



# THE OBSERVER

## SECOS Newsletter

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

## June 2025

### Short Weekend Trip

Anglesey Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> - Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June

Cemlyn Bay - Colin Park



#### "Auks & Terns Trip"

We'll be heading to Anglesey in June for our short weekend trip, based at the Parc Cybi Premier Inn in Holyhead. Our itinerary includes visits to Gronant Dunes, RSPB Cors Ddyga, RSPB South Stack, Cemlyn Bay, and RSPB Valley Wetlands, which will

provide a mix of coastal, wetland, and heathland habitats.

### Summer Walk

Redesmere

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June

Located near Siddington, north of Congleton, Redesmere was originally created in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as a feeder reservoir for Capesthorpe Hall's ornamental lakes. Today, it is a picturesque lake offering a serene setting for birdwatchers and nature enthusiasts.



Redesmere - Attic Tapestry

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

## May Highlights (first reports this month)

1<sup>st</sup> Cetti's Warbler, Common Sandpiper, Dunlin, Little Ringed Plover, Oystercatcher, Reed Warbler, Ringed Plover, Ruff, Whimbrel, Whitethroat; 2<sup>nd</sup> Blackcap, Common Gull, Goosander, House Martin, Little Grebe, Raven, Red-legged Partridge, Redstart, Swallow; 3<sup>rd</sup> Kingfisher, Little Stint, Sanderling, Sedge Warbler, Swift, Willow Warbler, Yellow Wagtail, Yellowhammer; 4<sup>th</sup> Grasshopper Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Sand Martin, Tawny Owl; 6<sup>th</sup> Little Egret; 8<sup>th</sup> Garden Warbler, Hobby; 9<sup>th</sup> Red Kite; 13<sup>th</sup> Mandarin Duck; 14<sup>th</sup> Tree Sparrow; 19<sup>th</sup> Greenshank; 21<sup>st</sup> Barnacle Goose, Egyptian Goose; 23<sup>rd</sup> Great White Egret; 26<sup>th</sup> Little Owl; 27<sup>th</sup> Dipper, Siskin; 30<sup>th</sup> Cuckoo

## Sightings EHF/PHF - May

| Wildfowl         | Count                                  |
|------------------|--|
| Shelduck         | regular, max 22                        |
| Wigeon           | regular, max 1                         |
| Gadwall          | 6, 26 <sup>th</sup>                    |
| Teal             | 8, 6 <sup>th</sup>                     |
| Mallard          | regular, max c180                      |
| Shoveler         | 2, 6 <sup>th</sup>                     |
| Mandarin Duck    | 1, 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> |
| <b>Goosander</b> | 1, 2 <sup>nd</sup>                     |
| Greylag Goose    | 1, 21 <sup>st</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> |
| Canada Goose     | regular, max 20                        |
| G C Grebe        | 5, 1 <sup>st</sup>                     |
| Coot             | regular, max 13                        |
| Moorhen          | regular, max 4                         |
| Mute Swan        | regular, max 3                         |



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 - May

| Waders               | Count                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Oystercatcher        | regular, max 4                       |
| Lapwing              | regular, max 5                       |
| Little Ringed Plover | regular, max 3                       |
| Ringed Plover        | 7, 3 <sup>rd</sup>                   |
| Dunlin               | 1, 1 <sup>st</sup>                   |
| Little Stint         | 2, 3 <sup>rd</sup>                   |
| Whimbrel             | 1, 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> |
| Greenshank           | regular, max 1                       |
| Ruff                 | 1, 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> |
| Common Sandpiper     | regular, max 2                       |
| Sanderling           | 3, 3 <sup>rd</sup>                   |



Whimbrel - Dennis Swaby



Greenshank - Dennis Swaby

| Gulls & Terns       | Count              |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Black-headed Gull   | 1, 1 <sup>st</sup> |
| Common Gull         | 1, 2 <sup>nd</sup> |
| Lesser Black-b Gull | regular, max 40    |
| Herring Gull        | regular, max 20    |

| Herons & Egrets | Count          |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Grey Heron      | regular, max 4 |

| Raptors & Owls | Count                                |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Buzzard        | 1, 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> |
| Peregrine      | 1, 4 <sup>th</sup>                   |



Whimbrel - Dennis Swaby



Lapwing - Dennis Swaby

# RSPB Leighton Moss - 11<sup>th</sup> May



Fifteen members enjoyed a spring outing to RSPB Leighton Moss on a glorious sunny day, with temperatures reaching 22°C. As we gathered in the Storrs Lane car park, we were greeted by the songs of chaffinch, greenfinch, chiffchaff and a very vocal Cetti's warbler. An unexpected highlight came early – a high-flying raptor initially thought to be a buzzard revealed itself as an **osprey** as it passed directly overhead, showing its long wings and pale head. A fantastic start!



From the visitor centre, we followed the Lower Trail, stopping to scan the reedbeds and distant pools. Here, we saw black-headed gull, coot, grey heron, mute swan and several pochard. Two marsh harriers quartered the reeds, while a pair of lesser black-backed gulls had taken up residence on the osprey nesting platform. Along the Causeway Trail, reed warbler, willow warbler and reed bunting were all in song. From the Causeway Hide, a distant booming bittern was heard by a few, although it

remained out of sight. Other species added here included gadwall, tufted duck, great crested grebe, cormorant, buzzard, pied wagtail, Canada goose – and another flyover osprey.

Lunch was taken either in the café or at the Feeding Station shelter, where a mallard startled us as it flew in at head height! Around the feeders were blue, great and coal tits, chaffinch, goldfinch, greenfinch, robin, dunnock, and a striking male bullfinch.

After lunch, we took the Family Trail through woodland, with some members climbing the Skytower for an elevated view of the reserve. Others continued to Lillian's Hide, hearing a sedge warbler and spotting several little grebes.





# RSPB Leighton Moss (continued)

From the Tim Jackson Hide, we enjoyed views of an oystercatcher nesting on top of a sand martin nesting box and two magnificent red deer resting in the undergrowth. A short detour to a former feeding area produced one of the day's star birds – a brief but clear sighting of a **marsh tit**. Finally, we visited the Grisedale Hide, where a little egret flew past and a pink-footed goose was seen.

Back at the visitor centre, a well-earned rest and choc-ice break was accompanied by four swifts circling overhead. Recharged, we made the short drive to the New Road car park, noting that the once deeply rutted track has now been resurfaced, except for the stretch under the railway bridge (left intentionally to preserve headroom).



Knot - Kirsty Crutchley

At the Allen Hide, we were treated to a busy scene: 25 avocets, hundreds of black-headed gulls, and at least 50 knot. From the Eric Morecambe Hide, we spotted more avocets, a lone oystercatcher and a redshank feeding along the pool's edge. Though we'd hoped for a spotted redshank, the bird's white wing bar confirmed it to be a common redshank.

A sheep and lamb marooned on a small island added a quirky moment to the day.

A thoroughly enjoyable trip with memorable highlights – especially osprey and marsh tit.

**Trip Count = 51 species**

*Mike Tonks*

## Goyt Valley - 20<sup>th</sup> May



Twelve members enjoyed a trip to Goyt Valley, led by Chris Parry.

37 bird species were recorded including:

Goyt Valley: **cuckoo**, **pied flycatcher**, red grouse, **dipper**, grey wagtail, **redstart**, **tree pipit**

Derbyshire Bridge: curlew, **golden plover**

Danebower Quarry: stonechat, kestrel, meadow pipit (sadly, no ring ouzel)

A hugely enjoyable day!

# Biddulph Grange - 28<sup>th</sup> May



16 members enjoyed a summer walk at Biddulph Grange, led by Peter Durnall. In the morning, we explored The Clough, Baileys Wood, and a short section of the Biddulph Valley Way. In the afternoon, we walked in Biddulph Grange Country Park.

29 bird species were recorded: Canada goose, mallard, woodpigeon, moorhen, coot, lesser black-backed gull, buzzard, sparrowhawk, carrion crow, magpie, jackdaw, swift, swallow, blue tit, great tit, house martin, chiffchaff, blackcap, goldcrest, wren, treecreeper, song thrush, blackbird, robin, dunnoek, house sparrow, chaffinch, greenfinch, goldfinch.

**2025 SECOS Field Trips Total = 151 species**

reed warbler - Dennis Swaby

## Sightings Elsewhere - May



Reed Bunting - Dennis Swaby

**EHF/PHF/MGP/RF:** Swift, **Raven**, **Sand Martin**, **Swallow**, **House Martin**, **Cetti's Warbler**, **Sedge Warbler**, **Reed Warbler**, **Grasshopper Warbler**, **Blackcap**, **Lesser Whitethroat**, **Whitethroat**, **Yellow Wagtail**  
**FFF:** Swift, Oystercatcher, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, Swallow, House Martin, **Sedge Warbler**, **Blackcap**, **Whitethroat**, **Yellow Wagtail**, **Grey Wagtail**  
**WF:** **Cuckoo**

**Alsager - Alsager Treatment Works:** **Swift**, **Swallow**, **Grey Wagtail**

**Alsager - Mosshouse:** **Swallow**, **House Martin**, **Willow Warbler**, **Whitethroat**, **Yellow Wagtail**, **Linnet**, **Yellowhammer**

**Astbury - Astbury Mere CP:** Mute Swan, Mallard, Tufted Duck, Red-legged Partridge, Woodpigeon, Coot, Great Crested Grebe, Red Kite, Carrion Crow, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Chiffchaff, Blackbird, Robin, Dunnock

**Brereton Heath - Brereton Heath LNR:** Yellowhammer

**Congleton - Congleton Link Road West:** **Red Kite**

**Congleton - Forge & Radnor Woods:** Sparrowhawk, Sand Martin

**Congleton - Mossley:** Sparrowhawk, **Tawny Owl**, Raven, Swallow, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Whitethroat, Treecreeper, Bullfinch

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

**Congleton - Westlow Mere:** Sand Martin

**Crewe:** Red Kite, Peregrine

**Doddington - Doddington Pool:** **Red-legged Partridge**, Swift, **Little Grebe**, Great Crested Grebe, Oystercatcher, Little Ringed Plover, Common Sandpiper, **Great White Egret**, Sparrowhawk, Red Kite, Hobby, Sand Martin, Swallow, **House Martin**, Reed Warbler, **Blackcap**, **Redstart**, Yellow Wagtail

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/>

## Sightings Elsewhere - May



Swallow - Dennis Swaby

**Sandbach:** Swift

**Sandbach - Elworth:** **Tree Sparrow**

**Shavington:** Mistle Thrush, Yellowhammer

**Swettenham:** Red-legged Partridge, **Hobby**, **Garden Warbler**

**Walgherton - Lea Forge:** Great Crested Grebe, Cetti's Warbler, Reed Warbler, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Whitethroat, Linnet

**Wheelock - Forge Fields:** Swallow, House Martin, Blackcap

**Gawsworth - Gawsworth Hall:** **Swallow**

**Hassall Green, SE of Sandbach:** **Ringed Plover**, **Whitethroat**

**Holmes Chapel - Marsh Lane Farm:** **Little Owl**

**Mow Cop:** Swift, Skylark, Willow Warbler, Meadow Pipit, Linnet, Stonechat

**Nantwich:** Grey Wagtail, Goldfinch

**Rode Heath:** **Siskin**

**Rode Heath - Rode Pool:** **Barnacle Goose**, **Egyptian Goose**, **Mandarin Duck**, Swift, **Little Egret**, Raven, Swallow, House Martin



Reed Warbler - Dennis Swaby

## Diary Dates



**8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> Jun**

Short Weekend Trip

**16<sup>th</sup> Jun 7.00 pm**

Committee Meeting

**18<sup>th</sup> Jun 7.00 pm**

Wednesday Summer Walk

**Anglesey**

Leaders: Ian & Lydia Taylor

**Redesmere**

Leader: Anthea Gater



SECOS Website: <https://www.secos.org.uk>



SECOS Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/SECOS1964>



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 <https://sandbachflashes.co.uk/>