



The Birds Of South Gloucestershire
2009 annual review including
news, articles and unusual birding events

www.thebirdsofsouthgloucestershire.co.uk

Front cover:

Hawfinch (Gary Thoburn), Firecrest, Grasshopper Warbler, Short-eared Owl, Mediterranean Gull (Paul Bowerman), Yellow-legged Gull (Matt Plenty), Mandarin (Pete Hazelwood), Wryneck (Alan Davis), Leach's Petrel (Paul Bowyer).

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
S. Glos Diary 2009 (abridged)	5
SYSTEMATIC LIST	17
Divers & Seabirds	17
Cormorants & Herons	18
Swans, Geese & Ducks	20
Raptors	21
Game	23
Waders	24
Skua's	27
Gulls	29
Terns	30
Auks, Doves & Owls	31
Hoopoe & Woodpeckers	32
Larks & Pipits	33
Wagtails	34
Chats and Thrushes	35
Warblers	36
Tits, Shrikes, Finches and Buntings	39
ARTICLES	42
Black Kite – TBOSG	42
Black-headed Bunting – M Coller	42
Fregetta Storm Petrel – J Martin	43
Pacific Diver – M Hayes	45
Grey-headed Wagtail – J Martin	47
Glossy Ibis – Pam Buckle & Phil Baber	50
The S. Glos List	55

INTRODUCTION

Amazingly four years have slipped by almost unnoticed since The Birds Of South Gloucestershire (TBOSG) was launched as a website on November 25th 2005 and I recall that faithful evening with some trepidation as I uploaded the first pages to the internet. I am also completely staggered by its popularity with, at the time, over 70,000 visitors from around the world and the ever increasing number of locally and in some cases nationally active birders who are willing to participate.

My primary objective was to provide a point of reference with easy access to information about rare, scarce and unusual bird sightings, both full species and forms, seen in 'S. Glos' to anyone from the back garden birdwatcher with a mild interest in local birdwatching to the avid 'birder' an yes even the odd 'twitcher'.

It is by no means authoritative nor exhaustive but it doe's I feel capture the essence of modern 'birding' in this extremely important region of the UK.

The information listed here has been gathered from a number of sources (and from as far back as 1824), any omissions may be due to records not being submitted so I would urge everyone to send their sightings to the appropriate Area Recorder.

Finally, a huge thanks to the increasing number of birders who freely contribute news, ideas and photos to TBOSG your continued support is invaluable, most welcome and greatly appreciated.

Remarkably 2009 saw the highest number of species ever recorded (thus far) in S. Glos with a final tally of 216 (201 species and 15 forms).

Martyn Hayes – S. Gloucestershire 2009

S. Glos Diary 2009 (abridged)

JANUARY

		16th	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth.
		17th	Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, two Short-eared Owls from Aust Warth.
1st	Two Water Pipits at Severn Beach, Mediterranean Gull at New Passage, Avocet off Northwick Warth also Jack Snipe, two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth plus Long-eared Owl.	18th	Mealy Redpoll at Orchard Pools, Mediterranean Gull at Southworthy Farm, New Passage, Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth, Hawfinch over Ringswell Common, Marshfield.
2nd	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage, two Short-eared Owls and three Goosander past Aust Warth, Avocet near Thornbury Yacht Club.	19th	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth.
3rd	Avocet on Aust/ Northwick Warth and New Passage also two Short-eared Owls.	20th	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth.
4th	Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth, two Grey Partridge at Frampton Cotterell.	21st	Goshawk in Cloud Wood, Doncombe Valley, Marshfield.
7th	Hawfinch near Hawkesbury Upton.	22nd	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth.
9th	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth.	23rd	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth, Grey Partridge off Down Road, Marshfield.
10th	Water Pipit at Severn Beach, Firecrest around Orchard Pools, two Short-eared Owls at Aust.	24th	Short-eared Owl at Severn Beach.
11th	Firecrest at Orchard Pools.	25th	Two Firecrest at Orchard Pools, Jack Snipe from Aust Warth, five Hawfinch at Bodkin Hazel Wood, Petty France.
12th	Two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.	26th	Firecrest at Orchard Pools, three Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.
13th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage also two Short-eared Owls.	27th	Firecrest at Orchard Pools.
14th	Jack Snipe on Westerleigh Common, two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.	28th	Hawfinch near St Anne's Churchyard, California Road, Longwell Green.
15th	Hawfinch on Ringswell Common, Marshfield.	29th	Three Hawfinch St Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.
		30th	Nine Hawfinch St Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, Firecrest at Orchard Pools.

31st	Mediterranean Gull and Water Pipit at Severn Beach, four Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth at Grebe Pond, nine Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard.	12th	Three Short-eared Owls on Aust Warth, five Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, four Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate.
FEBRUARY		13th	Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate, Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth.
1st	Five Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green one wandering to Willsbridge Mill CP, Longbeach Road, Water Pipit at Severn Beach.	14th	Seven Jack Snipe around Grebe Pond, two Short-eared Owls on Aust Warth, two Hawfinch at Longwell Green, four Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate.
2nd	Three Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.	15th	Six Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, Black Redstart at Culverslade Industrial Estate, Marshfield.
3rd	Three Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.	16th	Seven Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, Black Redstart at Culverslade Industrial Estate, Marshfield.
4th	Three Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.	17th	Hawfinch at Streamside Walk, Thornbury, seven Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.
5th	Black Redstart at Severn Beach, Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, five Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, two Goosander on R. Avon, Hanham.	18th	Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate.
6th	Four Goosander past Oldbury Power Station.	19th	Hawfinch at Streamside Walk, Thornbury, two Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park.
7th	Two Jack Snipe; one on Northwick Warth one at Orchard Pools.	20th	Eleven Hawfinch in St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, two Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate.
9th	Seven Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.	21st	Two Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, Firecrest at Orchard Pools, Severn Beach.
10th	Three Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, three Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.	22nd	Two Mediterranean Gulls on Lagoon III, Oldbury Power Station, two Grey Partridge on Northfield Lane, Marshfield.
11th	Six Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, three Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.		

23rd	Six Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.	5th	Two Firecrest near Orchard Pools, two Jack Snipe in the New Passage area.
24th	Firecrest at Orchard Pools.	6th	Two Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate, Firecrest at Orchard Pools.
25th	Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate with six at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.	7th	Two Firecrest near Orchard Pools and two Jack Snipe. Grey Partridge on Northfield Lane, Marshfield, several Brambling in the Rushmead farm area, six Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.
26th	Three Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate.		
27th	Four Hawfinch St Anne's Churchyard, nine Jack Snipe near Grebe Pond, Jack Snipe at Severn Beach.	8th	Firecrest near Orchard Pools plus two Jack Snipe and Woodcock, two Hawfinch in Kingsgate Park, Yate, Mediterranean Gull at Severn Beach.
28th	Two Firecrest near Orchard Pools, seven Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.		
MARCH		9th	Two Firecrest and two Jack Snipe around Orchard Pools, Severn Beach.
1st	Merlin on Northwick Warth, Mediterranean Gull on Lagoon III at Oldbury Power Station, twenty Brambling at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield.	10th	Firecrest near Orchard Pools, Severn Beach.
		11th	Four Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate, five Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, two Firecrest and Jack Snipe at Orchard Pools, two Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.
2nd	Mediterranean Gull and Yellow Legged Gull at Severn Beach, Firecrest at Orchard Pools, three Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.		
		12th	Two Firecrest at Orchard Pools, two Jack Snipe on second pool.
3rd	Two White-fronted Geese over Aust Warth, two Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, several Brambling at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield.	13th	Three Hawfinch in St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, Brambling at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield, three Firecrest near Orchard Pools with four Jack Snipe, two Merlin at New Passage, three Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.
4th	Two Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, two Jack Snipe at Orchard Pools, Water Pipit at Severn Beach, Black Redstart on Aust Warth, five Brambling at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield, two Dipper from the Queens Head Pub CP, Willsbridge.	14th	Little Ringed Plover at Oldbury Power Station plus Merlin, Grey

	Partridge and c.25 Brambling, two Firecrest near Orchard Pools, Merlin on Northwick Warth, Water Pipit at Severn Beach, two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.	25th	Two Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green.
		27th	Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth, Barn Owl at Severn Beach, two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth, four Brambling at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield.
15th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage, Jack Snipe Orchard Pools, several Brambling and Red Kite at at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield.	28th	c.40 Brambling around Rushmead Farm, Marshfield, two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.
16th	Two Hawfinch at Kingsgate Park, Yate, two Firecrest near Orchard Pools, two Short-eared Owls over Aust Warth.	29th	Merlin near Rushmead Farm, White Wagtail on Northfield Lane, Marshfield.
17th	Firecrest near Orchard Pools.		
18th	Two Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, Merlin, Jack Snipe and White Wagtail on Northwick Warth, Water Pipit and Scandinavian Rock Pipit at Severn Beach.	30th	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth, several Brambling at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield.
		31st	Two Short-eared Owls and Ring Ouzel at Aust Warth, Brambling at Rushmead Farm, Marshfield.
19th	Merlin on Northwick Warth.		
		APRIL	
20th	Two Hawfinch in St Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, two Merlin in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth, Water Pipit at Severn Beach.	1st	Hawfinch at St. Anne's Churchyard, Longwell Green, Merlin at Aust Warth, several Brambling in the Rushmead Farm, Marshfield.
21st	Two Merlin on Northwick Warth, Brambling at Orchard Pools plus Merlin, four Greylag Geese at Oldbury Power Station.	3rd	Grey Partridge on Northfield Lane, Marshfield, ten Brambling at Rushmead Copse, Common Redstart and Yellow Wagtail on Severnside.
22nd	Merlin and Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.	4th	Two Grey Partridge on Northfield Lane, Marshfield. Merlin on Northwick Warth, three Short-eared Owls on Aust Warth.
23rd	Merlin at New Passage.		
24th	Two Mandarin on Heneage Court Pools, Falfield with four Greylag Geese.	5th	Merlin in the New Passage area, three Short-eared Owls on Aust Warth.

6th	Ring Ouzel around Lagoon III, Oldbury Power Station, two Short-eared Owls and Merlin on Aust Warth.	17th	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth, Sandwich Terns and Sedge Warblers on the coast.
7th	Common Redstart on Westerleigh Common, Little Ringed Plovers at Severn Beach and OPS.	18th	Goshawk Shirehill Valley, Marshfield, three Arctic Skua off Severn Beach also Little Gull and Merlin.
8th	Two Tree Sparrows at Oldbury Power Station around Lagoon II, three Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth, four Brambling at Rushmead Copse, Marshfield, Pale-bellied Brent Goose at Severn Beach.	19th	Hen Harrier over Lagoon I, Oldbury Power Station, Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth, Osprey over Almondsbury.
9th	Water Pipit at Severn Beach.	20th	Short-eared Owl at Aust Warth.
10th	Reed Warbler, Whitethroat & Lesser Whitethroat at Oldbury Power Station, Merlin and two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.	22nd	Hoopoe at Woodmead Lane, Doynton.
11th	Tree Pipit and two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.	23rd	Grasshopper Warbler at Severn Beach, Whinchat on Northwick Warth.
12th	Arctic Skua from Aust Warth also three Short-eared Owls plus SEO at Severn Beach.	24th	Ten Sanderling at Severn Beach.
13th	Short-eared Owl at Thornbury Yacht Club, Marsh Harrier over Northwick Warth also Grasshopper Warbler, Common Redpoll at Severn Beach, two Spoonbill at Shepperdine.	25th	Pale-bellied Brent Goose at Severn Beach, Short-eared Owl on Northwick Warth.
14th	Wood Warbler at New Passage.	26th	Wryneck at Thornbury, Hoopoe at Lower Morton.
15th	Marsh Harrier at Severn Beach, Pied Flycatcher on Siston Common, two Short-eared Owls at Aust Warth.	27th	Manx Shearwater at Severn Beach.
16th	Two Grasshopper Warblers at Severn Beach.	28th	Merlin at Severn Beach, two Grasshopper Warblers from Aust Warth.
		MAY	
		2nd	Red Kite over Cow Hill near Oldbury, Grasshopper Warbler on Severnside.
		4th	Fulmar off Severn Beach, Hobby at Severn Beach and Thornbury.

5th	Red Kite over Aust Warth, two Greenland Wheatear on Northfield Lane, Marshfield, Wryneck on Blake's Road, Thornbury.	20th	Two Grey Partridge on Northfield Lane, Marshfield.
6th	Red Kite over Orchard Pools, Severn Beach.	21st	Cetti's Warbler R. Boyd, Wick Quarry, Nightingale at Horwood Farm, Lower Woods, Inglestone Common.
7th	Grasshopper Warbler at Severn Beach.	23rd	Grey Partridge from Northfield Lane, Marshfield.
8th	Pomarine Skua from Severn Beach plus nine Arctic Skua, Great Skua, Common Scoter, two Nightingale on Inglestone Common.	24th	Hobby over Thornbury.
9th	Two unidentified Skua off Severn Beach, Spotted Flycatcher Broadmead Brook, Shire Valley.	25th	Two Cetti's Warblers R. Boyd, Wick Quarry, two Quail Middledown Road, Marshfield.
10th	Hobby over Chipping Sodbury Quarry.	26th	Black Kite St. Catherine's Valley, Marshfield, two Arctic Skua off Severn Beach.
12th	Red Kite over A432 at Yate, three Nightingale at Lower Woods, Inglestone Common.	28th	Goshawk St. Catherine's Valley, Marshfield.
		JUNE	
13th	Wood Sandpiper at Severn Beach, Red Kite over New Passage.		A male Black-headed Bunting was seen briefly in a Yate garden mid-month.
14th	Two Pomarine Skua, three Arctic Skua, c.60 Kittiwakes and three Common Scoter off Severn Beach.		Goshawks have bred for the second year running in S. Glos.
15th	Two Arctic Skua, c.90 Kittiwake, eleven Pomarine Skua off Severn Beach.	3rd	Red Kite over Station Road, Staple Hill.
16th	Two Sandwich Terns at Oldbury Power Station, six Arctic Skua and Sandwich Tern at Severn Beach.	4th	Two Quail on Middledown Lane, Marshfield, two Mediterranean Gulls at Severn Beach.
17th	Nine Mandarin at Heneage Court Pools, Falfield.	5th	Three Quail Tormarton Road, Marshfield near Rushmead Farm.
18th	Channel Wagtail on Northwick Warth.	9th	Three Quail east of Tormarton Road at Rushmead Farm.
		14th	Arctic Skua off Severn Beach.

17th	Arctic Skua and Little Tern at Severn Beach, three Quail Rushmead Lane.		Gulls, Red Kite over Church Road, Hanham.
19th	Sixteen Mandarin at Dodington Lakes.	21st	Four Mediterranean Gulls at Oldbury Power Station on Lagoon III.
21st	Quail from Down Road, Marshfield.	22nd	Mediterranean Gull in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area, Yellow-legged Gull at Oldbury Power Station on Lagoon III.
26th	Goshawks rearing three chicks.		
JULY			
3rd	Quail at Marshfield, Shirehill Lane.	23rd	Four Mediterranean Gulls in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area, others at Aust Warth and Severn Beach, Yellow-legged Gull at Oldbury Power Station, Lagoon III.
4th	Red Kite at Swineford.		
6th	Eider from Severn Beach.		
9th	Three Quail at Marshfield.	24th	Yellow-legged Gull and two Mediterranean Gulls at New Passage, Little Ringed Plover at Severn Beach, Mediterranean Gull at Oldbury Power Station.
10th	Grasshopper Warbler Doncombe Valley, Marshfield.		
12th	Two Mediterranean Gull, Yellow-legged Gull at New Passage.	25th	Common Crossbill at Lower Knole Farm, Almondsbury, Turtle Dove Harcombe Wood, Marshfield, two Mediterranean Gulls at Littleton-upon-Severn, two Mediterranean Gulls in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area, five Quail at Marshfield.
15th	Two Eider off Severn Beach, Little Ringed Plover at Aust Warth.		
16th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.		
17th	Quail at Rushmead Barns also Hobby.	26th	Two Wood Sandpipers on Northwick Warth also two Mediterranean Gulls.
18th	Yellow-legged Gull at Oldbury Power Station, Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.	27th	Three Mediterranean Gulls in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.
19th	Mediterranean Gull at Oldbury Power Station.	28th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.
		30th	Gannet off New Passage plus Mediterranean Gull.
20th	Four Mediterranean Gulls at New Passage, two Quail at Marshfield, at Oldbury Power Station two Yellow-legged Gulls, two Mediterranean		

AUGUST

			Hen Harrier from Oldbury Power Station around Lagoon II.
1st	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage, Little Egret on Lagoon I, Oldbury Power Station.	12th	Mediterranean Gull in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.
2nd	Wood Warbler Marshwall Lane, Almondsbury, Avocet past New Passage, Quail along Shirehill Lane, Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.	14th	Common Scoter at Oldbury Power Station, Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.
3rd	Hobby and Mediterranean Gull in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.	15th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.
5th	Quail on Down Road, Marshfield, at Oldbury Power Station Mediterranean Gull on Lagoon III plus Little Egret over Lagoon II, in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area Mediterranean Gull.	16th	Mediterranean Gull in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.
6th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.	17th	Little Egret at New Passage.
7th	Mediterranean Gull at Oldbury Power Station, Lagoon III.	18th	Five Arctic Skua from the New Passage/ Northwick Warth, Wood Sandpiper at Oldbury Power Station.
8th	Mediterranean Gull from Northwick Warth, Mandarin at Oldbury Power Station.	19th	Wood Sandpiper on Lagoon I at OPS, also Little Egret.
9th	Mandarin at OPS, Mediterranean Gull from Northwick Warth, Little Egret at New Passage, an unidentified large dark raptor in the Middledown Farm area, Marshfield, Quail in the same area, two Quail at Down Road and Shirehill.	20th	Wood Sandpiper on Lagoon I, OPS, also Little Egret, Wood Sandpiper over New Passage.
		21st	Quail from Down Road, Marshfield, Wood Sandpiper on Lagoon I, OPS.
		22nd	Six Grasshopper Warblers from Lower Knole Farm, Almondsbury, Wood Sandpiper on Lagoon I, OPS plus Greylag Goose, Marsh Warbler , Mediterranean Gull and Little Egret on Northwick Warth.
10th	Mediterranean Gull in the Northwick Warth/ New Passage area.	23rd	Wood Sandpiper at Oldbury Power Station, Mandarin at Shepperdine, Yellow-legged Gull and Mediterranean Gull at New Passage, two Avocet on Northwick Warth, Little Egret on Aust Warth.
11th	Mediterranean Gull and two Little Egret on Northwick Warth, Pied Flycatcher at The Glen, New Passage,		

24th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.	9th	Two Little Egrets in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.
27th	Two Arctic Skua at Oldbury Power Station also Little Egret.	10th	Three Little Egret at New Passage.
29th	Grasshopper Warbler on Northwick Warth plus Osprey.	11th	Curlew Sandpiper and White Wagtail at Severn Beach.
30th	Mediterranean Gull in the New Passage area.	12th	Osprey at New Passage plus five Tree Sparrows, two Little Egret in the Northwick Warth/ New Passage area.
31st	Little Egret at Shepperdine, Mediterranean Gull on Northwick Warth, Grey Phalarope off New Passage.	13th	Avocet at Severn Beach, Little Egrets on Northwick Warth Oldbury Power Station.
SEPTEMBER		14th	Little Egret on Northwick Warth.
	An unconfirmed report of a Harrier Spp. in the 'Rushmead' area at Marshfield in recent days.	15th	Two Curlew Sandpipers at Severn Beach.
1st	Three Ring Ouzel on Northwick Warth, eighteen Pale-bellied Brent Geese at Severn Beach also Little Egret.	16th	Short-eared Owl and Little Egret on Northwick Warth, Curlew Sandpiper at Severn Beach and Lagoon I, Oldbury Power Station plus Spotted Redshank and Little Ringed Plover.
2nd	Little Egret at Oldbury Power Station, three Curlew Sandpipers at Severn Beach, two Little Egret in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area, another at Aust Warth.	17th	Two Little Egrets at New Passage.
5th	Two Little Egrets at Oldbury Power Station.	18th	Two Little Egrets in the New Passage/Northwick Warth area, Mandarin at Oldbury Power Station.
6th	Two Little Egrets in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area plus one at Oldbury Power Station.	19th	Hen Harrier in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area also two Little Egrets and Mediterranean Gull, two Little Egret and Mandarin at OPS, Short-eared Owl on Rushmead Lane, Marshfield.
7th	Mediterranean Gull in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth plus two Little Egrets.	20th	Wryneck at West Littleton, Common Scoter in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.
8th	Two Little Tern at New Passage plus Little Egret.		

21st	Wryneck at West Littleton, Common Scoter in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.		Barnacle Goose in the Keynsham/ Swineford area.
		5th	Mediterranean Gull at Severn Beach, Short-eared Owl at Aust
22nd	Common Scoter in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.		
		6th	Short-eared Owl at Aust.
23rd	Curlew Sandpiper at New Passage.		
		9th	Two Little Egret at New Passage, Short-eared Owl on Northwick Warth.
24th	Common Scoter in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.		
		10th	Mandarin and two Little Egret at Oldbury Power Station, two Little Egret in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area. Clouded Yellows on Severnside and OPS.
25th	Common Scoter in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area.		
		11th	Barnacle Goose in the Keynsham/ Swineford area, Mediterranean Gull and three Little Egret at New Passage.
26th	Ruff and Curlew Sandpiper at Cake Pill, Aust Warth, Semipalmated Sandpiper and Mediterranean Gull at New Passage, Grey-headed Wagtail , Common Scoter and Short-eared Owl on Northwick Warth, Mandarin at Oldbury Power Station.		
		12th	Red Kite over Middledown Road, Marshfield, Mediterranean Gull and Little Egret at New Passage, Short-eared Owl over Northwick Warth.
27th	Little Egret at OPS, Mediterranean Gull at New Passage, Short-eared Owl on Aust Warth.		
		13th	Little Egret on Northwick Warth.
28th	Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.		
		14th	Glossy Ibis at Severn Beach and New Passage/ Northwick Warth/ Aust, also Little Egret.
30th	Little Egret at New Passage.		
OCTOBER			
1st	Mediterranean Gull and Mandarin on Lagoon III, Oldbury Power Station, Little Egret at New Passage.	15th	Ring Ouzel in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth plus three Little Egret.
2nd	Three Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.	16th	Two Little Egret at New Passage.
3rd	Great Skua off Severn Beach. Barnacle Goose in the Keynsham/ Swineford area.	17th	Little Egret and Mandarin at Oldbury Power Station Cetti's Warbler at Grebe Pond, Northwick Warth also two Little Egret.
4th	Short-eared Owl over Aust Warth, Little Egrets at New Passage and OPS,		

18th	Little Egret in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth.	5th	Mediterranean Gull on Withymead Playing Fields, Marshfield.
19th	Little Egret in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth.	10th	Two Whooper Swans over Aust Warth.
20th	Black Redstart at Alveston	13th	Hen Harrier at Rushmead Lane, Marshfield.
21st	Two Little Egret in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth.	14th	Three Bewick's Swan past Severn Beach, Richard's Pipit over New Passage, three Little Auks at Severn Beach also c.200 Kittiwakes, Little Gull and Common Scoter.
22nd	Little Egret at New Passage.		
23rd	Two Little Egret at New Passage.		
24th	Little Egrets from Northwick Warth and Oldbury Power Station.	15th	Black Redstart at Mangotsfield, Mediterranean Gull near Cowhill, Oldbury-on-Severn, Cetti's Warbler on Northwick Warth, Hen Harrier at Rushmead Lane, Marshfield.
25th	Kittiwake off Severn Beach.		
26th	Black Redstart at Oldbury Power Station, Little Egret on Northwick Warth.	18th	Leach's Petrel and Storm Petrel at Severn Beach, two Shorelark over Aust Warth.
27th	50+ Corn Bunting on Rushmead Lane, Marshfield, Little Egret and Mediterranean Gull at New Passage.	19th	Two Jack Snipe on Aust Warth.
28th	Jack Snipe on Aust Warth, Brambling over New Passage, Common Crossbill over Pilning.	20th	Marsh Harrier New Passage/ Severn Beach also Black Redstart and Merlin at New Passage.
29th	Little Egret at New Passage with two at Oldbury also Black Redstart.	22nd	Pomarine Skua, Great Skua and 35 Kittiwakes past Northwick Warth, Jack Snipe at Oldbury Power Station.
31st	Spotted Redshank at New Passage with Little Egret.	23rd	Four Leach's Petrel, four Great Skua, two Gannets, Fulmar, Shag, c.80 Kittiwake and Little Gull at Severn Beach. Great Grey Shrike at Lower Woods, Inglestone Common.
NOVEMBER			
2nd	Hen Harrier over Harcombe Wood, Marshfield, Little Egret at New Passage.	24th	Six Leach's Petrel, three Great Skua, Shag, two Gannet, c.200 Kittiwake, Fulmar and Little Auk from Severn Beach, Pomarine Skua in the OPS area.

- 25th **Fregetta Storm Petrel** off Severn Beach, also up to fourteen Leach's Petrel, Little Auk, Grey Phalarope, Pomarine Skua and Great Skua.
- 24th Seventeen (17) Bewick's Swans past Shepperdine, two Merlin on Aust Warth, two Woodcock at Grebe Pond.
- 26th Two Little Auk, Pomarine Skua, four Leach's Petrel and two Swallows at Severn Beach.
- 26th Little Egret at New Passage.
- 27th **Pacific Diver** at Severn Beach also Pomarine Skua.
- 27th Little Egret at New Passage, Goosander over Kingswood, Bristol, Black Redstart at Oldbury Power Station.
- 28th Cetti's Warbler from Northwick Warth.
- 29th Jack Snipe at Grebe Pond, Northwick Warth, Pomarine Skua over Slimeroad Sands, Willow Tit at Wetmoor, Lower Woods, Wickwar.
- TBOSG 2009

DECEMBER

- 2nd Snow Bunting over Cake Pill, Aust Warth.
- 4th Merlin on Northwick Warth plus Little Egret and Jack Snipe.
- 5th Short-eared Owl near Lagoon III, OPS, Merlin on Northwick Warth.
- 6th Mediterranean Gull at Oldbury Power Station, four Little Egret at Thornbury, Grey Phalarope at Severn Beach, Black Redstart at Shepperdine.
- 10th Jack Snipe on Northfield Lane, Marshfield.
- 12th Merlin, Little Egret and Jack Snipe on Northwick Warth.
- 13th Little Egret at Park Farm, Thornbury, with two at New Passage.
- 18th Two Bewick's Swan over Aust Warth

SYSTEMATIC LIST

There were five new additions to the S. Glos list in 2009 in chronological order they were;

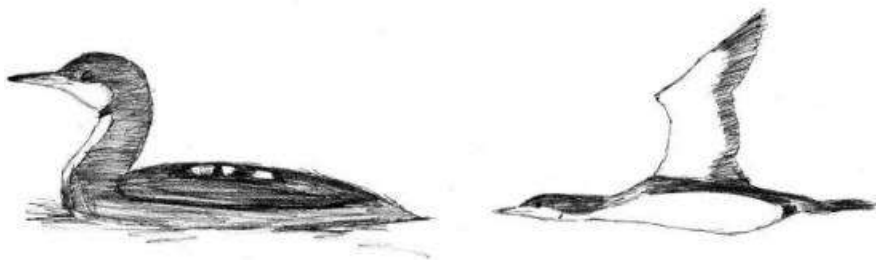
Black Kite	May in St. Catherine's Valley, Marshfield
Black-headed Bunting	June at Yate
Grey-headed Wagtail	September on Northwick Warth
Glossy Ibis	October at Severn Beach
Fregetta Storm Petrel	November at Severn Beach
Pacific Diver	November at Severn Beach

SPECIES ACCOUNTS (Previous occurrences) Total this year

DIVERS

Pacific Diver *Gavia pacifica* (0) 1

On the 27th November a winter adult was seen by five observers between 10:45 and 11:00 off Severn Beach in 'Burger Bar Bay'. This occurrence constitutes the first report of this species in S. Glos and the 4th British record. It was officially accepted on April 26th 2010 by the BBRC. See the article below.



Pacific Diver off Severn Beach. November 2009. Martyn Hayes.

SEABIRDS

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* (c.130) 1

One was seen off Severn Beach on November 18th at around 10:00.

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* (c.500) c.30

One was seen off Severn Beach on November 18th at around 09:00 heading out onto the estuary; At least four were present off Severn Beach on November 23rd with at least six on the 24th, up to fourteen on the 25th and a further four on the 26th.



Leach's Petrel off Severn Beach. November 2009. Paul Bowerman & Paul Bowyer.

White/ Black-bellied Storm Petrel *Fregetta grallaria/ tropica* (0) 1

On November 25th one was seen off the sea wall at Severn Beach. It was present for around ninety minutes before being lost to view in mid channel at around 09:40. This occurrence constitutes the first report of this species for S. Glos, Britain and Europe. A full account of this occurrence is set out in the articles below.

CORMORANTS

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* (30) 1

One, a juvenile, was noted off Severn Beach in the afternoon on November 23rd and was still present on November 24th.

HERONS

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* (Scarce) c.220

Little Egret bird days in S. Gloss for 2009 reached 220 with 38 recorded at Oldbury Power Station and 182 seen on Severnside; which includes Severn Beach, New Passage and Northwick & Aust Warth.

Little Egret 'bird days' in 2009

Location	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
OPS	5	1	1	1	2	1		7	9	6		5	38
Sevenside	11	11	17	8	14	17	17	9	34	37	1	6	182
Totals	16	12	18	9	16	18	17	16	43	43	1	11	220

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (0) 1

On October 14th a juvenile/ 1st winter was seen in flight over Severn Beach at around 15:30 and was subsequently tracked and photographed as it flew north-east over New Passage, Northwick Warth and Aust Warth before being lost to view. This occurrence constitutes the first report of this species for S. Gloucestershire.



Glossy Ibis over Northwick Warth. October 2009. Paul Bowerman.



Spoonbills at Shepperdine. April 2009. Pete Hazelwood.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (8) 2

Two juveniles were seen briefly in the evening at 19:15 on the shore at Shepperdine on April 12th.

SWANS & GEESE

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* (14) 2

Two were noted over Aust Warth on the afternoon of the 10th November.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* (33) 2

One was at Heneage Court Pools, Falfield on August 16th. The second was seen noted with c.70 Canada Geese between Keynsham and Swineford opposite Avon Valley CP on October 3rd.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota* (21) 19

On April 8th one was seen from the shore at Severn Beach. It was tracked down the coast at subsequently seen at Chitting Warth. The same or another was seen from the shore at Severn Beach on April 25th. On September 1st eighteen (18) were noted on the shore at Severn Beach.



The largest ever flock of Pale-bellied Brent Geese in S. Glos and the earliest by around three months at Severn Beach. Paul Bowerman.

DUCKS

Mandarin *Aix galericulata* (c.245) c.35

Two, a male and female were present on Heneage Court Pools near Falfield on March 24th. At least nine males were present at Heneage Court Pools near Falfield on May 17th. A pair were noted at Lower Wood, Wickwar on May 25th. At least twelve adults with eight ducklings in three broods were noted at Dodington Lakes on June 19th. At Oldbury Power Station on August 8th - 9th a juvenile, or eclipse male was on the lake before it flew to the shore where it was seen in the company of Mallard until 11:00 when it flew upriver. One was seen at Shepperdine on August 23rd. A male was noted on Lagoon III at Oldbury Power Station on September 26th, October 1st, 10th and 17th.



Mandarin at OPS. August & October 2009. Pete Hazelwood.

Goosander *Mergus merganser* (60) 10

Three, two males and a redhead were seen in flight past Aust Warth on January 2nd. A pair were logged on the River Avon 300 metres up river from the Chequers Pub in Hanham. Four redheads were seen in flight up river at Oldbury Power Station at 15:30 on February 6th. A female flew high to the west over Kingswood in Bristol at mid-day on December 27th.

RAPTORS

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* (c.65) c.12

In March individuals were reported from West Littleton, Doynton and Cadbury Heath but no dates or further details are available.

An adult was seen drifting north over Rushmead Farm in the afternoon at Marshfield and one was seen at Cadbury Heath on March 15th; One on March 17th at Doynton; One from Swineford on March 20th; One was seen near Oldbury village at 12: 50 on May 3rd where it circled and flew high north; One was seen just after midday drifting north over the sheep fields at Aust Warth on May 5th; One was seen drifting south over Orchard Pools at Severn Beach late morning on May 6th; One was seen drifting north over the A432 at Yate around 17:55 on May 12th; One was reported over New Passage at 17:20 on May 13th; One was seen on June 3rd at around 13:05 over Station Road, Staple Hill before heading towards Mangotsfield; One was reported from Swineford on July 4th; One was noted just inside the S. Gloss boundary at Church Road, Hanham on July 20th; One was noted drifting north-west over Middledown Road at Marshfield on October 12th.

Red Kite bird days 2009

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
		4		5	1	2			1			13

Black Kite *Milvus migrans* (0) 1

A presumed adult was watched on the 26th May drifting out of St. Catherine's Valley south and west of Marshfield. This occurrence constitutes the first record of this species for S. Gloucestershire. Read an account of this find in the articles below.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (23) 3

A female flew low south over Northwick Warth on April 13th. Another female was at Severn Beach at 10:00 then flew north-east towards New Passage on April 15th. One was noted in fields between New Passage and Severn Beach at 15:30 on November 20th.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* (24) 4

An adult female was seen over Lagoon I at Oldbury Power Station around 16:20 on April 19th and continued north-east. A juvenile/ female was reported over Lagoon II at Oldbury Power Station at around 15:45 on August 11th. A ringtail was noted in off the estuary then south-east over Northwick Warth on September 19th. A juvenile/ female was seen over Harcombe Wood from the long track near Ebbdown Farm at Marshfield on November 2nd.

Harrier Spp. *Circus spp* (6) 1

An unidentified large dark raptor probably a harrier was noted in the area of Middledown Farm near Marshfield on August 9th.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* (c.20) c.8

One was disturbed in Cloud Wood at the east end of Doncombe Valley south of Marshfield on January 21st and called several times as it flew off, A male was seen well in trees and then in flight for five minutes at Shirehill, Marshfield on April 18th. It was noted near Lower Shirehill Farm and Hazel Grove then flew west towards Rownham Farm. A male was seen with Buzzard in St. Catherine's Valley on the 28th May east of Ayford Lane near Motcombe Farm.

Successful breeding was recorded (at the same site as in 2008) again this year when a pair successfully reared three young.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (21) 3

One was seen on migration over Almondsbury at Lower Knole Farm on April 19th, One was seen briefly at 10:25 over Northwick Warth and subsequently Pilning late morning on August 29th. One was seen at New Passage at 07:30 heading south on September 12th.



Osprey over Northwick Warth. August 2009. Paul Bowerman.

GAME

Quail *Coturnix coturnix* (Scarce) c.8

The Cotswold escarpment in the east of S. Gloucestershire adjacent to the Wiltshire boundary in the Marshfield area is the stronghold of this species in our region. They breed here in fluctuating numbers though this year was a worse than average year. There were no reports from any other sites away from this area.

The first birds arrived on May 25th when at least two were heard calling on an Atlas survey near Middledown Road and farm at ST: 749 742 north and west of Marshfield.

The highest count was five on July 25th with one from Middledown Lane, two in an area with no general access and two north of Down Track from Down Road.

The last date was on August 21st when one was noted in a clover field on Down Road.

Quail bird days 2009

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
				2	12	16	6					36

WADERS

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* (c.85) 5

One was seen in flight down river past Northwick Warth on January 1st and roosting with waders at Aust Warth on January 3rd. One was reported near Thornbury Yacht Club at Oldbury-on-Severn on January 2nd. One was seen in flight up river past New Passage on August 2nd. Two were reported on Northwick Warth on August 23rd. One was seen at Severn Beach on September 13th.



Avocet at Severn Beach. September 2009. Paul Bowerman.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* (1) 1

On the 26th September a juvenile/ 1st winter was identified on the foreshore at New Passage. It spent a glorious afternoon there and was showing very well to the small but appreciative crowd. This is the second time this diminutive 'peep' has occurred in S. Gloucestershire, the first was record was in August 1990 at Oldbury Power Station. The record also represents the latest date for this species in S. Glos!



Semipalmated Sandpiper at New Passage. September 2009. Gary Thoburn and Paul Bowerman.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* (c.220) c.25

Aust Warth/ Northwick Warth/ Grebe Pond:

In the first winter period birds were reported from all three locations from January 1st until at least March 27th. The most reliable spot was Northwick Warth and around Grebe Pond where a maximum of nine were counted on February 27th. In the second winter period three reappeared in early October. Two

Orchard Pools:

Just first winter period and spring birds were noted on the pools with birds present from February 7th until March 15th. Four was the highest count here in March.



The short pointed tail, markedly shorter bill and strongly patterned mantle clinch this bird as Jack Snipe. Notice also the pale panel in the greater coverts. Northwick Warth. February 2009. Paul Bowerman.

Sightings away from Severnside included one near a small pond on Westerleigh Common at Yate on January 14th. One was noted on Severn Beach shore on February 27th. Two were noted in the New Passage area on March 5th. At Oldbury Power Station one was flushed from the salt marsh on November 22nd. One was

flushed twice and seen in flight on December 10th from Northfield Lane, Marshfield.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* (c.85) 2

Two autumn passage birds were logged, one on Lagoon 1 at Oldbury Power Station on September 16th. One was present on October 31st at New Passage.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* (18) 5

The best ever year for this elegant wader in S. Glos and a record equalling highest count of two birds in July!

A spring adult was seen at Severn Beach on May 13th with Dunlin and was last seen heading north towards the Second Severn Crossing where it was lost to view. Two were seen on Northwick Warth before flying south over New Passage on July 26th. A juvenile was noted on Lagoon 1 at Oldbury Power Station from mid- morning on August 18th - 23rd. One was seen flying south at New Passage at 11:30 on August 20th.



Juvenile Wood Sandpiper at Oldbury Power Station. August 2009. Matt Plenty.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* (21) 3

One was found off New Passage on the morning's low tide on August 31st where it lingered throughout the day and was still present in the evening. One was noted off Severn Beach at 12:45 on November 25th. One was seen on Shaft Beach at Severn Beach at 10:40 before flying south on December 6th.



Grey Phalarope off New Passage. August 2009. John Martin.

SKUAS**Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus* (143) 16**

A dark morph with a full set of 'spoons' was seen off Severn Beach at 06:50 on May 8th. Two (both pale morph) were seen off Severn Beach in the evening on May 14th. Eleven were seen off Severn Beach at 19:40 on May 15th, consisting of ten pale morph and one dark morph. A pale morph was seen off Northwick Warth at 13:10 on November 22nd. A pale morph sub adult was noted off Severn Beach at 13:30 on November 25th - 27th and nearby over Slimeroad Sands mid estuary on the 29th. One was noted on November 24th in the Oldbury Power Station area.



This pale morph Pomarine Skua delighted birders at Severn Beach. November 2009. Paul Bowerman.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* (c640) 32

A dark phase was 'picked up' coming from the Welsh sector and noted continuing north-east inland on April 12th. Three dark morphs were seen together off Severn Beach on April 18th. Ten were noted off Severn Beach (seven dark phase and three pale phase) on May 8th. One was seen off Severn Beach in the evening on May 14th. On May 15th two were noted off Severn Beach in the morning and a dark morph was logged there in the evening. Six were seen off Severn Beach on May 16th, one upriver at 09:30 with five lingering over high tide. Two were noted off Severn Beach on May 26th. A dark morph was noted off Severn Beach on June 17th. Three, an adult and two juveniles were seen in the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area on August 18th. Two dark morph birds were noted at Oldbury Power Station in flight down river at 11:35 on August 27th.

Skua Spp. *Stercorarius spp* (c.20) 2

Two (one light and one dark morph) were noted at long range off Severn Beach on May 9th.

GULLS

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus* (c.330) c.25

Since the first record of this species in March 1979 there has been a steady increase in sightings. 2009 could have been considered to have been an average to good year with the stronghold clearly being Severnside from Severn Beach to Aust Warth. Though the lion's share comes from this area, Oldbury Power Station does attract regular visitors. Birds were seen in the recording area from January to December with the exception of April and May when there were no sightings reported.

The highest count of bird days by far was in July with 34, twenty-five of which came from the aforementioned Severnside area. The highest count for this species was also in July when four birds were seen at New Passage and Oldbury Power Station on consecutive days.

There were just a couple or three sightings away from those mentioned above; An adult and juvenile were noted at Littleton-on-Severn, an adult was present on Withymead Playing Fields at Marshfield and an adult was seen in fields at Cowhill near Oldbury-on-Severn.



Mediterranean Gull at New Passage. August 2009. Paul Bowerman.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* (c195) 7

In a reversal of roles Oldbury Power Station came out on top with four of this year's seven sightings.

An adult was present at Severn Beach on March 2nd. A 2nd summer was present at Oldbury Power Station on July 12th. An adult was present at the roost on Lagoon III at Oldbury Power Station on July 18th. A juvenile was seen at Oldbury Power Station on July 20th. An adult was present at Oldbury Power Station on Lagoon III on July 22nd & 23rd. An adult was present at New Passage on July 24th. A juvenile/ 1st winter was reported at New Passage on August 23rd.



Yellow-legged Gull at Oldbury Power Station. July 2009. Matt Plenty.

TERNs

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* (c.210) 3

Just three birds were seen this year; One was reported off Severn Beach in the evening on June 17th. Two were seen off New Passage in the morning on September 8th.

AUKS

Little Auk *Alle alle* (c.20) 7

The best year for this species by far in modern times. All reports come from November when three were noted at Severn Beach in the afternoon of the 14th, one of which flew south-east over Beach Avenue at 13:55 closely followed by two more flying north-east at 14:40 towards and possibly beyond the Second Severn Crossing. One was seen from Severn Beach flying out on to the estuary at 14:20 on the 24th. One was seen off Severn Beach on the 25th. Two were seen off Severn Beach on the 26th.

DOVES

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* (Very scarce) 1

Just one bird was seen this year with an individual seen in flight at Marshfield on July 25th heading towards Harcombe Wood near Ebbdown Farm. The best year in recent times was 1989 with eleven birds recorded, since then no more than three or four have been logged annually dropping to one or two from 1994 onwards.

OWLS

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* (c.40) 1

One was seen briefly at dusk at Aust Warth on a line of fence posts before heading inland on January 1st. The best year for this species recently was 1997 when around nine birds were noted regularly roosting in trees from the Bridle Way at Oldbury Power Station.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* (Scarce) c.11

The most reliable place to catch up with this superb crepuscular hunter was by far Aust Warth where they put on some pretty spectacular shows! This year birds were present from January 1st until April 20th. Missing for the summer months they were next seen in mid-September but none were seen after mid-October at this site.

Several other sightings were noted away from Aust with individuals seen over the shore at Severn Beach, Thornbury Yacht Club at Oldbury-on-Severn, Thornbury Pill in April, at dusk over the model airfield on Rushmead Lane, Marshfield and along the shore at Oldbury Power Station near Lagoon III.



Short-eared Owl. Aust Warth. March 2009. Paul Bowerman.

HOOPOE

Hoopoe *Upupa epops* (18) 2

An individual was seen on a telegraph pole at Woodmead Lane, Doynton at 18:30 on April 22nd around ST: 725 744. One was reported at Lower Morton near Thornbury on April 26th seen on a fence post.

WOODPECKERS

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* (16) 1

Often these birds will pitch up in small gardens, this year was no exception! It was both seen and photographed in the finder's garden eating ants at Thornbury around 17:00 on April 26th.



Wryneck at Thornbury. April 2009. Alan Davis.

LARKS

Shorelark *Eremophila alpestris* (6) 2

Two were seen in flight at Aust Warth over the saltings at 13:30 on November 18th. Not quite the earliest winter date for this species which comes from November 1977 when one was seen at Severn Beach on the 5th.

PIPITS

Richards Pipit *Anthus richardii* (5) 1

The sixth S. Glos record for Richard's Pipit was on November 14th one was seen and heard as it flew south-west over New Passage in the morning at 11:00. This species was first recorded in S. Glos in 1993, that was also in November, just up the coast at Aust.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus lottoralis* (8) 1

At least one of these clinal forms from Europe and north-west Russia was present on the Salt Marsh at Severn Beach on March 18th. In spring Scandinavian Rock Pipit attains a pink flush on the breast provoking confusion with Water Pipit. The first record for this form in S. Glos was way back in 1870!



Scandinavian Rock Pipit at Severn Beach. March 2009. Paul Bowerman.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* (c.50) 3

Two were seen on the salt marsh below Severn Beach on January 1st where they were present on and off until February 1st. Noted again from Severn Beach shore on March 3rd, one was still present on the shore at Severn Beach until April 9th.

Interesting and useful field observations from Paul Bowerman.

...'Water Pipits are difficult to see in the salt marsh because they don't tolerate a close approach, usually flush readily and then fly high, up and down the shoreline for several minutes before landing a 100 metres from where they took off, Rock Pipits are quite approachable in comparison and usually only fly a short distance before landing again'...

WAGTAILS

Channel Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava/ flavissima* (0) 1

An interesting 'yellow' or 'flava' type wagtail was present on Northwick Warth with two Yellow Wagtails on May 18th. The two photographs below show what is clearly one of the continental variations possibly Blue-headed Wagtail but probably Channel Wagtail which is considered a hybrid. This is the first record of this hybrid form in S. Gloucestershire.



'Channel' Wagtail on Northwick Warth. May 2009. Paul Bowerman.

Grey-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava thunburgi* (0) 1

On September 26th an adult probably female was noted mixing with Meadow Pipit and feeding amongst cattle on the salt marsh on Northwick Warth north of New Passage. This occurrence constitutes the first report of this form for S. Gloucestershire. A full account of this occurrence can be found in the articles below.

CHATS & THRUSHES

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* (Very scarce) c.3

Three singing males were reported this year from the Inglestone Common area and all in May.

The first was a male in song at Horwood Farm in Lower Woods at Inglestone Common on May 5th, 21st and June 14th. Two males were heard singing on Inglestone Common on May 8th. Two or three males were heard singing at 20:45 at Lower Woods, Inglestone Common on May 12th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochrurus* (c.85) 9

Starting on Severnside; One was seen briefly at Severn Beach on Shaft Beach, 100 metres below the Second Severn Crossing on February 5th. A female type was noted at Aust Warth at 14:00 on March 4th. One was seen in gardens on Riverside Park, Severn Beach at 15:30 on November 20th.

In the Oldbury area; A male was seen at Oldbury Power Station on October 26th between Lagoon II and the cooling towers and was still present on October 29th. One was noted on a manure heap to the north-east of Shepperdine in sometime November. A female/ 1st winter was noted on the perimeter fence at Oldbury Power Station on December 27th.



Black Redstart at Alveston October 2009. R Walker.

Elsewhere a female/ 1st winter was seen well for 45 minutes at Culverslade Industrial Estate near Marshfield on February 15th - 16th. One was noted in an Alveston garden on October 20th. A female/ 1st winter was noted in a Mangotsfield garden on November 15th.

Greenland Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa* (Very Scarce) 2

Two birds showing characteristics of this form were seen in stock fields east of Northfield Lane at Marshfield on May 5th.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* (35) 6

Only bettered by nine birds in 2007, this year was a very good year for this species. First seen in the 'sheep fields' adjacent to Aust Warth at 18:00 on March 31st. The only other spring bird was a male seen in trees on the south side of Lagoon III at Oldbury Power Station on April 6th. The four autumn records come from Northwick Warth in September and the New Passage/ Northwick Warth area in October.

WARBLERS

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cettia* (19) 4

Seldom seen most birds surprise us with an explosive snatch of song. So unsurprisingly the photograph below was of a handled bird! First of the year's crop was heard in scrub near the R. Boyd at Wick Quarry from Raven's Rock raptor watch point in the evening on May 21st. It constitutes the first record of this species at this site. Four days later two were heard at the same spot. One was trapped and ringed at Grebe Pond on Northwick Warth on October 17th. A male was heard on Northwick Warth on November 15th and again on November 28th.



Cetti's Warbler at Grebe Pond. October 2009. Paul Bowerman.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia* (Scarce) c.17

Of the nearly twenty reports this year the most exciting comes from August when six birds including at least four juveniles were reported from Lower Knole Farm, Almondsbury on the 22nd. The latest date though was of one trapped, ringed and released on Northwick Warth on August 29th.



Grasshopper Warbler on Aust Warth. May 2009. Paul Bowerman.



Marsh Warbler on Northwick Warth. August 2009. Ed Drewitt.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* (4) 1

Early morning on August 22nd an unidentified '*acrocephalus*' warbler was trapped and ringed at Grebe Pond on Northwick Warth. It was later determined to be a Marsh Warbler from photographs and biometric details taken at the time.

For the ringers out there 'Age 3. White/ pale edges to primaries; wing 67mm; P2 to wingtip 3.5mm; P2 notch 10mm; Emargination P3 only; Primary projection 18mm; Bill (F) 11mm'.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* (Very scarce) 3

A singing male was reported early morning from New Passage on April 14th. One was reported from Severn Beach on May 14th. At Almondsbury one was noted along Marshwall Lane in a mixed flock of small passerines on August 2nd.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus* (31) 3

One was seen on Ableton Lane near Orchard Pools, Severn Beach in early January with two present by the end of the month. They were seen on and off until mid-March when a record three were logged on March 13th.



Firecrest at Orchard Pools near Severn Beach. March 2009. Paul Bowerman.

TITS

Willow Tit *Parus montanus* (30) 1

Just one individual was noted this year when it was both seen and heard at Wetmoor on Lower Moors LNR, Wickwar at 15:30 around ST: 745 875 on December 29th.

SHRIKES

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor* (4) 1

After an absence of twenty-six years the fourth record for S. Glos was found at Lower Woods on Inglestone Common near Wickwar on November 23rd. It also represents the earliest date for this species in the recording area.

FINCHES & BUNTINGS

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* (Very scarce) 7

Two were seen at Oldbury Power Station around Lagoon II on April 8th and a further five were seen heading north-east at New Passage on September 12th. Tree Sparrow has declined in S. Glos over the last twenty-five years to almost extinction levels. The British population of this species has fallen by 96% in the same period and the impact locally is sadly reflected in declining numbers. Early status of Tree Sparrow shows that it was formerly resident and as a nesting bird appeared to be common locally.

Common (Mealy) Redpoll *Carduelis flammea* (4) 1

At least one was present at Orchard Pools, Severn Beach on January 18th feeding on Great Willowherb. Several probably this species were seen at Severn Beach on April 13th. Mealy Redpoll is quite a descriptive name, the word 'poll' comes from the middle English term 'pol' meaning head, in this case red, and 'mealy' refers to the overall colouration. The first record for S. Glos comes from as recently as 2004 when one was seen at Thornbury Golf Course in February.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* (c.55) 2

Remarkably just two birds were recorded this year the first early in the morning on July 25th over Lower Knole Farm, Almondsbury, and the second in October on the 28th when one was heard over Pilning. Their distinctive flight call is described as a ringing 'jip-jip-jip'.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* (c.70) c.20



Hawfinch at Longwell Green. January 2009, Gary Thoburn.

The two main sites for Hawfinch in 2009 were Longwell Green and Kingsgate Park, Yate. Starting with St. Anne's Churchyard, California Farm, Longwell Green:

The first bird was found on January 28th. They continued to show on and off until at least April 1st. A maximum count of nine was noted on January 30th – 31st.

In February birds were found at Kingsgate Park, Yate:

Four were seen on February 12th, which turned out to be the highest count in the end, and they continued to delight until at least March 16th when two were still present.



Left Hawfinch at Thornbury, right Yate. February 2009. Matt Plenty & Darren Pearce.

Nine other birds were seen at different location in the first winter period only. In January the first was seen at 15:20 near Hawkesbury Upton in trees on west side of the Cotswold Way around ST: 773 871 on the 7th, the next was on Ringswell Common in the Doncombe Valley south of Marshfield on January 15th with another over the same site on the 18th. Five were seen at Bodkin Hazel Wood near Petty France on January 25th. They appeared to fly in from the Hawkesbury Upton direction then flew south-east towards Badminton and finally a male was seen in trees at the bottom corner of Manorbrook School Field and Streamside Walk, Thornbury (ST: 643 910) on February 17th & 19th.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* (c.80) 1

A single fly-over was heard from Cake Pill on Aust Warth in the morning on December 2nd.

Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala* (0) 1

An adult summer male, probably this species, was reported on a bird table in a private garden at Yate early morning in June. An account of this occurrence is set out in the articles below.

The S. Glos year list for 2009 finished on an impressive 216, 201 species plus 15 forms and is a new S. Glos record.

The S. Glos list at the end of 2009 stands at 308!

ARTICLES

BLACK KITE – John Mackenzie-Grieve

A presumed adult was watched on the 26th May drifting out of St. Catherine's Valley. It was first seen around 06:00 at a height of about 25 metres over the track between Halldoor Lane and Nailey Farm at approximately ST: 776 720 south and west of Marshfield. It was last seen leaving the valley heading in a generally north-north-westerly direction towards West Littleton. (John Mackenzie-Grieve) This occurrence constitutes the first documented reference to this species in S. Gloucestershire.

TBOSG: May 2009.

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING – Mark Coller

On June 7th a summer male was watched for several minutes on a bird table at Yate. This occurrence constitutes the first record of this species in S. Gloucestershire.

The bird was seen on Sunday June 7th 2009 in the morning at around 09:30 and was described as a bright yellow bird with a black head, brown back about the size and shape of a Chaffinch. It was watched for several minutes feeding on seed below a bird table with several House Sparrow and was seen briefly on the back fence before flying on its own towards Kingsgate Park. In flight, white in the outer tail feathers were noted. Despite much searching it could not be relocated that day or over the following days.

NB: A week or so before the S. Glos occurrence an adult male Black-headed Bunting was photographed on Guernsey at Jerbourg on May 26th 2009.

Mark Coller, S. Gloucestershire – June 2009.

FREGETTA STORM PETREL – John Martin

On 25th November 2009, I decided to sea watch at my local patch, Severn Beach, S. Gloucestershire before work. A south-westerly gale had been blowing during the night and I had seen a few Leach's Petrels there the two previous mornings. Disappointingly, when I arrived at 07.50, the wind had dropped to a stiff breeze and the sun was shining. I was soon joined by Allan Gaunt and Angus Dickie from Wolverhampton, and then by Richard and Rod Greer from Birmingham, all hoping to see Leach's Petrel.

At about 08.25, both Rod and Angus independently spotted a mystery bird flying away from us, heading up-channel towards the Severn bridge but, after a short search, Allan located it heading back down channel. He immediately shouted 'Oh my goodness, what on earth have we got here?' – or words to that effect! As I locked onto the bird, I realised that it was a stunning-looking storm-petrel with a white belly, and I began shouting rather incoherently, to ensure that everyone was watching it! The bird was flying low over the water at about 600 yards range, and we were all using telescopes on tripods. As we watched it, we called out the bird's features to one another.

Initial thoughts of it perhaps being a partial albino Leach's or Storm Petrel were soon dismissed, as this was like no storm-petrel I had ever seen. It had a remarkable flight jizz, gliding and tilting, with low, banking mini-shears just above the waves for hundreds of yards without a wing beat. It was also a distinctive shape, with rather broad wings, with a curved leading edge, straight trailing edge and pointed tip. Its striking white belly joined with an obvious white rump patch and with a large white patch on the black-bordered under wing. The upper wing was rather uniform dark brown, with no obvious pale carpal bar. The feet projected beyond the tip of the square-ended tail. Allan, who had seen 'fregetta' storm-petrels previously in the South Atlantic, mooted the possibility of it being a Black-bellied or White-bellied Storm Petrel, difficult as this was to believe.

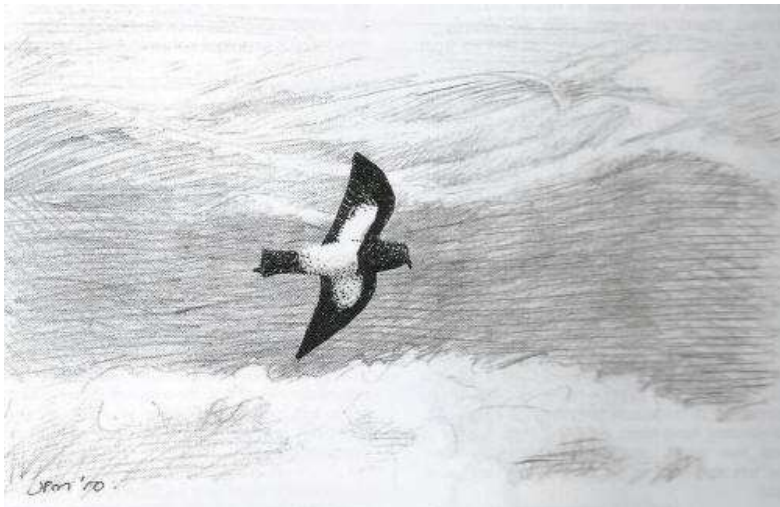
After a few minutes, the bird began to head obliquely away, across the wind, and we eventually lost it on the far side of the channel, over a mile-and-a-half away, at about 8.35am. We made some frantic mobile telephone calls about this 'mad petrel with amazing flight' (as I apparently described it) and, discussing the bird

with Mashuq Ahmed, Chris Batty and Brian Small, we realised that it had to be a 'fregetta' species – either a Black-bellied Storm Petrel or a White-bellied Storm Petrel – and the news was quickly broadcast to this effect.

The bird seemed quite likely to reappear, as this almost land-locked site often holds seabirds in such conditions. Sure enough, the bird showed again from our viewpoint for a few minutes about an hour later, albeit much more distantly than our initial sighting, and about fifteen other local birders were able to see it. Sadly, despite the wind strengthening, the bird did not show again for the gathering crowd.

I would like to thank the other observers for commenting on an earlier draft of this note. Now that we are all compiling our detailed notes and submissions, it is clear that the bird was indeed either a Black-bellied Storm Petrel or a White-bellied Storm Petrel, but separation of these two species can be very tricky and we wonder whether we are ever going to be able resolve the identification to species level with absolute certainty. Either way, we all expect this to be our 'bird of a lifetime', and that is probably enough – as my friend Mike Prince remarked 'you never forget a 'fregetta'.

John Martin, S. Gloucestershire - November 2009.



Black/ White-bellied Storm Petrel. John Martin.

PACIFIC DIVER – Martyn Hayes

On Tuesday November 24th 2009 whilst sea watching at Severn Beach after some pretty spectacular storms the previous couple of days I was eagerly anticipating good, close views of local rarities like Petrels, Skua's and Auk's. Not to be disappointed they duly put on quite a show, but in one of the inevitable quiet periods I took to chewing the fat with a couple of local birders and started to speculate as to what might be the next new addition to the S. Glos list. Surf Scoter was mooted as was the 'near miss' Pacific Diver just a couple of miles upriver in the Slimbridge area. Never in a million years could anyone have dreamed it would be FREGETTA STORM PETREL! a south Atlantic 'fregetta' Petrel and to add insult to injury the very next day on November 25th...!

Typically work got in the way and to my utter dismay I'm cruising over the 'Old' Severn Bridge exactly when the little blighter is being seen off Severn Beach... DOH...!!! Managing to get away by 14:00 I pitch up at 'The Beach' and spent until dusk waiting in vain... DOH...!! Ah well 'life's a b**ch' maybe next time...! Note the pragmatic standpoint... I was mortified really.

Two days later on November 27th I'm back at 'The Beach' staring intently at a pretty flat calm sea, very little wind, glorious sunshine and almost perfect light and it looks as if someone's pulled the plug out, cos' the tide line is a postcode away and high tide isn't due in until mid-afternoon...DOH!... Ah well 'life's a beach' so I guess I'll have a look anyway. One or two other birders were present when I arrived at around 10:00 but not much has been seen; a Pom had been called around 09:00ish but nothing since.

At 10:45 a Black-throated Diver type came whizzing under the Second Severn Crossing from 'up north' at about 400 metres range heading parallel with the shore line in a south-westerly direction... knowing how rare Black-throated's are in the Severn estuary (there's only been three and a half...?) I'm begging it to stop and drop on to the water so I can have a better look... and it did!

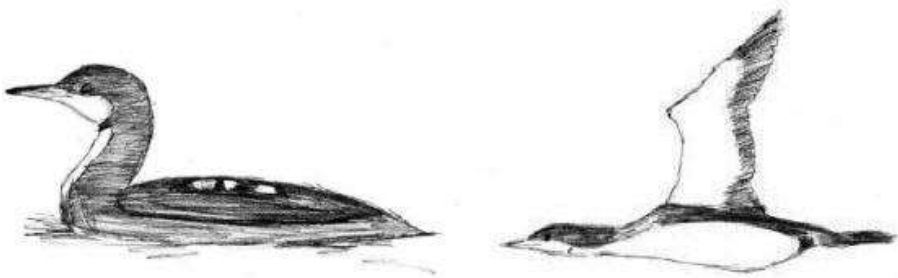
Initial impressions were, in flight, of a starkly contrasting black and white diver with a clear demarcation between upper and lower parts, and when on the water in bright sunshine on a fairly calm sea other more defining details were noted.

Quickly putting the other birders on to it the salient features started to emerge. A sleek rounded head lacking the angularity of Black-throated, the clear thin 'throat strap', the lack of any rear flank patches, when in flight a complete 'vent strap' and at rest on the sea a few white scapulars... that'll be an adult Pacific Diver then...nice one!

Almost inevitably and because of its proximity to Severn Beach the Slimbridge bird had a great chance of being picked up on Severnside, thankfully I can say...'I was there'... After just fifteen minutes, a couple of exploratory dives and some token preening it lifted from the bay at 11:00 it was seen flying strongly south-west towards Denny Island and Portishead to disappear into the distance.

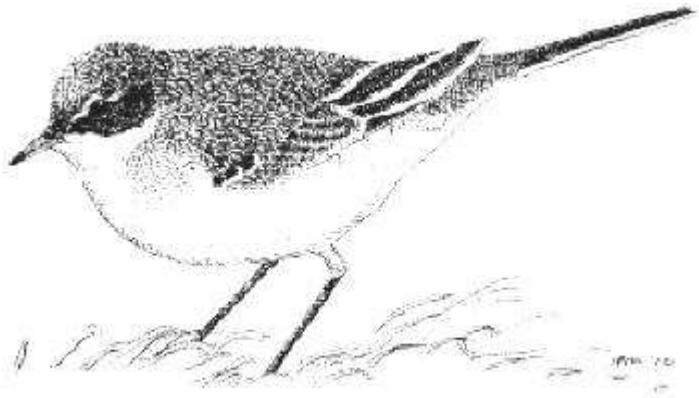
My thanks to the co-finders who reasoned that a lull in the anti-cyclonic weather conditions prompted the bird to re-orientate and make its way back down the estuary to 'bluer' less 'brown' pastures?

Martyn Hayes - November 2009.



Pacific Diver off Severn Beach. November 2009. Martyn Hayes.

GREY-HEADED WAGTAIL – John Martin, Brian Lancaster



Grey-headed Wagtail on Northwick Warth. September 2009. John Martin.

On the morning of September 26th I had been birding at New Passage and Northwick Warth since 07:30 and was joined by Brian Lancaster. It was quite a 'birdy' morning with decent numbers of common migrants including 20 Chiffchaffs, eight Blackcaps and an influx of at least 33 Song Thrushes. We were even inspired to check around the old tip by Green Lane before heading back along the Warth towards New Passage for the high tide. We both heard a Yellow Wagtail call and the bird duly dropped in nearby - a nice record these days and likely to be the last of the year. I remarked that the bird seemed to have a dark hood and was worth further scrutiny. It was with Meadow Pipits at first then got separated from them and fed amongst the cattle. It showed well at times down to 25m or less but was frequently lost in the longer grass. Nonetheless careful scrutiny showed that it really did have a dark grey hood with a tiny suggestion of a pale supercilium and was overall rather dark and cold toned above. Its calls were usually similar to 'flavissima' but on at least one occasion were distinctly zippy (perhaps merely a response to stress). I obtained a recording of some of the calls but unfortunately we were unable to get any photographic images. We both took field notes and I made some sketches of the bird. By now we were fairly happy it was a Grey-headed Wagtail (race 'thunbergi') but phoned the news out as a 'probable' because we were not sure if this form should show a slight supercilium.

The bird was clearly a 'flava wagtail' of some kind. The lores and ear coverts were solidly dark grey with no paler area below the eye. The forehead, crown and nape were a slightly paler grey. There was a small short narrow pale supercilium starting just in front of the eye and ending just behind it. The mantle was similar in shade to the crown and rather cold grey-brown in colour, lacking any obvious olive and not contrasting in tone much with the wings. There were two indistinct slightly paler wing-bars and somewhat more obvious white fringes to the dark centred tertials. The tail was dark with a lot of white in the outer feathers. The underparts were a pale creamy colour (JPM) or pale yellowish with the throat somewhat paler (BL). The bill was black and the legs dark.

After a while we lost track of it and decided to check out the waders a New Passage. We met Paul Bowerman and suggested to him that the wagtail was worth seeing in the hope that he would be able to photograph it. Unfortunately he could not find it, and we called him back prematurely as we had found a Semipalmated Sandpiper on the rising tide - what a morning! The wagtail was not seen again although the 'semip' showed well through the late morning and afternoon.

Discussion

The identification of flava wagtails is not always easy and autumn individuals are notoriously difficult. This is not the case with all races, however, and 'thunbergi' is easier than some other forms. The essential reference is Alström and Mild (2003). They mention reports of a rather wide zone of intergradation of thunbergi with nominate flava (Blue-headed Wagtail) in Northern Europe. They also note, however, that intermediates are actually rather infrequent with many birds in zones reported to hold intermediate populations (e.g. southern Finland) being all or nearly all pure thunbergi.

The Northwick Warth bird appeared to be an adult female, being basically too colourful for a first-winter (also lacking bold whitish wing bars or any dusky marks in the malar area or on the breast as shown by most first-winter birds) and not bright enough for an adult male. Alström and Mild state that adult females differ from flava in having a less clear-cut supercilium (sometimes just a short stripe behind the eye or lacking all together), slightly darker crown and especially the ear

coverts which often lack the pale sub-ocular patch found in most flava. Our bird fitted this description perfectly - not all autumn thunbergi are as easily separated from flava - it was very similar to the adult females illustrated on Plates 145 and especially 146 in Alström and Mild (2003).

Autumn female feldegg (Black-headed Wagtail) could be a pitfall as some individuals might look quite like the Northwick bird. They should have black rather than dark grey ear coverts, or at least have a significant element of black. Calls should also be consistently zippier whereas ours gave mainly unremarkable flavissima-like calls and the zip call just once, perhaps when slightly alarmed.

Key points in favour of thunbergi were:

- solidly dark grey ear coverts lacking a pale area below the eye,
- grey forehead, crown and nape, slightly paler than the ear coverts,
- short narrow pale supercilium (although we thought this problematic at the time it is in fact typical of female thunbergi,
- possibly darkish rather cold toned mantle, although not mentioned in the literature it is shown in at least some photos.

The race thunbergi has a wide summer range breeding from central and northern Scandinavia east to eastern Siberia as far as the Kolyma River, and wintering in much of sub-Saharan Africa east to Indochina and south-eastern China. In Britain they are mainly a scarce but regular migrant on the east coast and the Northern Isles. Most are seen in spring peaking in mid to late May with far fewer reported in autumn.

Reference

Alström P. and Mild K. (2003). Pipits and Wagtails of Europe, Asia and North America. Christopher Helm (subsidiary to A & C Black), London.

John Martin - September 2009.

GLOSSY IBIS – Pam Buckle , Phil Baber

Pam's Account:

Phil and I had decided to pop out to Severn Beach on the afternoon of Wednesday 14th October. It was a really nice day, sunny and warm. I took a wrong turn which delayed us quite a bit. Then we stopped to look at plants in a garden shop. When we finally got to Severn Beach it was about 15:20. We got our 'scopes out and had a look around. After about 10 minutes I noticed a bird flying left to right along the shore line. At first, with my naked eye, I thought it might possibly have been an odd looking Curlew, as it had a long de-curved bill. But it seemed somehow not right for that species. I said something like, "What is that?" As soon as I put my binoculars to my eyes, I could see that it was, in fact, a Glossy Ibis! It had really long legs, and was flapping its long wings steadily. It was beautiful, and shone iridescent in the sun. "It's a Glossy Ibis!!!" I exclaimed. (Having wanted to see this species for quite some time!) Phil got on to it, and managed to have the sense to ring Paul Bowerman, somehow staying glued to the Glossy as he did so.

Incredibly Paul was actually at New Passage, which was where the bird was heading. He called back a few minutes later to say that he had seen it a minute after Phil rang off. He had also got photographs. There was great excitement all round! I just cannot believe the luck involved here: if we hadn't taken the wrong turning; if we hadn't stopped at the shop; if Paul hadn't been at New Passage, the Glossy Ibis might just have flown by unnoticed!

Phil's Account:

Pam and myself had arrived at Severn Beach seawall at 15:20 (my notebook entry.) I was hoping to show her one of the Grey Plovers I had found there the previous day. As we arrived 2 Pintail flew up, which delighted me, as I had never seen this species here before, in over 20 years. A cursory scan along the exposed mud towards Chittening produced only a Curlew, Black-Headed Gulls and a Grey Heron. 5 Turnstone flew past. Then I found 5 Ringed Plover on the shoreline. Intending to show Pam these, I began to put the 'scope on them. Meanwhile, unbeknown to me, Pam had picked up a bird flying along the shoreline towards us and began to call it. This was at about 15:30. As I took my eye from the eyepiece, I saw the bird

in question. Just as Pam said, excitedly, "It's a Glossy Ibis!". Indeed it was. And performed well in front of us, with strong sunlight on its plumage, as it flew low over the shoreline towards the Second Severn Crossing. As it passed us it began to gain height rapidly. It cleared the seawall, the flats behind us and began to head off inland, virtually due west. Keeping it in binocular vision, I fumbled for my mobile phone. I had recently asked Paul Bowerman for his number in case I ever found anything interesting on site. This proved quickly to have been very fortuitous! I looked for his number, and paused as the Glossy altered its course, and began to fly up the coast once more. At this point the roof of the flats obscured the Ibis, and I lost it. But now I knew which way it was headed. I found Paul's number, and got through. Luckily (it turned out) he was at New Passage, having just got back from twitching the Staines Brown Shrike! I told him that a Glossy Ibis was headed on a bearing exactly in his direction, and for him to look back towards the bridge and wait. I rang off.

Later, he revealed that 60 seconds after the call the Ibis flew over him - just as predicted! Paul then watched it fly over Northwick Warth, where it landed briefly, "causing consternation among the ducks and waders", before being harassed by corvids. It flew then, until lost to sight, towards Aust Warth. But Paul was able to reel off about 50 photos before this happened. A search, later, of the Aust Warth area by ourselves and others failed to relocate the Ibis. It was surmised that it had continued its bearing, and flown further up the estuary. The bird was in juvenile/1st winter plumage.

If it hadn't been for Pam, I would have been squinting at Ringed Plovers - blissfully unaware of the Ibis flying over me. So, even though Pam has only been birding for just over a year, it cannot be overstated that she made a very valuable contribution to local ornithology on this day. Wish I could find 'rares' as easily!

A description was forwarded to the County Recorder and the BBRC. A copy of this description is featured below. This was backed up by Paul's marvellous photo records. (What is remarkable is that the 3 observers involved in this 1st sighting all share the same initials!) Phil's annotated sketches, drawn later that day from memory, are also featured here. These were also forwarded to the BBRC.

Description:

Size: Appeared slightly larger than Curlew in flight. About same size as a Little Egret, with longer fuller wings. The fact that it was all dark, in my opinion, made it look conjecturally bigger than a bird with lighter, or more camouflaged plumage.

Shape/ Jizz/ Behaviour:

Clearly an Ibis. Long, thickish de-curved bill. With curvature more after basal half of bill, giving it a slight 'kinked' appearance. (In contrast to the elegant slender curvature of a Curlew's bill, it being quite unlike that species in any other respect, to my mind.) Bill base thicker than rest of bill. One edge of base extending from eye to fore-chin. The other from eye to fore-crown in a two-sided triangle. Bill width constant to tip, where appeared slightly 'blob-ended'. (see illustration.) Long wings with broad base and arm. On hand tapering to a 'rounded point' at tip. On close views a very slight 'fingering' at the primary tips. On some wing-strokes the hand gave a more rounded appearance. (Especially on the downward strokes.) Head and neck held out before bird in flight. Neck bowed downward slightly. Bill pointing at an angle downwards. Sturdy, almost triangular head. with 2 distinct, but small, peaks at rear crown and top of fore crown (see illustration.) Legs long. Held trailing behind, with obvious bunched feet (resembling a shoe.) Reminiscent of a Purple Heron's feet, but tidier/neater. Tail shortish, looked straight edged. Legs projecting beyond. Tail tip extending to just beyond tibio-tarsal joints. Body: Slight 'keel' at front of breast, and slight 'hump' on back, visible especially on down-stroke of wings. Rear of body attenuated to tail and feet, mirroring attenuation at front-end. Distance between bill-tip to shoulder roughly equivalent to that from base of rear-wing to tips of feet. Coupled with wings, in flight profile, gave it an almost 'cruciform' appearance. But the toes to bill strut of the 'cross' contrastingly thinner than the broad 'wing-strut'! (More than any other bird, the flight jizz reminded me in some ways of Eurasian Spoonbill.) Wings markedly "bowed" downward in flight, especially from behind as it flew away. The very tips of the primaries appeared to have been 'pinched up between thumb and fore finger' (see illustration.)

Plumage:

Entire plumage a dark 'bronzy' brown. Somewhat lighter on the head and neck. With an apparent small lighter area/ zone on the chin/ upper throat. Upper and under parts concolourous. Under wing also. A slight subtle suffusion of greenish and violet was noted on certain views, and in certain lights. It was not clear exactly which areas of the plumage showed this suffusion. This did not extend to the neck and head, but was at times visible on upper body and upper wing. Otherwise the whole bird appeared solidly dark-brown. The 'bronze' and other casts were only seen, as the light caught it from certain directions as it flew. It was considered that the Ibis was a juvenile, or 1st Winter: this from its more subdued and duller plumage, and the lack of any distinct pale strip in the loreal zone.

Bare Parts:

Bill, legs and feet appeared dark to dark-grey. On some views the bill appeared to have a grey to greyish-blue cast to it. The legs/ feet looked dark-greyish on all views. The eyes appeared dark. It was not sporting a darvic, or other ring (as some other Spanish birds have sported.)

Call: It did not call.

Addendum

Locally, in Gloucestershire, a Glossy Ibis was reported at Zeiss Hide Top New Piece, WWT Slimbridge on 13:10, and it, or another at 100 Acre on 17:10. A bird was reported from Lydney on 15:10. It is unclear whether these reports relate to one or more birds. But the Lydney bird could, conceivably, be the same bird as ours. Noted the day after, and not that far from the Severnside bird's location.

If accepted, this Glossy Ibis will represent the first record for the Severnside recording area, and for South Gloucestershire. As far as I am aware, it will also be the fourth record for the Avon Area, as covered by the Avon Bird Report. Two records, I believe, from Chew Valley Lake in September, are under consideration by BBRC. The first was in November 2007 at Chew, which was accepted by the BBRC. Although nationally, this Autumn, Glossy Ibis have been well represented,

to this date it remains a very rare bird in our local area. So this record is somewhat significant.

Pam Buckle & Phil Baber - October/ November 2009.



Glossy Ibis over Northwick Warth. October 2009. Paul Bowerman.

THE S. GLOS LIST 2009

SPECIES

Red-throated Diver	Shoveler	Sanderling	Guillemot
Black-throated Diver	Red-crested Pochard	Sempalmated Sandpiper	Razorbill
Great Northern Diver	Pochard	Little Stint	Black Guillemot
Pacific Diver	Ring-necked Duck	Temminck's Stint	Little Auk
	Tufted Duck	White-rumped Sandpiper	Puffin
	Scaup	Pectoral Sandpiper	
	Eider	Curlew Sandpiper	Pallas's Sandgrouse
	Long-tailed Duck	Purple Sandpiper	Rock Dove
	Common Scoter	Dunlin	Stock Dove
Little Grebe	Velvet Scoter	Broad-billed Sandpiper	Woodpigeon
Great Crested Grebe	Goldeneye	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Collared Dove
Slavonian Grebe	Smew	Ruff	Turtle Dove
Black-necked Grebe	Red-breasted Merganser	Jack Snipe	
	Goosander	Snipe	Ring-necked Parakeet
Fulmar	Ruddy Duck	Long-billed Dowitcher	
Cory's Shearwater		Woodcock	Cuckoo
Sooty Shearwater	Honey Buzzard	Black-tailed Godwit	
Manx Shearwater	Red Kite	Bar-tailed Godwit	Barn Owl
Balearic Shearwater	Black Kite	Whimbrel	Little Owl
Storm Petrel	White-tailed Eagle	Curlew	Tawny Owl
Leach's Petrel	Marsh Harrier	Spotted Redshank	Long-eared Owl
Black-bellied Storm Petrel	Hen Harrier	Redshank	Short-eared Owl
Gannet	Montagu's Harrier	Greenshank	
Cormorant	Goshawk	Green Sandpiper	Nightjar
Shag	Sparrowhawk	Wood Sandpiper	
	Buzzard	Terek Sandpiper	Swift
Bittern	Osprey	Common Sandpiper	Alpine Swift
Night Heron	Kestrel	Turnstone	
Cattle Egret	Red-footed Falcon	Red-necked Phalarope	Kingfisher
Little Egret	Merlin	Grey Phalarope	European Bee-eater
Grey Heron	Hobby		Hoopoe
White Stork	Peregrine	Pomarine Skua	
Glossy Ibis		Arctic Skua	Wryneck
Spoonbill	Red-legged Partridge	Long-tailed Skua	Green Woodpecker
	Grey Partridge	Great Skua	Great-spotted Woodpecker
Mute Swan	Quail		Lesser-spotted Woodpecker
Bewick's Swan	Pheasant	Mediterranean Gull	
Whooper Swan	Water Rail	Franklin's Gull	Woodlark
	Spotted Crake	Little Gull	Skylark
Taiga Bean Goose	Corncrake	Sabine's Gull	Shorelark
Pink-footed Goose	Moorhen	Black-headed Gull	
White-fronted Goose	Coot	Ring-billed Gull	Sand Martin
Greylag Goose		Common Gull	Swallow
Canada Goose	Common Crane	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Red-rumped Swallow
Barnacle Goose		Yellow-legged Gull	House Martin
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	Oystercatcher	Herring Gull	
Red-breasted Goose	Black-winged Stilt	Caspian Gull	Richard's Pipit
Egyptian Goose	Avocet	Iceland Gull	Tree Pipit
Ruddy Shelduck	Stone Curlew	Glaucous Gull	Meadow Pipit
Shelduck	Little Ringed Plover	Great Black-backed Gull	Rock Pipit
	Ringed Plover	Kittiwake	Water Pipit
Mandarin	Kentish Plover	Sandwich Tern	Yellow Wagtail
Wigeon	Dotterel	Roseate Tern	Grey Wagtail
Gadwall	Golden Plover	Common Tern	Pied Wagtail
Teal	American Golden Plover	Arctic Tern	
Green-winged Teal	Grey Plover	Little Tern	Waxwing
Mallard	Lapwing	Black Tern	Dipper
Pintail	Knot	White-winged Black Tern	
Garganey			

Wren	Jackdaw
Dunnock	Rook
Robin	Carrion Crow
Nightingale	Hooded Crow
Red-spotted Bluethroat	Raven
Black Redstart	
Redstart	Starling
Whinchat	Rose-coloured Starling
Stonechat	
Northern Wheatear	House Sparrow
	Tree Sparrow
Ring Ouzel	Chaffinch
Blackbird	Brambling
Fieldfare	Greenfinch
Song Thrush	Goldfinch
Redwing	Siskin
Mistle Thrush	Linnet
	Twite
Cetti's Warbler	Lesser Redpoll
Grasshopper Warbler	Mealy Redpoll
Aquatic Warbler	Common Crossbill
Sedge Warbler	Bullfinch
Marsh Warbler	Hawfinch
Reed Warbler	Lapland Bunting
Icterine Warbler	Snow Bunting
Dartford Warbler	Yellowhammer
Subalpine Warbler	Cirl Bunting
Lesser Whitethroat	Reed Bunting
Common Whitethroat	Black-headed Bunting
Garden Warbler	Corn Bunting
Blackcap	
Yellow-browed Warbler	
Wood Warbler	
Chiffchaff	
Willow Warbler	
Goldcrest	
Firecrest	
Spotted Flycatcher	
Pied Flycatcher	
Bearded Tit	
Long-tailed Tit	
Marsh Tit	
Willow Tit	
Coal Tit	
Blue Tit	
Great Tit	
Nuthatch	
Treecreeper	
Golden Oriole	
Red-backed Shrike	
Great Grey Shrike	
Woodchat Shrike	
Jay	
Magpie	

FORMS

Continental Cormorant
Pale-bellied Brent Goose
Ring-necked Pheasant
Tundra Ringed Plover
Northern Dunlin
Greenland Dunlin
Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit
Icelandic Redshank
Continental LB-backed Gull
Scandinavian Herring Gull
Kumlien's Gull
Scandinavian Rock Pipit
Blue-headed Wagtail
Eastern Yellow Wagtail
Grey-headed Wagtail
White Wagtail
Greenland Wheatear
Continental Song Thrush
Icelandic Redwing
Scandinavian Chiffchaff
Siberian Chiffchaff
Northern Willow Warbler
Nordic Jackdaw
Continental Chaffinch