



THE OBSERVER

SECOS Newsletter

Promoting and fostering an interest in ornithology by observation, research and record-keeping

Field Trip

Knypersley Reservoir Tuesday 6th February

Knypersley Reservoir was built in 1827 to supply water to the Caldon Canal. It is the only reservoir along the course of the River Trent.

The Reservoir is a nice place for birding. The woodland has a rich birdlife, and the birds are used to human presence. The open water has waterfowl. Overall, this is an attractive area for a walk and the birding is close to the paths.

February 2024



Dam at Knypersley Reservoir - Kate Jewell



Kingfisher - Nick Martin

"A Celebration of British Birds"

Nick Martin
Friday 9th February

To quote Nick:

"We love birds and in this talk we will find out more about our relationship with them and how many species have adapted to live alongside us and our activities. We'll look at the rare birds, the common species and the new kids on the block. We'll enjoy the best of the dawn chorus, seabirds, birds of prey and much more."

For trip details, refer to the Chairman's Note email, visit the SECOS website or contact the trip leader.

Field Trip

North Wales Coast

Sunday 18th February

The North Wales Coast has some fantastic birding sites, such as Llanfairfechan, NWWT The Spinnies and RSPB Conwy. If there is time, and the weather and light are favourable, we will also have short stops at Rhos-on-Sea and Kimmel Dunes LNR.



RSPB Conwy Visitor Centre - Wikipedia

January Highlights (first reports this month)

1st Barnacle Goose, Cetti's Warbler, Curlew, Fieldfare, Goldeneye, Goosander, Great White Egret, Kingfisher, Little Grebe, Mandarin Duck, Redwing, Siskin, Water Rail, Yellowhammer; 2nd Little Egret; 3rd Blackcap, Pochard, Tawny Owl, Woodcock; 4th Egyptian Goose, Golden Plover, Pink-footed Goose, Red-legged Partridge, Snipe; 5th Mediterranean Gull; 6th Australian Shelduck, Short-eared Owl, Whooper Swan; 7th Common Gull, Lesser Redpoll; 9th Raven, Waxwing; 10th Cattle Egret, Dipper; 11th Caspian Gull, Dunlin, Green Sandpiper; 12th Chiffchaff; 13th Barn Owl, Common Redpoll (Mealy); 14th Black-tailed Godwit, Pintail; 16th Redshank; 19th Ring-necked Parakeet; 20th Brambling, Green Woodpecker, Yellow-legged Gull; 21st Merlin; 24th Black Swan; 26th Oystercatcher

Sightings EHF/PHF/MGT/RF - January

Gulls & Terns	Count
Black-headed Gull	regular, max c1550
Mediterranean Gull	1, 5 th , 30 th
Lesser Black-b Gull	regular, max 18
Herring Gull	regular, max c140
Caspian Gull	regular, max 2
Yellow-legged Gull	1, 20 th , 29 th
Common Gull	regular, max 5
Great Black-b Gull	regular, max 3



Redshank - Dennis Swaby

CF = Crabmill Flash

EHF = Elton Hall Flash

FF = Fodens Flash

FFF = Fields Farm Flash

GF = Groby Flash

MGT = Maw Green Tip

OTF = Oak Tree Flash

PHF = Pump House Flash

RF = Railway Flash

WF = Warmingham Flash

WLF = Watch Lane Flash

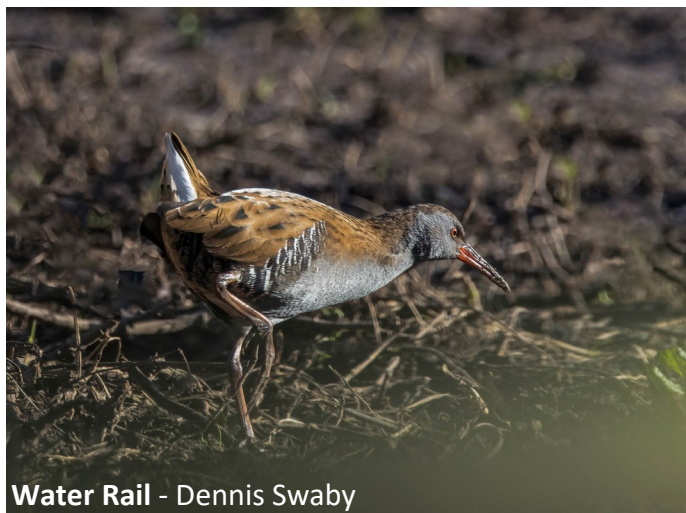
Blue text indicates place first seen.

Underline indicates high flock count (see Feb 2020 Newsletter, page 8).

Sightings EHF/PHF/MGT/RF - January

Wildfowl	Count
Shelduck	regular, max 77
Wigeon	regular, max c950
Gadwall	max 3, 7 th , 28 th
Teal	regular, max 140
Mallard	regular, max c90
Pintail	max 3, 22 nd
Pochard	regular, max 4
Shoveler	regular, max 32
Tufted Duck	regular, max 42
Goldeneye	1, 1 st , 3 rd , 13 th
Goosander	max 3, 13 th
Australian Shelduck	1, 6 th , 28 th
Pink-footed Goose	regular, max 32
Greylag Goose	regular, max 10
Canada Goose	regular, max 116
Barnacle Goose	1, 1st
G C Grebe	1, 19th
Little Grebe	regular, max 1
Coot	regular, max 90+
Moorhen	regular, max 16
Mute Swan	regular, max 6

Golden Plovers - Dennis Swaby



Water Rail - Dennis Swaby



Australian Shelduck (escape) - Dennis Swaby

Waders	Count
Water Rail	regular, max 1
Oystercatcher	1, 30 th
Lapwing	regular, max c265
Golden Plover	max c85, 4 th
Dunlin	max 6, 12 th
Redshank	regular, max 2
Common Snipe	regular, max 17
Curlew	regular, max 27
Black-tailed Godwit	regular, max 1
Green Sandpiper	1, 12 th , 13 th
Woodcock	max 2, 5 th



Mediterranean Gull - Dennis Swaby

Herons & Egrets	Count
Grey Heron	regular, max 4
Little Egret	regular, max 4
Cattle Egret	max 6, 12 th
Great White Egret	regular, max 3

Raptors & Owls	Count
Sparrowhawk	max 2, 7 th
Common Buzzard	regular, max 2
Kestrel	regular, max 3
Peregrine	1, 1 st
Short-eared Owl	max 2, 13 th

Sightings Elsewhere - January



Great Spot. 'pecker - Dennis Swaby

EHF, PHF, MGT, RF: Kingfisher, **Green Woodpecker**, Raven, **Cetti's Warbler**, **Chiffchaff**, **Redwing**, **Fieldfare**, Stonechat, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Linnet, Common Redpoll (Mealy), Lesser Redpoll, Siskin, Yellowhammer

FF: Goosander, Little Grebe, **Woodcock**, **Ring-necked Parakeet**, Cetti's Warbler, Greenfinch, Lesser Redpoll, **Siskin**, **Yellowhammer**

FFF: Goosander, Snipe, Tawny Owl, Kingfisher, Kestrel, Raven, Redwing, Fieldfare, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Siskin, Yellowhammer

WLF: Pink-footed Goose, Water Rail, **Cetti's Warbler**, Lesser Redpoll, Siskin, Yellowhammer

Alsager - Borrow Pit Meadows: Goosander, Bullfinch, Siskin

Alsager - Fanny's Croft: Redwing, Yellowhammer

Alsager - Salt Line: Redwing, Fieldfare, Bullfinch, Siskin

Alsager - Wood Park: Meadow Pipit **Arclid:** **Waxwing**

Astbury - Astbury Mere CP: Pink-footed Goose, Goldeneye, Little Grebe, Lapwing, Dunlin, Common Gull, Raven, Chiffchaff, Bullfinch, Lesser Redpoll

Balterley: Redwing, Fieldfare **Barthomley - Walnut Tree Farm:** Lapwing

Brereton Heath - Brereton Heath CP: Kingfisher, Redwing, Fieldfare, Lesser Redpoll, Siskin

Brereton Mill Pool: Tufted Duck, Redwing, Siskin


Checkley: Red-legged Partridge, Raven, Redwing

Congleton - Mossley: Woodcock, **Brambling**

Congleton - River Dane: **Mandarin Duck**, **Goosander**, Sparrowhawk, **Kingfisher**, **Dipper**, Grey Wagtail, Bullfinch

 **SECOS Website:** www.secos.org.uk

 **SECOS Blog (to read/record local sightings):** www.secos.org.uk/sightings

 **Sandbach Flashes:** This medium does not do justice to the images that Dennis Swaby captures at Sandbach Flashes. Some of the images have been uploaded to www.sandbachflashes.co.uk

Sightings Elsewhere - January



Common Redpoll (Mealy) - Dennis Swaby

Rode Heath: Pink-footed Goose, Redwing, Fieldfare

Swettenham - Swettenham Meadows: Pink-footed Goose, Barn Owl, Fieldfare, Bullfinch, Siskin

Walgherton - Lea Forge: Woodcock, Raven, Fieldfare

Wheelock - Forge Fields: Tawny Owl, Kingfisher, Blackcap, Greenfinch

Wheelock - Trent and Mersey Canal to M6: Little Egret

Winterley & Winterley Pool: Goosander, Common Gull, Fieldfare, Greenfinch

Crewe: Short-eared Owl

Crewe - Radway Green: Sparrowhawk, Fieldfare

Doddington - Doddington Pool: Whooper Swan, Pochard, Goldeneye, Goosander, Red-legged Partridge, Little Grebe, Oystercatcher, Great White Egret, Merlin, Raven, Redwing, Fieldfare, Stonechat

Haslington: Sparrowhawk, Redwing, Fieldfare, Lesser Redpoll

Holmes Chapel: Barn Owl

Middlewich: Black Swan, Blackcap

Middlewich - Lime Beds: Green Sandpiper

Moston Green: Pink-footed Goose, Redwing, Fieldfare, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Common Redpoll (Mealy), Lesser Redpoll, Yellowhammer

Rode Heath - Rode Pool: Egyptian Goose, Mandarin Duck, Goosander, Little Grebe, Snipe, Great White Egret, Little Egret, Raven, Siskin

This is a small selection of species seen in the SECOS Recording Area.

A full listing is on the website:
<https://www.secos.org.uk/sightings/>

Tittesworth Reservoir - 9th January



16 members met in the car park to be joined later by a further 3 for our walk around Tittesworth Reservoir. The Visitor Centre was closed for refurbishment and instead a "Pop up Café" was available on this cold but dry winter day. We walked away from the Visitor Centre seeing winter thrushes fly overhead but it was difficult to identify them. One thrush, later identified as a song thrush, flew over our heads and behind a hedge, together with a male bullfinch. Blue and great tits were seen with the occasional chaffinch and robin as we made our way into the wooded area. This part of the walk felt warmer as the trees protected us from the wind as we watched blackbirds and redwing rummaging for grubs in the leaf litter. While on the boardwalk a deceased goldcrest was found on the ground which presumably had succumbed to the previous night's cold weather. Two latecomers to the walk reported a further 3 bullfinches at the start of the Crabapple trail, together with 5 siskins by the stream.

continued >>

SECOS Website: www.secos.org.uk

SECOS Blog (to read/record local sightings): www.secos.org.uk/sightings

Sandbach Flashes: This medium does not do justice to the images that Dennis Swaby captures at Sandbach Flashes. Some of the images have been uploaded to www.sandbachflashes.co.uk

Tittesworth Reservoir (continued)

We walked back to the Visitor Centre car park for our packed lunches with nothing of note to add to the list. At this point, some walked onto the hide for lunch out of the wind, a sound decision that was rewarded with views of a red kite and kingfisher. After lunch, we walked down to the feeder area that was very active with blue, great, long-tailed and willow tits ravenously taking food from the feeders. Goldfinches were present in good numbers with chaffinch, dunnock and robin feeding on the ground. Earlier in the day, a great spotted woodpecker was seen on the fat balls and a solitary redpoll was competing with the goldfinches for food, possibly niger seed in the tall cylindrical feeders. Great crested grebe, tufted duck, mallard, black-headed gull and a solitary common gull were the main protagonists on the reservoir before the group moved across the road to the comfort of the hide but not before seeing a single fieldfare in the field used as an overflow car park.

In the hide, telescopes were used to find goosander, teal and common pochard at the far end of the water. Common buzzards were displaying but there was no further sign of the red kite or kingfisher. The water level was high and no snipe were found despite exhaustive searching of the water edges. A willow tit gave good close views as it raided the bird table for seed. The trip leader suggested we give it a further ten minutes for the kingfisher to appear before we return home – ten seconds later excellent views of the kingfisher were seen as it flew across the front of the hide. In total we saw 46 species for the day and these are listed below.

Mallard, Tufted Duck, Pochard, Teal, Canada Goose, Goosander, Great Crested Grebe, Moorhen, Cormorant, Grey Heron, Buzzard, Red Kite, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, Carrion Crow, Magpie, Jackdaw, Jay, Rook, Kingfisher, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Redwing, Fieldfare, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Willow Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Robin, Dunnock, Wren, Treecreeper, Nuthatch, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Redpoll, Siskin, Reed Bunting.

Ian and Lydia Taylor

Diary Dates



6th Feb 10.00 a.m.

Tuesday Field Trip

Knypersley Reservoir

Leader: Tom Graham

9th Feb 7.30 p.m.

Indoor Meeting

A Celebration of British Birds

Speaker: Nick Martin

16th Feb 7.00 for 7.30 p.m.

60th Anniversary Dinner

Kruger National Park

Speaker: Jeff Clarke

18th Feb 10.00 a.m.

Sunday Field Trip

North Wales Coast

Leader: Mike Tonks

🕸 SECOS Website: www.secos.org.uk

🕸 SECOS Blog (to read/record local sightings): www.secos.org.uk/sightings

🕸 Sandbach Flashes: This medium does not do justice to the images that Dennis Swaby captures at Sandbach Flashes. Some of the images have been uploaded to www.sandbachflashes.co.uk