, partly as they are rather secretive, as is indicated by the paucity of records at the height of the breeding season. The most consistent recording is from individuals who methodically monitor their local patch. Away from the tabulated sites one to five were recorded widely with ten in Louth on Jan 1st. Proof of breeding was received from North Hykeham, Deeping St James, West Keal and Castle Bytham.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Vagrant May-Jun and Aug-Oct. LBRC RBBP

Two were at Gibraltar Point on May 25th (KMW), one an adult male the other an immature male both heard singing around Sykes Farm and The Plantation; the adult flew off south, the immature remained in song until late evening. Another male was found next day May 26th singing near Mill Hill and thought to be additional to those of 25th(JS). Another immature male was singing at the south end of the east dunes on Jun 8th (KMW et al) and finally one was photographed at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR Aug 26th (NC).



Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* Theddlethorpe Dunes Aug 26th 2018 © Nick Crouch

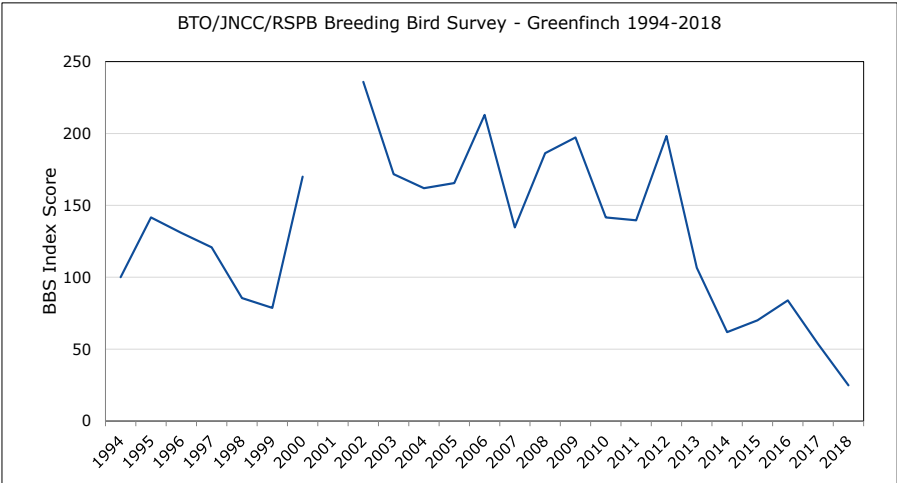
Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

■ (*harrisoni*) ■ (*nominate*)

British form *harrisoni* a common but declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Nominate continental form a winter visitor in unknown numbers. Red List (*harrisoni*) and Green List (*nominate*).

The recurrent theme for this species seems to be its well-documented decline. The BTO index derived from Lincolnshire BBS data now stands at its lowest ever, a fall by 75.2% since the index

year of 1994. The next BoCC4 assessment seems likely to bring a change of status of Greenfinch in the UK – when will it become a description species?



As in 2017, wintering flocks of 20 or more during the first quarter were few and noted at just eight sites across the county with the largest again at Whisby NR (125, Jan 3rd), this and a count of 100 on Jan 6th being the only three-figure counts during Jan-Mar. After Mar, numbers quickly fell as wintering flocks dispersed to breeding territories. Summer numbers were unremarkable and fledged young were reported at Boultham Mere, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR, Tattershall and Winteringham. A post-breeding flock of 150 at Marton on Aug 21st was notable.

Autumn coastal passage was very modest at Gibraltar Point with only a trickle of birds south in Sep and a maximum of 51 south on Oct 21st. Oct maxima elsewhere included 50 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 19th and 30 at Freiston Shore (Oct 10th) and Tetney Marsh (Oct 10th-11th). Numbers declined during Nov-Dec but with a significant flock of 200 at Dowsby Fen on Nov 17th; elsewhere flocks were no higher than 30. British Greenfinches don't generally move far but an adult male ringed in Bedfordshire on Dec 16th 2017 was found freshly dead (hit window) in Horncastle on Jun 7th, 115km N.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*



Rare coastal winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly Sep-Apr. Rare inland. Red List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR	80	120	35	-	-	200	150
Marshchapel	17	80	68	-	24	13	-
Donna Nook	60	-	40	40	-	-	24
Theddlethorpe St. Helen	55	8	-	-	-	100	1
Tetney Marsh	-	13	65	25	17	24	13
Butterwick	51	-	-	-	-	27	61
Cleethorpes	16	16	-	-	-	21	80
Leverton	107	19	-	-	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	1	52	50	-	-	-	-
Saltfleet	-	55	-	-	-	-	-
Friskney	53	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gedney Drove End	-	-	-	-	-	-	50

This remains a bird almost exclusively of coastal saltmarshes in winter, as evidenced by the table, which shows maximum monthly numbers at all sites with at least one count over 50. The highest numbers were along the northeast coast and these were broadly similar to 2017. Almost certainly there is some overlap between adjacent sites, with the birds showing high mobility and splitting into smaller groups before re-assembling further along the saltings. Sites on the Wash had larger

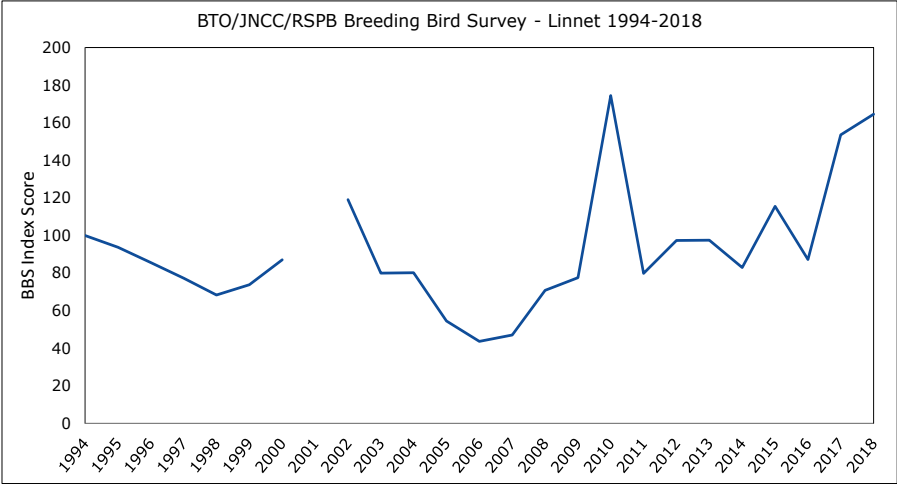
flocks than in 2017, at least at the start of the year, while the presence on the Humber was much reduced with the only report of three to five birds at East Halton Skitter on two dates in Nov. The last reports in spring were 40 at Donna Nook on Apr 8th and the first autumn records were 30 at Gibraltar Point on Oct 6th.

Linnet *Linaria cannabina*



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

Recorded widely throughout the county all year with counts from about 159 sites, and with maximum counts being recorded in Sep. The BBS index for Lincolnshire in 2018 (165) is almost back to the index peak value of 2010 (174).



During Jan-Mar several flocks of 100 or more were recorded at 13 mainly coastal sites, the highest being 400 at Freiston on Jan 20th. Spring movements on the coast were seen in Mar-Apr, with most in the second half of Apr; between Apr 14th-26th 1223 were counted during visible migration watching with a peak of 302 on Apr 18th, 271 of which went through south. Inland there was an impressive count of 360 at Nocton Fen on Mar 28th. Summer counts were unremarkable but increased in early autumn and some large post-breeding flocks were seen at Frampton Marsh (300) and Winterton (130) in late Aug. More were seen in Sep, particularly late in the month (table) and Gibraltar Point logged 2677 south during the month, peaking at 609 south out of a total of 834 on Sep 30th.

Site	Sep		Oct		Nov	
	Maximum	Date	Maximum	Date	Maximum	Date
Fillingham	400	29th	-	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	300	1st	235	18th	200	27th
Gibraltar Point	834	30th	886	3rd	432	13th
Huttoft	220	23rd	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	399	25th	400	19th	320	16th
Tetney Marsh	220	23rd	-	-	-	-

In Oct high counts were concentrated at just three coastal sites: Frampton Marsh, Gibraltar Point and Tetney Marsh and visible migration at Gibraltar Point logged a total of 4340 south during the month. Coastal passage declined in Nov but 432 moved south at Gibraltar Point on Nov 13th and Frampton Marsh and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR still held significant flocks. In Dec none of the coastal sites held more than 100 and more were recorded inland with 130 at Stubton Dec 24th, 100 at Baumber Dec 14th, and 100 at Alkborough Flats Dec 29th the only substantial flocks.

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 met these criteria and were deemed acceptable.

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*



Nominate Scandinavian and Russian form scarce or very scarce, occasionally fairly common, irruptive winter visitor. Greenland form *rostrata* a very rare vagrant. Amber List (nominate). **LBRC**

Small numbers were recorded in the first quarter at some regular sites. In the Sleaford area one to three birds were in Ruskington Jan 1st-Apr 17th, and birds were ringed there on Feb 6th and Mar 30th (JDa). Elsewhere one was in a private garden in Lincoln on Feb 22nd (CG) and singles in Bourne Woods and Dunsby on Mar 3rd, Apr 10th, Dunsby Apr 13th and Bourne Woods Apr 16th (JDa).



Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret* Grantham Apr 8th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*



Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare breeder. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	2	-	1	3	-	-	-	2	3	38	46	1
Whisby NP	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	17	70
Lincoln, Swanpool	20	15	10	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Lincoln, Doddington	11	10	18	11	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-
North Hykeham	4	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	22
Broadholme	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-	-

There was only a limited presence of Lesser Redpolls in the county during the year with no large coastal flocks or counts at inland woodlands, as in 2017. The Lincoln area had the most consistent reports, particularly on a garden feeder in Doddington Park, and also at Ruskington, but numbers at both locations were generally low. A total of 29 sites had reports in spring and only 19 sites, including coastal migration hotspots, in the autumn/winter. There were only three reports between late Apr and early Aug: singles at Gibraltar Point on Apr 20th, at Branston on May 1st, and at Gibraltar Point on Aug 4th. There was no evidence of breeding. The only report at Messingham, which usually has a small flock, was of one on Apr 6th.

A most notable achievement was 146 birds trapped and ringed at Walesby Moor between Oct 21st and Nov 15th. This emphasises the variable nature of this species at sites in the county and their tendency to appear without notice, although it may also be that this species is under-reported, with no further submitted records at this site or at many locations where there has been at least some presence in most years (e.g. Laughton Forest, Twigmoor). Two re-trapped birds were of interest: Y527562 was ringed as an adult male on Oct 26th 2017 and re-trapped in Market Rasen on Feb 6th; S866546 was ringed as a 1CY bird on Nov 8th 2017 at Dunsby and re-trapped at Angler's Country Park, Wakefield on Oct 21st.

Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus*

Irruptive vagrant first recorded in Oct 1962 when at least 11 occurred. There were four in 1982/3, 90 in 1990/1, two in 1995 and one in 2013. LBRC

A female was identified in a flock of Common Crossbills at Gibraltar Point on Nov 14th-15th (BWd, KMW); this female had the typically bulging lower mandible of the species. This was the first record since 2013 when there was a major irruption into Britain.



Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus* Gibraltar Point Nov 11th 2018 © Ben Ward

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. Green List.

After the dearth of Crossbills in the last quarter of 2017, they remained very scarce in the county in 2018 with the first record not until Mar 5th when two were at Gibraltar Point. Records were only received from eight sites, an increase of two on 2017: Anderby Creek, Baston Fen, Chapel St. Leonard's, Fillingham, Gibraltar Point, Laughton Forest, Snipe Dales and Tetney Marsh.

Gibraltar Point recorded them on 49 dates during Mar-Nov, the other sites on just single dates in Jun, Jul, Oct and Nov. Most in the spring was a count of ten on May 27th at Gibraltar Point. One to three birds were seen there Jun-Sep but there were records there on 17 dates in Oct with ten on Oct 10th, 16 Oct 11th and 11-13 Oct 23rd-25th. Up to six were present on 11 dates in Nov, the last being a single in the Plantation on Nov 23rd. Needless to say there was no evidence of any breeding activity.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*



British form *britannica* a common resident and passage migrant. Nominate continental form may also occur. Amber List (*britannica*).

Goldfinch remains one of the commonest finches in the county and was reported from more than 180 sites. The largest wintering flocks in the first quarter were all in Jan-Feb with 50 or more at

nine sites, the most being 100 at Frampton Marsh (Feb 2nd) and Ruskington (Jan 31st); 80 at Boultham Mere (Jan 6th and 22nd) and Tetney Marsh (Jan 11th).

Some modest southwards movement began at Gibraltar Point during Mar, but most were on the move there during Apr peaking at 185 south on 16th; there was also 100 south at Freiston Shore on Apr 17th. Passage petered out by the first week of May and Jun-Jul totals were unremarkable. Post-breeding flocks then started to build up during Aug and several sites on the coast and inland reported 100 or more on some days and most at Frampton Marsh (150 Aug 7th), Gibraltar Point (135 Aug 15th), Freiston Shore (100 Aug 13th) and Welbourne (100 Aug 27th).

Autumn numbers were much lower than in 2017 but with most still recorded in late Sep, with 300 at Fillingham on Sep 29th and 230 feeding in one weedy field at Alkborough Flats on Sep 30th. Coastal passage was much more modest too with a maximum of 173 (122 south) at Gibraltar Point also on Sep 30th. Numbers at Gibraltar Point in Oct were slightly higher with more than 100 birds recorded on 19 dates during the month, but still substantially lower than the 1000s recorded in 2017. Highest counts were 615 Oct 9th (596 south) and 793 Oct 17th (719 south), with 3739 logged moving south during the month (cf. Oct 2017 when more than 25000 were logged). Elsewhere on the coast Tetney Marsh had 123 on Oct 17th and inland 240 were at Welbourne Heath on Oct 16th. Southward passage continued into Nov with 824 south at Gibraltar Point on Nov 13th being the highest of the month. Cleethorpes had 200 on Nov 21st, the only other count of more than 100 in Nov. Dec was the quietest month of the winter with 140 at Tetney Marsh on Dec 30th and 100 in Lincoln on Dec 10th and 11th.

Two birds ringed locally as adult males were re-trapped in 2018, both now more than six years old. Five birds, three re-trapped and two found dead, exhibited movements of more than 100km. S867468 was a Scottish bird wintering in the south of the county.

S867468	First-year Male Caught by ringer	04-01-18 24-06-18	Finch Hatton Close, Ruskington: 53°2'N 0°23'W (Lincs.) Selkirk: 55°32'N 2°50'W (Scottish Borders), 322km NNW, 5mth.
ATC7861	Adult Male Caught by ringer	29-09-18 29-10-18	Nr. North Somercotes: 53°26'N 0°9'E (Lincs.) Hardham: 50°56'N 0°32'W (West Sussex), 283km S, 1mth.
S178855	Adult Female Freshly dead	21-11-16 17-07-18	Alderton: 52°0'N 1°24'E (Suffolk) Gainsborough: 53°23'N 0°46'W (Lincs.), 212km NW, 1y 7mth.
S866322	Adult Male Freshly dead (hit glass)	25-10-17 23-10-18	Dunsby, Bourne: 52°49'N 0°22'W (Lincs.) Briggswath: 54°27'N 0°39'W (N. Yorks.), 182km N, 11mth.
Z999636	Adult Male Caught by ringer	09-04-17 09-11-18	Top Scrub, Filey Brigg Country Park: 54°13'N 0°16'W (N. Yorks) Pickworth: c. 52°53'N 0°27'W (Lincs.), 148km S, 1yr. 7mth.

European Serin *Serinus serinus*

Very scarce migrant, mainly Apr-Jun and Oct-Nov. LBRC.

After a blank year in 2017, there were several to report in 2018, all at Gibraltar Point barring one at Tetney Marsh. The first of the birds at Gibraltar Point was on Mar 22nd, thought to be a female seen briefly at the drinking pool in the Plantation (SML). The second was a male on May 5th in the sycamores in the west dunes (GWr). Meanwhile the third of the year turned up at Tetney Marsh on May 28th (RL). Four records followed from Gibraltar Point: a flighty female or immature bird in the east dunes on Jun 10th (RKW); one on Jun 16th flew south over the Beach Car Park (KMW); another female or immature on Jul 1st (RKW). The Jun-Jul sightings are thought to relate to the same individual. Finally there was one on Oct 6th in the east dunes with a Linnet flock (RKW).

Siskin *Spinus spinus*



Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce in summer but may breed in some years. Green List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	1	2	60	235	4	2	21	25	443	357	248	36

Only Gibraltar Point had reports from all months of the year (see table of maximum day counts) and these reflect similar numbers to 2017 during the migration periods. At Gibraltar Point in Sep 1559 in total were counted going south and in Oct 2316 went south. Away from there the reported wintering numbers were again generally lower than a few years ago, with counts over 40 limited to a few sites in the Lincoln area - Hartsholme/Swanholme Lakes (100 Jan 27th; 70 14th Feb), Whisby (80 Jan 27th), Boultham Park (60 Feb 5th) and Boultham Mere (50 Feb 13th). Elsewhere there were 45 at Messingham Jan 13th and 50 Feb 21st, and 50 at Baston and Langtoft GP Mar

4th. In total birds were noted at 37 sites throughout the county in the first half of the year and 57 sites in the year as a whole. There were no reports of potential breeding, although singing males were observed at Boultham Mere on Mar 26th and at Goulceby on Apr 11th.

The only large count in autumn, away from Gibraltar Point, was 100 seen on Butterwick Marsh on Oct 9th. Wintering records at the end of the year were again low, with 47 at North Hykeham on Dec 1st and 50 at Belton Park on Dec 29th being the only significant flocks.



Siskin *Carduelis spinus* Grantham Apr 8th 2018 © Steve Nesbitt

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*



Fairly common but somewhat localised and declining resident. Red List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	45	20	30	13	5	-	-	-	1	24	22	60
Winceby	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	54	-
Frampton Marsh	1	-	4	3	10	1	4	1	1	1	-	14
Freiston Shore	22	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Crowland	-	-	20	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

Records were received from 43 sites across the county, all of which recorded Corn Buntings in at least one month of the year.

The winter roost at Gibraltar Point built up through the first quarter, peaking at 45 birds on Jan 25th, much lower than the winter peak there in 2017 (117). The next highest count was of 30 on Mar 6th but birds quickly dispersed with few remaining by the first week of Apr with a few coming into song. Singing males were reported from Gibraltar Point on Apr 27th and May 13th; Kirton Marsh on Feb 3rd; Snipe Dales on Jun 1st; Snipe Dales on Apr 27th and Jun 1st; Thurlby Fen three to four Mar 31st-May 28th; Winceby two, on May 7th and Jun 17th. 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.

Autumn counts at Gibraltar Point began to increase from late Oct with 24 there on 29th, then 54 on Nov 12th and a winter maximum of 60 on Dec 16th. Elsewhere there was a flock of 54 at Winceby on Nov 12th, 37 at Welbourne on Dec 13th, 30 at Wragg Marsh (Spalding) on Dec 10th, 26 at Thimbleby on Dec 14th and 14 at Frampton Marsh on Dec 28th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*



Common resident, but numbers have decreased. Red List.



Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* Donna Nook May 24th 2018 © Graham Catley

In 2018 87% of BBS squares recorded Yellowhammers (80% in 2017) with an average of 5.1 birds per occupied square (6.0 in 2017). It is the 12th most widespread bird in Lincolnshire from BBS coverage and the 22nd most numerous. Although this species is classed as a red data species in Britain, it's breeding population in the county has shown no significant change over the period 1994-2018 based on the Lincolnshire BBS index. Yellowhammers tend to flock up in winter and encountering very large flocks often requires walking a great distance in agricultural areas. In the first quarter there were 250 at Fillingham on Jan 14th, 162 at Welbourn on Jan 26th and 100 at

Brocklesby on Jan 26th. These flocks usually break down in late Mar and birds flock up again in late autumn. There were 200 at Cleethorpes on Nov 21st and 110 at Welbourn on Dec 13th.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

Rare vagrant. LBRC

2007 One was found at Pye's Hall, Donna Nook, on 28th Sep (SL).

There were no records in 2018.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Common/very common resident and passage migrant. Amber List.

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gibraltar Point	30	22	18	20	17	16	14	14	303	330	42	27
Fockerby	220	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Middlemarsh Farm	19	50	12	4	8	5	4	5	20	6	20	14
Witham Mouth	14	100	6	-	-	2	6	4	10	3	-	10
Cleethorpes	38	38	8	4	6	6	4	6	-	4	30	8
Boultham Mere	32	10	6	10	3	4	5	2	5	15	4	20
Tetney Marsh	7	6	-	10	10	10	8	-	20	25	8	8
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	6	20	9	4	2	6	2	1	5	20	20	15
Alkborough Flats	2	1	20	7	3	40	10	9	1	4	7	5
Willow Tree Fen	30	15	12	18	5	-	4	3	12	-	3	3

Reed Buntings were widely recorded across the county in all months with counts from around 136 sites, slightly down on 2017. Peak counts were recorded in Jan in the first quarter and in Oct during autumn passage. The sites recording the highest peak counts in any month are tabulated with Garthorpe Farm, Fockerby again recording a remarkable 220 on Jan 7th, close to the 250 recorded there on Jan 14th 2017. Predictably, numbers fell during Feb-Mar as birds dispersed. Spring and summer counts were unremarkable and the summer nadir occurred in Aug at a time when both juveniles and adults are undergoing moult and are likely to be at their least conspicuous.

Autumn passage on the coast peaked in Sep and Oct and the regular recording of visible migration at Gibraltar Point recorded a Sep peak of 303 on 22nd 271 of which went south. There were ten other dates when more than 100 birds were recorded with the highest of the autumn being 330 on Oct 17th, 284 of which went south.

Among the ringing recoveries was an adult male re-trapped at Benington on Mar 24th for the third time, now just over six years old, and birds ringed in Essex (Feb 2014) and Suffolk (Dec 2017) were both re-trapped in the county in Aug and May respectively. British data overall have shown that some Reed Buntings from northern Europe and the Low Countries winter in the UK although most British-ringed Reed Buntings tend not to move far.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Nominate continental form a scarce local passage migrant and winter visitor Sep-Apr. Rare inland. The Greenland and Canadian form *subcalcaratus* may also occur. Amber List (both forms).

Seven coastal sites recorded Lapland Bunting with some overlap possible. This was an exceptionally poor year for the species with no double-figure counts at all. In the first quarter the highest count of the year was five at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Jan 12th with singles at Gibraltar Point on Feb 3rd, Gedney Drove End on Feb 4th, Seaview car park on Feb 12th, Saltfleet on Feb 17th and lastly two at Gibraltar Point on Mar 11th.

Autumn arrivals were similarly very sparse, beginning with singles at Gibraltar Point on Oct 7th, 9th, 15th, three on 17th and another single on 20th. Elsewhere the picture was the same with singles at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on Oct 21st, Nov 2nd and 4th; at Saltfleet on Dec 4th and 9th; at Cleethorpes on Dec 11th. The final record of the year was at Gibraltar Point on Dec 22nd.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Icelandic form *insulae* a regular winter visitor and passage migrant on coast, mainly Sep-Apr, exceptional in summer. Scarce but fairly regular inland. Nominate Scandinavian form a scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber List (both forms).



Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* Cleethorpes Feb 1st 2018 © Graham Catley



Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* Cleethorpes Feb 1st 2018 © Graham Catley

Site Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	38	42	-	-	-	100	7
Cleethorpes	75	75	-	-	-	-	6
Gibraltar Point	8	3	1	1	5	13	2
Theddlethorpe St Helen	-	-	-	-	-	27	1
Mablethorpe	-	12	-	-	-	-	-
Tetney Marsh	-	-	-	-	4	5	-
Freiston Shore	6	1	-	-	-	-	-
Donna Nook	4	-	-	-	-	-	3
Horseshoe Point	2	-	-	-	-	3	-
Grainthorpe	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Saltfleet	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Huttoft	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Trusthorpe	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Frampton Marsh	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Goxhill	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gedney	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Covenham Reservoir	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

Counts were received from 17 sites across the county all of which are included in the table. Note that there were no records from Apr-Aug and that most records were from coastal sites. There were birds on the coast from the beginning of the year with notable flocks at Cleethorpes LNR and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR. In the first quarter these peaked at 75 at Cleethorpes LNR on Jan 17th and Feb 16th and at 42 at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR on Feb 7th. The latter flock was reduced to 21 on Feb 15th, while those at Cleethorpes remained another week and there were still 60 on Feb 22nd. Single-figure counts were the rule elsewhere with eight at Gibraltar Point in Jan and a flock of six at Freiston Shore from Jan 1st-10th, then five to Jan 23rd and the last there a single on Feb 7th. The last bird of the first quarter was at Gibraltar Point on Mar 6th.

The first bird of the autumn was on the same date as in 2017, albeit at a different site, at Gibraltar Point on Sep 24th and just a sprinkling of birds arrived in Oct, with just one to four at various coastal sites and once again an inland record from Covenham Reservoir on Oct 15th (a day later than one there in 2017).

The main arrival occurred during Nov with 100 between Crook Bank and Churchill Lane (Theddlethorpe St Helen) on 10th and several double-figure counts thereafter, the last being one of 40 on Nov 17th. The only other significant count was of 13 at Gibraltar Point on Nov 30th. Very few remained into Dec with seven at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on 9th and six at Cleethorpes on Dec 11th the most. Three at Donna Nook and a single at Gibraltar Point on Dec 28th were the last of the year.

Appendix 1

Records of birds of suspect origin in 2018, including escapes and those released from captivity

This list includes those species that may not have self-sustaining wild populations and any individuals from species that are on the British list that are known, or are strongly believed, to have been of captive origin. The Lincolnshire Bird Club asks that all records of these 'category E' species recorded in Lincolnshire are submitted. We are aware that the species on this list and other escapes are under-recorded.

Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*

2017 addition: One at Stickford Jan 23rd-Feb 2nd.

Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus* RBBP

Two were at Freiston Shore on May 25th and May 28th and another was at Cleethorpes Boating Lake on Jun 26th and Jun 30th, Jul 12th, Aug 2nd and Aug 31st.

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

There were singles at Holywell Jan 13th, Feb 17th and Oct 21st; Woodhall Spa Airfield NR on Mar 27th and at Branston Nov 18th.

South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana*

An adult female turned up at Frampton Marsh on Nov 27th and was also seen on Dec 2nd and Dec 12th. Hybridization in captivity has been reported with other *Tadorna* species and with Egyptian Geese.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

Singles were at Barton Pits on Jan 12th, Feb 7th, Apr 15th, Jul 18th and Aug 12th. Two were on Brayford Pool, Lincoln on Jul 11th and one was on Welton village pond on Feb 18th and Mar 18th.

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

One (unsexed) was seen at Ruskington on Jan 19th. Then an adult male turned up at Gibraltar Point on Apr 9th and 11th. It then moved on to Frampton Marsh from Apr 25th and was seen on many dates there up to and including Jun 15th. It was seen to be carrying a pink and white ring on its right leg clearly indicating its captive origin.

Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

There was one at Fleet Hargate on Jul 13th and 19th with four there on Aug 6th. Two were at Norton Disney on Apr 22nd. The species is more widespread than these records suggest and is widely ignored by birdwatchers.

Azure Tit *Cyanistes cyanus*

Perhaps the most bizarre record of 2018. At about 08:05 on May 11th two presumed escape Azure Tits were found together in a mist net in the east dunes at Gibraltar Point. On examination, one was found to have a pink split colour ring on the right tarsus, a broken primary and some tail feather damage. The other had minor tail feather damage and a just started brood patch. The birds were presumed to be escapes, and no rings were added. They were released into the Plantation, next to Sykes Farm.

Ringling Report 2018

The bird ringing activity in the county in 2018 is summarised in the table below. The data for Lincolnshire are from the BTO website (<https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/results2018/ringGBL2018.htm>).

Ringing recovery information is placed within the systematic list in order to provide all significant information about each species in one place. By doing so, 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. As ever, we welcome analyses of Lincolnshire ringing data for inclusion in future reports as featured articles.

Pulli 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 are tabulated separately as 'Unaged' and are included in the totals for the year. The Grand Total column gives the number ringed in Britain and Ireland during the year.

Species	Pulli	Juvenile	Adult	Unaged	Total ringed in 2018	
					Lincs	Britain/Ireland
Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	915
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	0	0	0	0	0	160
Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>	0	8	13	0	21	1942
Mandarin Aix <i>galericulata</i>	0	0	1	0	1	37
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	0	0	1	0	1	969
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	0	0	1	0	1	9
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	13	0	0	0	13	192
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	21	0	0	0	21	141
Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	5	12	3	0	20	653
Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	2	0	0	0	2	123
Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>	3	0	0	0	3	175
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	0	0	4	0	4	530
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	0	0	2	0	2	277
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	0	25	316	0	341	2302
Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	0	1	0	0	1	46
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	7	0	0	0	7	1939
Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	0	1	5	0	6	114
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	0	6	28	0	34	547
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	0	2	4	0	6	589
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>	0	0	0	0	0	242
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	0	1	1	0	2	186
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	0	3	3	0	6	1088
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>	0	48	54	0	102	2898
Woodcock <i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	0	2	1	0	3	1390
Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	0	0	1	0	1	592
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	0	97	6	0	103	1919
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	0	3	1	0	4	18
Black-headed Gull						
<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	0	0	11	0	11	3250
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	0	0	3	0	3	641
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	0	1	0	0	1	2093
Little Tern <i>Sternula albifrons</i>	5	0	0	0	5	667
Stock Dove <i>Columba oenas</i>	30	0	26	0	56	1297
Woodpigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	0	6	29	1	36	1386
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	2	3	14	2	21	541
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	1	1	0	0	2	67
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	486	0	156	0	642	7404
Tawny Owl <i>Strix aluco</i>	40	0	12	0	52	1262
Little Owl <i>Athene noctua</i>	158	0	44	0	202	517
Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	0	0	10	0	10	661
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	0	1	0	0	1	475
Great Spotted Woodpecker						
<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	0	16	21	0	37	2185
Green Woodpecker <i>Picus viridis</i>	0	1	2	0	3	205
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	221	3	10	0	234	2625
Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>	0	2	0	0	2	433

Hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i>	0	0	1	0	1	123
Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	10	0	0	0	10	435
Red-backed Shrike <i>Lanius collurio</i>	0	0	1	0	1	10
Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	0	3	6	0	9	543
Maggie <i>Pica pica</i>	0	4	1	0	5	529
Jackdaw <i>Coloeus monedula</i>	212	0	7	0	219	2540
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	0	0	4	0	4	465
Carriion Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	0	1	1	0	2	105
Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>	9	0	0	0	9	274
Coal Tit <i>Periparus ater</i>	7	122	142	10	281	14597
Marsh Tit <i>Poecile palustris</i>	0	4	5	1	10	1343
Willow Tit <i>Poecile montanus</i>	0	6	0	0	6	540
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	780	1591	1003	3	3377	134717
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	304	797	680	9	1790	71740
Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	0	1	0	0	1	931
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>	61	114	62	0	237	8752
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	47	214	134	1	396	28220
House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>	0	351	205	0	556	3894
Cetti's Warbler <i>Cettia cetti</i>	0	0	1	1	2	1230
Long-tailed Tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	0	37	149	200	386	17017
Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	0	273	83	42	398	24730
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	0	209	102	9	320	29851
Wood Warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	0	1	0	0	1	398
Yellow-browed Warbler <i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	0	0	0	4	4	220
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	3	149	59	0	211	21395
Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	0	165	53	0	218	24610
Icterine Warbler <i>Hippolais icterina</i>	0	1	0	0	1	8
Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	1	345	133	24	503	62192
Garden Warbler <i>Sylvia borin</i>	0	11	9	1	21	4175
Barred Warbler <i>Sylvia nisoria</i>	0	1	0	0	1	33
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia curruca</i>	0	45	27	1	73	2464
Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>	10	395	115	1	521	12404
Firecrest <i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	0	3	0	0	3	550
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>	0	297	65	26	388	15016
Wren Troglodytes troglodytes	7	257	73	5	342	14124
Nuthatch <i>Sitta europaea</i>	0	0	2	3	5	3265
Treecreeper <i>Certhia familiaris</i>	0	18	4	4	26	2113
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	6	338	285	19	648	18307
Ring Ouzel <i>Turdus torquatus</i>	0	1	4	0	5	264
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	15	449	532	44	1040	26131
Fieldfare <i>Turdus pilaris</i>	0	5	15	2	22	2067
Redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>	0	97	69	15	181	17211
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	0	104	41	6	151	5879
Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	2	1	0	0	3	252
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	1	5	6	0	12	1164
Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	9	287	149	17	462	21813
Pied Flycatcher <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	0	4	1	0	5	13799
Red-breasted Flycatcher <i>Ficedula parva</i>	0	1	0	0	1	10
Redstart <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	0	1	2	0	3	1300
Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	0	0	1	0	1	639
Stonechat <i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	0	2	0	0	2	1095
Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	0	0	7	0	7	819
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	11	213	164	168	556	16498
Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	448	90	174	195	907	15770
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i>	1	435	220	14	670	17460
Yellow Wagtail <i>Motacilla flava</i>	0	9	2	0	11	778
Grey Wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	0	2	0	0	2	825
Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	5	44	14	0	63	2160
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	0	91	16	4	111	14437
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	0	2	0	0	2	1171
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	1	300	575	21	897	29527

Brambling <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	0	9	9	0	18	5114
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	0	49	35	0	84	6145
Greenfinch <i>Chloris chloris</i>	0	391	445	12	848	18032
Linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i>	3	154	72	12	241	9236
Redpoll sp. <i>Acanthis flammea/cabaret</i>	0	0	6	0	6	695
Lesser Redpoll <i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	0	121	122	0	243	14007
Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	0	1255	1361	26	2642	55191
Siskin <i>Spinus spinus</i>	0	5	118	0	123	25122
Corn Bunting <i>Emberiza calandra</i>	0	0	1	0	1	56
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	0	42	185	0	227	4945
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	0	266	316	16	598	13169
GRAND TOTAL	2947	10431	8857	919	23154	982858

Selected recoveries and related news in 2018

Some of the most of the interesting recoveries are included in the main body of the report because they represent particularly long-lived birds, birds which have moved a long distance within Britain and Ireland, birds which have gone to, or come from countries with few such recoveries, or because few birds of this species have been recovered, or because the report has been flagged as interesting, usually from having moved a long distance in a small number of days. Here we draw attention to a few of these included in the main text. Sightings or recoveries mentioned below were made in 2018.

Wildfowl recoveries often involve birds that have been shot and these included two **Greylag Geese**, one ringed at Derwent Ings and shot on the Humber when aged 19y 7m; the second was ringed at Ancaster and shot at Woodhall Spa aged 4y 2m. A 2CY female **Mute Swan** ringed at Brayford Pool in 2010 was seen alive (ring read in the field) in Hyde Park in August. An adult male **Eurasian Teal** ringed at Caerlaverock on Mar 20th didn't survive long, being shot at Wyberton on Nov 14th, 318 km to the south. The rapid colonisation of Britain by **Little Egrets** continues to throw up interesting data, much of it via colour ringing with nestlings ringed in the county being seen in Perth and Kinross (again) and Teesside. **Marsh Harriers** carrying wing tags are seen regularly in the county and one was seen at Bonby on Jan 15th and Feb 25th having been ringed as a nesting female at Cantley, Norfolk; this bird was also seen at Alkborough on Dec 28th 2017. A 12yr 10mth old **Common Buzzard** ringed as a nestling in Derbyshire was found freshly dead at Benniworth was the only other raptor recovery of note.

There were many notable recoveries, controls and colour ring observations among the waders migrating through and wintering in the county. The first three of these elderly **Oystercatchers** show good site fidelity and the fifth was retrapped in Denmark having been ringed on the Wash in a summer catch:

FA07301	Adult	12-08-1983	Friskney New Marsh: c. 53°3'N 0°13'E (Lincolnshire)
	Caught by ringer	02-08-2015	Friskney: 53°1'N 0°11'E (Lincolnshire), 5km 31y 11m 21d
	Caught by ringer	12-08-2018	Wainfleet Marsh: 53°4'N 0°17'E (Lincolnshire), 5km, 35y 0m 0d
FA11395	Adult	10-08-1987	Friskney New Marsh: c. 53°3'N 0°13'E (Lincolnshire)
	Freshly dead (cold weather)	04-03-2018	Holkham Gap: 52°58'N 0°47'E (Norfolk), 40km, ESE, 30y 6m 22d
FA40036	Second-year	28-08-1992	North Sea Camp, Boston: c. 52°56'N 0°4'E (Lincolnshire)
	Caught by ringer	13-09-2014	Wainfleet Marsh: 53°4'N 0°17'E (Lincolnshire), 23km NE, 22y 0m 16d
	Caught by ringer	13-08-2018	Friskney: 53°1'N 0°11'E (Lincolnshire), 13km N, 25y 11m 16d
FA47184	Adult	29-09-1992	Cold Harbour: 52°57'N 0°5'E (Lincolnshire)
	Alive (ring read in field)	21-05-2018	de Westereen: 53°16'N 6°1'E (Friesland)
			Netherlands, 398km E, 25y 7m 22d
	Freshly dead	30-05-2018	de Westereen: 53°16'N 6°1'E (Friesland)
FA46511	Adult	21-08-1993	Holbeach St Matthew: c. 52°05'N 0°5'E (Lincolnshire)
		13-03-2018	Skagen Fyr, Fyrhavenne, Skagen: 57°043'N 100°37'E (Nordjylland)
			Denmark 856km NE, 24y 6m 20d.

Avocets colour rings caught the eye with five birds ringed as nestlings providing extensive information over a number of years. They were all British-ringed birds and one has been sighted 13 times each since being ringed. Sightings have all been on the Wash at Frampton Marsh, Gibraltar Point or Middlemarsh Farm have and between Mar-Oct, but two (EW43232 and EW43335) have also been seen in the Netherlands in Mar, May, Jul and Dec. Birds moult post-breeding and British

breeders join flocks both at home and across the North Sea. From late October, Avocets move to their wintering sites. Most birds wintering in Britain (all of which are on estuaries) are thought to be British breeders, although some of the latter have been found to move as far south as Morocco. A **Golden Plover** ringed as a 1CY bird in the Netherlands in 2016 was found freshly dead at South Kyme Fen on Feb 22nd, aged 1 yr. 3 mths and a **Grey Plover** ringed in 2006 at Leverton Outgate was retrapped there on Sep 9th, now aged 12 yr. A **Ringed Plover** colour-ringed in 2017 in N Wales was seen alive at Gibraltar Point on May 29th and a **Curlew** ringed as an adult at Holbeach St Matthew on Aug 23rd, 2005 was seen alive for the seventh time on Jul 24th at Torvela, Finland. Three **Bar-tailed Godwits** all originally ringed on the Wash in 2005, 2011 and 2012 were all retrapped on the Wash, one on Feb 17th, the other two on Aug 16th. The catalogue of colour-ringed **Black-tailed Godwits** is now enormous but adult female EW64265 caught the eye: ringed as an adult on Oct 13th 2012 in Kent, she has been seen twice in Iceland (Apr 15th 2014 and Jun 23rd 2016), seven times in Kent, on Tiree, Argyll on Apr 24th 2017 and at an undisclosed Lincolnshire site on Jul 29th. A colour-ringed **Knot** ringed on the Wash on Jul 26th 2013 was seen alive at Marske, Redcar on Aug 16th and two **Wash-ringed Dunlin** were both retrapped on Jul 11th, one in Sweden and the other in Finland. Two **Redshanks** ringed on the Wash in the autumn of 2018 as 1CY birds didn't survive long as sadly both were both shot in France on Sep 24th and Oct 28th respectively.

There are many records of colour-ringed gulls in the BTO archive, too many to list individually. Some selected records include **Black-headed Gull** SFH ringed as a nestling in Finland on Jun 16th 2006 in Finland was found dead on the Wash on Mar 4th, aged almost 12 yrs. and EL80278 ringed at Gibraltar Point in 2008 as an adult has since been seen there in each of 2016, 2017 and 2018 now aged at least 10 yrs. A Norwegian-ringed **Common Gull** was found long dead (leg only) at North Thoresby on Jan 19th aged 2.5 yrs. A colour-ringed **Great Black-backed Gull** that has visited Denmark in the past was seen at Kirkby landfill site on Dec 20th and among the **Herring Gull** data was GN87749 last seen in France in Feb 2014 that also turned up at Kirkby landfill site on the same date.

Shags are regularly found dead on our coastline and three ringed as nestlings on the Isle of May and another on the Firth of Forth between 2014-17 were recovered dead on the Wash, at Skegness, Anderby Creek and Theddlethorpe Dunes, all in March when aged between 8 months and almost four years. Shags, particularly immature birds, are prone to displacement during long periods of poor weather or onshore winds, which make foraging difficult. Close relative the **Cormorant** provided a colour ring sighting when a bird ringed as a nestling at Attenborough NR, Nottinghamshire was seen twice in the county, firstly at Chapel Farm on Aug 9th and then at Boultham Mere on Aug 23rd. A **Common Guillemot** ringed as a nestling in Highland Region in 2017 was found dead at Cleethorpes on Feb 1st, the only other seabird recovery of 2018.

Movement of the many owl nestlings ringed in the county reveal some interesting site fidelity and longevity statistics and the enthusiastic pullus-ringing activities of AGB and RSh continues to contribute to our knowledge of **Barn**, **Tawny** and **Little Owls** in the county. Several 10-11 yr. old **Barn Owls** were retrapped and a nestling ringed in Hertfordshire on Jul 25th was sadly hit by a car on Sep 12th near Grimsby, 196km north of its natal site. A car on the A1 at Long Bennington hit a **Long-eared Owl** ringed as a nestling in 2005 in Nottinghamshire on Mar 9th. All Owl sp. suffer significant losses every year from collisions with motor vehicles.

Kestrels also suffer at the hands of the motorist but a nestling ringed at East Halton on Jul 5th and found in Somerset, 319km southeast, on Oct 2nd described as 'sick' was probably suffering from starvation. There were no notable **Peregrine** recoveries but Alan Ball (AGB) and team ringed a record 13 chicks from four nests, and an adult **Hobby** was ringed at the Marston STW Swallow roost.

There are few **Marsh Tit** recoveries so a juvenile ringed in Nottinghamshire on Jul 11th that flew into a window at Gibraltar Point 76km east on Sep 25th was a surprise. Even more remarkable was the **Blue Tit** ringed on Mar 1st 2012 that was found freshly dead in Belfast on May 14th, 387 km west northwest. In addition AGB and team recorded detailed moult status in 200 juveniles in November as part of a BTO trial to try and determine whether moult strategy is linked to winter survival. Last but not least, a **Great Tit** ringed on Nov 11th in Warwickshire was retrapped at Gibraltar Point on Mar 30th, 154 km. to the east.

Among the other passerines, a **Chiffchaff** ringed as an adult female in Willingham Forest on Jun 18th 2017 was retrapped on the Isle of May on May 15th: an overshoot or northern colonist? A **Common Whitethroat** ringed as an adult male on Apr 24th 2015 has now been retrapped twice at Donington on Bain in 2016 and again on Jun 10th. A **Blackbird** ringed as a 1CY female at Gibraltar Point on Oct 25th 2012 was found in Norway on Oct 23rd victim of an unknown bird of prey 1017 km north and a 1CY **Redwing** ringed on Oct 30th at Nettleton was retrapped near

Sutton Coldfield on Nov 19th 143 km. southwest. One local and long-lived bird was a **House Sparrow** ringed when a 1CY male at Market Rasen School on Aug 23rd 2010 and retrapped at the same site on Jul 11th aged 7yr. 10 mths. A **Tree Sparrow** ringed in Northamptonshire on Nov 2nd 2017 was retrapped at Nettleton on Mar 23rd having moved 133km north northeast. An adult male **Greenfinch** ringed in Bedfordshire in Dec 2017 was found freshly dead in Horncastle on Jun 7th having flown 115 km. north only to fly into a window. A **Lesser Redpoll** ringed at Dungeness BO on Oct 26th 2017 was retrapped at Market Rasen School on Feb 6th 287 km. north northwest and a **Goldfinch** ringed at Gibraltar Point as an adult female on Oct 7th 2016 was retrapped in Belgium on Feb 17th and again on Mar 17th, some 378 km. away across the Channel. **Siskins** originate well to the north and two recoveries involved Scottish birds: Z951725 ringed on Mar 20th 2016 at Bourne Wood as a 1CY male was found dead on May 14th at Peterculter, Aberdeen 496 km. north northwest, and Z482308 ringed as an adult male on May 23rd 2016 at Lockerbie was retrapped at Market Rasen on Mar 6th, 227 km southeast.

The invasion of Hawfinches *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* in Lincolnshire in 2017-2018

Introduction

One of the biggest surprises of autumn 2017 was the unprecedented arrival of Hawfinches into Britain. The exact number is difficult to calculate as the birds were so widespread and mobile, but it is thought that in excess of 1,000 birds arrived here and that the true figure might even have been as high as 5,000. The estimated UK breeding population is only 500–1,000 pairs, so this is an incredible increase. Some of the largest concentrations were in Surrey, Sussex and Shropshire, whilst Lincolnshire saw unprecedented numbers arrive from mid-October.

Conditions in continental Europe in 2016 and 2017

The name Hawfinch suggests that Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* berries are a favourite food but, although they do form part of their diet, they prefer Yew *Taxus baccata*, Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and Field Maple *Acer campestre*. Irruptions are typically associated with a failure of this food supply: too many birds, or not enough food for them to survive the winter.

A preliminary summary in the journal *Der Falke*, which compared data in 2017 with that of the three-year period 2014-2016, showed that records submitted to the German online portal Ornitho.de in 2017 were more frequent than usual from August and peaked in October and were thought to reflect Hawfinch movements due to an almost complete failure of the Beech *Fagus sylvatica* crop, which was known to have occurred in at least northwestern Germany if not elsewhere in central and eastern Europe. In addition, in the western German state of North Rhine-Westphalia there was a bumper seed crop of both Beech and Hornbeam in 2016, followed by an almost total failure of both in 2017. Frosts in late April 2017 also affected the yields of commercial fruit trees, including cherries *Prunus*, and thus almost certainly wild cherries too.

It is therefore likely that the Hawfinch population was high following the abundance of food in 2016, and that the almost total lack of Beech mast, Hornbeam nuts and Cherry stones in 2017 accounted for the 2017 irruption, with birds moved south and west in search of food (*per* P. Combridge). In Lincolnshire birds were observed very often feeding on Yew berries, but also on tree leaf buds such as Beech and Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* (*pers. obs.*).

Hawfinch migration in Western Europe in 2017

The weather has been mooted as a factor in the Hawfinch invasion but probably had less of an impact than failure of their food supply. Hawfinches traditionally migrate south from their breeding grounds in Central Europe towards the Mediterranean. In 2017 their migration coincided with the arrival of Storm Ophelia, which headed eastwards from the Atlantic, swirling anticlockwise off the west coast of Europe, and the strong winds could have pushed migrating Hawfinches towards the UK. However, this is harder to prove.

Considerable numbers of Hawfinches were seen in France in October 2017, with most at the migration watch point of La Cotentin, Plangenoual (Brittany), where 3,548 were recorded during the period Oct 15th-31st, peaking at 1,352 on Oct 24th. In November the numbers tailed off, with 'just' 823 seen between Nov 1st-9th. In Holland and Belgium there were lower counts in October, with peak day counts of 266 at De Vulkaan (Den Haag, Netherlands) on Oct 16th and 143 at Zandpanne De Haan (West Flanders, Belgium) on Oct 26th (data courtesy of www.trektellen.org). The direction of the irruption was mainly to the southwest. In contrast, further north at Falsterbo, Sweden, for example, a below average number of Hawfinches (5) was seen in October 2017 (https://www.falsterbofagelstation.se/index_e.html) compared to 34 in October 2018.

The Hawfinch 'invasion' of Great Britain in 2017-2018

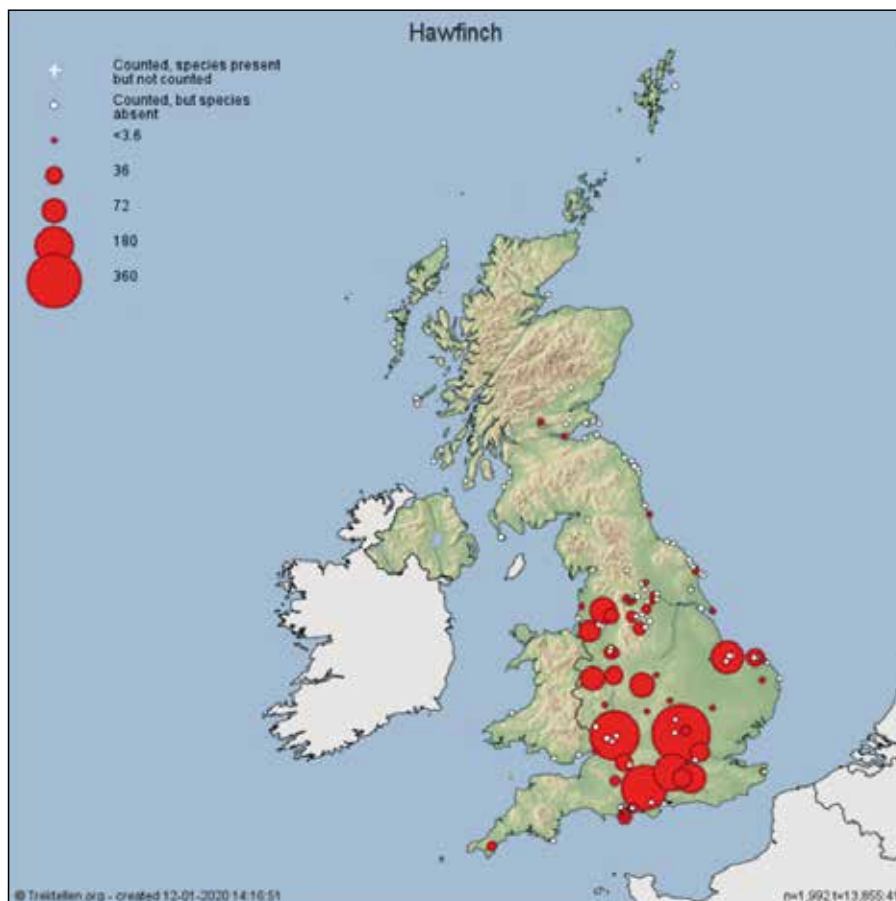
Hawfinches began arriving in Britain from the second week of October 2017. In the southern half of the country one of the largest counts was of 115 over Step's Hill, Buckinghamshire, during the morning of Oct 23rd. Elsewhere in England the BirdGuides (BG) Review of the Week, 25th-31st October, noted that there were 630+ reports during this week (compared to 323 the previous week), with several 1,000s of birds having arrived. The BG map for 25th-31st October showed that the greatest density occurred in a dense band running northwest through the Midlands, from Kent and Sussex to Lancashire. The sparse scattering of pins along the east coast makes for a stark contrast.



Map of Hawfinch sightings during 25th-31st October 2017
(© BirdGuides Ltd).

Count from visible migration sites (data from Trektellen.org)

Annual autumn totals of Hawfinches across all UK visible migration sites during 2010-16 were all of less than 100 birds, whereas in 2017 1,990 birds were recorded! During 2010-19 a total of 2,674 Hawfinches were recorded, with the 2017 total accounting for 74.4% of this total.

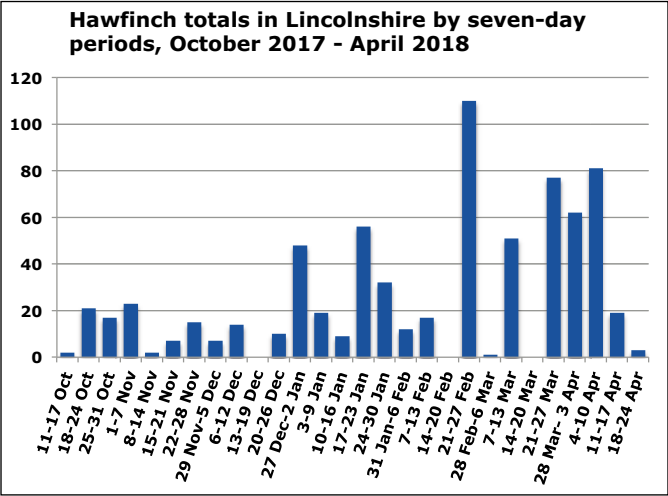


Numbers and timing of arrivals in Lincolnshire

The histogram groups the total numbers of Hawfinches reported to the LBC by seven-day periods from October 2017 – April 2018. Perusal of the LBC archive showed that numbers petered out by mid-April 2018 and the last were three at Gibraltar Point on Apr 19th. (There were also two there on May 25th, one May 29th-30th and one Jun 1st, possibly all relating to the same one or two individuals. Given the gap between these records and the last in mid-April these were not considered to be part of the departing 'invasion' birds.)

The first Hawfinches to be recorded in autumn 2017 were two at Gibraltar Point on Oct 14th. From then until the end of that year there were some modest—but still exceptional for Lincolnshire—totals recorded, with maxima by seven-day period of 21 during Oct 18th-24th, 23 Nov 1st-7th and 14 Dec 6th-12th. There was a clear increase in records in late December/early January, with a peak of 48 reported during the seven-day period Dec 27th-Jan 2nd and also in the last two seven-day periods in January: 56 in Jan 17th-23rd and 32 in Jan 24th-30th.

Lest it be forgotten, from Feb 22nd 2018 Great Britain and Ireland were affected by a cold wave, unofficially the ‘Beast from the East’, officially Anticyclone Hartmut, which brought widespread very cold weather and heavy snowfall to large areas. The highest Lincolnshire seven-day total of 2018 of 110 was during Feb 21st-27th, right at the start of this severe weather; higher counts were recorded elsewhere in Britain at this time, with the most being the 325 at Mickleham in Surrey. It is possible that roving Hawfinch flocks were concentrated at good food sources during this severe weather. There is then a gap in records for the seven-day period Feb 28th-Mar 6th, more likely due to observers being unable to get out and travel in such severe weather rather than to an absence of birds. Good numbers continued to be reported during March and April, with most during Mar 7th-13th (51), Mar 21st-27th (77), Mar 28th-Apr 3rd (62) and Apr 4th-10th (81).



Apart from the unprecedented numbers of Hawfinches, the number of sites recording them across the county was undoubtedly the highest on record: around 33, allowing for some movement between sites close together. Sites recording double figure counts were (in date order): in 2017, Gibraltar Point, Oct 20th (11); in 2018, Scawby Park, Jan 21st (32), Forest Pines, Broughton, Feb 26th (60), Hartsholme CP, Mar 23rd (20), Belton Park, Mar 26th (12) and East Keal, Apr 8th (24). (NB: Scawby Park and Forest Pines are geographically close and birds are presumed to have moved between the two sites.)

The maximum counts per month for all sites recording Hawfinches between October 2017 and April 2018 are tabulated; summing the monthly totals probably gives the bare minimum of birds present, with the likelihood that small flocks here and there were missed. Sites recording Hawfinches are also shown on the map and the size of the dots reflects the numbers seen there.

Site	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18
Alkborough Flats	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Barton Pits	5	2	-	-	-	-	-
Baston & Langtoft GP	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Belton Park	-	-	-	-	-	1	12
Boultham Mere	-	1	-	-	-	7	-
Bourne Wood	-	1	-	1	1	-	-
Broughton (Forest Pines)	-	10	21	22	60	45	-
Doddington Hall	-	-	1	1	-	6	-
Donna Nook	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
East Keal	-	1	-	1	-	13	24
Elsham	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Fillingham	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
Freiston Shore	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	11	1	-	-	-	-	3
Grantham	-	2	-	-	-	-	-

Grimsby	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Haverholme Priory	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Lincoln	-	-	-	-	-	20	15
Louth (Hubbard's Hills)	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Middle Rasen	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Normanby	2	5	2	3	1	-	-
Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Scawby Park	-	-	-	32	-	-	-
Snipe Dales	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Tattershall	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Tealby	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Tetney Marsh	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
Walesby	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Whisby NP/North Hykeham	-	-	2	1	-	-	-
Withern	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Monthly total	21	32	31	65	63	93	59



Maps showing the location of all Hawfinch records in October 2017- April 2018

The Hooded Crow in Lincolnshire and Kent

Andrew Henderson

Summary

In the nineteenth century and until about 1930, the Hooded Crow was an abundant passage migrant to both Lincolnshire and Kent. Numbers were not reported but are assumed to have been in the hundreds or thousands in Lincolnshire, and probably smaller but still in hundreds in Kent. Terms such as ‘extremely abundant’ and ‘exceedingly common’ were used to describe their status at the time. The largest numbers were found in coastal areas but smaller concentrations were found inland, especially in open farmland.

By the 1950s, a decline was well under way. Annual peak counts in Lincolnshire were still in the low hundreds, but in Kent they were no more than 50. The decline continued until the mid 1990s, by which time the two counties had been attracting similar numbers each winter for around 20 years. For the most recent 25 years, Hooded Crow has been a rare winter visitor; the annual totals for each county have not exceeded seven, with the notable but perhaps isolated exception of 19 in Lincolnshire in winter 2018/19.

The seasonal pattern of occurrence has changed little from early times. Despite the small numbers now occurring, it is still possible to detect higher numbers during the passage periods of October–November and March–April. Summer records are rare. Also as before, the majority of Hooded Crows are found along the coasts or estuaries, with far smaller numbers inland.

In Britain and Ireland, crows of both species are highly sedentary, and the Hooded Crows occurring along the east coast of England in winter are believed to come from the more migratory populations of Scandinavia. The decline in numbers here may be due to birds remaining in continental Europe rather than crossing the North Sea to Britain.

Introduction

The Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix* was once a common passage migrant and winter visitor to much of eastern and southern England. While it was probably always more abundant near the coast than elsewhere, it was also locally numerous inland in the more open landscapes. In the coastal counties, the species’ status has gone from common to scarce or rare since the mid 20th century and it is now mostly very rare inland in England. Hooded Crow has been on the list of description species for both Lincolnshire Bird Club and Kent Ornithological Society for about 20 years. This article summarises the changes and current status of the Hooded Crow in those two counties.

Hooded Crows breed in Ireland, the Isle of Man and western and northern Scotland, but most of their distribution lies in Scandinavia, eastern Europe and western Asia. The closely related Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* is found in the rest of western Europe and, separated by the Hooded Crow’s range, in eastern Asia (a different subspecies). The taxonomic treatment of Hooded Crow has ebbed and flowed. Historically, although Hooded Crow and Carrion Crow are known to hybridise within a narrow zone (a few tens of miles wide), it was regarded as a separate species, and that remained the case until 1956 when the British Ornithologists’ Union lumped Hooded with Carrion Crow. Fortunately, during the period when the two were treated as subspecies, the LBC and KOS in common with most recording bodies continued to keep separate records. The BOU split the two once more from 2002 (Parkin *et al.* 2003).

The species has always been viewed as distinct and has gathered a wide range of other vernacular names. One is the Royston Crow, after the town in Hertfordshire, where there is still a local newspaper named the Royston Crow and the town football team is nicknamed the Crows. Foster (1914) described it as not infrequent in parties of two to five in north Hertfordshire from November to March, and evidently it was at least as numerous as Carrion Crow, which was described as rare in the district. There is still extensive open chalk farmland around Royston – but no Hooded Crows; the last record in Hertfordshire was as long ago as 1985. Other vernacular names listed by Cordeaux (1872) for Lincolnshire are Hoodie, Grey-backed and Denmark Crow, while Ticehurst (1909) for Kent includes Queenborough, Dun, Grey, Scotch and Kent Crow, and Saddleback.

Sources

The choice of counties was determined by the ready availability of information, since I hold series of county bird reports for these but not other counties. As it turns out, they were a good choice. In the past few years, Lincolnshire has been in the core area for wintering Scandinavian migrants

to Britain, while Kent is at the southern limit of regular occurrence – thus they form a good basis for looking at the changes of status.

- The main sources of information used have been:
- Lincolnshire Bird Reports 1979-2018,
- Kent Bird Reports 1952-2018,
- Digital databases of both Lincolnshire Bird Club (1997 onwards) and Kent Ornithological Society (1979 onwards),

The digital dataset of Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory from 1949-2018.

For winter 2018-2019, the main sources have been supplemented by records listed online by BirdGuides (www.birdguides.com/Species-Guide/ioc/corvus-cornix). These have not necessarily been accepted by the relevant county committees but fit the patterns of accepted records. BirdGuides data, along with summaries on BirdTrack (www.bto.org/our-science/projects/birdtrack), have been used to obtain background information on recent occurrence elsewhere in the winter range of Hooded Crows in Britain.

Historical status

Lincolnshire

Cordeaux (1872), writing of the Humber district, described Hooded Crow as ‘an autumn visitant, and extremely abundant in all the coast district, and along the Humber shore’. They were typically present from early October to March or April, though earlier and later birds did occur. Smith & Cornwallis (1955) reported similar status for Lincolnshire, though with recently decreased numbers, especially inland where in any case numbers had been much smaller than on the coast.

Lorand & Atkin (1989) stated that in Lincolnshire ‘until the 1930s, flocks totalling hundreds or occasionally thousands occurred on the coast in autumn. Numbers have declined considerably since then and most records in recent years have referred to single birds or small parties’. Analysis of recent data illustrates the later part of that decline, and the establishment of its status in the county as a very scarce bird.

There have been three known nesting attempts. The first was in 1900, when an adult was shot from the nest at Market Stainton (Blathwayt 1915); Blathwayt also reported a claim that the species occasionally bred in the Spalding district. Others recorded by Lorand & Atkin (1989) involved a nest at Crowland Wash in 1954 (though only one adult was seen and it could have been a mixed pairing with Carrion Crow), and an unsuccessful breeding attempt by a pair at Grainthorpe in 1976.

Kent

Ticehurst (1909) described Hooded Crow as a common winter visitor to Kent, found most commonly round the coast, but also abundant on the fields of the chalk downs especially near Dover and Folkestone and through to the Stour valley, but with only scattered birds further inland. The numbers that arrived in autumn were ‘sometimes immense’. Power (1866) said they were ‘exceedingly common’ in winter in the Rainham area, delighting in fields where sprats had been used as manure. Typically birds were present between mid September-mid November and mid February-mid April, with some birds passing through the county to winter elsewhere. In keeping with the period, no numbers are given, but the use of terms such as ‘abundant’ and ‘immense’ suggests that counts would have been in the hundreds at least.

By the time of Gillham & Homes (1950) and Harrison (1953), numbers had greatly diminished in the county, and it was largely confined to the coast and its associated marshland. It occurred in varying numbers, and while hard winters sometimes produced larger arrivals, there was no clear correlation. For example, several hundreds were seen at Swalecliffe in January 1948, which was in a mild winter. Taylor et al. (1981) reported the continuing decline of passage and wintering numbers during 1952-1976. Numbers varied from year to year, and winter totals were usually under 50.

There are two records of mixed breeding in Kent (Ticehurst 1909, Harrison 1953). The first involved a pair that nested at Hothfield in spring 1899; both were shot. In May 1933, adults of each species were seen with a young hybrid near a nest on Holmstone Beach, Lydd.

Recent status

Thanks to the existence of the long-term computerised dataset at Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory, it is possible to summarise trends for that area for a long period, from 1949 onwards, using the maximum count for each winter. For Kent, similar analysis of winter maxima is possible for the

whole county for almost the same period, using data from Kent Bird Reports which started in 1952. Note that, since Hooded Crow is a winter visitor, annual totals in all cases are shown for July-June years rather than calendar years.

A more detailed analysis, based on annual totals rather than maxima, has used records for Lincolnshire and Kent for the period from 1979 onwards. Records have been extracted from Lincolnshire Bird Reports, and from the LBC's recent (post 1997) computerised data. For the early years in the period, especially 1979-1981, the information in LBRs is not precise, and it has been necessary to make some assumptions about numbers present, and how many remained from one calendar year to the next, from the summaries, but this is unlikely to have affected the overall description of the trend. Likewise, Kent data have been extracted from the Kent Bird Reports, and from the KOS's computerised data which, in the case of Hooded Crow, begin in 1977, with some judgements necessary regarding minor discrepancies between the two sources.

Only very few records since 1979 have been described as hybrid Carrion x Hooded Crows in the county records. In Kent, there was one at Dungeness on 21st May 2001, while in Lincolnshire, there was one at Sutton Ings on 20th July 2001. A photograph of one at Mablethorpe on 14th January 2020 was placed on the LBC Twitter feed. Two spring 2018 records in Kent were described as possible hybrids. There may well have been others, where the hybrid status was not recognised or reported; I think I recall hearing about some such examples in both counties but this information is not in the bird reports or databases. The hybrids have been included in the analyses here, since they derive from populations close to the main range of Hooded Crow.

Seventy year trends

The first two charts below show the highest count each year at Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1), and in Kent as a whole (Fig. 2). Note that the first three winters in the Kent sequence have no values: this is because the years preceded the publication of the county reports rather than absence. The charts are presented with x and y axes to the same scale to make them visually comparable.

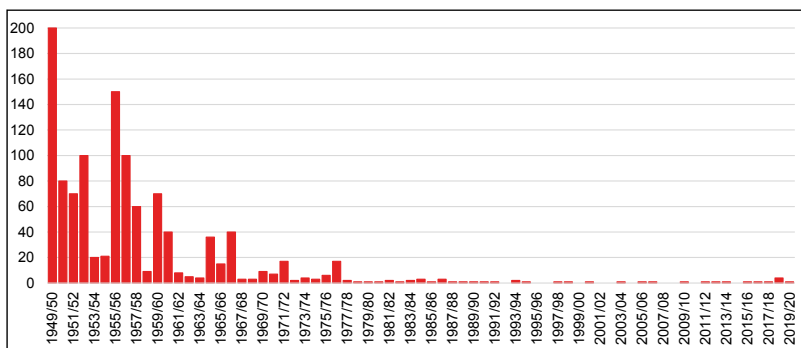


Figure 1. Annual Hooded Crow maxima at Gibraltar Point, 1949/50-2018/19

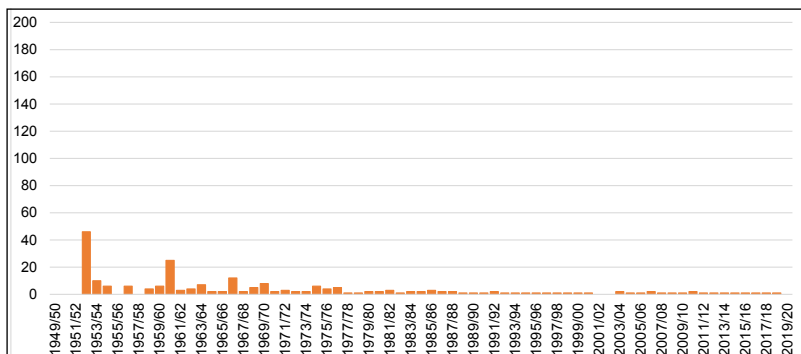


Figure 2. Annual Hooded Crow maxima in Kent, 1952/53-2018/19

These charts illustrate the end of the decrease from the earlier period, when hundreds or thousands of birds occurred, to the present status of only one or two per year in each area. For both areas, there has not been any count of more than three since the winter of 1976/77, with the exception of four at Gibraltar Point in 2018/19.

The highest counts at Gibraltar Point from 1949 onwards were 200 on 31st October 1949, 150 on 6th November 1949, and 150 on 26th November 1955. The last three-figure count was 100 on 18th November 1956, and the last two-figure count was 17 on 5th November 1976. It is noteworthy that most of the highest counts fall during October-November. There are only three counts of 50 or more outside those months, in the Januaries of 1950, 1957 and 1958.

In Kent, there had been a report of 'several hundreds' at Swalecliffe in January 1948 but, from 1952 onwards, the highest counts were 18 W at Swalecliffe on 9th November 1952, 46 on farmland north of Deal on 15th February 1953, and 25 at Sandwich Bay on 25th March 1961. Unlike the case of Gibraltar Point, these high counts are not restricted to autumn, and may indicate that birds filtered southwards after arriving further north on the east coast, and also that spring passage was more pronounced in Kent. It is noteworthy, though, that maxima are far smaller for Kent than for the relatively small area of Gibraltar Point, at least until the mid 1970s, despite the counts coming from the whole county.

Forty year trends

For both counties, it is possible to show annual total numbers of Hooded Crows (taking into account the assumptions described above) for the period from 1979 onwards. As can be seen in Figure 3, totals continued to decline until the early 1990s, albeit with much variation from year to year. Since then, numbers have continued to vary a little from year to year but until 2018/19 there hadn't been a winter with more than seven in either county for 25 years. In Lincolnshire, there were five winters with no records. It could be that this partly reflects poorer reporting during 1997-2007 when no Lincolnshire Bird Reports were published; however, recording effort at Gibraltar Point remained fairly consistent through that period, and none were seen there. In Kent, there were two such winters, successive to one another in 2001/02 and 2002/03 and thus close to blank years in Lincolnshire.

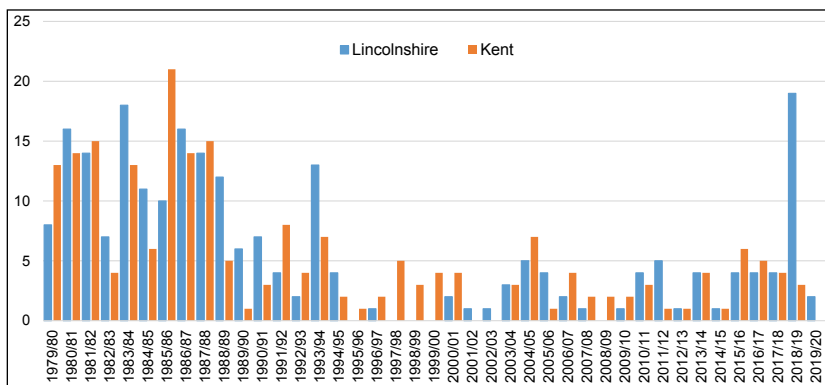


Figure 3. Annual Hooded Crow maxima in Lincolnshire and Kent, 1978/79-2018/19

One interesting observation from this chart is that the pattern of totals through the years is, on the whole, similar in the two counties. This presumably reflects the varying scale of immigration from year to year along the whole of the east coast of England. Some of that variation may be due to winter temperatures on the continent but, as noted above for the historical period, that does not appear to be a major factor. For example, the most recent severe winter in 2010/11 shows barely elevated totals. It is also evident that (until 2018/19) Lincolnshire has no longer attracted more than Kent, as was the case until the 1960s.

The similarity in patterns of totals over the forty years contrasts with the earlier years of the seventy year charts (Figs. 1 and 2), which show no clear correlation in totals between Gibraltar Point and Kent.

The chart below (Fig. 4) shows the weekly pattern of occurrence (first dates) over the forty year period. Kent records are all attributable to precise dates, but for Lincolnshire this is not always

the case. Especially for 1979-1981 but also for some later years, records that are attributed in the published reports to periods (such as “1-2 at three sites during January-April”) cause difficulties, since it is not possible to make assumptions about the first date of each record; in the example, therefore, all three are attributed to 1st January. Thus there are marked spikes in the chart on the first dates of several clusters of Lincolnshire records, most markedly on 1st January. This could indicate a second wave of arrival in mid winter, but is more likely to be a recording artefact.

Despite those difficulties, the pattern is clear and very similar in the two counties: the largest numbers appear, as in the historic period, at passage times, during October-November and March-April. There is some indication that autumn passage may be larger in Lincolnshire than in Kent, and that the reverse is true in spring. Note that long-staying birds are not illustrated in the chart, which shows only the arrival dates. Many birds remain for prolonged periods during the winter, although this is less prevalent now than so few occur.

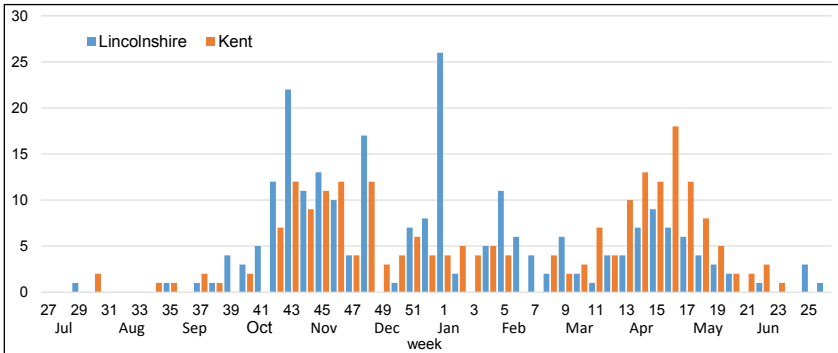


Figure 4. Weekly pattern of Hooded Crow arrivals in Lincolnshire and Kent, 1979/80-2018/19

As can be seen from the seasonal chart, there have been a few records in summer, and these include one bird in Kent that remained throughout two summers. This table lists all those occurring in June-July during 1979-2019:

Lincolnshire

Grainthorpe, 19th June 1983
 Saltfleetby, 20th-26th June 1984
 North Cotes, 22nd June 1985
 Anderby Creek, 27th June 1987
 Sutton Ings, 20th July 2001 (hybrid)
 Croftmarsh, 2nd June 2013

Kent

West Blean, 27th July 1980
 Reculver/Minnis Bay, 26th April
 1988 to 2nd August 1989
 Margate, 26th July 2007
 Seasalter, 10th June 2017

The majority of records in both counties during 1979-2019 have come from the coast or estuaries, or within a couple of miles of them. However, some 36 of the Lincolnshire total of about 230 individuals were found further inland, with the Kirkby-on-Bain area (where ten were recorded) contributing more than other sites, no doubt a reflection of the presence of both a rubbish tip and birders. The equivalent figures for Kent were 16 inland birds out of 218. In both counties, despite the far smaller numbers now arriving, birds are still occasionally found inland.

The high total for Lincolnshire in 2018/19 has not been repeated in the following winter. At the time of writing (late January 2020), I am aware of only two reports for Lincolnshire, and none for Kent.

Recent occurrence elsewhere in England and Wales

The presence of around 19 in Lincolnshire in winter 2018/19 is interesting. It was the highest total since a similar number in 1983/84, but there was no sign of elevated numbers in Kent. Examination of reports published online by BirdGuides revealed larger numbers of reports than in the previous two winters along the east coast, especially from Yorkshire to Norfolk. This is not a reliable assessment of status, since (a) not all records will have been submitted to BirdGuides and (b) the inclusion of repeat sightings makes it hard without more detailed analysis to establish numbers present. However, it may well indicate that numbers were indeed higher throughout that

area. Counts did also appear to be somewhat higher on the east coast also during January-April 2017, and it was interesting to note that reports on the west coast of England and Wales, often very sparse, were more frequent during spring of each year 2017, 2018 and 2019. BirdTrack summaries (based on inclusion in complete lists) suggests that occurrence in England is more frequent in autumn than in spring, whereas there is a less clear distinction between seasons for Wales. The numbers of birds are small, of course, but the apparent difference of seasonal occurrence on east and west coasts is of interest.

Why have Hooded Crow numbers decreased?

The zone of Carrion x Hooded Crow hybridisation in Britain lies in northern Scotland and has shifted north-westwards during the past century (Cook 1975, Parkin et al. 2003). It is tempting to think that this might be associated with the decline in numbers of Hooded Crows being seen in England. However, Scottish Hooded Crows are sedentary, and ringing recoveries suggest that our wintering birds are from Scandinavia (Wernham et al. 2003), where the population is partially migratory. There have been only ten recorded ringing movements between Britain and the continent (BTO 2019), all of birds ringed on the continent in Scandinavia or northernmost Germany and recovered in Britain. Three of those involved Lincolnshire. These were of nestlings ringed in Sweden in May 1938 and found dead at Grantham in October that year, ringed in Sweden in June 1946 and found at Horncastle in January 1947, and ringed in Norway in May 1951 and shot near North Cotes in October that year. There have been no continental-British recoveries since 1951 – perhaps reflecting the decline – and none at all affecting Kent. It's worth adding that information on movements from ringing is likely to be limited, because relatively few crows are ringed. By 2018, the total number of Carrion and Hooded Crows ringed since the BTO scheme began in 1909 was 20,073; for comparison, despite being localised and a recent arrival in Britain, 20,638 Cetti's Warblers had been ringed.

The trends in Lincolnshire and Kent are similar to those elsewhere in eastern and southern England, though the timing varies between counties. For example, in Essex, the species had changed from common to scarce by the 1950s, and then underwent a marked drop in frequency in the late 1970s (Wood 2007). That seems broadly similar to Lincolnshire and Kent, though perhaps the change to near-rarity was a little earlier. Further west along the south coast, the decline was definitely earlier. In Cornwall, the species' status is thought to have changed from fairly common to scarce as long ago as the first half of the nineteenth century (Penhallurick 1978). In France, it was common as far south as the Pyrenees in the nineteenth century, but became markedly rare in the first quarter of the twentieth. It was still a regular wintering species in northern parts, especially Nord and Pas-de-Calais, but numbers fell from at least 1,000 to 500 between the mid 1950s and the mid 1960s, a trend that continued subsequently (Yeatman-Berthelot 1991).

The decline in wintering numbers in England has been attributed to the Scandinavian populations becoming less migratory as a result of climatic amelioration (Holyoak 1971, Wernham et al. 2003). In other words, as temperatures in the breeding area and along the migration route have become warmer in winter, it has become possible for birds to remain there rather than travelling as far as they did before. This short-stopping behaviour associated with climate change has been identified in a range of waterfowl over the past 30 or more years (e.g. Holt et al. 2015). The timing of the change in behaviour by Hooded Crows pre-dates the effects on waterfowl by many years. The earlier commencement of short-stopping by Hooded Crows, in contrast to waterfowl, may well reflect the crows' ability to survive in sub-zero temperatures whereas waterfowl generally are forced to move when water bodies freeze.

Other factors also could be involved. One is the size of Scandinavian Hooded Crow breeding populations. BirdLife International (2004) suggests that numbers in Denmark and Norway were increasing during the latter part of the twentieth century, while there were declines in Sweden and also in Finland. The Swedish trend has been one of decline for at least thirty years (Ottvall et al. 2009), possibly attributable to shooting pressure. However, it seems unlikely that the historical Swedish breeding population was so large as to explain the scale of the historical decline of English wintering numbers. Another possible contributory factor is that changing availability of food may have altered the suitability of different areas (in Scandinavia or England), either by provision of abundant food, as at landfill sites, or by its reduction through agricultural change (when was a field last manured with sprats, as mentioned above for north Kent?).

Acknowledgements

The data on which this article is based were collected by Lincolnshire Bird Club, Kent Ornithological Society and Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory, and I am grateful to them and the many observers who have submitted records over the years. Phil Hyde and Robin Mace efficiently sent me data from the two bird clubs and GPBO, and Dave Roberts, Chris Hindle and Alastair Henderson

provided information on recent records. Murray Orchard kindly checked the Hertfordshire status of Hooded Crow and drew my attention to Foster (1914), and Kevin Wilson made some very helpful and encouraging comments on an early draft.

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Icelandic Redwings (*Turdus iliacus coburni*) in Lincolnshire

**George Gregory (Data Assistant, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust)
and Dean Nicholson**

There are two subspecies of Redwing: Icelandic Redwing (*Turdus iliacus coburni*), which breeds in Iceland and the Faeroe Islands, and the nominate subspecies (*T. i. iliacus*), in the rest of the breeding range. According to da Prato et al (1980), referring to the British Isles, 'in autumn most *iliacus* go through in October; the smaller *coburni* passage is relatively more spread out with a small peak in November'. Collar et al (2019) note that subspecies 'coburni largely quits Iceland and Faeroes, passing through Fair Isle (off N Scotland) slightly later than nominate, some perhaps making long direct flight to Iberia; winter quarters in Britain, Ireland, W France, Spain and Portugal, birds from W Iceland mainly S of Loire valley, in France, those from E Iceland N of it'.

In autumn, winter and early spring nominate Redwings occur commonly in Lincolnshire, but Icelandic Redwings are much rarer. According to the Lincolnshire Bird Report 2016 (The Lincolnshire Bird Club, 2016). There are just four previous Lincolnshire records of *T. i. coburni*, all shot at North Cotes between 1935 and 1945 (Lincolnshire Bird Report 2016).

The article presents evidence for the occurrence of Icelandic Redwings in Lincolnshire. Without DNA analysis, there are two methods of distinguishing the two subspecies: wing length of trapped birds and plumage/exposed part features.

Identification of Icelandic Redwings using Wing Length of Trapped New Birds

At Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory (GPBO), situated on Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve (GPNR), Lincolnshire, from 1949 up to 31 December 2018, 3863 Redwings were trapped and newly ringed. Of these 2888 had their wing lengths measured and recorded. One of the latter cohort had a recorded wing length of 104mm. This was presumed to be secondary to wing damage as it so much shorter than the other recorded wing lengths and was excluded as an outlier from the analysis.

According to Birds of the Western Palearctic (BWP) (Cramp et al 1998) Icelandic Redwings *T. i. coburni* have wing lengths of 116-127mm (N = 25 individuals measured in Iceland). Individuals of this subspecies measured on Fair Isle (Williamson 1958) had wing lengths of 113-133mm (N = 246). Svensson (1992) states that individuals of the nominate subspecies *T. i. iliacus* have wing lengths of 109-124mm (N = 108) and more recently Dierschke et al (2010) gave a range of up to 127mm for *T. i. iliacus*. In this analysis to ensure reliability individual Redwings with wing lengths of 128mm or less are not considered as being Icelandic Redwings on wing length alone.

In the newly ringed cohort of 2888 birds which had a wing length measured at GPNR six had wing lengths in excess of 128mm. These were:

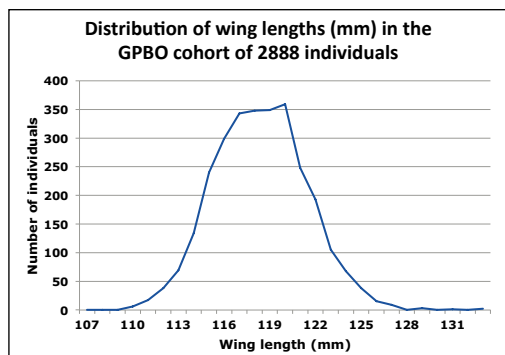
129mm on 3rd November 1994
133mm on 1st February 1996
129mm on 14th January 2000
131mm on 9th January 2001
129mm on 20th October 2005, and
133mm on 6th October 2012.

All of these have a wing length of more than 128mm and are clearly of the subspecies *T. i. coburni* based on this measurement alone. The remaining 2881 wing lengths ranged from 107-127mm.

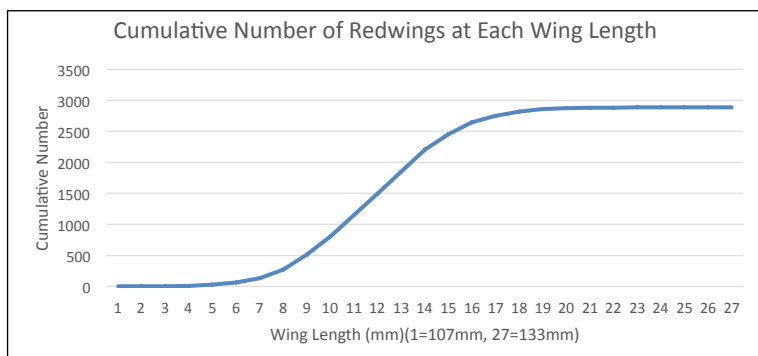
The frequency distribution of the wing length of the newly ringed Redwings measured at GPBO is shown in the line graph below.

The curve is clearly close to that of a bell-shaped Normal Distribution. However, the asymmetrical extension of the tail to the right is due to the presence of very long-winged individuals. Using the wing length data including those of the six longer-winged individuals, the skew, using the Microsoft Excel population skew application (SKEW.P), was calculated as +0.8970. This indicates a larger population of statistically shorter-winged individuals (*T. i. iliacus*) to which is added a smaller population of statistically longer-winged individuals (*T. i. coburni*). The skew calculated when omitting the six known very long-winged individuals was +0.5287. This confirms that a

small percentage of individuals of the longer-winged population (*T. i. coburni*) were present in the original cohort of 2888 birds. It is, however, impossible to identify the individuals concerned.



Another way of presenting the data is a line graph of the cumulative number of individuals at each wing length of all newly ringed Redwings measured at GPBO, and this is shown below.



The curve is clearly close to the usual sigmoid (S-shaped) curve. However, the asymmetrical extension of the tail to the top right again indicates the presence of very long-winged individuals.

If a conservatively estimated total of six individuals of *T. i. coburni* from the remaining combined populations is added to the six known very long-winged individuals, then out of 2887 newly ringed Redwings whose wing lengths were measured at least 12 were of the Icelandic subspecies, i.e. 0.416%. Using these figures as representative, if a conservatively estimated 5000 Redwings reach Lincolnshire every winter, then at least 20, on average, should be Icelandic Redwings. Collar et al (2019) state '16-21 million pairs in Europe (including European Russia) with 1-200,000 of these in Iceland, or roughly 1% of the total'.

If it could be done, a similar analysis of wing lengths of Redwings trapped elsewhere in Lincolnshire would be valuable.

Identification of Icelandic Redwings on Plumage/Exposed Part Features

According to Svensson (1992) Icelandic Redwings are 'very slightly darker above and, especially, below than nominate; ground colour deeper buff on sides of head and on throat, breast and under tail coverts; sides of breast and flanks more extensively tinged olive-brown; streaks and marks heavier and more extensive. Slightly larger.' BWP (Cramp et al 1998) lists similar differences, but also notes 'leg and foot darker'. Neither states darker ear coverts as a key difference. Indeed, a web search of images of Iceland Redwings reveals many with ear coverts no darker than the upperparts. Clearly, darker ear coverts may be a good identification feature if present, but are not an eliminatory feature if absent. The principal distinguishing feature, as quoted by the above sources, is the extent of the dark streaks and marks on the underparts.

These differences are important in identifying well-marked individuals of Icelandic Redwings. However, there is some overlap in plumage (as well as in wing length) between the two subspecies. Less well-marked individuals of Icelandic Redwings can be difficult, or even impossible, to distinguish from nominate Redwings. A series of photographs illustrates this point.

(It must be noted that in the following photographs with a predominately green background, the buff/brown tints, particularly on the head and underparts, are likely to be suppressed due to the in-built programmes used by digital cameras.)

Photograph 1 (by Carol Lund) is of a nominate Redwing trapped in East Dunes and ringed on 26 September 2017 at GPBO. Used for comparison purposes, it shows only reduced dark markings on the underparts, particularly on the flanks, quite pale brownish upperparts and pale pinkish legs and feet.



Photograph 1.

Photograph 2 (by Phil Hyde) is of a breeding adult Icelandic Redwing, with a juvenile, taken in Iceland in July 2018. Compared to the individual in Photograph 1 it shows prominent dark marks on the underparts and darker upperparts. The ear coverts are not particularly dark.



Photograph 2.

Photograph 3 (by George Gregory) is of an Icelandic Redwing (*T. i. coburni*) trapped in East Dunes and ringed at GPNR on 20 October 2005. It clearly belongs to this subspecies on wing length alone (129mm). Despite fading of the old print, particularly of the brown/buff tints, it illustrates many key features of Icelandic Redwing, especially darker upperparts, more extensive and darker streaking on the underparts reaching to the undertail coverts, and dark legs and feet. The ear coverts are quite dark.



Photograph 3.

Unfortunately, even some trapped Redwings are difficult, or even impossible, to assign to subspecies in the hand. Photographs 4 and 5 (by George Gregory) show a problematic individual trapped in East Dunes and controlled at GPBO on 30 October 2016, and subsequently retrapped there on 31 October and 1 November 2016. This was the first control or recovery in Lincolnshire of a Redwing ringed in either Iceland or the Faeroe Islands. It had a wing length of 128mm, and bore an Icelandic ring fitted on 22 September 2016 at Akureyri, Nordur, Iceland. It was, however, not definitely accepted as an Icelandic Redwing. The Lincolnshire Bird Report 2016 (The Lincolnshire Bird Club, 2016) states: '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 a *coburni*, although it is more likely than not that it was.'



Photograph 4.



Photograph 5.

On 2 February 2016 Dean Nicholson photographed a Redwing at Whisby Quarry/Jobs Lane, as shown in Photographs 6 and 7. It stood out markedly amongst 20 *T. i. iliacus*, being very dark and heavily streaked below, especially on the flanks and with the streaks reaching the under tail coverts, with a characteristic thin white patch up the central belly area, and with an especially dark throat. The rather limited red flank patch was also duller adding to the darker appearance. The thing that worried him at the time, however, was the ear coverts being the same tone as the upperparts; at no stage at all did it show darker ear coverts. However, as noted above, darkness of ear coverts is not a necessary feature for identifying Icelandic Redwings. The extensive dark marking on the underparts clearly correspond with those stated as being characteristic of Icelandic Redwing.



Photograph 6.



Photograph 7.

On 27 February 2016 Dean Nicholson took a series of photographs of a Redwing on Jackson's Marsh, Croftmarsh Local Nature Reserve, at Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire, including Photographs 8 to 11. He noted the following features: subtly larger (thicker bill), darker below with very heavily streaked upper breast, flanks and undertail coverts and ventral area (just visible on Photograph 10), darker brown upperparts and darker ear coverts, and darker legs. Photograph 11 is a comparison shot showing the bird next to an obvious nominate Redwing. The differences between these two individuals are striking. The larger and darker bird clearly shows key features of Icelandic Redwing.



Photograph 8.



Photograph 9.



Photograph 10.



Photograph 11.

Redwings in the field are often quite flighty, and it is often difficult to observe or photograph them well. However, trapped individuals offer better opportunities for examination. Bearing in mind the important wing length, plumage and exposed part features mentioned above, perhaps a greater effort to identify Redwings sub-specifically would result in more Icelandic Redwings being recorded in Lincolnshire. Observers in the county are encouraged to observe Redwings more closely in the field and in the hand, and to take photographs and wing lengths of any individuals showing features of Icelandic Redwing.

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A Preliminary Phenological Analysis of Ten Species or Subspecies of Wintering Birds at Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve from the Winter of 1949/50 to the Winter of 2017/18

**By George Gregory (Data Assistant, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust),
Kevin Wilson (Warden, Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve)
and Adrian Blackburn (Member, Gibraltar Point Bird
Observatory Team)**

The computerisation of historical and recent records of birds at Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve (GPNRR) has facilitated the extraction and analysis of such records, including this preliminary phenological (occurrence in time) analysis of a number of wintering bird species or subspecies recorded from the winter of 1949/50 to that of 2017/18 inclusive.

Choice of Species

Although there are many species and subspecies of birds that have been recorded as wintering at GPNRR, the records of only 8 are analysed here. The criteria for the inclusion of species of birds in this analysis are:

1. They are not, entirely or mostly, resident, summering or passage species.
2. They are not water birds occurring entirely or mostly on the water bodies (Freshwater Mere, Fenland Lagoon, Jackson's Marsh, Tennyson's Sands and other pools on Croftmarsh) that were created many years after 1949, e.g. many species of ducks.
3. They are of reasonably regular occurrence in at least reasonably large numbers during the winter.
4. They are relatively easy to find, identify and count accurately.
5. Their recorded counts do not merely reflect the increased durations of sea-watches in recent decades, e.g. sea ducks, Red-throated Diver and Great Crested Grebe.

The 10 species that fulfil all of these inclusion criteria and whose records are analysed here are:

1. Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*).
2. Dark-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*).
3. Shore Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*).
4. Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix*).
5. Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*).
6. Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*).
7. Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*).
8. Twite (*Linaria flavirostris*).
9. Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*).
10. Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*).

Methodology

The winter periods were taken to be from 1 October of each year to 31 March of each subsequent year.

For each species or subspecies the highest count in each winter period, as recorded in the Census Logs, Migration Logs and Daily Record Sheets and entered into the Wildlife Recorder application on the reserve's data computer, from 1949/50 to 2016/17, was tabulated. For each species or subspecies the mean highest count and the standard deviation (a measure of variability of the highest counts) were calculated and recorded.

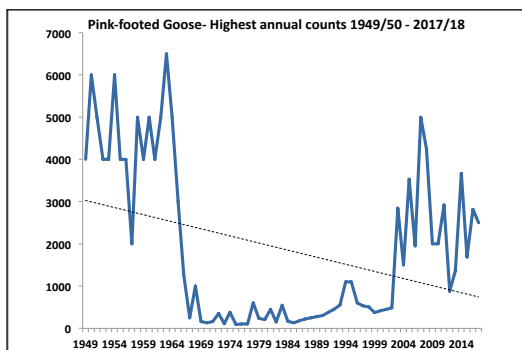
Microsoft Excel line graphs of the highest count for each species or subspecies for each winter period were produced, together with the linear trendline. For some species or subspecies the linear trendline on the line graphs passes below zero. This is an abstract mathematical necessity for displaying a linear rate of change, and does not mean the concrete existence of negative numbers of individuals. Exponential trendlines were not used since, for many species or subspecies, at least one value was zero, making such trendlines impossible to calculate.

Results

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Mean highest count: 1885.67 (standard deviation 1893.02).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): -33.61.

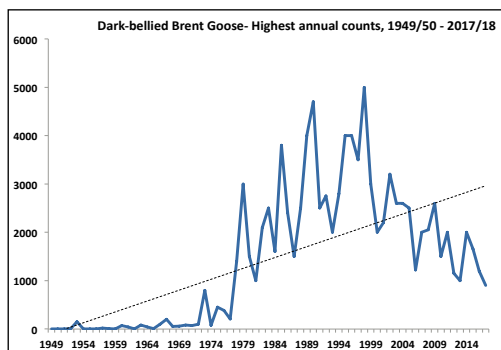


The graph shows a pattern of high maxima from 1949 until the mid 1960s that was followed by much lower counts until the mid 2000s, when there was a recovery to a pattern of more moderate high maxima. There may have been medium term changes in migration routes and/or wintering areas in the east of England. Possible explanations include medium term changes in cropping of nearby fields, where numbers of this species linger, say from potatoes to winter wheat or to bare soil, while significant amounts of Sugar Beet have been left on fields in north Norfolk. Changes in the geomorphology of the River Steeping estuary, which they have used as an overnight roost site, could be a factor. About 20 years ago the bombing range at Wainfleet was closed, greatly reducing disturbance, after which numbers started increasing again, suggesting that this is a major factor.

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

Mean highest count: 1433.59 (standard deviation 1374.27).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): +44.99.

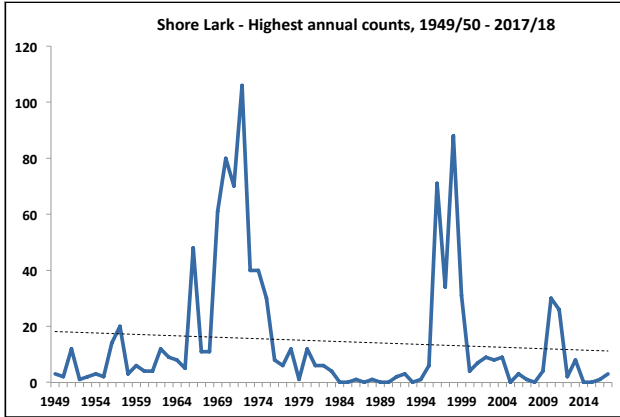


Very low maxima until the early 1980s were followed by a major overall increase until about 2000, then by a gradual decrease to moderate maxima. Again, there could have been changes in the wintering distribution in eastern England, or perhaps in migration routes. A likely factor is gradual changes in the geomorphology of the point area, with associated successional changes in cover of plant food species. Eelgrass (*Zostera*) has disappeared and there is still not much pioneer marsh, with few areas of Sea Poa Grass (*Puccinellia*). A few decades ago there was a tendency for numbers of Dark-bellied Brent Geese to move between the estuary/saltmarshes and inland fields, but there have been recent efforts to scare them off of the latter.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

Mean highest count: 14.71 (standard deviation 23.01).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): -0.10.

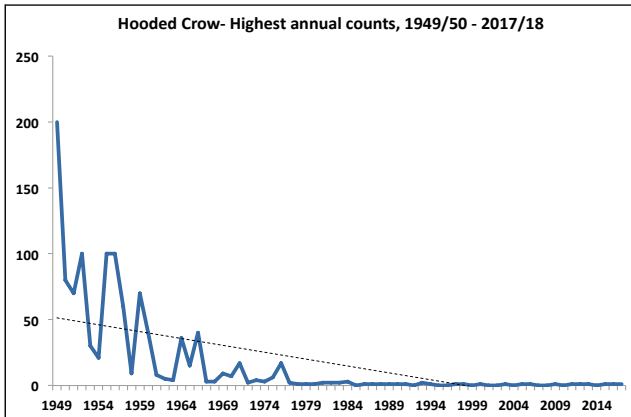


England is at the edge of the usual wintering range of this species, and many winter maxima at Gibraltar Point have been low. Influxes of birds arriving for the winter have occurred in periods of successive years, peaking in 1972 and 1998. Shore Larks are dependent on strip saltings, where Annual Sea Blite seeds are an important food source. At Gibraltar Point these have been colonised by coarse grasses in the absence of Rabbit grazing due to Myxomatosis. The small downward trend may not be significant, but climate change could have resulted in many of this species wintering further north.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Mean highest count: 15.87 (standard deviation 33.95).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): -1.04.

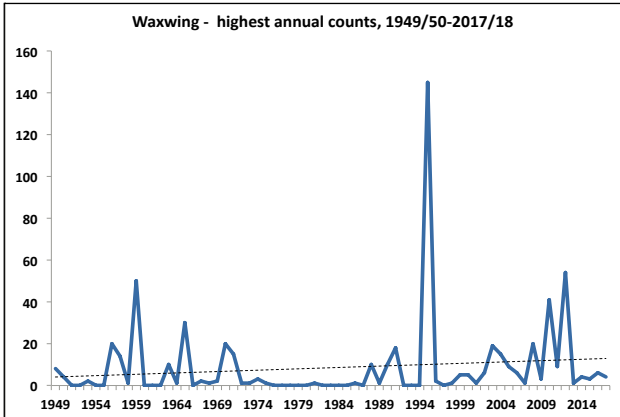


In the early years of recording, Hooded Crows, originating from Scandinavia, were a common sight in winter at Gibraltar Point. The steady decline to a very low level by the 1970s is generally attributed to wintering further north due to climate amelioration. In recent decades this species has not always been recorded annually, but there has been a slight increase in numbers in recent years.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Mean highest count: 8.51 (standard deviation 19.91).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): +0.13.

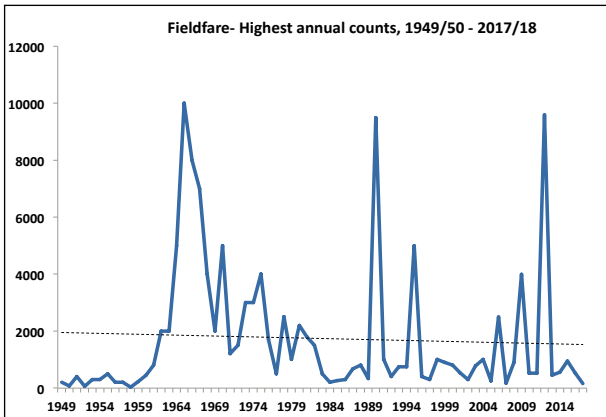


England is at the extreme limit of the usual wintering range of this species. Apart from an exceptional influx in 1995 and a few moderate influxes in other years, annual maxima have generally been low. Waxwings are an irruptive and nomadic species, usually arriving for the winter as a result of berry crop failure or cold weather in north Europe. The small increase in the trend is probably of little significance.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Mean highest count: 1741.78 (standard deviation 2555.67).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): -6.20.

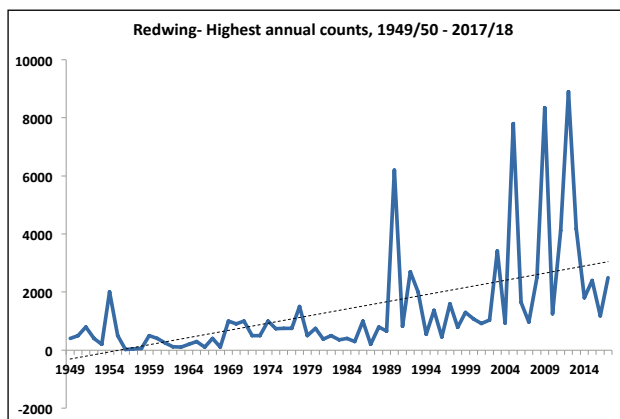


Fieldfare winter maxima are generally very variable in the short term, but the overall trend seems to be slightly downward. Large influxes into Gibraltar Point, of birds arriving for the winter, that mostly last only a few days, until berries and haws are depleted, are strongly dependent on weather conditions in Scandinavia and over the North Sea. However, moderate numbers tend to stay longer on the reserve than is the case with the next species.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Mean highest count: 1371.16 (standard deviation 1842.02).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): +49.29.

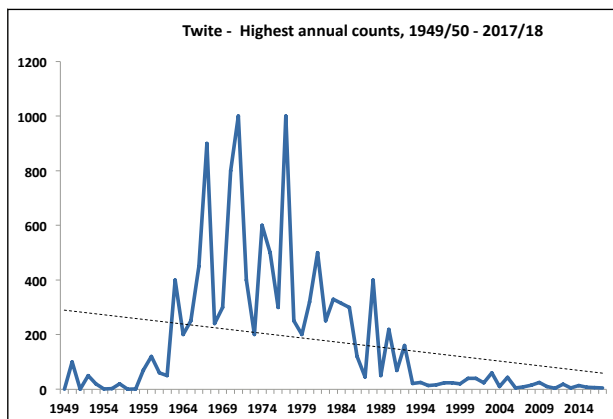


This is another species that often occurs in large but short-lived influxes of birds arriving for the winter. In contrast with the preceding species, Redwing maxima show a clear increase over the decades. Possible reasons include a gradual increase in the breeding population in Scandinavia, the main origin of Gibraltar Point's birds, and a gradual change in their wintering areas, due to climate amelioration. Relatively few individuals tend to through the winter.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

Mean highest count: 174.52 (standard deviation 240.36).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): -3.39.

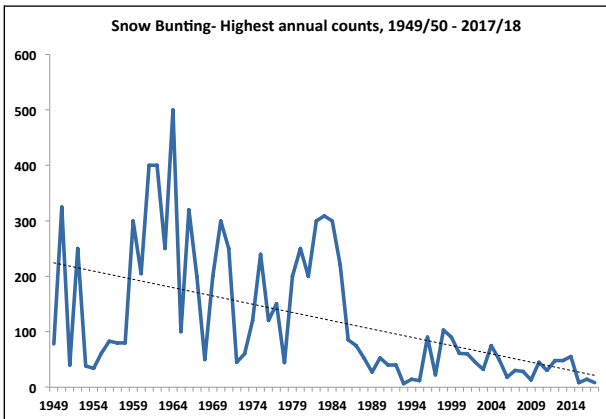


The low maxima before the mid 1960s were possibly due to lack of suitable habitat just inland from the shore. When this developed, due to geomorphological changes and associated plant succession, there were very high maxima for many years. Change from preferred seed-providing species to coarse grasses in the absence of Rabbit grazing due to Myxomatosis has probably been a factor in the gradual decline to very low figures in recent decades. This decline also corresponds with a serious reduction in the breeding population in the Pennines, the main source of Gibraltar Point's wintering birds.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Mean highest count: 122.88 (standard deviation 116.48).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): -2.99.

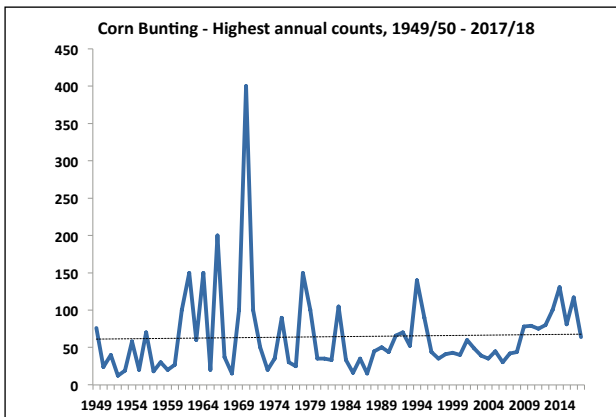


Wintering Snow Buntings on the east coast originate mostly or entirely from Iceland or from even further north-west. Overall, there has been a fairly consistent gradual decline in numbers recorded at Gibraltar Point. Possible reasons included wintering further north due to climate amelioration, changes in the geomorphology of the shore and replacement of preferred seed-producing species by coarse grasses in the absence of Rabbit grazing due to Myxomatosis. There has been a recent increase in numbers of this species in east Norfolk, possibly due to a more favourable food supply there.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza malaria*

Mean highest count: 64.67 (standard deviation 56.57).

Mean annual change (as shown by linear regression analysis): +0.10.



The slight overall gradual increase in the trend of wintering highest counts is counter-balanced by the very high maxima from the early 1960s to the early 1970s, when quite large flocks were seen feeding on the saltmarsh. There has been a serious decline in the breeding population in Britain since those decades, but reasonably good numbers still winter at Gibraltar Point. Ringing returns indicate that British Corn Buntings do not move very far with no Lincolnshire-ringed birds recovered or controlled outside of the county to date.

The Snowy Owl at Wainfleet Marsh, March 21st-22nd 2018

1. Finder's report by Kevin Wilson

Having downloaded the morning's e-mails, about 30 of them, on March 21st, I skimmed the senders and subject columns. Amongst all the usual work subjects, the label "large owl" caught my attention. The message was from Friskney resident Andy Rayment. While walking his dog at Wainfleet Marsh, he had seen a large owl. Being familiar with Short-eared owls, he suspected this was a Snowy Owl. Andy sent a short clip of video taken on his telephone. Though slightly distant and silhouetted against the sun, this indeed looked like a Snowy Owl. Surely this was the bird that had gradually moved west along North Norfolk until last having been seen at Snettisham on March 9th-11th.

I noted Andy's sighting was at 09.15 and it was already nearly midday - could the bird still be around? I emailed Andy back with my telephone number to see if he would ring me with location details. I also contacted local staff and birders to see if anyone was close to the locality to check it out. No one was available, so Richard Doan, Ben Ward and I made the drive to the bottom of Sea Lane, Friskney, site of a former RAF bombing range. Here, we were presented with a vast landscape of saltmarsh, tidal flats and open farmland. I left Richard and Ben checking to the north, while I headed south down the sea bank for about three km while scanning west and east.

It was amazing to think that on December 30,1990, I had been in the exact area watching Lincolnshire's first Snowy owl. Today, however, I was having no luck and time was short, so I had to head back. As I met back up with Richard and Ben, I received a telephone call from Andy who said that the bird had flown off but probably not gone far towards the foreshore. At that moment, a four-wheel drive vehicle drove quickly down the old MOD track out across the marsh. Fortunately this vehicle must have flushed the owl out of its hiding place because the next thing I heard was Ben exclaiming, "I've got the Snowy Owl!" I thanked Andy for his call and the settled down to enjoy scope views of the bird as it took shelter from the wind behind a gate post about 150m away.

Mindful of the significance of the sighting for Lincolnshire birders, we quickly put the news out and there followed a sizable twitch. I returned for more views in the evening, hoping to see the owl in flight before dusk. The weather was grim and, although I did not see if fly, it had hopped up onto the gatepost and was showing in full view and being quite active.

The following day approximately 600 birders were on site. Frustratingly, the crowd of birders could be seen from as far away as Gibraltar Point - but not the owl! The previous bird had come up to Gibraltar Point on March 17,1991 after apparently having been flushed by a photographer, and I recall watching two Short-eared owls repeatedly dive-bombing it just over the sea bank.

The Snowy Owl decided to head south during the late evening of March 22nd before taking up another temporary residence deeper into the Wash until it was re-found in the Freiston-Frampton Marsh area May 1st-10th.



Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* Wainfleet Marsh Mar 22nd 2018 © Steve Keightley

2. Snowy Owl pellet collection and analysis

On Mar 24th, two days after the Owl had gone, Andrew Chick and myself decided to examine the saltmarsh around its two favourite perches to see if it had regurgitated any pellets, a slim hope perhaps. We found one fresh Owl pellet and the finder's brother Robin later found a second. Although very likely from the Snowy Owl we couldn't exclude it having come from a Short-eared Owl. One pellet was dispatched to Professor Martin Collinson, Dept Clinical Genetics, University of Aberdeen for potential DNA analysis of any cellular material that might have been recoverable. Sadly the material that might have yielded DNA was too degraded to recover any DNA for analysis and thus we could not confirm that the pellet was from the Snowy Owl. The circumstantial evidence was strong though and Gary Steele's analysis was of interest.

Pellet dissection- report from Gary Steele

Pellet 1

The maximum dimensions of the pellet were 7.3 x 3.3 cm, and it was relatively fresh and still moist internally. Following its dissection the pellet was found to predominately contained the almost complete skeletal remains of a single avian prey item, with the exception of the bill. The sternum, cranium and one of the two tibiotarsi were heavily fragmented. The tarsus length was 3.1cm. The absence of the bill made the identification of this prey item down to species level less easy. There were also a very low number of somewhat larger skeletal remains, again probably avian, which didn't seem to fit into the skeletal reconstruction and may have belonged to a separate prey victim.



Skeletal remains of an avian (?) prey item from the dissection of Pellet 1

Pellet 2

Compared with the pellet 1, this was noticeably smaller, 2.8cm x 2.1cm, but was nevertheless of similar overall form and colouration; it was noticeable drier and more compacted in nature. From past experience when dealing with the pellets of other owl species, particularly Barn Owls, it is not that usual to find relatively small pellets mixed in with others that would be considered more 'standard' in size.

Once again the pellet was entirely made up of avian prey remains – the matrix material mainly consisting of fine particles of feathers and remainder of bird bones. Even accounting for its much smaller size, when compared to the earlier one this pellet contained very few bone remains, just 14 in total, compared with the 70+ in pellet one. Four of the bones consisted of vertebrae, and what was immediately striking was their size (up to 16mm in length) which was a significantly bigger than the largest bird vertebra in the first pellet and suggestive of larger prey victim. As far as could be determined, the vast remainder or bone material consisted of broken-down fragments, probable sternum or pelvis (or both).

Conclusion

Although not conclusively from the Snowy Owl on Wainfleet Marsh, the size of the avian remains in them points towards the pellet origin as being from this bird. Unfortunately DNA could not be extracted from then pellet material sent to the University of Aberdeen.

Stilt Sandpiper at Frampton Marsh on 22nd August 2018: finder's account by Paul Buxton, Nottingham

On the 22 August 2018, I arrived at RSPB Frampton Marsh, with Richard Rogers, Robert Lawson and Martyn Perkins, at around 8am. It was one of a handful of visits we have each year to this fabulous reserve, and relatively close to our Nottinghamshire home. We were aware of high tide being in the afternoon, so low tide for most of our visit did not deter us, as there are always plenty of birds to see. Prior to heading round to the North Scrape, we had a Spoonbill fly in, which itself made the trip worthwhile.

Around the path to the North Scrape at around 10.45am, we noticed a few waders feeding and said "Let's get one more wader for the day list". I scanned with my binoculars, and picked out a wader and said "probable Spotted Redshank". The bird was feeding frantically, and we noticed that the overall colour was greyish with some black feathers on the scapulars and barring on the breast and flanks. "Get a look at this bird," I said to the others, as it looked interesting. I immediately started to get as many phone-scoped pictures off as I could in case it flew off.

We observed that the bird was long billed and had a distinct supercilium. We spoke about possible plumages and ages of Spotted Redshank and also considered Curlew Sandpiper, but something was not right. The bird continued to feed around 100m in front of us and even looking into quite bright light the overall colour, black scapulars and barring stood out. The bare parts just looked dark though. Again I thought of Spotted Redshank, but the bill just was not thin and delicate enough and Richard said, "The bill is just not right". This instinctively made me think of a rarer bird.

By now I had taken around 50 pictures and some video, and my camera battery was getting low. I got the Collins App up on the phone and looked at Long-billed Dowitcher. I have seen a few of these but that did not fit so my thoughts turned to Stilt Sandpiper, a bird we had never seen other than Richard who saw the recent Dorset bird. Immediately the pictures looked really good for that species! I swore and said to the others "Look at this!" The illustrations showed a plain wing with no white in, long legs, and a white rump (all features that we had not observed). The bird continued to feed to at least knee-deep in water and it was not heard to call.



Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* Frampton Marsh Aug 23rd 2018 © Steve Keightley

We needed more to clinch it and a couple of the lads had moved on along the path. I caught up with them and said, "If we leave this bird and it comes on the pager as a Stilt Sandpiper at Frampton Marsh, I am going to be gutted". My phone had now switched off due to low battery but Richard had gone ahead and had also taken some phone-scoped footage. He managed to get a signal and send some video footage to our local patch group on "Whats App". Richard shouted at me "James Shergold and Clive Prescott [finder of the Rutland Stilt Sand] say it's a Stilt Sandpiper! Immediately I shouted for us all to get back to the bird. I managed to get my phone on again and put the news out on RBA and James also put it on Birdguides. We continued to view the bird as people started to arrive and eventually saw how long the legs were and that it had a white rump. A lifer for me, Robert and Martyn, and a great bird for Richard!

What a bird, what a day, and what a Reserve. The RSPB deserve massive praise for the development of this site.

Stilt Sandpiper at RSPB Frampton Marsh – a reserve view

The incredible news of the stilt sandpiper on the reserve on 22 August really made for quite a buzz. With the finders putting the news out, it was not long before the first birders were arriving to see it, a pattern that continued over the next 8 days, the duration of its stay. The bird's final day was 3 September, during which time an extra 2,000 people had been to the reserve to see it and its friends. The bird was not the only rarity on site. A Red-necked Phalarope shared the same pool for a while, while a Long-billed Dowitcher (which ended up staying 250 days) was also present. All in all, a bit of a purple patch!

Previous Stilt Sandpiper records in Lincolnshire

There have been two previous records of Stilt Sandpiper in Lincolnshire, details confirmed by John Moyes who saw both of these birds! John also saw the 2018 bird to complete a unique hat trick... unless anyone knows better?

1. An adult in summer plumage was found at Wisbech sewage farm on July 17th 1963, remaining until August 7th. The finders were two Cambridgeshire teachers, one of whom filmed the bird. Sadly both are now deceased and no photographic evidence is available. It was caught and ringed by the late Clive Minton et al on 19th July and was largely solitary during its stay.
2. An adult moulting into winter plumage was found on August 12th 1965 at Wisbech sewage farm, remaining until August 26th. This bird consorted with a flock of 15 Dunlin and 6 Curlew Sandpipers. This bird was unringed.

Both of these birds were seen to fly into the Lincolnshire section of the sewage farm. One of them crossed the river and county boundary (which runs down the River Nene) to Foul Anchor, thus providing a "tick" for Cambridgeshire birders. These early Lincolnshire Stilt Sandpiper records were reported in the BBRC reports on Rare Birds in Britain for 1963 and 1965 as follows :-

1. Lincolnshire/Norfolk/Cambridgeshire: Wisbech sewage-farm, adult, trapped, 19th July to 7th August (G. Gould, J. A. Hardman, Dr. C. D. T. Minton *et al.*) (*Brit.Birds*, 57: 125-126).
2. Lincolnshire/Norfolk: Wisbech sewage farm, 12th to 26th August (D. G. Bell, G. M. S. Easy, J. A. W. Moyes *et al.*).

Finder's Report: Pallid Swift, Dawson City LWTR, Goxhill, Lincolnshire, 11th November 2018.

Steve Routledge

After reading numerous reports over the previous days and weeks of Pallid Swifts turning up in an unprecedented influx of the species to our shores, today's local patch visit was full of expectation as always and the southerly airflow had a good feeling to it and I hoped it would be a good day.

A good omen for things to come was a late House Martin which flew south along the seawall towards Killingholme and a report on Birdguides that a Pallid Swift had just been seen at Spurn fired me up with even more enthusiasm!

After watching a nice flock of 5 Twite at East Halton Skitter in between showers, we carried on towards Dawson City stopping opposite the reserve to scan the estuary when I turned around to see a Swift flying towards us from the south. I shouted 'Swift!' as I tried my best to nail the bird with the camera in pretty poor light.

The bird began to feed over the saltmarsh, with a curious, floppy hirundine-like flight, not zooming around like Common Swifts usually do and I thought to myself 'this has to be a Pallid!' as I had read an article by the late Martin Garner about the flight action of Pallid Swifts being different from that of Common Swifts and the bird also looked decidedly blunter winged at some angles and chunkier than Common Swift when viewed side on.

The bird began to slowly drift out over the river and I thought it was going to leave for Yorkshire, but the birding gods were smiling on us as it steadily made its way back again and I tried to obtain some more photographs. It then gained speed and it was lost behind hedges towards Goxhill Haven as it headed in a roughly westerly direction, no doubt cutting the corner of Goxhill Haven. The whole sighting had lasted approximately 10 minutes.



Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus* Dawson City/Goxhill Haven Nov 11th 2018 © Steve Routledge

I alerted other birders further west of me about the bird and put it out on Birdguides as a probable Pallid Swift, of which I was pretty sure looking at my pictures but I would have liked a second opinion. It seemed to have the right attributes: blunter winged and chunkier than Common with a dark area around the eye standing out from the paler head, giving it a very distinctive look even in the poor light. This coupled with the distinctive flight action made me pretty positive about it.

Later that evening I contacted both Graham Catley and Adam Hutt, who both commented they thought it was a Pallid Swift and helped with some photo editing and to further confirm things. It was definitely the bird photographed earlier that morning at Spurn, as it had a distinctive step between the belly and tail.

This constitutes only the second acceptable record of this southern European breeding species for Lincolnshire and more importantly a big points score on my Patchwork Challenge year list, a day which will last in my memory for a long time to come.

Editor's note: Accepted by BBRC, British Birds 112 (10): 590. There is a second Lincolnshire record in circulation with BBRC seen on 7th November 2018.

Contributors to LBC records in 2018, with initials for reference

CAdl	Chaz Adland	MYC	Mike Cousins
SAi	Stuart Ainsworth	PCc	Peter Crick
et al	et al	PCr	P Croft
SA	Stephen Andrew	NCC	Nick Crouch
GHA	Geoff Annibal	CCu	Chris Cullen
IAA	I A Ashworth	MDa	Michael Daly
CA	Chris Atkin	PDb	Paul Daubney
RAk	Robert Atkinson	GD	Gerry Davies
JB	John Badley	JDa	Jack Dawson
ABa	Alison Baldwin	RDn	Richard Doan
AGB	Alan Ball	NHD	N H Dorrington
RBa	Roger Barnett	ADv	Andy Dove
ABar	A Bartholomew	JDk	Jon Drakes
CBe	Colin Beck	ND	Neil Drinkall
PBe	Patrick Bell	PDr	Peter Dryburgh
RBe	Rick Bennett	SEl	Stephen Elliott
ABe	Anthony Bentley	GE-M	Greg Elliott-Moustache
IB	Ian Birch	IE	Ian Ellis
BGu	Birdguides	JEl	Julie Ellison
BTr	Birdtrack	JEn	John Ensor
BRG	Birklands Ringing Group	PEs	Phil Espin
PBo	P Bone	DEv	Derick Evans
SPB	Steve Botham	JEy	Jeremy Eyecons
WB	William Bowell	MFa	Malcolm Fairly
SAB	S A Britton	GJF	Gary Fenwick
WPB	William Brooking	SLF	Stuart Fisher
HCa	Helen Cadogan	VF	Vin Fleming
RCm	Richard Camm	MFr	Martin Francis
RCa	Richard Caney	GPBO	Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory
GCa	Gary Carter	CCG	Clare Gillatt
LCa	Les Carter	IG	Ian Gordon
PCa	Paul Carter	PMG	P M Gosling
CRC	Colin R Casey	JTG	John Goy
GPC	Graham Catley	MJG	Martin Gray
DCh	David Chambers	GGr	George Gregory
RCh	Roy Cheetham	GAM	Grimsby Area Members
APC	Andrew Chick	CG	Chris Grimshaw
SCp	Stephen Chippendale	SHl	Sheelagh Halsey
JRC	John Clarkson	BHa	Barry Hancock
DCo	David Cohen	GH	Graham Hardy
TC	Toby Collett	RHr	Robert Hardy
PC	Paul Collis	JTH	John T Harriman
ACol	Andrew Colston	JHn	Jaquie Harrison
MCot	Mike Cottingham	JHar	Julie Harrison

KKH	Kerry Harrison	TCL	Tom Lowe
MHa	Matt Harrison	EJM	Edmund Mackrill
MEH	Mike Harrison	MM	Monica Marks
RHar	R Harrison	OM	Owen Marks
RHa	Roy Harvey	KAM	Kevin Marshall
RHay	Russell Hayes	AMcD	Anthony McDonald
PBH	Peter Haywood	NTM	Neal McKenna
RHe	Richard Heath	SJM	Steve Meek
BHe	Brian Hedley	HM	Hugh Middleton
ACBH	Andrew Henderson	DJM	D J Miller
BHn	Brent Henry	IPM	Ian Misselbrook
JHe	James Hewson	SMo	Steve Moore
RHi	R Hicks	DMn	David Morison
JHo	John Hollis	DMy	Derek Morley
CAH	C A Holt	CMo	Cliff Morrison
GHo	Grahame Hopwood	GMu	Geoff Mullett
AJH	Tony Housman	MNa	Maurice Nauta
AHu	Alan Hudson	DNy	Dave Naylor
RJH	Ray Hume	JRN	J R Nelson
BH	Barrie Hunt	SN	Steve Nesbitt
PAH	Phil Hyde	DNw	Daniel Newton
RJa	Richard Jackson	DN	Dean Nicholson
SJg	S Jagger	AO	Alan Oliver
CJ	Chris Jarvis	JOv	John Oliver
DMJ	David Jenkins	GMO	Gervase Orton
CJJ	Colin Jennings	ROs	R T Osborne
SJ	Sheila Jennings	CPO	Peter Overton
BJo	Barry Jones	MPn	Mick Paine
DJn	Denis Jones	CP	Chris Park
HJo	Hugh Jones	ATP	A T Pearce
JJ	Josh Jones	RPr	Roy Pearson
SK	Steve Keightley	SPd	Stuart Pedley
TK	Trevor Kerry	CPe	Colin Penny
GKn	Garry Knight	MPi	Mike Pilsworth
NKz	Neil Kurz	MPt	Michael Pittaway
AKy	Alan Kydd	JPor	Jim Porte
RLb	Roger Labbett	PP	Phil Porter
BLa	Brian Lawrence	SPr	Sally Prescott
PLe	Phil Lee	HPr	H Procter
TML	Trevor Lee	Cas	Casual Record
ACL	Alexander Lees	EJR	John Redshaw
LBCF	Lincolnshire Bird Club Forum	RRi	Reg Rice
PL	P Locking	KRi	Ken Richards
RL	R Lorand	DROb	David Roberts
SL	Steve Lorand	NRO	Neil Roberts
NAL	Nigel Lound	KDR	Keith Robertson
SLo	Steve Lovell	CRO	Christopher Robinson

KRo	Keith Robinson	MVi	Matt Vickers
KRm	Ken Rome	AWa	Alan Walker
JRs	Jan Rousseau	JRW	John Walker
SRo	Stephen Routledge	JWW	John Walton
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	BWd	Benjamin Ward
JSa	Jonathan Savory	NWa	Nigel Watson
CS	Chris Sayer	RKW	Rob K Watson
CSc	Colin Scott	SWa	Steve Watson
PSc	Pete Scott	JWa	John Watt
ASha	Andy Sharp	PNW	Nicholas Watts
IGS	Ian Shepherd	SDW	Simon Wellock
JS	James Siddle	WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
ACS	Andrew Sims	TWh	Terry Whalin
ISm	Ian Smith	JWh	J Wheldon
IS	Ian Squire	WBR	Whisby Nature Park Bird Report
DSt	Donna Staples	BLW	Barry Lane Wilcox
GCS	Garry Steele	RBW	Barrie Wilkinson
WBS	Bill Sterling	SWi	Steve Willey
KSu	Kevin Sullivan	GW	Geoff Williams
PS	Paul Sullivan	JWl	John Wilson
MJT	Mike Tarrant	KMW	Kevin Wilson
PTa	Paul Taylor	PWi	Peter Wilson
MTh	Mel Thorn	SWl	Simon Wilson
RTi	Robert Titman	CWd	Cheryl Wood
ATo	Alan Tomlinson	TWo	Tomas Wood
PTo	Philip Townsend	OW	Oliver Woodman
NPT	Nick Tribe	DWo	Dave Worrell
ATu	Aidan Turner	DKW	Dave Wright
Twi	Twitter	GWr	Garry Wright
Unk	Unknown	JWg	Jim Wright
AV	Andrew Vaughan	EB	eBird

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Tern, Black	101	Woodpecker, Great Spotted	117
Tern, Common	99	Woodpecker, Green	117
Tern, Little	97	Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted	117
Tern, Roseate	99	Wren	143
Tern, Sandwich	97	Wryneck	116
Tern, White-winged Black	100	Yellowhammer	171
Thrush, Mistle	149		
Thrush, Song	149		
Tit, Azure	175		
Tit, Bearded	127		
Tit, Blue	127		

Lincolnshire Bird Reports

Include Review of the year, Systematic List, Rarity accounts,
Survey results, Ringing reports, Colour photographs & charts

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