



Your local birdwatching group

**South East Cheshire
Ornithological Society**

Bird Report 2021

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Map of the Recording Area | 4 |
| Systematic List | 5 |
| Ducks; Geese and Swans (Anatidae) | 6 |
| Pheasants and allies (Phasianidae) | 11 |
| Pigeons; Doves (Columbidae) | 12 |
| Rails; Crakes and Coots (Rallidae) | 12 |
| Grebes (Podicipedidae)..... | 13 |
| Plovers (Charadriidae) | 14 |
| Sandpipers; Snipes (Scolopacidae)..... | 15 |
| Gulls; Terns and Skimmers (Laridae) | 17 |
| Ibises, Spoonbills | 20 |
| Hérons; Bitterns (Ardeidae)..... | 20 |
| Kites; Hawks and Eagles (Accipitridae) | 20 |
| Owls (Strigidae)..... | 21 |
| Woodpeckers (Picidae) | 22 |
| Caracaras; Falcons (Falconidae) | 23 |
| Crows; Jays (Corvidae) | 23 |
| Tits; Chickadees (Paridae) | 24 |
| Swallows; Martins (Hirundinidae)..... | 25 |
| Leaf warblers and allies (Phylloscopidae) | 26 |
| Reed warblers and allies (Acrocephalidae) | 26 |
| Sylviid Babblers (Sylviidae) | 27 |
| Goldcrests, Kinglets | 28 |
| Thrushes (Turdidae)..... | 28 |
| Chats; Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)..... | 29 |
| Old World Sparrows; Snowfinches (Passeridae) | 31 |
| Wagtails; Pipits (Motacillidae) | 31 |
| Finches (Fringillidae)..... | 32 |
| Buntings (Emberizidae)..... | 34 |
| Early and late dates for summer visitors..... | 35 |
| Local Rarities | 36 |
| Acknowledgements | 36 |
| Appendix..... | 37 |

Introduction

The Systematic List that makes up the bulk of this document is a compilation from the Sightings Section of the Society's monthly newsletter. The inclusion of detailed observations from the fieldworkers covering the SECOS Winter and Breeding Bird Survey [SWaBBS] patches have boosted the records and will no doubt improve the depth of our understanding of our local avifauna, especially records of breeding activity and success.

A consequence of the restrictions of movement, etc. at various times of the year (Covid-19), inevitably will have led to some birds being missed.

1. I would like to acknowledge the input by Colin Lythgoe to this document. He has helped me hugely in proof-reading it and offering me feedback
2. the inclusion of tables has only been partially successful - maxima for all months not known and I believe the inclusion of '0' would make the table look busy!
3. Andy Livermore, the CAWOS Systematic List Editor has given me a list of the species (with counts) that the county would consider a flock of birds as 'significant' – see individual species below for the details
4. my thanks to all those who added their sightings to the various log books, blogs, etc. or sent them directly to me by email / text (or to a distribution list I'm a 'member' of)
5. sightings entered in logbook(s) retrospectively may not be included
6. my database, Wildlife Recorder®, sorted the Systematic List / sequence used in this summary - the sequence used by the International Ornithologists' Union - IOC 12.1 - Jan 2022
7. inevitably, errors and omissions will have crept in, along with incomplete records i.e. where I didn't note count, gender, age, breeding status, etc.
8. unless previously recorded at that site, details of breeding have been omitted for 'sensitive' species
9. local birders continue the policy to withhold details of those rarities where it is thought that 'protecting' the site might encourage these birds to establish territories
10. the SECOS Recording Area is hectads SJ74, 75, 76, 85 and 86 within Cheshire (see next page)
11. some locations included are just outside the SECOS Recording Area as our policy is to share sightings that occur where overlapping the boundary

Where the phrase "breeding confirmed" is used it refers to fledglings recorded. I acknowledge that SWaBBS fieldworkers record specific breeding activity, i.e. nests with young, nest with eggs, adults carrying food/faecal sacs and occupied nests - those records are identified using the same description.

In 2019, I was granted access to the BTO's BirdTrack and WeBS databases and the BTO also send me local records for BBS, GBW and other specific surveys such as heronries, etc.

Please let me know of any errors, etc. that you see, or any sightings not included.

John Thompson, SECOS Bird Recorder (Apr '19 - Apr '22)

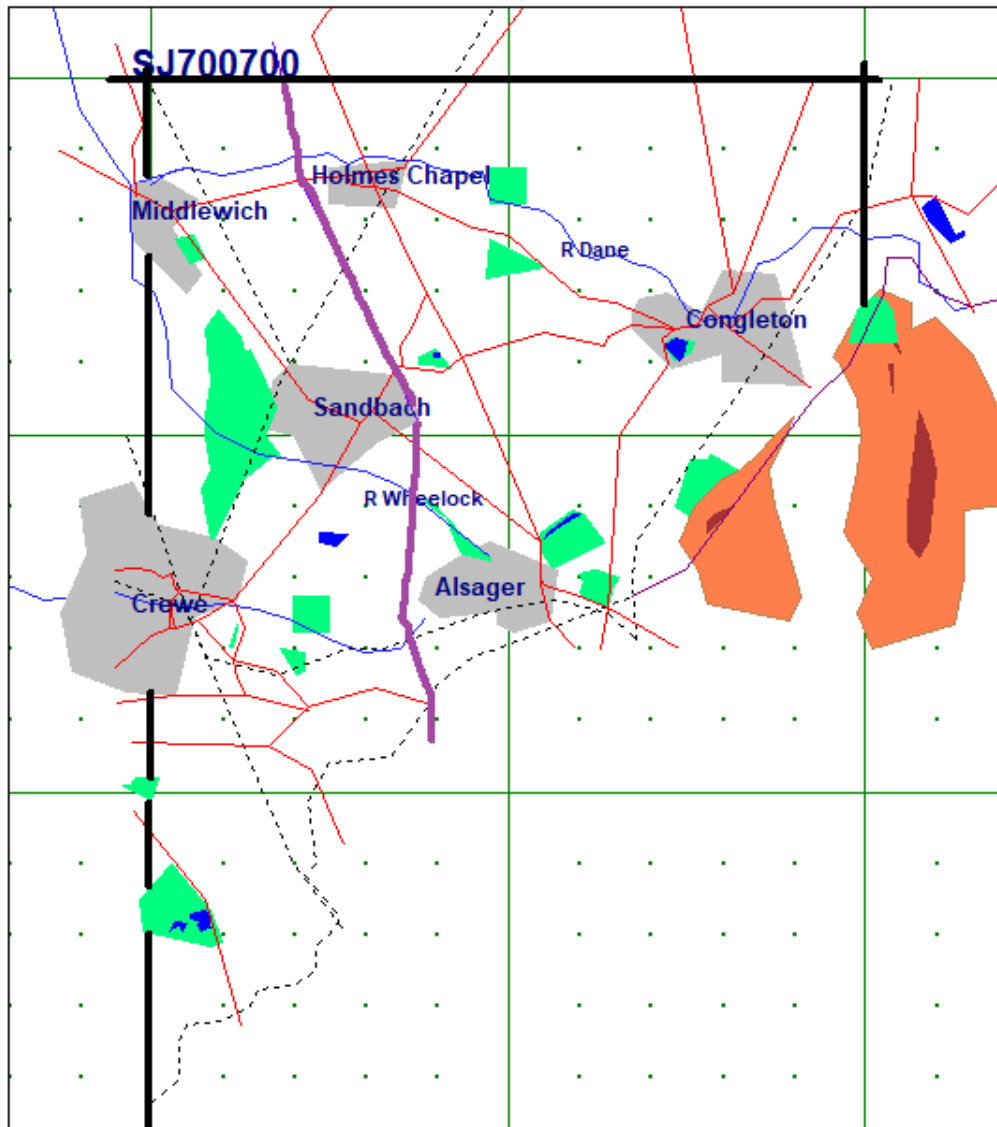
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SECOS Bird Report 2021

SECOS Recording Area & main birding sites

Map of the Recording Area



Produced using DMAP®

Key: -

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Black, thick | Edge of Recording Area | Black, dotted | Railway tracks |
| Blue | Water courses | Brown, dark | Over 300 metres above sea level |
| Dotted line | County border | Brown, light | Over 200 metres above sea level |
| Green | Main birding locations | Grey | Areas of conurbation |
| Purple, thick | M6 Motorway | Red | Roads |

In 2020, I produced an update to list of the main birding sites accessible to the public. It can be viewed and downloaded from the SECOS website.

Also available on the website is a Checklist and a Gazetteer.

Systematic List

Key:

| | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ♀ - female | ♂ - male | BP - Business Park |
| c - circa | | CP - Country Park |
| 1 st cy - first calendar year | 1 st w - first winter | GC - Golf Club |
| ad - adult | imm - immature | LNR - Local Nature Reserve |
| juv - juvenile(s) | n/c - present but no count | |
| EHF - Elton Hall Flash | FF - Fodens Flash | FFF- Fields Farm Flash |
| | MGT - Maw Green Tip | PHF - Pump House Flash |

Between 2011 and 2017, sightings of local birds were mainly confined to Sandbach Flashes, Doddington and Rode Pool with, comparatively, few from the wider SECOS Recording Area.

Until we have sufficient data to establish the local status of 'our' birds, I have included the species status according to CAWOS, from their 2019 Bird Report.

Definitions used in the status statement, on the line following each species' name, are as follows:

| Numbers of birds / Pairs for breeding species | | Temporal status | |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| rare | 1 to 5 | resident | resident breeding and recorded throughout the year but winter and summer populations may not be the same individuals |
| very scarce | 6 to 10 | | |
| scarce | 11 to 100 | | |
| uncommon | 101 to 500 | summer visitor | breeding annually but not present in winter |
| fairly common | 501 to 1000 | | |
| common | 1001 to 5000 | winter visitor | not present in breeding season |
| very common | 5001 to 25,000 | migrant | recorded on passage |
| abundant | 25,000+ | vagrant | does not normally occur |
| Distribution | | irregular | occurs less than annually |
| Locally | occurs in up to 10% of tetrads | visitor | occurs at any time of year, but does not breed |
| thinly | from 11 % to 50% of tetrads | | |
| widespread | in more than 50% of tetrads | | |

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Ducks; Geese and Swans (Anatidae)

White-faced Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna viduata*)

Escaped or Feral - breeds in sub-Saharan Africa and much of South America.

Reported on 2 dates in June at EHF/PHF

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

CAWOS very common widespread resident

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Arclid SQ | 180 | 107 | 64 | 56 | 67 | 191 | 193 | 541 | 1796 | 181 | 7 | 108 |
| Doddington | 150 | 150 | 140 | 80 | 90 | 190 | 230 | 557 | 450 | 300 | 250 | 136 |
| EHF/PHF | 125 | 700 | 15 | 26 | 25 | 50 | 55 | 250 | 864 | 1200 | 400 | 200 |
| Queen's Park | 141 | 76 | 95 | 85 | 103 | 197 | 131 | 72 | 47 | 95 | 34 | 69 |
| Rode Pool | 11 | 38 | 62 | 32 | 19 | 51 | 57 | 49 | 6 | 41 | 45 | 2 |

Breeding confirmed at Doddington, Holmes Chapel, Queen's Park and Rode Pool plus juveniles seen at Wheelock/Malkin's Bank

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)

CAWOS scarce feral resident

Reported every month of the year

All the records were of single birds, apart from these: - c80 at EHF/PHF in Sep, 4 at Bosley Res. in Oct and 2 at Doddington in Apr

Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*)

CAWOS fairly common resident

Recorded in every month of the year

Highest count of 624 at Doddington in Oct

Breeding confirmed at Fields Farm Sandbach and Rode Pool

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)

CAWOS common winter visitor to Dee estuary

Recorded in Jan, Feb, Mar, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec

Birds seen on the ground or on the water at Doddington and Sandbach Flashes – it's been difficult to know if some reports are of skeins or not!

Highest skein was c600 over Haslington in Feb

White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)

CAWOS Rare winter visitor. Some feral birds

1 reported in Middlewich on 26th Jan

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*)

Escaped or Feral - Australian species

1 reported in EHF/PHF in Feb

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

CAWOS fairly common resident, thinly distributed

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Doddington | 6 | | | 18 | 29 | 60 | 61 | 60 | 42 | 58 | 56 | 1 |
| EHF/PHF | 16 | 18 | 4 | 36 | 16 | 24 | 10 | 7 | 14 | 3 | 8 | 15 |
| Middlewich Canal | 62 | 38 | 14 | 22 | 7 | | | | 4 | | 32 | 32 |
| Newsbank Pool | | | | | 51 | 38 | 47 | 31 | 36 | 34 | 61 | 32 |
| Rode Pool | | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | 2 | |

Breeding confirmed / juveniles seen at Astbury Mere CP, Doddington, Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF), Winterley Pool and Wychwood Park

SECOS member David Cookson leads the Cheshire Swan Study Group. See their website for reports of ringing, etc.: - <https://cheshireswanstudygroup.wordpress.com/>**Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)**

CAWOS scarce winter visitor

Recorded in Jan, Feb, Mar, Oct, Nov, Dec

Highest count of 18 at EHF/PHF in Dec

Reported at Doddington, Middlewich Canal and Lime Beds, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, MGT/RF), plus flyovers at Alsager and Macon Meadows

Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*)CAWOS scarce visitor and rare breeder. Presumed escaped or feral birds - [an African species](#)

Recorded in every month of the year

Highest count of 4 at Rode Pool in Jan

Reported at Arclid SQ, Doddington, L Moreton Hall, Newsbank Pool, Rode Heath/Rode Pool and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF).

It is suspected that a pair at Rode Pool nested but no evidence of success

Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)

CAWOS very common visitor to estuaries, uncommon thinly spread breeder inland

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Doddington | 2 | 3 | | 6 | 8 | | | | | | | |
| EHF/PHF | 53 | 93 | 116 | 41 | 25 | 13 | 19 | 13 | 1 | 1 | 44 | 27 |

There were no records of breeding confirmed / juveniles

Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*)

CAWOS rare irregular visitor usually presumed escaped or feral birds

Records at EHF/PHF in Apr, May, Jul, Aug, Sep, Nov

Highest count of 3 at EHF/PHF in Jul & Aug

South African Shelduck (*Tadorna cana*)

aka Cape Shelduck

[Escaped or Feral - breeds in South Africa](#)2 reported on Middlewich Canal on 13th Jul

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Muscovy Duck (*Cairina moschata*)

Escaped or Feral - native to Mexico and Central and South America

Recorded at Meremoor Fisheries

Mandarin Duck (*Aix galericulata*)

CAWOS uncommon feral resident

Breeds in East Asia, feral population established in Britain

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-------------|---|----|----|----|---|----|----|---|---|----|---|----|
| Lawton Lake | 3 | 14 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 19 | | | | | 1 | 8 |
| Rode Pool | 9 | 3 | 6 | 13 | 4 | 12 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 15 | 8 | 13 |

Other than those in the table above, reports also from Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Bearda, Doddington, Little Taxmere, Macon Meadows, Meremoor Moss, Middlewich, Newsbank Pool, North Rode Pool, Queens Park, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF), Scholar Green and Swettenham/The Quinta. Ducklings seen at Arclid SQ (both quarries), Congleton and Lawton Lake. See the Rode Pool Bird Report for details of their nest box occupation.

Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*)

CAWOS locally common winter visitor and migrant, rare breeder

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-----------------|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| Astbury Mere CP | 5 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 7 |
| Doddington | 31 | 53 | 18 | 3 | | | | | 8 | 15 | 12 | 6 |
| EHF/PHF | 26 | 25 | 21 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 27 | 51 | 25 | 38 | 18 |
| Rode Pool | 9 | 6 | 16 | 1 | | | | | 3 | 15 | 19 | 11 |

Other than those in the table above, reports also from Arclid SQ, Eaton Hall SQ, MGT/RF and Newsbank Pool

Gadwall (*Mareca strepera*)

CAWOS uncommon resident

Recorded in every month of the year except Jul

Highest count of 11 at EHF/PHF in Jun

Reports from Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Doddington, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, FFF & MGT/RF) and Newsbank Pool

Wigeon (*Mareca Penelope*)

CAWOS fairly common inland, rare in summer

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-----------------|-----|------|-----|----|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Astbury Mere CP | 2 | 6 | 2 | | | | | | | n/c | n/c | 6 |
| Doddington | 29 | 28 | | | | | | n/c | 7 | 8 | 7 | 13 |
| EHF/PHF | 736 | 1262 | 470 | 16 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 103 | 150 | 650 | 825 |
| Rode Pool | | | | | | | | | | | 10 | 14 |

Other than those in the table above, reports also from Arclid SQ, Balterley Green, Eaton Hall SQ and Sandbach Flashes (CF, FFF, MGT/RF and WLF)

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

CAWOS common widespread resident, very common in winter

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Arclid SQ | 376 | 333 | 44 | 24 | 24 | 113 | 151 | 217 | 263 | 159 | 187 | 246 |
| Astbury Mere CP | | 320 | | | | | | | n/c | | | |
| Doddington | 450 | 200 | 350 | 200 | 150 | 200 | 400 | 150 | 400 | 300 | 600 | 400 |
| EHF/PHF | 175 | 127 | 40 | 49 | 98 | 87 | 220 | 210 | 250 | 75 | 200 | 55 |
| Queens Park | 58 | 123 | 31 | 37 | 37 | 56 | 74 | 120 | 115 | 84 | 89 | 50 |
| Rode Pool | 22 | 51 | 22 | 19 | 14 | 25 | 40 | 43 | 48 | 40 | 40 | 21 |

Pintail (*Anas acuta*)

CAWOS common winter visitor to Dee estuary, scarce elsewhere

Recorded in every month of the year except May to Jul

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Doddington | 1 | 4 | | | | | | | | 1 | | 2 |
| EHF/PHF | 2 | 1 | 2 | | | | | 2 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 1 |

Other than those in the table above, reports also from Alsager Mere, Astbury Mere CP and MGT/RF

Teal (*Anas crecca*)

CAWOS scarce resident, very common winter visitor to estuaries, fairly common inland

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-----------------|----|-----|----|-----|---|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Astbury Mere CP | 5 | 1 | | 4 | | | | | 9 | | n/c | 7 |
| Doddington | 15 | 14 | | n/c | | | | n/c | 6 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| EHF/PHF | 85 | 115 | 74 | 41 | 6 | 5 | 28 | 159 | 281 | 227 | 150 | 121 |
| MGT/RF | | | 40 | | | | | | 1 | | | 18 |
| Rode Pool | 32 | 28 | 11 | 6 | 1 | | 6 | 10 | 14 | 39 | 28 | 22 |

Other than those in the table above, reports also from Arclid SQ, Balterley Green, Bent Farm SQ, Eaton Hall SQ, Joey the Swan, Sandbach Flashes (FF) and Middlewich

Yellow-billed Teal (*Anas flavirostris*)

Escaped or Feral – from South America

1 recorded occasionally at EHF/PHF in Nov & Dec

Pochard (*Aythya farina*)

CAWOS scarce resident, locally common winter visitor

Preferring deep water - recorded in every month of the year except Aug

Highest count of 27 at Doddington in Feb

Seen at Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Doddington and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF)

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Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

CAWOS fairly common resident. Common widespread winter visitor and migrant

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| Arclid SQ | 38 | 42 | 25 | 36 | 12 | 24 | 59 | 77 | 100 | 75 | 40 | 52 |
| Astbury Mere CP | | 103 | | 59 | | 10 | 25 | | | 54 | n/c | 173 |
| Doddington | 114 | 174 | 196 | 61 | 26 | 16 | 28 | 57 | 44 | 45 | 114 | 61 |
| EHF/PHF | 8 | 52 | 15 | | 2 | 7 | 2 | n/c | 1 | 2 | 4 | 13 |
| Rode Pool | 10 | 17 | 14 | 3 | 4 | 1 | | | | 4 | | 6 |

Other than those in the table above, also seen at Alsager Mere, Eaton Hall SQ, Lawton Lake, Mere Moor Fishery, Middlewich and Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF, WF & WLF)

Breeding confirmed at Doddington and Mere Moor Fishery

Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)

CAWOS abundant coastal winter visitor, very scarce migrant inland

Highest count of 17 at Bosley Reservoir in Jun

Also reported at Astbury Mere CP in Jul (5) & Nov (2)

Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)

CAWOS uncommon winter visitor. Rare non-breeder in summer

Recorded in Jan, Feb, Mar & Nov, Dec

Highest count of 24 at Doddington in Feb

Also reported at Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF)

Smew (*Mergellus albellus*)

CAWOS rare visitor

A female type was reported at Rode Pool on 19th Feb

Goosander (*Mergus merganser*)

CAWOS uncommon winter visitor inland. Very scarce breeder

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-----------------|----|----|----|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| Arclid SQ | 11 | 10 | 10 | 1 | | | | | | 6 | 3 | 11 |
| Astbury Mere CP | 3 | | | | | | | | | | n/c | n/c |
| Congleton Park | 5 | 2 | 2 | n/c | | | | | 3 | | | |
| EHF/PHF | 14 | 17 | 7 | | 1 | | | 2 | 1 | 3 | 13 | 17 |
| Lawton Lake | 3 | 4 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Queens Park | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | | | c24 | 32 |
| Rode Pool | 9 | 6 | 2 | | | | | | | | 3 | 17 |

Other than those in the table above, also seen at Alsager Mere, Borrow Pit Meadows, Brereton Heath LNR, Congleton, Doddington, Eaton Hall SQ, Fields Farm Sandbach, Middlewich, North Rode Pool, Sandbach Flashes (FFF, FF, MGT/RF, WF & WLF), Scholar Green, Swettenham, Wheelock and Winterly Pool

Breeding confirmed / juveniles seen at Congleton Park and R Dane, Swettenham

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*)

CAWOS scarce coastal visitor. Rare inland

2 reported at Church Lawton on 9th Apr

Helmeted Guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*)

Escaped or Feral - originally from North West African, reportedly now extinct 'in the wild'

Reported at Mow Cop in Jun

Pheasants and allies (Phasianidae)

Red Grouse (*Lagopus lagopus*)

CAWOS uncommon resident in Eastern Hills

Recorded in Apr, Jun, Sep

5 records from the Eastern Hills

Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)

CAWOS uncommon locally distributed resident

Recorded in Apr, May, Jun, Dec

5 records of 1s or 2s from Alsager, Checkley, Cranage, Doddington and Groby Rd Crewe

Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

CAWOS very common widespread feral resident supported by releases

Recorded in every month of the year – probably overlooked / under-recorded

Highest count of 24 at Swettenham

Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*)

County Rarity (non-calling birds)

CAWOS rare migrant, summer visitor

1 was reported calling at Arclid SQ on 27th Jun

Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*)

CAWOS common thinly distributed resident supported by releases

Recorded in every month of the year except Aug, Sep & Nov

Highest count of 24 at Doddington.

Also reported at Astbury, Blakenhall, Brereton, Brindley Green, Brownlow, Checkley, Doddington, Lea Forge, North Rode, Swettenham, Tidnock and Wallhill

Swift (*Apus apus*)

CAWOS common summer visitor and migrant, thinly distributed breeder

Recorded in Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep - locally numbers continue to decline.

Highest count of c300 at Borrow Pit Meadows on 13th Aug

My thanks to those who took part in the locally organised Swift Count

Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*)

CAWOS scarce summer visitor and migrant, thinly distributed

Recorded in May, Jun, Jul

7 records all of singles except for 2 reported at Three Shires Head (May). Other records from Arclid SQ (3 sightings in May), Bearda, Blakenhall, Danebower, Gawsworth and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF)

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Pigeons; Doves (Columbidae)

Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

CAWOS very common resident, widely distributed in urban areas

Often overlooked & under-recorded
Highest count of 51 at Queens Park
No breeding records

Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*)

CAWOS common widespread resident

Recorded in every month of the year
Highest count of 12 at Doddington & Gawsworth
Breeding confirmed at Quakers Coppice and Rode Pool, probably breeding at Arclid SQ

Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*)

CAWOS abundant widespread resident and migrant

Common locally and under-recorded
Highest count of 300 feeding at Doddington
Breeding confirmed at Holmes Chapel

Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

CAWOS very common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month of the year
Highest count of 15 at Basford
Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ

Rails; Crakes and Coots (Rallidae)

Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*)

CAWOS Uncommon winter visitor and migrant, scarce breeder

Recorded Jan-Apr, Jun & Oct-Dec
Highest count of 4 at Bagmere and Wybunbury Moss
This cryptic, secretive bird is difficult to see at the best of times, but even more so during their breeding season; recorded at Astbury Mere CP, Bagmere, Betley Mere, Macon Meadows, Rode Pool, throughout Sandbach Flashes and Wybunbury Moss

Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

CAWOS very common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month
Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|---------------|-----|----|-----|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|-----|
| Arclid SQ | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Doddington | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 6 | n/c | 5 | 2 | 6 | 2 |
| EHF/PHF | 7 | 15 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 5 | | 7 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 7 |
| Macon Meadows | 7 | 9 | n/c | 7 | 5 | n/c | n/c | n/c | n/c | n/c | 3 | n/c |
| Queens Park | 9 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 11 |
| Rode Pool | n/c | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 |

Highest count of 24 at Gawsworth

Breeding confirmed at Borrow Pit Meadows, Doddington, Macon Meadows, Meremoor Moss, Queens Park, Rode Pool, Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF), Wheelock/Malkin's Bank and Wybunbury Moss

Coot (*Fullica atra*)

CAWOS common resident and migrant, widely distributed

Common locally, recorded in every month

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Arclid SQ/Taxmere | 20 | 22 | 16 | 17 | 14 | 16 | 21 | 31 | 32 | 20 | 24 | 26 |
| Astbury Mere CP | | 158 | | 4 | | | | | 20 | | | |
| Doddington | c500 | 514 | 150 | 78 | 92 | 294 | 360 | 750 | 880 | 1320 | 1290 | 386 |
| EHF/PHF | 70 | 300 | 22 | 13 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 17 | 15 | 10 | 11 |
| Queens Park | 12 | 11 | 9 | 5 | 12 | 7 | 15 | 16 | 9 | 11 | 9 | 7 |
| Rode Pool | n/c | 9 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 4 | n/c | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

Comparing data from other CAWOS sites, Doddington held the highest concentrations of this species in the county

Breeding confirmed at Doddington, Holmes Chapel, Rode Pool, Queens Park and Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

Common Crane(*Grus grus*)

CAWOS Vagrant

A bird matching this description was seen in a field near Radway Green from the motorway on 16th Oct

Grebes (Podicipedidae)

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)

CAWOS uncommon resident, thinly distributed

Recorded in every month

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Astbury Mere CP | 4 | 5 | 4 | 2 | n/c | n/c | 1 | | 2 | 2 | n/c | n/c |
| Doddington | 12 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 17 | 12 | 12 | 15 | 19 | 16 |
| EHF/PHF | 2 | | | n/c | | 1 | | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Lawton Lake | 4 | 4 | | | | | | | | | 3 | 1 |
| Rode Pool | n/c | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 3 | 5 |

Other than those in the table above, also seen at Arclid SQ, Brereton Heath LNR, Eaton Hall SQ, Lea Forge, Queen's Park, Sandbach Flashes (FF & MGT/RF) and Wychwood Park

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Doddington and Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)

CAWOS uncommon resident inland

Recorded in every month

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------------|---|---|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|-----|---|
| Arclid SQ | 1 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 11 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| Astbury Mere CP | | 6 | | | 2 | | | | 1 | | | |
| Doddington | 3 | | 11 | 11 | 19 | 10 | 11 | 37 | 20 | 13 | 4 | |
| EHF/PHF | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | n/c | 1 |
| Rode Pool | 1 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 2 | n/c | | | | |
| Watch Lane Flash | | | 9 | n/c | | | | | | 8 | 14 | |

Other than those in the table above, also seen at Alsager Mere, Brereton Heath LNR and Winterley Pool
Breeding confirmed at Doddington, Rode Pool and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF), failed attempts at Arclid SQ

Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

CAWOS fairly common breeder inland

Common locally; recorded between Jan-Aug

Seen throughout the Recording Area including flyovers

Highest count of 9 at Doddington

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ (failed at egg stage), Doddington and Mere Moor Fishery

Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)

CAWOS locally distributed migrant on estuaries, scarce inland

1 was reported at EHF/PHF on 20th Mar

Plovers (Charadriidae)

Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

CAWOS very common winter visitor, migrant and widespread breeding species

Common locally, recorded in every month

Flocks of 500+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Highest count of 1000 at MGT/RF

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|---------------|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Arclid SQ | 70 | 85 | 26 | 4 | 5 | 66 | 111 | 415 | 430 | 148 | 75 | 125 |
| Doddington | 45 | 6 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 65 | 41 | | 80 |
| Eaton Hall SQ | | | | | | | | 35 | | | | |
| EHF/PHF | 330 | 500 | 1 | n/c | n/c | 45 | 55 | 267 | 54 | n/c | 420 | 800 |

Breeding confirmed / juvs seen at Arclid SQ

Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)

CAWOS Fairly common winter visitor and migrant. Very scarce breeder in the Eastern Hills

Common locally, recorded in every month except Aug & Sep

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Highest count of c1000 at Danebower

Other than in areas in the Eastern Hills, also recorded at Arclid SQ, Gawsworth, M6 (Jnct 18), Middlewich and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF)

Breeding confirmed / juvs seen at Axe Edge

Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)

CAWOS Uncommon winter visitor and common late summer migrant to coast, otherwise scarce. Scarce breeder

Recorded in Apr, May, Jun, Aug

4 records – all from EHF/PHF

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)

CAWOS Scarce migrant and summer visitor

Recorded in Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul

Highest count of 5 at EHF/PHF

Seen at Albion Lock, Arclid SQ, Astbury, Middlewich and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF)

Breeding probable at Arclid SQ

Sandpipers; Snipes (Scolopacidae)

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)

CAWOS Very scarce migrant inland

2 or 3 birds reported on three dates in Apr & May at EHF/PHF

Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

CAWOS Common winter visitor and migrant, fairly common in summer on estuaries. Scarce breeder

Recorded in every month of the year

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| EHF/PHF | 34 | 32 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 28 | 29 | 33 | 37 | 44 | 28 |

Also seen at Arclid, the Eastern Hills, Gawsworth, Mooresbarrow, Mow Cop, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & WLF), Swettenham and Tidnock, plus flyovers at various other sites

No breeding records

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

CAWOS Scarce migrant away from the coast and estuaries

Recorded in every month of the year except Jun

Other than noted at Doddington (Jul), only noted at Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, FFF & MGT/RF)

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| EHF/PHF | 3 | 5 | 25 | 22 | 2 | | 32 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 6 |

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

CAWOS Fairly common coastal winter visitor and migrant. Rare migrant elsewhere

2 birds reported flying over EHF/PHF in May

Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*)

CAWOS Scarce migrant and winter visitor

Singles were reported at EHF/PHF in May & Sep

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)

CAWOS Inland, scarce winter visitor and migrant

Recorded in every month of the year except Jan & Jun

Singles, unless noted otherwise; seen at Basford Hall Railway Yard in Aug, Doddington in Mar and EHF/PHF – see table

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|---|---|
| EHF/PHF | | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 4 | 1 | n/c | 1 | 5 |

Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*)

CAWOS Scarce coastal winter visitor

1 was videoed while on farmland in Holmes Chapel on 13th Oct

Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)

CAWOS Scarce breeder, thinly distributed with bias to the east. Uncommon winter visitor

Recorded from Jan-Apr & Oct- Dec

Highest count of 10 at Middlewich

Reported at Alsager (Fanny's Croft), Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Congleton, Fields Farm Sandbach, Gawsworth, Lawton Woods, Lea Forge, Middlewich, Mow Cop, Rode Pool, Sandbach Flashes (FF & MGT/RF), Winterley Pool and Wybunbury Moss

Jack Snipe (*Lymnocyptes minimus*)

CAWOS Scarce winter visitor and migrant

Recorded from Jan- Mar & Nov-Dec

Singles, unless noted otherwise reported at Coppenhall Moss (2), Meremoor Moss, Middlewich Lime Beds (11) Mow Cop (13) and Sandbach Flashes [MGT/RF (3)]

Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)

CAWOS Uncommon winter visitor and migrant. Very scarce breeder

Recorded in every month except May

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------|-----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|
| Arclid SQ | 17+ | 17 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Doddington | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 2 | | 1 | 3 |
| EHF/PHF | 2 | 3 | 1 | | | | 2 | 6 | 10 | 3 | n/c | 3 |
| MGT/RF | 25 | 10 | 11 | 1 | | | | | 1 | 8 | 45 | 10 |
| Rode Pool | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 13 |

Other than the table above; singles, unless noted otherwise reported at Astbury Mere CP, Blackclough, Danebower, Fields Farm, Sandbach (5), Lea Forge (1), Meremoor (c12), Middlewich (5), Middlewich Lime Beds (13), Mow Cop (14), Sandbach Flashes [FFF, Tetton Lane Flash (2) & WLF (2)] and Wybunbury Moss (4)

Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

CAWOS Scarce migrant and rare breeder, rare irregular winter visitor

Recorded in Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep

Highest count of 4 at EHF/PHF

Reported at Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Barthomley, Doddington, Rode Pool and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF)

Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)

CAWOS Scarce autumn migrant, rare in winter and spring

Recorded in every month except May

Highest count of 9 at EHF/PHF

Singles, unless noted otherwise, reported at Arclid SQ (3), Barthomley, Middlewich Lime Beds (3), Newsbank Pool and Sandbach Flashes [EHF/PHF, MGT/RF, Tetton Lane Flash (2) & WLF]

Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)

CAWOS Scarce inland. Uncommon locally distributed breeder

Recorded in Mar, Apr, Jun, Jul, Aug, Oct, Dec

Records from Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF) other than 1 in flight over Congleton

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EHF/PHF | | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 2 | | 1 |

Wood Sandpiper(*Tringa glareola*)

CAWOS Very scarce migrant

1 was reported at EHF/PHF on 4th Aug

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*)

CAWOS Scarce migrant on the Dee, rare inland and in winter

1 was reported at EHF/PHF between 24th Apr & 1st May

Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)

CAWOS Rare spring, very scarce late summer and autumn migrant inland. Rare winter visitor

Singles reported at Arclid SQ on 30th Jun and at EHF/PHF on 11th Jul & 14th Aug

Gulls; Terns and Skimmers (Laridae)

Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*)

CAWOS Uncommon coastal migrant and winter visitor, rare inland

1 was reported at Astbury Mere CP on 2nd Feb

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*)

CAWOS Abundant winter visitor and migrant. Common locally distributed breeding species

Common locally, recorded in every month

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Arclid SQ | 81 | 400 | 575 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 103 | 154 | 217+ | 230 | 525+ | 132 |
| Doddington | | 6 | 25 | | | | 9 | 5 | 91 | 450 | 150 | 5000 |
| EHF/PHF | 2000 | 146 | 1500 | n/c | n/c | 10 | 310 | 350 | 211 | 125 | 1500 | 110 |
| Rode Pool | n/c | 2 | | | | 1 | 4 | 5 | 19 | 73 | 230 | 300 |

No colour-ringed birds reported at Arclid SQ this year

Doddington is a winter roost site for Black-headed Gull and also for Common Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull

Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*)

CAWOS Scarce coastal migrant, very scarce inland

1 was reported at EHF/PHF 27th Nov

Mediterranean Gull (*Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*)

CAWOS Very scarce breeder and scarce visitor throughout the year

1 or 2 reported at EHF/PHF, Meremoor Moss, Middlewich Canal and Queens Park, occasionally lingering during these months: - Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov

Common Gull (*Larus canus*)

CAWOS Common, widespread migrant and winter visitor. Scarce as summering non-breeder

Recorded in every month except Jun & Aug

Highest count of 40 at Doddington in Dec

Other than at landfill sites, inland flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)

CAWOS Fairly common winter visitor on estuaries and uncommon resident. Has bred

Recorded in every month

Highest count of 104 at MGT/RF in Dec

Other than at landfill sites, inland flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)

CAWOS Very common, widespread migrant and winter visitor, uncommon breeder

Common locally, recorded in every month – we monitor one of the few UK inland breeding colonies

Highest count of 1000 at Middlewich Canal in Jan

Other than at landfill sites, inland flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

breeds on Crewe Industrial Estate

First recorded in 2012 but from the size of the colony it must have existed before then, a Seabird Count of the nesting sites on some of the roofs on Weston Road Industrial Estate has been monitored since then.

This year, breeding on the roof of Dunelm in Crewe Town Centre was confirmed. Colin Lythgoe’s 2019 report on local gull breeding sites is on the SECOS website

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*)

CAWOS Scarce non-breeding visitor

Recorded in every month except Apr & Jun

Reported at Arclid SQ, Bosley Reservoir, Doddington and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF)

Highest count of 9 at Arclid SQ in Sep

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)

CAWOS Common widespread migrant and winter visitor, uncommon breeder

Common locally, recorded in every month – we monitor one of the few UK inland breeding colonies
Breeds on Crewe Industrial Estate and Crewe Town Centre

Other than at landfill sites, inland flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Maximum monthly count: -

| | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Arclid SQ | 66 | 43 | 60 | 5 | 1 | 225+ | 550+ | 544 | 490 | 925 | 730 | 78 |
| Doddington | | 4 | 1 | | 2 | 11 | | | 28 | 100 | 264 | 400 |
| EHF/PHF | n/c | 10 | n/c | n/c | 220 | 2 | 15 | 26 | 12 | 80 | 96 | 20 |
| MGT/RF | | 350 | 300 | | | | | n/c | | | | |

Colour-ringed birds were recorded at Arclid SQ; all ringed as nestlings in Bowland, Lancs: -

- ringed in 06/18, noted in Portugal in 09/18, Cadiz 02/20
- ringed in 07/19, noted in Leicester in 06/20
- ringed in 06/18, noted in Wiltshire in 08/18 and 07/19

Sandwich Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*)

CAWOS Fairly common coastal migrant and common non-breeding summer visitor, rare inland

2 reported at Astbury Mere CP on 30th Sep

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

CAWOS Very scarce inland. Rare breeder

Recorded between Apr & Aug

Reported at Astbury Mere CP, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF) and Rode Pool

Has bred at WLF in 5 of the last 10 years, but not in ‘20 or ‘21

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

CAWOS Scarce coastal migrant and non-breeding summer visitor, rare inland

2 were reported flying through EHF/PHF on 4th May

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

CAWOS Very scarce migrant except for occasional large movements

1 was reported at Winterley Pool on 2nd & 3rd Sep

Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*)

County Rarity

CAWOS Vagrant

1 was photographed flying over Marton Trout Fishing Pools on 26th Apr

Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

CAWOS Common visitor and uncommon breeder

Recorded in every month

Highest count of 32 in flight, seen at Congleton, otherwise 25 at Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF)

Reported at Alsager Mere, Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Brereton Heath LNR, Congleton, Doddington,

Eaton Hall SQ, Lea Forge, Meremoor, Rode Pool, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, MGT/RF & WLF)

Swettenham and Winterley Pool

Birds showing characteristics of the continental subspecies [*P.c. sinensis*] were reported at Arclid SQ and EHF/PHF; during the Autumn, birds with DARVIC rings were noted. Some of these were ringed this year as fledglings at Hale Decoy by the Mersey Ringing Group

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Ibises, Spoonbills

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

CAWOS Vagrant

County Rarity

1 was reported at EHF/PHF on 26th May

Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)

CAWOS Very scarce visitor

County Rarity

9, yes NINE, were reported at EHF/PHF on 7th Oct

Hérons; Bitterns (Ardeidae)

Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*)

CAWOS Rare winter visitor

1 was reported at EHF/PHF on 11th Sep

Grey Heron (*Ardea alba*)

CAWOS Common locally distributed breeder, widespread in winter

Common locally and recorded in every month most of, if not all, the local heronries are monitored 'best estimates' of nests in heronries: - Doddington 22 and Rode Pool 48

Great White Egret (*Ardea alba*)

CAWOS Scarce on Dee estuary, rare elsewhere

County rarity (away from the coast)

Singles recorded during all the months of the year, but with sightings of 2 (Sep) & 3 (Mar) birds seen at MGT/RF so, perhaps, locally not a rarity?

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

CAWOS Locally common resident and scarce breeder on the estuaries, scarce elsewhere

Recorded in every month except May & Jun

Highest count of 5 at EHF/PHF and in the Rode Heath area – a third of the records are of more than one bird

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

CAWOS Scarce migrant

13 records of singles between Apr & Aug except one of 2 birds at EHF/PHF on 11th Apr – none of the sightings mention a bird lingering to fish, etc.

Kites; Hawks and Eagles (Accipitridae)

Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)

CAWOS Fairly common, widespread resident

Common locally; recorded in every month

Highest count of 3 at Alton St., Crewe in Sep

Adult with food reported at Macon Meadows, Crewe

Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*)

CAWOS Scarce migrant and winter visitor, rare breeder

Singles recorded at Gawsorth on 24th Apr, at EHF/PHF on 5th Sep and at Brindley Green on 24th Sep

Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*)

CAWOS Scarce visitor

Recorded between Feb & Nov (none suggest bird was perched or on the ground)

Singles seen at numerous sites, 2 recorded over Alsager and Foden's Flash on the same day – 27th Jul

Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)

CAWOS Common, widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of c20 in the Rode Heath area

Displaying birds seen at Meremoor Moss

Breeding confirmed at Rode Pool

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

*** **a Schedule One bird**

CAWOS Uncommon local resident

Recorded in every month except Jul & Nov

Reported at many sites

Owls (Strigidae)

Little Owl (*Athene noctua*)

CAWOS Uncommon thinly distributed resident

Recorded in every month except Aug, Oct and Dec – all of singles, except 2 at Doddington

Reported at Basford, Bradwall, Doddington, Mow Cop, Queens Park and Shavington

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*)

CAWOS Very scarce localised resident

The winter roost on MGT has been a cause for concern in previous years, **with some visitors ignoring the welfare of this locally scarce species by wanting to get closer views / photographs!** The absence of reports in this year suggest the 'damage has been done'!

Adults were seen in flight and juvs heard begging at a withheld location - *see page 3, point 9*

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

CAWOS Scarce winter visitor and migrant, has bred

Preferring to winter on the coast, they favour the Eastern Hills during the breeding season, where there were 9 reports between Apr & Jun. 1 was reported on migration, at a withheld location, on the western edge of the Recording Area on 9th May

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*)

CAWOS Fairly common thinly distributed resident

Recorded in every month

Singles, unless noted otherwise, seen at Alsager (2), Astbury Mere CP (3), Brereton Heath LNR, The Cloud (3), Congleton, Crewe: Town Centre & Quakers Coppice, Crewe GC, Danebower, Doddington, Gawsworth (4), Hassall (2), Lawton Woods (2), Middlewich, Rode Pool, Sandbach Flashes [EHF/PHF, FF (2), FFF (2), Green Lane (2), Tetton Lane, WF (2) & WLF], Salt Line/Borrow Pit Meadows (2), Scholar Green, Shavington, Swettenham, Wheelock and Wybunbury Moss

Breeding confirmed at Alsager, Congleton and Rode Pool. Probably breeding at Doddington

Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

*** **a Schedule One bird**

CAWOS Uncommon resident, thinly distributed

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 3 at Rode Pool

Adults reported with food at Arclid SQ and Macon Meadows

Woodpeckers (Picidae)

Wryneck(*Jynx torquilla*)

County Rarity

CAWOS Vagrant

1 reported (on BTO's BirdTrack) at Bridgemere on 13th Apr

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates minor*)

CAWOS Scarce resident thinly distributed

3 records: 1 drumming at Rode Pool on 9th Feb, a belated record at EHF/PHF in Mar and 1 at Alsager on 26th Nov

Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)

CAWOS Common resident, widely distributed

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 4 at Arclid SQ

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Barthomley, Doddington and Quakers Coppice

Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*)

CAWOS Uncommon resident, thinly distributed

More than 20 sightings, mostly of singles recorded in every month except Feb & Dec

Singles, unless noted otherwise, recorded at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Brownlow/Wallhill (2), The Cloud, Gawsworth, Lea Forge, Queens Park, Rode Pool (2), Sandbach Flashes [FFF (2) & MGT/RF], Salt Line & Borrow Pit Meadows, Scholar Green, Shutlingsloe and Wybunbury Moss

Probably breeding at Rode Pool

Caracaras; Falcons (Falconidae)

Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)

CAWOS Common, widespread resident and migrant

Common locally; recorded in every month
Highest count of 2 at numerous locations
Breeding confirmed at Gonsley Green and Scholar Green

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)

CAWOS Very scarce winter visitor, rare resident

Recorded in Feb, Apr, Jun, Sep, Dec; singles seen in the Eastern Hills, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF), Queens Park and Wybunbury

Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*)

*** **a Schedule One bird**

CAWOS Scarce migrant, summer visitor and breeder

Recorded between Apr & Oct, 43 records from 27 locations – both numbers slightly down on 2020
Highest count of 3 over a Haslington garden and at a withheld location
An adult with food was reported at EHF/PHF in Aug
The Rare Breeding Birds Panel guidelines suggest sightings within 2km of one another are counted as a single site. Disregarding both early and late season sightings, if I calculate 2km from the centre of a cluster of sightings, I estimate there to be 11 breeding territories (8 in 2020).

Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*)

*** **a Schedule One bird**

CAWOS Very scarce breeding species, scarce migrant and winter visitor

Recorded in every month
Seen at 25 locations - 5 within Sandbach Flashes – a handful of reports of 2 birds together and at EHF/PHF in Feb 3 birds were reported
A 1st winter bird with a DARVIC ring was photographed at EHF/PHF in Nov – probably from the brood raised in Northwich

Monk Parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*)

“originates from the temperate to subtropical areas of Argentina and the surrounding countries in South America. Self-sustaining feral populations occur in many places, mainly in North America and Europe”
Wikipedia

1 seen during a SWaBBS visit at Holmes Chapel on 8th Jun

Crows; Jays (Corvidae)

Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)

CAWOS Common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month
Highest count of c20 at MGT/RF

Magpie (*Pica pica*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month
Highest count of 21 at Macon Meadows

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Jackdaw (*Coloeus monedula*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident and winter visitor

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 225 at Bagmere

Flocks of 50+ (not tips) considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Other 50+ flocks recorded at Arclid, Doddington, Goostrey, Mooresbarrow, Rode Hall/Pool, Stowford and Winterley

Breeding confirmed at Barthomley, Doddington, Holmes Chapel and Stowford

Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*)

CAWOS Common resident thinly distributed

Recorded in every month

Highest count of 171 at Blakenhall

Flocks of 50+ (not tips) considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Other 50+ flocks recorded at Alsager, Arclid Hollow, Mooresbarrow, North Rode and Winterley

Breeding confirmed at Alsager and Arclid Hollow

Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of c50 at Doddington, and at Stowford during SWaBBS

Flocks of 50+ (not tips) considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Breeding confirmed at Macon Meadows, MGT/RF and Wybunbury Moss

Raven (*Corvus corax*)

CAWOS Scarce resident

Recorded in every month

Highest count of a flock 19 at MGT/RF

Often reported as flyovers

Breeding confirmed at Arclid Hollow, Doddington and Rode Pool

Tits; Chickadees (Paridae)

Coal Tit (*Periparus ater*)

CAWOS Common resident widely distributed

Fairly common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 5 at Swettenham

Breeding confirmed at Swettenham during SWaBBS

Willow Tit (*Poecile montanus*)

CAWOS Scarce resident, locally distributed

2 were recorded at Betley Mere on 21st Mar

County Rarity

(away from proven breeding sites)

Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Breeding confirmed at a number of sites

Great Tit (*Parus major*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Breeding confirmed at a number of sites

Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)

CAWOS Common thinly distributed resident, migrant and winter visitor

Recorded in every month except Aug

Highest count of c200 at Checkley in Jan

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Seen at Alsager*, Arclid SQ, Astbury/Mere CP, Barthomley, Blackclough, Blakenhall, Bradwall*, Brindley Green, Brownlow/Wallhill, Checkley, Cut-thorn Hill, Danebower, Doddington, Fields Farm Sandbach, Goostrey, Haslington, Hulme Walford, Lea Forge, Meremoor Moss, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, FFF, MGT/RF & WLF), Scholar Green, Swettenham/The Quinta, Wheelock and Winterley
Other flocks of 10+ marked above with ‘*’

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ and bird(s) displaying/visiting probable nest site at Alsager and Meremoor Moss

Swallows; Martins (Hirundinidae)

Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*)

CAWOS Common summer visitor, thinly distributed

Common locally, recorded between Feb & Sep

Highest count of c400 at Arclid SQ

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Other flocks 50+ at Astbury Mere CP and Doddington

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

CAWOS Very common widespread summer visitor

Common locally, recorded between Mar & Oct with a sighting of 1 bird on Christmas Day!

Highest count of 150 at Doddington

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Other flocks of 50+ at Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

Breeding confirmed at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Haslington and Holmes Chapel

House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*)

CAWOS Common widespread summer visitor

Common locally, recorded between Mar & Oct

Highest count of 100 at Doddington

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

No other flocks of 50+

Breeding confirmed at Alsager, Hassall, Holmes Chapel and Wheelock with probable breeding at Arclid Hollow

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*)

*** **a Schedule One bird**

CAWOS Scarce resident

Recorded in all months except Jul & Aug.

Highest count of 3 at Betley Mere and MGT/RF

Initially, reports were withheld to allow the birds to establish territories - *see page 3, point 9*. This local policy has been successful as they have expanded their range.

Since the first local record in Oct '15 it has been confined to the Sandbach Flashes area up to 2020. Its range now includes Betley Mere, Fields Farm Sandbach, Meremoor Moss and Middlewich

Long-tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 15 at Macon Meadows during SWaBBS

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Barthomley, Holmes Chapel, Macon Meadows, Meremoor Moss, Quakers Coppice, Queens Park, Roe Park, Swettenham and Wybunbury Moss

Leaf warblers and allies (Phylloscopidae)

Dusky Warbler (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*)

County Rarity

CAWOS Vagrant

First noted on 20th Dec. 2020 at Astbury Mere CP. The bird stayed until 24th Jan, although elusive and not recorded every day.

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

CAWOS Common summer visitor, widely distributed

Common locally, recorded between Mar & Aug

Highest count of 15 at Knotbury

Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*)

CAWOS Very common summer visitor widely distributed. Scarce winter visitor

Common locally, recorded in every month – it is generally accepted that the overwintering birds are from continental Europe and are not UK breeders

Highest count of 20 at Swettenham

Courtship noted at Swettenham

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Holmes Chapel, Rode Pool and Roe Park

Reed warblers and allies (Acrocephalidae)

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

CAWOS Common summer visitor, thinly distributed

Common locally, recorded between Apr & Jul

Highest count of 3 (singing ♂) at Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

Breeding confirmed at Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*)

CAWOS Common summer visitor, thinly distributed

Common locally, recorded between Apr & Sep

Highest count of 7 at Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

Breeding confirmed at Doddington and Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF) and probable breeding at Arclid SQ

Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*)

CAWOS Uncommon summer visitor, thinly distributed

Recorded in Apr, May, Jun & Aug

Singles reported at Bagmere, Joey the Swan, Lea Forge, Mow Cop, Sandbach Flashes, Scholar Green and Somerford.

Probably breeding at Mow Cop and Somerford

Sylviid Babblers (Sylviidae)

Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*)

CAWOS Very common summer visitor, widely distributed. Uncommon winter visitor

Common locally, recorded in every month except Feb, Oct & Nov. Similarly, to Chiffchaff it is generally accepted that the overwintering birds are from continental Europe and are not UK breeders

Highest count of c40 at Arclid SQ

No records of confirmed breeding

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*)

CAWOS Common summer visitor, thinly distributed

Recorded between Apr & Jul and in Sep

Usually singles but c3 at Lea Forge in May. Other records are from Arclid SQ, Basford Hall Railway Yard, Bearda, Borrow Pit Meadows/Salt Line, Brereton Heath LNR, Doddington, Gawsworth, Holmes Chapel, Mow Cop, Rode Pool, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF), Swettenham/The Quinta and Wallhill

Probable breeding at Arclid SQ, Lea Forge and Swettenham/The Quinta

Lesser Whitethroat (*Curruca curruca*)

CAWOS Common summer visitor, thinly distributed

Recorded between Apr & Sep.

Highest count of 3 at Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF)

Adult with food reported at Somerford

Whitethroat (*Curruca communis*)

CAWOS Very common summer visitor, widely distributed

Recorded between Apr & Aug.

Highest count of 9 at Meremoor Moss

Breeding confirmed at Lea Forge and Scholar Green

Probably breeding at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Meremoor Moss and Wallhill

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Goldcrests, Kinglets

Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapilla*)

CAWOS Very scarce winter visitor and migrant

2 were reported in Mar at Quakers Coppice between 7th & 16th and 1 was at Queens Park on 21st

Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*)

CAWOS Common resident and winter visitor, widely distributed

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 8 at Roe Park during SWaBBS

No records of breeding

Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 22 at Salt Line during SWaBBS

Juveniles seen at EHF/PHF

Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 6 at Roe Park during SWaBBS

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Macon Meadows, Meremoor Moss and Roe Park

Treecreeper (*Certhia familiaris*)

CAWOS Common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 8 in a private wood in Barthomley during SWaBBS

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Barthomley, Congleton and Quakers Coppice

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident and abundant winter visitor - common locally

recorded in every month

Flocks of 500+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Highest count of c2,000 by M6, junction 17

Other flocks of 500+ at Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & WLF)

Breeding confirmed at Holmes Chapel and Swettenham

FYI - murmurations recorded at Bagmere SSSI (but not in 2021)

Thrushes (Turdidae)

Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident and winter visitor

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 12 at Swettenham during SWaBBS

Breeding probable at Arclid SQ and Quakers Coppice (nest building) during SWaBBS

Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*)

CAWOS Common widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month except Aug
Highest count of c12 at Rode Pool
Breeding confirmed at Fields Farm Sandbach and Rode Pool

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)

CAWOS Very common widespread winter visitor and migrant

Common locally, recorded in Jan-Apr & Oct-Dec

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Highest count of c250 at MGT/RF and Meremoor Moss

Other flocks of 50+ at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Doddington, Goostrey, Holmes Chapel, Middlewich, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, FF & Green Lane set-aside), Swettenham and Winterley

Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident augmented in winter

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of c50 at Borrow Pit Meadows

Breeding confirmed at Alsager, Holmes Chapel, Macon Meadows, Queens Park, Shavington, Swettenham, Wheelock/Malkins Bank and Wybunbury Moss

Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*)

CAWOS Very common widespread winter visitor and migrant

Common locally, recorded in Jan-Apr & Oct-Dec

Highest count of 175 at Winterley

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Other 50+ flocks at Doddington, Fields Farm Sandbach, Goostrey, Holmes Chapel, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF) and Winterley

Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*)

CAWOS Rare summer visitor to the Eastern Hills, scarce passage migrant

Recorded in Mar, Apr & Oct

Highest count of c14 at Cut-thorn Hill

In the past decade, occasional reports at The Cloud, Congleton, Doddington, Elworth, Mow Cop and EHF/PHF, but not reported outside the Eastern Hills area in 2021

Chats; Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)

CAWOS Uncommon, thinly-spread distributed summer visitor

Recorded between May & Sep

Highest count of 8 at Gawsworth

Reported at Allgreave, Barthomley, Bearda, Brereton Heath LNR, Brownlow, The Cloud, Congleton, Gawsworth, Lea Forge, Marton, Rode Pool, Scholar Green, Quakers Coppice, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF), Three Shires Head and Wybunbury.

Breeding confirmed at Barthomley, Gawsworth and Quakers Coppice. Probably breeding at Brereton Heath LNR and Wildboarclough

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident and winter visitor

Common locally, recorded in every month
Highest count of 28 at Salt Line during SWaBBS
Breeding confirmed at five locations

Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*)

CAWOS Scarce summer visitor and migrant

Reported at Allgreave, Bearda, Lawton Woods, Rode Pool and Wildboardclough
No records of breeding

Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*)

CAWOS Rare winter visitor and migrant. Has bred *** **a Schedule One bird**

County Rarity (inland)

Reports of single birds at Cat & Fiddle, Rode Heath, Sandbach & Shutlingsloe

Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)

CAWOS Scarce summer visitor and migrant

Recorded between Apr & Aug.
Reported at Bearda, The Cloud, Cut-thorn Hill, Gawsworth, Knotbury, Scholar Green, Tidnock, Three Shires Head and Wildboardclough

Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*)

CAWOS Scarce summer migrant, has bred

Recorded Apr-May & Aug-Sep.
Reported in 1's and 2's at Alsager, Gawsworth, Middlewich, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF) and Shutlingsloe

Stonechat (*Saxicola rubicola*)

CAWOS Scarce resident and migrant

Recorded in every month except Aug
Highest count of 6 at MGT/RF
Reported at Checkley, Coppenhall Moss, Danebower area, Doddington, Goostrey, Lea Forge, Meremoor Moss, Mow Cop, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, MGT/RF, Rookery Bridge & Tetton Lane), Rode Heath, Scholar Green and Wheelock Wastewater Treatment Works
No records of breeding

Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)

CAWOS Uncommon migrant. Scarce summer visitor to the eastern hills

Recorded Mar-Jun & Aug-Sep.
Highest count of 11 at Danebower
Reported at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Cat & Fiddle, Checkley, Church Lawton, Danebower area, Doddington, Gawsworth, Lea Forge, Meremoor Moss, Mow Cop, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, MGT/RF) and Winterley

No records of Greenland Wheatear (*Oo leucorhoa*) this year

Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*)

CAWOS Scarce resident in the eastern hills

Recorded in every month and favours the faster, clear rivers and streams.

Other than sites within the Eastern Hills, only historically usually recorded in 4 or 5 sites in Congleton area, other 2021 records are from Allgreave, Borrow Pit Meadows, Church Lawton, Lawton Lake and Macon Meadows

Breeding confirmed at Congleton, courtship observed at Lawton Lake

Old World Sparrows; Snowfinches (*Passeridae*)

Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

CAWOS Uncommon thinly spread resident

Recorded in every month.

Highest count of c20 at MGT/RF.

Also reported at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Brereton, Brownlow/Wallhill, Checkley, Fields Farm Sandbach, Gawsworth, Sandbach Flashes (Green Lane set aside & MGT/RF) and Scholar Green.

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Gawsworth & Scholar Green

We are grateful to our sponsor HJ Lea Oakes Ltd, who provides feed for some of the local feeding stations

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 45 at Queens Park/King George V Playing Fields during BBS

Breeding confirmed at four locations

Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 13 at Borrow Pit Meadows during SWaBBS

Breeding confirmed at Alsager, Barthomley, Holmes Chapel, Rode Pool, Meremoor Moss and Wybunbury Moss

Wagtails; Pipits (*Motacillidae*)

Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)

CAWOS Uncommon and thinly distributed summer visitor and migrant

Recorded between Apr & Sep

Highest count of 13 at Gawsworth

Reported at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Astbury, Betchton, Brereton, Brindley Green, Brownlow/Wallhill, Doddington, Fields Farm Sandbach, Gawsworth, Meremoor, Middlewich, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF & MGT/RF), Somerford and Wheelock Wastewater Treatment Works

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ and Brindley Green. Probable breeding at Meremoor and Somerford

No reports of any sub-species this year

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)

CAWOS Fairly common resident and migrant

Recorded in every month of the year

Highest count of c8 roosted at Arclid SQ

Reported at over 40 locations

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ, Betchton, Congleton Park/R Dane, Sandbach Flashes (FFF) and Swettenham

White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)

CAWOS Uncommon migrant

Recorded in Mar, Apr & Sep

Highest count of 16 at Doddington

Reported at Astbury Mere CP, Doddington and Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF)

Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident

Subspecies – common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 45 at Elworth

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ

Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)

CAWOS Common thinly distributed resident and migrant

Recorded in every month

Highest count of 155 at MGT/RF in Sep

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Other 10+ flocks reported at Arclid SQ, Bradwall, The Cloud, Doddington, Fields Farm Sandbach, Holmes Chapel, Knotbury, Mow Cop, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, FFF, OF & WLF), Scholar Green and Winterley

Breeding confirmed at Mow Cop. Probably breeding at The Cloud and Knotbury

Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)

CAWOS Very scarce local summer visitor and migrant

Recorded in Apr, May, Jun & Sep.

Highest count of 2 at The Cloud and Mow Cop

Also reported at Cut-thorn Hill, Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF) and Three Shires Head

Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*)

CAWOS Very scarce winter visitor

County Rarity - away from regular wintering sites

1 was reported (on BTO's BirdTrack) at Doddington on 7th Apr

Finches (Fringillidae)

Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)

CAWOS Very common widespread resident and winter visitor

Common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 300 at Alsager during SWaBBS in Jan

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as ‘significant’

Other 50+ flocks reported at Doddington & Sandbach Flashes (WF [Fields Farm set-aside])

Breeding confirmed at Holmes Chapel

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

CAWOS Uncommon winter visitor

Recorded in Jan-Apr & Oct-Dec

Highest count of 25 at Gawsworth

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Reported at Alsager, Astbury Mere CP, Borrow Pit Meadows, Bosley Reservoir, Checkley, The Cloud, Doddington, Fields Farm Sandbach, Gawsworth, Marton, Middlewich, Mow Cop, Rode Heath, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, FF, MGT/RF, Rookery Bridge & WLF) and Wybunbury Moss with occasional reports from birders gardens where one was noted singing in Oct

Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*)

County Rarity

CAWOS Rare visitor, once resident

1 was reported (on BTO's BirdTrack) at Swettenham on 10th Jun, the other report was of 1 at Groby Flash on 30th Nov & 1st Dec

Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)

CAWOS Common widespread resident

Fairly common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 8 at Joey the Swan

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

No records of confirmed breeding but described by Colin Lythgoe, my predecessor, in early editions of the local bird reports as "widespread records ... all of which are probably breeding sites for this sedentary species."

Greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*)

CAWOS Common widespread resident

Fairly common locally, recorded in every month but affected by *Trichomonosis*

Highest count of 35 at Sandbach

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Breeding confirmed / juvs reported at gardens in Shavington and Weston

Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*)

CAWOS Common widespread resident and migrant

Recorded in every month

Highest count of c220 at Sandbach Flashes (WF - Fields Farm set-aside)

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Other flocks of 10+ reported at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Brownlow/Wallhill, Eaton Hall SQ, Lea Forge, Meremoor Moss, Sandbach Flashes (Green Lane set aside & MGT/RF) and Scholar Green

Lesser Redpoll (*Acanthis cabaret*)

CAWOS Scarce resident and fairly common winter visitor, thinly distributed

Recorded in all months except Jun, Jul & Sep

Highest count of 20 at Brereton Heath LNR and Brownlow/Wallhill

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Reported at Alsager, Arclid SQ, Astbury Mere CP, Checkley, The Cloud, Doddington*, Elworth, Joey the Swan, Lea Forge*, Middlewich, Moston, Queens Park, Salt Line/Borrow Pit Meadows, Sandbach, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, FFF, FF, MGT/RF*, Rookery Bridge), Scholar Green, Shavington, Swettenham*, Taxmere and Wybunbury Moss

Flocks of 10+: - * indicates locations above

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)

CAWOS Irruptive, rare irregular breeding species, otherwise scarce

Recorded in Jan, Mar, Apr, Oct, Nov. All records are believed to be of birds heard and/or in flight.
All single, unless otherwise noted: Reported at Astbury Mere CP, The Cloud (30) and Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)

CAWOS Abundant widespread resident

common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of c75 at Arclid SQ

Flocks of 50+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Breeding confirmed at Swettenham

Siskin (*Spinus spinus*)

CAWOS Common winter visitor and migrant. Very scarce breeder

recorded in every month except Aug

Highest count of c40 at Meremoor Moss during SWaBBS

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Other 10+ flocks at Brereton Heath LNR, Congleton, Macon Meadows, Meremoor Moss, Salt Line & Borrow Pit Meadow, Sandbach Flashes (FF & WF [Tetton Lane]), The Quinta and Wybunbury Moss

Buntings (Emberizidae)

Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*)

CAWOS Rare resident

1 was reported at Fanny's Croft on 12th Jan and seen again at least once more that month. 3 were reported at a withheld location in Jul

Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citronella*)

CAWOS Fairly common widespread resident

recorded in every month

Highest count of c20 at Fanny's Croft

Flocks of 5+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Reported at Albion Lock, Alsager*, Astbury, Barthomley, Basford/Weston, Bradwall*, Brindley Green, Brownlow/Wallhill*, Brereton, Checkley, Church Lawton*, Fanny's Croft*, Fields Farm Sandbach, Holmes Chapel, Lea Forge, L Moreton Hall, Malkins Bank, Rode Heath, Salt Line/Borrow Pit Meadows, Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF, MGT/RF, Rookery Bridge), Scholar Green*, Smethwick, Somerford and Winterley

Flocks of 10+: - * indicates locations above

Breeding confirmed at Somerford with probably breeding at Alsager (Fanny's Croft)

Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)

CAWOS Common widespread resident

fairly common locally, recorded in every month

Highest count of 15 at MGT/RF

Flocks of 10+ considered by CAWOS as 'significant'

Flocks of 10+ at Meremoor Moss and Scholar Green

Breeding confirmed at Arclid SQ & Little Taxmere and Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF)

Early and late dates for summer visitors

The table below has been sorted in date order for the '10-year average' arrival dates for the SECOS Recording Area. I have used the 15 species listed in earlier local bird reports plus the 2 new species (in red) that that I added in last year's report that are also considered as locally breeding summer visitors.

| Species | First Report in 2021 | | 10-year average | Earliest Date |
|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | Date | Location | | |
| Sand Martin | 28-Feb | Eaton Hall SQ | 13-Mar | 1-Mar |
| Little Ringed Plover | 7-Mar | Arclid SQ | 21-Mar | 5-Mar |
| Swallow | 21-Mar | Brereton Heath LNR | 26-Mar | 10-Feb |
| Willow Warbler | 31-Mar | Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF) | 2-Apr | 21-Mar |
| House Martin | 29-Mar | Doddington | 5-Apr | 25-Mar |
| Yellow Wagtail | 10-Apr | Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF) | 6-Apr | 1-Apr |
| Reed Warbler | 14-Apr | Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF) | 11-Apr | 16-Mar |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 24-Apr | Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF) | 17-Apr | 14-Apr |
| Whitethroat | 9-Apr | Middlewich | 17-Apr | 11-Apr |
| Sedge Warbler | 24-Apr | Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF) | 18-Apr | 4-Apr |
| Hobby | 3-Apr | Holmes Chapel | 20-Apr | 3-Apr |
| Grasshopper Warbler | 24-Apr | Sandbach Flashes (MGT/RF) | 21-Apr | 14-Apr |
| Common Tern | 24-Apr | Sandbach Flashes (EHF/PHF) | 22-Apr | 1-Apr |
| Garden Warbler | 28-Apr | Doddington | 23-Apr | 14-Apr |
| Swift | 26-Apr | Crewe | 25-Apr | 17-Apr |
| Cuckoo | 1-May | Gawsworth | 28-Apr | 16-Apr |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 12-May | Gawsworth | 5-May | 17-Apr |

NB – I have been unable to find (for each year) probable first sightings for species Common Tern, Cuckoo, Grasshopper Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher, so to avoid skewing the average date, I have left some years blank.

SECOS Bird Report 2021

Local Rarities

If you find a rarity, I urge you to consider completing a Rarity Form. When I took on the role, I had some negative feedback about forms submitted in the past to the county and/or national rarity panels that rejected forms as not proven.

The forms now being used are standardised. They ask: -

- if the bird has been photographed and/or videoed – if possible send an image with the form
- your previous experience with the species

With plenty of room to add your account and description with a prompt to include: -

- circumstances of finding the bird
- plumage, bare parts etc and call
- the ‘jizz’

On the form I’ve drafted for SECOS rarities, I’ve included comments: -

- submissions are often declined if the observer(s) has not included sufficient information on the form
- if the species looks similar to others, it is important that you are aware of the differences and document that you have seen them (also where hybridisation is known, e.g. Hooded Crow or Caspian Gull)
- If you give the panel a reason to doubt the description, they often err on the side of caution

If, when preparing to fill in the Rarity Form, you consider all the points above and include all the relevant information, you will increase the probability of your form being accepted - i.e., leave no room for doubt.

Acknowledgements

Apart from records from local or visiting birders, some of the data I have been given access to includes WeBS, BBS, and I append their relevant acknowledgements and terms and conditions for use: -

Data were provided by WeBS, a Partnership jointly funded by the British Trust for Ornithology, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee, in association with The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, with fieldwork conducted by volunteers. Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated. Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org)

The BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey is a partnership jointly funded by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), with fieldwork conducted by volunteers.

Appendix

Scarce & rare birds reported between 1st Jan 2010 to 31st Dec 2021

The table below shows the months in which the 'rarer' species have been reported in the SECOS Recording Area during the period covered. Each mark represents at least one record, the thicker marks indicate more records. It should be noted that some of the species showing up in our recording area may well be influenced by specific weather conditions.

| Species | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Brent Goose (Dark-bellied) | . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Snow Goose | . | | .. | | | -- | . | | | . | | |
| Baikal Teal | | | | | | .. | | | | | | |
| Green-winged Teal | . | | .. | | | | | | | | | |
| Scaup | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Lesser Scaup | | | | . | | | | | | | | |
| Long-tailed Duck | . | | | | | | | | | | | . |
| Smew | .. | .. | .. | | | | | | | | | .. |
| Slavonian Grebe | . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avocet | | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Grey Plover | | | | . | | | . | .. | | | | |
| Whimbrel | | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Bar-tailed Godwit | | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Turnstone | | | .. | | | .. | | | | | | |
| Knot | | | | | | .. | . | .. | | .. | | .. |
| Stilt Sandpiper | | | | | | | . | | | | | |
| Curlew Sandpiper | | | | . | | . | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Temminck's Stint | | | | . | | | | | | | | |
| Sanderling | .. | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Purple Sandpiper | | | | | | | | | | . | | |
| Little Stint | | | | | | | .. | .. | . | | | |
| Jack Snipe | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Red-necked Phalarope | | | | . | | | | | | | | |
| Grey Phalarope | | | | | | | | | | | . | |
| Wood Sandpiper | | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Spotted Redshank | | | . | . | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Kittiwake | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Sabine's Gull | | | | | | . | | . | . | | | |
| Little Gull | . | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Ring-billed Gull | . | | | | | | | | | | | . |
| Gull-billed Tern | | | | | | . | | | | | | |
| Sandwich Tern | | | . | . | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Little Tern | | | .. | | | | | | | | | |
| Arctic Tern | | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Whiskered Tern | | | .. | | | | | | | | | |
| Black Tern | | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Arctic Skua | | | | . | | | | | | | | |
| Great Northern Diver | | | . | | | | | | | | .. | .. |
| Gannet | | | | | | . | .. | .. | . | | | |
| Shag | | | | | | | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Glossy Ibis | . | | | . | | .. | | | | | . | |

SECOS Bird Report 2021

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|-----------------------|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|----|----|
| Spoonbill | | | | . | | | | | | | - | | | .. |
| Bittern | . | . | . | . | | | | | | . | | . | . | . |
| Cattle Egret | | | | | | | | | | .. | . | | | |
| Honey-Buzzard | | | | . | | | | | | . | | | | |
| Rough-legged Buzzard | | | . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hoopoe | | | | . | . | | | | | . | | | | |
| Bee-eater | | | . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wryneck | | | . | . | . | | | | | | | | | |
| Red-backed Shrike | | | | | | | | | | . | | | | |
| Great Grey Shrike | . | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Golden Oriole | | | | . | . | | | | | | | | | |
| Bearded Tit | | | .. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Woodlark | | | | | | | | | | | | | .. | |
| Yellow-browed Warbler | . | | | | | | | | | . | | | | |
| Dusky Warbler | | | | | | | | | | | | | | . |
| Iberian Chiffchaff | | | | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| Firecrest | | | . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black Redstart | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Richard's Pipit | | | | | | | | | | . | . | | | |
| Water Pipit | | | . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rock Pipit | | | | | | | | | | . | | | | |
| Arctic Redpoll | . | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Snow Bunting | | | | | | | | | | . | | | | |