



SOUTH EAST CHESHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

2008 BIRD REPORT

Including Birds of Sandbach Flashes



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Editorial

Welcome to the SECOS annual bird report for 2008. This year's report will follow the same format as last year's, with the systematic list forming the bulk of the text and individually written articles about finds and general observations regarding birds and birdwatching locally completing the report.

As seems to be the case every year the SECOS area had more than it's fair share of interesting records with Sandbach Flashes, Stowford and Doddington providing the vast majority of these once again. As last year more than 150 species were recorded in the Sandbach Flashes recording area alone which is excellent for an inland site. The first Cattle Egret for the SECOS area was seen in July but unfortunately chose a private site so the inevitable next record will be well received. Sandbach Flashes as always produced quality birds with Greenland White-fronted Goose, Green-winged Teal, Red-crested Pochard, Spoonbill, Avocet, Caspian Gull, Ring-billed Gull and Common Crossbill amongst the many notable records. Records from the Stowford area included Black Kite, Marsh Harrier, Quail and Hawfinch. It's not however all about scarcities and rarities and counts of waders, wildfowl or any other interesting observations are most welcome.

Included in this report is an article by Alan Booth with his thoughts and observations on his time watching the Sandbach Flashes area and anybody interested or inclined to do something similar for future reports please feel free. Mark Stubbs proves that you can record good birds anywhere with his article on urban birding.

The SECOS winter garden bird survey continues to provide interest in the dark days of that season. Thanks go to all the bird watchers who submit their sightings and to those who fund the various bird feeding stations out of their own pockets resulting in the enjoyment of many. Thanks also to HJ Lea Oakes of Wheelock for the supply of free bird food.

Finally, please encourage any local friends with an interest in birds to purchase a copy of this report, at £2.50 even in these days of recession it's got to be good value.

Andy Firth

Contributors

Many thanks to those people who have recorded sightings in the log books at Sandbach Flashes, Doddington Pool and Rode Pool and to the individuals who have submitted paper records personally. Those records have been used to produce this report.

Abbreviations Used

CF	Crabmill Flash	ad	adult
CP	Canal Pools	m	male
EHF	Elton Hall Flash	f	female
FF	Foden's Flash	imm	immature
FFF	Fields Farm Flash	juv	juvenile
GF	Groby Flash	c	approximately
OF	Oak Tree Flash	max	maximum
PF	Plex Flash	BBRC	British Birds Rarities Committee
PHF	Pump House Flash	BP	Business Park
RF	Railway Flash	CP	Country Park
RLT	Red Lane Tip	SQ	Sand Quarry
TLF	Tetton Lane Flash		
WF	Warmingham Flash		
WLF	Watch Lane Flash		

Status Definitions

The status of species within the area is given in a one-line entry after the species heading. These have been defined as follows:-

Abundant	Occurs in large numbers in suitable habitats and seasons.
Common	Occurs regularly or widely distributed in suitable habitats.
Fairly common	Occurs in moderate numbers in suitable habitats.
Uncommon	Occurs in small numbers.
Scarce	One or two records in each year, or restricted to specific habitats.
Rare	Occurs less than annually.
Very rare	Less than ten records in the last 20 years.
Vagrant	Less than two records in the last 20 years.

BIRDING SITES

I have listed below some of the more major sites for birding in the SECOS area, including a brief summary of the site and a grid reference of its approximate centre.

The level of access is denoted by the figure shown, in accordance with the following definitions:-

¹ No public access

² Access to SECOS members only

³ Some access or viewing from footpaths and roads

⁴ Public access

Arclid Sand Quarry SJ778623³

Extensive area of water formed by the quarry workings.

Astbury Mere SJ849624⁴

Extensive area of water formed by the quarry workings, now used for water sports and angling.

Bagmere SJ796643³

An overgrown mere still with some water and reed beds and a designated SSSI.

Bent Farm Sand Quarry SJ830621³

A large working sand quarry owned by WBB Minerals.

Brereton Heath CP SJ798651⁴

A Cheshire County Council Country Park comprising a water-filled quarry and surrounding mixed woodland.

Crewe Business Park SJ720550⁴

Primarily a Business Park but managed very sympathetically for wildlife. Adjacent to Quakers Coppice.

Crewe Golf Course SJ744546³

Situated at Haslington. It also includes the Valley Brook and surrounding woods.

Crewe Hall SJ735544¹

A very extensive area of mixed woodland and farmland.

Doddington Pool SJ714464²

Includes two large lakes, woodland, the Hall and grounds.

Lawton Woods SJ825559³

Large area of mixed woodland including a lake.

Middlewich Lime Beds SJ711653¹

The raised settling beds owned by British Salt.

Mow Cop from SJ856573 to SJ873593³

A sandstone ridge of moorland habitat giving extensive views over the Cheshire Plain and which forms the Cheshire/Staffordshire border.

Quakers Coppice SJ724546⁴

A wood of six hectares on the south side of Crewe owned by Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council.

Rode Pool SJ815575²

A 1300 metre-long lake with islands and extensive reed beds, surrounded by woods. The SECOS bird hide overlooks one end of the pool.

Roe Park SJ858583³

Large area of mixed woodland on side of Mow Cop, like Welsh hill valley habitat.

Sandbach Flashes ³

An all-embracing term used to describe the various flashes in the area to the west and south of Sandbach, and north of Crewe. These started forming in the 1930s after land subsidence following brine extraction. All flashes are now privately owned and there is no public access. However, most are watchable from public roads and tracks. Most of the flashes' area is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are currently around fourteen flashes, but the most important are:-

Elton Hall Flash SJ727596

In two parts, with the River Whealock flowing through the well-vegetated part, and very little vegetation on the saltpan.

Maw Green Tip SJ717577

Not strictly in the flashes' area but inextricably linked for gulls and corvids. It is being greatly expanded and now butts right up to Railway Flash and Groby Flash. Just north of Crewe.

Pump House Flash SJ723595

The site of the old brine pumping mechanism. Now silting up rapidly.

Railway Flash SJ718585

Currently two separate flashes with a marshy area between.

The Moat SJ730613 (previously known as Foden's Flash)

Includes a large bed of bulrushes and the wood around and behind the flash.

Warmingham Flash SJ719619

Heavily disturbed by fishermen.

Watch Lane Flash SJ727606

Heavily disturbed by fishermen but with two small reed beds.

Stowford SJ745530 ³

An area of wet meadows between the A500 and the railway line.

Swettenham SJ801675 ³

Farmland and mixed woodland by the River Dane.

Taxmere SJ780625 ¹

Area of woodland and a pool just north of Arclid Sand Quarry.

Timbersbrook/The Cloud SJ896627 to SJ900635 ³

A small (but important in a SECOS context) area of upland moorland and conifer forest.

Westlow Mere, Congleton SJ855644 ³

Previously known as Hulme Walfield Sand Quarry, now a Trout Fishery.

When out in the countryside, either general birdwatching or carrying out specific fieldwork, then observe the birdwatcher's code of conduct:-

1. The welfare of birds must come first.
2. Habitat must be protected.
3. Keep disturbance to birds and their habitat to a minimum.
4. When you find a rare bird think carefully about who you should tell.
5. Do not harass rare migrants.
6. Abide by the bird protection laws at all times.
7. Respect the rights of landowners.
8. Respect the rights of other people in the countryside.
9. Make your records available to the local bird recorder.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 2008

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

Fairly common resident.

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	4	2	2	2	27	42	45	44	9	9	7	15
Winterley	9	3	2	nc	7	nc	7	7	7	7	5	5

Numbers continue at a more natural low level at Winterley. Successful breeding from several sites, including Stowford with seven cygnets here in May. Recorded regularly at Sandbach Flashes with at least two breeding pairs present. A pair with seven cygnets on EHF in late May being particularly noteworthy.

Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)

Rare winter visitor.

50 seen flying over Crewe on 16th March had been seen a few minutes earlier over Stowford and over Blithfield earlier in the day. One was at Doddington 5th Dec. At Sandbach Flashes three were on EHF on 8th Oct.

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant or feral.

At Sandbach Flashes a skein of 35 over MGT on 23rd Jan. A bird was then seen on and off throughout April mainly on WLF and the surrounding fields. 13 at Rode Pool on 5th Nov. Fewer birds noted moving from Lancashire to Norfolk with 200 over Stowford on 1st Nov, 250 over Haslington on 30th Nov and a skein of approx 300 birds over EHF on 6th Dec.

White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)

Rare winter visitor.

The first record of Greenland White-fronted Goose (race *flavirostris*) for Sandbach Flashes were two individuals, an adult and 1st winter on 30th Oct, found with the Canada Goose flock. They flew south independently of the Canadas after a short stay.

Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*)

Rare winter visitor or uncommon feral.

More breeding success for this increasingly common species. Two pairs bred at Rode Pool with broods of eight and four and one pair at Stowford with five young noted. Also at Doddington with 40 in Sept and around 25 regular thereafter. At Sandbach Flashes odd birds regular at EHF and WLF with 11 over RF on 29th June and nine at WLF on 17th Nov notable.

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Common resident.

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	248	194	127	131	154	191	184	317	401	442	383	250

138 adults with 53 juvs at Doddington and 70 adults with 22 juvs at Rode Pool. Disappointingly common at Sandbach Flashes with upwards of 500 present in late summer and early autumn.

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)

Rare visitor or feral.

At Sandbach Flashes one or two regular with the Canada Goose flock. Also at Doddington with one in May, June and July.

Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*)

Rare visitor.

A pair were noted on Winterley Pool on 22nd July. Then on 18th Aug two pairs appeared here in mysterious circumstances since they were later noted to have their wings clipped. They were very tame, racing the Mallard for bread and were last recorded on 1st Sept.

At Sandbach Flashes two birds were on PHF briefly on the afternoon of 7th Oct.

Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)

Uncommon resident and winter visitor.

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF/PHF	42	78	71	26	37	27	24	1	4	1	38	56

A minimum of five pairs bred at Sandbach Flashes, with juveniles noted on FFF, WF and EHF

Mandarin Duck (*Aix galericulata*)*Scarce visitor.*

The first ever recorded breeding of this species at Sandbach Flashes was a female with three juveniles on the newly created pool adjacent to MGT on 7th June. These followed sightings of a minimum of four birds (two drakes and two females) on Railway Flash earlier in the year, subsequent sightings came from RF and EHF with six on GF (three drakes and three females) on 14th Dec. Occasional records of singles at Rode Pool, Queens Park Crewe and Stowford.

Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)*Common winter visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF/PHF	702	380	629	33	4	4	1	3	110	153	550	450
Doddington	56	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	17	5	45
Rode Pool	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	16	20	62

At Sandbach Flashes the coordinated count of all the flashes in Jan gave a total of 856, with 142 on CF. The early winter period maximum of 702 birds at EHF/PHF was well up on the previous year.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)*Uncommon winter visitor.*

Again recorded infrequently at Sandbach Flashes this year but with no particular patterns to the sightings. Two were at Doddington and Rode Pool in April and May.

Teal (*Anas crecca*)*Common winter visitor. Scarce in summer.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF/PHF	211	265	183	93	13	17	20	191	400	240	200	313
Doddington	21	37	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	15	2	75
Rode Pool	9	11	17	10	0	0	3	3	9	17	35	4

Counts in the early winter period at Sandbach Flashes were down on the previous year however later winter period counts were as expected.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas carolinensis*)*Rare winter visitor*

At Sandbach Flashes a drake found on 27th Feb on EHF stayed until 9th March, though it did go missing at times.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)*Common resident. Abundant in winter.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF/PHF	125	150	150	120	230	52	210	603	510	200	240	200
Doddington	418	187	170	115	152	117	237	235	403	521	482	349
Rode Pool	57	30	30	20	24	48	62	107	99	67	58	80

Breeds commonly on most waters in the area. Numbers apparently down on previous years at Sandbach Flashes although the ever encroaching willow scrub makes this a particularly difficult species to count accurately at EHF.

Pintail (*Anas acuta*)*Uncommon winter visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF/PHF	18	30	13	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	8	11

Maximum count of 30 at Sandbach Flashes with EHF being the most productive site. Unusual away from the flashes but two at Doddington in Dec.

Garganey (*Anas querquedula*)*Scarce summer visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes a drake on RF on 21st April was the first of another impressive spring passage. Another drake on the 10th May on EHF and two drakes together on 12th May on EHF were followed by another eight sightings throughout the rest of May and June. Quite why a species that relied on one keen eyed observer to pick out birds amongst the Teal flocks in late summer has become so regular on spring passage recently is not known but most welcome.

Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)*Uncommon winter visitor, scarce in summer.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF/PHF	21	17	14	23	4	3	1	12	23	17	12	14
Doddington	13	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	48	76
Rode Pool	16	18	28	9	2	0	0	0	8	18	24	6

A definite decrease in numbers of birds at Sandbach Flashes this year but impressive counts in Nov and Dec at Doddington.

Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*)*Rare visitor*

At Sandbach Flashes a juvenile on 17th Aug on EHF was not present the following day.

Pochard (*Aythya ferina*)*Fairly common winter visitor.*

Max counts were 36 at Doddington in Feb and March, otherwise less than 10. Uncommon at Sandbach Flashes this year once again with odd birds on EHF.

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)*Fairly common winter visitor. Uncommon in summer.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	51	107	89	75	42	25	55	47	126	67	52	72
Rode Pool	26	21	24	12	14	5	2	6	4	12	11	6

As usual several pairs bred at Doddington with broods of nine, eight, three and three noted. Smaller numbers at Sandbach Flashes this year with birds most regular at RF and CF. A count of 24 on RF in April being the largest. The only breeding record from RF with three juveniles present on the typically late date of 9th Aug.

Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)*Rare visitor*

Two drakes were on Astbury Mere on 6th Sept.

Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)*Uncommon winter visitor.*

Doddington is still the top site for this species with 18 in Jan, 31 in Feb and 27 in March. Also 16 in Dec. Two immatures were on EHF on 22nd Dec with one remaining until the year end.

Goosander (*Mergus merganser*)*Winter visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF/PHF	12	16	15	3	1	0	6	8	8	2	17	22

Recorded regularly at Sandbach Flashes with birds present every month except for June. Recorded regularly now on FF and FFF. Various records of one or two from six different sites but 14 from Rode Pool in Jan. A breeding record from the River Dane where seven juveniles were seen in early July.

Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)*Uncommon resident.*

Scarce at Sandbach Flashes. One or two occasional at Rode Pool and Doddington.

Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*)*Rare except where locally released.*

Records from several sites where presumably released for shooting, with a max count of 30 at Doddington. An adult with a juv seen at Pyms Lane Crewe old tip site. At Sandbach Flashes the only record was one in the field behind PHF on 1st May.

Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)*Scarce resident*

Records from Doddington where up to 50 birds were released by the adjacent shoot. 18 here in Jan.

Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*)*Rare summer visitor*

At Stowford a male was first heard calling on the evening of 8th May. It was then heard calling daily until 19th May but not thereafter. Since males stop calling when they have found a mate we will never know whether this bird stopped to breed or moved on.

Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)*Scarce resident except where locally released.*

Usually in the thousands where released for shooting, otherwise not common. At Sandbach Flashes common at the feeding station in FF with a tree climbing individual regular on the EHF feeders.

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)*Fairly common resident.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	3	5	3	5	4	4	5	17	23	15	9	8

Doddington continues to be the stronghold although generally numbers were lower this year except for the post breeding flock which totalled 23 in Sept. At least three pairs bred and six young were noted. Up to four regular at Rode Pool in winter. Recorded regularly at Sandbach Flashes but the only proven breeding being a pair with two juveniles on GF.

Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)*Common resident.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	14	10	14	22	32	14	54	70	69	31	11	4

A disappointing year for breeding success with just one local brood at Doddington, even though several pairs were formed, and none at Rode Pool from three pairs. However, the post breeding flock at Doddington was the largest ever with 70 in Aug. The only breeding records from Sandbach Flashes came from WF and OTF and numbers appeared to be smaller than recent years in the winter period.

Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)*Fairly common winter visitor. Rare in summer.*

Recorded every month at Sandbach Flashes, with a peak count of 24 in Feb, and at Doddington with peak counts of 16 in March and 22 in Sept.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)*Vagrant*

On 4th July an adult flew in to the Lemon Pool at Doddington in the mid-afternoon and stayed for a few hours but was not present the next day. This is the first record for SECOS and the third for Cheshire. It has been accepted by BBRC. More details in the following article.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)*Rare visitor.*

The best ever year at Sandbach Flashes with five sightings of eight individuals. Still though a difficult species to catch up with as the birds tend not to stay around. The first was at EHF on 22nd May with five in Aug including three together on the 2nd. The final sighting was one on PHF on 15th Oct. Also one bird was present in the Rode Pool and Odd Rode area, being seen several times from 5th Jan to 15th April. Another – or the same? – was at Rode Pool on 30th Dec.

Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)*Common resident.*

A big increase in the long established herony at Rode Pool with 53 nests this year (42 in 2007 and 39 in 2006). Regular at Sandbach Flashes, particularly EHF.

Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)*Rare visitor.*

A welcome addition to several Sandbach Flashes lists was a sub adult bird on EHF from 16th to 20th June.

Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*)*Vagrant*

On 21st April one was reported over Stowford at 19-40 heading towards Crewe Hall.

Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*)*Very rare visitor*

One over Holmes Chapel on 22nd March and then a single seen four times in April and May in the Alsager/Radway Green area. The only record from Sandbach Flashes was of a bird in flight over the Red Lane Tip area in the early afternoon of 11th June. Still a very difficult species to catch up with at the flashes despite the re-introduction programmes nationally.

Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*)*Very rare visitor*

On 28th May an imm or female was seen to fly low over the fields at Stowford.

Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)*Very rare visitor*

One of the birds of the year at Sandbach Flashes was the male seen from the bridle path at FF on the morning of 21st Oct.

Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)*Common resident.*

Common throughout the area with many records. Recorded in 26 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey. Proved successful breeding from Crewe Cemetery and two nests in Crewe Town Centre.

Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)*Common resident.*

Common and widespread throughout the whole area with counts of 12 recorded at Stowford and Oakhanger and breeding proven in the Sandbach Flashes recording area and Doddington.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)*Rare migrant.*

At Sandbach Flashes two records, the first flew over PHF on 3rd April and the second attempted to catch a fish on Birch Pool on the 5th April. Also one over Crewe on 31st March.

Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)*Common resident.*

Common throughout the area. The only proven breeding at Sandbach Flashes was from MGT area.

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)*Rare winter visitor.*

Five records from Sandbach Flashes with unsexed birds on 1st Jan, 31st Jan and 3rd April and males on 29th Feb and 21st Nov. Two records from Stowford with a female noted on 31st March and 7th April.

Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*)*Uncommon summer visitor.*

The first bird was one over Stowford on 17th April followed by one over FF on the 27th April. Apparently a poor year with the regular Oakhanger pair present all summer but failed and no pair established at Doddington. After the initial sighting at Sandbach Flashes recorded infrequently especially from EHF until the last on the 17th Sept, with approximately 25 sightings in total. Also one over Sandbach on 17th Sept.

Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*)*Scarce resident and winter visitor.*

Recorded regularly throughout the year in the Sandbach Flashes area. Occasional records also from Maw Green Tip, Doddington, Stowford and Leighton Hospital Crewe again - a regular site.

Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*)*Scarce winter visitor.*

Not uncommon in the Sandbach Flashes area again this year with FF and WLF being the most reliable sites for records. Also two at Stowford in Jan and Feb and singles at Doddington and Rode Pool in Nov and Dec.

Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)*Common resident.*

At Sandbach Flashes the coordinated count in Jan gave a total of 83 spread over 10 of the flashes. Confirmed breeding from EHF, WLF, FFF and CF.

Coot (*Fulica atra*)*Common resident and variable winter visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Doddington	168	192	138	69	69	264	373	522	244	241	264	290

A very poor year for breeding success at Doddington with few juvs seen. Common and widespread in the Sandbach Flashes area (162 on 10 flashes in Jan) with the largest concentrations on CF and WLF. A colour ringed bird seen at EHF on 3rd Nov was ringed just 11 days previously at North Duffield Carrs (SE6397), East Yorkshire on 23rd Oct.

Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)*Scarce winter visitor and uncommon summer visitor.*

First record was from Stowford on 9th Feb, the same date as last year. A pair bred here, laid three eggs but failed. At Doddington a pair hatched three young on the island and successfully fledged one. At Sandbach Flashes as in almost all previous years first recorded in late Feb and then seen regularly with up to five present throughout spring and early summer.

Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)*Very rare visitor*

At Sandbach Flashes once again recorded with (presumably) a pair on EHF on 16th March and another two also on EHF on 3rd June.

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)*Scarce summer visitor. Uncommon spring/autumn migrant.*

First recorded on 16th March at Sandbach Flashes and with no evidence of breeding, numbers peaked at 17 on 3rd July and return passage then poorer than in recent years. Only one other record with a single at Doddington on 27th May.

Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes ten on 17th May were the only real flock of note, other than these, ones and twos only in another poor year.

Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)*Uncommon winter visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes still a difficult bird to see with flocks of ten on 13th Jan, 24 on 23rd Jan and eight on 22nd Oct being the largest concentrations.

Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)*Common resident and abundant winter visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	1200	1100	23	22	45	258	658	750	825	600	800	800

No proven breeding in the Sandbach flashes area but wintering numbers stable with typical early and late winter period counts. Other flocks noted were 500 at Stowford in Jan and 300 at Doddington in Feb.

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)*Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	0	0	0	5	1	1	3	2	2	2	0	2

Another very poor year at Sandbach Flashes considering favourable water levels at migration times.

Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)*Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	12	10	13	2	0	0	2	3	6	5	6	7

Another year with typical counts for Sandbach flashes.

Jack Snipe (*Lymnocryptes minimus*)*Scarce winter visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes seen at MGT in Jan, Feb, Oct, Nov and Dec. Also at Stowford where there were two in Jan, one in Feb and one in Oct.

Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)*Uncommon winter visitor and migrant.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	12	10	13	2	0	0	10	30	35	11	20	40

A very difficult species to count accurately so probably under recorded at Sandbach Flashes. Up to 50 in the marsh at Stowford in Jan.

Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)*Scarce winter visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes birds seen in the FF area in the winter months but no evidence of any staying to breed. At least five reported by the gamekeepers at both Doddington and Rode. One at Wheelock.

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)*Common non breeding resident*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	51	10	42	122	18	9	38	15	3	2	0	1

Numbers well down on previous years at Sandbach Flashes but still recorded almost every month.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)*Scarce passage migrant.*

At Sandbach Flashes the first was a bird over EHF on 12th April with four also on EHF on 21st April. After these just several singles noted with the last on 30th July.

Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)*Scarce resident and fairly common winter visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	40	43	51	3	0	4	56	70	65	4	53	57

A very typical year at Sandbach Flashes in terms of sightings with 70 in August being the largest count. Singles at Doddington and Stowford in spring.

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)*Rare passage migrant*

A moulting adult on 12th Sept on EHF/PHF was the only record for the year at Sandbach Flashes.

Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)*Uncommon visitor and migrant.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	7	5	4	4	1	1	3	4	6	3	5	5

Regular at Sandbach Flashes but never common.

Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)*Uncommon passage migrant.*

At Sandbach Flashes just five recorded with singles on 9th and 29th May and three on 17th Aug.

Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)*Scarce winter visitor. Uncommon passage migrant.*

At Sandbach Flashes the first returning bird after no spring records was on EHF on 11th June and then seen in good numbers throughout summer and autumn with counts of between six and eight regular. Up to three over-wintered at Stowford. One at Doddington in July.

Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)*Uncommon passage migrant.*

The first passage bird at Sandbach Flashes was one at WLF on 7th April then a minimum of 30 records with the last on 19th Sept. Several records from Doddington of up to three birds on spring and autumn passage. One at Arclid on 7th Dec was probably over-wintering.

Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)*Rare visitor*

One record at Sandbach Flashes of three birds at EHF on 21st May.

Mediterranean Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*)*Scarce visitor.*

A minimum of 13 birds seen at Sandbach Flashes over the year with the first on 17th Feb and two juveniles later in the year of particular note.

Little Gull (*Larus minutus*)*Rare visitor.*

After a blank last year a welcome return to form at Sandbach Flashes with three adults on EHF briefly on 22nd April and a 1st s also on EHF on 3rd/4th July.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)*Abundant autumn and winter visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	2000	1800	2500	119	30	12	125	400	700	1300	1400	1500

At Sandbach Flashes the rather gruesome decomposed remains of a bird at EHF found on 19th Dec 2007 was a bird ringed as a nestling in Denmark on 26th June of that year.(Thanks to AB for recovering the ring and subsequent enquiries). Slightly lower max numbers of around 8500 birds in the winter evening roost at Doddington.

Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)*Very rare visitor*

An adult in winter plumage on PHF on 23rd Feb was part of the impressive gull influx at Sandbach Flashes.

Common Gull (*Larus canus*)*Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.*

At Sandbach Flashes a count of 420 on 23rd March on EHF was particularly impressive. Up to 200 in the winter evening gull roost at Doddington.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)*Fairly common winter visitor. Uncommon summer visitor.*

Maximum	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
EHF	50	200	568	750	12	6	64	400	800	500	50	300

The Doddington gull roost held 450 in Nov.

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*)*Scarce visitor.*

Recorded regularly throughout the year at Sandbach Flashes with an impressive nine on the 11th July.

Caspian Gull (*Larus cachinnans*)*Very rare visitor*

Very difficult to equate exact numbers of birds seen at Sandbach Flashes but at least 20 reports of perhaps ten birds. Individuals of all ages were seen with March and April being particularly productive.

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)*Fairly common winter visitor. Uncommon summer visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes birds of the more northern form (*argentatus*) were recorded in the early and late winter period. A count of 550 adults at EHF on 17th Dec was impressive.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides*)*Scarce winter visitor.*

At least four individuals seen at Sandbach Flashes with a 1st w bird present for more than three months (into Apr) also a 2nd w and an adult in the early winter period followed by a 1st w on 22nd Dec.

Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*)*Scarce winter visitor*

Two records at Sandbach Flashes with a 1st w on EHF on 17th Feb and a 2nd w on EHF/PHF on 24th Dec.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)*Uncommon winter visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes an incredible count of 248 on EHF on 29th Dec.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

Scarce passage migrant.

Sandbach Flashes had a welcome return to form with two records. The first was a juvenile that flew through EHF on the morning of 17th Aug; the second was an adult also at EHF on 15th Sept. The seven at Doddington on 31st Aug in dark drizzly weather were not present the next day.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

Uncommon passage migrant.

Once again very scarce at Sandbach Flashes with one on RF on 21st April the first of the year. Further records totalled only eight sightings. At Doddington one on 9th May and two on 27th May.

Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

Common resident

Common in built up areas especially in Crewe town centre.

Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*)

Uncommon resident.

Several pairs used nest boxes at Quakers Coppice. Up to 30 resident at Doddington. Common at Sandbach Flashes.

Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*)

Common resident.

A common resident at Sandbach Flashes with numbers augmented by migrants in the winter period with visible migration evident on some days. A large flock of 800 at Doddington in Dec. Increasingly common in gardens in the winter and recorded in all 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

Common resident.

A common resident, being recorded in 50 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey. 28 noted around EHF in early Jan and 25 at Stowford.

Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*)

Scarce summer visitor and migrant.

Now a scarce visitor with no records from Sandbach Flashes and just two elsewhere with one at Bagmere on 29th April and one at Shavington on 26th May.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Scarce resident.

Not as many sightings anywhere as in 2007 but still believed to be holding on to recent increases or increasing slightly.

Little Owl (*Athene noctua*)

Common resident.

Fewer records than usual of this previously common species. At Sandbach Flashes this species is arguably the fastest declining of any with less than ten records of possibly only two to three individuals.

Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*)

Common resident.

Still common in the Sandbach Flashes recording area with calling birds from all suitable habitat. Once again a pair bred successfully in a Barn Owl style nest box at Crewe Golf Course.

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

Rare visitor

Following last year's single record a doubling this time around at Sandbach Flashes with a bird hunting the MGT/RF area on the afternoon of 6th Jan and a bird over EHF in the late afternoon of 7th Dec.

Swift (*Apus apus*)

Fairly common summer visitor.

First of the year were two over Crewe and one at EHF on 26th April. Seen regularly but in low numbers. No breeding colony details and this species needs another survey. The latest bird just hung on into Sept with one on the 4th Sept over EHF.

Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)*Uncommon resident.*

Records from several sites and breeding proved at Rode Pool. Regular sightings at Sandbach Flashes with records from EHF, PHF, FF, WLF and RF.

Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*)*Uncommon resident.*

Records from six sites and a juv seen at Wistaston. After last year's single record at Sandbach Flashes a repeat performance with a vocal bird in the fields bordering PHF on 4th Aug. This bird went on some less reputable birders year list on call alone.

Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)*Common resident.*

By far the commonest woodpecker in the area. Recorded in 21 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey (17 out of 50 in 2007). Many records from Sandbach Flashes with records in every month and birds including juveniles on the feeders at both EHF and FF and also in trees bordering FFF.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos minor*)*Uncommon resident.*

After last year's unprecedented run of records at Sandbach Flashes back to a more normal return this year with a pair briefly in FF on the 10th April. Also recorded at Rode Pool and Haslington.

Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)*Fairly common.*

Quite widespread round the area, usually in low numbers but winter flocks of 100 at Stowford and 13 at Alsager South. Recorded frequently but in small numbers at Sandbach Flashes this year with the best site undoubtedly being the MGT area where breeding probably occurred.

Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*)*Fairly common summer visitor.*

The first record was one at Astbury on 11th March, with 18 here on the 15th. No breeding at Wybunbury Sand Quarry, an old site that was re-used last year. At least two pairs bred in the bank of the River Dane at Byley. 400 feeding at Doddington on 5th July in heavy rain. First record of the year at Sandbach Flashes was three days later than last year on 18th March, then regular throughout.

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)*Common summer visitor.*

The first record was from Sandbach Flashes with one at EHF on the 22nd March and then commonly recorded throughout the summer months with an exceptionally late bird over EHF on 12th Nov. A huge flock of up to 1000 were at Doddington on 18th April. 15 pairs bred in farm buildings at Stowford

House Martin (*Delichon urbica*)*Common summer visitor.*

At Sandbach Flashes the 9th April produced the first of the year and then regularly recorded until 7th Oct, though in smaller numbers than Swallow. Up to 300 at Doddington in June.

Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)*Rare passage migrant*

One was present at Stowford on 23rd Aug.

Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)*Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.*

Winter flocks of 80 at Oakhanger and 45 at Stowford. Recorded regularly at Sandbach Flashes with the MGT area being most productive.

Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)*Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor.*

Regular records from Stowford, where two pairs bred, and Doddington, where one pair bred. The last record was three at Stowford on 6th Sept. First recorded at Sandbach Flashes in the field by WLF on 8th April and then infrequently, particularly around EHF, with several juveniles presumably birds passing through from further north in late summer.

A bird of the blue-headed race *M. f. flava* was at Stowford on 11th May.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)

Fairly common resident and winter visitor.

Recent increases continue with records from all year, proved breeding at Doddington and records from seven out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey. Regular in the Sandbach Flashes recording area particularly in the winter period.

Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*)

Fairly common resident.

At Sandbach Flashes six of the continental race *M.a.alba* at WLF on 8th April was particularly noteworthy, otherwise just two further reports of this race. British race birds very common with breeding regular. Up to 50 at Doddington on spring and autumn passage and 120 in winter on the filter beds at Wheelock sewage farm. 80+ in the Crewe Arms Hotel, Nantwich Road roost.

Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)

Rare winter visitor

When thousands appeared on the east coast of Scotland in Oct and Nov we expected another local influx. However the few birds that were seen did not stay, probably due to the lack of a suitable source of food.

Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*)

Scarce resident.

A pair were seen regularly in spring at the usual breeding site at Bathvale, Congleton, but this is due for redevelopment.

Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)

Abundant resident.

Commonly recorded throughout the area and recorded in 48 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)

Common resident.

Commonly recorded throughout the area and recorded in 51 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)

Abundant resident

Commonly recorded throughout the area and recorded in 52 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)

Scarce migrant and rare summer visitor.

A slightly disappointing return at Sandbach Flashes with just one record of a female in the hedgerow bordering MGT on 19th April.

Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*)

Scarce migrant.

The only records from Sandbach Flashes were two birds at MGT on 21st Sept. A juv was seen at Stowford on 17th Sept.

Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*)

Scarce winter visitor.

Over-wintering birds at Stowford with up to four in both winter periods. Also eight here on 12th Oct. Two at Doddington in Jan. Another disappointing year for this species at Sandbach Flashes with just two birds recorded in Jan and Feb at MGT and three also at MGT in Oct, two in Nov and up to four in Dec.

Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)

Uncommon passage migrant.

First recorded at Sandbach Flashes on 21st March and then infrequently, particularly from MGT until the last on Sept 9th. Regular at Stowford on spring passage with up to seven in April. Singles in autumn from railway sidings at Basford and a works depot in Crewe.

Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)

Abundant resident and winter visitor.

The commonest birds in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey, being recorded in 1227 bird/weeks out of a possible 1259.

Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*)

Common winter visitor.

The biggest count at Sandbach Flashes was 111 over EHF on 22nd March with a "massive count" in the MGT area on 22nd Nov. This coincided with a count of 1000 mixed Fieldfare and Redwing at Stowford on the same date. Numbers increased quickly in early Nov but decreased again by the end of the year as all the available berries were eaten.

Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)

Fairly common resident.

Scarce but still seen regularly in the Sandbach Flashes area. Recorded in 43 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)

Common winter visitor.

The biggest count at Sandbach Flashes in the early winter period was c200 with approximately the same maximum in the late winter period. Also 200 at Swettenham in Jan. Numbers increased quickly in early Nov but decreased again by the end of the year as all the available berries were eaten.

Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*)

Fairly common resident.

Breeding recorded in the WLF area otherwise recorded regularly throughout at Sandbach Flashes. Autumn gatherings were noted at Rode Pool with 32 feeding on the cricket pitch on 5th Aug and 16 at Doddington on 12th Sept.

Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*)

Rare summer visitor

One singing on passage at Haslington on 21st April. Intriguing records from Stowford with a single singing male from 21st April to 7th May and then two singing males on 28th July in eminently suitable breeding habitat.

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

Uncommon summer visitor.

The earliest recorded at Sandbach Flashes was on the typical date of 25th April with breeding records from GF, WLF and PHF. Other records from Doddington, Stowford and Weston.

Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*)

Uncommon summer visitor.

First recorded at Sandbach Flashes on the 18th April and then commonly heard and occasionally seen at GF and WLF, with even the smallest stand of reeds holding singing birds. Also three pairs bred at Rode Pool and two pairs in the new reed bed at Doddington.

Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*)

Common summer visitor. Scarce winter visitor.

Recorded at Sandbach Flashes regularly from late March with singing birds regular throughout the breeding season. Recorded in 10 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*)

Fairly common summer visitor.

First record for Sandbach Flashes was on 26th April at the EHF watch point with singing birds then from FF, WLF and CF. Still a common bird but few counts of breeding birds.

Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*)

Uncommon summer visitor.

The first record from Sandbach Flashes was one in the bushes adjacent to RF on 23rd April than well represented throughout the breeding season with the last being on 10th Sept.

Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*)*Common summer visitor.*

The first from Sandbach Flashes was one in the hedgerow on MGT on 22nd April then commonly recorded with breeding proven at several sites until the last on 14th Sept. The first record for the area was one on 19th April at Stowford, with 11 singing males here in May.

Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*)*Common summer visitor, very rare winter visitor.*

The first record for Sandbach Flashes was on 18th March with singing birds then regular and birds still being seen into November (presumably wintering birds). Also recorded from Bathvale, Congleton and Haslington on 18th March. Recorded in 4 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)*Common summer visitor.*

3rd April saw the first record for Sandbach Flashes. Once again rather scarce throughout the breeding season but no details since a singing warbler count in May was not done this year. The last was seen on 18th Sept at EHF and 27th Sept at Stowford.

Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*)*Fairly common resident and winter visitor.*

Frequently seen in the Sandbach flashes area with records throughout the breeding season suggesting nesting birds nearby. Pairs with juvs recorded in Haslington and Crewe. Recorded in 19 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey (12 out of 50 in 2007).

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)*Uncommon summer visitor.*

A very slight improvement on recent years at Sandbach Flashes with five records, the first being a bird in the hedgerow adjacent to PHF on 4th May. Last year's overall increase maintained with five pairs successful at Doddington, similar to 2007, and pairs with juvs at Wistaston and Warmingham.

Long-tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*)*Common resident.*

Very common at Sandbach Flashes throughout. Max recorded flock was 22 at Rode Pool.

Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*)*Common resident.*

Common at Sandbach Flashes with a pair visible whilst nesting in an exposed rotting gate post and unexpectedly fledging young.

Nest boxes were used at the following sites:-

Site	Pairs	Eggs laid	Juvs hatched	Juvs fledged	Productivity (juvs per pair)
Quakers Coppice	10	90	76	8	0.8
Rode Pool	2	13	2	0	0

A disastrous year with most young starving in the nest.

Great Tit (*Parus major*)*Common resident.*

Common at Sandbach Flashes.

Nest boxes were used at the following sites:-

Site	Pairs	Eggs laid	Juvs hatched	Juvs fledged	Productivity (juvs per pair)
Quakers Coppice	7	45	32	12	1.7
Rode Pool	6	29	22	9	1.5

Not quite as bad as Blue Tit but still a very poor year for productivity.

Coal Tit (*Periparus ater*)*Fairly common resident.*

Reported regularly at Sandbach Flashes and noted visiting both feeding stations. Becoming more common in winter and recorded in 49 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Willow Tit (*Poecile montanus*)*Scarce resident.*

At Sandbach Flashes still regular in FF after last years successful breeding, no direct evidence of breeding this year but birds present throughout. Only one other record with one at Bathvale, Congleton on 27th Feb.

Marsh Tit (*Poecile palustris*)*Rare visitor.*

Amazingly the bird first recorded on the feeders at Rode Pool on 17th Sept 2002 has been present there ever since. Recorded in most weeks, summer and winter, it has never been seen with another Marsh Tit and so presumably has never bred. Also one in a Sandbach garden in Dec.

Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*)*Common resident.*

Another good year at Sandbach Flashes with birds regular throughout the year especially around FF, also breeding proven with several juveniles recorded. Recorded in 23 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey.

Treecreeper (*Certhia familiaris*)*Common resident.*

Common at Sandbach Flashes with breeding noted in FF and EHF. Generally common but under recorded.

Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)*Uncommon resident.*

Regular throughout at Sandbach Flashes with breeding suspected in FF. On the feeders at Rode Pool one was seen to take 17 peanuts into its crop before flying off (the previous record was 14!).

Magpie (*Pica pica*)*Common resident.*

Common all year at Sandbach Flashes. A count of 38 birds roosting on the periphery of the FF corvid roost in late January being of particular note and 40 around EHF on 10th Dec also notable. Around 25 in a winter roost in Crewe Business Park.

Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*)*Common resident and winter visitor.*

A common bird in and around the Sandbach Flashes area. An estimate of 2,000 plus birds going into the FF corvid roost in late January contained a large count of this species.

Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*)*Common resident.*

The total nests at regularly counted rookeries were:-

Site	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Crewe/Alsager (8 sites)	462	487	472	460	476
Foden's Flash	147	138	136	131	121

Carriion Crow (*Corvus corone*)*Common resident.*

Common all year throughout the area.

Raven (*Corvus corax*)*Scarce visitor and resident.*

Continuing to increase with many scattered records of wandering birds. The regular pair bred at Doddington again and a series of sightings from Stowford would indicate the possibility of another breeding pair around Crewe Hall. Another record breaking year at Sandbach Flashes with approximately 30 sightings although the species still eluded some year lists.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)*Common resident and abundant winter visitor.*

The huge winter roost by Crewe Railway Station increased to at least 50,000 by the end of Feb, with other roosts of 5,000; 2,000 and 2,000 within two miles of this one. Sadly the roosting site trees have now been felled by Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council. A reduction in records of large flocks in the Sandbach Flashes recording area this year but still present in good numbers in the winter period especially around EHF with a flock of 2000 plus noted in Feb.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)*Common resident.*

Sandbach Flashes recorded a decline in records this year but still regular. 15 pairs bred in farm buildings at Meremoor Farm, Stowford.

Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)*Fairly common resident.*

The feeding and breeding scheme at Meremoor Farm, Stowford continues to grow with 44 pairs using nest boxes this year. Most are multi-brooded and at least 200 young fledged, although some were taken daily by a Sparrowhawk. No obvious change in status at Sandbach Flashes with birds commonly seen year round especially around EHF.

Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)*Common resident and winter visitor.*

Some large flocks in Nov and Dec with around 500 feeding in game crops at Doddington and 400 at Stowford. Also 200 at Brereton in Jan. Common throughout the Sandbach Flashes area but no large counts noted.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)*Scarce winter visitor.*

Recorded from several sites with 11 at Swettenham and 10 at Brereton in Jan. At least 8 at Doddington in Dec in the huge Chaffinch flock.

Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*)*Common resident.*

The only large flock noted was 200 at Doddington in Dec. Recorded in 41 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey. Common throughout the Sandbach Flashes recording area with flocks noted around WLF.

Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)*Fairly common resident.*

A huge flock of 500 at Stowford in Aug. Recorded in 45 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey. Common at Sandbach Flashes with a flock of 100 plus birds feeding on seed heads on MGT in Nov.

Siskin (*Carduelis spinus*)*Uncommon winter visitor and scarce resident.*

More common than in 2007 being recorded in 24 out of 52 gardens in the SECOS Winter Garden Bird Survey but only four in 2007. Flocks of 70 at Bathvale, Congleton; 50 at Congleton; 30 at Day Green and 25 at Swettenham. Most records for Sandbach Flashes from FF though never common.

Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*)*Fairly common resident.*

Winter flocks of 120 in game crops at Doddington and 50 at Stowford. Regularly recorded at Sandbach Flashes especially behind the railway at EHF and on MGT.

Lesser Redpoll (*Carduelis cabaret*)*Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.*

The largest flock at Sandbach Flashes was 30 plus birds at FF in Nov. A flock of 20 regular at Stowford in Nov and Dec.

Mealy Redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*)*Rare winter visitor*

At Stowford two Mealies were noted in the flock of Lessers on 28th Dec.

Common Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)*Very rare visitor*

At Sandbach Flashes the first ever records of non flyovers were a juvenile viewable from the canal towpath behind FF on 2nd Sept and the following day birders looking for this bird saw 12 fly from the FF area over the canal towpath. Also recorded from Stowford where six were seen and heard as they flew over on 16th Nov.

Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)*Uncommon resident.*

Breeding proven from FF and records intermittently from throughout the Sandbach Flashes recording area.

Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*)*Very rare visitor*

On 2nd Nov at Stowford one was seen feeding in hawthorn bushes on the marsh. It then flew to another hawthorn tree by the fishing ponds where it was photographed. It then flew off when disturbed by a fisherman, two minutes before I arrived!

Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*)*Uncommon resident.*

Numbers continue to decline with the only double figure count being 30 at Weston on 21st Jan. Another ordinary year for records from Sandbach Flashes and possibly only four or five birds present.

Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)*Uncommon resident.*

Recorded from WLF, EHF, GF and WF but the best site in the Sandbach Flashes area being MGT with 15 in Nov being the largest count. 14 singing males at Stowford in March was a good count.

Category E Species – Introductions or Escapes

Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*)

A single was with the Canada Goose flock at Rode Pool from 17th June to 1st July.

Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*)

One was at Doddington on 9th May.

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)

At Sandbach Flashes sightings from MGT on the pool bordering the landfill and from PHF.

Ringed Teal (*Callonetta leucophrys*)

At Sandbach Flashes a drake in late March.

Yellowbill (*Anas undulata*)

This African species was recorded from Sandbach Flashes with two on EHF on 4th Aug.

BLUE TIT NESTING FAILURE

The regularly monitored nest boxes at Quakers Coppice and Rode Pool gave the following results in 2008.

Site	Pairs	Eggs laid	Juvs hatched	Juvs fledged	Productivity (juvs per pair)
Quakers Coppice	10	90	76	8	0.8
Rode Pool	2	13	2	0	0

From a total of 103 eggs laid only eight young fledged.

This disastrous performance also occurred in a Wistaston nest box. Erected in February, a Blue Tit pair were nesting and hatching young in late April, all nest activity being monitored by a camera. The whole clutch of eleven eggs hatched, the first nestling dying after two days, the remainder all dead within a week. Certainly some chicks were removed by the parents who had seemed very attentive. The deaths were mainly due to starvation as adults could not find enough food at the right time for the chicks to survive.

With the freezing weather of late December and early January also taking a toll we wait the 2009 breeding season with trepidation to see how many boxes are occupied.

Colin Lythgoe

CATTLE EGRET AT DODDINGTON 4TH JULY 2008

On 4th July Colin Lythgoe and David Meakin were sitting on the bank of Lemon Pool scoping the birds whilst doing a wildfowl count. At 14-45 an egret flew in and landed on a dead tree in the water. Looking through the scopes to confirm the expected ID of a Little Egret it was immediately identified as an adult Cattle Egret in summer plumage. The bird spent a few minutes cleaning its bill, wiping either side of it across the small branch it was standing on, and then started preening. It once flew a short distance on to another, larger, dead tree and continued preening. It was still present when we left at 16-30. The record was not made public due to the strictly private location of this pool. The bird could not be found on the estate the next day.

Description: an obvious small white egret. The loose feathering on the crown, mantle and breast was a gingery brown colour, paler on the mantle. A relatively shorter and thicker bill compared to Little Egret and an orange colour. Legs were greyish/yellow at the top, shading to a darker grey at the bottom with black feet.



Last winter (late 2007) and early spring (2008) saw an unprecedented influx of Cattle Egrets, *Bubulcus ibis*, into the southwest of England. From here they spread across the country, with one being present near Burton on the Wirral from late December 2007 to the end of January 2008.

There were a number of records from Somerset, widely scattered across the county, and many of these individuals were long-stayers. Subsequently Somerset Ornithological Society reported that two pairs of Cattle Egrets had bred at a site in the county, rearing at least one young. As far as is known, this is the first time this species has been recorded breeding in the United Kingdom and, it is hoped, the event will prove a prelude to colonisation.

The Doddington record is the first for the SECOS area and only the third for Cheshire with the previous records being one at Caldy on the Wirral for an hour on 30th April 1997 and the one near Burton in 2007/8. This record has been accepted by the BBRC.

Colin Lythgoe

WHO NEEDS KILLYBEGGS?

After last year's momentous influx of Iceland Gulls in the Sandbach Flashes recording area it was thought things could not get better for the gull enthusiasts. The events of February 2008 proved us all wrong with an unprecedented run of Larid records. Accepting that Gulls are not everybody's cup of tea the following summation of records from the flashes should encourage every local birder to give the visiting flocks at least a brief look.

On the 3rd February a 2nd winter Iceland Gull was seen on Elton Hall Flash with a 1st winter Iceland Gull recorded the following day in the gull roost. This 1st winter bird had a deformed mandible and was the bird recorded the previous month at Chasewater Reservoir in the Midlands which ironically some of the keener flashes listers had seen at Chasewater. This individual stayed in the flashes area well into April and became a bit of a local celebrity.

The 16th of the month saw the first Mediterranean Gull of the year with a 2nd winter bird on Elton Hall Flash. The following day saw a 1st winter Glaucous Gull and an adult Mediterranean Gull in the gull roost on the same flash. On the 22nd a 3rd winter Caspian Gull was picked out among the gulls on Pump House Flash.

On the 23rd an adult Ring-billed Gull, adult Mediterranean Gull and an adult Yellow-legged Gull were in the same flock of birds on the field adjacent to Pump House Flash. Indeed over this weekend there were ten species of gull present on the Elton Hall, Pump House Flash complex. The 26th saw another adult Mediterranean Gull.

With the proximity of the Maw Green Tip area and the amount of rubbish it deals with we should continue to record good numbers and variety of gulls in the Sandbach Flashes recording area.

PS: - If anyone finds a Bonaparte's or Laughing Gull give me a call!

Andy Firth

BIRDING IN AN URBAN TETRAD

For the last four years I have been birding and recording in the tetrad SJ75C, a 2km square covering Crewe East, firstly for the Cheshire and Wirral Atlas, then the British Trust for Ornithology National Atlas. It has been very rewarding and has thrown up a few surprises, although I knew it had potential from having had several unusual sightings in the area prior to the surveys.

The area in the tetrad includes the town centre shopping complex, Victorian housing, railway embankments, industrial estate with waste ground, two allotments, football ground, railway station, university and grounds, two small parks and a large open grassed area with mature trees. The River Waldron (known locally as the Valley Brook) with tree lined valley and a large reed fringed pond bordering another tetrad is also included.

Overall there was a wide range of habitats to explore. Visits were often made early in the morning so as not to arouse suspicion. Wandering around with binoculars in a built up area may seem peculiar to some people, but I made every effort to introduce myself to members of the public and inform them of what I was doing, which led to them often volunteering information regarding their own sightings.

Breeding Birds

As well as the commoner urban breeding birds that you would expect, Sparrowhawk, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Coal Tit, Goldcrest, Nuthatch, Treecreeper, Bullfinch, Whitethroat, Chiffchaff and Blackcap all successfully fledged young.

Reed Bunting, Lesser Whitethroat, Garden, Sedge and Reed Warbler were all encountered singing during the recording period, and on a private railway site at the southern end of the tetrad Yellowhammer were commonplace. Remarkably a male Black Redstart was seen by one observer on two occasions, unfortunately breeding wasn't confirmed despite intensive searching.

It's worth mentioning that several species nest colonially within the tetrad, these being House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Swift, House Martin and Feral Pigeon.

Winter Visitors

Fieldfares, Redwings, Siskins, Lesser Redpolls, Grey Wagtails and even the occasional Brambling were noted and who could forget the Waxwing invasion during the late winter 2004, when up to 180 birds were present on Asda car park feeding on berries, often in the company of 2 male Blackcaps. It's at this time of the year when roosts tend to build up. The most impressive were the Starlings and around 70,000 used the leylandii in Pedley Street in the last winter period, which often attracted the local Sparrowhawks trying to predate them. Other roosts include Greenfinch, House Sparrow, Pied Wagtail and Blackbird.

Rarities

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Mediterranean Gull and Black Redstart are all worthy of a mention, but the rarest sighting must go to the Desert Wheatear seen on private railway land from the 12th to 14th December 2007.

This was a first for Cheshire and Wirral and a bird I have still not seen but it just demonstrates what can turn up in an urban or working environment.

Flyovers

Although not directly associated with the tetrad birds flying over have been noted. Passerines such as Meadow Pipit and Skylark, raptors including Buzzards, Kestrel, Peregrines and even Hobby, but the most impressive has to be an Osprey seen heading north over Hungerford Road in spring.

Wading birds, Raven and Pink-footed Geese have also been noted. The latter is not to be confused with the local resident Canada Geese that move around several sites and pass over the tetrad regularly.

General

Birds seen prior to the recording period have included Spotted Flycatcher, Kingfisher, Coot, Water Rail, Snipe, Tawny Owl and Barn Owl.

Although survey work has now been completed for this tetrad, I will continue to keep a close eye on it, as I now regard this as my urban local patch and you just never know what could turn up or return.

Mark Stubbs

FAILURE OF HOBBIES TO BREED IN THE OAKHANGER AREA

Unfortunately in 2008, the well established pair of Hobbies in the Oakhanger area failed to breed successfully. I have been watching this pair since 2001 and at that time they were the first confirmed breeding of the species in the SECOS area. I can't be sure why no young birds fledged but it could be down to one or more of the factors I've listed below:

1. The weather. Although the wet conditions this summer could have played a part, the weather wasn't too dissimilar to the two previous summers and breeding was successful then (see table below).
2. Prey availability. Hirundine and Swift colonies may have been down in numbers, as well as farmland birds and flying insects, so hunting may have become more difficult.
3. Disturbance. The first two weeks of incubation (usually late June/early July) is critical. The female Hobby may desert the eggs she's laid if disturbance is prolonged or excessive. Although having said that this pair must have been used to human activity to a certain extent, as their chosen nesting area is only 80 metres or so from a public footpath and borders two separate farms and both have livestock in the fields around them.
4. Mortality. One of the original pair may have died and been replaced with a less experienced younger bird. The latter to me seems a more likely possibility although I cannot be certain.

This year as previously I timed my visits to the nesting area in mid-August as the young Hobbies are usually vocal or perched on prominent branches near the nest. Despite four visits in total no young were seen, but both adults were present on the first two visits and on the latter two only the male was in evidence.

Let's hope this is just a small blip and they will return to the area in 2009 and breed successfully.

Although I feel personally attached to this pair and was disappointed with the outcome this year, it's worth mentioning that since 2001, several pairs now breed in the SECOS area and there are up to 50 pairs in Cheshire (Birds in Cheshire and Wirral 2008). Nationally they are increasing in numbers and spreading their range, so the future certainly looks bright for this elegant falcon.

Breeding Success of Hobbies at the Oakhanger site.

Year	Young fledged	Year	Young fledged
2001	2	2005	2
2002	3	2006	2
2003	2	2007	2
2004	3	2008	0
		Total	16

Mark Stubbs

RANDOM REFLECTIONS OF AN OCCASIONAL FLASHES BIRDER

I have been birding at Sandbach Flashes, on an irregular basis, for over 40 years. I started visiting the area in the late 60s on the way to see my parents at Wybunbury every three weeks or so.

I saw the Purple Gallinule in September 1971. At that time everyone initially thought it was a wild vagrant and not, as it turned out, an escape from a Whitchurch Aviary!

I had regular sightings of various species which did not occur in my home area around Macclesfield. These were mainly wader species such as Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Little Ringed Plover and Ruff. These birds were highlights for me but they were topped by three Avocets in May 1974.

I have been a Cheshire Birder for 54 years but I have never been a serious twitcher or indeed much of a Lister. For the purposes of this article I have made a rough count of the species that I have seen at Sandbach over the years. It is approximately 135 only. Of course many of today's regular watchers see this number every year.

In the 60s and 70s there were no Bird Lines, pagers or web sites so rare birds were only seen by me if they were still where they were when reported by Eric Hardy in his weekly Daily Post column. Also optical equipment and identification books were much inferior to the superb bins, scopes and field guides of today.

After 1975 my visits became very occasional up to a day in May 1998 when I had superb close up views of a lovely Wood Sandpiper. This, together with retirement, rekindled my enthusiasm for the Flashes, so I recommenced regular visits. For the last ten years I have called on an approximately weekly basis. I usually only go to Elton Hall and Pump House but occasionally I go to Watch Lane, Fodens and the Tip. Most of my visits are on a Wednesday morning with Pete Lunt. Contrary to some local birder's views I do occasionally arrive on other days!

Over the last ten years there have been many personal highlights. Nearly all the special birds didn't have the decency to show themselves on Wednesday mornings. Thanks, however, to kind phone calls from Flashes' regulars I have been able to come and see some really good birds. The ones that have stood out for me have been Avocets again in May '99, Night Heron in June '99, Great White Egret in February '01, Spotted Sandpiper in June '04, Red-necked Phalarope in August '06 and Spoonbill in June '08. There are several others too numerous to list.

I usually find something of interest on most of my visits. It is very easy to take for granted Flashes specialities such as Tree Sparrow and Ruff until one considers how difficult they are to see elsewhere in Cheshire.

The main drawback of Elton is the lack of control over the water level. In recent years it seems invariably to flood at peak wader passage time. Also damage to the river bank is not repaired speedily making the flooding worse.

The biggest improvement over the years is without doubt the provision of the off road watch point. It is now a much safer place.

Back in the 60s the speciality was waders but now I would say it is gulls. Due to the expertise of locals such as Dave Norbury the wide range of annually recorded gull species includes Iceland, Glaucous and Ring-billed Gulls. Also two species not even heard of in the early years Yellow-legged and Caspian Gull.

My personal preference in birding is local patchwork around Macclesfield and Atlassing, Wildfowl Counts and all types of surveys. I regard my weekly visits to the Flashes as a relaxing change and the chance to see something different. I am very rarely disappointed.

Alan Booth

EARLY AND LATE DATES FOR SUMMER VISITORS

The table has been arranged in date order for the '10 year average' arrival dates so that you know what order to expect the visitors in.

	ARRIVALS			DEPARTURES		
	Date in	10 Year	Earliest	Date in	10 Year	Latest
Species	2008	average	ever	2008	average	ever
Chiffchaff	18-Mar	14-Mar	8-Mar-89	29-Sep	11-Oct	28-Oct-04
Little Ringed Plover	16-Mar	17-Mar	5-Mar-00	31-Aug	1-Sep	16-Oct-85
Sand Martin	11-Mar	20-Mar	11-Mar-08	12-Sep	22-Sep	24-Nov-72
Swallow	22-Mar	26-Mar	10-Feb-07	12-Nov	22-Oct	30-Nov-74
Blackcap	29-Mar	30-Mar	08-Mar-07	20-Sep	18-Sep	2-Oct-05
Willow Warbler	03-Apr	31-Mar	28-Mar-03&05	27-Sep	8-Sep	27-Sep-08
House Martin	09-Apr	5-Apr	25-Mar-95	07-Oct	17-Oct	5-Nov-77
Yellow Wagtail	08-Apr	13-Apr	29-Mar-81	08-Sep	15-Sep	27-Oct-06
Lesser Whitethroat	23-Apr	18-Apr	21-Mar-00	10-Sep	14-Sep	1-Oct-98
Sedge Warbler	25-Apr	19-Apr	16-Apr-80	nr	1-Sep	1-Oct-78
Reed Warbler	18-Apr	20-Apr	12-Apr-97	03-Sep	18-Sep	4-Oct-98
Whitethroat	19-Apr	20-Apr	15-Apr-93	14-Sep	5-Sep	21-Sep-93
Cuckoo	29-Apr	22-Apr	5-Apr-82	nr	17-Aug	1-Oct-86
Swift	26-Apr	23-Apr	16-Apr-96	04-Sep	11-Sep	3-Nov-78
Garden Warbler	26-Apr	26-Apr	20-Apr-96	nr	19-Aug	9-Sep-83
Hobby	17-Apr	2-May	27-Mar-94	17-Sep	26-Sep	8-Oct-00
Grasshopper Warbler	21-Apr	8-May	21-Apr-08	nr	nr	30/8/??

Nr signifies no record in the current year.

I have selected 17 species in total, these being summer visitors that usually nest in the SECOS area. I have deliberately not chosen the spring and autumn passage migrants, since these times quite often overlap, and it is not possible to separate the end of spring passage from the start of autumn passage. Also some passage migrants are only seen on one passage but not both. It should be noted that there is usually some uncertainty over the dates for Blackcap and Chiffchaff. Both of these species over-winter regularly and have been recorded in every month of the year. It is currently accepted that the wintering population is made up of birds that move here from the continent, whilst our summering birds migrate south. Therefore these two species do fit my criteria for inclusion.

Two earliest ever records have been broken this year with a Sand Martin at Astbury Mere on 11th March, one day earlier than the previous record from 1989. The Grasshopper Warbler record was also advanced by one day with singing birds at Haslington and Stowford on 21st April. The Haslington bird moved quickly on but the Stowford one stayed until 7th May.

The very late Swallow seen at Elton Hall Flash on 12th November could have expected to be a record but still had some way to go to beat the existing one of 30th November in 1974.

We are struggling to get late records of warblers so please keep your eyes open for these in September next year!

COORDINATED COUNT AT ALL FLASHES ON 27th JANUARY 2008

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Flashes	15	16	Total
Little Grebe						1										1(2)		
G't Crested Grebe		1				6				2	1	11			21(15)	1	4	26
Cormorant		1	2		10					4	1				18(3)	1	6	25
Grey Heron		1	2	1		1					3				8(8)	1	9	9
Mute Swan		3								4	2				9(25)	7		16
Barnacle Goose											1				1(1)		1	1
Canada Goose	41		43			1	95		6		176				362(267)	33	26	421
Shelduck		1			42										43(36)			43
Wigeon		1	5	18		690					142				856(270)	3	859	
Mallard	18	4	1			125	9	1	2	9	5	32	7		213(275)	85	190	488
Teal		3				211			2		24				240(336)			240
Pintail						15						15(9)						15
Shoveler						12						12(4)						12
Pochard												0(0)			0(0)	5	5	5
Tufted Duck										9					9(31)	9	10	28
Goosander											1				1(5)		1	1
Ruddy Duck												0(1)			0(1)		0	0
Water Rail												0(1)			0(1)		0	0
Moorhen	7		6	4		29	12		2	2	2	15			83(44)	11	3	97
Coot	6		25	4		28	37	2	2	2	2	54	2		162(252)	22	19	203
Lapwing						1200	3								1200(1000)			1200
Snipe		35									1				25	70(10)	9	79
Curlew						3						35			38(46)			38
Ruff							9								9(15)		9	9
Redshank						4									4(4)			4
Black-tailed Godwit						51	2								53(8)			53
Black-headed Gull		252				450	12			10		3			727(151)	70	75	872
Common Gull			5			4									9(3)		9	9
Lesser B'backed Gull			135						25						160(26)			160
Herring Gull			385						10						395(37)			395
Great B'backed Gull			22												22(12)			22

1 Groby Flash 9 Canal Pool
 2 Oaktree Flash 10 Fodens Flash
 3 Railway Flash 11 Plex Flash
 4 Fields Farm Flash 12 Crabmill Flash
 5 Pump House Flash 13 Warmingham Flash
 6 Elton Hall Flash 14 Tetton Lane Flash
 7 Watch Lane Flash 15 Winterley Pool
 8 Red Lane Pool 16 Arclid Sand Quarry

SOUTH EAST CHESHIRE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Total of all birds excluding gulls: sites 1-14 = 3428 (2711 in 2007) & sites 1-16 = 3873 (3272)
 On the count date the weather was: dry but all flashes full after a long wet period.
 note: 1) the count from PHF and EHF is combined under EHF

This is the total for sites 1 to 14 which is all of the flashes comprising Sandbach Flashes

SUMMARY OF THE TOTAL COUNTS FROM 2001 TO 2008

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Average
Little Grebe	2	4	1	0	1	0	0	2	1
G't Crested Grebe	2	13	1	21	24	19	15	21	14
Cormorant	8	14	12	10	23	4	3	18	11
Grey Heron	6	7	10	4	10	9	7	3	7
Mute Swan	11	12	7	21	7	20	25	9	14
Canada Goose	509	419	367	323	490	405	267	362	393
Shelduck	42	12	20	16	30	35	36	43	29
Wigeon	431	211	772	453	751	474	270	856	527
Mallard	2	151	329	415	206	218	275	213	226
Teal	357	441	265	292	613	411	336	240	369
Pintail	10	8	15	4	25	23	9	15	14
Shoveler	8	3	7	4	22	16	4	12	9
Pochard	1	0	1	2	7	0	0	0	1
Tufted Duck	0	11	0	22	19	18	31	9	14
Goosander	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	1
Ruddy Duck	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Moorhen	62	83	64	53	66	63	44	83	65
Coot	306	234	305	191	220	184	252	162	231
Lapwing	782	1170	295	526	648	1900	1000	1200	940
Snipe	19	64	5	14	116	9	10	70	38
Curlew	49	48	6	52	64	56	46	38	45
Ruff	6	16	0	11	13	14	15	9	10
Redshank	2	7	3	5	9	12	4	4	6
Black-tailed Godwit	0	0	0	0	0	3	8	53	8
Black-headed Gull	464	754	695	857	841	930	151	727	677
Common Gull	3	3	27	4	2	5	3	9	7
Lesser B'backed Gull	8	14	15	67	48	24	26	160	45
Herring Gull	201	22	1691	83	150	68	37	395	331
Great B'backed Gull	2	10	68	0	18	5	12	22	16