

# DODDINGTON POOL BIRD REPORT 2018



Images courtesy of Dennis Swaby

## DODDINGTON POOL BIRD REPORT FOR 2018

*Details of all the water related birds and birds of prey that we have recorded have been included, together with most of the more noteworthy species.*

### **Mute Swan** (*Cygnus olor*)

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	41	0	1	7	21	60	62	44	43	49	56	55

A pair built a nest in the wood opposite the end of the island, then moved and built another on the island, but no eggs were seen.

### **Whooper Swan** (*Cygnus cygnus*)

On 4<sup>th</sup> December two flew in low as if from Lemon Pool when shooting started.

### **Pink-footed Goose** (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)

Eight were seen briefly on 28<sup>th</sup> January and one on 9<sup>th</sup> December with 200 Greylag.

### **Greylag Goose** (*Anser anser*)

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	14	19	0	23	0	2	10	330	412	233	110	200

The usual pattern with much higher numbers in autumn. One pair bred and fledged four young.

### **Canada Goose** (*Branta canadensis*)

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	129	73	68	55	54	137	76	243	780	642	170	20

Again following the usual pattern with much higher numbers in autumn. A good breeding success as usual with a total of 57 young seen.

### **Barnacle Goose** (*Branta leucopsis*)

Three birds were present on 26<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Egyptian Goose** (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*)

Two birds were present on 8<sup>th</sup> April and also on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

### **Shelduck** (*Tadorna tadorna*)

As last year one or two were recorded in January and February but then increased to five in March and April but did not stay to breed. Four paid a brief visit in December.

### **Wigeon** (*Anas penelope*)

In the first winter period peak counts of 11 in January and 1 in March. Then in the second winter period 22 in October, 16 in November and nine in December.

### **Gadwall** (*Anas strepera*)

Two in February, one in May and then a single occasionally from September to the year end.

### **Teal** (*Anas crecca*)

Back to more usual numbers with a maximum of ten from January to March and 12 from August to November but then numbers picked up in December and we had a peak count of 54.

### **Mallard** (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

A very common resident, with over 700 counted on the two pools in autumn and many young seen.

### **Shoveler** (*Anas clypeata*)

Present from January to April, with a maximum of 17 in January, and from September to the year end with around 10 as usual in September and October, but then numbers increased to a good count of 34 in November and then an exceptional count of 76 briefly in December.

**Pochard** (*Aythya ferina*)

Numbers remain low for this once common species. Present from January to March in reasonable numbers with a maximum of 47 in February. In the second winter period present from October to December with a maximum count of just four in November and eight in December.

**Tufted Duck** (*Aythya fuligula*)

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	137	144	167	141	21	39	53	79	33	53	66	49

A good year with the now regular high numbers in winter and good breeding success. Three broods were recorded with a total of 26 young.

**Mandarin** (*Aix galericulata*)

A single male was present during January and February and again in November.

**Goldeneye** (*Bucephala clangula*)

A regular winter visitor and present from January to March, with a maximum count of 26 in March and from October to December with a maximum of 16 in December.

**Ruddy Duck** (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

A female was seen and photographed on the Main Pool on 12<sup>th</sup> January but it was gone by the next day and not seen again.

**Red-legged Partridge** (*Alectoris rufa*)

Regularly seen in the area.

**Grey Partridge** (*Perdix perdix*)

None actually recorded.

**Pheasant** (*Phasianus colchicus*)

Many reared by the shooting syndicate and released.

**Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

Recorded in January and then June through to December. Usually less than ten, except for the regular autumn surge in numbers, which this year was 42 in September and October and then a very high 85 in November. Numbers reduced to 11 in December.

**Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*)

Becoming increasingly common with one or two seen frequently during November and December and three seen on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Great White Egret** (*Ardea alba*)

A Great Egret was seen with two Little Egrets on 11<sup>th</sup> December.

**Grey Heron** (*Ardea cinerea*)

Once again the size of the breeding colony has increased with a total of eleven occupied nests counted on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Successful breeding this year and by June there were at least 16 fledged young hanging around the nest site. Up to ten birds present all year.

**Little Grebe** (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)

A slightly better year for breeding. On Lemon Pool four pairs were defending territories but just two broods of young were seen; a 2 and a 1. On the Main Pool just two pairs looked to have nested and only 1 young was seen. The peak autumn counts were low with just four on each of the pools.

**Great Crested Grebe** (*Podiceps cristatus*)

A slightly better year for breeding. On the Main Pool around 25 birds summered and four pairs nested with broods of 1; 2; 2; and 3. On Lemon Pool one pair had two young and one pair failed. The post-breeding flock peaked at 55 in August.

**Sparrowhawk** (*Accipiter nisus*)

Resident and breeds in the area.

**Buzzard** (*Buteo buteo*)

Resident and common.

**Osprey** (*Pandion haliaetus*)

One briefly on passage on 5<sup>th</sup> April. Then one on more leisurely return passage appeared on 13<sup>th</sup> September and stayed for a week, giving superb views as it fished close up to the pool side.

**Kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus*)

Resident and two seen regularly near the sailing club and probably bred nearby.

**Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*)

Seen more often in recent times and wandering singles were seen in February, March and November.

**Water Rail** (*Rallus aquatica*)

A good series of records again this year with one seen or heard frequently in the first winter period up to 2<sup>nd</sup> April from both pools.

**Moorhen** (*Gallinula chloropus*)

Bred on both pools and young seen on each. Maximum count was 19 on Main Pool, probably a good breeding season, and seven on Lemon Pool in July, but usually under-counted due to its shy habits.

**Coot** (*Fulica atra*)

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	318	246	202	92	60	273	432	235	123	72	107	163

Doddington continues to be a major site for Coot within the county. Many pairs bred and the highest count in July contained many young.

**Avocet** (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)

A real red-letter day on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. Whilst watching 11 Black-tailed Godwits very close on the sand at the end of the island 17 Avocets flew in circled round, landed there briefly and then departed!

**Oystercatcher** (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

Four birds returned by early February and eight during March. As usual two pairs bred, one on the Sailing Club roof and one on the island. In June four adults and two free flying young were noted. The last bird was seen on 3<sup>rd</sup> August

**Golden Plover** (*Pluvialis apricaria*)

On 20<sup>th</sup> September two were seen in a large flock of Lapwing passing over.

**Lapwing** (*Vanellus vanellus*)

The highest count in the first winter period was 48. Numbers increased from August and reached a regular flock size of around 200 but occasionally another flock of at least 350 flew in and joined them. A super sight of nearly 600 Lapwing flying around overhead.

**Little Ringed Plover** (*Charadrius dubius*)

Two on 6<sup>th</sup> June and singles on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> August.

**Curlew** (*Numenius arquata*)

A single bird seen on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, then three on 11<sup>th</sup> April and one on 27<sup>th</sup> May.

**Black-tailed Godwit** (*Limosa limosa*)

On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 11 flew in and landed close by at the end of the island, preened and rested for 30 minutes and then flew off.

A good example of the vagaries and luck involved in bird recording. There has been only one previous record of Avocet with a single in March 2016. Singles of Black-tailed Godwit have only been recorded in 2010, 2011, 2015 and 2016. And today there were bigger numbers of both species together within the same half an hour - and then gone.

**Dunlin** (*Calidris alpina*)

One paid a brief visit on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**Common Sandpiper** (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

Recorded 12 times during the period April through to 24<sup>th</sup> August.

**Green Sandpiper** (*Tringa ochropus*)

A single record of one on 21<sup>st</sup> August.

**Jack Snipe** (*Lymnocyptes minimus*)

A single was first seen on the island on 29<sup>th</sup> October. During November it showed well for such a secretive little bird and was last seen in early December.

**Woodcock** (*Scolopax rusticola*)

On 14<sup>th</sup> April walking to the Raven nest tree in George's Wood I nearly trod on a Woodcock.

**Snipe** (*Gallinago gallinago*)

Lower numbers than last year with up to four seen in February and March and up to five from September to early December. Usually seen on the waterline around the island.

**Common Tern** (*Sterna hirundo*)

One on 20<sup>th</sup> April and four on 4<sup>th</sup> July.

**Black-headed Gull** (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*)

A maximum count of around 6000 in the gull roost in January but the late winter roost had much lower numbers with around 4,000 in December.

**Common Gull** (*Larus canus*)

A maximum count of around 20 in the gull roost in December.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** (*Larus fuscus*)

Much lower numbers in the gull roost with around 500 in December (4,000 in December 2017).

**Herring Gull** (*Larus argentatus*)

Around 50 seen in the gull roost in December.

**Great Black-backed Gull** (*Larus marinus*)

A single was seen with the other gulls in January.

**Stock Dove** (*Columba oenas*)

Seen regularly but no high counts recorded.

**Wood Pigeon** (*Columba palumbus*)

Very common but the largest flock size noted was just 120 in October.

**Barn Owl** (*Tyto alba*)

Does breed and adults occasionally seen at dusk from the main road.

**Little Owl** (*Athene noctua*)

A pair present and probably bred near the Sailing Club.

**Tawny Owl** (*Strix aluco*)

Resident and breeds. Heard occasionally in early spring.

**Common Swift** (*Apus apus*)

The highest count noted was 45 in June.

**Common Kingfisher** (*Alcedo atthis*)

Singles seen frequently during early winter and spring. Then in July the annual question of where do they breed was probably answered. Both birds of a pair were seen frequently carrying a fish and flying away east over the A51 down to Checkley Brook; where presumably they had a nest and were feeding young.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** (*Dendrocopos major*)

The commonest woodpecker and several pairs bred.

**Jay** (*Garrulus glandarius*)

Seen fairly often but breeding not proved.

**Jackdaw** (*Corvus monedula*)

Very common and many pairs breed in and around the hall.

**Raven** (*Corvus corax*)

The resident pair were recorded in most months and seen guarding the usual nest site in Georges Wood, although no family group was seen.

**Goldcrest** (*Regulus regulus*)

Resident and breeds.

**Skylark** (*Alauda arvensis*)

A maximum of just two males heard singing.

**Sand Martin** (*Riparia riparia*)

The highest count noted was 25 in June.

**Swallow** (*Hirundo rustica*)

The only flock size noted was 20 in May. Several pairs are just hanging on to nest in the old timber yard shed.

**House Martin** (*Delichon urbicum*)

The highest count noted was 80 in August.

**Chiffchaff** (*Phylloscopus collybita*)

A summer visitor. Also one was recorded on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Willow Warbler** (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

A summer visitor.

**Blackcap** (*Sylvia atricapilla*)

A summer visitor.

**Garden Warbler** (*Sylvia borin*)

A summer visitor.

**Whitethroat** (*Sylvia communis*)

A summer visitor.

**Sedge Warbler** (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

A summer visitor.

**Reed Warbler** (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*)

A poor year and probably only six pairs bred around Lemon Pool.

**Starling** (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

A mixed flock on 17<sup>th</sup> March held 350 Fieldfare, 200 Starling and 50 Redwing.

**Fieldfare** (*Turdus pilaris*)

A mixed flock on 17<sup>th</sup> March held 350 Fieldfare, 200 Starling and 50 Redwing.

**Redwing** (*Turdus iliacus*)

A mixed flock on 17<sup>th</sup> March held 350 Fieldfare, 200 Starling and 50 Redwing.

**Spotted Flycatcher** (*Muscicapa striata*)

A very nice record of a pair with two fledged young all flycatching to feed themselves very close in front of us by Lemon Pool.

**Stonechat** (*Saxicola torquata*)

A female was recorded on 20<sup>th</sup> March by the Main Pool.

**Wheatear** (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)

A really poor year with just three records; two on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, one on 26<sup>th</sup> April and a single on return passage on 11<sup>th</sup> August.

**Yellow Wagtail** (*Motacilla flava*)

Recorded through April with usually two or three but a high count of seven on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Then just a single on 15<sup>th</sup> May but sadly none stayed to breed this year.

**Grey Wagtail** (*Motacilla cinerea*)

Occasional sightings through the year.

**Pied Wagtail** (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*)

An exceptionally poor spring passage. Numbers started to build in March with a peak of 19 but then quickly dropped away to just one in April (52 last year) Probably one pair bred with young seen. Few records on autumn passage with just three in September and October. The only records for White Wagtail *M.a. alba* were singles on 20<sup>th</sup> March and on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**Meadow Pipit** (*Anthus pratensis*)

Once again a pathetically poor showing on spring passage with no records! (last year we saw up to 60 birds over a four week period). The only flock recorded was 17 in January.

**Chaffinch** (*Fringilla coelebs*)

A flock of at least 140 was present during November feeding on maize stubble.

**Brambling** (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

In the first winter period up to eight were using the feeders by the offices and one was seen in December.

**Greenfinch** (*Chloris chloris*)

Few finches recorded.

**Goldfinch** (*Carduelis carduelis*)

Few finches recorded.

**Siskin** (*carduelis cannabina*)

A flock of 25 seen in March.

**Linnet** (*Carduelis cannabina*)

A large flock of around 200 was present in the first winter period and up to 55 in the second winter period.

**Bullfinch** (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)

Seen in March.

**Hawfinch** (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*)

A single seen briefly on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

**Reed Bunting** (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)

A few pairs breed, with two singing males around the yacht club and south bay in April, May and June and one on Lemon Pool. A few also remain for the winter.

Colin Lythgoe; Mike Warner ; Andy Warner; Sylvia Jarvis.